

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Anaheim Union High School District



Volume 5, Issue 10

November 2024



**The Jan & Ross Billings Innovation Center
at Magnolia High School**

Innovating Education



State Superintendent of Instruction Tony Thurmond and Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero honored Kennedy High in Anaheim for its outstanding civic learning programs.

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Elevating Education: The Role of Civic Engagement in Student Achievement and Well-Being



**Michael B.
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Superintendent

The State Seal of Civic Engagement, approved by the State Board of Education in 2020, marked a vital progression in developing students who are not only academically strong but also civically active and socially aware.

However, the absence of this seal in the College and Career Indicators (CCI) of the [California School Dashboard](#) represents a missed opportunity — until now.

Recently, the State Board of Education has requested that the California Department of Education incorporate the seal into the CCI. By incorporating it, we can incentivize schools to cultivate civic responsibility, enhance the relevance of education and elevate student voices. This initiative offers a powerful chance to foster active citizenship, connect learning to real-world challenges, and inspire students to engage meaningfully with their communities.

The Seal of Civic Engagement, which is affixed to a student's diploma or certificate of completion, should be added alongside other key indicators like the State Seal of Biliteracy, ensuring it receives the attention it deserves. With local criteria including a minimum GPA of 2.0 in all social science courses and the completion of a civic engagement project, schools would now be held accountable to a higher standard of civic instruction. The inclusion of the civic engagement seal on the California School Dashboard is not only a recognition of student accomplishments but also a catalyst for broader shifts in educational practices that prioritize civic education.

Incorporating the California Seal of Civic Engagement into the school dashboard will encourage schools to shift away from traditional instructional models and move toward more student-centered approaches. One of the primary benefits is the emphasis on elevating student voice and agency. Rather than positioning students as passive recipients of knowledge, the seal incentivizes schools to create opportunities for students to take on leadership roles, participate in community-based projects and engage

in civic dialogue, and ultimately give students a reason to vote and participate in our democracy.

Student-driven learning experiences will become a central focus, allowing students to take ownership of their education and the role they play in society. This shift fosters not only a deeper understanding of democratic principles but also a sense of responsibility and empowerment. As students take on active roles in addressing real-world challenges, they develop leadership, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, all while becoming more engaged in their communities.

The connection between civic engagement and student well-being is becoming increasingly evident through research at [UCLA](#) and [USC](#). By embedding service learning into the curriculum, schools can create more holistic learning experiences that connect academic content with community service. Civic engagement projects offer students a sense of purpose and belonging, which can significantly contribute to their mental health.

When students work on projects that address real-world problems, they not only learn about the issues but also engage emotionally and intellectually with the material. Service learning provides an avenue for students to apply what they've learned in the classroom to make a tangible impact in their communities, which can enhance their sense of agency and improve their emotional well-being. Schools will be encouraged to develop instructional models that prioritize these types of experiences, ultimately supporting the mental and emotional health of students in ways that extend beyond traditional academic instruction.

One of the most exciting opportunities provided by the California Seal of Civic Engagement is the potential to integrate civic engagement with career exploration. Schools can align civic projects with career pathway programs, providing students with hands-on learning experiences that are directly related to potential college majors and career interests.

See **SUPERINTENDENT** • Page 3

For example, students interested in public service, environmental sustainability or health care could engage in civic projects that allow them to explore these fields while still in high school. By linking civic engagement with career pathways, schools not only make learning more relevant but also provide students with early exposure to future career opportunities. This shift in instructional focus ensures that students are better prepared for both post-secondary education and the workforce.

A key feature of the Seal of Civic Engagement is its potential to drive instructional shifts that address pressing societal issues. With its inclusion in the dashboard, schools will be incentivized to create project-based learning opportunities that tackle local and global challenges such as climate change, affordable housing, health care access and mental health.

By engaging in civic projects that address these critical issues, students develop the skills necessary to analyze problems, research potential solutions and implement action plans. These hands-on experiences prepare students to think critically and creatively, making their learning more meaningful and applicable to real-world contexts. The seal encourages schools to foster a learning environment where students can connect their education to the challenges facing their communities and the world.

The Seal of Civic Engagement also promotes active citizenship by encouraging schools to design lessons that emphasize democratic participation, voter registration and civic responsibility. By embedding these democratic practices into the curriculum, schools can ensure that students are not only knowledgeable about the issues but also understand the importance of participating in democratic processes.

This instructional shift prepares students to be informed and engaged citizens beyond graduation, helping to create a more active and participatory democracy. Students who understand the value of their voice and their vote are more likely to carry those values into adulthood, becoming lifelong advocates for their communities and society at large.

By nudging schools to prioritize civic education, we can prepare a generation of students who are not only academically accomplished but also socially conscious and ready to engage with the challenges of the modern world. From promoting student well-being to encouraging career exploration and addressing critical societal issues, including the Seal of Civic Engagement in the state's accountability system is a vital step toward creating a more equitable and empowered future.

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AUHSD Alternative Education Programs

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Jose Lara
Coordinator

Gilbert High School Community Garden

Gilbert High School is proud to unveil its new Community Garden, a project that highlights the power of collaboration and sustainability. Over the summer, four dedicated staff members—Ruth Park, Monse Avila, Nikki Resh, and Lisa Holley—along with more than 30 interns, transformed a vision into reality. This garden will provide a steady supply of fresh produce to individuals and families grappling with food insecurity.

Working in synergy with the Gilbert High Mercadito food pantry, the garden aims to address local needs while promoting self-sufficiency. The garden will be nurtured

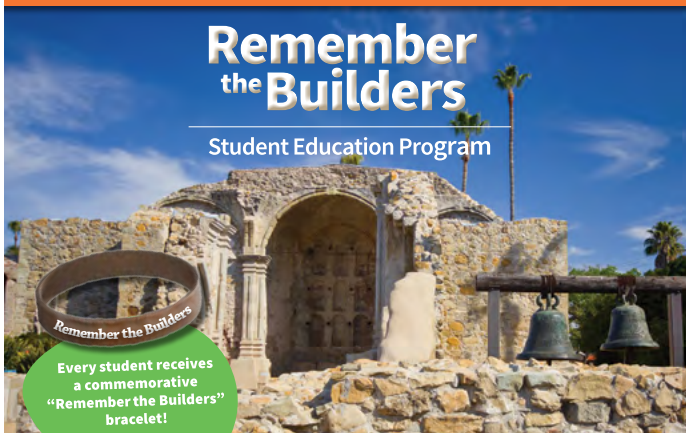
through a course offered at the school, ensuring ongoing care and engagement. Additionally, local organizations, community members, and volunteers will play crucial roles in its upkeep, making it a true community effort. This initiative embodies Gilbert High's commitment to community schools and civic engagement.



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School News

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AIME

501 N. Crescent Way, Anaheim, CA 92801 • 714/999-3794 • www.auhsd.us



MJ Cooke
Program Director

Setting a Foundation for Success

The AIME program had a busy summer, involving over 450 AUHSD students in a variety of internship opportunities. These internships included the AIME Summer Internship program for rising seniors, the AIME City of Anaheim Internship program, the AUHSD Student Film Academy, and the Kindset program.

During the AIME Summer Internship program, students gained real-world experience with professionals from various organizations including the Disneyland Resort, OC Supervisor Chaffee, Satori Law, and Big Brothers Big Sisters OC. Additionally, the program supported its collaboration with the CEO Leadership Alliance, Orange County, who brought in companies like CHOC, Medtronic, and Edwards Lifesciences.

The City of Anaheim also contributed by increasing internship opportunities through the Californians for All Youth Job Corps Grant to provide the AIME City of Anaheim Internship, which supported student internships addressing climate change, food insecurity, and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

These grant-supported efforts collectively provided students with meaningful work experience while also addressing critical community needs. Students worked on projects including the AUHSD Public Information Office internship, Community Schools Outreach, Gilbert Community Garden and Civic Engagement, Plurilingual Instructional Aide Internship, computer repair technician, and webmaster assistant internship.

The AUHSD Student Film Academy consisted of a four-week boot camp in video production, paired with field trips to hear from industry professionals at organizations such as Roadtrip Nation and Sony Studios. The Kindset program provided a six-week entrepreneurial experience where students created products and services to spread kindness in their community.

Coming off such an impactful summer, our student interns are set to begin the school year with a greater sense of confidence, purpose, and direction. The collaboration with their peers, leadership of their AIME summer coordinators, and workplace experience with industry mentors will undoubtedly set the foundation for a strong school year and beyond.

Visual & Performing Arts

501 N. Crescent Way, Anaheim, CA 92801 • 714/999-3794 • www.auhsd.us



Brian Belski
*Director
Arts Education*

Arts Pathways

The arts education programs in Anaheim Union High School District (AUHSD) offer a transformative experience for students, creating a vibrant community that celebrates creativity, collaboration, and cultural relevance. Our district is dedicated to providing all students access to an engaging, standards-based arts curriculum that not only prepares them for a future in California's \$650 billion Creative Economy but also fosters essential life skills.

In AUHSD, students explore the arts through four key Artistic Processes: Creating, Presenting, Responding, and Connecting. These processes are designed to encourage self-expression and develop well-rounded, thoughtful individuals. Arts classes are more than just electives—they're spaces where students can explore their own stories, connect with their peers, and engage in meaningful creative work. Through visual and performing arts

courses, students refine their communication skills, build confidence, and gain experience that prepares them for various career paths in the creative industries.

Our arts program is uniquely positioned to embrace the diversity within our student population. AUHSD's arts instruction values and integrates students' cultural backgrounds and life experiences, providing a safe and inclusive environment for everyone. Visual arts projects and ensemble performances foster a deep sense of connection and teamwork, emphasizing that we achieve more together than in isolation.

The district is also proud of its efforts to support arts pathways that align with career-readiness goals. Students have opportunities to learn from practicing artists, collaborate with local arts organizations, and showcase their talents at district and community events. These experiences give our students real-world insight and foster critical skills that will serve them well, whether they pursue creative careers or other professional paths.

In AUHSD, arts education isn't just about creating artists—it's about developing creative, resourceful, and empathetic young adults ready to make a positive impact on their communities.





Scott Reindl
Coordinator, 21st
Century Career
Readiness

Importance of Social Capital

Through the Career Preparedness Systems Framework, AUHSD is dedicated to preparing students for the jobs of today and tomorrow, guided by each student's sense of voice and purpose. A key part of being career ready is learning to build social capital.

Social capital refers to the connections and relationships an individual has as well as the benefits that arise from these connections. This includes strong ties and connections to family, friends, and members of your community as well as loose ties such as friends of friends, teachers, clergy, and connections on social media. Building social capital creates a support system, providing people to rely on for help, advice, and emotional support when needed. In addition, it can help find a job, gain access to valuable information, and provide a gateway to opportunities unavailable through individual efforts.

Over the past several years, AUHSD has been implementing the Career Launch curriculum to help students build social capital in its AIME Internship Program and a number of English classes. This curriculum teaches students to access the hidden job market that exists within our networks. Building strong social capital can give students access to this hidden job market and opportunities to advance their careers and find life success.

Even without experiencing the Career Launch curriculum, being aware of social capital and applying a few simple strategies can make a huge difference. These strategies include being approachable, attending social events and community gatherings, being willing to help others, maintaining trust, volunteering for community service, having an online presence, and staying curious and open to learning from others. Implementing these strategies to build social capital can give students a strong advantage in finding college, career, and life success.

Plurilingual Services

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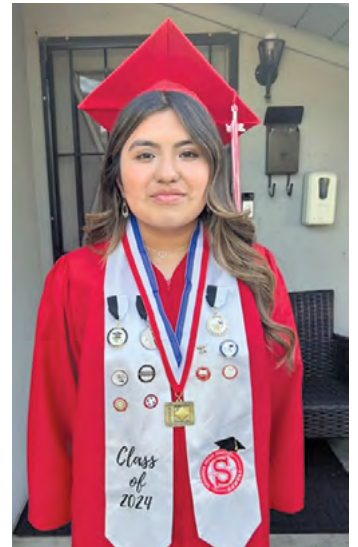


Dr. Renae Bryant
Director

Seal of Biliteracy and Pathways to Biliteracy 2024

The advantages of biliteracy and plurilingualism are many: 1) more competitive for college admission, scholarships and career opportunities, 2) greater financial-earning power, 3) ease to communicate when traveling, 4) keeps generations of families connected and 5) greater cognitive ability and neuroplasticity.

In May 2024, Anaheim UHSD recognized 1,172 seniors for earning State Seal of Biliteracy medals in seventeen languages (the most languages yet) and 951 eighth-grade scholars for earning the District Pathways to Biliteracy Award (medals) and the new California Department of Education Pathways to Biliteracy Award

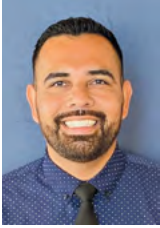


AUHSD scholars earned over 1,172 State Seal of Biliteracy Awards in seventeen different languages (the most languages yet) in 2024.

(certificates). Thanks to our scholars, staff and families' diligent work, Seal of Biliteracy awards were earned in the following languages: Arabic, American Sign Language, Farsi, French, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Telugul, and Vietnamese. Forty-seven scholars earned trilateracy awards and one scholar earned a Polyglot award for being pluriliterate in four languages.

Anaheim High School

811 W. Lincoln Ave., Anaheim, CA 92805 • 714/999-371 • anaheimhs.org



Ruben Calleros
Principal

A Model Community School –Leveraging Our Most Valuable Space

Anaheim High School is making great leaps in how education is done by helping to empower students to realize and manifest their dreams in a way that truly represents the vision our community constructed for our school. As a community school, we are dedicated to the education of “the whole child”, and we enter into the third year of our community school effort with an invigorated sense of purpose and drive. Our opening days were centered around two key concepts: Radical Dreaming, as championed by Dr. Jamila Dugan, and Transcendent Thinking--a process described by Dr. Mary Helen Immordino-Yang, in which students connect their experiences in the classroom to their life beyond. Staff members came together to look at and discuss valuable street data and testimonials to help inform instruction, and along with our community of partners, at Anaheim, we are empowering our dreamers to write the next chapter of their stories.



Ball Junior High School

1500 W. Ball Rd., Anaheim, CA 92802 • 714/999-3663 • ball.auhsd.us



Maryanna Lee
Principal

Vibrant Environment

Ball Junior High School has experienced a powerful transformation in campus culture and climate through the dedicated efforts of staff, community partners, and deeply engaged parent involvement, which has been instrumental in building a more connected and supportive environment for students. Parent participation has amplified the school's initiatives, strengthening bonds between students, families, and school staff and contributing to a vibrant, inclusive atmosphere on campus. This partnership is a cornerstone of the school's success in fostering a positive and engaged student body.

Staff members are focused on teaching essential conflict-resolution skills, encouraging open dialogue, and promoting mutual respect through restorative practices. These approaches equip students to resolve disagreements constructively, building an empathetic and cohesive student community. A key contributor to this mission is Neutral Ground, an organization offering mentorship,



conflict mediation, and restorative circles that empower students to address challenges with accountability and resilience, further enhancing the school's climate by reducing disciplinary issues.

Another impactful change is Ball Junior High's new cell phone-free policy, which minimizes distractions and enhances student focus and peer connections. Without cell phone distractions, students enjoy engaging in a variety of lunchtime activities, including ASB-led events, the popular Karaoke Club, Chess Club, and organized sports on the field with the CSA. These enjoyable events foster teamwork, community, and meaningful connections among students. Club Elevate further cultivates leadership skills through fun, purposeful activities, while counselors provide support through tutoring and creative crafting sessions that promote self-expression and relaxation. Additionally, “The Nest,” Ball Junior High's dedicated wellness space, offers a calming environment with daily enriching activities that support mental health. Students appreciate the various events, activities, and games available, helping them effectively manage stress and build resilience in a vibrant and nurturing environment.

Brookhurst *Junior High School*

601 N. Brookhurst Ave., Anaheim, CA 92801 • 714/999-3613 • brookhurst.org



Gilbert Amancio
Principal

Modernization Projects

This summer, our school underwent a series of exciting modernization projects aimed at creating a more welcoming and vibrant environment for our students and community. The campus received a fresh coat of paint, bringing new life and energy to our buildings. We installed solar panels, reflecting our commitment to sustainability and reducing our carbon footprint. A new marquee now proudly displays important updates, events, and celebrations, while our repaved parking lot ensures a safer and more organized space for everyone.



These improvements are more than just cosmetic; they represent a fresh start for our school. The updated look has already made a positive impact on our school climate, with increased participation and a renewed sense of pride among students, staff, and families. As we embark on this new academic year, we are excited to see how these changes will continue to enhance our school community.



Cambridge Virtual Academy

803 S. Dale St., Anaheim, CA 92804 • 714/999-7757 • cambridge.auhsd.us



Hilda Vazquez
Principal

Explore More

At Cambridge Virtual Academy, we prioritize students wellness. Research shows that “exposure to nature has been linked to improved attention, lower stress, better mood, reduced risk of psychiatric disorders and even upticks in empathy and cooperation.” Explore More So Cal, in partnership with Project Heal the Land, takes an innovative approach to combat the hours spent in front of a screen by organizing hikes during the school year. Each hike focuses on developing students’ abilities to advocate and champion their mental wellness and sharpen their cognitive abilities. Students use maps to navigate the trails and they become participants in the healing nature of being outdoors. Students learn leadership skills and discipline to take care of themselves and others while challenging their physical endurance on a



Students hiking through the SoCal trails

trail. Being in nature allows students to make personal connections that instill appreciation and understanding of the natural world, respond responsibly, and develop conflict resolution skills that transcend from hiking, to the classroom, home, and their community.

Want to learn more or are just curious about our program, give us a call at 714-999-7757 or email CVA@auhsd.us for more information.

Go BEES!



Explore More Group Picture

Cypress High School

9801 Valley View St., Cypress, CA 90630 • (714) 220-4144 • cypress.auhsd.us



Jennifer Brown
Principal

Vendi, Vidi, Vici

Cypress High School proudly celebrated the opening of its new track and field facility, a milestone that promises a bright future for student-athletes and the entire community. This facility isn't just a place to compete; it's a platform for students to chase dreams, build resilience, and work together toward success.

Community leaders, staff, students, and supporters gathered to mark this achievement. "This is more than a space for competition; it's a launching pad for dreams, determination, and resilience," shared a district spokesperson, capturing the enthusiasm felt across campus. With this new space, students have an

invaluable resource to grow, test their limits, and learn the importance of hard work and teamwork.

One student-athlete shared a personal story, highlighting the difference this facility will make in their lives. "This field is an opportunity for us to push through our limits together," they said, emphasizing how the new space will bring athletes closer, foster unity, and strengthen friendships.

Beyond athletics, the facility stands as a community hub—a gathering place for families, friends, and fans to share in the achievements of Cypress students. From soccer games to band performances, this space will host countless memories and celebrations. This project also supports the school's exclusive Sports and Entertainment Pathway, giving students a path to future careers connected to their passions.

As the ribbon was cut, excitement filled the air. The facility symbolizes more than a physical upgrade—it's a testament to Cypress High School's dedication to its students, a commitment that will shape generations to come. With this new chapter, Cypress is ready to make its mark, guided by its motto: Veni, Vidi, Vici—"I came, I saw, I conquered."



Dale Junior High School

900 S. Dale Ave., Anaheim, CA 92804 • 714/220-4210 • dale.auhsd.us



Rafael Santiago
Principal

Life's A Garden... Dig It at Dale Junior High School!

The Dale Junior High School Community Garden is much more than just a small patch of greenery; it serves as an important resource for students, offering a peaceful place to escape from the busy school day. This lovely garden not only provides a quiet spot to relax but also acts as a hands-on educational tool. Students can learn about

topics like sustainable gardening, plant biology, and the importance of eating healthy foods.

One of the most exciting developments is the plan to double the garden's size in the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. This expansion will create even more opportunities for students to get involved and experience the joys of gardening firsthand. With the added space, students will be able to attend workshops, grow a wider variety of

plants, and take part in ecological projects that connect them to the environment around them. The garden will also serve as an ideal setting for group activities, fostering collaboration and teamwork among students.

The garden promotes learning that connects to real life, encouraging students to engage with nature and develop important skills like responsibility and cooperation. It also raises awareness about environmental issues and healthy living. Many students find that spending time in the garden reduces stress and increases their overall well-being.

As the garden grows, it will continue to inspire students and provide valuable lessons beyond the classroom. The Dale Junior High School Community Garden exemplifies how collaboration, education, and a commitment to sustainability can create a greener and healthier future for everyone. Overall, it's a place where students can cultivate both plants and their own personal growth.

Hope School

7901 Knott Ave., Buena Park, CA 90620 • 714/220-4199 • hope.uhisd.us



Louie LeMonnier
Principal

Where Innovation Meets Individualized Education

Why is Hope School the #1 Special Education School in America? There are many reasons, but one of the most significant is that we have created an innovative, specialized learning environment

specifically designed for students with disabilities to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Our innovative approach allows for individualized instruction and support that is engaging and relevant to students' lives. We offer a non-traditional school setting, providing personalized learning that is tailored to fit the needs of students who may not thrive in traditional school settings. While our approach may look different from traditional schools, it is tailored to meet the needs of all students. Although students at Hope School share similar experiences, each student's journey is unique.



Our goal is to empower students with disabilities to reach their full potential and become successful, contributing members of their community. We are proud to be the #1 Special Education School in America, and we will continue to innovate and evolve to meet the needs of our students and community.

Katella High School

2200 E. Wagner Ave., Anaheim, CA 92806 • 714/999-3621 • katella.uhisd.us



Chuck Hernandez
Principal

The Business of Esports

Katella High School proudly announces the launch of The Business of Esports, an exclusive pathway designed for students with a keen interest in the gaming industry. This ambitious program offers a distinctive blend of career exploration and practical experience in video game development, equipping students for successful careers in one of the world's most dynamic industries.

The pathway's flagship course, Game Development I, introduces students to game design theory and its practical application in the role of a Game Developer. Utilizing industry-standard tools such as Unity and Unreal Engine 5, students create playable game demos while mastering coding fundamentals in C#. Although the technical demands are rigorous, students are ready to embrace the challenge, evolve from gamers to game makers, and empower themselves to gain the 21st-century skills essential for thriving in the gaming industry.



Kennedy High School

8281 Walker St., La Palma, CA 90623 • 714/220-4101 • kennedy.auhsd.us



Poppy Hill-Bonales
Principal

Civic Learning Award of Excellence

In May 2024, Kennedy High School was awarded the Civic Learning Award of Excellence, an honor sponsored by Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond. Each year this award is given to only one high school in the state of California. The award celebrates the high-quality civic education that Kennedy students experience. The culture of Kennedy places emphasis on proven civic learning practices, which are reflected in classroom learning opportunities, student projects, clubs/organizations and IB CAS projects. At Kennedy, we take pride in our holistic approach to civics education, which not only equips

students with essential knowledge but also empowers them to actively contribute to a more just and equitable society. One prominent avenue for service-learning is through civic action projects embedded across all subjects and grade levels. These projects, such as Soapbox Speeches, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), and letter writing campaigns, allow students to address pressing issues while applying knowledge and skills learned in the classroom. Whether it's advocating for social justice, environmental conservation, or community well-being, Kennedy students actively participate in civic engagement activities that are directly linked to curriculum objectives. In September 2024, Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero presented the 2024 Civic Learning Award of Excellence to Kennedy High School in a ceremony on campus.

Lexington Junior High School

4351 Orange Ave., Cypress, CA 90630 • 714/220-4201 • lexington.auhsd.us



Daniel Klatzker
Principal

A Creative Event

Throughout October Lexington hosted many student events from our college and career exploration lessons, Fun Run, Lunch with the Lion, Halloween dance and most recently we hosted a vibrant Día de los Muertos event, celebrating this traditional Mexican holiday through student voice and creativity. The cross-curricular collaboration brought together Spanish, Art, Photography, Culinary, and ASB departments, each adding unique elements to the

festivities. Students designed colorful ofrendas in honor of loved ones, while the art and photography department showcased student artwork inspired by Día de los Muertos themes. Meanwhile, the culinary class prepared traditional enchiladas, giving students a delicious taste of Mexican cuisine. ASB coordinated engaging activities throughout an extended lunch, with a live mariachi band adding a lively, authentic soundtrack. This event not only brought students together to learn about a rich cultural tradition, but also empowered them to share their creativity and unique perspectives with the school community.



Loara High School

1765 W. Cerritos, Anaheim, CA 92804 • 714/999-3677 • loara.uhsd.us



Gary Brown
Principal

Loara High School Unveils Exciting New Programs for 2024-2025

Loara High School is excited to announce two major additions for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. In collaboration with OCDE and CHOC, the school is introducing a new wellness space designed to help students relax and manage anxiety. This serene environment aims to support mental health and overall well-being.



Additionally, Loara is launching its first Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program in partnership with North Orange County ROP. This program offers students the opportunity to become certified as nursing assistants, providing a valuable credential for immediate employment or a solid foundation for further nursing education. These initiatives mark a significant step in enhancing student support and career readiness at Loara High.



Magnolia High School

2450 W. Ball Rd., Anaheim, CA 92804 • 714/220-4221 • magnolia.uhsd.us



Aaron Chau
Principal

The Independent Learning Center

Along with the Ross and Jan Billings Innovation Center, Magnolia High School has also opened its doors to their own Independent Learning Center.

The Independent Learning Center, or ILC, is an independent studies at-risk program that provides a group play therapy approach to social and emotional learning. Using socialization as the main driver for healing, students

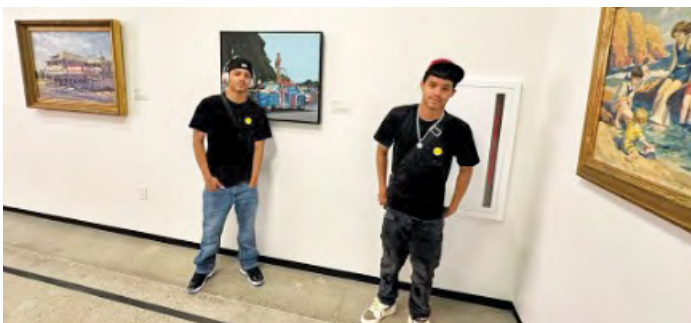
are able to participate in group activities as well as individual therapeutic sessions that can be customized to their needs.



Through this program, students can maintain connection with their home campus by participating in on-campus classes, school activities, and lunch, if they choose. The ILC also conducts field trips to colleges and vocational schools, and even plans hikes to help students complete their P.E. hours.

The staff at the Magnolia ILC are Scott Hughes, who serves as the outreach specialist; Vaishali Bennett, the outreach counselor; and Cristina Arroyo, the social worker. Angela Metcalfe and Sarah Valenzuela are the outreach teachers.

This program has been on the Anaheim campus since 2010, and on the Western High School campus since 2015. It has been shown to be effective in allowing students to return to school, as well as providing support for those who may be at risk of dropping out or not graduating on time.



Orangeview Junior High School

3715 W. Orange Ave., Anaheim, CA 92804 • 714/220-4205 • orangeview.uhisd.us



Bindi Crawford
Principal

Providing Opportunities for Success

I am proud to share that Orangeview Junior is the proud recipient of a grant through the Drake Gives and Save the Music foundation this year. We have been so grateful to receive 35 new instruments for our students to learn and perform.

Our growing music program continues to collaborate with the Pacific Symphony as well in order to provide specialized training from professional music artists on a 1:1 and small group rotation. At Orangeview Junior High School, our mission this year has been clear: build a strong, supportive school culture that sets each student up for success both now and in the future. Since the beginning of the year, we have been dedicated to creating both a welcoming and supportive environment.

Looking ahead, we are gearing up for something transformative: the redesign of Orangeview and Western High School for the 2025–26 school year. This collaborative effort will bring an innovative approach to grades 7–12, creating new opportunities for learning and growth. These moments are forging stronger connections between our campuses, which will only grow as we move toward the redesign.

Every day, our school community grows stronger, thanks to the dedication of our staff, students, and partners. We are proud of everything we have achieved this year and look forward to even more opportunities to make Orangeview Junior High School a place where every student thrives.



Oxford Academy

5172 Orange Ave., Cypress, CA 90630 • 714/220-3055 • oxford.uhisd.us



Amber Houston
Principal

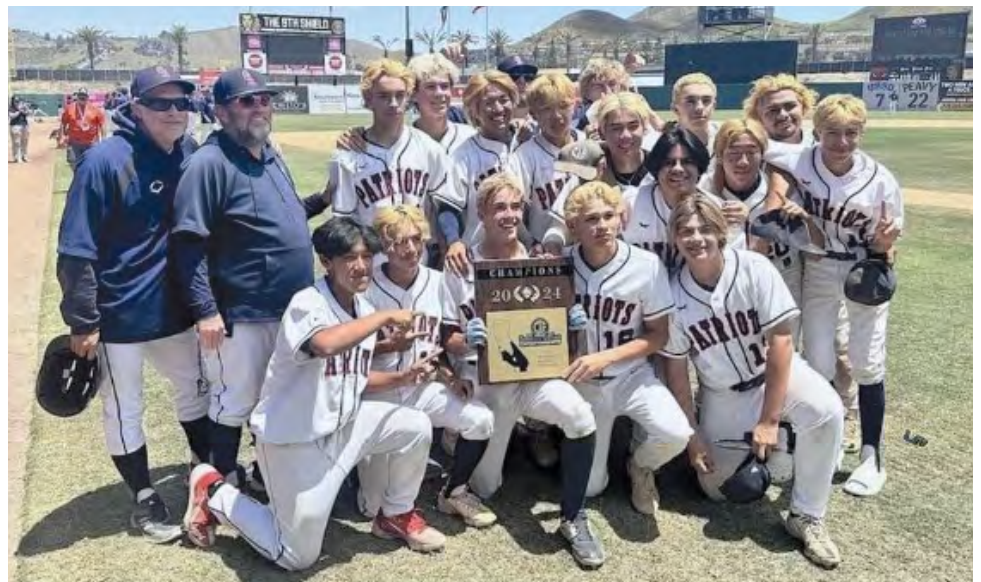
Baseball Brings Home Division 7 CIF Championship

Not only do our students rank top caliber in academics, this past year they have shown equal achievement in Athletics. Our student athletes are a special breed; attending an 8 period classload school day with predominantly AP and dual enrollment

college classes, all while balancing the demanding physical and mental work ethic of high school athletics. We have seen a surge in dedication and commitment to our sports teams at Oxford the last couple years truly creating well-rounded balanced students learning lessons and skills outside the classroom. Under head coach and AP Calculus teacher, Cory Williams, the team brought home the division 7 Championship after an incredible season of ups and

downs. In addition our Girls Softball Team and Tennis teams also made it to the final CIF Championship falling short as runner up.

We also have two swim team events that brought home the division 2 CIF Championship. Oxford Academy is proud to expand our excellence to all areas of high school life!



Savanna High School

301 N. Gilbert St., Anaheim, CA 9280 • 714/220-4262 • savanna.uhisd.us



Mike Pooley
Principal

Growing Inside and Outside

Savanna High School kicked off the school year on Aug. 7 with great energy! The campus has been abuzz for weeks as we prepared the site for our students.

A new school garden has taken off with the help of dedicated summer community-school interns. This summer staff tended the garden throughout the summer and harvested many items that we are offering to our school community. In addition, the classrooms are humming with great learning experiences—we have been focusing on building a healthy, safe, and welcoming learning environment. This year, we have added an advisory period on Thursdays with which we are able to address schoolwide lessons



that includes Capstone Program development, college and career lessons, study skills, and community building.

The campus was festive and looked great because of our awesome ASB leaders, who arrived early to decorate. In addition, students were greeted as they entered the campus by a lively drum line performance, cheerleaders were loud and encouraging, and our Link Crew leaders helped students find classrooms. Our main goal was to have our students establish a positive connection to Savanna High School staff and students on day one.

Our hope this year is to continue to grow from both outside and inside the classroom to help our Rebels reach their dreams.



South Junior High School

2320 E. South St., Anaheim, CA 9280 • 714/999-3667 • south.uhisd.us



Yolanda Mejia
Principal

Summer Swim Program: A Splash of Success

CIF Championship Water Polo Coach Denise Osorio brings tears of joy to adults who learn how to swim for the first time through Community Schools Programs this Summer, South Junior High partnered with Anaheim High School to offer free swimming lessons to the community. Many participants, who had never learned to swim before, gained confidence and water safety skills. The program, facilitated by certified interns, demonstrated that it's never too late to learn. The overwhelming response shows a clear need for accessible swimming instruction. South Junior High is committed to continuing this valuable program.



Sycamore Junior High School

1801 E. Sycamore St., Anaheim, CA 92805 • 714/999-3616 • sycamore.auhsd.us



Nancy Cortez
Principal

Fiesta Night

On August 5, 2024, Sycamore Junior High welcomed incoming 7th grade students and families with a Fiesta Night. This community event provided students and families the opportunity to walk the campus before the first day of school. Sycamore teachers welcomed and guided families around campus while emphasizing the various resources available. This event helped to ease the transition from elementary to junior high as many students were nervous about their first day. Families expressed gratitude and appreciation for being able to familiarize the campus and meet staff. It was a fun-filled night for students, families and staff to come together and build community. Fiesta Night was a huge success and Sycamore is already looking forward to hosting more for their community. A big THANK YOU to the amazing partners OCEA, PTSA, Grupo Folklorico from Project Say, Anaheim High School's Bros, and Raising Canes for their contributions.



Walker Junior High School

8132 Walker St., La Palma, CA 90623 • 714/220-4051 • walker.auhsd.us



Dr. Jennifer Sasai
Principal

Innovative AI Pathway

Walker Junior High School is at the forefront of educational innovation, with a new approach to artificial intelligence (AI) in education. The school has embraced the potential of AI tools for teachers and as a significant part of the curriculum. The unique initiative involves both teachers and students who become well-versed in AI technology. From the start of the school year, the school has made AI training a priority for teachers through professional development. Through the training, teachers are then able to infuse AI into the curriculum. Throughout seventh grade, students are exposed to AI mini-activities and AI performance-task assessments. When students progress to eighth grade, the AI pathway continues to deepen their understanding, building on the foundational

knowledge acquired in the previous year. In our AI exclusive pathway, Engineering I class, students created an app using machine learning and image classification. The curriculum is designed to be dynamic, reflecting the evolving nature of AI technology. This ensures that students are not only well-versed in the basics but are also exposed to the latest developments in the field. A new elective wheel has also been introduced this year to immerse students in AI. Students take classes in such subjects as AI media fusion, AI in music, and AI in art.

The seamless transition from junior high to Kennedy High School, a six-year exclusive pathway, allows students to continue their AI journey, expanding their skills and knowledge in a more specialized setting. This pathway not only prepares students for future academic pursuits but also equips them with the skills needed in an increasingly AI-driven world.

Western High School

501 S. Western Ave., Anaheim, CA 92804 • 714/220-4040 • western.auhsd.us



Lorena Moreno
Principal

School Redesign Summer Retreat

On July 16-17, about 30 members of the Orangeview Junior High and Western High School communities gathered for a summer school redesign retreat, marking the first steps toward consolidating and redesigning the schools for Fall 2025. The retreat brought together teachers, administrators, parents, and students to collaboratively reimagine a G7-12 school. Participants developed a shared understanding of the redesign process, explored proven features of successful secondary schools, and began crafting strategies to foster

a renewed educational environment. As recent Western graduate Vasu Bagga highlighted, building strong relationships and understanding students' stories will be key to this transformation.



Things in the Sky—Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search. When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Schoolnewskay@gmail.com. Please put AUHSD in the subject line.

Entries must be received by **December 15, 2024**
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble.!

- | | |
|----------|---------|
| STARS | RAIN |
| SUN | SNOW |
| MOON | SLEET |
| AIRPLANE | WIND |
| KITE | CLOUDS |
| BALLOON | SMOG |
| JUPITER | FOG |
| MARS | PLUTO |
| MERCURY | RAINBOW |
| SATURN | ROCKET |
| URANUS | |



Congratulations to Kelly Grove
Winner of our February Word Search Contest!

Sourish's Review



Sourish M.

The Secret to the Truth!!

The book that I am currently reading would be the entire Hardy Boys series, the *Tower Treasure*. It is a very good book and the two main characters that take place in the story would be very



relatable in terms of being a reader of the same age and know the way that a teenager would think and plan out a situation. The two Main characters in the Book would be the Hardy Brothers, Frank Hardy and Joe Hardy, who would help out in detective work and attempt to solve certain cases from certain people who report them, for example, neighbors, or what they see in their daily lives. Both brothers would be motivated as per their father, which is known internationally as a very good detective. Following his footsteps, both Frank and Joe would put together their skills and try to solve their cases and problems in their area.

The Fight in Magic...

A magical world, what could go wrong? The book *We Rule the Night* by Claire Eliza Bartlett shows life in a magical world where people are looked down on and superiority defies laws. Two main characters Revna and Linné both experience unfair treatment based on their appearance. This is an action packed, suspenseful, and emotional book! You are able to experience the book through the eyes of both of the protagonists with imagery and well descriptions. The author has slowly revealed the paths for Revna and Linné that have intertwined and form a relationship that is shown throughout the book. Revna and Linne go through many challenges and their future is undecided. They both have gone through the effects of war and are forced to understand each other in ways to help them survive. This fantasy book provides an experience of many emotions and shows the true fight in magic!



Sourish M. is a 9th grader who is passionate about learning and protecting nature. He is interested in Science and Engineering and pursues many hobbies such as playing Soccer and Guitar, while traveling with his friends and family.

Novelist –Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.
When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: SchoolNewsKay@gmail.com Please put AUHSD in the subject line.

Entries must be received by **December 15, 2024**
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win
a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble.

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| COMPUTER | BROWSER |
| EDITOR | GOOGLE |
| IPAD | INTERNET |
| SPELLCHECK | BING |
| PRINTER | ASPIRIN |
| PUBLISHER | KEYBOARD |
| NOTEPAD | TELEPHONE |
| READERS | WIFI |
| PENCIL | IMAGINATION |
| IDEAS | |
| PEN | |



How Fast Do I Read?

When I was first taught to read, the instruction was to point to each word with my finger and say each word out loud. Later, I was told to stop using my finger. Finally, I was told to stop saying the words out loud. At that time, I was considered a good reader.

In reality, I was a slow reader. I continued to pronounce each word mentally, which slowed my rate of reading down. Teachers would assign reading based on an average reading speed for that grade level. If the grade level considered 150 words per minute the average and I read at 75 words per minute, the assigned reading took me twice as long as for others in the class. My reading speed was never considered a factor. The only evaluation was simply that I could read.

To improve your reading speed, consider that when you look around a room, you do not mentally say each item you see. Your mind processes that information. When reading, you need to break the habit of saying each word mentally and instead let your mind automatically process the information. This procedure will help you improve your fluency:

Begin by determining the number of words you read per minute. This can be done by reading for one minute and then counting the words you read. An average

fourth-grader should read 150 words per minute (wpm), and a high school student should read 250 wpm. After establishing a basis, go back to the beginning.

Use a bookmark or a ruler to guide your eyes on a line. Then, quickly read for five minutes without saying each word. This will help you to break the habit of saying each word as you read. You may want to repeat the same sentence or paragraph several times.

Do this exercise for five to 10 minutes each day, and you will increase your wpm in 30 days. The better one reads, the better they will do in life. Most books are written for people who can read 200 wpm. Slow readers get bored! Students that read fast cut down on homework time, which allows for other studies or leisure.

Average Words Per Minute

- 6–7 years old: 53–111 wpm
- 7–8 years old: 89–149 wpm
- 8–9 years old: 107–162 wpm
- 10–11 years old: 139–194 wpm
- 11 to 14 years old: 150–204 wpm
- 14 to 18 years old: 200–300 wpm
- 18–23 years old: 250–350 wpm
- Adults: 220–350 wpm

Presidents' Day

Why do we celebrate the third Monday in February as Presidents' Day? On that day, we celebrate all the United States presidents. We often associate Presidents' Day with the first president, George Washington, born Feb. 22, 1732, and the 16th president, Abraham Lincoln, born Feb. 12, 1809.

Washington was the American version of Cincinnatus, who gave up the dictatorship in Early Rome. When King George III heard that, it was reported that he said, "Washington would be the greatest man in the world." It was during Washington's presidency that the framework of the structure of the United States government and economic system were established. The two-party system was taking shape, with Federalist as one party and Anti-Federalist, under Thomas Jefferson's opposition to the federalist, as the other.

By 1824, the two parties emerged in a contest election between John Q. Adams and Andrew Jackson. Then in 1828, Jackson won the presidency and expanded the electorate to the common man, and the two parties drifted

further apart over the issue of the expansion of slavery.

The election of 1860 was won by Abraham Lincoln, and the Southern slave states tried to withdraw from the Union and sparked the Civil War. It was during this war that Lincoln gave his Gettysburg Address on Nov. 19, 1863, pointing out that the American experience began in 1776 with the Declaration of Independence. "Conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal"—these simple words changed America from "are independent states" to "is a unified nation."

During the short speech, Lincoln did not refer to the elite but to those who "gave the last full measure of devotion." By 1860, the nations had won independence from monarchies and returned to monarchist governments. America was the last hope "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

One president gave us an America of the people, and the other made a course correction that is still in the process of carrying on the experiment in democracy.

D.H.Coop is a retired fire/paramedic and retired teacher having taught IB and AP World History 30 years.
He continues to tutor and consult. www.HistoryDepot.com

Orange County Department of Education

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

AI Signals a New Era for Teaching and Learning in Orange County



Dr. Stefan Bean
Superintendent

As an eighth-grader, Ibrahim Memon from Tustin's Legacy Magnet Academy began working on an AI-powered app designed to allow rideshare drivers to keep 100 percent of their fares.

Today, Ibrahim is a high school junior. And his app? It's operational in Seattle.

Ibrahim's story highlights the extraordinary potential of Orange County's young innovators, especially when supported with cutting-edge educational tools like artificial intelligence. And his success is a prime example of the outcomes we hope to encourage and nurture at the Orange County Department of Education through our own AI initiative.

We already know that AI in schools is about more than just the adoption of a new technology. It signals a transformative shift in how we educate our students, and there's no choice but to embrace it.

Indeed, to quote the Borg from Star Trek, "Resistance is futile" — but I don't mean that in a menacing way. The fact is this wave of technology is already here, and now it's up to us to harness it responsibly and strategically to enhance educational outcomes for all learners.

So far, the feedback we've seen from introducing AI in classroom settings has been highly encouraging. These emerging technologies not only make learning more interactive but also tailor instructional experiences to individual needs, making education more effective and engaging. Survey data shows a 90 percent satisfaction rate among students participating in AI-driven activities.

That said, the foundation of our strategy must be to support educators. That's why OCDE will be advancing AI fluency programs and comprehensive professional development opportunities to

help make teachers' work more efficient and to maximize the impact of their instruction. Additionally, we will be promoting collaborative environments where students and teachers can explore the potential of AI together, fostering inclusive and innovative educational spaces.

Our Vision and Goals

At the Orange County Board of Education meeting on Sept. 4, our staff outlined a new strategic vision for the integration of artificial intelligence and the empowerment of students and staff. This wasn't about mandating a new direction, but rather supporting our districts and scaling up the innovative work many are already doing.

As we stated at that meeting, we envision a future where AI revolutionizes education, unlocking unprecedented opportunities, and we are committed to harnessing its transformative power responsibly to enhance learning, inspire innovation and prepare every student for success in college, careers and beyond. By embedding ethical principles into our AI initiatives, we strive to create an educational environment where technology uplifts humanity, fosters creativity and builds a brighter future for all.

That's the overarching vision, but clear, measurable goals will be essential to ensure that OCDE's AI initiative achieves its intended objectives and enhances educational outcomes.

By 2025, for example, our target is for 90 percent of local districts to adopt ethical AI guidelines that promote responsible use across all educational settings. We also commit to holding regular meetings throughout the year to review progress and adjust strategies to make sure our efforts remain aligned with our broader educational objectives. Additionally, we want to work closely with district leaders to guarantee that all students have access to advanced technologies.

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION (EC §§200, 220, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973):

The Anaheim Union High School District Governing Board is committed to providing equal opportunity for all individuals in education. District programs, activities, practices, and employment shall be free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying based on race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, or genetic information; the perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

A copy of the District's nondiscrimination policy is available from the District office or on the District website under Board Policies (Board Policy 8900).

A copy of the District's sexual harassment policy is available from the District office or on the District website under Board Policies (Board Policy 8708).

A copy of the District's Section 504 policy is available from the District office or on the District website under Board Policies (Board Policy 8200).

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Complaints alleging noncompliance with the District's policy of nondiscrimination should be directed to:

Nondiscrimination Compliance Coordinator

Brad Jackson
Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Anaheim Union High School District
501 N. Crescent Way, Anaheim, CA 92801
jackson_b@auhsd.us

Complaints alleging noncompliance with the District's sexual harassment policy (Title IX) should be directed to :

Title IX Coordinator (Students)

Lorena Stout
Anaheim Union High School District
501 N. Crescent Way, Anaheim, CA 92801
stout_l@auhsd.us

Complaints alleging noncompliance with the District's Section 504 policy should be directed to:

Section 504 Coordinator

Amy Kwon
Director, Learning & Development
Anaheim Union High School District
501 N. Crescent Way, Anaheim, CA 92801
kwon_a@auhsd.us