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Covering the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District



Volume 18, Issue 53

May 2026

Ruby Drive Elementary Earns Distinction as Orange County's First Elementary AVID National Demonstration School



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Ruby Drive Elementary Earns Distinction as Orange County's First Elementary AVID National Demonstration School



**Dr. Kym
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Superintendent

Ruby Drive Elementary School has been formally recognized by Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) for its sustained, multiyear implementation of AVID strategies, earning designation as the first elementary AVID National Demonstration School in Orange County. This distinction reflects the school's commitment to fostering college and career readiness through rigorous academic practices and a culture of high expectations for all students.

With this achievement, the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District becomes the first district in the United States to establish a comprehensive TK-12 neighborhood feeder pattern of AVID National Demonstration Schools, including Ruby Drive Elementary School, Kraemer Middle School, and Valencia High School.

During the validation process, Dani de Jesus, an AVID Implementation Strategist supporting Los Angeles County, provided formal commendation on behalf of the AVID Center. Following classroom observations, stakeholder interviews, and a comprehensive review of schoolwide data, the validation team concluded that Ruby Drive Elementary exemplifies the core principles of AVID at the highest level.

In remarks shared with the school community, de Jesus emphasized that the designation reflects more than strong implementation, noting that the systems, expectations, and instructional practices required of an AVID National Demonstration School were evident across all classrooms

and learning environments. Ruby Drive Elementary was described as a "beacon of excellence" both within the local community and at the national level.

Key areas of distinction included the school's commitment to inclusive excellence through a fully mainstreamed model, ensuring that all students are held to rigorous academic standards. Additionally, the school's emphasis on student agency, highlighted by its Student Leadership Elective, demonstrates a structured approach to developing leadership skills and real-world responsibility among students. The validation team also recognized the school's transformation of family engagement through student-led showcases, which achieved approximately 95% family participation and positioned the campus as a center for teaching and learning across the district.

As part of the validation process, the AVID Center also identified areas for continued growth to ensure sustained excellence. These include strengthening articulation between elementary and middle school to support students' transition and ensure the continuation of organizational and academic habits, as well as advancing inquiry-based instruction and literacy practices, particularly through deeper conceptual questioning in mathematics and science.

This recognition underscores the collective dedication and sustained efforts of Principal Lisa Carmona and the Ruby Drive Elementary staff, whose leadership and instructional practices have established a model of schoolwide excellence and equitable student achievement.

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Giselle Nguyen
President

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Each year, signature events bring this mission to life. The Shamrock 'n Run 5K/2K unites nearly 2,000 participants in a celebration of wellness and student entrepreneurship, while the Middle School Track Meet on May 6th engages over 500 students in building confidence, perseverance, and sportsmanship.

What makes REACH special is its spirit: when a community comes together, our students thrive, potential becomes momentum—and momentum shapes a brighter future.



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Orange County Department of Education

200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa CA 92628 • 714/966-4000 • www.ocde.us

A Moment to Reflect – and a Look Ahead



Dr. Stefan Bean
Superintendent

As the room began to fill for the Orange County State of Education event on March 13, I paused for a moment to take it all in. Educators, school leaders, elected officials and community partners were all coming together, each bringing a unique perspective and area of focus.

What stood out wasn't our different roles. It was what brought us together — the collective belief in our students and in what is possible for them.

That sense of shared purpose stayed with me throughout the day, especially as we heard from our guest speaker, Adán Correa. A Santa Ana High School graduate, Cal State Fullerton alum and advocate for the neurodivergent community, Adán is known to many from the Netflix series "Love on the Spectrum." He shared his journey with humor, honesty and a genuine sense of joy.

Adán is a remarkable young man and the perfect speaker for our event, not just because of who he is, but because of how he got there. In his own words, he is where he is today because of the steady presence of people

See **OCDE** • Page 6

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OCDE • From Page 5



Dr. Stefan Bean
Superintendent

who believed in him and supported him, including teachers, coaches, counselors and family. It's a reminder of something we all know and the recurring theme of my address: No one gets there alone.

That idea feels especially important right now. We are seeing real progress in Orange County's schools — higher-than-ever graduation rates, improving attendance and expanded opportunities through career pathways and innovation.

At the same time, our work is becoming more complex. Student needs are growing, expectations continue to evolve, and schools are being asked to do more, often with fewer resources. The question, then, isn't only how we respond to challenges. It's how we continue building on what's working.

For me, that means staying grounded in what matters most, like continuing to center belonging and connection so our students feel seen and supported, while staying aligned in our efforts so the work happening across classrooms, schools and districts adds up to something greater.

It also means being intentional about how we support the adults doing this work by protecting their time, reducing unnecessary burdens and keeping the focus on students. Just as important is continuing to listen, because the most meaningful insights often come directly from the students and communities we serve.

When I look across Orange County, I'm proud to say I see these efforts in action every day. I see educators showing up for students in ways that often go unseen. I see leaders making thoughtful and sometimes difficult decisions in service of their communities. I see partnerships forming that strengthen this work.

That is what progress looks like.

As we look ahead, I keep coming back to a simple question that I posed on March 13: Where can we better align our efforts so that no student walks alone?

It's a question we will continue to answer together, not necessarily through high-level decisions but in more subtle ways like how we as educators collaborate, how we prioritize our work, and how we support students, communities and one another. Because in the end, what defines us is the consistency of how we show up for each other and for our students.

The 2026 State of Education is in the books. But the state of education? It continues to grow stronger, thanks to the collective efforts of educators, families, students and community partners.

I'm grateful to be part of this work with you.

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Brookhaven *Elementary School (TK-6)*

1851 N. Brookhaven Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7110 • www.brookhavenelementary.com



Laura Fisher
Principal

Think, Build, Innovate: Brookhaven GATE Students Take Learning to the Next Level

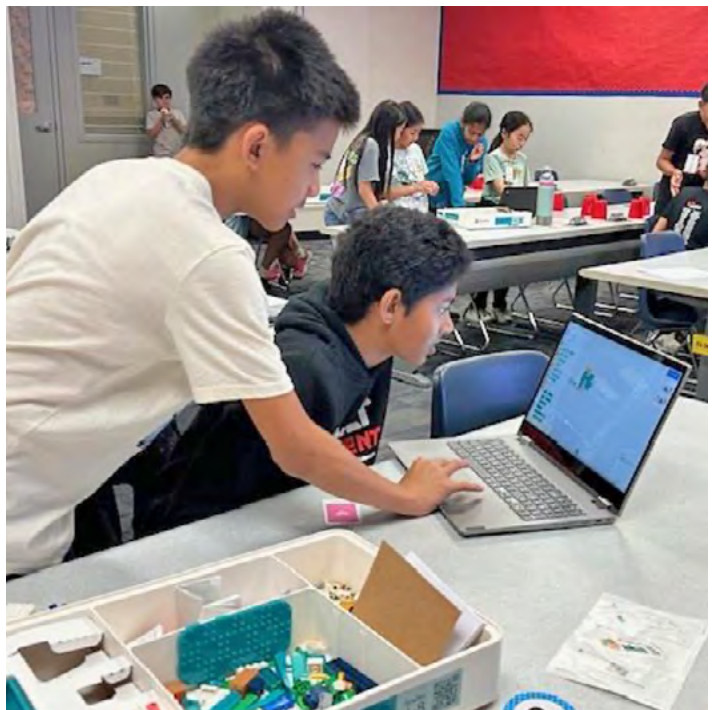
Brookhaven Elementary's GATE students are expanding their learning beyond the classroom through an exciting partnership with REACH FIRST LEGO League, offering afterschool enrichment rooted in STEM exploration. FIRST® LEGO® League sparks curiosity and confidence in young minds

through hands-on experiences where students imagine, build, and collaborate to solve real-world problems.

Through this program, Brookhaven's GATE students are applying the Depth and Complexity icons—such as “Details,” “Patterns,” and “Rules”—as they design, test, and refine their LEGO-based solutions. The partnership encourages critical thinking, teamwork, and creative problem-solving in meaningful, engaging ways.

“I like figuring out how to fix our robot when it doesn't work the first time,” shared one student. “It makes me think deeper and try new ideas.”

This collaboration reflects Brookhaven's commitment to enriching advanced learners with opportunities that challenge their thinking and inspire innovation.



Students work in teams to build and program robots to perform tasks.

Bryant Ranch *School (TK-5)*

24695 Paseo de Toronto, Yorba Linda, CA 92887 • 714/986-7120 • www.bryantranchschool.com



Shannon Robles
Principal

Entrepreneurship in Action at Bryant Ranch

At Bryant Ranch, we offer students a variety of engaging learning experiences to meet diverse interests and strengths. This year, our GATE/Honors Academy featured a Shark Tank-inspired deep dive into entrepreneurship. Working in small

groups, students collaborated to create an original product, including a business plan, market research, prototype, and slide deck.

Throughout the process, they strengthened teamwork, communication, and leadership skills while



applying critical thinking and problem-solving. A key focus was developing a growth mindset—students learned how to respond to feedback, navigate critique, and persevere when ideas were refined or rejected.

The program culminated in presentations to a panel of “sharks,” made up of teachers and the principal, giving students an authentic opportunity to showcase their innovation and build confidence.

These experiences foster creativity, resilience, and real-world readiness for future success.



El Camino Real High School (Continuation High School 9-12)

1351 E. Orangethorpe Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7060 • www.ecrhs.pylusd.org



Gina Aguilar
Principal

Congratulations Jasmine Diaz

Each year, PYLUSD selects one student to represent the district in the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Every Student Succeeding Awards program. This program honors students who have demonstrated strength and perseverance in overcoming significant life challenges to achieve success.

El Camino Real High School senior Jasmine Diaz was recognized alongside 30 other students from districts across Orange County at an inspiring ceremony held at the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana on March 6, 2026. During the event, Jasmine was also selected from this distinguished group of honorees as the ACSA Region 17 statewide recipient. She will be recognized at the ACSA Leadership Summit in San Diego this November, where she will receive a \$1,000 scholarship.

Jasmine plans to attend community college in the fall to study journalism. She is an intelligent, creative, resilient, and kind young woman, and the staff at El Camino Real High School are so proud of her.



El Dorado High School (9-12)

1651 N. Valencia Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7580 • www.edhs.org



Michael Zides
Principal

El Dorado's March Madness with Unified PE

El Dorado gave a big Friday shout out to Unified PE students, dedicated teachers, and student volunteers who helped bring the March Madness event to life on March 27th. Special thanks to student organizers Lauren Gei, Justin Ibarra, and Avery Huang for their leadership and vision. Our SPED teachers—Mrs. Dawdy, Mr. Merrill, Mrs. Jones, and

Mr. Pe, and the amazing aides, support students daily and help make events like this possible.

What began as an idea grew into something truly special. Avery, Lauren and Justin collaborated with the SPED team while Unified students spent months practicing basketball in preparation for the big day. The event's highlight was the overwhelming support from our school and ASB. Students filled the stands at lunch, cheering on their peers and creating a moment of recognition and unity that made the day unforgettable for everyone involved.



Esperanza High School (9-12)

1830 N. Kellogg Dr., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/986-7540 • www.esperanzahs.com



Kelly Molina
Principal

Excellence in the Performing Arts

Esperanza's performing arts programs continue to excel, earning recognition at both the regional and national levels.

Esperanza High School's Jazz Ensemble I has been selected as one of only 20 finalists nationwide to perform at the 31st Annual Essentially Ellington High School Jazz Band Program & Festival, one of the premier high school jazz events in North America. Held at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City, the

festival brings together top ensembles for workshops and adjudicated performances.

Under the direction of Brad Davis, the ensemble was selected through a highly competitive blind audition process. Students will participate from April 30 to May 2, 2026, working with professional musicians and performing for a distinguished panel that includes Wynton Marsalis. This marks Esperanza's first selection in 14 years and highlights the program's sustained excellence.



Esperanza's award-winning show choir, Reverberation, earned Grand Champion along with First Place, Best Show, and Best Vocals at its most recent competition. The ensemble showcased exceptional vocal performance, choreography, and stage presence while representing Esperanza with professionalism and integrity.

Esperanza's drama department also recently produced *Little Shop of Horrors*, highlighting students' vocal and acting talents through a dynamic blend of suspense and humor.

These accomplishments reflect the talent and dedication of our students and staff and reinforce Esperanza's strong tradition of excellence in the performing arts.



Fairmont Elementary School (TK-6)

5241 Fairmont Blvd., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7130 • www.fairmontelementary.com



Anne San Roman
Principal

AVID Family Night

Fairmont Elementary recently welcomed families to a highly engaging AVID Family Night focused on strengthening literacy at home. The event brought together students, parents, and staff for an evening centered on the power of reading. Teachers Mrs. Corral, Ms. Bonfield, Mrs. Perez, and Ms. Brechwald led families through an interactive read-aloud strategy, modeling effective techniques that support comprehension and student engagement.



Following the demonstration, families had the opportunity to practice these strategies together, creating meaningful shared reading experiences. A wide selection of books from the school library was available, allowing students to explore different genres and interests. Flexible seating options throughout the space helped create a warm, comfortable environment where families could relax and enjoy reading together.

The evening concluded on a high note, with every student selecting a brand-new book to take home. Events like this highlight Fairmont's commitment to fostering a love of reading and building strong school-home connections.



Rebecca Allan, Principal

Fun Events

Key students anticipated their ride and walk-a-thon and carnival on April 24th. This was a fun-filled event with local police and firefighters joining Key on their walk. The carnival followed with Venture students helping Key students, manning the carnival booths and cheering on our Key students. Everyone enjoyed pizza after their hard work! Thank you to Venture Academy for their assistance to George Key! Also thank you to Key and Venture PSSO and your help in making this event possible.

May 19th is our field day with Tuffree Middle School. We are looking forward to the special assemblies and activities that we will be doing with our 8th grade friends at the middle school. Thank you to Mr. Matt LeGrand and all of your support for our students.

May 22 is our Key family barbecue and raffle! This is a great way to celebrate the end of the year and support our raffle basket fundraiser. All Key families are invited for this event!

Glenknoll Elementary School (TK-6)

6361 Glenknoll Dr., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7140 • www.glenknoll.org



Erica Kadhom
Principal

Exciting School Year

Glenknoll Elementary has had an exciting school year filled with meaningful learning experiences, student achievements, and a strong sense of community. From hands-on classroom activities to schoolwide events, students have been actively exploring, creating, and growing together as Glenknoll Cougars.

Schoolwide, Glenknoll proudly hosted its annual Battle of the Books and Move-a-Thon events. Literacy and teamwork were on full display during Battle of the Books, as students competed in a fun and friendly reading competition that strengthened comprehension, built confidence, and fostered a love for literature. The Move-a-Thon brought the entire school together for a day of fun and fitness, with students rotating through activity stations like yoga, volleyball, and dancing while celebrating their fundraising efforts. These events

were made possible by the incredible support of staff, parent volunteers, community partners, and the dedicated PTA.

Inside the classroom, students continue to engage in rigorous and relevant learning experiences. Our youngest learners in Transitional Kindergarten took part in an imaginative “hike,” where they encountered real animals such as frogs, toads, and turtles, sparking curiosity about the natural world. Older students also had opportunities to extend their learning beyond campus, including a meaningful visit to the Museum of Tolerance, where sixth graders explored important lessons in history. Students also participated in enriching art lessons, with several selected to represent Glenknoll in the PYLUSD District Art Show. Their work showcased impressive creativity and skill.

Altogether, Glenknoll continues to thrive as a place where students grow academically and creatively, and we look forward to a strong finish to the school year!

School News

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FOUNDER/PUBLISHER: Kay Coop
562/493-3193 • schoolnewskay@gmail.com

ADVERTISING SALES: 562/493-3193

CONTENT COORDINATOR: Barbra Longiny

GRAPHIC DESIGNER/PRODUCTION:

Emily Ung and Mie Kawamura

COPY EDITOR: Kate Karp

SOCIAL MEDIA: Nancy Lueder

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Glenview Elementary School (TK-6)

1775 Glenview Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/986-7150 • www.glenviewbulldogs.org



Viri Fraga
Principal

Blooming in Two Languages: Glenview's Tenacious Journey to Biliteracy

Glenview Elementary Dual Language Academy, the proud home of the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District's elementary dual language program, continues to empower over 400 students to become biliterate in both Spanish and English. Through a thoughtfully designed instructional model, students develop

strong literacy skills in two languages while also gaining meaningful exposure to diverse cultural perspectives. This dual focus on language and culture helps foster globally minded learners who are prepared to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

In March, Glenview proudly hosted its second Dual Language Academy (DLA) Biliteracy Night, an event that highlighted the strength of collaboration between students, teachers, and families. A special highlight of the evening was a visit from children's book author Emily Job, a Glenview alumna and current teacher at OCSCS. She read aloud her inspiring book *Tenacious Flower*, engaging families and students in a shared literacy experience that emphasized perseverance and growth.



The event also showcased the work of Glenview's sixth-grade dual language teachers, Mr. Reyes and Mrs. Quintana, who prepared their students to demonstrate the research-based reading strategy of readers' theater. Students confidently performed scenes from *Tenacious Flower* in Spanish, modeling fluency, expression, and comprehension skills for their families.

This interactive experience allowed parents to gain insight into instructional practices used in the classroom while actively participating in their children's learning. By bringing families into the educational process, Glenview continues to strengthen its commitment to biliteracy through a collaborative and inclusive approach. Events like Biliteracy Night exemplify the school's mission to build a vibrant learning community where language, culture, and academic excellence come together.

Golden Elementary School (TK-6)

740 E. Golden Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7160 • www.golden.pylusd.org



Kristin McDonald
Principal

Shine Bright, Stay Golden: Lunch with a Loved One

This week, Golden Elementary proudly hosted one of our most beloved traditions: Lunch with a Loved One. Held twice each year, this special event invites families onto campus to share a picnic-style lunch with their children, often bringing along their child's favorite meal to make the day even more meaningful.

Our community truly showed up! It was so fun to see the variety of lunches and the creativity families brought to campus. From cozy blankets and lawn chairs to inflatable couches, mini tables, and even tents, families created their own special picnic spaces. Of course, nothing we do at Golden



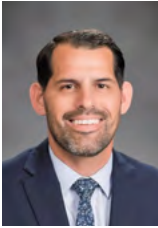
is ever ordinary, and this event was no exception.

Over the course of two days, our campus was filled with smiles, laughter, and connection. Students enjoyed time with their loved ones before heading off to play, while families relaxed and visited with one another, strengthening our sense of community. Events like this reflect our commitment to partnering with families. Lunch with a Loved One is always a highlight, and a beautiful reminder that when we come together, our Golden Eagles truly shine bright.



Kraemer Middle School (7-8)

645 N. Angelina Dr., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-1551 • www.kraemerms.org



Matthew Callaway
Principal

Career Speaker Day

Kraemer Middle School recently hosted its annual Career Speaker Day, giving students a firsthand look at the wide range of opportunities that await them in the future. Professionals from a variety of industries volunteered their time to share insights about their careers, educational journeys, and the different paths that led them to where they are today.

Students had the opportunity to select three speakers to visit, allowing them to explore multiple interests and hear diverse perspectives. Each session provided valuable real-world connections, helping students better understand how their current learning can translate into future success.

This engaging event was organized through the school's AVID program and led by coordinator Ms. Rosete as part of College and Career Week. Career Speaker Day continues to be a meaningful experience, inspiring students to think broadly about their goals and the many possibilities available to them.



Lakeview Elementary School (TK-5)

17510 Lakeview Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7190 • www.lakeview.pylusd.org



Stephanie Given
Principal

Literacy with a Night of Reading, Authors, and Fun

On March 19, Lakeview Elementary School hosted a Family Literacy Night for our community. This was a fun-filled evening where families came to celebrate the joy of reading and writing! Students and their families rotated through engaging literacy stations, met six different local authors, and participated in book-inspired crafts and games. This interactive night was designed to spark a love of literacy while creating meaningful family memories through learning and play.

On the following day, students in grades 3-5 participated in a literacy extension day where they learned how to write a mystery story from one of the authors. Students enjoyed developing their plot and were inspired to collaborate with peers to write engaging stories. We are grateful for our local community who shared their gift of writing to develop our students' love for literacy, and to Mrs. Williams for planning a fun event for all!



Linda Vista *Elementary (TK-5)*

5600 S. Ohio St., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7200 • www.lindavistaelementary.org



Kathleen Escaleras-Nappi
Principal

Celebrating 50 Years of Learning, Leadership, and Lion Pride

At Linda Vista Elementary, we believe our students are that future, and their elementary years lay the foundation for becoming confident scholars and supportive leaders.

This April, we are proud to celebrate our 50th Anniversary alongside our students, staff, and community, honoring our past, embracing our present, and looking ahead to a bright future.

Linda Vista Elementary opened its doors in 1975 to serve a growing residential community and later became part of the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District (PYLUSD) in 1989. In preparation for this milestone celebration, our leadership team, in collaboration with a dedicated committee of parents, brought our vision to life in meaningful and memorable ways.

As a school community, we captured a commemorative drone photo with all students, created 50th Anniversary t-shirts for staff and students, and invited students to share what they love most about their school. Our celebration also included a spirited Decades Week, where students dressed

in styles from the 70s, 80s, 90s, 2000s, and today, bringing our history to life in a fun and engaging way.

On Friday, April 24th, we look forward to welcoming our school community and former Lions to celebrate together in our MPR. The event will feature photos, desserts, food, school tours, and, most importantly, a shared sense of connection and pride. Together, we celebrate not only 50 years of history, but also our enduring legacy of achievement and the bright future ahead for all Lions.



Mabel Paine *Elementary School (TK-5)*

4444 Plumosa Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7210 • www.mabelpaine.org



Kristi Coonan
Principal

Student-Centered Classrooms

At Mabel Paine Elementary, our classrooms are intentionally designed to be student-centered, ensuring every child is actively engaged in their learning. Teachers consistently use small group instruction to differentiate and meet students where they are, providing targeted support and opportunities for growth.



Rigor and meaningful academic discourse are evident across grade levels, as students are encouraged to think critically, collaborate, and share their ideas. This focus on high-quality instruction and strong relationships creates an environment where students feel supported, challenged, and inspired.

We recently celebrated our students' amazing work at our annual Open House, which brought out a huge turnout of families. It is always special to see former students return to campus, highlighting the lasting impact of the Mabel Paine community.

As a result, Mabel Paine students are achieving, thriving, demonstrating confidence, curiosity, and a love of learning each day.



Melrose Elementary School (TK-5)

974 S. Melrose St., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7220 • melrose.pylusd.org



Dr. Janice Weber
Principal

Understanding the Possibilities

A school's mission statement is only meaningful if known and owned by everyone, including students (Reeves & Eaker, 2019). At Melrose, if you ask any Marlin student, "Why do you come to school?" they will answer, "We come to school to CLUB! C stands for Connect. L stands for Learn. U stands for Understanding the Possibilities, and B stands for Believing in Yourself." It is

our mission at Melrose to ensure that students understand the possibilities for their future and connect today's learning to their vision and beliefs for themselves. Because of the generosity of our educator colleagues and friends at Valencia High School, Melrose 5th-grade students took a field trip to explore the amazing programs

and opportunities at VHS that support college and career readiness. Led by Principal Mr. Herzfeld, Activities Director Ms. Paquet, and her amazing ASB students, our Marlins went on a scavenger hunt and interacted with student leaders to learn what it could be like to be a future Tiger, Class of 2033! VHS teachers graciously opened their classrooms for Marlins to learn more about AVID, Graphic Design, E-Games, Robotics, Photography, Ceramics, Media Production, Culinary, Journalism, and BITA. Our morning concluded with breakfast and a spirited Tiger gear raffle. Marlin students left excited and energized for the possibilities ahead! Thank you, VHS!



Morse Elementary School (TK-6)

431 E. Morse Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/524-6300 • www.morseschool.net



Kelly Farrell
Principal

Bringing the Farm to Morse

Morse Elementary recently had the opportunity to partner with Old Grove Orange to bring an engaging and educational Farm to School Mini Farmers' Market experience directly to our students. This experience gave our TK-5th grade students a hands-on way to learn about the nutritional importance of fruits and vegetables while connecting with the people who grow them.

Farmer Jackie shared what life is like on the farm, giving students a glimpse into the daily work that goes

into growing fresh produce. She introduced fruits and vegetables available at the market that day, explaining each item's unique nutritional "superpower" and how it helps our bodies stay healthy and strong. Farmer Jackie's enthusiasm and connection with students made the learning come alive.

The highlight of the experience was when students became shoppers themselves! Each student selected three items of their choice, applying what they had learned about nutrition and making thoughtful decisions about their selections. The excitement was contagious as students proudly chose fruits and vegetables to take home and share with their families.



Orange County School of Computer Science at Bernardo Yorba (6-8)

5350 Fairmont Blvd., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7400 • www.ocscs.org



Cameron Shepherd
Principal

Hub for Hands-On Learning

The OCSCS Innovation Lab continues to serve as a dynamic hub for hands-on, future-focused learning across campus. This quarter, students engaged in interdisciplinary projects that blend computer science, engineering, and design thinking. Highlights include student-created prototypes using 3D printers, introductory coding tied to real-world problem solving,

and collaborative design challenges that emphasize creativity and iteration.

To deepen this work, OCSCS partnered with the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) to bring Computer Science trainers on-site to work with our entire staff. These sessions focused on embedding computer science concepts across the curriculum, helping teachers make meaningful connections within their content areas. Moving forward, OCDE coordinators will provide more targeted professional development with our

Core 4 departments (Math, ELA, Science, and History) to further strengthen instructional practices. As the Innovation Lab evolves, it remains a space where innovation thrives and students are empowered to think critically and solve meaningful problems.



Parkview *Home School (TK-12)*

2189 N. Kraemer Blvd., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7050
www.pylusdparkview.org

Buena Vista *Virtual Academy (K-12)*

4999 Casa Loma Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7026
www.buenavistavirtual.org



Dominique Polchow
Principal

Independent Study

At Buena Vista Virtual Academy and Parkview School, independent study is built on a shared commitment to flexibility, connection, and strong academic support. Each school offers a distinct model designed to meet the needs of different learners.

Buena Vista Virtual Academy offers a fully online model that delivers structure and connection in a virtual setting.

Students participate in live instruction, small-group support, and one-on-one check-ins with teachers. Clear pacing guides and standards-aligned curriculum keep students on track, while teachers use real-time data to monitor progress and provide targeted support. Connection is built through virtual discussions and ongoing communication with families.

Parkview provides a hybrid model that blends independent study with meaningful in-person opportunities. Students can attend onsite classes to

receive direct instruction, participate in hands-on learning, and collaborate with peers, while still benefiting from the flexibility of independent study. These onsite experiences help reinforce learning, build relationships, and create a sense of belonging on campus.

Despite their different formats, both schools share strong systems that promote student success. Consistent teacher interaction, clear expectations, and regular progress monitoring ensure accountability and rigor. A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is in place to ensure students receive timely, targeted academic interventions when needed.

Both programs also prioritize school culture and student well-being. Opportunities for recognition, community-building, and wellness support help students feel connected and valued.

Ultimately, Buena Vista and Parkview demonstrate that independent study is not one-size-fits-all. Whether through a hybrid or fully virtual model, both schools provide high-quality, flexible pathways that keep students engaged, supported, and on track for success.

Rio Vista *Elementary School (TK-5)*

310 N. Rio Vista St., Anaheim, CA 92806 • 714/986-7240 • www.riovistaschool.org



Cynthia Alvarez
Assistant
Principal

Rio Vista Parents and Volunteers Go for the Gold!

At Rio Vista, we know education extends beyond the classroom and is strengthened through meaningful partnerships with families. Our parent volunteers are essential to this work, helping create a supportive environment where all students can thrive.

Whether organizing events, assisting in classrooms, or supporting activities behind the scenes, our volunteers generously give their time and talents. Their involvement enriches our school and shows students that their success is a shared priority.

This year's theme, "Our Volunteers Go for the Gold," perfectly reflects their impact. We were proud to recognize them at a special luncheon celebrating their contributions.

Every hour they give and every effort they make is truly gold-worthy.

Our volunteers are champions for our students, and we are deeply grateful for their partnership in building a strong, connected school community.



Rose Drive *Elementary School (TK-5)*

4700 Rose Dr., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7250 • www.rosedrive.pylusd.org



Trisha Gray
Principal

Stronger Together: The Heart of the Rose Drive Community

At Rose Drive Elementary, community is more than a value—it's the foundation of who we are. Our school thrives because of the strong connections between students, families, and staff, all working together to support one another and create meaningful learning experiences.

Throughout the year, we intentionally create opportunities for families to engage, connect, and be part of their child's educational journey.

Events like our Family Literacy Night help connect families with effective strategies to promote reading and learning at home. Our PTA-sponsored Family Fun Nights, such as Bingo for Books, Puzzlepalooza, and our end-of-the-year Carnival, provide welcoming spaces for laughter, connection, and shared memories that strengthen the bonds within our school community.

We also value open communication and learning together as adults. Our Coffee with the Principal meetings offer families a chance to connect, ask questions, and hear from guest speakers on relevant topics. This year, we hosted an e-bike safety presentation from the Sheriff's Department and a parenting workshop through Essential Connections, providing practical tools and information to support families beyond the classroom.

At Rose Drive, community is not just about families coming together—it's also about students learning to give back and serve. Our students play an active role in building a positive school culture through leadership

opportunities such as Team Roadrunner, Garden Club, student valet, and Big and Little Buddies. Upper-grade students also serve as recess helpers for our primary students, modeling kindness, responsibility, and mentorship while fostering connections across grade levels.

It is this shared commitment to support one another, stay connected, and grow together that makes Rose Drive such a special place. When students, families, and staff come together with a common purpose, we create a community where everyone belongs and thrives.



Ruby Drive *Elementary School (TK-6)*

601 Ruby Dr., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-1921 • www.rubydrive.org



Lisa Carmona
Principal

Ruby Drive Creates Student Elective Courses for 6th-Graders

Our future middle schoolers at Ruby Drive have had the opportunity throughout the year to take ownership of their learning by selecting a weekly elective course including AVID

Leadership, Hands on Learning: Gardening and Cooking, and Stem Lab: Robotics. Within AVID Leadership students complete



an interview and choose roles such as Campus Ambassadors, Big Buddies, or Green Crew, allowing them to explore interests and develop responsibility. Sixth grade teacher Mrs. Cubias shared, “Our students are at an age where they are figuring out who they are and what they’d like to contribute to the world and I feel like this opportunity has definitely helped them identify their own strengths.” These experiences build confidence, expand skills, and increase engagement as students prepare for the transition to middle school.

Sierra Vista *Elementary School (TK-6)*

1811 N. Placentia Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7270 • www.sierravistaelementary.org



Debra Kojima
Principal

Leadership Shines at Sierra Vista

At Sierra Vista Elementary, we are committed to cultivating leadership in our Eagles in many ways — one of which is through our Student Leadership Team. This outstanding group meets weekly under the guidance of their dedicated advisors, Mrs. Gallagher and Ms. Heffner, both 6th grade teachers at Sierra Vista, who inspire students to make a meaningful difference in our community.

Our student leaders take that responsibility seriously. They participate in initiatives like The Great Kindness Challenge, craft uplifting messages for their community, organize canned food drives, and lead a mentorship recess program that pairs them with students who could use a little extra



support. They also work alongside our school counselor and registered behavior technician to help foster meaningful mentorships and develop systems that create intentional opportunities to support some of our younger Eagles — ensuring every student feels seen, valued, and connected.

We couldn’t be prouder of the heart and dedication these young leaders bring to Sierra Vista every day. They are truly making our learning community a better place for everyone!”



The Student Leadership Team at Sierra Vista fosters mentorships, as well as leadership skills that last a lifetime! These Eagles make our community a better place to be!

Topaz Elementary School (TK-6)

3232 Topaz Ln., Fullerton, CA 92831 • 714/993-9977 • www.topazschool.org



Dr. Bilma Bermudez
Principal

Topaz Elementary: Career Day Brings Real-World Inspiration to Students

Our Tigers ended their Read Across America celebrations on a high note with an engaging and inspiring Career Day. The event gave students a valuable opportunity to explore a wide range of future career paths while connecting their learning to the real world.

Throughout the morning, students interacted with an impressive group of presenters, including a superintendent, board member, nurse, props painter, co-CEO, police officer, librarian, director, computer

designer, dentist, financial advisor, video production specialist, and EMT. Each presenter shared insights about their profession, including daily responsibilities, education requirements, and personal experiences.

Students were excited to ask questions and learn firsthand about the many possibilities available to them. The event was made even more special through the support of parents, district staff, and community members who generously shared their time and expertise.

Career Day was a fun and meaningful way to inspire students, broaden their horizons, and encourage them to dream big about their futures. A special shoutout to those who participated and made this event possible.



Travis Ranch School (TK-8)

5200 Via de la Escuela, Yorba Linda, CA 92887 • 714/986-7460 • www.travisranchschool.org



Kristen Petrovacki
Principal

Rooted in Service: Volunteers Help Travis Ranch Shine

Travis Ranch School recently welcomed an incredible group of parent and student volunteers who dedicated their Saturday to enhancing our campus. Dozens of volunteers rolled up their sleeves to clean lunch tables, spread fresh mulch, and clear out overgrown planters, making an immediate and visible impact on our learning environment. Their teamwork and commitment reflect the strong

sense of community that defines Travis Ranch.

The momentum continues as another group of volunteers prepares to support our campus through the upcoming Love Yorba Linda event, providing additional care and attention to our shared spaces.

We are deeply grateful for our parent volunteers who generously give their time both in and out of the classroom. Their efforts not only beautify our school but also model service, pride, and collaboration for our students. Together, we are creating a welcoming and inspiring environment for all Trailblazers.



Tuffree Middle School (7-8)

2151 N. Kraemer Blvd., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7480 • www.tuffree.org



Sarah Barton
Principal

California Distinguished School

Tuffree Middle School has the incredible honor of being recognized as a California Distinguished School this year. This accolade recognizes the accomplishment of Tuffree Middle in closing the achievement gap for students on their campus, which is only made possible because of the commitment of their staff. Three years ago, the teachers at Tuffree made a collective commitment to “Level Up” and hone in on improving

instruction for all students, a commitment which has continued to strengthen every school year since. This commitment includes enhanced instructional practices, supporting each other, and ensuring every student leaves Tuffree in a better place than when they first stepped on campus. Clearly, this undertaking paid off. This recognition is a reflection of the commitment from the staff, connectedness of the students, and culture of our community. Tuffree looks forward to continuing to rise together and keep leveling up for years to come.

Tynes Elementary School (TK-6)

735 Stanford Dr., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-5550 • www.johnotynes.org



Dr. Christa Borgese
Principal

An Incredible Jog-a-Thon

On April 17th, the Tynes school community came together for an incredible Jog-a-thon experience that truly captured the spirit of joy, connection, and shared purpose. Students from preschool through 6th grade participated in a Super Mario-themed event filled with music, bubbles, and “power-up” stations that kept energy high and smiles even higher.

Thanks to the thoughtful planning of our PTA and the dedication of our staff, the event ran seamlessly and created lasting memories for students. After their runs, participants enjoyed donated water and well-earned Otter Pops—small touches that made a big difference.

Most impressively, our community leveled up in a big way, surpassing our fundraising goal of \$22,000 and raising over \$26,000 to support student programs and opportunities.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed, volunteered, and cheered on our students. This is what strong schools and communities look like—coming together to make a meaningful impact.



Valadez Middle School Academy (6-8)

161 E. La Jolla St., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7440 • www.valadezacademy.org



Will Truong
Principal

Engaging Families on the Path to Student Reclassification

On Friday, February 27, the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District (PYLUSD) hosted a Long-Term English Learner (LTEL) Family Night in collaboration with Melrose Elementary School and Valadez Middle School Academy.

Families shared dinner while participating in activities aimed at gathering valuable feedback to better support students on their path toward reclassification. Long-Term English Learners are defined as students who have been enrolled in a United States school for six years or more but have not yet been reclassified as fluent English proficient. During the event, families learned about ELPAC scores, discussed goal-setting strategies to support their students' academic progress, and received practical tools to reinforce learning at home.

The evening also featured engaging activities and prize giveaways, creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all who attended. The strong participation of families reflected a shared commitment to supporting student achievement and language development.



Valencia High School (9-12)

500 N. Bradford, Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-4970 • www.vhstigers.org



Chris Herzfeld
Principal

Another Exceptional Year

Valencia High School has had another exceptional year so far in academics, arts, athletics and activities.

Our Academic Decathlon team took 2nd in Division 1 in Orange County and took 2nd place in Super Quiz. VHS took 2nd in Division 2 and 12th overall at State.

Valencia's chapter of Future Business Leaders of America saw 111 students from VHS' Val Tech, IB, Cambridge and non-Academy classes join forces at the FBLA Southern Section Leadership Conference, placing 3rd overall. 90 students qualified for the FBLA State competition!

College Acceptances: So far for the class of 2026: UC Berkeley (15), Duke (3), Johns Hopkins (3), Harvard (2), Columbia (2), Rice (2), Princeton, Brown, UCLA, USC, West Point, and more to come.

AP Testing: VHS administered 1918 AP exams last spring with an average pass rate of 91%. We are on track to administer 1938 AP exams this year.

Cybersecurity: VHS took 2nd Place in the high school

division, successfully defending complex networks against live attacks from industry professionals.

Three VHS Artists were named semi-finalists for the OC Register's Artist of the Year recognition: Erica Lee (Vocal Music), Damien Slavkov (Fine Arts), and Mal Lake (Fine Arts).

The VHS Band and Orchestras earned straight Superior Ratings in SCSBOA competition. The Jazz Band won the advanced division of the Esperanza Jazz Festival. Erica Lee made National Honor Choir and Evan Kim, Victoria Yoon and Eva Yoon made National Honor Orchestra.

Valencia Athletics earned League Championships in Girls Volleyball, Tennis, Golf and Water Polo and Boys Soccer, along with strong CIF appearances in Wrestling and Boys Basketball. Boys Soccer was 4th in the Open Division and made it to State Regionals.

The VHS Den was #1 in the Orange County Student Sections competition for the Fall season, defeating powerhouses El Dorado and Aliso Niguel.

We are proud of our students, teachers, coaches and staff for their dedication to Pride, Tradition and Excellence. Go Tigers!

Van Buren *Elementary School (TK-6)*

1245 N. Van Buren St., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7100 • www.vanburenelementary.org



David Cammarato
Principal

Exploring Science at Pali Institute

Our 6th grade students recently participated in an unforgettable Outdoor Science School experience at Pali Institute, where learning extended far beyond the classroom. Located in the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains, students engaged in hands-on science activities surrounded by fresh air and scenic



forest landscapes. During their stay, they explored topics such as wildlife, geology, and astronomy while also building skills in archery, shelter building, and other outdoor activities. Students identified rock formations,



observed native plants and animals, practiced focus and precision on the archery range, and worked collaboratively to construct shelters. This outdoor setting fostered curiosity, teamwork, and independence, helping students connect classroom learning to real-world experiences. Evenings around the campfire and time spent in cabins created lasting memories and strengthened friendships. Pali Institute offered a meaningful balance of education and adventure, reinforcing academic concepts while supporting personal growth in a positive, nature-based environment that students will remember for years to come.

Wagner *Elementary School (TK-6)*

717 E. Yorba Linda Blvd., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7180 • www.wagnerwildcats.org



Kyleen Fennema
Principal

A Day In The Life: Wagner TK Version!

Every day at Wagner, TK students make choices, learn with friends, and grow their skills in a nurturing environment with caring, expert teachers.

Each morning begins with students choosing a greeting. Will they choose a hug wave? A high five or a fist bump? A dance? Whatever they choose, there is a smile and the start of something wonderful.

In the classrooms, children grow crucial skills - letter formation, foundational math and reading skills, coloring,

cutting, and more. They enjoy social emotional lessons with puppet friends, and of course, each day is filled with songs and wiggle breaks that get everyone moving.

A student favorite is daily center choice time where children explore art, sensory tables, science, blocks, dramatic play, and more. It's not just play, it's skill building, social interaction, and more!

Outside, students play imaginative games, climb on the playground structure, ride trikes, or run around in the grass.

Days close with a song or a fun new fact, sending kids home confident, and ready for a new day tomorrow.



Outdoor Friends



Center Play



Letter Skills

Woodsboro Elementary School (TK-6)

7575 Woodsboro Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/986-7040 • woodsboro.pylusd.org



Rachael Collins
Principal

Woodsboro Students Shine through the Arts

Woodsboro Elementary School continues to shine with its strong commitment to visual and performing arts, ensuring that every student has meaningful opportunities to participate and engage. This spring, student performers wowed audiences in a fantastic production of *Newsies Jr.*, made possible through the incredible support of the Woodsboro PTA. Their dedication helped



bring the production to life and showcased the talent, teamwork, and confidence of our students. Thanks to Prop 28 arts funding, every Woodsboro student also had the opportunity to experience the magic of live theater as the entire school attended the performance to support their peers. It was a powerful moment of schoolwide pride and community.

In addition, upper grade students have been extending their learning in the arts by connecting performance with social studies through engaging experiences such as Walk Through California, Walk Through the American Revolution, and Walk Through Ancient Civilizations, bringing history to life through creativity and performance!



Yorba Linda Middle School (6-8)

4777 Casa Loma Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7080 • www.ylms.org



Paige Stills
Principal

Annual Showcase

Yorba Linda Middle School proudly hosted its annual Showcase, celebrating the talents and diversity of our student body. This year's theme, "*Around the World*," highlighted performances that

reflected cultures and perspectives from across the globe. Student leadership classes, unified programs, and performing arts groups came together to create an inclusive and engaging evening for all.

The Tommy Lasorda Field House was filled with families, staff, and community members, creating a packed house and an energetic atmosphere. Each performance showcased not only student talent, but also the collaboration, creativity, and school pride that define YLMS.



As a culminating event, the Showcase served as a meaningful way to close out a successful school year—celebrating our students' hard work, connections, and accomplishments.

Yorba Linda High School (9-12)

19900 Bastanchury Rd., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7500 • www.ylhs.org



Dr. Bird Potter
Principal

Continuing the Tradition of Excellence

This school year has been filled with exciting achievements and memorable moments at Yorba Linda High School, highlighting the talent, dedication, and spirit of our Mustang community. One of the year's standout successes was the incredible production of *The Music Man* by our YLHS Theater program. Students brought energy, creativity, and professionalism to the stage, delivering a performance that captivated

audiences and showcased the depth of talent on our campus. From the cast to the crew, the production was a true team effort and a source of pride for our entire school.

We are also proud to celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of our Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter. This year, 50 YLHS members competed at the state level, demonstrating exceptional

skill, leadership, and determination. Of those competitors, 19 students placed across 14 different events, and five members qualified for the National Leadership Conference, an impressive achievement that reflects their dedication and hard work. In addition, we are proud to share that one of our YLHS students was selected as the 2026–2027 Southern Section President, a prestigious honor that highlights the leadership excellence fostered within our program.

As the school year comes to a close, we look forward to celebrating the Class of 2026 and all they have accomplished during their time at YLHS. Their contributions have helped shape our school culture, and we are excited to see the paths they will pursue beyond high school. At the same time, we eagerly anticipate welcoming a new class of Mustangs and continuing the tradition of excellence that defines Yorba Linda High School.

Summer Fun—Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search. When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: SchoolNewsKay@gmail.com Please put **PYLUSD** in the subject line.

Entries must be received by June 15, 2026

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble.

BEACH	CHATTING
HIKING	ROAD TRIP
WALKING	HANGING OUT
JOGGING	SWIMMING
RUNNING	DIVING
READING	WATCH TV
TEXTING	IPAD
SKATING	GAMES
PICNIC	INSTAGRAM
SURFING	GEO CACHING
SHOPPING	

