



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 10, 2024

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Sixth Grade Students Give TEDx Presentations Using Both Spanish and English

Spanish Dual Language Immersion students at Paul Ecke Central and Capri Elementary present TEDx Talk series, showcasing bilingual abilities through extensive research projects.

ENCINITAS, CA – Sixth grade Dual Language Immersion (DLI) students at Paul Ecke Central and Capri Elementary showcased their bilingual skills last week while presenting in their school TEDx Talk series. As part of DLI, sixth graders in the program give a 5-10 minute TEDx talk using both English and Spanish. The TEDx talks serve as a capstone project for DLI students to put their years of Spanish study to the test.

Students prepare their presentations for nearly two months. They decide on topics, complete research, create accompanying visual presentations, learn any additional Spanish words to support their topics and work with their teachers to make adjustments.

“The TEDx Talks for our 6th Grade students provide a wonderful opportunity for them to research and present on topics that are important to them,” said Paul Ecke Central principal, Wesley Sechrest. “This culminating activity empowers students through curiosity and intrinsic motivation to become experts and teach others about their chosen subjects. It is a moment for them to shine, showcasing their hard work and personal growth.”

Students at Paul Ecke presented on a variety of complex topics such as quantum computers, nanobots in medicine, social media, a.i. in education, universal healthcare, physics, space exploration, and more. Capri Elementary students presented in groups of three or four, each group selecting a Latin American country and a specific challenge their chosen country is facing. Their topics ranged from deforestation in Guatemala and Argentina, to street dogs in Costa Rica and human rights issues in Columbia and Panama.

“One of the things I like about our TEDx presentations is that our students feel empowered when they use their voice to share what’s important and relevant to them,” said Paul Ecke DLI teacher Lubin Piedras Avila. “Through their research, they have the opportunity to learn more about worldwide issues and technological advances that could change our society, and share these ideas with an authentic audience.”

While this project would normally be a huge undertaking for any sixth grade student, presenting half of it in Spanish adds an extra layer of difficulty. Students rose to the challenge, presenting masterfully to an audience consisting of parents, teachers and district staff.

“The first time I heard the TEDx talks, I was astounded by the seamless fluency with which our students navigated both languages,” said Stacy Crum, principal at Capri. “The distinctions between native English

and native Spanish speakers were almost undetectable. The TEDx presentations epitomize the incredible advantage our students gain from the DLI program, preparing them to step into adulthood as confident, bilingual individuals,” said Principal Crum. “Achieving such linguistic proficiency at just 12 years old is truly extraordinary.”

The DLI program is a challenging and rigorous academic program in which Spanish is used as the primary language of instruction. The program implements a 90/10-immersion model in which kindergarten students receive 90% of their instruction in Spanish and 10% in English. The percentage of English instruction increases until core subjects are taught in Spanish for 50% of the day and English for 50% of the day in fourth through sixth grades.

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ABOUT ENCINITAS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

Encinitas Union School District’s (EUSD) vision is to ignite the limitless potential of all learners. EUSD works to cultivate values of joy, belonging, integrity, service and innovation for its approximately 4,300 students in Kindergarten through 6th grade. EUSD serves the city of Encinitas and the Rancho La Costa area of South Carlsbad in North San Diego County. All nine EUSD schools have been recognized as California Distinguished Schools and serve a diverse and varied community.