



## County Schools' Student Events Are Set to Be Held Virtually This Year



*Congratulations to all Mock Trial teams advancing to the semifinal round this year.*

Happy New Year! The San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools office is continuing to connect students through virtual academic competitions. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, students have the opportunity to take part in events such as Mock Trial and Academic Decathlon.

The 2020 year ended with a promising start with the 39<sup>th</sup> annual Mock Trial competition. Twenty-six teams representing 23 high schools participated virtually in the four preliminary rounds that ended Dec. 9, 2020. Each team took turns playing both the prosecution and defendant roles in an aiding and abetting case with a real judge and scoring attorneys from both the San Bernardino County District Attorney's and Public Defender's offices. Redlands High School, Rancho Cucamonga High School, Los Osos High School and Cajon High School were preliminary round finalists and will advance to the semifinals. They will compete virtually over a two-day period from Jan. 20-21 for a spot in the event finals on Jan. 23.

Decathletes will have their time to shine at the San Bernardino County Academic Decathlon. More than 280 students are expected to compete in the 38<sup>th</sup> annual competition. The virtual event begins Jan. 13.

The events season continues with the San Bernardino, Inyo and Mono (SIM) Science and Engineering Fair,

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## Newsroom Spotlights

### Desert Mountain Children's Center Hosts Holiday Drive-Thru Event



Desert Mountain Children's Center shared a mountain of holiday spirit on Saturday, Dec. 19 during a holiday drive-thru event. Food boxes and toys were distributed to more than 500 children throughout the day.

[See the photos.](#)

### San Bernardino County Board of Education Honors Regional Teachers of the Year



The San Bernardino County Board of Education recognized five Regional Teachers of the Year during their first meeting of the new year.

[See post here.](#)

History Day and Spelling Bee following the Academic Decathlon. Each competition will take place virtually in March.

Academic competitions enrich the high school experience for many students, as they keep them connected and engaged with their peers, teachers and coaches. Distance learning may have changed the delivery method for events, but it has not affected the spirit of determination and achievement for San Bernardino County students.

## Countywide Network of Support for Suicide Prevention

It was inspiring to see the energy and passion demonstrated by our community partners who participated in our recent suicide prevention webinar. The Partnership, Collaboration and State Mandates for Suicide Prevention in San Bernardino County K-12 Schools event was held on Dec. 4, 2020. It was



organized by the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools' Innovation and Engagement branch in collaboration with the San Bernardino County Department of Behavioral Health.

More than 200 attendees, representing 22 school districts within the three county regions, participated in the development of a countywide suicide prevention framework. Overall, 86 percent of participants shared positive feedback on the webinar.

The event emphasized the need to prioritize mental health in schools through collaboration and community partnerships. Students from Redlands East Valley High School, Redlands Unified, and the Healthy Rancho Cucamonga Youth Leaders Program, City of Rancho Cucamonga, showcased their collective work in our surrounding communities and stressed the importance of youth advocacy. In addition, mental health experts and community leaders discussed key components to a robust comprehensive suicide prevention resource network.

I am grateful for the strong partnership we have with the San Bernardino County Department of Behavioral Health. This partnership allows us to provide mental health programs and resources to our students who are in most need of support.

As county superintendent, I commend those who participated in finding new ways to help raise awareness of mental health and address suicide prevention. These crucial conversations are essential to establishing a countywide comprehensive framework that promotes connectedness and emotional well-being among our

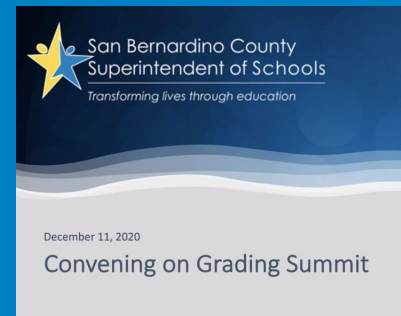
## New Round of Laptops Distributed to School Districts Across San Bernardino County



County Superintendent Ted Alejandre and San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors Chairman Curt Hagman visited the SBCSS Support Center on Dec. 8 to help distribute a new round of laptops to school districts in San Bernardino County.

[Watch the video here.](#)

## Grading Summit Convened To Reverse Failing Grade Trend



Educators in San Bernardino County met on Dec. 11 to collaborate at the SBCSS Convening on Grading Summit. Through the lens of equity, participants focused on strategies to support students with failing grades in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Read more here.](#)

## Meet the 2020 Operation Recognition Veterans Diploma Project Graduates



youth and fosters a countywide network of support for our school communities.

## Student Success Partnerships Gives Back to The Homeless



With homelessness on the rise amid the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic impact, the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools' Student Success Partnership distributed 141 holiday lunch bags to the homeless within San Bernardino County.

The lunch bags were prepared by foster youth students during the Student Success Partnership's virtual Give Back Academy.

The purpose of the academy is to show empathy to others who are less fortunate and brainstorm ways to help those in need. Students were given food items to fill the packages and art supplies to decorate them with their own words of encouragement: "You matter; The world is yours; You are loved."

The Student Success Partnership is a collaboration between the University of Redlands, School of Education, San Bernardino City Unified and SBCSS Foster Youth Services coordinating program. The partnership provides leadership and development opportunities to help improve educational outcomes for youth in foster care and group homes within the Inland Empire.

The Give Back Academy is one of three academies provided by the Student Success Partnership. The joint partnership offers a variety of educational enrichment activities, field trips, community service opportunities and training programs to inspire foster youth to explore their futures.

The Give Back Academy connects and engages students through compassion and empathy for others. This important partnership plants a 'seed of hope' for a better future for our at-risk youth. I am incredibly proud of the work done by SBCSS staff and our education partners to support our most vulnerable students.



Congratulations to the Class of 2020! In partnership with the San Bernardino County Department of Veterans Affairs, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools hosted Operation Recognition Veterans Diploma Project on December 14.

Learn more this year's graduates by visiting the [VDP website](#).

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