



# HACIENDA LA PUENTE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE *January 2025*



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## *Superintendent's* **MESSAGE**

Dear HLPUSD Community,

Happy New Year! As we step into the second half of the 2024-25 school year, there is a renewed sense of excitement and anticipation for the opportunities and milestones ahead.

This month, we honored Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, reflecting on his dedication to service, equality, and justice. We also celebrated Lunar New Year across the District and observed the important milestone of the 100th day of school on January 21.

Our high schools hosted Quad Nights for middle school students to explore the opportunities awaiting them at the next level, while numerous campuses also organized Open Houses to engage with current families and showcase our dynamic programs.

We also held a Career Technical Education (CTE) Middle School Symposium in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Office of Education and the Golden State Pathways Program to showcase our diverse CTE pathways. The event featured classroom visits, breakout sessions with CTE educators, and presentations from student ambassadors in biotechnology, aviation, and other pathways. These experiences gave attendees a deeper understanding of the real-world skills and experiences our students are gaining.

January is also School Board Appreciation Month, and I want to express my sincere gratitude to our Board members for their leadership, dedication, and unwavering support of our District. Their commitment plays a key role in ensuring the continued success of our students, teachers, staff, and all HLPUSD.

As we continue to focus on student success, I'd like to share a few important reminders. Enrollment for TK through 12th grade opened on January 21, and we encourage families to explore the exceptional opportunities HLPUSD has to offer. Additionally, our LCAP Survey for students (grades 6-12), staff, and parents is open. If you have not done so already, please take a moment to share your input with us by Friday, January 31. Your feedback is essential in helping us shape the future of our District.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Whether through volunteering, attending events, or cheering on our students, your involvement makes HLPUSD a special place. Let's continue our journey of growth, excellence, and pride.

Sincerely,

Dr. Alfonso Jiménez, Superintendent  
Hacienda La Puente Unified School District





*Grazide Elementary School students create cards for Santa with help of a Glen A. Wilson High School Teens2Tots club volunteers on December 20.*

## In Case You Missed it: Student Non-Profit Hosts Holiday Fair for Elementary Kids

Wrapping up the fall semester with joy and creativity, Glen A. Wilson High School's student-led, non-profit Teens2Tots brought holiday cheer to Grazide Elementary School on December 20 with its annual Christmas Fair. Excited students moved between activity stations, creating holiday-themed artwork and playing festive games, all guided by enthusiastic high school volunteers.

Co-founded in 2022 by Glen A. Wilson High School students Heeju Bahk and Stephanie Feng, Teens2Tots provides young students with accessible academic and social support. Their initiatives range from craft workshops to after-school tutoring programs, fostering connections between high school mentors and younger students. This year's Christmas Fair welcomed more than 100 transitional kindergarten and kindergarten

students, demonstrating the growing impact of Teens2Tots within the Hacienda La Puente Unified community.

"Organizing an event of this size was no small feat," said Feng. "But our experiences working with local schools like Cedarlane Academy and Bixby Elementary in the past really prepared us. Seeing the kids' excitement and hearing them proudly share their finished craft projects made all our hard work worthwhile. My favorite part was reading their adorable letters to Santa!"

Stay up to date with our current news and events by clicking [HERE](#)!

*Story produced by Glen A. Wilson High School Senior Skylar Fan*



## REMINDER: Celebrate Our Fall/Winter Achievements

As Hacienda La Puente Unified School District reflects on the highlights of the fall and winter months, the community is invited to revisit our Fall/Winter Digital Newsletter. This edition celebrates the remarkable accomplishments of students, staff, and schools, beginning with a look back at the exciting first day of school, captured in a vibrant video that set the tone for the year.

The newsletter highlights innovative programs, community initiatives, and key milestones reached during the first five months of instruction. It also features stories that showcase the dedication and hard work of students, teachers, and community members, all working together to achieve excellence.

Read quick news bites and watch short videos featured in our Fall/Winter 2024-25 digital newsletter [HERE!](#)



## Hacienda La Puente Unified Youth Court Program Earns Prestigious Golden Bell Award for Fostering Student Growth



*Hacienda La Puente Unified Youth Court students celebrate earning a 2024 California School Board Association Golden Bell Award during a program event on December 10.*

A Hacienda La Puente Unified restorative justice youth court program that promotes an innovative, proactive approach to reducing out-of-school suspensions has been recognized by the California School Boards Association (CSBA) with its prestigious Golden Bell Award.

The Youth Court Program offers students in grades 6-12 a peer-driven alternative to suspension. By encouraging accountability, reflection, and understanding of their actions' impact, along with support from Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) resources, the program has contributed to a 40% decrease in out-of-school suspensions for grades 6-12 during the 2023-24 school year.

"Youth court has a positive impact on students and their families," HLPUSD Executive Director of Student and Family Services Dr. Karen Dabney-Lieras said. "Respondents take responsibility for their actions and student jurors build upon their leadership skills and listening abilities as they cultivate empathy and understanding. All respondents are required to return and serve as jurors at least once, but many decide to join our program permanently."

Youth Court has 12 leader jurors, made up of both middle and high school students, and tries approximately 35 cases a year, which are referred by District schools. A typical Youth Court trial has six jurors, with students serving as forepersons, clerks, and bailiffs. The students are assisted by Youth Court program coordinator Amanda Cevallos, program advisors Jessica Lujan and Vanessa Ortiz, program translator and parent liaison Cindy Jaquez, and an adult judge.



*La Puente High School senior and varsity basketball point guard Vanessa Gutierrez shoots a free throw during a game against Pomona High School on January 7.*

## Balancing the Books and Breaking Records: La Puente High School Senior Excels in All Areas

From dominating on the court to excelling in advanced coursework, La Puente High School senior Vanessa Gutierrez embodies the essence of a well-rounded student. Whether competing in sports, managing a packed academic schedule, or serving as a leader among her peers, Gutierrez consistently demonstrates dedication and drive.

Gutierrez has participated in volleyball, basketball, and track throughout all four years of high school. She also serves as the captain and point guard of the varsity basketball team, leading her teammates as they work toward a strong season.

"I encourage young girls to embrace every opportunity and never let anyone tell you what you can't accomplish," Gutierrez said. "This District has given me incredible teachers, coaches, and mentors, along with the support of my family, and it has shaped me into the person I am today."

In addition to year-long athletics, Gutierrez has taken on a leadership role as the president of the Renaissance program, where she works to build school spirit, recognize student achievements, and foster a positive campus culture. Her leadership journey began at Sparks Middle School, where she was one of five students selected for the La Puente High School Leadership program.

Upon graduation this spring, Gutierrez hopes to attend an out-of-state university, where she plans to major in sports business, combining her passion for athletics with her academic goals to build a successful career in the sports industry.



## YOUR VOICE MATTERS: 2025 LCAP Survey

Hacienda La Puente Unified is inviting students in grades 6-12, staff, and parents/guardians to participate in the 2025 Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) Survey. The annual survey is a vital opportunity for the District to gather input and feedback that will help shape its future priorities and initiatives.

The survey will close on Thursday, February 13, and all eligible participants are encouraged to share their insights and experiences. The feedback collected will play a crucial role in developing a plan that reflects the needs and aspirations of the HLPUSD community.

Scan the QR code or click [HERE](#) to take the survey!

HACIENDA LA PUENTE  
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

### Local Control Accountability Plan Community Survey

January 13 - February 13, 2025

Seeking feedback from:

- Students (grades 6-12)
- Staff
- Parents/families

Scan the QR Code or visit:  
[bit.ly/HLPUSD-LCAP25](https://bit.ly/HLPUSD-LCAP25)  
(link is case-sensitive)

Survey is available in English,  
Spanish and Mandarin.

# HLPUSD'S WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

*Proud to be, creating mental harmony.*



## January Wellness Wednesday Recap: Tips for Sticking to Your Goals

Hacienda La Puente Unified is committed to providing robust resources and services that support all students and foster healthy and happy school communities where our students, staff, and families feel supported, respected, and valued.

With the start of a new year, Hacienda La Puente Unified is sharing tips for helping keep yourself and your loved ones on track to sticking to their goals.

The Greater Good Science Center (GGSC) outlines the best ways to stay motivated and disciplined to pursue our best intentions. Whether you are looking to start a new routine or break an old habit, here are some things you can do to ensure success:

- 1. Encourage Confidence** – know that you are fully capable of achieving what you set your mind to and focus on building a vision of success so you can see your end goal.
- 2. Foster Connections** – form special friendships or bonds over similar goals. Maybe offer to be a partner in action or accountability and find out what others need to feel supported.
- 3. Promote Self-Reflection** – check in daily on your progress or reassess if your original goal is no longer serving you.
- 4. Be Generous with Compassion** – expect setbacks and know that things will not always go according to schedule.
- 5. Celebrate Your Small Achievements** – small actions and successes will lead to achieving your overall goal. Be patient, persistent, and celebrate everything that brings you closer to the finish line.

Click [HERE](#) for the most current news and events!



## Public Meeting Notice: Board of Education

An in-person/virtual Regular Board of Education Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 13 at the District Office, 15959 East Gale Ave., City of Industry.

For more information on the Board agenda, how to address the board, and access the meeting, please visit [www.hlp schools.org/board](http://www.hlp schools.org/board).



## Board of Education Bond/School Improvements and HLPUSD Celebrations

Hacienda La Puente Unified encourages the community to stay up to date with our Board meetings, including our school site and Bond improvement updates and HLPUSD celebrations. Please visit the Board of Education [webpage](#) to catch up on the District's successes.

# YOU'RE INVITED!

— 10TH ANNUAL —

## HACIENDA LA PUENTE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT STATE OF THE DISTRICT

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2025 at 6 P.M.  
Hacienda Heights Community Center  
1234, Valencia Ave., Hacienda Heights

# YOU'RE INVITED: State of the District

Hacienda La Puente Unified is thrilled to invite you to our 10th Annual State of the District! This vibrant celebration honors the District's remarkable journey, achievements, and vision for the future.

**When: 6 p.m. Thursday, February 6**

**Where: Hacienda Heights Community Center  
1234 Valencia Ave., Hacienda Heights**

Celebrate with us as Superintendent Dr. Alfonso Jiménez reflects on 2024 milestones, pays tribute to the District's journey through the decades, highlights advancements in academics, technology, and facilities, and shares exciting plans for 2025. The event is set to include lively performances and the premiere of the 2024-25 Showcase Video, a heartfelt look at our District's incredible journey through the eyes of alumni, educators, and students.