



# Holtville

## UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Publication of Holtville Unified School District

FALL 2025



## HORIZONS AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Horizons After-School Program provides expanded learning opportunities for students in Grades TK–12 throughout the regular school year, summer and scheduled intersessions. The program is designed to support students' academic, social and personal growth by offering a variety of engaging and enriching activities. Students can explore their creativity through cooking and baking, arts and crafts and hands-on projects, while also participating in sports and physical activities that promote teamwork and healthy lifestyles.

In addition to educational enrichment that reinforces classroom learning and builds important life skills, the program offers exciting field trips that expose students to new experiences and broaden their horizons. Horizons creates a safe, supportive and fun environment where students can learn, explore and thrive beyond the traditional school day.



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Para la versión en español,  
escanee el código QR.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello Community Members,

It has been exciting to welcome students and staff back for another school year! Seeing the curiosity and learning that is taking place in classrooms is a reminder of why this work is so meaningful. HUSD is building a community of lifelong learners. So much success is taking place around Holtville. Pine Elementary earned the 2025 California Distinguished School Award, HUSD earned the CABA Chapter of the Year Award and HUSD was also recognized as a model district for multilingual education. Sports teams and extracurricular activities are immersing students in opportunities outside of the classroom. HUSD is working hard to prepare students for their futures.

We encourage you to stay connected by following district updates, newsletters and reaching out with any questions or feedback. Your voice is important in shaping a positive school experience. Thank you for your continued support as we begin this new year together. I look forward to the accomplishments that this year will bring.

Best Wishes,

*Mr. Celso Ruiz*

*Superintendent of Holtville Unified School District*

## PINE ELEMENTARY EARNS 2025 CALIFORNIA DISTINGUISHED SCHOOL AWARD

Pine Elementary School proudly celebrates earning the 2025 California Distinguished School Award, a recognition of its exceptional performance and commitment to closing the achievement gap. This prestigious honor reflects the dedication, hard work and collaboration of the school's teachers, staff, students, families, HUSD administration and board members, all working together to create a thriving learning environment.

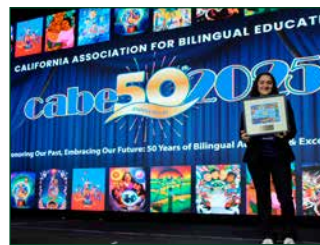
Presented by the California Department of Education (CDE), Pine Elementary's achievement was formally celebrated at the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim on May 30, 2025, marking a momentous occasion for the entire school community. This milestone is significant as it coincides with the retirement of Principal Patricia Harrison whose leadership, vision and dedication have been instrumental in guiding Pine Elementary to this distinguished honor, as well as longtime teachers Gina Wright and Mary Davis whose commitment, passion and guidance have left a lasting impact on students and the community of Holtville.



## FFA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE IN SACRAMENTO

This past April 2025, Holtville FFA proudly took 48 students to the 2025 California State FFA Leadership Conference in Sacramento, where over 7,000 members from across the state gathered for four days of general sessions, workshops and competitions that inspire leadership and personal growth. Our students took full advantage of the opportunities, hearing from motivational speakers, exploring the career expo and competing in statewide contests.

Holtville's Parliamentary Procedure team placed in the Top 6 in California, while several members showcased agriscience projects at the state level. A special highlight was Kate Grizzle, who was honored with an Almond Board of California State Scholarship, recognizing her hard work and dedication. The conference also featured the transition of state officers and the election of a new team to lead FFA in 2025–26. Through their achievements, Holtville FFA once again represented our community with pride, demonstrating the leadership, scholarship and agricultural excellence that continues to define our chapter.



## 2025 CABA CHAPTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

*The award was presented at the 2025 CABA conference in Long Beach.*

Holtville High School's Yanessi Padilla shares the 2025 CABA (California Association for Bilingual Education) Chapter of the Year Award as the student liaison for CABA Calexico Education Sin Fronteras, Chapter 84. This chapter, comprised of dedicated parents and students, works to promote bilingual and multicultural engagement by providing resources and fostering meaningful connections within the school community. Committed to empowering and inspiring families, the Calexico chapter celebrates the importance of bilingualism and multicultural education, encouraging students and families to embrace the cultural diversity that enriches their educational experiences.

## HUSD RECOGNIZED AS MODEL DISTRICT FOR MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

Holtville Unified School District was honored to host Dr. Edgar Lampkin, Chief Executive Officer of California Association for Bilingual Education (CABA), along with Mrs. Dalia Padilla, a proud Holtville parent and facilitator for CABA Calexico Educación Sin Fronteras, Chapter 84.



Recognized as a model district for multilingual education, HUSD offers students rich opportunities to engage in a bilingual and multicultural learning experience through its English and Spanish Dual Language Program. This commitment reflects the district's dedication to preparing students for a diverse world while celebrating the value of bilingualism and cultural understanding.





# PINE ELEMENTARY PRESENTS HANSEL AND GRETEL

Pine Elementary, in collaboration with Missoula Children's Theater, brought the classic play Hansel and Gretel to life at Finley Auditorium. This collaboration gave students a unique opportunity to explore the performing arts and build their creativity beyond the classroom.

Students took part in every step of the production, from auditions and rehearsals to the final performance, building strong skills in teamwork, public speaking and stage presence.

The event received enthusiastic support from families, staff and the community, reflecting Pine Elementary's commitment to enriching student experiences and fostering creativity through the arts.



# TEACHERS GROW WITH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the start of the 2025-26 school year, Holtville Unified School District provided professional development for teachers in English Language Development (ELD) and AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination). AVID is a program that helps students develop the skills and habits needed to succeed in school and prepare for college and careers.

During the training, teachers learned strategies to support multilingual learners, improve student engagement and build critical thinking and organizational skills. Through workshops and coaching, educators gained practical tools to create effective, inclusive classrooms that help all students succeed during the 2025-26 school year.



# Free Mobile Dentist

According to the California School-Based Health Alliance, more than 60% of children aged 6 to 19 in California are affected by tooth decay. When left untreated, it can cause pain, difficulty eating, and trouble speaking — all of which can hinder a child's intellectual and social development. These issues contribute to significant school absenteeism, with an estimated 869,202 missed school days annually, costing school districts approximately \$60 million each year.



Read more about dental health here

Big Smile Dental's Mobile Department is partnering with the HUSD Nurse's Office to provide free dental services directly to eligible TK–8th grade students. This collaboration removes barriers to oral healthcare by offering convenient, on-site services, including cleanings, exams and preventive treatments. A total of 71 students benefited from dental services last year. By providing care at school, the program supports student health and promotes overall wellbeing. The dentist is scheduled to return Nov. 12–14, 2025. Please contact the school for more information.

# HHS VARSITY BASEBALL TEAM COMPETES AT PETCO PARK



On April 17, 2025, the Holtville High School (HHS) Varsity Baseball team had the remarkable opportunity to compete in the San Diego Section John Baumgarten High School Baseball Series at the iconic Petco Park, home of the San Diego Padres. This unforgettable experience allowed HHS student-athletes to showcase their talent on a professional stage, facing off against the skilled Brawley Wildcats. For the student-athletes, stepping onto the same field as professional baseball players offered inspiration and a sense of achievement that will leave a lasting impression.



# IMPERIAL VALLEY COLLEGE CAREER EXPO

Students from Freedom Academy and Sam Webb School attended the Imperial Valley College Career Expo, an annual event designed to introduce students to a wide range of educational and professional opportunities. The visit allowed students from both schools to explore diverse career pathways, from healthcare and technology to business and skilled trades.

At the expo, students engaged with college representatives, industry professionals and career counselors, gathering valuable information about programs, certifications and future career options. The experience encouraged students to reflect on their interests, explore potential career paths and consider the education or training needed to achieve their goals.

By participating in the Career Expo, Freedom Academy and Sam Webb School provided their students with an inspiring, hands-on opportunity to connect classroom learning with real-world career possibilities. The event emphasized the importance of planning, making informed decisions and pursuing ambitions with confidence, equipping students to take meaningful steps toward their future.

# YOU'RE INVITED

The Board of Trustees of Holtville Unified School District conducts regular meetings that begin at 6:00 p.m. on the third Monday of each month (unless otherwise denoted) at the Holtville Unified School District Board Room. You are invited to attend these meetings. Please contact the Administration Office in advance at (760) 356-2974 for verification.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Ben Abatti Jr..... President  
Julie Duarte..... Board Clerk  
Jared Garewal..... Member  
Kevin Grizzle..... Member  
Larry Iten..... Member

## CONTACT US

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Phone..... (760) 356-5718

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## OUR WEBSITE

[www.husd.net/](http://www.husd.net/)



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## 11TH ANNUAL MIGRANT EDUCATION STATE SPEECH AND DEBATE TOURNAMENT



Holtville students participated in the 11th Annual Migrant Education State Speech and Debate Tournament, held in Monterey, California, in May 2025. Students in the Migrant Education Program competed in a variety of speech and debate categories. Our students performed exceptionally well. In total, we had 13 students participate in the tournament.

**4th Grader**..... Sofia Gomez Meza

**4th Grader**..... Esmeralda Joselyn Hurtado Pementel

**5th Grader**..... Florencia Corona Acuña

**5th Grader**..... Jorge Garcia Torres

**5th Grader**..... Nathalia Katherine Ramos

**6th Grader**..... Maria Elva Garcia Salgado

**6th Grader**..... Ashley Marlen Ruiz Lopez

**8th Grader**..... Gabriela Michelle Arellano

**9th Grader**..... Yanesi Michelle Padilla

**11th Grader**..... Ayleen Marely Ruiz Lopez

**11th Grader**..... Destiny Denisse Gonzalez

**11th Grader**..... Jonathan Hurtado

**12th Grader**..... Naomy Raquel Marquez

### Finley Elementary

Esmeralda Hurtado Pimentel..... 1st Place Prepared Speech

Sofia Gomez..... 1st Place Extemporaneous Speech

Nathalia Ramos..... 1st Place Extemporaneous Speech,

2nd Place Prepared Speech

Jorge Garcia..... 3rd Place Extemporaneous Speech

### Region Awards

### Holtville Middle School

#### State Awards

Maria Elva Garcia Salgado..... 2nd Place Prepared Speech

Gabriela Michelle Arellano..... 1st Place Extemporaneous & 1st Place Prepared Speech,

2nd Place Extemporaneous Speech,

1st Place Prepared Speech

#### Region Awards

### Holtville High School

#### State Awards

Yanesi Padilla..... 1st Place Extemporaneous & 1st Place Prepared Speech,

2nd Place Prepared Speech

Naomy Marquez..... 3rd Place Extemporaneous & 3rd Place Prepared Speech

#### Region Awards

PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR OUR  
UP TO DATE SCHOOL CALENDAR.