FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Inclusion in Action: Encinitas Union School District Students Choose to Include and Promote Accessibility Through Hands-On Experiences

Encinitas, CA – February 9, 2024 – In an endeavor towards fostering inclusivity and embracing diversity, all nine of Encinitas Union's elementary schools have recently participated in a series of events aimed at promoting inclusion, accessibility, and dedicated to fostering inclusivity and celebrating diversity across all nine of its elementary schools.

The annual, week-long events brought together students, educators, and community leaders to engage in meaningful dialogue and practical demonstrations centered around inclusivity. By embracing inclusion, we create a space where all children feel heard, respected, and valued. This not only enhances their academic experiences but also contributes to the development of empathy and adds to their experience of being a Skilled Communicator, and a Confident Collaborator.

Additionally, each school highlighted an "abilities" celebrity gallery walk and hosted inspirational assemblies featuring remarkable blind athletes who shared their personal narratives of triumph and perseverance. Through these compelling stories, students became innovative thinkers, discovering the transformative power of determination and resilience in the face of challenges.

Aligned with the district's Learner Profile, students actively participated in immersive activities, experiencing firsthand the realities of dyslexia, braille literacy, and adaptive sports. Witnessing their teachers engaging in wheelchair basketball sessions further underscored the importance of fostering empathy and a welcoming environment where diversity thrives and every voice is valued.

EUSD's Superintendent Andree Grey remarked, "I am always impressed with how our Special Education Parent Council, PTAs, TRAC Teachers, and Specialists work together to ensure all students have an opportunity to learn and grow with inclusive practices. Of course, the overarching idea is that all children should have access to their dreams and inclusion."

Beyond the week-long activities, families received suggested home-based initiatives to extend learning experiences, fostering sensory exploration and replicable ability simulations. Through these efforts, students are equipped to champion inclusivity within their communities year-round.

At Encinitas Union School District, inclusivity is not just a week-long endeavor—it's ingrained in our District Learner Profile. We continue to nurture the global citizen in each student.

On January 16th, the EUSD Board of Trustees passed and adopted resolution 07-2324 in support of Abilities Awareness and Inclusion in Action. As stated in the adoption, "The Encinitas Union School District recognizes the importance of giving students and staff opportunities for

greater understanding and acceptance of individuals with disabilities and designates support for Abilities Awareness / Inclusion in Action throughout the year."

Photos Below:

- Students at Ocean Knoll walk through the gallery of celebrities with "abilities".
- El Camino Creek teachers work as a team to learn how to play basketball while in a wheelchair.
- OPE students create art using their feet to better understand the challenges faced by those with fine motor skill limitations.
- An EUSD student experiences what it is like to read by braille.
- Mission Estancia students create colorful "Choose to Include" reminders to hang around the school.
- A legally blind star athlete and member of the U.S. Blind Hockey team, Blake Steineke spoke at all EUSD schools to share his story of perseverance when faced with adversity.



Photographer: Jocelyn Leilani



Photographer: Lauren Ardigo



Photographer: Monica Lee



Photographer: Tracie Davee



Photographer: Kelly Griffin



Photographer: Megan Power