

C-VUSD CONNECTS

INNOVATIVE EDUCATION THAT INSPIRES EVERY STUDENT'S UNLIMITED POTENTIAL



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Transparent communication is the foundation of trust, and trust is what builds relationships and strengthens our partnership as a school community. By keeping you informed, engaged, and connected, we ensure that everyone—students, families, staff, and educational partners—feels valued and empowered. Our commitment to effective communication goes beyond sharing information; it creates a sense of belonging and pride in our schools. Through strategic promotion and marketing, we highlight the incredible programs and achievements that make Covina-Valley Unified a great choice for families. This not only celebrates the excellence within our District but also plays a critical role in maintaining strong enrollment and ensuring our schools continue to thrive. I'm also proud to share that our Communications Team has been recognized with five awards for excellence in Communication and Public Relations. This achievement reflects our dedication to keeping our community informed and engaged. Thank you for your continued support as we work together to provide the best for our students and community.

Dr. Elizabeth Eminhizer

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP (ERP) HONOR ROLL

The annual Honor Roll, presented by Educational Results Partnership (ERP), recognizes schools and districts preparing students for success using objective achievement data. Supported by business leaders, this program highlights successful schools, promotes collaboration among educators, and shares best practices. For 2024, the following C-VUSD schools were honored:

- **Barranca Elementary**
- **Grovecenter Elementary**
- **Manzanita Elementary**
- **Merwin Elementary**
- **Mesa Elementary**
- **Rowland Avenue Elementary**
- **Workman Avenue Elementary**



Stay Connected With Us!

519 E Badillo St, Covina, CA 91723
626.974.7000 • www.c-vusd.org

 @covinavalleyUSD

SOUTH HILLS LIBRARY RIBBON CUTTING

South Hills High School celebrated the grand unveiling of its innovative new library on January 23, with students, employees, families, and community members joining in the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Designed to inspire and support student success, the cutting-edge learning hub features updated technology, dynamic workspaces for individual and collaborative use, and an imaginative atmosphere tailored to the needs of South Hills students. The event featured remarks from Board of Education Vice President Maria Caceres and Board Member Maria Cruz, DSW, who highlighted the District's commitment to creating inspiring spaces for student learning. Special recognition was also given by state and local leaders, including representatives from the City of West Covina, State Senator Susan Rubio's Office, State Assemblywoman Blanca Rubio's Office, and Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis's Office. The South Hills High Jazz Band added to the excitement with a lively performance, and guided tours showcased the library's advanced digital resources, flexible seating, and interactive study areas.



DID YOU KNOW? SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS ACT SIGNED INTO LAW

H.R. 82 eliminates the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), two federal rules that reduced Social Security payments for workers eligible for public pensions based on work not covered by Social Security, including CalSTRS members. California public school educators do not pay into Social Security, so they do not receive Social Security benefits for their CalSTRS-covered employment. While H.R. 82 does not impact CalSTRS retirement benefits, members who qualified for Social Security while working non-teaching jobs (or educator jobs not covered by CalSTRS) are now eligible to receive a Social Security benefit without being offset by the WEP. In addition, members may now be eligible to receive spousal or survivor Social Security benefits without being offset by the GPO.

[Click here visit the SSA eligibility website](#)

AIR QUALITY UPDATES: WHAT THEY MEAN FOR SCHOOLS

C-VUSD closely monitors air quality conditions and makes decisions regarding student activities based on the most current information. To assist our community, click the links below to access helpful guides from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and AirNow.gov:

- [Air Quality Guide for Activities](#)
- [Air Quality and Outdoor Activity Guidance for Schools](#)
- [Check the Current Air Quality Index by Zip Code](#)
- [Recursos sobre la calidad del aire en español](#)


The District remains committed to ensuring the health and safety of all students. Please stay tuned to our communication channels for updates, and thank you for your continued trust and support.

Air Quality Guide for Particle Pollution		
Hazardous particle pollution is one of the nation's most common air pollutants. Use the chart below to help reduce your exposure and protect your health. Visit AirNow.gov for your local air quality forecast (www.airnow.gov).		
Air Quality Index	Who Needs to be Concerned?	What Should I Do?
Good (0-50)	It's a great day to be active outside.	
Moderate (51-100)	Some people who may be unusually sensitive to particle pollution.	Unusually sensitive people: Consider making outdoor activities shorter and less intense. Watch for symptoms such as coughing or shortness of breath. These are signs to take it easy. Everyone else: It's a good day to be active outside.
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (101-150)	Active groups include people with heart or lung disease, older adults, children and teenagers, pregnant people, asthmatics, and outdoor workers.	Sensitive groups: Make outdoor activities shorter and less intense. It's OK to be active outdoors, but take more breaks. Watch for symptoms such as coughing or shortness of breath. People with asthma: Follow your asthma action plan and keep quick relief medicine handy. People with heart disease: Symptoms such as chest pain, dizziness, or shortness of breath, or unusual fatigue may indicate a serious problem. If you have any of these, contact your health care provider.
Unhealthy (151-200)	Everyone	Sensitive groups: Avoid long or intense outdoor activities. Consider rescheduling or moving activities indoors.* Everyone else: Reduce long or intense activities. Take more breaks during outdoor activities.
Very Unhealthy (201-300)	Everyone	Sensitive groups: Avoid all physical activity outdoors, especially for those when air quality is better or more activities indoors.* Everyone else: Avoid long or intense activities. Consider rescheduling or moving activities indoors.*
Hazardous (301-500)	Everyone	Sensitive groups: Remain indoors and keep activity levels low. Follow tips for keeping particle levels low indoors.*

*Note: If you don't have an air conditioner, staying inside with the windows closed may be dangerous in extremely hot weather. If you are hot, go outdoors with an air conditioner or check with your local government for hot and if cooling centers are available in your community.

Guía de la calidad del aire sobre la contaminación por partículas		
La contaminación por partículas dañinas es uno de los contaminantes atmosféricos más comunes en nuestra país. Visite el website que le ayudará a reducir su exposición a las partículas dañinas y proteger su salud. Consulte en www.airnow.gov el pronóstico para la calidad del aire local.		
Índice de la calidad del aire	¿Quién se debe preocupar?	¿Qué debe hacer?
Buena (0-50)	Es un día excelente para realizar actividades al aire libre!	
Modorada (51-100)	Personas que pueden ser especialmente sensibles a la contaminación por partículas.	Personas especialmente sensibles: Considere reducir las actividades que requieren esfuerzos prolongados o intensos al aire libre. Preste atención a los síntomas de la contaminación, como la tos o la dificultad para respirar. Este es un día para estar activo al aire libre. Para el resto de la población: Es un buen día para estar activo al aire libre.
Insalubre para Grupos Sensibles (101-150)	Los grupos sensibles incluyen a las personas que tienen enfermedades cardíacas o pulmonares, a las personas con asma, a las personas embarazadas, a las personas mayores, a los niños, a los adolescentes.	Grupos sensibles: Reduzca las actividades que requieren esfuerzos prolongados o intensos. Está bien hacer actividades al aire libre pero debe tomar pausas y hacer actividades menos intensas. Preste atención a los síntomas de la contaminación, como la tos o la dificultad para respirar. Las personas sensibles deben seguir su plan de acción de salud y tener a mano medicamentos de acción rápida.
Insalubre (151-200)	Todas	Los grupos sensibles: Evite las actividades que requieren esfuerzos prolongados o intensos. Considere reprogramar o mover las actividades dentro de casa. Para el resto de la población: Reduzca las actividades que requieren esfuerzos prolongados o intensos. Descanse a menudo durante las actividades al aire libre.
Muy Insalubre (201-300)	Todas	Grupos sensibles: Evite todas las actividades físicas al aire libre. Para el resto de la población: Evite las actividades físicas al aire libre. Considere reprogramar o mover las actividades dentro de casa. Para el resto de la población: Reduzca las actividades que requieren esfuerzos prolongados o intensos. Descanse a menudo durante las actividades al aire libre.
Peligrosa (301-500)	Todas	Evite todas las actividades físicas al aire libre. Las personas sensibles deben permanecer dentro de casa y evitar salir al exterior. Si sale, debe usar un equipo de protección respiratoria. Consulte con su médico si tiene problemas de salud.

Stay Connected With Us!

519 E Badillo St, Covina, CA 91723
626.974.7000 • [www.c-vusd.org](#)
 @covinavalleyUSD



AMERICA'S BEST SCHOOLS



Manzanita Elementary School has been recognized with the prestigious 2025 America's Best Schools Award, and **Barranca Elementary School** has earned the distinction of being an Honor Roll School. The America's Best Schools Award celebrates public schools that excel in educational equity and excellence, where every demographic group achieves impressive academic results. Schools must meet rigorous criteria to earn this recognition, highlighting their commitment to providing exceptional opportunities for all students. This recognition not only honors the hard work and dedication of our schools but also provides an opportunity to share their successes and best practices to inspire continuous improvement across the nation. Congratulations to Manzanita and Barranca Elementary Schools for this incredible achievement!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHANGES TO SENSITIVE LOCATIONS POLICY.

Covina-Valley Unified School District understands that recent changes to the Sensitive Location Policy may have caused confusion or concern. We want to reassure our community that systems and laws are in place to protect student privacy and ensure our campuses remain safe spaces for learning.

Key measures include:

- Single points of public entry at all campuses, with visitors required to check in at the office. (Security fencing at Fairvalley is in progress.)
- Strict protocols for releasing student information, which is only shared with law enforcement or outside agencies with explicit parent/guardian permission or a verified subpoena.
- Legal reviews of subpoenas or court orders by the district administration in consultation with legal counsel.




TRAWEAK RECEIVES PROJECT LEAD THE WAY GRANT

Traweak Middle School has received a \$10,000 Project Lead the Way (PLTW) grant, generously sponsored by Phillips 66. This funding will provide vital support to the school's exceptional engineering and robotics program, enabling students to explore innovative STEM opportunities and develop real-world problem-solving skills. Grants like this play a crucial role in supporting school programs, ensuring students have access to enriching, hands-on learning experiences. The grant highlights the commitment of both Traweak and its community partners to fostering a robust learning environment that inspires the next generation of engineers and innovators.

Stay Connected With Us!

519 E Badillo St, Covina, CA 91723
626.974.7000 • www.c-vusd.org

 @covinavalleyUSD

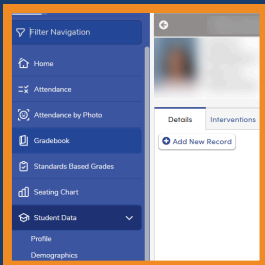


SOUTH HILLS HIGH SCHOOL EARNS COLLEGE BOARD'S AP® COMPUTER SCIENCE FEMALE DIVERSITY AWARD

South Hills High School has earned the College Board's AP® Computer Science Female Diversity Award for expanding young women's access to AP Computer Science A (CSA). This prestigious recognition highlights the school's ongoing commitment to promoting diversity in STEM education and empowering young women to explore computer science. By fostering an inclusive learning environment and encouraging participation in advanced coursework, South Hills High School continues to break barriers and inspire the next generation of innovators. This achievement reflects the dedication of educators, students, and the community to advancing equity and excellence in education.



click the image above to
login into Incident IQ for
AERIES Resources



DID YOU KNOW? AERIES FOR TEACHERS

Teachers have access to student Discipline and Intervention screens in the Aeries Student Information System. These tools are available to help you better support and understand students' needs.

What You Can Do with This Access:

- View discipline records to gain insights into behavioral patterns or incidents that may impact learning.
- Review existing intervention plans to see strategies in place for individual students.
- Collaborate effectively with counselors, administrators, and support staff by staying informed about student support efforts.
- Request Pre-Referral Interventions (see the bottom image on the left)

How to Access These Screens:

1. Log in to Aeries as you normally would.
2. Locate the Discipline and Interventions tabs within your teacher dashboard.
3. Select a student to view the relevant details.

We encourage you to utilize these resources to enhance your understanding of students and to help foster a supportive learning environment. If you need additional support in navigating these features, please don't hesitate to reach out to your site administrator.

DID YOU KNOW?

STAYING CONNECTED – LITERALLY

As part of ongoing upgrades, new projectors may not include VGA connections. However, TSS ensures that all classrooms remain equipped with hard-wired video connections for teacher laptops, including VGA (with adapters) or HDMI cables as needed. Additionally, all classrooms have the ability to connect wirelessly. While there are no plans to eliminate hard-wired connections, TSS remains committed to supporting these options to ensure seamless integration with classroom technology.

LET'S RECYCLE

Teachers and staff are encouraged to recycle construction paper whenever possible, as recycled materials can be repurposed for a variety of classroom projects. Recycled construction paper is especially useful for afterschool programs, primary grades, and preschool programs. Each site and department is recommended to have a designated recycled paper box to make this process easy. Thank you for supporting sustainability in our schools!

Stay Connected With Us!

519 E Badillo St, Covina, CA 91723
626.974.7000 • www.c-vusd.org

@cavinavalleUSD



EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

NOVEMBER 2024



Shari Tavarez

Shari Tavarez, TK Aide at Merwin Elementary, is recognized for her exceptional dedication and positive impact on both students and staff. She approaches each day with professionalism and optimism, consistently ensuring student success. Beyond her daily duties, Shari enriches TK and Kinder classrooms with her passion for music, significantly enhancing learning experiences.



Joanna Melka

Joanna Melka, a Title I Intervention Teacher at Rowland Avenue, excels in driving student success through data-driven ELA interventions, with 84% of her students showing improvement. She also leads the Accelerated Reader program, organizes literacy events, and manages the school library, significantly enhancing the educational environment.



Manuel Vazquez

Manuel Vazquez, a custodian at Traweek Middle School, is celebrated for his exceptional work ethic and dedication. He consistently ensures the school is clean and safe, enhancing the environment for all. Recently, Manuel's quick action to extinguish a fire showcased his courage and commitment to safety. His helpfulness and positive attitude make him an invaluable asset to the school community.



Terry Abernathy

Terry Abernathy, Principal of South Hills High School, is celebrated for his transformative leadership that elevates the entire school community. His presence at school events and motivational "Fire It Up" motto foster a culture of unity, inspiring excellence, and continuous growth among students and staff.



Pam Nagami

Pam Nagami, a Speech and Language Pathologist, exemplifies exceptional dedication, supporting students and the SLP team tirelessly. A marathon runner, her stamina shines through in her meticulous lesson preparation and detailed reporting, profoundly impacting her colleagues and setting high professional standards.



Jesus Mercado

Jesus Mercado, a school bus driver, is honored for his exceptional dedication and service. Known for his compassion and work ethic, he ensures the safety and happiness of his students daily, treating each with kindness and creating a family atmosphere on his bus. Jesus goes beyond his duties, even covering costs for students in need, making him a valued team member and a true role model.

NOVEMBER NOMINEES

- Olga Alvarez
- Margie Candelaria
- Maha Essayli
- Bianca Garcia
- Ralph Garcia
- Cruz Hernandez
- Fred Hernandez
- Keilley Meng
- Mauricio Pinto
- Gabriel Ramirez
- Randy Reed
- Elizabeth Romero
- Katia Savitsky

Stay Connected With Us!

519 E Badillo St, Covina, CA 91723
626.974.7000 • www.c-vusd.org

   @covinavalleyUSD



EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

DECEMBER 2024



Susan Mendenhall

Susan Mendenhall, a Math Intervention Teacher at Mesa Elementary, is recognized for her outstanding dedication to improving student outcomes and supporting staff through precise data analysis and strategic initiatives. Her contributions significantly enhance academic performance and school-wide decision-making.



Karen Huff

Karen Huff, a Teacher-On-Special-Assignment for the English Language Learner (ELL) Program, is renowned for her commitment to ELL students, families, and educators. She excels in language instruction, curriculum development, and organizing state-mandated testing. Her efforts, including aiding a Vietnamese-speaking student with special needs, demonstrate her dedication to overcoming educational barriers and fostering school-wide collaboration.



Roxanne Mancuso

Roxanne Mancuso, Office Clerk at Ben Lomond Elementary, is recognized for her pivotal role in maintaining a smoothly running front office. Known for her warm smile and friendly demeanor, she creates a welcoming atmosphere, remembers names, and consistently supports students and families. Her dedication significantly enhances the school community, making her an invaluable asset to both staff and families.



Elizabeth Romero

Elizabeth Romero, a Clerk II at Covina High, plays a crucial role as the college and career center assistant in the counseling department. She dedicates her time to the Dual Enrollment Program, guides students through college applications, and assists with FAFSA submissions. Elizabeth's pivotal efforts in organizing "I Applied Day" and her ongoing support significantly enhance the college and career pathways for students, making her a valued member of the school community.



Amy Weng

Amy Weng, the Assistant Principal at Mesa Elementary, is recognized for her significant contributions to the school community. Her approachable demeanor makes her a trusted resource, adept at discussing academic standards, curriculum, and classroom management. Amy handles responsibilities from supporting the principal to attending student support meetings and managing the school store. Her dedication ensures Mesa runs smoothly, exemplifying outstanding leadership and commitment.

DECEMBER NOMINEES

- Lynda Allen
- Nancy L. Anderson
- Amy Aragon
- Delia Avila
- Rozanna Boone
- Angelina Cabrera
- Margie Candelaria
- Joshua Chuang
- Abigail Colmenares
- Blanca Cornejo
- Matt Dalton
- Sonya Espinoza
- Arlynn Fierro
- Joanna Flores
- Raeleen Fogg
- Javier Fregoso
- Kathy Galindo
- Jared Garcia
- Denise Godinez
- Doug Graham
- Jessica Huggett
- Saira Jeronimo
- Joshua Johnson
- Amanda Killingsworth
- Andrea Madrigal
- Nicole Mann
- Jonathan Martin
- Karrie Mauch
- Karrie Mauch
- Jen McGee
- Ingrid Mercado
- Brianna Mitchell
- Debbie Moses
- Brenda Munoz
- Sharie Overstreet
- Lynsey Padilla
- Quaelynn "Q" Payne
- Steve Petersen
- Laurie Pieper
- Roseann Placencia
- Ryan Price
- Gabriel Ramirez
- Lourdes Reyes
- Monique Rodarte
- Anthony Roldan
- Christine Sadler
- Brianna Sapienza
- Joe Schell
- Gloria Silva
- Denishesha Smith
- Tina Stanley
- Joanna Tarula
- Rebecca Vail
- Joe Veazey
- Esmerelda Venegas
- Donna Verduzco
- Ashely Vizcarra-Brown
- Shelly Warschaw
- Julie Weinreb
- Mingchen Yang
- Erica Zambrano

INNOVATIVE EDUCATION THAT INSPIRES EVERY STUDENT'S UNLIMITED POTENTIAL

Stay Connected With Us!

519 E Badillo St, Covina, CA 91723

626.974.7000 • www.c-vusd.org

@covinavalleyUSD