



Mendez Minutes

Mendez Fundamental Intermediate School

Edition 14 Tuesday, March 10, 2026

Quote of the Month

By: Tobias Lopez



I would like to offer you this quote for the month of **March**:
"You must do the thing which you think you cannot do." by Eleanor Roosevelt.

Meet the Journalism Staff:

Ms. Yolanda Elmore, Editor
Mrs. Yvette Cortes, Co-Editor

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Diana Gallegos

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Rosadelinda Gomez

Paola Guillen

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Jacob Martinez

Joseph Martinez

Ariannie Mendez

Darian Mendoza

Guadalupe Merino

Guadalupe Pintor

Melina Romero

Hanna Salagado

Juliana Vargas

Mila Zamarripa

Yoselin Zuniga

Feature Article

"Years in Santa Ana"

By: Mr. William Skelly

Working with young people in Santa Ana has taught me many important lessons about students, families, and the journey of growing up. Every day I see how much everyone involved in a school community wants the same thing: for students to be successful, confident, and prepared for the future.

One of the first things I've learned is how much parents care about their children's success. Families want their students to learn, grow, and have opportunities that will help them build strong futures. At the same time, students have their own priorities. Many students value their friendships deeply. They want to feel respected by school staff, and they appreciate teachers who truly engage them in the classroom. Simply put — students love teachers who love teaching.

I've also noticed something interesting about how students' relationships with adults change as they grow. Kindergarteners often love their administrators right away. They wave, smile, and look up to them with excitement and trust. But middle school students are different. With them, respect is something you must earn. Many middle schoolers are developing independence and forming their own peer culture. Sometimes that culture can make it seem

Strategy of the Month

"Own Your Work"

By: Dr. Laura Castro

As we head into the challenging month of March, our school is focusing on a simple, but powerful goal: **Own Your Work**.

Spring break is around the corner, testing season is beginning, and energy levels start to shift. That's why this month, we're focusing on something that helps every student succeed: **Academic Responsibility**.

Owning your work means:

- Coming prepared to class
- Starting assignments right away
- Staying focused during work time
- Completing assignments to your best ability
- Turning work in on time
- Asking for help when you need it

"Manny Would Love to Hear from You"

By: Yvette Cortes



If you have a question to ask Manny the Mustang or if you would like to share positive feedback about *Mendez Minutes*, or if there is topic or trend that you would like us to research and write about, please scan the QR code below.



Your question or comment may be featured in an upcoming newsletter.

Manny the Mustang looks forward to hearing from you!



like they don't need adults at all. But even when they act that way, they still benefit from adults who care, listen, and show up consistently for them.

Something I wish more students understood is that the adults at school are there to support them, especially during adolescence. Adolescence can be confusing, exciting, and sometimes overwhelming. Every adult in a school has gone through this stage too — believe it or not! During these years, the front part of the brain is still developing. This area helps with decision-making and thinking about consequences. Because it's still changing, it can sometimes be harder for students to pause and think through the results of their choices. When staff members step in to guide students, it's usually because they are trying to help them succeed not just now, but in the future.

Another lesson I've learned is that life experience can be a powerful teacher. Students often hear advice or stories meant to help them avoid mistakes, but sometimes the best learning happens when they experience the natural consequences of their own choices. Those moments, although difficult, can lead to important growth.

I have also learned that many students who grow up speaking a language other than English at home may struggle with confidence in school. They are often learning subject material while also navigating humor, slang, and complex academic language. This takes tremendous effort and courage. What may look like hesitation is often simply the challenge of learning in more than one language at the same time.

Finally, my experiences with immigrant families — as the child of an immigrant, the spouse of an immigrant, and someone who has worked with immigrant communities for many years — have deeply shaped me. I have been humbled by their work ethic, amazed by the

This focus isn't about being perfect, it's about putting in effort and following through. When students take ownership of their learning, grades improve, stress decreases, and confidence grows. Also, teachers across campus will be reinforcing what quality work looks like and recognizing students who demonstrate responsibility and strong effort.

Middle school is the perfect time to build habits that lead to long-term success. The choices you make today such as finishing assignments, staying organized, and giving your best effort will help prepare you for high school and beyond. Being on top of our academic game and locking in helps us to be Respectful, Responsible, and Ready.

Mustangs, let's work together to finish the month strong.

Strong effort.

Strong habits.

Strong finish.



Dr. Laura Castro, ELA Teacher

"A Day in the Life of..."

By: Darian Mendoza



I wanted to know about Nurse Hellen's day-to-day responsibilities, so I interviewed her about her job.

Cheers to the 2026 Mendez Renaissance Scholars—We're Proud of You!



"Mendez Girls' Soccer Team is Ready"

By: Paola Guillen



The Mendez girls' soccer team is working hard this season. This year, approximately 80 girls tried out, but only 22 made the team.

I am proud to say that I was one of the players selected, and I play forward.

We're a talented group of athletes, but we need to improve and grow stronger as a team. We practice every

contributions they have made to this country, and inspired by how their cultures enrich the communities around them. Their stories, traditions, and determination add strength and beauty to an already diverse society.

Working with students has taught me that growing up is a process filled with learning, mistakes, courage, and change. It has also shown me that when students feel supported, respected, and understood, they are capable of incredible growth. And that is one of the most rewarding lessons of all.



Mr. William Skelly, Interim AP

March Song of the Month - "Walking on Sunshine"

By: Stacy Colin



I chose this song because it's perfect for the month of March.

I also chose this song because it makes me happy about the start of Spring.

Finally, whenever I hear this song it reminds me of California's beautiful sunshine.



She told me that her day consists of taking care of cuts, nosebleeds, fevers, sprains, dizziness, and upset stomachs.

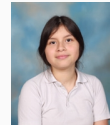
Then I asked Nurse Hellen, "What are the challenges of being a nurse?" She said the challenge is that it is an all day job which involves seeing approximately 15-30 kids a day.

Next, I asked her, "What makes being a nurse fun, easy, and rewarding?" She told me that it is the students. She appreciates it when students come in to say hi and give her a compliment.

Lastly, I asked her, "What can students and staff do to help make your job easier?" She said, "Stopping by the office when you really need help makes my job easier."

Community Event

By: Diana Gallegos



Santa Ana's 3rd Annual Orange County Ukulele Festival is going to take place on Friday, March 20, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Delhi Center.

The Delhi Center is located at 505 E. Central Avenue, Santa Ana, CA 92707

This is an opportunity to hear the ukulele's bright, cheerful, and warm sound with your family.



Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 2:45p.m. to 5:00p.m. to get ready for our tournament on March 14.

At practice, we work on our soccer drills and communication. We push ourselves to do our best at each practice.

To the girls who did not make the team this year, I believe that you should still try out next year. Keep working hard to improve and join an outside league this summer to sharpen your skills.

Welcome, Ms. Padilla!

By: Alyssa Garcia



Ms. Sandra Padilla is one of our 6th grade math teachers here at Mendez.



Ms. Padilla earned her Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from California State Fullerton. Then, she attended Hope International University where she earned her Masters degree in Education along with her teaching credential.

Ms. Padilla is no stranger to Santa Ana Unified School District. She previously taught at Carr Intermediate and Saddleback High School.

As a teacher, something Ms. Padilla finds challenging is when her students do not come to her, her colleagues, or the tutors in the library for help. She wants to see her students soar on the assessments

Journalist Spotlight

March showcases three wonderful Journalism Scholars.

"Get to Know Me!"



My name is Guadalupe, but my close friends call me, Lupe. I am 14-years old and in the 8th Grade.

I have an obsession with Spongebob and that is something a lot of people know about me.

I am a very energetic, sweet, and confident person, but I tend to be quiet when I am by myself.

I am a football fan, and my team is the San Francisco 49ers!

I love doing my makeup because I find it very peaceful. In fact, I would actually love to be a professional make-up artist in the future.

My sister and I love to spend time together on the weekends. She is my inspiration, and I love her!

-Guadalupe Pintor

"Amazing Ariannie"



I describe myself as energetic. I am a girl who loves to smile and laugh, and make everybody's day better. No matter what day it is, I am in a great mood. I always greet my teachers with a smile and a nice compliment.

One dream I have is to become a Neurosurgeon. The schools I would like to attend are Cal State University, Fullerton, or UC Irvine. My sister, who is a surgical technician, inspired me to pursue a career in the medical field.

"Celebrate Read Across America in March"

By: Melina Romero & Hanna Salgado



When I was little, my favorite books were any written by Dr. Seuss. His stories are silly and full of rhymes which I enjoyed. I liked the funny characters and the words were easy to understand. Dr. Seuss' stories made me laugh and helped me to enjoy books when I was a kid!

-Melina Romero



Reading was one of my favorite things to do when I was a kid. I liked reading stories about kids, families, and school. My favorite childhood book was a book series, *Baby-Sitters Club*, created by Ann M. Martin. I liked this series because the girls were all friends who created their own babysitting business. The stories were fun and easy-to-read.

-Hanna Salgado



Career Day at Mendez

Mendez Fundamental will host its Career Day on **Thursday, March 26, 2026.**

The purpose of Career Day is to expose Mustangs to the many exciting

that she gives, and tutoring would help them in doing so.

The easy part of being a teacher is when her students understand the day's math lesson and that they're able to help others who don't understand the lesson.

When Ms. Padilla isn't in her classroom, she likes to crochet, cook, bake, and spend time with her family.



**Ms. Sandra Padilla, Math Teacher,
Room 322**

St. Patrick's Day

By: Joseph Martinez



Saint Patrick's Day is a national holiday that is celebrated on March 17th and honors the patron saint of Ireland. Saint Patrick's Day was first celebrated on March 17, 1631.

Most people wear green on Saint Patrick's Day and tradition says that if one did not wear green, he or she would get pinched.

Here's to shamrocks, Leprechauns, and lots of luck!

Beanstack Reading Challenge



I have two siblings, a brother who is 25, and a sister who is 28. I am the youngest sibling. I also have a cat named Jackie, and a guinea pig named, Zoey.

I used to live in Garden Grove, but in 2019 I moved to Santa Ana. My family and I left many friends, but did find a good life here in Santa Ana.

-Ariannie Mendez

"My Adventurous Life!"



I think people would describe me as a funny and kind person. One dream of mine is to travel around the world.

When I'm not in school, I go to the park with my dog. I also enjoy going out with my friends to the mall or the beach.

I absolutely adore animals! I think they are the best thing God created..

I am not a native Californian, I am from Wisconsin! When I first came here in 2020, I was shocked by the number of sunny days-Wisconsin gets very cold!

I plan to attend Santa Ana High School because they have an amazing Nursing program.

Finally, I would love to travel to Spain when I am able to do so because I think it's a very beautiful place.

I cannot wait to begin my adventurous life!

-Juliana Vargas

Jokes for March

By: Rosadelinda Gomez



and varying career choices available to them when they continue to pursue their education in high school and beyond.

If your parents, relatives, and/or neighbors would be interested in participating in our Career Day, please have them do the following:

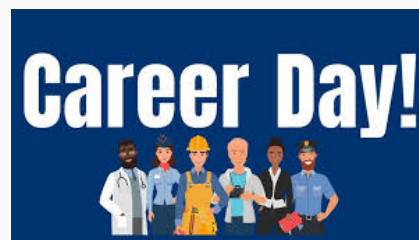
1. Click on this link to fill-out some information
<http://tinyurl.com/3jt9vu5x>

OR

2. Contact Mrs. Tina Tran, Lead Counselor at (714) 972-7822 or tina.tran@sausd.us

Career Day is scheduled from 8:00am - 9:45am. Refreshments will be provided.

It will be a fantastic day!



Mendez Testing Dates QR Code:



There are several important tests happening in Semester Two. Please scan the QR Code above to remind yourself of our busy testing season at Mendez Fundamental.

Mendez Library QR Code:



Mendez Mustangs, please remember to **log your SSR minutes each day**. In addition, don't forget to write at least one book review each month and submit it in Beanstack. Mrs. Cortes **enjoys** reading your reviews!

Coming Soon to Mendez Minutes

One of our amazing Journalists will write an article on Mendez's 8th Grade AVID Scholar...

Gabriel Arroyo Cisneros



Question: I asked my girlfriend when her birthday was.

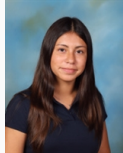
Answer: She said "March 1st". So I walked around the room and asked her again...

Question: Why was the sports' fan acting so crazy?

Answer: He had March Madness!

"Did You Know?"

By: Lylah Lamas



Did you know that **March 10th** is **Middle Name Pride Day**? This is a day to loudly and proudly share your middle name with the world. Well, as long as it's not **Hairy Toes**. Could you imagine it?

Mark Hairy Toes Johnson



Did you know **March 26th** is **Make Up Your Own Holiday Day**? Be creative! How about **Nap Day**? I know that our Mendez faculty, staff, and Administration would ENJOY that day!



Mendez Scholars

Are...

Respectful

Responsible

Ready

