



# Mendez Minutes

Mendez Fundamental Intermediate School

Edition 16 Tuesday, May 5, 2026

**WE DID IT—ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL ACADEMIC YEAR AT MENDEZ!!**

## Quote of the Month

By: Mia Lua



I would like to dedicate this quote to the 8th Grade class at Mendez:

*“As the school year ends, may your mind be filled with knowledge and your heart full of memories.”*

– Mia Lua, May 2026

## Farewell Mustangs, Class of 2026

By: Mendez Faculty & Staff

It would not be good form to say farewell to you **without** sharing special messages from Mendez Faculty and Staff.

We hope that you will treasure these messages for a lifetime.

Here’s to you, **Mendez Mustangs!**

**8th Grade WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT**



## Feature Article

**“You Have Grown”**

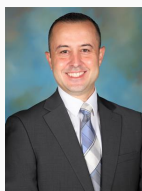
By: Gabriel Moreno

To the promoting class of 2026, as the school year comes to a close, it’s important to take a moment to recognize the amazing 8th Grade Class of **Mendez Fundamental Intermediate**.

You represented the Mustang name with pride, and as you move on to high school, you leave behind a strong legacy that others will look up to.

Over the past three years, your experience has been more than just academics. You didn’t just learn information—you grew as individuals. You showed that being a Mustang isn’t just about being there, but about the attitude, effort, and character you bring every day.

I wish you the best of luck as you move on to High School; it was a pleasure being your principal. Go Mustangs!



**Mr. Gabriel Moreno, Principal**

## Strategy of the Month

**“Lift Others Up”**

By: Dr. Laura Castro

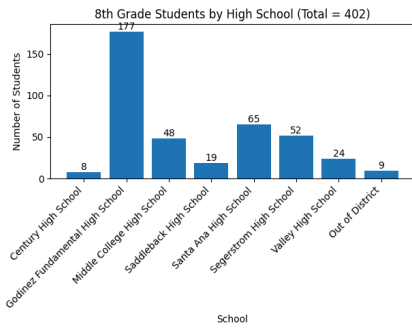


**M**ustangs, we have made it to May and our year is coming to an end. We faced challenges and conquered them and many of us did not do it alone. As we head into the final stretch of the school year, Mendez Scholars are focusing on a powerful goal: **lifting each other up**. This means supporting one another not just socially, but academically as well.

In the classroom, lifting others up looks like helping a classmate understand a concept, explaining your thinking, or offering encouraging feedback. It’s not about giving answers, but it’s about helping others learn and grow. Outside the classroom, it means showing kindness, including others, and using

# Next Up... High School!!

By: Ms. Yolanda Elmore & Mrs. T. Tran  
Our Promoting 8th Graders are on their way. Let's **look at where our future leaders will attend high school.**



# “Embrace Every Opportunity”

By: Dr. Magaly Ponce-Gomez

Watching this class of 8th graders grow over the past three years has been an incredible journey. Although this year I was not there the whole year due to my daughter being born, I’ve had the privilege of seeing each of you develop not only academically, socially, but also as individuals with unique talents, goals, and personalities. Your dedication to sports, clubs, and countless extracurricular activities has created memories that will last a lifetime; moments of teamwork, perseverance,

# Feature Article

## May is Mental Health Awareness Month!

By: Mrs. Stephanie Resendiz

A time to learn about mental health, speak openly about feelings, and feel comfortable asking for help.

Middle school comes with a lot of changes. One moment things feel fine and the next you might feel stressed or overwhelmed.

### It might help to talk to someone if:

- Your worries won't go away
- You feel overwhelmed most days
- You're having a hard time focusing
- You just don't feel like yourself
- You are feeling unsafe or worried about your safety

### Support at School:

There are adults on campus who are here to support you. You can talk to your school counselor or ask a trusted staff member for help getting connected to support at school..

### What You Can Try This Week:

- Take three slow breaths when you feel stressed
- Check-in with a friend
- Do one thing each day that helps you relax or smile

**Reminder:** Taking care of your mental health is a strength!



**Mrs. Stephanie Resendiz,**  
*School-Based Mental Health Specialist*

words that build people up instead of tearing them down. Even small actions can make a big impact. A simple “You’ve got this,” helping a peer get started, or inviting someone to join your group can change someone’s entire day.

At Mendez, we believe success is stronger when we support each other. Let’s finish the year by creating a community where everyone feels confident, included, and inspired to do their best. Just a few more weeks until summer vacation. Let’s finish strong and help your fellow Mustang.



**Dr. Laura Castro,** *ELA Teacher*

# “Ms. Jenyfer Bustos, Summerbridge Leader”

By: **Juliana Vargas** 🎓



The baton is being handed-off to a new Summerbridge Leader for 2026, and that person is Ms. Jenyfer Bustos, Special Education Teacher.

I realized that I had some questions about the Summerbridge program at Mendez, so I asked the former Summerbridge Leader, Assistant Principal (AP) April Salas about the program.

**Juliana:** “For our incoming 6th Graders, what is Summerbridge?”  
**AP Salas:** “Summerbridge is a program we have for incoming 6th

and joy that define who you are becoming.

As you move on to high school, embrace every opportunity that comes your way. Continue to challenge yourselves, stay involved, and support one another just as you have here. The habits and friendships you've built will carry you far beyond these halls.

I have no doubt that your paths will lead you to great success in high school, college, and beyond. Keep striving, stay focused and never forget your end goal. You can be anything you set your mind to! Go Mustangs and make a difference in this world.



**Dr. Magaly Ponce-Gomez,**  
*Assistant Principal*

## *Mendez Teachers are a gift to each student in the classroom*

By: Darian Mendoza



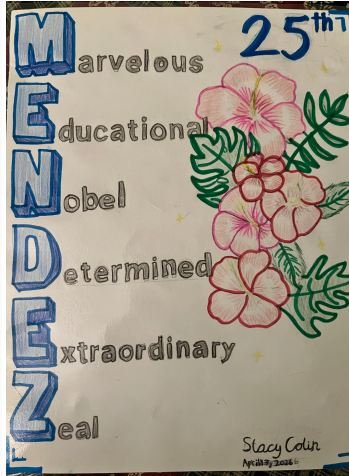
**National Teacher's Appreciation  
Week is from  
Monday, May 4 - Friday, May 8**

I think that it is very important to show our appreciation for our teachers.

## *Journalist Spotlight*

### **"What Mendez Fundamental Means to Me"**

By: Stacy Colin 



"I enjoyed contributing artwork to the May edition of Mendez Minutes. I hope everyone likes it!"

### **"Being a Mendez Honor Student"**

By: Paola Guillen 



As an Honor student in 7th and 8th Grade, I learned how to stay organized, manage my assignments, and push myself to do my best. Honor's class helped me improve my study habits and think more deeply about what I have learned.

My advice for future Honor students is to avoid procrastination and ask for help when you need it. While Honors' classes can be challenging (especially if you have two or more), they do help you to grow.

I honestly feel ready for the challenges ahead at Santa Ana High School, as I am enrolled in both Honor and AP classes there.

Graders that helps them transition from Elementary to Middle school. We offer this free program to our 6th Graders so that the transition from one teacher (in 5th Grade) to six different classes with a different teacher for each class. By attending the program, the 6th Graders will receive a tour of the campus, meet fellow 6th Graders as well as some of our sensational Mendez teachers and staff, and the students will be able to sharpen their skills in ELA, math, and technology. As a special treat, our students are introduced to AVID which will help them to quickly learn skills and strategies for academic success."

**Juliana:** "What are the dates and times for Summerbridge 2026?"

**AP Salas:** "This year's Summerbridge program is from Monday, July 27th to Friday, July 31st from 8:00a.m. to 12:00p.m."

**Juliana:** "Why is it good for 7th and 8th Grade Mendez scholars to be volunteers at Summerbridge?"

**AP Salas:** "I am a big believer in the volunteer spirit. Therefore, I believe that it is very important for our Mendez scholars to give back and help the incoming 6th Graders. Moving from Elementary to Middle school is not easy for every student. Upperclassmen have the opportunity to make that move a lot smoother this summer!"



**Ms. Jenyfer Bustos,**  
*Special Education Teacher*

Teachers are helping us to become better versions of ourselves. Teachers help us grow!

Whether you celebrate your teachers with a handmade card, a gift card to their favorite store, or offering them a helping hand with a few classroom tasks before or after school, honor and celebrate them for all that they do.

### Thank you, Mendez Teachers!!



Here are the top five gifts teachers love (according to Google):

1. **Gift Cards (Target, Amazon):** These are at the top of the list as they allow teachers to treat themselves or purchase needed classroom items.
2. **Handwritten Notes or Letters:** Sincere notes of appreciation from students and parents are highly valued and often cherished more than physical gifts.

## Jokes for May

By: **Lylah Lamas** 🎓



**Question:** What do you call a graduate who loves coffee?

**Answer:** A latte-achiever!

**Question:** Why was the 8th Grader going broke?

**Answer:** Nothing he did made cents!!

## Mendez Memories

This May Edition of *Mendez Minutes* features four of our 8th Grade Journalists who will share what they'll miss about Mendez Fundamental Intermediate.



**Alyssa Garcia** 🎓

I will absolutely miss everyone here at Mendez. I will miss my teachers and friends--learning in class was fun.

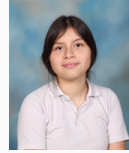
I will forever miss my 8th Grade math teacher, Mr. McDonald. He is a great, amazing, and relaxed teacher. I will also miss my favorite teacher, Ms. Elmore. She brings so much joy and fun into her classroom.

Without Mendez I would not have some of the funniest memories of the great and wonderful people that I have met here.

I hope that I will make new memories in my high school years--I can't wait!

## "Did You Know?"

By: Diana Gallegos



Did you know that **May 11th** is **Eat What You Want Day**?

That's right! If you want to dip french fries in strawberry ice cream, go for it!



Did you know that **May 25th** is **Memorial Day**?



**On Memorial Day**, we honor the men and women who chose to serve in all branches of our military. They are true heroes, and we should be grateful for them.

**SAUSD schools and the district offices will be closed in observance of this holiday.**

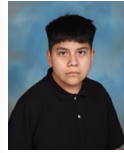
### 3. Classroom Supply

**Restock:** High-quality supplies like Flair Pens, Sharpie S-Gel pens, Post-it Notes, and dry-erase markers are practical, everyday needs.

### 4. Personalized Items:

Thoughtful, custom gifts such as a personalized stamp, custom stationery, or a personalized teacher lanyard.

5. **Coffee or Treats:** Coffee gift cards, gourmet snacks, or a catered meal for the staff are popular ways to bring joy to a busy school day.



**Joseph Martinez** 🎓

I will forever cherish my wonderful memories here at Mendez.

One of my favorite memories was when I volunteered to help Ms. Elmore with Career Day.

Another favorite memory for me was Literacy Night. Assistant Principal Salas invited so many people and I had a lot of fun.

Out of all of the 18 teachers that I have had in my three years here at Mendez, my favorite teacher is Ms. Steele. She is kind to everyone, has a lot of energy, and always has a smile on her face.

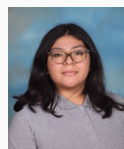
I am glad that my parents chose Mendez Fundamental. The teachers, staff, and Administration are all nice. I have met so many people who have been there for me. I'll never forget my years at Mendez Fundamental.



**Abygail Leon** 🎓

I will never forget when Mr. Lubba shaved his head because we (his math students) scored 90% or higher on the math MAP test. None of us believe he would do this. Secretly, I wondered if his wife was flabbergasted when she saw that her husband was instantly bald. But that just showed us all how much he cares about our success.

Thank you for the good times, Mr. Lubba.



**Daisy Fernandez** 🎓

The memories that I have made are what I will miss most. I have had a lot of fun at Mendez. From field trips, to sports teams, tutoring, and enjoying lunch

## "Manny Wants 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 a 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 our August 2026 newsletter.

**Manny the Mustang** looks forward to hearing from you!



## Beanstack Reading Challenge




May 1, 2026 - May 31, 2026

### 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!

# Are you looking for something to do this summer?

By: **Guadalupe Pintor**   
and  
**Tobias Lopez**



## What? Summer Teen Camp

Where? **Garfield Community Center**  
**510 N. Lacy Street**  
**Santa Ana, CA 92701**

When? **June 8 - August 7**

Price? **\$35 per participant**

Registration opens on **Monday,**  
**May 4, 2026**

For more information, please visit  
this website:  
<https://www.santa-ana.org/summer-teen-camp>

## Mendez Scholars

Are...

Respectful

Responsible

Ready



together with friends have all been special.

A few of my favorite memories from this year would be in Journalism. Journalism taught me a lot more than just recording and editing videos. We worked together in that class and created a bond while learning about one another. Thanks to Ms. Elmore for making that happen.

In my last weeks at Mendez, I want to continue to learn and grow. Life is precious, and I do not want to waste a minute of it!

### Our Fantastic Journalism Staff:

- Ms. Yolanda Elmore, Editor**
- Mrs. Yvette Cortes, Co-Editor**
- Stacy Colin**
- Daisy Fernandez**
- Diana Gallegos**
- Alyssa Garcia**
- Paola Guillen**
- Lylah Lamas**
- Abygail Leon**
- Tobias Lopez**
- Mia Lua**
- Jacob Martinez**
- Joseph Martinez**
- Ariannie Mendez**
- Darian Mendoza**
- Guadalupe Merino**
- Guadalupe Pintor**
- Melina Romero**
- Hanna Salagado**
- Juliana Vargas**
- Mila Zamarripa**
- Yoselin Zuniga**



**Happy Summer from the Journalism Class of 2025 -2026**

## Letter from the Editor

**“Way to go, Mendez Fundamental!”**

By: Ms. Yolanda Elmore

This year was full of many successes for Mendez Fundamental.

I want to begin by saying Thank You very much to the entire Mendez Family for your support of our school newsletter, **Mendez Minutes**. I am very grateful for my co-editor, Mrs. Cortes, and my staff of Journalism scholars who stepped-up in so many wonderful ways this school year. Kudos to the teachers, staff, and/or Administrators who wrote an article in one of our monthly newsletters this year.

**P.S. A very special thank you to the teachers and staff who wrote emails to the Journalism Scholars this year. My scholars were deeply touched by your acknowledgement of their hard work. Your emails are on the Wall of Appreciation in my classroom.** 🥰

When I reflect on the 2025 - 2026 academic year, it is clear that we have a lot to be proud of at our school. Here are just two that stand-out for me:

- 1. Mendez reclassified over 70 students. The dedication to our students is a joy to see!**
- 2. Mendez was a stand-out at the OC STEAM Reading Challenge! We impressed everyone and put Mendez on the map!**

Now, as the 2025 - 2026 school year comes to an end, the **Mendez Minutes** staff would like to wish you and your family a restful and wonderful summer.



**Ms. Yolanda Elmore, ELA & Journalism Teacher**