

School News

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Covering the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District

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PYLUSD CELEBRATES 24 SENIORS NAMED
2026 NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALISTS

PLACENTIA-YORBA LINDA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

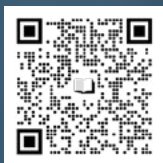
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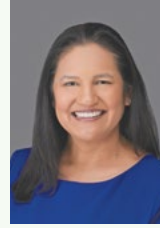
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President



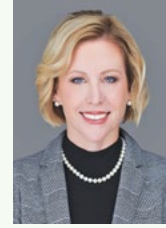
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PYLUSD Celebrates Academic Excellence and Invites Families to Discover Its High Schools



Dr. Kym LeBlanc-Esparza
Superintendent

The Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District (PYLUSD) proudly celebrates 24 exceptional seniors who have been named Semifinalists in the 2026 National Merit Scholarship Competition. This impressive group includes three students from El Dorado High School, fifteen from Valencia High School, and six from Yorba Linda High School, representing the district's ongoing commitment to academic excellence and college readiness.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) recently announced approximately 16,000 semifinalists nationwide in its 71st annual program. These academically talented students represent less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors and now have the opportunity to compete for 7,000 prestigious scholarships worth nearly \$26 million to be awarded in spring 2026.

To qualify, students first took the Preliminary SAT/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test as juniors, entering a nationwide pool of 1.3 million participants.

About 95 percent of semifinalists are expected to advance to the finalist level, with more than half ultimately earning the coveted title of National Merit Scholar.

Congratulations to PYLUSD's 2026 National Merit Semifinalists!

El Dorado High: Evan Nam, Catherine Nguyen, Ethan Woo

Valencia High: Edwin Anthoniraj, Noah Choi, Adam Kim, Carson Lim, Lynzie Lim, Irene Pan, Aashna Shah, Sahej Anand Singh, Leana Sung, Ethan Swarat, Christopher Tran, Caleb Yang, Angela Yao, Evelyn Yao, Delilah Yick

Yorba Linda High: Xenia Lee, Jia Tong Lin, Aaron Luo, Austin Truong, Mikayla Wang, Zishuo Xu

Families are invited to Discover PYLUSD at upcoming High School Showcase Events to learn about the outstanding programs, activities, and opportunities that make PYLUSD schools among the best in Orange County. Events begin at 6 p.m. on October 29 (El Dorado), November 6 (Valencia), November 12 (Yorba Linda), and November 19 (Esperanza).

Visit www.pylusd.org/hsshowcase for more details.

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**Giselle
Nguyen**
President

REACH Foundation Partners with SoCalGas to Power STEAM Learning

The REACH Foundation proudly partnered with SoCalGas to provide PYLUSD students with an innovative learning experience through the Hydrogen Home Innovation Experience (H2IE) — the first of its kind in the nation.

Before the tour, REACH Interns facilitated interactive pre-lessons introducing students to hydrogen energy, sustainability, and renewable technologies. During the visit to

SoCalGas in Downey, students participated in hands-on activities — assembling solar hydrogen systems, generating hydrogen with solar panels, and observing electrolyzers and fuel cells in action.

The day ended with a tour of SoCalGas's H2 Smart Grid, capable of powering 100 homes, and a walk through a hydrogen-blended home of the future.

This collaboration showcased how education, innovation, and community partnerships can inspire the next generation of problem solvers. REACH extends special thanks to SoCalGas, our community partners, and dedicated REACH Interns for making this STEAM Club experience a groundbreaking success!



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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

Brookhaven Celebrates Unity Day

On October 22, Brookhaven students and staff came together to celebrate Unity Day, a national event promoting kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. This is a day when we unite to send a visible message of building commUNITY through these values. The call to action is simple: wear and share the color orange to show support for a welcoming and caring school environment.

Students and staff proudly wore orange to symbolize unity and hope. Our PAL students (Peer Assistance Leaders) created colorful posters with positive messages to spread kindness across campus. Principal Fisher visited classrooms to share a meaningful anti-bullying read-aloud, and teachers conducted Second Step Bullying Prevention lessons to help students learn how to recognize, report, and refuse bullying.

Fourth grader Emma shared, “I like Unity Day because it reminds everyone to be kind and include others — it makes our school feel happy and safe.”

Through these activities, Brookhaven continues to foster a culture where every student feels safe, valued, and connected — proving that kindness truly brings our community together.



Brookhaven students Emma, Maddie, and Amelia proudly show their school spirit and unity by wearing orange for Unity Day.

Bryant Ranch *School (TK-5)*

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



Shannon Robles
Principal

Bryant Ranch, Growing Together

At Bryant Ranch, we offer many opportunities for students to get involved because we recognize the importance of belonging and making learning fun. One of our longest-standing and most beloved programs is the Garden Club, where students come together to learn, grow, and connect with nature. Members are busy planting carrots, beans, and peas as they meet bi-weekly and plan to host another student-led farmers market this year.



This year, our Garden Club is the proud recipient of a healthy community grant, which will be used to update our wooden planters and enhance our garden space. With the support of our PTA, staff, and community, students will also begin a new STEM-focused project that extends beyond traditional gardening and horticulture.

At Bryant Ranch, we are all Explorers at heart—curious, creative, and proud of the vibrant sense of community we continue to cultivate together.



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

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



Gina Aguilar
Principal

Building Connections to School

At El Camino Real High School we firmly believe that a strong sense of belonging increases engagement, motivation, and academic success. Students who are connected to school are more likely to attend regularly, participate in class, and develop positive behaviors. To that end, we

have made it a priority to create more opportunities for students to feel connected to school. This year, students have started two clubs. The Fashion Club was founded with the goal of bringing students together who love fashion. The Mental Health & Wellness Club was established to empower and inspire teens to educate their peers on topics surrounding mental health to raise awareness and fight stigma. Both clubs are planning

activities to get the school community involved. El Camino has also started an E-Sports program where students compete against one another in games like Mario Kart and Super Mario Bros. In addition, we are participating in a sports league where teams will compete against other continuation high schools in the county.



El Dorado *High School (9-12)*

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



Michael Zides
Principal

El Dorado High School is FUTURE READY!!!

El Dorado High School is off to a fantastic school year. Over 2100 students and 130 staff members are excited and fully involved with our school and community. What does “Hawk Strong” mean? Our Hawks are being challenged academically, on a daily basis, while also participating in many extracurricular activities. It is IMPOSSIBLE to be bored at EDHS. We

have something for everyone. Our Academies and CTE pathways are flourishing with over 200 members participating. Athletically we have 50% of our students participating in at least one sport. Our Visual and Performing Arts are second to none. Students join Band, Color guard, Choir, Orchestra, AVID, Link Crew, ASB, Mock Trial, ED Law Academy, Digital Media Arts Academy, Science Olympiad, Photography, Woodworking, Academic Word Quest, Academic Decathlon, and over 65 clubs. The majority of adults on campus are involved in one of our extra-curricular offerings which is where they make meaningful connections with our students. “Students don’t care

how much you know unless they know how much you care.” Hawk Strong is all about our staff caring about our students and building those relationships. I could not be prouder to be the principal at this amazing school.

GO HAWKS!!



Esperanza High School (9-12)

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



Kelly Molina
Principal

A Well-Rounded Education

Esperanza High School offers specialized academies and advanced programs that prepare students for college and career success. The Aztec Engineering & Manufacturing Academy (AEM) provides hands-on experience with industry tools and software, allowing students to design and build projects from concept to completion. The Medical Sciences Academy (MSA) offers courses such as Medical Careers,



Body Systems and Disorders, and Medical Assisting, with opportunities for certification and clinical externships in local medical offices. Additional pathways include graphic design, computer science, culinary arts, and JROTC, giving students the chance to explore diverse professional fields.

Esperanza also offers the prestigious AP Capstone Program, combining AP Seminar, AP Research, and four additional AP courses. Students who earn qualifying scores receive the AP Capstone Diploma, demonstrating advanced skills in research, analysis, and communication. Together, Esperanza's programs create a well-rounded education that blends academic rigor with real-world experience.

Fairmont Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Anne San Roman
Principal

Music at Fairmont Inspires Creativity and Joy

At Fairmont, music is an important part of every student's education. Students in grades K–3 attend music class once a week with Mrs. DiSchiavi, where they explore rhythm, melody, and movement through fun, engaging lessons. Beginning in fourth grade, students can choose to join the vocal music program with Mrs. Edmondson or learn to play an instrument with Mr. Evans and Mrs.

Dominguez.

Music helps spark creativity, build confidence, and strengthen focus. Studies show that learning music supports brain development, enhances memory, and improves problem-solving skills.



At Fairmont, students not only develop musical talent but also a lifelong appreciation for the arts. Whether they are singing in harmony or learning new notes on an instrument, students look forward to music each week. Through these enriching experiences, Fairmont is fostering a love of music that encourages imagination, teamwork, and joy across all grade levels.

Rebecca Allan, Principal

A Fun October

George Key students had fun with their Halloween activities. The Parent Student Staff Organization (PSSO) provided small pumpkins to the classes to decorate on 10/24/2025.

George Key's annual haunted house was on 10/30. This was a fun sensory experience for our students as they walked or rolled through the haunted house with many things to see, touch and hear! Key held their annual Halloween parade on 10/31 in the Key courtyard.



Our Cutest Pumpkins!

Venture Academy will be running their Holiday Boutique on December 2, 3, 4 at Venture Academy in room 2. More information will be coming regarding hours etc. We invite district staff to come out and find a special decoration or gift for your holiday celebration! Parent volunteer, Kim Kanan, is finishing up Key and Venture Academy school photos. She provided wonderful class photos to both schools last year and we look forward to seeing her amazing photography.



Ms. Kim's Class at the Fall Dance

The Fall Harvest Dance

Venture enjoyed their first dance of the year, the Fall Harvest Dance. We were pleased to have Ms. Christie Ann, community member, volunteer come and teach several line dances to the group. Venture appreciates their families who provided the goodies and snacks for the party! It was a fun afternoon, celebrating good work and an opportunity to practice social skills.

Glenknoll Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Erica Kadhon
Principal

A Paws-itively Great Start to the School Year at Glenknoll!

The first few months of the 2025–2026 school year at Glenknoll Elementary have been filled with excitement, learning, and Cougar pride! From the very first day, our campus has been buzzing with energy as students settled into routines, reconnected with friends, and embraced new adventures in learning.

Early on, students participated in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) rotations to learn what it means to show their P.A.W.S. (Practice Personal Best, Act Responsibly, Work and Play Safely, and Show Respect) in all areas of school life. These lessons helped set a positive tone for the year, creating a supportive and respectful environment for everyone.

In September, we came together for our meaningful Patriot Day Assembly. We are so grateful to our active-duty and veteran first responders and military personnel whose presence made the event so special. Three of our 6th graders led the Pledge of Allegiance and read heartfelt poems, adding pride and reflection to the day.

October brought even more community spirit as we celebrated Walk to School Day, promoted healthy choices during Red Ribbon Week, and wrapped up the month with our fun-filled Fall Festival! Students are currently hard at work preparing for Seussical the Musical, Jr., which will debut in January.

With such an inspiring and joyful start, it's clear that this year at Glenknoll will be filled with learning, kindness, and Cougar pride every step of the way! We are so proud of the work our students and teachers have already accomplished, and we cannot wait for the exciting months ahead.

Glenview *Elementary School* (TK-6)

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



Viri Fraga
Principal

Glenview's Bicultural Literacy Night: ¡Una Noche de Lectura y Tamales!

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. The program's unique approach not only focuses on language proficiency but also embraces bicultural experiences, enriching students' understanding of diverse cultures.

This October, Glenview Dual Academy proudly hosted its first-ever Bicultural Literacy Night, a community event designed to bring families, teachers, and community members together to celebrate language, culture, and literacy.

Central to the evening was a parent training session led by Mrs. Tabata and Mrs. Vega, who introduced the beloved children's book *Too Many Tamales*. The session focused on effective and interactive read-aloud strategies, equipping parents with tools to support and engage their children during reading at home.

The event culminated in a festive tamale-making tradition, where Glenview families, staff, and community members gathered to create tamales under the guidance of culinary students and the OCROP lead teacher from Esperanza High School. This hands-on activity fostered a sense of community while honoring the rich cultural heritage embedded within the dual language program.

Glenview's Bicultural Literacy Night highlights the school's commitment to cultivating bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural learners who are prepared to thrive in a diverse and interconnected world.



Golden *Elementary School* (TK-6)

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



Kristin McDonald
Principal

Golden's Frightfully Fun Family Math Night – A Spooktacular Success!

Our very first Golden Frightfully Fun Family Math Night was a huge success! We had a wonderful turnout as students from TK through 6th grade explored hands-on math activities in every room. Each space offered Halloween-themed challenges that proved one important lesson - Math is not scary!

From pumpkin patterns to spooky story problems, families worked side-by-side

solving puzzles, estimating candy corn, building shapes, and playing math games that made learning both fun and engaging. Many of the activities were easy to recreate at home, helping families continue to foster a love of math beyond the classroom.

The evening was a wonderful reflection of Golden's commitment to opening our campus and welcoming families as true partners in learning. We believe strongly that our families play an essential role in every child's success. Thank you to our incredible teachers and staff who transformed classrooms into math wonderlands, and to our amazing families who came ready to play, laugh, and learn together. At Golden, community is the best - and math is definitely not scary!



Kraemer Middle School (7-8)

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



Matthew Callaway
Principal

Clubs at Kraemer: Something for Everyone!

Kraemer Middle School offers an incredible variety of clubs designed to connect students, spark curiosity, and celebrate our diverse interests. With 23 different clubs this year, there's truly something for everyone! Students

can join high-energy groups like Rock Climbing and Basketball, explore creative outlets in K-Pop Dance or Bollywood Dance, or dive into imagination and strategy through Dungeons & Dragons.

Earlier this month, our annual Club Rush event filled the quad with music, posters, and excitement as students explored all the opportunities available to them. Joining a club is one of the best ways to meet new friends,

discover passions, and feel more connected to the Kraemer community. Whether you're looking to move, create, compete, or collaborate—there's a place for you here at the Greatest Middle School on Earth!



Lakeview Elementary School (TK-5)

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



Stephanie Given
Principal

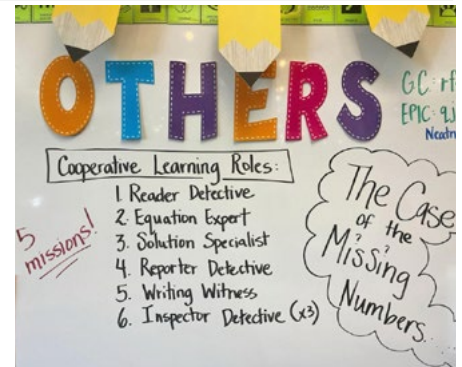
Lakeview Lions Grow their Minds!

"A well-educated mind will always have more questions than answers." - Helen Keller.

Opening students' minds means nurturing curiosity, not just delivering information. Keller's words remind us that true learning is not about memorizing answers, but about developing the courage and wonder to keep asking questions. When students learn to think deeply, explore ideas,

and challenge assumptions, they begin to see learning as a lifelong journey rather than a destination. Simple yet engaging activities, such as "Which One Doesn't Belong," a cognitively guided instructional strategy, shifts

learning from answer-getting to thinking, reasoning, and communicating. Instead of looking for one correct answer, students explore multiple perspectives and justify their thinking. In third grade, students work in collaborative groups to solve math missions, guided by their roles and responsibilities. Lakeview Teachers do not take this responsibility lightly and seek to create a learning environment where students' ideas and curiosities are nurtured to grow our Lions into positively contributing citizens. Go Lions!



3rd Grade students share ideas through each Cooperative Learning Role.



Mrs. Angeles' Kindergarten students eagerly participate in Which One Doesn't Belong.

Linda Vista *Elementary* (TK-5)

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

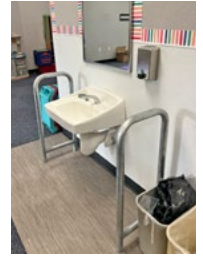


Kathleen Escaleras-Nappi
Principal

Roaring Into the School Year with Exciting Updates

We're thrilled to share some exciting updates happening around Linda Vista! Our kindergarten classrooms are now home to two brand-new bathrooms, and the impact has been wonderful. These new additions have made daily routines smoother and more comfortable for our youngest learners, giving them easier access while encouraging independence and responsibility. Students are also taking great pride in keeping our restrooms clean and showing respect for shared spaces.

Out on the playground, the excitement continues as we prepare to install a new Gaga Ball pit, one of our students' all-time favorite games. This will give even more opportunities for teamwork, friendly competition, and lots of laughter!



Around campus, you'll also notice our PBIS core values and schoolwide rules proudly displayed as visual reminders of who we are and what we stand for.

In September, we had the unique opportunity to collaborate with Mrs. Nadiq, a professor from Switzerland, to explore how we teach English fundamentals such as phonics, vocabulary, spelling, writing, and reading. Our partnership will help support English-speaking students in Switzerland who are working toward higher-level language skills. It was an inspiring and enriching exchange, and we look forward to continuing this international collaboration in the future.

As we move forward, our focus remains on kindness, self-control, and teamwork — because at Linda Vista, we believe in the Power of PAWS and the strength of our community!

Mabel Paine *Elementary School* (TK-5)

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



Kristi Coonan
Principal

Mustang PRIDE at Mabel Paine Elementary!

This year, we're excited to launch our new PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) focus — Mustang PRIDE!

At Mabel Paine Elementary, our goal is to build a positive school culture where students are recognized and celebrated for showing their PRIDE every day.

Mustang PRIDE stands for:

P – Prepared: Come ready to learn and bring the materials, mindset, and effort needed for success.

R – Respect: Treat others, yourself, and our school with kindness and care.

I – Inclusive: Welcome and support others, work as a team, and help everyone feel a sense of belonging.

D – Determination: Keep trying, work hard, and never give up.

E – Excellence: Strive to do your best in everything you do.



Students can earn PRIDE cards when staff notice them demonstrating these positive behaviors throughout the day. They can then use their cards to shop at our Mustang PRIDE Store, where they'll find fun prizes and rewards that celebrate their positive choices!

A huge thank you to our amazing Mabel Paine PTA for sponsoring the Mustang PRIDE Store and helping us recognize and reward our students' efforts and great character!

We're so proud of our Mabel Paine Mustangs for showing their PRIDE and making our school a great place to learn and grow!

Melrose Elementary School (TK-5)

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



Dr. Janice Weber
Principal

Setting Them Up for Success: PBIS at Melrose!

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) strategies are in place at all schools in PYLUSD! PBIS helps students learn behavior expectations by explicitly teaching them what "Respectful, Responsible, Helpful, Kind, and Safe behaviors (The Marlin High Fives) look like in the classroom, at the lunch tables, on the playground, on the play structures, in

the restrooms, on the stairs, in the hallways, in every place and location on campus. Combined with teaching expectations in small-group rotations during the first week of school, staff use preventative/proactive strategies to reduce the likelihood of inappropriate behaviors and reinforcement strategies to increase the likelihood of positive behaviors. This is accomplished by teaching rules and procedures, setting up warm, welcoming learning spaces, providing structure and routines, fostering predictability, creating classroom communities, and building relationships with our students

and families. When we witness students exhibiting the Marlin High Fives, students receive positive affirmations along with Dojo points and/or blue Marlin cards that they can redeem on Prize Truck Tuesdays! Marlins of the Week are recognized in every class. We award ribbons to classes with the best lunch table and library/computer/P.E. class behavior, and trophies to grade levels that exhibit excellent sportsmanship while playing soccer at recess. Setting students up for success is ongoing! PBIS supports student learning, fosters friendships, and promotes a safe and respectful environment!



Morse Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Kelly Farrell
Principal

Building Thinkers: Morse Students Deepen Inquiry Through Costa's Levels of Questioning

Morse Elementary continues to strengthen its schoolwide implementation of AVID strategies to build students' critical thinking and inquiry skills. This year, a major focus is Costa's Levels of Questioning, a framework that helps

students move from basic recall to deeper analysis and evaluation. Teachers across all grade levels are introducing and practicing the three levels of questioning through familiar and engaging fairy tales. For example, students might begin by recalling facts from Cinderella (Level 1), then interpret character motives (Level 2), and finally debate the fairness of the story's ending or how it would change in a modern setting (Level 3). By connecting these thinking levels

to stories they already love, students are developing a clearer understanding of how to ask meaningful questions and think critically. This creative, schoolwide approach supports Morse's goal of building confident, curious learners who are prepared to take ownership of their learning!



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

From Learners To Leaders

As hard as it is to believe, the Orange County School of Computer Science is already wrapping up its first quarter of the school year! Our innovative, mastery-based approach empowers teachers to provide meaningful feedback that helps students grow as creators, collaborators, and leaders. In our state-of-the-art Innovation Lab, students gain hands-on experience using digital tools like Adobe Illustrator and lab machines such as the laser cutter, 3D printer, sewing machine, and BN-20A printer to bring their ideas to

life. These experiences inspire creativity and connect learning to real-world applications in design, engineering, and entrepreneurship. We recently celebrated the end of the quarter with a free-admission school dance, and our campus continues to shine with weekly student recognitions and exciting Toro Ticket raffles. As we move forward, OCSCS remains dedicated to fostering curiosity, innovation, and community in every student.



Parkview *Home School (TK-12)*

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



Dominique Polchow
Principal

Empowering Student Voice: High School Principal's Advisory Committee

The Principal's Advisory Committee (PAC) serves as a vital bridge between students and administration, fostering open dialogue about what's working well and where the schools can continue to grow. Whether sharing ideas for community-building events or exploring new ways to boost student engagement, PAC members play an essential role in shaping decisions that directly impact their peers and the overall school experience.

At the start of the school year, Buena Vista and Parkview high school students were invited to apply for the committee by sharing why they wanted to serve and how they hoped to make a difference. Monthly meetings are held via Zoom, allowing students from both Buena

Buena Vista *Virtual Academy (K-12)*

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

Vista Virtual Academy (BVVA) and Parkview School to participate from anywhere while maintaining consistency and collaboration.

During each meeting, students engage in meaningful discussions about current school initiatives, upcoming events, and topics that influence student life. Early conversations have included ideas to strengthen student communication, increase student engagement, and plan schoolwide spirit activities that build a sense of community across both campuses.

As the PAC continues to grow, BVVA and Parkview look forward to expanding student leadership opportunities and integrating student feedback into ongoing school improvement efforts. The committee reflects the schools' shared belief that student voice and leadership are essential to creating thriving, connected learning communities.

Rio Vista *Elementary School (TK-5)*

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



Dr. Brandon Frank
Principal

English Learner Advisory Committee

In October, Rio Vista Elementary School held our first English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) meeting of the year with the families of our emerging bilingual students. Families learned about how we can work together to support their students at home and at school. They got a chance to see the curriculum we use to bolster progress in the language domains of reading, writing, listening and speaking, including

the incorporation of technology and AVID strategies. After becoming ELAC members and asking some great questions, parents experienced the highlight of the event: English Learner Awards! We celebrated all of our “Newcomers” (students who have been learning English in school for less than one year) for the courage and bravery they show in school every day. The celebration was punctuated with champurrado, pan de muerto, and the ofrenda that our students worked together to build collaboratively as a Rio Vista Family.



Rose Drive *Elementary School (TK-5)*

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



Trisha Gray
Principal

AVID Implementation Begins at Rose Drive Elementary!

This year, Rose Drive Elementary is excited to begin our journey with AVID, which stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination, a proven program that helps students develop the skills they need to be successful in school and beyond. Our focus areas for the year include organization, focused note-taking, and college and career awareness.

Students are already building strong habits in organization by learning how to keep their materials and assignments structured, using tools like binders, planners, and checklists to stay on top of their learning. In the area of focused notes, students are being introduced to strategies that help them organize information, think critically, and make connections as they learn. These are skills that deepen understanding and support retention.

Our focus on college and career awareness helps students make connections between their learning today and their goals for the future. Each Wednesday, students and staff wear college or career-focused shirts to spark conversations about future opportunities. During morning meetings, classes explore different college and career pathways, encouraging students to dream big about the many possibilities ahead.

By November, all of our upper grade teachers will be trained in AVID Foundations, ensuring that these

strategies are used consistently across classrooms to help every student reach their full potential. This work also aligns with our feeder pattern's AVID implementation, promoting student success not only at Rose Drive, but throughout their educational journey and beyond.

We are excited to see our students “Reach for the STARS” as they take on these new tools for success!



Ruby Drive *Elementary School (TK-6)*

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



Lisa Carmona
Principal

Mind Over Matter- The Ruby Drive Wellness Room

At Ruby Drive, we understand that academic growth begins with a healthy, focused mind. Our Wellness Room, led by Registered Behavior Technician Maria Lozoya and School Counselor Michelle Meyerson, provides a welcoming space where students can relax, talk, and develop a positive mindset. Together, Maria and Michelle support all students in creating a

balanced and joyful school experience. When additional support is needed, they provide guidance on emotional regulation, social skills, and coping strategies. They also offer classroom lessons to help make concepts like “wellness,” “healthy mindset,” and “self-regulation” part of our everyday language. The Wellness Room has quickly become one of the most popular places on campus, especially during recess, as students learn that their well-being truly matters at Ruby Drive. Through this supportive space, our scholars are reminded daily that wellness and learning go hand in hand.



Sierra Vista *Elementary School (TK-6)*

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



Debra Kojima
Principal

Sierra Vista Earns Silver CA PBIS Award

Sierra Vista is thrilled to announce that we have been awarded the prestigious Silver CA PBIS Statewide Recognition Award! This honor recognizes schools demonstrating exceptional implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports practices. Schools must show evidence of consistent PBIS implementation, data-driven decision making, strong outcomes, and commitment to positive school climates.

This achievement reflects the incredible dedication of our entire learning community—staff, students, and families working together every day.

Our success is built on SOAR values: Stay Safe, Organized and On-task, Accept Responsibility, and Respect People and Property. Through PBIS practices, we consistently teach these expectations so every student understands what positive behavior looks like in all settings—lunch areas, library, playground, hallways, and classrooms.

We are so proud of the hard work and partnership with our parenting community that helps us to build strong character throughout our Sierra Vista Community!



Sierra Vista is proud of the PBIS systems that we have in place to really build community and character throughout the community! Sierra Vista staff review the rules and expectations of our students to start the year off right!

Topaz Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Dr. Bilma Bermudez
Principal

Trunk or Treat at Topaz Elementary!

Our Topaz Tigers had a spooktacular evening at this year's Trunk or Treat event! The night featured 27 decorated trunks, each bursting with creativity from our dedicated staff and supportive parents. Students arrived in their Halloween costumes, eager to visit each themed trunk and collect sweet treats along the way.

This event truly captured the spirit of community and connection. Smiles, laughter, and excitement filled the air from the

moment families arrived until the very end of the night. It was heartwarming to see parents, staff, and students come together to celebrate in a fun and safe environment. Events like Trunk or Treat strengthen our school community by fostering relationships, building trust, and creating lasting memories.

A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who donated candy, decorated trunks, volunteered, face painted, or simply came to share in the fun. Together, we continue to make Topaz a place where students, families, and staff grow and celebrate as one.



Travis Ranch School (TK-8)

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



Kristen Petrovacki
Principal

Trailblazers Create Unified Art Project Promoting Inclusion

Travis Ranch Middle School students recently completed a thematic art project titled Starry Night Pumpkin Patch, created through the Unified Art program. The project brought

together students in the Moderate/Severe Special Education classes and their

general education peers to design a collaborative piece that celebrates creativity, friendship, and inclusion.

This inspiring project is the first of many planned this year, each designed to promote empathy, leadership, and connection across campus. Through Unified Art, student leaders are trained to support their peers with special needs as classmates and collaborators, using creative expression as a bridge to build understanding and community.

We are deeply grateful to our special education teachers, our art instructor, and our PTA for their ongoing partnership and generous support. The Starry Night Pumpkin Patch reminds us that every Trailblazer contributes to the beauty and strength of our inclusive school community.



Tuffree Middle School (7-8)

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



Sarah Barton
Principal

Dual Language Academy

Tuffree Middle School is proud to celebrate the addition of PYLUSD's Dual Language Academy. This dynamic program builds biliteracy and cultural competence for students in our community. Our DLA program offers students the unique opportunity to engage in rigorous academic content in both English and Spanish and strengthen literacy and communication skills in both languages.

Through the Dual Language Academy, students engage in an immersive, collaborative learning environment where language and culture are woven into every subject. This approach not only enhances cognitive development, but also fosters empathy, global awareness, and appreciation for diverse perspectives.

Biliteracy is more than just speaking two languages, it's about opening doors to future opportunities, deeper interpersonal connections, and greater competency in a complicated world. The Dual Language Academy embodies our mission to empower all students to be compassionate, well-rounded individuals who are prepared for college and career pursuits.



Tynes Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Dr. Christa Borgese
Principal

Level Up

The 2025–26 school year is off to an incredible start as our Tynes Tigers continue to Level Up—Every Student, Every Day! We kicked off the year celebrating our PBIS Gold Award, recognizing our schoolwide commitment to positive behavior and a caring community. Teachers have been hard at work “leveling up” their instructional practices through

professional development focused on strengthening our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to better meet the needs of every learner. Our Family Movie Night brought families together under the stars for a fun evening of laughter and connection, while our PTA fundraiser reached its goal thanks to the tremendous support of our families and staff. From classrooms to playgrounds, the energy on campus is contagious—students are engaged, teachers are inspired, and our community is stronger than ever. It's clear that this year, our Tigers are ready to Level Up in every way!



Valadez *Middle School Academy (6-8)*

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



Will Truong
Principal

Creativity Takes Flight with Art Club

At Valadez Middle School Academy, we are excited to continue supporting Every Eagle, Every Day as they grow in and beyond the classroom. One place where our Eagles are soaring creatively is in Art Club. Led by Mrs. Ashley Ortega, Art Club is a welcoming space for students to explore art through painting, drawing, crafts, and more. Open to all skill levels, the club meets monthly

and encourages imagination, collaboration, and hands-on learning. Whether students are experienced artists or simply curious to try something new, every Eagle is invited to discover and celebrate their creativity.

Mrs. Ortega fosters a positive and inclusive environment where students feel safe to take creative risks, share ideas, and express their unique perspectives. Art Club has become a place of belonging on our campus, where Eagles support one another, build confidence, and take pride in their artistic journey. We are proud of our creative Eagles!



Valencia *High School (9-12)*

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



Chris Herzfeld
Principal

Valencia High School Continues to Thrive as Academic Powerhouse

Valencia High School is proud to announce that 15 seniors are among the top ½% of students in the nation to receive the honor of 2026 National Merit Scholar Semifinalist: Edwin Anthoniraj, Noah Choi, Adam Kim, Carson Lim, Lynzie Lim, Irene Pan, Aashna Shah, Sahej Anand Singh, Leana Sung, Ethan Swarat, Christopher Tran, Caleb Yang, Angela Yao, Evelyn Yao and Delilah Yick. 33 additional students scored in the top 5% in the nation and qualified as 2026 National Merit Commended Students.

176 students' AP scores earned them The College Board's National Recognition Award including 34 First Generation Scholars and 142 School Scholars.

Huge congratulations to Irene Pan and Suren Sanjay for being named @CokeScholars Semifinalists! Out of 107,000+ applicants from across the country, only 1% earned this incredible honor, and we're proud to have two right here at VHS.

And finally, VHS is proud to announce that we were once again the top International Baccalaureate (IB) program in Orange County with 57 students awarded International Baccalaureate (IB) Diplomas last spring, along with 20 recipients of the prestigious Cambridge AICE diploma. A record 172 students earned the Val Tech Diploma including 36 dual IB/ValTech and 10 dual Cambridge/Val Tech. 7 AVID students also earned Val Tech diplomas with 2 AVID/IB and 1 AVID/Cambridge. Valencia High School continues to set the pace for High Expectations in a Nurturing Environment leading to success for students of ALL backgrounds.

Van Buren *Elementary School (TK-6)*

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



**David
Cammarato**
Principal

PBIS Recognition

Over the past several years, Van Buren Elementary has been steadily strengthening its PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) program, a framework designed to promote a positive

school environment by teaching, modeling, and recognizing safe, respectful, and responsible behaviors.

At the end of last school year, Van Buren applied for California state recognition of its PBIS efforts. We are proud to announce that our school



has earned Silver Recognition for 2025! This honor reflects the hard work and dedication of our PBIS team, who refined our systems and guided the application process. We also extend our sincere appreciation to our entire staff for their consistency and commitment in supporting PBIS across all grade levels, this recognition truly represents a team effort.

As part of the award process, an external evaluator visited our campus to observe our PBIS practices and interview both staff and students about our PBIS STARS program. We look forward to continuing this important

work together to ensure that every student thrives in a safe, supportive, and positive school community.

Wagner *Elementary School (TK-6)*

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



**Kyleen
Fennema**
Principal

WIN Time Drives Academic Success at Wagner

Wagner's commitment to meeting students where they are has produced remarkable results. Through our WIN (What I Need) time, students receive targeted support during the school day, ensuring every learner gets the help they need to succeed and reach their goals.

WIN time allows teachers to provide personalized instruction, enrichment, and intervention without requiring students to miss core content or stay after school. By embedding this flexible

support into our daily schedule, we've created a culture where every student can thrive.

The results are in and the impact speaks for itself! This year's state test scores reveal extraordinary growth across Wagner: English Language Arts scores soared by 15%, while math scores increased by 6%. On top of that, we're proud to say that every testing grade showed growth and we are officially back to or above pre-covid achievement levels!

These outstanding results reflect our dedicated staff's commitment and skill, as well as our students' hard work. It's a great time to be a Wagner Wildcat!



Woodsboro *Elementary School (TK-6)*

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



**Rachael
Collins**
Principal

Woodsboro Earns PBIS Gold Recognition!

Woodsboro Elementary is proud to announce that we have earned the Gold Award from California PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) for the 2024–2025 school year! This honor recognizes schools

that implement positive behavior systems with excellence, fostering safe and supportive environments for all students.

Woodsboro completed a rigorous application process, highlighting our data-driven approach and commitment to teaching, reinforcing, and celebrating positive behavior.



Our PBIS team—including our school counselor, Registered Behavior Technician, teachers, and administration—worked collaboratively to strengthen systems that help every student succeed.

“At Woodsboro, we make positive behavior a priority by rewarding students, empowering student leaders, and providing supports when needed. Our students continue to shine by living the Woodsboro Way: Bee Ready, Bee Responsible, Bee Respectful,” shared Principal Rachael Collins.

This Gold recognition reflects the dedication of our entire school community—students, families, and staff—working together to make Woodsboro a place where everyone thrives.

Yorba Linda *Middle School (6-8)*

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



**Paige
Stills**
Principal

Yorba Linda Middle School Starts the Year Strong

Yorba Linda Middle School is off to an exciting start for the 2025-26 school year! From the first week of school, Bobcats have been building community through our PBIS Welcome Week and ongoing efforts to make YLMS a safe and welcoming place for all students.

Our student leaders have been busy setting the tone for a positive year. ASB hosted the first school dance of the year, bringing students together for music, games, and school spirit. In addition, our WEB (Welcoming Every Bobcat Belongs) leaders organized special lunchtime activities to help new students feel connected and part of the Bobcat family.

YLMS also celebrated an incredible athletic achievement

as our girls' volleyball team captured the district championship title! Their teamwork and determination are a reflection of the Bobcat Way: Respect, Empathy, and Potential.

Nutrition Services added a fun twist to lunchtime by hosting a student taste test, giving students the chance to sample and vote on new menu items for future meals.

Beyond the celebrations and events, YLMS continues to make strong academic gains. The school showed growth in last year's CAASPP scores and has now surpassed pre-COVID performance levels.

At Yorba Linda Middle School, there truly is something for everyone: academics, athletics, leadership, and community. We are proud of our students, staff, and families for making YLMS a place where “Every Bobcat, Every Day” thrives. Our mission remains strong: to empower students for future success.



Yorba Linda High School (9-12)

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



**Dr. Bird
Potter**
Principal

A Strong Start to 2025–2026 at YLHS.

The 2025–2026 school year is off to an incredible start, as we welcomed students back to campus full of Mustang spirit and enthusiasm. The energy has been felt across every corner of Yorba Linda High School as our community embraces our core values of Service, Teamwork, Achievement, Mastery, Passion, Ethics, Dedication, and Excellence.

The fall semester has already been filled with exciting events that brought our campus together. We kicked off the year with our Welcome Back Dance, followed by a spirited Homecoming Week, where students, staff, and families came together to celebrate Mustang pride. We also hosted our annual Club Rush, which featured a record number of student clubs, giving Mustangs more opportunities than ever to get involved, build connections, and make their high school experience meaningful. It has been wonderful to see so

many students engaged and connected on campus.

On Tuesday, October 7th, YLHS proudly hosted its annual Future Ready Day, an event designed to help students explore life beyond high school. The day featured an inspiring lineup of speakers from a wide range of college and career pathways. Students spent the day connecting with professionals, visiting college representatives, and working on their next steps toward achieving their goals.

This event was a tremendous success thanks to the support of our PTSA, who helped make the day possible, and to the many guest speakers and college representatives who generously shared their time and expertise with our students. Your partnership is invaluable in helping Mustangs envision and prepare for their bright futures.

As the school year continues, we look forward to building on this momentum. With strong student involvement, supportive staff, and a connected community, Yorba Linda High School is poised for an outstanding year filled with growth, achievement, and Mustang pride.

Novelist –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 December 15, 2025

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

COMPUTER	BROWSER
EDITOR	GOOGLE
IPAD	INTERNET
SPELLCHECK	BING
PRINTER	ASPIRIN
PUBLISHER	KEYBOARD
NOTEPAD	TELEPHONE
READERS	WIFI
PENCIL	IMAGINATION
IDEAS	
PEN	



Congratulations to Roy Hull
Winner of our May Word Search Contest!