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Volume 13, Issue 39

April 2026



Fierce Competition in the 2025-26 WOW Literacy Challenge





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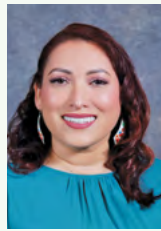
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Fierce Competition in the 2025-26 WOW Literacy Challenge

Since the introduction of the World of Wisdom (WOW) Literacy Challenge Champion Goblet, competition among Fullerton School District schools has intensified. Hermosa Drive School earned the first spot on the goblet, but Laguna Road School was determined to dethrone them — swooping in to claim the second.

This year, the rivalry reached a new peak: the two schools finished in a dead tie for the 2025-26 challenge.

WOW is a voluntary literacy challenge open to all students in grades three through six. This year's challenge invited students to complete four literacy-related tasks. Laguna Road School boasted the highest percentage of students who completed all four challenges at 91%, while both Laguna Road and Hermosa Drive Schools achieved 100% participation overall.



District-wide, the results were equally impressive. Over 53% of Fullerton School District students in grades 3–6 chose to participate in the WOW program, and more than 27% — 1,029 students — completed all four literacy challenges.

The WOW Literacy Challenge is built on an innovative, anime-inspired gaming premise: students choose one of eight “guardians,” each representing different strengths and intellectual pursuits, and complete tasks to earn points, join forces, and collectively defeat the universal threat of apathy. Based on

their chosen guardian's qualities, students explore related reading genres and maker activities — from inventions to gardening — earning power-up stickers and points toward a collective goal. Together, their reading and task completion restores the world. The program's creative framework is designed to inspire students to develop lifelong reading habits, discover, and learn in ways that feel like adventure rather than obligation.



Business Services

1401 W. Valencia Dr., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7400 • www.fullertonsd.org



Dr. Rob Coghlan
Assistant
Superintendent

Business Services Bond Update

Since the passage of our Measure N School Improvement Bond, approved by Fullerton residents on November 5, 2024, for a total of \$262,000,000, we have been busy planning, designing, and constructing many improvements throughout the District.

Some of these improvements include removing old playground equipment and wood chips and replacing them with modern, age-appropriate playground equipment and rubberized safety

surfaces. In total, we renovated 31 playgrounds across the District over a six-month period.

Another improvement we accomplished was replacing outdated school marquees with new, modern electronic marquees. So far, we have installed new marquees at six schools, with additional installations planned.

Our most ambitious projects to date have been the new ARCs at Nicolas and Parks. ARC stands for Arts and Recreation Center, and these facilities will be a tremendous asset to both schools. The ARCs are 10,000-square-foot buildings that include a full-size basketball

and volleyball court, a large stage with two dressing rooms, state-of-the-art audio and visual systems, bleachers, and restrooms. These buildings will be completed soon and will be ready for students to use.

Upcoming projects include renovating and modernizing school restrooms, installing eight new portable buildings over the summer, constructing a new dance studio at Parks, and adding new lunch and shade structures at six school sites. We are continuing to plan and design additional improvements across the District and look forward to rolling them out soon.



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Innovation and Instructional Services

1401 W. Valencia Dr., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7400 • www.fullertonsd.org



Jeremy Davis
Assistant
Superintendent

Innovation. Service. Excellence.

Fullerton School District continues to demonstrate the power of innovation, service and dedication across our community. FSD was recently awarded a \$525,000 Innovation Grant from the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) to expand the Tiny Home Project at Nicolas Junior High School, now in its third

build. This unique program gives students hands-on construction and career technical education (CTE) experience while building tiny homes that support families in our community experiencing homelessness.

We are also proud to celebrate Jagath Jayaratne, who was named the 2026 Orange County Classified School Employee of the Year in Technical Services by OCDE. For nearly two decades, Jagath has helped keep our classrooms connected while supporting staff and students across FSD.

In addition, Hanna Chon, Computer Tech II, was recognized by Parenting OC Magazine for her dedication and positive impact on students and families. These accomplishments reflect the innovation, compassion and excellence that define FSD.



IIS Award Recipients Hanna Chon and Jagath Jayaratne.





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Personnel Services

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Christopher Wilkins
Interim Director

Fullerton School District Celebrates Two Outstanding Leaders

Fullerton School District is proud to recognize two exceptional administrators who have gone above and beyond in their dedication and service to our students, staff, and community. Please join us in congratulating this year's Management of the Year award recipients!

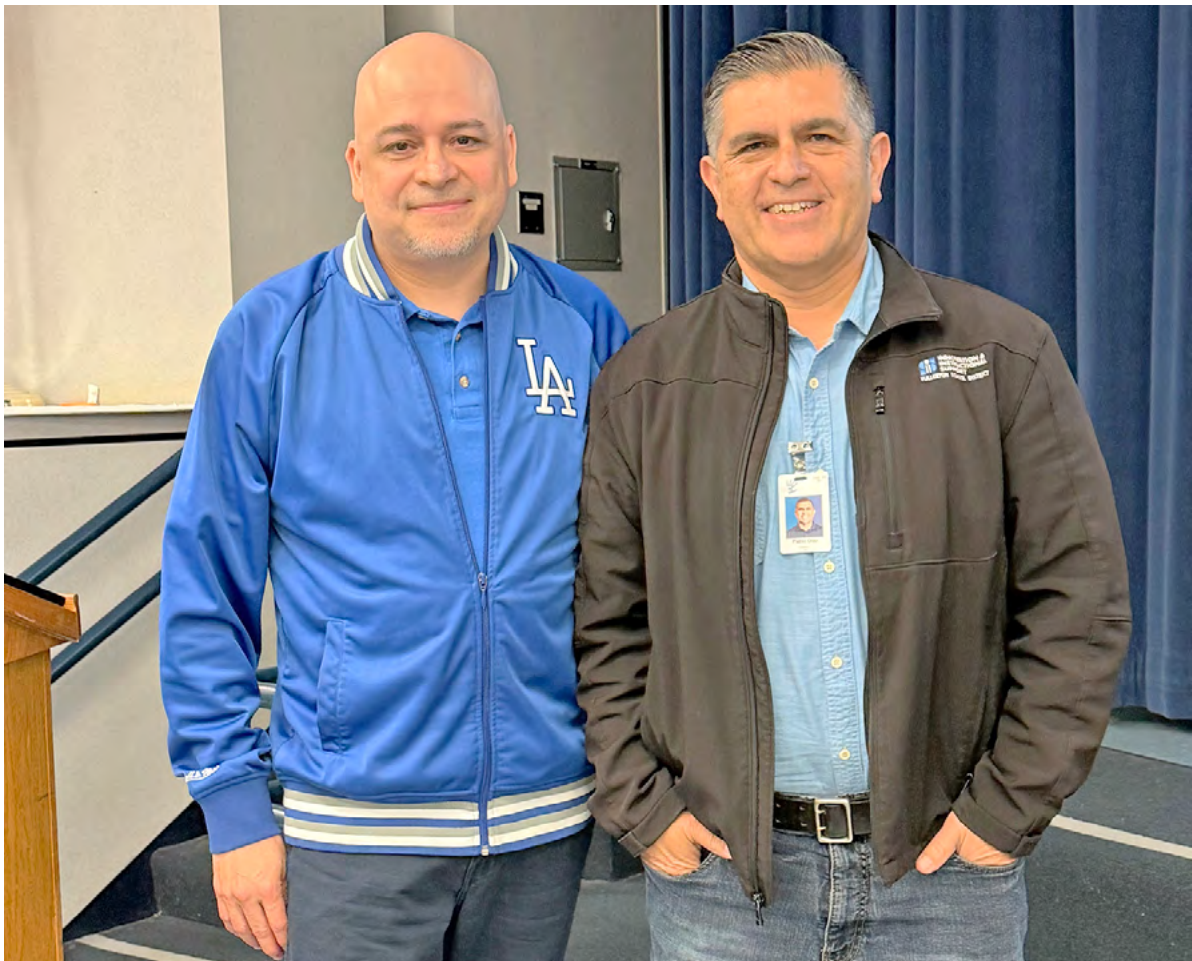
Director of Business Services

Damian Ibarra has demonstrated unwavering commitment to the financial health and operational excellence of Fullerton School District. This year, Damian's leadership in Business Services has been instrumental in streamlining district operations, ensuring fiscal responsibility, and supporting the resources that keep our schools running smoothly. His collaborative approach, meticulous attention to detail, and tireless work ethic have earned the respect and admiration of colleagues

across the district. Damian consistently goes beyond his role to ensure that every dollar is put to work in service of our students.

Director of Innovation and Instructional Support

Pablo Diaz has been a driving force behind transformative instructional practices and innovative learning initiatives throughout Fullerton School District. As Director of Innovation and Instructional Support, Pablo has worked tirelessly to equip teachers with cutting edge tools and professional development opportunities that directly impact student achievement. His vision, passion for education, and ability to inspire those around him have helped position our district as a leader in instructional innovation. Pablo was the innovative visionary behind our first in the nation 8th grade Tiny Home project and has ensured the program's success for three years. Pablo also ensured our district became the first Apple Distinguished School District west of Texas. Pablo has been a dedicated educator and innovator for FSD for 20 years.



**Damian Ibarra - Director of Business Services and
Pablo Diaz - Director of Innovation and Instructional Support**

Orange County Department of Education

200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa CA 92628 • 714/966-4000 • www.ocde.us

A Moment to Reflect – and a Look Ahead



Dr. Stefan Bean
Superintendent

As the room began to fill for the Orange County State of Education event on March 13, I paused for a moment to take it all in. Educators, school leaders, elected officials and community partners were all coming together, each bringing a unique perspective and area of focus.

What stood out wasn't our different roles. It was what brought us together — the collective belief in our students and in what is possible for them.

That sense of shared purpose stayed with me throughout the day, especially as we heard from our guest speaker, Adán Correa. A Santa Ana High School graduate, Cal State Fullerton alum and advocate for the neurodivergent community, Adán is known to many from the Netflix series "Love on the Spectrum." He shared his journey with humor, honesty and a genuine sense of joy.

Adán is a remarkable young man and the perfect speaker for our event, not just because of who he is, but because of how he got there. In his own words, he is where

See **OCDE** • Page 10

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OCDE • From Page 9



Dr. Stefan Bean
Superintendent

he is today because of the steady presence of people who believed in him and supported him, including teachers, coaches, counselors and family. It's a reminder of something we all know and the recurring theme of my address: No one gets there alone.

That idea feels especially important right now. We are seeing real progress in Orange County's schools — higher-than-ever graduation rates, improving attendance and expanded opportunities through career pathways and innovation.

At the same time, our work is becoming more complex. Student needs are growing, expectations continue to evolve, and schools are being asked to do more, often with fewer resources. The question, then, isn't only how we respond to challenges. It's how we continue building on what's working.

For me, that means staying grounded in what matters most, like continuing to center belonging and connection so our students feel seen and supported, while staying aligned in our efforts so the work happening across classrooms, schools and districts adds up to something greater.

It also means being intentional about how we support the adults doing this work by protecting their time, reducing unnecessary burdens and keeping the focus on students. Just as important is continuing to listen, because the most meaningful insights often come directly from the students and communities we serve.

When I look across Orange County, I'm proud to say I see these efforts in action every day. I see educators showing up for students in ways that often go unseen. I see leaders making thoughtful and sometimes difficult decisions in service of their communities. I see partnerships forming that strengthen this work.


That is what progress looks like.

As we look ahead, I keep coming back to a simple question that I posed on March 13: Where can we better align our efforts so that no student walks alone?

It's a question we will continue to answer together, not necessarily through high-level decisions but in more subtle ways like how we as educators collaborate, how we prioritize our work, and how we support students, communities and one another. Because in the end, what defines us is the consistency of how we show up for each other and for our students.

The 2026 State of Education is in the books. But the state of education? It continues to grow stronger, thanks to the collective efforts of educators, families, students and community partners.


I'm grateful to be part of this work with you.



Fielding School of Public Health
Community Health Sciences

National Education Safety and Security Initiative (NESSI)
Founder/Director: Frank Quiambao
Coordinator: Bryan Astrachan bryan.astrachan@ucla.edu
<https://cphd.ph.ucla.edu/national-education-safety-and-security-initiative-nessi>

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Session 7: 07/27 - 07/30



Jr. Beginning 10 & under & Jr. Beginning 10 & Over

Tuesday & Thursday

4:30pm - 5:30pm

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Session 3: 07/21 - 08/06

Session 4: 08/11 - 08/27

Jr. Intermediate & 10 & Over Advanced

Tuesday & Thursday

5:30pm - 6:30pm

\$149.00 per session

Session 1: 06/09 - 06/25

Session 2: 06/30 - 07/16

Session 3: 07/21 - 08/06

Session 4: 08/11 - 08/27

Jr. Beginning 10 & Under

Saturday

8:30am - 9:30am

\$135.00 per session

Session 1: 06/13 - 07/11

Session 2: 07/18 - 08/15

Jr. Beginning 10 & Over

Saturday

9:30am - 10:30am

\$135.00 per session

Session 1: 06/13 - 07/11

Session 2: 07/18 - 08/15

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Acacia Elementary School

1200 N. Acacia Ave., Fullerton, CA 92831 • 714/447-7700 • www.fullertonsd.org/acacia



Rachel McCormick
Principal

Introducing Ms. Nguyen

We are proud to introduce Acacia's Teacher of the Year, Ms. Lauren Nguyen! As our RtI Coach, Ms. Nguyen works closely with students who need additional support in reading, helping them build confidence and develop essential skills for success. Her dedication and care make a meaningful impact on our students every day.

Beyond her work in intervention, Ms. Nguyen plays an active role in enriching

our school community. She helped organize Read Across Acacia, including coordinating with Troy High School's ASB students to visit and read with our classes which was an experience our students truly enjoyed. She also shares her culture in meaningful ways, such as during our Lunar New Year celebration, where she taught 5th graders a traditional Vietnamese game.

Ms. Nguyen's passion, leadership, and commitment to students make her an invaluable part of Acacia. We are so fortunate to celebrate her!



Ms. Nguyen plays a Vietnamese game with students during a Lunar New Year celebration.

Beechwood School

780 Beechwood Ave., Fullerton, CA 92835 • 714/447-2850 • www.fullertonsd.org/beechwood



**Hannah
Lim**
Principal

Career Day

Every year, we encourage our Beechwood Bobcats to continue their learning beyond the walls of their classrooms. In order to support them in pursuing their passions and exploring different ways to make an impact in their community, Beechwood School hosts an annual Career Day.

On Career Day, all students attended a keynote address with Kari Ehmer, a graduate of the United States Military academy at West Point, former U.S. Army officer, and Division I athlete. Ms. Ehmer spoke about the importance of leadership, emotional regulation, resilience, and self-belief. During her presentation, she encouraged our students to work on developing their confidence and taking ownership of their mindset and choices. Students were inspired to work on effective communication and unlock their ability to perform, lead, and thrive - both now and into the future.

Students were allowed to choose three sessions with participating community members from a variety of different fields, including law, healthcare, finance, government, and engineering. Popular speakers included John Kim, a Music Executive for Interscope Records; Blake Jirges, a Golf Pro and Director of Instruction; Max Katkaphan, Senior Director for Membership Service for the LA Football Club; and Tracey Alcalá, who works in Human Resources for Rivian. Other notable sessions involved a food stylist, forensic scientist, and a judge for the Orange County Superior Court.

Our students were excited to participate and learn more in depth regarding different careers and passions. We cannot wait to see how our Beechwood Bobcats will pursue their own dreams for themselves, their community, and on a global level.



Commonwealth *Elementary School*

2200 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, CA 92831 • 714/447-7705 • www.fullertonsd.org/commonwealth



Jean Summy
Principal

Commonwealth Tiger Theater Club Shines!

Everybody wants to be a CAT! An Aristocat, that is! Our Commonwealth Tiger Theater Club put on a fabulous four show run in March, capping off an incredible three-year journey as a Disney Musicals In Schools grant program. We started by learning how to run a sustainable theater arts program from planning and auditions to staging and

performing. In the first year we had the support of a weekly artist who supported our teacher leaders in the production and rehearsal process over 17 weeks. In the second year, we were ready to run the entire process on our own, with a strong team of four committed teachers who worked with our students to learn dialogue, staging and musical score. In addition, students were able to add choreography that gradually became more complex and lighting. This year we added structured set changes for our crew. Our third year was a resounding success!



Fern Drive *Elementary School*

1400 W. Fern Dr., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7710 • www.fullertonsd.org/fern



Julie Lucas
Principal

Fern Drive Falcons Shine in District Speech & Debate Tournament

Fern Drive Elementary is proud to celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of our Speech and Debate team, led by our dedicated coach, Mrs. Kim. On March 7th, six of our talented Falcons competed in

the final district tournament, representing our school with confidence, skill, and determination.

Our students delivered impressive performances across multiple categories. In Novice Declamation, Matthew S. earned a strong 4th place finish. In Novice Elementary Poetry, Sofia H. showcased her expressive talent earning 5th place. In Varsity Declamation, Thomas J. placed 4th, while Hannah S. achieved an outstanding 2nd place finish, demonstrating exceptional poise and delivery. We also recognize Julia K. for her participation in Elementary Storytelling and Ruby H. for competing in Elementary Varsity Poetry, both of whom represented Fern Drive with pride and courage.

While we celebrate these accomplishments, we are equally proud of the growth each student demonstrated throughout the season. Speech and Debate challenges students to think critically, communicate effectively, and step outside of their comfort zones. Our Falcons embraced



these challenges, building confidence and finding their voices along the way. We also celebrate our coach, Mrs. Kim, for her dedication, passion, and commitment to our students. Her leadership has been instrumental in fostering a supportive and enriching environment where students can thrive.

At Fern Drive, we believe every student has a voice that deserves to be heard. Watching our students grow in confidence and courage through Speech and Debate has been incredibly inspiring. We are so proud of each of them for taking risks, supporting one another, and representing our school with such pride.



Robert C. Fisler *School*

1350 Starbuck St., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-2890 • www.fullertonsd.org/fisler



Dr. Caroline Llewellyn
Principal

Family Science Night

Fisler's Family Science Night was a joyful and engaging evening that brought our school community together through curiosity, creativity, and hands-on learning. Families filled our campus with excitement as students explored a wide range of interactive science stations designed to spark wonder and deepen understanding. From engineering challenges and simple machines to chemistry experiments and design-based activities, every corner of the event invited students to think, question, and discover.

What made the night especially meaningful was seeing students take the lead in their learning, especially our middle school students, who hosted many of the activities and engaged younger students and families with such confidence and enthusiasm. They explained concepts, guided experiments, and created a welcoming environment that made learning feel accessible and fun for everyone.

Laughter, collaboration, and moments of discovery were everywhere. It was a beautiful reminder of how powerful learning can be when it is active and shared. We are so grateful to our parents, teachers, staff, and volunteers who made the evening possible. Family Science Night reflects what makes Fisler so special: a community that values learning, supports one another, and shows up for our students in meaningful ways.



Golden Hill *School for Creative & Performing Arts*

732 Barris Dr., Fullerton, CA 92832 • 714/447-7715 • www.fullertonsd.org/golden



Dr. Neil Anderson
Principal

Authentic Theatrical Experience

Golden Hill School for Creative and Performing Arts proudly presented *Disney's Beauty and the Beast Jr.*, showcasing the incredible talents of our 5th and 6th grade students. This production reflected not only student dedication, but the power of community partnerships, local experts supported costuming efforts, bringing characters to life with vibrant, high-quality designs.

The show was further elevated through the use of professional lighting design, giving students an authentic theatrical experience.

At Golden Hill, the arts are not an “extra,” but an essential part of learning. Productions like this cultivate confidence, collaboration, creativity, and discipline, hallmarks of educating the whole child. Through meaningful, real-world artistic experiences, students develop skills that extend far beyond the stage, reinforcing our commitment to nurturing both academic and artistic excellence.



Hermosa Drive *Elementary School*

400 E. Hermosa Dr., Fullerton, CA 92835 • 714/447-7720 • www.fullertonsd.org/hermosa



Julianne Ettinger
Principal

Hermosa Teachers Named Elementary Speech and Debate Coaches of the Year

Hermosa Drive Elementary proudly celebrates Mrs. Dona Miller and Mrs. Pamela Zinnel, who were recently recognized as the Elementary Teacher Coaches of the Year at the Fullerton School District Speech and Debate Championship.

Through their leadership of Hermosa's Speech and Debate program, Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Zinnel have inspired students to find their voices, think critically, and communicate with confidence. They have created an encouraging

environment where students feel empowered to share their ideas, listen respectfully to others, and grow as thoughtful leaders.

This recognition is especially meaningful as both educators prepare to retire at the end of the school year, marking the culmination of remarkable careers dedicated to education and student success.

Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Zinnel have made a lasting difference in the lives of students, families, and staff at Hermosa Drive Elementary. The Hermosa community is incredibly grateful for their leadership, passion, and commitment to supporting students and helping them reach their full potential.



Ladera Vista *Junior High School of the Arts*

1700 E. Wilshire Ave., Fullerton, CA 92831 • 714/447-7765 • www.fullertonsd.org/ladera



Dr. Bill Lynch
Principal

Science in the Classroom!

Ladera Vista Junior High School of the Arts is more than an arts-focused campus—it is a place where academic excellence and strong family partnerships thrive. A powerful example of this collaboration is the ongoing support of the Ladera Vista PTSA, which partners with the school's Science PLC to enhance hands-on learning experiences.

Each year, the PTSA funds the purchase of cow eyeballs for all 8th grade students

as part of their NGSS Light Waves unit. During this engaging lab, students dissect and identify key structures of the mammalian eye, including the sclera, cornea, iris, pupil, lens, retina, optic nerve, and more, deepening their understanding of how light enables vision.

Beyond science, PTSA fundraising supports schoolwide initiatives such as PBIS incentives, the Spartan Store, and Teacher Grants. These grants have expanded into a permanent commitment, funding enriched science experiences for all 8th grade pathways, including Honors and Dual Language programs.



Laguna Road *Elementary School*

300 Laguna Rd., Fullerton, CA 92835 • 714/447-7725 • www.fullertonsd.org/laguna



Stephanie Guppy
Principal

Laguna Road Takes the Stage

Laguna Road recently showcased student learning through a series of engaging arts performances across multiple grade levels. Third grade students kicked off the winter and spring performances with Fullerton Is Our Town, highlighting local history and community connections. Second graders followed with Grammarosaurus, a fun and creative musical that brought grammar concepts to life through song and storytelling. Fourth graders then presented

a musical program on California history, combining content learning with performance. These events reflect Laguna Road's ongoing commitment to integrating the arts into instruction while giving students meaningful opportunities to build confidence and share their learning. Families and staff enjoyed seeing students take the stage and apply what they've learned. Looking ahead, we are preparing for the 6th grade production of Beauty and the Beast and the 5th grade Ukulele concert, where students write and perform their own original songs. Laguna Road is proud to continue offering students opportunities to grow through the arts!



Second graders bring grammar to life on stage!



Third grade entertains us with Fullerton history!

Maple *Elementary School*

244 E. Valencia Dr., Fullerton, CA 92832 • 714/447-7590 • www.fullertonsd.org/maple



Dr. Amanda Sobremesana
Principal

Annual Career Connect STEAM Night

Maple Elementary School is proud to announce that it has been recognized as a 2026 California Department of Education Green Ribbon School – Silver Level award recipient. This state recognition honors schools that demonstrate a strong commitment to environmental education, sustainability, and healthy learning environments.

As an environmental science school, a highlight of Maple’s work can be seen during our annual Career Connect STEAM Night, where students and families participate in hands-on activities that promote

innovation and environmental awareness. During this event, families explore career stations and interactive exhibits, including the Pacific Marine Mammal Center’s *Whales on Wheels*, a life-sized gray whale experience that teaches conservation and marine science. These opportunities connect curiosity, conservation, and career exploration for students.

Younger Maple students also experience environmental learning through classroom projects, such as an apple unit where they conduct taste tests, analyze class data, and explore garden practices. Maple further promotes sustainability through Share Tables, reducing food waste while supporting a culture of responsibility and community care.



Nicolas Junior High School

1100 W. Olive Ave., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7775 • www.fullertonsd.org/nicolas



Jose Varela
Principal

AVID Hosts Fun-Filled Pi Day Fundraiser at Nicolas Junior High

Nicolas Junior High School's AVID program celebrated its annual Pi Day fundraiser with excitement, laughter, and plenty of whipped cream. Held on March 14, the event brought together students and staff for a memorable day centered on school spirit, community engagement, and a little bit of friendly competition.

As part of the fundraiser, students and staff had the opportunity to vote for their favorite teachers and staff members to be "pied" in the face. Each vote cost \$1, allowing participants to support AVID while playfully nominating candidates. Throughout the week, the energy built across campus as students encouraged one another to cast votes, often rallying behind their favorite staff members.

During the main event, selected teachers and staff stepped forward with great sportsmanship as the results were revealed. A student was then randomly chosen to deliver the grand finale—smashing a cream pie into the face of each selected staff member. Cheers, laughter, and applause filled the campus as each pie was delivered, creating a lively and unforgettable atmosphere for all in attendance.



Beyond the fun and excitement, the fundraiser successfully generated support for AVID programs, helping to provide opportunities and resources for students. Most importantly, the event strengthened relationships between students and staff, highlighting the positive and inclusive culture at Nicolas. Overall, the Pi Day fundraiser was a tremendous success—bringing the school community together for a great cause and loads of fun.



Orangethorpe *Elementary School*

1400 S. Brookhurst Rd., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7730 • www.fullertonsd.org/orangethorpe



Deborah Bennett
Principal

Community Reading

The Booknik was a wonderful evening that brought the Orangethorpe school community together to celebrate reading and family time. Families were warmly welcomed to campus and invited to enjoy dinner together before the evening's activities began, creating a relaxed and friendly atmosphere for connection. We were honored to host several distinguished

guests who volunteered their time to read to our students and families, including local police officers, firefighters, school board members, and therapy dogs who delighted the children. Their participation made the event even more special and helped highlight the importance of literacy in our community. Orangethorpe staff worked hard to create a memorable experience for everyone by designing a fun superhero-themed event filled with engaging activities, reading opportunities, and excitement for all ages. The combination of community involvement, family engagement, and creative planning made Booknik a truly successful night that celebrated reading and strengthened connections across our school community.



Pacific Drive *Elementary School*

1501 W. Valencia Dr., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7735 • www.fullertonsd.org/pacific



John Leonard
Principal

123 Andres!

On March 13th, Pacific Drive's Dual Language Academy hosted the bilingual musical group 123 Andres! for the second annual Pacific Drive Family Concert Night. The Grammy Award winning duo came to perform songs to get families and students singing and dancing together in both English and Spanish. This year, families gathered on the blacktop outside to celebrate the event with a "concert in the park" style format.

This second annual event has turned into a night that many students and families look forward to due to the fun, interactive nature of the event. Many of Pacific Drive's teachers attend with their families, and the atmosphere is one of joy, dance and cultural relevance. The evening is also a great opportunity for multilingual learners to experience a language-rich night of songs in two languages, which aligns perfectly with Pacific Drive Dual Language Academy's focus of bilingualism, biliteracy and cultural competence.

We are excited to host 123 Andres! again next year as this event has become a staple of the Spring Season for all Pacific Drive families!



Parks Junior High School

1710 Rosecrans Ave., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7785 • www.fullertonsd.org/parks



Jenna Breite
Principal

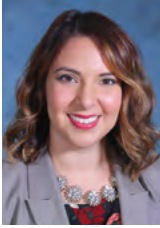
Multicultural Assembly

Our Superintendent Advisory Committee, made up of three dedicated student leaders, recently organized a special event to celebrate the many cultures represented at Parks. These students worked collaboratively to plan a schoolwide assembly that highlighted music and dance from around the world. Our Orchestra performed a lively selection from Puerto Rico as well as music from *K-Pop Demon Hunters*. Our Choir brought energy to the stage with songs from *Mamma Mia!*, and the Korean Club wowed the audience with an upbeat and fun dance routine. Following the assembly, students returned to their classrooms where they had the opportunity to enjoy a variety of multicultural snacks. The event was a wonderful reminder of the diverse backgrounds that make up our Parks community and how celebrating those differences helps strengthen our school culture.



Raymond *Elementary School*

517 N. Raymond Ave., Fullerton, CA 92831 • 714/447-7740 • www.fullertonsd.org/raymond



Cristina Centeno
Principal

Raymond Mariachi Rising

At Raymond Elementary, music and culture come alive through our vibrant Mariachi program! Under the direction of our dedicated music teacher, Mr. Fuerte, students across grade levels are building both musical skills and a deeper appreciation for traditional Mexican folk music.

Our 1st and 2nd grade students are beginning their musical journey by learning to play the guitar. Through engaging lessons, they are introduced to foundational skills while exploring classic folk songs that celebrate rich cultural traditions.

In grades 3rd through 6th, students take their learning to the next level by participating in a full Mariachi ensemble. Many are learning instruments for the very first time, including the guitarrón, violin, and trumpet. Their hard work, enthusiasm, and commitment are evident as they develop both individually and as a group.

This spring, our Mariachi students will showcase their talents at their grand premiere during our Outdoor Open House Concert in May. This special performance will highlight months of dedication and provide our school community with an opportunity to celebrate student achievement.

We are incredibly proud of our students and grateful for the opportunity to promote diversity, culture, and the arts through this meaningful program.



Richman *Elementary School*

700 S. Richman Ave., Fullerton, CA 92832 • 714/447-7745 • www.fullertonsd.org/richman



Devi Sok-Huynh
Principal

Paivika Mountain Explorers

Richman Elementary's 6th grade junior scientists recently experienced outdoor learning at Camp Paivika in the scenic San Bernardino Mountains. At over 5,000 feet elevation, 39 students engaged in NGSS-aligned science through guided hikes and field studies.

Junior scientists explored forest ecosystems, identifying native trees like Jeffrey pines and observing wildlife such as mule, deer and birds of prey. Lessons on

watersheds and geology helped deepen their understanding of natural systems and environmental stewardship. Beyond science, our explorers built independence, confidence, and collaboration skills through shared outdoor experiences.

On campus, students who did not attend participated in "Camp Richman," where Mrs. Rios led engaging NGSS science labs focused on hands-on experiments and engineering design.

Special thanks to our dedicated team: Ivy Ninofranco, Amy DeSalvo, Heather Rios, Tiffany Kienast and our office team for making these meaningful learning experiences possible for Richman students.



Under the stars at Camp Paivika, Richman 6th graders gather around the campfire sharing the day's adventures, and creating memories that will last a lifetime.

Rolling Hills *Elementary School*

1460 E. Rolling Hills Dr., Fullerton, CA 92835 • 714/447-7795 • www.fullertonsd.org/rolling



Lindy McNutt
Principal

Popcorn Factory!

Our 3rd grade students in the LTL MultiAge Program are close to wrapping up another successful Popcorn Factory! Each year, our students take part in this meaningful project to raise money for a charity of their choice. The Popcorn Factory is a favorite tradition because it builds teamwork and strengthens problem-solving skills as students plan,

market, and manage their sales. From creating posters with their little buddies to advertising key details like time, date, and location, students take ownership of every step. They also take on important roles such as cashier, clerk, cook, manager, and banker, learning responsibility and collaboration along the way. This year, the LTL students chose to donate their proceeds to Wags, an animal rescue center. LTL students love to help any animal in need, any way they can! We are proud of their hard work, leadership, and generosity in supporting a cause that matters to them.



Sunset Lane *Elementary School*

2030 Sunset Ln., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7750 • www.fullertonsd.org/sunset



Dr. Tracy Gyurina
Principal

Olympic Spirit Shines

This past February, Sunset Lane proudly celebrated our very own Winter Olympics! The festivities began with a memorable Opening Ceremony featuring the Sunset Lane Choir and a special guest, Ms. Vicky Wang, a member of the 1988 U.S. Women's Olympic Hockey Team. Ms. Wang inspired students with her story of perseverance, teamwork, and dedication required to compete at the Olympic level.

Students eagerly participated in six winter-themed events: Team Bobsled, Ski Jump, Speed Skating,

Biathlon, Team Curling, and a Hockey Shootout. Each activity challenged students' skills, collaboration, and sportsmanship. Ms. Wang also volunteered her time to mentor 5th graders before the Hockey Shootout, demonstrating proper slap-shot techniques and sharing training insights from her Olympic experience.

Classes competed enthusiastically for points, with Ms. Jeong's class excelling in 6th grade, Ms. Ortega's class leading 5th grade, and Mrs. La's students earning multiple gold medals in 4th grade. Most importantly, our students showcased outstanding sportsmanship, making this a true celebration of teamwork, perseverance, and school pride!



Inspiring the next generation: Olympian Vicky Wang shares her story of perseverance and teamwork at Sunset Lane's Winter Olympics Opening Ceremony.

Coaching champions: PE teacher Mitchell Tao and Olympian Vicky Wang guide Sunset Lane students through the Winter Olympics events



Shining with pride! Sunset Lane students show off their hard-earned Winter Olympics medals.

Valencia Park *Elementary School*

3441 W. Valencia Dr., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7755 • www.fullertonsd.org/valencia



Melanie Carmona
Principal

Reading Week Celebration

Valencia Park celebrated Read Across America Week with a full week of fun activities designed to spark a love of reading. Students participated in themed spirit days, including sharing books connected to their culture, showing off their creativity with crazy hair and clothes, wearing cozy pajamas, dressing in rainbow colors, and finishing the week with favorite hats.

On Wednesday morning, we hosted our Breakfast, Blankets, and Books event where more than 100 families joined us in the MPR to read together in their pajamas while enjoying breakfast and music. Teachers also started the day with fun classroom reading activities so all students could celebrate together.

Students participated in Reading BINGO, earning three Pride Tickets when they completed a BINGO card. We also held a bookmark contest, and celebrated 5th grader Grace Loeza for being our winning designer! Every student at VP received a copy of her bookmark to enjoy.

It was a wonderful week celebrating the joy of reading across our VP community.



Woodcrest Elementary School

455 W. Baker Ave., Fullerton, CA 92832 • 714/447-7760 • www.fullertonsd.org/woodcrest



Soraya Ramos
Interim Principal

Celebrating Literacy and Community

Our school had an incredible time celebrating Read Across America, filled with meaningful literary experiences for our students. We were honored to welcome a wonderful group of guest readers, including Officer Enriquez, Trustee Vanesa Estrella, Interim Superintendent Dr. Chad Hammitt, and a Therapy Dog team. Each visitor helped bring stories to life to inspire a love of reading in every classroom.

Our “Breakfast with Books” event brought families together to enjoy a meal while reading side by side, creating a joyful start to the day. Students also participated in a reading challenge, exploring new books and genres to earn prizes and even take home books of their own.

To round out the week, Career Day connected students with inspiring members of our community, including City Councilmember Zahra, a content creator, a National Guard member, an independent filmmaker, and a chemical hygiene officer. Students asked thoughtful questions and gained insight into a wide range of career paths, helping them envision the many possibilities for their futures.



Therapy dog duo, Bob and Billie, read aloud *After the Fall* by Dan Santat to our classrooms to celebrate Read Across America.



Isaiah Kollmansberger, independent filmmaker, sharing his passion and journey with our students on Career Day.



Families read their favorite stories together during Breakfast with Books to celebrate Read Across America.