



FULLERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT *PRESS RELEASE*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sept. 14, 2026 CONTACT: Juliette Funes, PIO PHONE: (657) 706-3774

New Fullerton School District Superintendent Returns to Classroom as Kindergarten Teacher

FULLERTON, CA – Fullerton School District Superintendent Gretchen Janson, Ed.D., traded the District Office for a kindergarten classroom on Sept. 9, spending a full school day as a substitute teacher at Commonwealth Elementary School as part of her first [100 days](#) leading the District.

Stepping into Sandra Dellalonga's classroom, Janson, who began her tenure as superintendent on July 1, taught 28 kindergarten students for the day – marking her first time leading a [classroom](#) in 22 years.

Among the day's lessons, Janson introduced students to the color orange, using familiar objects – from tigers to oranges – to help students make connections between the color and the world around them. Students then created their own books featuring words and illustrations of orange objects. Janson also led a math lesson focused on the number eight, guiding students as they explored different ways to make eight, such as combining groups of three and five.

"Spending a full day back in the classroom gave me an even greater appreciation for the incredible work our teachers and classified staff do every day," Janson said. "There is so much that goes into creating a classroom where students feel supported, engaged and excited to learn. Experiencing that work firsthand helps me better understand how we can continue supporting the people who make that possible."

The experience was part of Janson's ongoing effort to listen, learn and better understand Fullerton School District from the perspective of the students and employees who experience its classrooms and campuses every day. Since starting in the role, Janson has prioritized visiting schools, connecting with employees and learning firsthand about the people, programs and practices that shape the student experience.

For Janson, returning to the classroom offered an opportunity to reconnect with her roots as an educator while experiencing firsthand the preparation, flexibility and teamwork required

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throughout a school day. She plans to substitute teaching across grade levels at the various FSD schools.

"I was a little nervous, but it definitely was adventure-filled, and this gave me the opportunity to learn more about our district, our students and our staff," Janson said. "I want to thank the Commonwealth team for welcoming me and helping me be ready to go."

By listening to employees and stepping directly into their work, Fullerton School District is strengthening the connection between District leadership and its schools – helping ensure decisions and priorities remain grounded in what students and staff need to thrive.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

091426_SUPERINTENDENT_TEACHES1: Fullerton School District Superintendent Gretchen Janson, Ed.D., joins Mrs. Dellalonga's kindergarten students at Commonwealth Elementary School during recess on Sept. 9. Janson spent the full day as a substitute teacher, marking her first time leading a classroom in 22 years and giving her a firsthand look at the experiences of FSD students and employees as part of her first 100 days as superintendent.

091426_SUPERINTENDENT_TEACHES2: Superintendent Gretchen Janson teaches kindergarten students about the color orange before students create their own books featuring words and illustrations connected to the color.

091426_SUPERINTENDENT_TEACHES3: Superintendent Gretchen Janson engages with kindergarten students during classroom play. From leading lessons to building with students on the carpet, the day gave Janson an opportunity to experience the rhythms of a kindergarten classroom firsthand.

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