

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Newport-Mesa Unified School District



Volume 18, Issue 98

June 2022

An Exceptional School Year!



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SUPERINTENDENT

Successful Finish to a More Normal School Year



Dr. Wesley Smith
Superintendent

Newport-Mesa Unified School District (NMUSD) successfully ended the 2021-22 school year maintaining its goal of keeping schools open for in-person instruction every school day, all year long, despite the challenges.

For the first time since March 2020 (and the first time ever for some), our students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade finally felt what it was like to have a more typical school year, connected with each other and fostering healthier and happier school environments. Students had the ability to collaborate on classroom assignments, and attend in-person music, theater, art, and athletic events, school assemblies, and field trips.

Not only have our students shown resilience and dedication as they navigated many unexpected challenges in recent years, but they also showed good character and kindness in the process. As is the case each school year, our students continued to excel in all areas of our educational offerings, from academics and arts to athletics and other extracurriculars.

Our high school athletic teams competed in major championships bringing home eight CIF championships, adding to our district's total of more than 150 CIF championships:

- Costa Mesa High School Cheer
- Corona del Mar High School
 - Boys Lacrosse
 - Varsity Girls Water Polo
 - Varsity Wrestling
- Newport Harbor High School
 - Boys Water Polo
 - Girls Water Polo
 - Boys Volleyball
 - Football
 - Girls Basketball
 - Girls Lacrosse

Another notable achievement, which is a testament to our educators and our students, is the U.S. Department of Education recognizing Davis Magnet School as a national Blue Ribbon School. This is a high honor that was only attributed to 28 schools in California. And Davis Principal Christy Flores also was awarded the Outstanding Leadership Award from the U.S. Department of Education.



Our class of 2022 is well prepared for their future. Many of our recent graduates achieved perfect scores on the SAT and/or SAT exams and are off to Ivy league schools, local community colleges, international colleges, and trade schools, as well as all branches of our military, and some directly to the workforce.



Davis Magnet School

Regardless of the awards and accolades, we hope that all our nearly 19,000 students, their families, and our 3,000 employees feel comfort, pride and success in being part of the Newport-Mesa school community. We are a fortunate school district with many programs, resources, and supports that enable us to educate and prepare every child, every day for future success.

Enjoy the summer as we plan and prepare for another exceptional school year in 2022-23.



Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



School News

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Covering the
NEWPORT-MESA

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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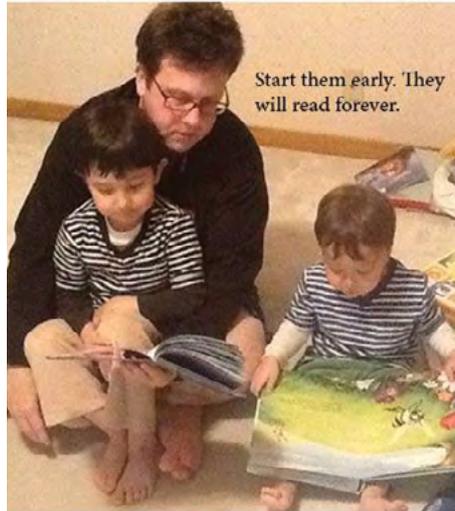
endorse the advertisers in this publication.

Dr. Wesley Smith begins this issue with his article on page 3 highlighting the school year awards and accolades during the school year.

As always we thank you for including *School News* among your reading choices. On pages 28 - 31 are the Word Search Contest (open to all ages), the Costa Mesa and Newport Public Libraries summer programs information, and many ideas for fun activities.

Our next issue is October 12. Have a fun summer. Please remember to include the library among your activity choices.

Congratulations Class of 2022!



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Merry Grasska
MPH, FNP-C,
RN
Director

Ready for Summer?

For most of us, summer brings a welcome change of pace from our routines and hectic schedules. Summer also allows many enrichment activities for children. Whether children are engaged in indoor or outdoor fun, there are ways to be safe and healthy and to enjoy summer.

Water activities have many social, emotional and physical health benefits. However, it is important to be water safe to prevent drowning, injuries and illness.

Sun and clear skies are frequently enjoyed during summer. Whether at home or during travel, hot weather poses health risks. Monitor yourself and your children for overheating and sunburn. Watch and encourage fluid intake, and use sunscreen. Hats, sunglasses and shade can help prevent exposure to the harmful rays of the sun. Those who enjoy hiking and camping will need to guard against mosquitoes and other bugs. Use proper clothing; repellents that are safe, especially for children; and screens, and check for ticks. Food safety is also important along with frequent handwashing before meals and after using the bathroom. Foods need to be cooked and stored at proper temperatures. Travel with food to the beach or other places should be done with caution to temperature variation and types of foods that may spoil easily.

There is certainly a lot to think about as summer approaches, the days get longer, and we pack in our favorite activities. Planning in advance of these activities will help keep children and family members safe and healthy. The CDC has [summer safety information here](#). Our Health Services team wishes you a safe and healthy summer!



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Partners4Wellness

Partners4Wellness has partnered with local retailers to provide education on current State and local tobacco and vape laws.

Funding provided by the Orange County Health Care Agency-Tobacco Use Prevention Program (TUPP)



In 2017:



42% of tobacco retailers targeted in the region were compliant with current laws by displaying up-to-date Tobacco Retailer License and STAKE Act stickers.



96% of retail clerks in targeted locations asked youth for ID when attempting to purchase vape/tobacco products.*

In 2019:



91% of tobacco retailers targeted in the region were compliant with current laws by displaying up-to-date Tobacco Retailer License and STAKE Act stickers.



99% of retail clerks in targeted locations asked youth for ID when attempting to purchase vape/tobacco products.*

LOWERING YOUTH ACCESS TO TOBACCO AND NICOTINE IN COSTA MESA & NEWPORT BEACH

Thank your local retailers for creating a safe and healthy community!

*An Attempted Buy Event was conducted with under age youth who attempted to purchase tobacco/vape products at 34 stores within our target cities. Adult supervision was provided during the time of the event.

February 2022

For more information on keeping tobacco and nicotine products out of youth's hands, please visit our website: partners4wellness.org or you can contact us at tmccafferty@p4w.org or 949-595-2288 Ext. 322

City of Costa Mesa



John Stephens
Mayor

Costa Mesa Now

Recently, I had the pleasure of interviewing NMUSD Superintendent Dr. Wesley Smith along with my co-host Councilmember Manuel Chavez on the Costa Mesa Now podcast, which is available on the City of Costa Mesa website and wherever you get your podcasts (e.g., Spotify).

I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know Superintendent Smith better and came away confident that the district is in able hands. We spoke for so long that this will be Costa Mesa Now's first two-part episode.

During the episode, we covered many topics of interest, including early childhood development, mental health, CRT, managing the pandemic, equity in education, the fentanyl crisis, and Dr. Smith's philosophy on education. Councilmember Chavez provided an important perspective because he is a product of the NMUSD having attended, Rea, Pomona, Tewinkle and Estancia before earning his bachelor's degree in political science from UC Irvine.

I urge you to listen to the Costa Mesa Now podcast with Dr. Smith, and I congratulate the Board of Trustees for recruiting a Superintendent who can lead the district toward a bright future.

77 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/754-5107
www.costamesaca.gov

Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue



Dan Stefano
Fire Chief

Water Safety!

With the 2021-22 school year coming to a close, a hearty and happy congratulations to all of the successful graduates throughout NMUSD and beyond! As everyone shares in the well-deserved joy of this moment in time, including a healthy and fun summer ahead, please include safety as the highest priority.

Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue is promoting Water Safety! Children Drown Without A Sound, so please take the time to learn and know the risks of water. Whether children are in a pool, river, lake or ocean, around any body of water, including buckets to bathtubs, ALWAYS have an adult water watcher and ALWAYS use the buddy system.

Another valuable tool and skill set is to learn CPR. As a starting point, you can learn "Hands Only CPR" today! This summer, CMFR will be partnering with area schools, businesses, and the community to help make that happen. The first step is taking just 60 seconds to learn how to save a life and sharing it with the important people in your life - heart.org/handsonlycpr

[Have a Happy and Healthy Summer!](#)

P.O. Box 1200, Costa Mesa, CA 92628 • 714/754-5106

City of Newport Beach



Kevin Muldoon
Mayor

City Debuts First 'Human Lift' for Disabled Boaters

I was very pleased earlier this month to help launch a project that will create a more inclusive and welcoming Newport Harbor for residents and visitors with disabilities: The City's first human lift.

The lift is the first of its kind in Newport Harbor and one of only a small number on the West Coast. It can be used for transferring someone from the dock at Marina Park to a small sailboat, a small powerboat, or kayak.



The project helps advance our goal of making harbor activities such as boating, sailing and kayaking more accessible to everyone.

The equipment is now available to the public at no cost upon request, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily by calling 949-270-8159 or emailing harbormaster@newportbeachca.gov.

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nmusd-ca.schoolloop.com/nutrition



Todd Hatfield
Director

MyPlate: Following the Food Guidelines

*By Pam Williams, MPH, RD
Nutritionist*

Did you know that Nutrition Services is dedicated to serving the best foods available to all NMUSD students? Did you also know that each meal pattern is designed to follow MyPlate? We provide fresh fruits and vegetables, delicious entrees made with protein and grains, and dairy products.

During the schoolyear, various students learn about MyPlate and how to incorporate the five food groups into their diet. Why these food groups? They provide the nutrients that humans need to live. What's so special about each food group?

- Fruits are usually sweet and grow on trees. They provide fiber, and vitamins such as folic acid and vitamin C. Fruits also provide an array of minerals such as magnesium, zinc, and manganese.
- Vegetables can be savory and delicious. They grow below and above the ground. Vegetables contain nutrients such as fiber, and beta carotene, which the body uses to make vitamin A. They contain minerals such as calcium, phosphorus, and potassium.
- Grains are hearty and filling. They grow in large fields. They are rich in fiber, B vitamins and nutrients such as zinc, magnesium, and selenium.
- Proteins are found in animals and plants. Both sources contain the building blocks of protein along with other nutrients.
- Dairy foods come from animals such as cows and give us calcium. Other milk substitute products can be used when someone has milk allergies. Be sure to read the label because all milk substitute products may not contain calcium.

As summer approaches, let's launch into a world filled with these foods. Let MyPlate carry our food choices through the summer and when we return to school in the fall, Nutrition Services is committed to upholding a meal plan that will continue to help keep our students healthy.

**Be sure to enter our
Word Search Contest
on page 28.**

Early Childhood Education

2985 Bear St., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-5000

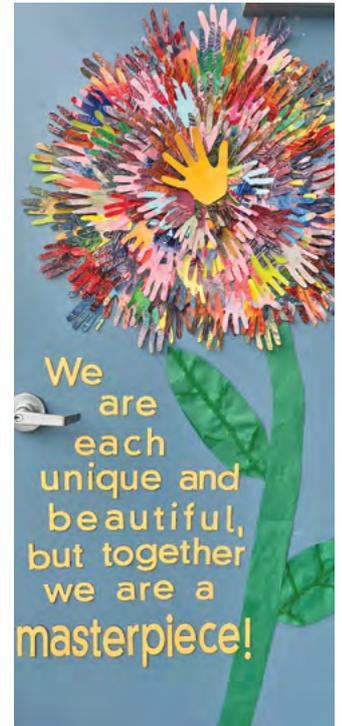


Michelle O'Neill
Coordinator

Art Project Collage

The Wilson preschool team consists of Ms. Macy, our teacher, Ms. Karla, and Ms. Hannah our teacher assistants.

The students in the AM and PM sessions were excited to partake in creating a 3D flower out of handprints to decorate their classroom door for open house. Our preschoolers cut out their handprints and painted them using a variety of different colors. The students were asked to engage in conversations with their peers about their favorite colors and why. Ms. Macy extended the art project the next day by having the students share one thing they liked their beautiful handprint collage in their classroom.



Adams Elementary (K-6)

2850 Club House Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7935 • adams.nmusd.us



Stacy deBoom-Howard
Principal

Great End To The Year!

As we end the 21-22 school year, we want to say thank you to our amazing school community for all their support!! We are very happy to end the year focusing on the abundant successes, events, and programs our All-Star Community has been able to enjoy this spring from our family events, arts programs, field trips and most recently our school play "Seussical". Thank you to our

PTA who has supported us with these events and given their time to make our school a great place for our students, staff, and families. We appreciate you!

The end of year also brought on a celebration for our amazing Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Sperling! We are so thankful for her dedication and support to our school!! Congratulations!

Have a safe and relaxing summer, All-Stars! Remember to read, practice your math facts/strategies, explore, rest and smile! See you August 22nd!



Roy O. Andersen Elementary (K-6)

1900 Port Seabourne Way, Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-6935 • andersen.nmusd.us



Tiffany Lewis
Principal

3-Day Earth Day

Thanks to the generous support of our PTA and DEANs, Andersen Elementary took part in a 3-day Earth day focused event. The final result was a giant living painting created by students and staff. Art for the Sky is a team building activity centered around a message of helping our environment and caring for the earth. Students collected jeans which

became the ocean and wore specific colored shirts to create our mascot, the dolphin. Aerial photographs captured the image and students were treated to final ceremony where the image and amazing video were revealed! The jeans were donated as part of Andersen's commitment to sustainability and giving back to our community.



Back Bay/Monte Vista *High School*

390 Monte Vista Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6900 • backbay.nmusd.us



Mike Wagner
Principal

2021-22 What a great year!

Wow! Seems like school just began, but now we are celebrating our seniors with much deserved festivities!

In the month of May we have already celebrated with an amazing Cinco de Mayo party for the students, hosted a senior breakfast filled with food and raffle giveaways, Prom is right around the corner, Grad night of fun at Universal Studios, scholarship

awards and of course graduation for our outstanding seniors!

With every celebration we honor each student that has worked so hard to earn a high school diploma. Even those who at times felt that task was impossible, as a small campus of students, we are lucky to be able to create a caring community of students and staff, which, in turn, creates strong, resilient students. Our seniors have proven that no task is too hard or too far to accomplish with hard work and dedication.

California *Elementary (K-6)*

3232 California St., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7940 • california.nmusd.us



Ryan Longacre
Principal

National Bike to School Day

On May 11th, nearly 40 students and members of their families joined me in celebration of National Bike to School Day. With the support of the Costa Mesa Police Department and staff members from City Hall, California Elementary students rode as a group from our meeting spot on Gisler Avenue to our campus just under a mile away. Office

Torres began our ride with some words on bike safety. He spoke of proper helmet fit and why it is so crucial for students to observe this state law. Office Torres also encouraged our students to set goals, extolled the virtues of working hard, and cautioned them about listening to anyone who might plant the seeds of doubt when it comes to goals and dreams. With everyone properly outfitted with helmets and armed with motivation, we set off towards campus. Although short, it was a journey filled with symbolism.



Office Torres from the Costa Mesa Police Department addresses students from California Elementary School on National Bike to School Day.

Cloud Campus (TK—12)

www.nmusd.us/cloudcampus



Dr. Racquel Stephens
Principal

More-Than-Virtual Successes!

Cloud Campus is in full swing with end-of-year activities. Our students had a busy month with state testing, doing many projects for clubs, AP testing and end-of-year planning.

We had our first-ever in-person prom for juniors and seniors at an events venue in Newport Beach!

Our open house took place May 25—virtually, of course—and students worked

hard to showcase their exemplary work throughout the year. Parents should be proud of their children's accomplishments and their expertise in the many digital tools used at Cloud.

In ASB, our students celebrated “May the 4th Be with You” with Star Wars trivia in Zoom. Our school digital newspaper, *Cloud Cover*, highlighted the many events in our virtual campus and celebrated the journalism skills of our students at Cloud.

This time of the year also marks award season, and our students have risen to the occasion to exemplify our SOAR values of self-respect, ownership, acceptance and resilience. Our teachers were also recognized for Teacher Appreciation Day with many, many well-wishes from their students and parents and a luncheon from our Parent-Teacher Organization. Thank you, Cloud Campus teachers!

Cloud Campus students will also be celebrating three in-person promotions and graduations. Our sixth- and eighth-graders will be celebrating their promotions, and our 12th-graders will be celebrating their graduation. This will be the first in-person promotion/graduation at Cloud Campus, and for many students, it will be the first time meeting their classmates in person.

Our students at Cloud have so many accomplishments to be proud of! They have exemplified our SOAR values of self-respect, ownership, acceptance and resilience this year and are ready to participate in their end-of-year promotion! Congratulations to all our students!

College Park Elementary (K-6)

2380 Notre Dame Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7960 • collegepark.nmusd.us



Jake Topete
Principal

Celebrating Kindness

During the week of April 18, College Park celebrated kindness throughout the week. We kicked off the week by participating in Let's Be Kind Day along with many other schools throughout the district. Our students wore their new Let's Be Kind T-shirts to celebrate the day.

During the week, a kindness heart mural was created out of small sticky notes with written messages that celebrated kindnesses that had been witnessed and done throughout the week. The end of the school week wrapped up with a visit from a guest speaker, Brent Poppen. Mr. Poppen is a Paralympian who shared his story of overcoming adversity and believing in the possible.

Our week wrapped up with a Kindness Celebration on campus on Saturday night. Students, families and community members came together at College Park to participate in a couple of service projects: planting a garden and painting murals on our handball courts, finishing with a movie on the lawn. It was a wonderful week of celebrating kindness at College Park.



Corona del Mar High School (7-12)

2101 Eastbluff Dr., Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-6000 • cdm.nmusd.us



Dr. Rebecca Gogel
Principal
7-8 Grade



Josh Hill
Principal
9-12 Grade

First in Series of Lasts

By *Eliana Posin*,
12th Grade Student

As the school year enters its last weeks, with all the rallies finished, AP tests wrapped up, and seniors itching to throw up their grad caps, there is only one way to end the year with a bang. That's right, Prom!

This year, CdM's Prom was

held at a popular concert venue near a famous theme park. With the roaring '20s theme, the dresses were beautiful and the suits looked sharp. The event started at 7 p.m. and ended at 10 p.m., and many students could hear the theme park's fireworks as they left the dance. Before they got to the dance, many students, especially seniors, gathered at suitable lookout spots all over Newport, Corona del Mar and Laguna Beach to take pictures of their last high school dance.

Six students ran for Prom Court: Cole Hendrickx, Carter Healy, and AJ Plumb for Prom King, Kayla Arbogast, Amelie Freby and Emily Valentine for Prom Queen. Carter Healy and Emily Valentine took their crowns home at the end of the night.

There was a lot of positive feedback from the dance.

"My favorite part was dancing at Prom," senior Alice Iacone said. "It was so much fun dancing with my friends. It was a good event to end my senior year with."

Junior Sofia Krykunen focused more on the social aspect of the dance during her feedback. "I loved spending time with my friends. Getting ready, eating dinner, and then going to the dance together was definitely my favorite part," she said.

Overall, Prom 2022 was one to remember for all the seniors graduating. After not holding a Prom last year, CdM's Prom comeback was a big success. Whether it was the outfits, the pictures, the venue or the dancing, CdM's final event of the year will not be forgotten!

Costa Mesa High School / Middle School (7-12)

2650 Fairview Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-8700 • cmhs.nmusd.us



Dr. Eugene Kwong
Principal
7-8 Grade



Jake Haley
Principal
9-12 Grade

STEM Programs Shine in Competitions

The NMUSD District Robotics Tournament of Champions was held at Costa Mesa High School on May 21, 2022. Costa Mesa had four teams (2-HS and 2-MS) under the direction of Karen Upthegrove and Racine Cross that competed in the VEX

robotics tournament. Overall, there were 11 teams from Ensign, Newport Harbor, and Estancia.

Three out of four of the Costa Mesa teams qualified in the top five and made it to the semifinals. Costa Mesa claimed the top prizes and took home first and second

place. Team Circuit Breakers took first place, with team members Dylan Matian, Liam Menendez, and John Bui. Team Rust in Peace took second place, with team member Lorelei Hobbs. Team Mobius Prime was a semifinalist, with team members Valentina Sakaske and Jack Wickstrom.

The Math Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) State Championships, hosted by San Diego State University, were held on Saturday, May 21, 2022. The Costa Mesa team, under the direction of Quang Nguyen, consisted of seniors Sophia Catania, Lucero Islas, and Lena Nguyen. They successfully defended their state title, and are now back-to-back state champions in the National Engineering Design Competition (NEDC). They are now representing California as the top high school team at Nationals hosted by New Mexico in late June.

Congratulations, and go Mustangs!



Davis Magnet (K-6)

1050 Arlington Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7930 • davismagnet.nmusd.us



Christy Flores
Principal

Always a Team

As the 2021-2022 school year wraps up, I'd like to take this opportunity to share joy and gratitude as the proud principal of Davis Magnet School. The past two years presented us with unimaginable challenges, yet, our Davis Magnet School community continued to thrive, resulting in national recognition as a 2021 National Blue Ribbon Achievement Gap School awardee. None of this would have been possible without the strong, positive school culture that is the foundation of Davis Magnet School's success.

In addition to receiving this national recognition, our community joyfully welcomed the return of many traditions

and experiences for our Davis students and adults alike. Field trips, assemblies, band and choir concerts, sports tournaments, family events, and so much more provided wonderful opportunities for collaboration, creativity, and laughter.

Additionally, the increased support of a counselor, provided by our district's board of education, allowed for us to even better serve our students.

Although there were challenges, our community faced them the same as we always do, as a team. I am grateful to be a part of this wonderful community, and appreciate the dedication of our teachers and staff, the ongoing support of our families, and, of course, the hard work of our students. Have a fun and safe summer, and trust that our Davis community gives me incredible #davisduckspride!

Eastbluff Elementary (K-6)

2627 Vista del Oro, Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-5920 • eastbluff.nmusd.us



Cheryl Beck
Principal

Concert on the Lawn

Friday, May 13, we had our Concert on the Lawn. Families were so excited to join with their lawn chairs or blankets to see our Eastbluff students show their musical talents!

This was our first music program since the COVID-19 pandemic began, and we were so thrilled to be able to invite our families for an in-person music event! All grades were showcased. A huge thank-you goes to our amazing music teachers, Mrs. Duffin and Miss Herron, who worked so

hard in preparing them! Our music teachers are so creative and talented!

Our students not only sang but sixth grade also presented their small group rock bands while other grades played ukuleles or the drums creatively on plastic buckets and more. There were also several choreographed dance moves. We felt like it was our version of *High School Musical*!

Our students and music teachers all worked so hard and shined so brightly! It was such a pleasure to celebrate our talented students. What a spectacular event! We are so proud of you all!



Early College *High School (9-12)*

2990 Mesa Verde Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7990 • earlycollege.nmusd.us



Dr. David Martinez
Principal

Wrapping Up

ECHS had a very eventful April and May upon returning from our spring break on April 4th.

We held our first full-scale “Let’s Be Kind Day” event on April 26th. Students wore their black

T-shirts and took part in various lunchtime activities hosted by the LBK organizers. Later that week, we were notified that our school was awarded the California Department of Education’s 2022 California Pivotal Practice (CAPP) Award in recognition of supporting student engagement, technology, nutrition services, and social-emotional well-being during the 2020-2021 school amid the pandemic.

This was the highest state honor a school could receive this year, and it marks the fifth time in school history that we were recognized for a top annual state honor (2009, 2015, 2019, 2021, and 2022).

The first in-person Talent Show and Prom were held on back-to-back days on May 13th and 14th, respectively. As for the Prom, it was ECHS’ largest student turnout, as



we combined together with the Back Bay/ Monte Vista and Cloud Campus students for a harbor cruise. Our Annual Awards Night was also held in person for the first time in three years at the OCC Moore Theatre on May 25th. Close to 100 students earned awards and/or scholarships. College courses also ended on May 25th and 26th, with high school final exams beginning on May 27th.

ECHS will conclude the school year on June 2nd, where the Class of 2022 graduation ceremony will once again be held at the OCC Moore Theatre at 3:30 pm.



Horace Ensign *Intermediate (7-8)*

2000 Cliff Dr., Newport Beach, CA 92663 • 949/515-6910 • ensign.nmusd.us



Samantha Payne
Principal

Reclassification

Reclassification is the process used by school districts to determine if a student has sufficient English language fluency to be successful in academic settings without language support, and on April 21, 2022, Ensign celebrated

its 18 students who reclassified from “English Learner” to “Fluent English Proficient”! In recognition of this immense accomplishment, Ensign hosted a celebration for the students and their families, joined by district personnel and Ensign staff. The night was filled with decorations, food, laughter, and a ceremony honoring this great achievement! These 18 students will now carry the proud designation of “Reclassified Fluent English Proficient” (RFEP), will

have a broader opportunity in course selections, and will no longer be required to take the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC). Ensign could not be prouder of these students!



Estancia High School

2323 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6500 • estancia.nmusd.us



Michael Halt
Principal

Welcome to the Nest

Estancia High School was pleased to host Future Eagle Night on our school campus this spring. Future Eagle Night is a spirited evening where incoming 9th grade families learn about the academic, athletic, and

activity programs offered at Estancia High School. This year, Estancia also invited current Grade 9-12 families to participate as many families did not have the opportunity to experience this special evening in spring 2020 and 2021. Families walked the red carpet to the entrance and were greeted by a spirit tunnel of ASB leaders, Link Crew leaders, and Estancia cheerleaders.

Families attended a presentation by our principal, head counselor, Athletics Director, and Activities Director and performances by the Estancia Jazz Band and Estancia Cheer. Following the presentation, families were able to



obtain information about various academic programs, including our Career Technical Education Pathways and the Lyceum Academy, the 25 CIF sports offered, clubs, and school-connected organizations including PTSA, the Estancia-TeWinkle Schools Foundation, and SOY.

Harbor View *Elementary (K-6)*

900 Goldenrod Ave., Corona del Mar, CA 92625 • 949/515-6940 • harborview.nmusd.us



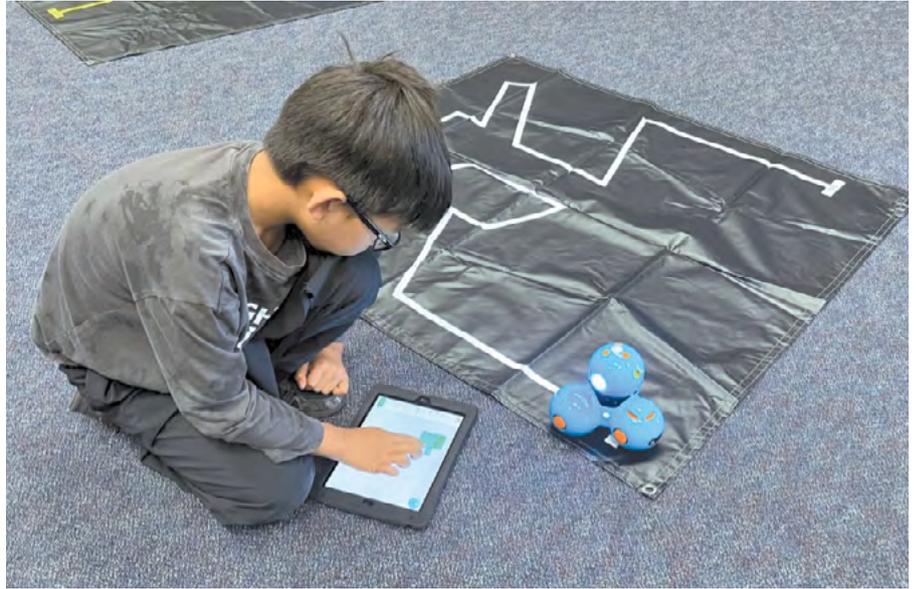
Gabriel Del Real
Principal

STEM Night

As the seconds on the clock quickly ticked away, students, in teams of four, used twenty dry spaghetti noodles, one yard of masking tape, and string to build the tallest tower they can. There was a catch.

The spaghetti-noodle tower had to support a marshmallow at the top. This marshmallow challenge was one of many activities available to students and their families at our annual Harbor View Elementary School STEM Night. STEM stands for Science Technology Engineering and Music.

In addition to the marshmallow towers, families gathered in our school's Multi-Purpose Room (MPR) programmed Dash Bots, mastered Lego challenges, used digital shapes to create animals on iPads, and created flying objects in a wind tunnel. The stations were arranged so students, and their families, could spend as much, or



A Harbor View Elementary student programs a Dash Bot at the annual STEM Night.

as little, time as they wanted at each one. Throughout the night, laughter and exclamations of excitement were heard throughout the room as students of all ages had a terrific time.

Heinz Kaiser *Elementary (3-6)*

2130 Santa Ana Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6950 • kaiser.nmusd.us



Dr. Deborah Granger
Principal

Victorious Knights!

Kaiser's 2022 Academic Pentathlon team was UNSTOPPABLE! The nine-member team blazed through online exams in late-April, then faced off against other teams from across Orange County at

University High School in Irvine on May 7th. When the dust settled, Kaiser Knights received multiple medals for individual success in areas including fine arts, math, science, social studies, and literature. The creme de la creme was Kaiser's first place team award and second place overall award. Mrs. Rauch coached Kaiser's team throughout this school year and brought our school to a sweet victory - perfect way to end a magnificent year! Congratulations, scholars!



A little fun between events!

Killybrooke Elementary (K-6)

3155 Killybrooke Ln., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7945 • killybrooke.nmusd.us



Laura Sosa
Principal

Family Math Morning

On Friday, April 29, our school hosted our parent community for a successful Family Math Morning. This annual Killybrooke tradition was on pause during the COVID-19 pandemic, but we were delighted to see it return this year.

More than 120 families attended to play math games alongside their children and receive take-home tools to support math learning at home. In a true demonstration of teamwork, grade levels collaborated to determine which games would

be available for our families, and student leadership helped distribute materials and explained how to play the games. Each table in our lunch shelter was alive and bustling with conversations surrounding math, positioning our students as teachers with their families as learners.

Following the morning session, many parents opted to stay for the informational presentation that discussed shifts in math learning and fraction progressions. This presentation was led by our very own Alexandra Antonopoulos, who spearheaded the family event. We were grateful for the opportunity to dive into math learning alongside our parent community!



Families participate in grade level specific math games to promote math exploration and learning.

Abraham Lincoln Elementary (K-6)

3101 Pacific View Dr., Corona del Mar, CA 92625 • 949/515-6955 • lincoln.nmusd.us



Dr. Kristin DeMicco
Principal

Looking Back

It is difficult to believe that we are quickly approaching the end of our school year! I am so grateful to our staff, our students and our families for making this such a positive and memorable year.

Although the school year is winding down, there seems to be something to celebrate every day! From a very successful family movie night to sliming me at our Friday assembly, we are continuing to make positive memories for our Lincoln students

and community. I am grateful to our PTA for bringing an in-person talent show back to our school this year and for helping us throw an amazing Open House and STEAM fair to celebrate the talents and accomplishments of our students. For the first time since the pandemic, we were able to send our fifth-grade students to camp, and I am happy to report that we once again celebrated “May the 4th Be with You” with a very successful Penny Wars event.

I am truly honored to be a part of this Lincoln community and look forward to a new school year in 2022-23!

Mariners Elementary (K-6)

2100 Mariners Dr., Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-6960 • mariners.nmusd.us



Matthew Broesamle
Principal

Performing Arts Program

Mariners Elementary School has seen incredible growth in our performing-arts programs during the 2021–22 school year. With over 60 students performing in band and over 100 students in our show choir, the Marlins have really shown they have what it takes to take center stage and perform.

Our band, which has grown to its highest number of participants, performs often at our weekly flag decks as well as at events across Orange County. Our band will be participating in the Balboa Island Parade in early June as well as later that month at a major theme park.

Mariners Show Choir is in its first year of existence and has had incredible success! In late May, students took the stage and performed *The Little Mermaid Jr.* Mariners music teacher Paul Leedy has done an excellent job of bringing the arts back to life at Mariners.



Mr. Leedy preparing cast members for productions of Little Mermaid, Jr.

We are so proud of all our students for showing great courage in taking the stage and giving their best effort in all their performances. Go Marlins!

Newport Coast Elementary (K-6)

6655 Ridge Park Rd., Newport Coast, CA 92657 • 949/515-6975 • nce.nmusd.us



Somer Harding
Principal

NCE Coyote Track Club Earns Spirit Award!

For the first time in school history, our runners that participated in the Newport Beach Youth Track & Field Meet of Champions were awarded the SPIRIT AWARD for their overall participation and achievement.

Our students were led by one of our parents, Coach Rita Lee. Students were very excited to participate and spent time at school over several weeks practicing their running during their lunch recess. We are proud to display this perpetual trophy in our school lobby until next year when we hope to win it again!



Newport Elementary (K-6)

1327 W. Balboa Blvd., Newport Beach, CA 92661 • 949/515-6965 • newportel.nmusd.us



Amanda Estrada
Principal

Spring Events

It's been a busy spring season with so much to celebrate. In April we hosted our Open House event. It was a wonderful evening where students and teachers could showcase their hard work and artistic talents. For many of our families, it was their first time inside the building. I love seeing students proudly touring their parents and guests through their classroom and showing off the numerous projects, writing pieces, and artwork they have completed throughout the course of the year.

In May, we hosted our Spring Sing music performance. Each grade level had the opportunity to perform a number of songs that they have been working on this year in music class. There were also performances by our school choir and the ukulele club.



Elaina Marrujo, Stacy Bauer and Elaine Canino were awarded grants through the Newport Mesa Schools Foundation.

Three of our teachers were awarded grants through the Newport Mesa Schools Foundation at their annual awards dinner in May. We are so grateful for the impact these grants will have on the students of Newport Elementary.

Newport Heights Elementary (K-6)

300 E. 15th St., Newport Beach, CA 92663 • 949/515-6970 • newportheights.nmusd.us



Terri Clarke
Principal

Partnerships with a Purpose

At NHES, partnerships are a key focus with our staff and community. Partnerships with our parents/guardians is the single-most important one we make each year, that includes with our PTA and Foundation. Through the volunteerism and fundraising efforts of these organizations, NHES has benefitted from student field trips & assemblies, family fun nights, classroom supplies, enrichment activities & resources, support staff, technology programs, our Shark Tank Technology Lab & teacher, and so much more. This spring, our Foundation hosted the annual Spring Gala raising over \$100,000 to benefit our students! Our PTA hosted the annual Jog-A-Thon, getting our

students pumped up with school pride, providing a healthy dose of outdoor activity, nurturing fun competition, and fundraising for our school! We are so grateful for these partnerships with our parents/guardians and the greater NHES community. THANK YOU!



Newport Harbor High School (9-12)

600 Irvine Ave., Newport Beach, CA 92663 • 949/515-6300 • nhhs.nmusd.us



Sean Boulton
Principal

CIF Championships

Newport Harbor High School won 8 CIF titles this year. 5 CIF Southern Section Titles and 3 CIF State Regional Titles.

We earned CIF Championships in:

1. Football
2. Girls and Boys Water Polo (CIF Southern Section and CIF Regional Titles for boys and girls)
3. Girls Lacrosse
4. Boys Volleyball (CIF Southern Section and CIF Regional Titles)

This brings our school total to 54 CIF Southern Section titles and a year we will not soon forget in our 92 year history of serving the Newport-Mesa Community!



Paularino Elementary (K-6)

1060 Paularino Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7950 • paularino.nmusd.us



Annalisa Schwartz
Principal

Family Event

At Paularino Elementary we recently held our first family event in over two years! The Paularino PTA hosted Pizza and Bingo Night in early May to welcome families back to campus. Many families came out to enjoy some pizza and smiles with a few rounds of Bingo and Loteria. This was a beautiful event

where families could come together, share a meal, and play a few games. Many of our families have not been on our campus in the past two years so this was a wonderful opportunity to welcome them back. A few teachers were able to join the festivities and stated this event was a fun and interactive way to get our families back on campus. We look forward to many more family events next school year. Go Panthers!



Pomona Elementary (K-6)

2051 Pomona Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6980 • pomona.nmusd.us



Cindy Pedroso
Principal

Panther Pride

We are winding down the school days, but certainly not the activities. Our kindergarten students recently went to Centennial Farms to learn all about animals and plants. They held chicks and planted seeds. For them, this was extra-special, as riding a school bus for the first time is the best part!

The return of the Jog-a-thon was another great hit for our students, staff, and parents.

This was the school's first opportunity to have the families back together for such a fun day. Our sixth-grade students were also off to science camp at the end of May,

another wonderful tradition that was sorely missed. The students enjoyed daily hikes and many outdoor activities. This was a wonderful opportunity for them to make the kind of memories that they will carry with them for years to come.

Along with all of the special events and activities, we continue to celebrate the many successes of our students. At our most recent Flag Deck ceremony, we had the great pleasure of honoring 32 of our students for their outstanding overall performance. Our Panthers of the Year were treated to a special luncheon from a local restaurant. These outstanding students demonstrated excellent character traits and academic excellence.



Everett A. Rea *Elementary (K-6)*

661 Hamilton St., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6905 • rea.nmsd.us



Dr. Duane Cox
Principal

PTA Jog-A-Thon

On May 11, Rea Elementary School held our traditional PTA Jog-a-thon. Given our previous COVID protocols, it was wonderful to welcome parents and community partners onto campus for the day. Parents streamed onto the field, purchased Jog-a-thon t-shirts, encouraged joggers, and enjoyed the music; the Rea Shark spirit was felt by all! Our PTA was able to generate funds for many student programs,

including Art Masters, Robotics Clubs, Walk Through American Revolution, California, Ancient Civilizations, and more. Business partners played a huge role by providing Jog-a-thon shirts for students and staff members, and in kickstarting fundraising. Students entered the fields with their classroom teacher, were photographed under the balloon arch, then made their way to their assigned track. Most importantly, students built relationships with one another, encouraged one another, and had a positive experience to associate with running and exercise.



Have a fun summer!

Charles W. TeWinkle *Intermediate (7-8)*

3224 California Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7965 • tewinkle.nmusd.us



Dr. Dipali Potnis
Principal

Congratulations, Chris Garibay!

The end of the year can be bittersweet. We relish our students' development throughout their years at our site and yearn for a little more time with them to see their progress as they mature into young adults.

AVID is a program that has been at TeWinkle for decades. The teachers who teach in this program have cultivated a learning environment that is caring and promotes the tools that will allow for students to be college or career ready. So many of our students have gone on to high school and have received accolades such as valedictorian or college scholarships. Many attend colleges as first-generation students, and some students have been the first in their family to attend college. These are milestones that we applaud and admire.

This year, Chris Garibay received our eighth-grade AVID standout student honor. He is humble, passionate, driven, a student athlete and, quite frankly, an inspiration. He received this award at Angel's Stadium and was celebrated by his family, friends, and school board members and staff. Beyond receiving the standout student at TeWinkle, he was interviewed and chosen as one of the eight recipients of a \$10,000 scholarship by the Angels Baseball Organization.

Access to programs give students amazing opportunities at our school site and beyond. AVID builds confidence in our students and prepares them for the real world.

We are so proud of Chris for this incredible accomplishment and look forward to celebrating his success beyond his time at TeWinkle. Thank you to our stakeholders that celebrated this milestone in his life. It will be one that will not be forgotten!



Sonora *Elementary (K-6)*

966 Sonora Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7955 • sonora.nmusd.us



Mia Doidge
Principal

Pizza with the Principal

Sonora Eagles have some great ways to earn Eagle Bucks! Eagle Bucks are our schoolwide incentive when students are recognized doing something kind, following rules, displaying one of our six-character traits, and going above and beyond.

Each week students have four buckets they can place their Eagle Bucks in. At our Friday Eagle Rallies, we draw Eagle Bucks and announce winners to participate in fun activities like corn hole, ice cream with the principal, and pizza with the principal, among many others.

For pizza with the principal, some of the teachers at Sonora bring their pizza ovens and we set up a table outside the office

to make pizza! Students roll homemade dough, pour their sauce, and get to choose from a variety of toppings. We cook the pizza in the ovens and the delicious aroma fills the air, making everyone's stomachs rumble. Students enjoy eating their pizzas and take home any extras in a special pizza box!



Victoria *Elementary (K-6)*

1025 Victoria St., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6985 • victoria.nmusd.us



Dr. Aaron Peralta
Principal

Outdoor Science School

Our Victoria sixth-graders traveled to Three Oaks in Lake Arrowhead this April for four days of Outdoor Science School.

Students were thrilled to participate in outdoor science activities, as this was the first time we've been back to camp in two years!

During our fun filled stay, we learned exciting concepts about astronomy, earth science and zoology. Each day at camp was filled with songs, activities, hikes and games. Students loved the night hike under the stars where we studied the constellations. The "courage walk" during the night hike challenged students to use their understanding of nature as they explored the wilderness.



Brandon's favorite memory was the amazing scenery that he got to experience after completing the challenging strawberry hike. Sophia personally enjoyed her cabin leaders and was thankful for all that they taught her and the fun that they brought to the experience. Mari enjoyed seeing all the animals, and she got picked to hold the Madagascar hissing roaches! Rayne loved performing the skit and singing all the camp songs.

Victoria's visit to Three Oak's created memories that will last forever!

Whittier *Elementary (K-6)*

1800 Whittier Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6990 • whittier.nmusd.us



Randy Lempert
Principal

The Sounds of Spring

There is excitement in the air at Whittier. The sounds you hear around our campus are not just from the bumblebees buzzing around the Whittier garden. It's the energy coming from our spring activities!

The spring season was kicked off with an amazing PTA-supported Jog-a-thon. Our preschool through sixth-grade students were busy running around the track and challenging their friends to see who could get the most laps. The music and cheers from our Dolphin families could be heard all through the campus during this exciting event.

Our students have been very busy in the garden this spring. They have been getting their hands dirty by working hard in the soil and growing fresh vegetables. The butterflies have also been active, making our Whittier

garden a peaceful place on campus. We even get a sneaky rabbit to visit the garden from time to time.

After school, you can still hear whistles blowing, coaches instructing, and students kicking around the soccer ball. The Pilot Cup was back, and over 130 third-through sixth-grade students participated in the 2022 tournament. Whittier was excited to be showcasing its great sportsmanship at this year's event.

Do you hear the music? That's Mr. Funk leading the Dolphin musicians in our music assemblies. With his help, our students successfully showcased their talents to our parents during the last week of May.

It is an exciting time to be a Dolphin! And as the Whittier school year comes to an end, the sounds of excitement continue. We want to continue to thank our fantastic Dolphin community for being so supportive. What a great spring we had. Go, Dolphins!

Wilson *Elementary (K-6)*

801 Wilson St., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6995 • wilson.nmusd.us



Dr. Jennifer Heckert
Principal

Wilson Community Day

Wilson is very grateful for our community partnerships. We held our first Community Day on May 12 and had many volunteers support and participate on this very special day. We celebrated LOVE Costa Mesa Day and loved on our school in various ways. Volunteers created a new, bilingual school mural, planted new plants in newly painted pots, and also prepared for

new flags outside our classroom doors. Additionally, we partnered with many public agencies to host a bike skills workshop. Wilson students had a chance to receive a free helmet, get their bike checked, and learn about bike safety skills while completing a bike obstacle course. There were also opportunities to win various bike and safety related prizes. The day was a huge success and we are so appreciative to our Wilson families, students, staff and community partners who helped spread positive energy on this day!



Woodland *Elementary* (K-2)

2025 Garden Ln., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6945 • woodland.nmusd.us



Dr. Amy Nagy
Principal

Coming Together

Woodland Dragons had many opportunities to gather and celebrate the end of the year with activities that included the whole family!

We loved being able to invite family and friends to share in the fun, especially after being so isolated during the past few years. We came together to share experiences that included learning, fun, food, games, and celebrations. Events in May included our Jog-A-Thon, Social Emotional Learning Night, KWPF0 Spring Carnival and Open House. In June, our Foundation will host, Camping Under the Stars and we will finish the year with a flag deck Extravaganza! The



Families working together during our Social Emotional Learning Night.

year has been filled with special memories and it has been wonderful to close it out with activities that include everyone. Woodland Elementary is a GREAT place to learn!

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: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com Please put NMUSD in the subject line.

- | | |
|----------|-------------|
| 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 | |

Entries must be received by July 15, 2022
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble.

T	B	X	A	Q	A	P	V	M	B	A	V	X
A	Z	G	G	I	F	I	A	U	N	T	Y	L
I	I	G	N	I	F	R	U	S	H	B	B	N
T	F	A	I	I	G	T	E	C	C	M	E	H
T	I	M	T	A	D	D	T	V	Q	O	A	G
F	N	E	T	S	K	A	T	I	N	G	C	E
P	O	S	A	E	W	O	E	J	D	I	H	O
W	N	R	H	J	X	R	O	R	N	P	K	C
I	A	U	C	O	G	T	U	C	A	A	D	A
A	G	L	Z	G	P	N	I	Y	G	D	E	C
O	C	Y	K	G	N	P	G	N	I	K	I	H
A	N	S	W	I	M	M	I	N	G	B	I	I
G	B	I	N	N	N	V	G	N	Z	O	D	N
Z	I	G	W	G	I	G	Y	X	G	A	I	G
T	M	O	H	D	Y	J	D	Q	E	W	F	S

Contests Sponsored by
BarkateNehiSmiles.com

Parent To Parent



Jodie Lynn

Activities Away from Technology

Q. My 10-year-old son only wants to stay indoors, play video games and eat chips and the like. He doesn't like sports. I'm trying to get him outdoors and moving but he complains about the heat. Any ideas on how to get him away from becoming a couch potato and away from the TV?

A. There are plenty of programs that your son might like such as swimming, drawing, painting, camping, making pottery, volunteering at a pet shelter, cooking, graphic design for kids, etc. The whole idea is to get him into a scheduled activity three to five days a week. Some of the facilities where the activities take place have lunch served to the kids. It's usually a pretty healthy one at that. They should give you a weekly copy of them. If not, ask for one. Some programs allow kids to bring their lunch. This means that he will be eating less of the bad things and more of the good. He might even decide that eating fruit is a good break from chips. If your son can find something he likes and can participate in it with a friend, he'll be more willing to stick with it, especially if there's no pressure to be a super star. This will also give him less time to play video games or to watch TV.

Jodie Lynn is an award winning, internationally syndicated family/health and education columnist and best selling author.
www.ParentToParent.com

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Costa Mesa Public Libraries



Sarita Dangond
 Branch Manager,
 Costa Mesa
 Donald Dungan
 Library



Vivian Strabala
 Branch Manager,
 Costa Mesa
 Mesa Verde
 Library

Summer Reading Challenge

Orange County Public Libraries are open for in-person services according to State and County guidelines. In addition to Costa Mesa branch hours listed below, please visit ocpl.org/libraries and click on any of our branches to see hours of operation.

- Get a Library Card! Find details at www.ocpl.org
- Enjoy Virtual Programs and 24/7 Resources at www.ocpl.org/virtual

Summer Reading Challenge – June 13 – July 30

The OC Public Libraries Summer Reading Challenge will be available on the web or mobile app through Beanstack – 20 days of reading earns an entry to the opportunity drawing. Visit or contact your branch for more information about summer programming for all ages, including storytimes, crafts, special performers, book clubs and more! OCPL will present the virtual programs for all ages.

Costa Mesa-Donald Dungan Library will host watch parties for OC Public Libraries' virtual events in addition to other in person events at the branch.

OC Public Libraries www.ocpl.org

Costa Mesa Donald Dungan Library

1855 Park Avenue, Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/646-8845

Hours: Mon – Thurs 10am – 7pm, Fri – Sun 9am – 5pm

Check the calendar for all events

<https://ocpl.org/events?type=All&location=721>

Costa Mesa-Mesa Verde Library

2969 Mesa Verde Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/546-5274

Hours: Mon – Thurs 10am – 7pm, Fri – Sun 9am – 5pm

Check the calendar for all events

<https://ocpl.org/events?type=All&location=1021>

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Newport Beach Public Libraries



Christine Chapel
*Librarian,
Mariners Branch,
Newport Beach
Public Library*

Read Beyond the Beaten Path!

Join us for the Newport Beach Public Library's Summer Reading Program June 11 through July 30. This year's theme is "Read Beyond the Beaten Path" and encourages readers of all ages to explore the world through reading and the great outdoors. We offer an adult, teen and children's program. The children's program is for all kids through 6th grade – with both a Readers' Club and a Read-to-Me Club offered.

Participants register via Beanstack through our website at newportbeachlibrary.org and keep track of their reading time and activities to earn digital badges and physical prizes. Once registered, readers can pick up a free, new paperback book at their preferred Newport Beach Library location. Participants who complete the program will be entered into a GRAND PRIZE drawing. Readers can also write

or draw book reviews. Each submitted book review will be entered into a weekly prize drawing.

Be sure join us for exciting craft activities and interactive programs each week!

- Opening Day Prize Drawing | June 11
- Under-the Stars Crafts | June 21, 22, 23, 25
- Stuffed Animal Summer Camp | June 28, 29, 30, July 2
- Out-in-the-Garden Crafts | July 5, 6, 7, 9
- Summer Seek and Find Challenge | July 11-16
- Sailing-the -Seas Crafts | July 19, 20, 21, 23
- Kids Imagine Nation Musical Group | July 30 |

Central Library Civic Center Lawn

We hope to see you at the library this summer! Happy reading!

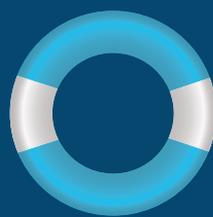
The Summer Reading Program is generously funded by the Friends of the Library

Central Library 1000 Avocado Ave., Newport Beach, CA 92660
949/717-3800 • www.newportbeachlibrary.org/kids
Mariners Branch 1300 Irvine Ave., Newport Beach, CA 92660
949/717-3838
Balboa Branch 100 East Balboa Blvd., Balboa, CA 92661
949/644-3076
Corona Del Mar Branch 410 Marigold Ave., Corona Del Mar, CA 92625
949/644-3075

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Orange County Department of Education



Dr. Al Mijares
Superintendent

After moving to a farm in Westminster, Felicitas and Gonzalo Mendez sought to enroll their three children at 17th Street School, one of two elementary campuses in the city.

The year was 1943, and the Mendez children and their parents were all American citizens. Still, they were turned away from 17th Street, then known as “the White school,” and directed instead to Hoover

Elementary, designated for students of Mexican heritage.

That set the stage for the groundbreaking case of *Mendez v. Westminster*, which struck down the legal justification for forced school segregation in California and laid the foundation for the U.S. Supreme Court’s landmark *Brown v. Board* decision.

While U.S. District Court Judge Paul J. McCormick originally ordered local school districts to end discriminatory practices against students of Mexican descent in February 1946, his ruling was appealed to the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. It was upheld there a year later — on April 14, 1947, exactly one day before Jackie Robinson broke baseball’s color barrier.

This past April marked the 75th anniversary of the conclusion of the Mendez case, which had profound ramifications that reached far beyond our county’s borders. Yet the case wasn’t widely known in the decades that followed — even in Orange County. That began to change when Sylvia Mendez, one of the children at the heart of the lawsuit initiated by five families, began raising awareness at her mother’s request more than two decades ago.

Since then, the Mendez case has been the subject of news articles, books and documentaries, and it was even commemorated with a U.S. postage stamp. In 2000, the Santa Ana Unified School District opened Gonzalo Felicitas Mendez Fundamental Intermediate School. The Los Angeles Unified School District also named a high school after Gonzalo and Felicitas Mendez, who became the subject of a Google Doodle.

The family’s story came full circle in 2019, when the Mendez family was celebrated by the Westminster School District, which changed its marquee to read “In Honor of La Familia Mendez.”

“This is such an honor for my father, Gonzalo, and mother, Felicitas Mendez,” Sylvia Mendez said. “My father grew up here in Westminster, and we fought the case and won it. And after it was won, nobody said, ‘Gracias, Gonzalo.’ But look at the wonderful ‘gracias’ we are getting today from this wonderful school district.”

Westminster High School also dedicated its new learning pavilion in Sylvia Mendez’s honor in 2021. Meanwhile, OCDE, which produced a scripted podcast on the case in 2017, has teamed up with the City of Westminster for the creation of an interactive park and trail to recognize *Mendez v. Westminster* and its legacy. Both public spaces are set to open this year.

The Mendez case may still be less known than other high-profile legal battles, including *Brown v. Board*. But it’s a critically important turning point for our nation, with reverberations that extended into all areas of society where separate-but-equal policies stifled equity for all citizens.

Keep in mind that this case was pursued by five regular families who emptied their bank accounts and spent years of their lives working to guarantee access for generations of students they would never meet. For that, we owe them an extraordinary debt of gratitude, and we owe it to them to remember.

As we mark 75 years since *Mendez v. Westminster*, this anniversary is not simply about acknowledging an historic injustice. It should be celebrated as an affirmation of our shared values, a reference point to measure how far we’ve come, and a reminder that ordinary people can do extraordinary things when they band together behind a just case and put children first