

FREE

School News

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Covering the Newhall School District



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May 2021



We are Back to Full Time In-Person Instruction



We Did It

On Monday April 19, 2021, the Newhall School District finally opened its doors for full time in-person instruction for the first time since March 13, 2020. Who would have ever imagined it would have taken 402 days for this to happen? The opportunity for students to get back with their peers is important. The interactions with other students and staff, the social emotional piece, has really weighed on everyone. Our teachers worked so hard to create engaging distance learning lessons for their students, but it just is not the same as being inside the walls of a school for most of our children. Walking into classrooms on that first full day back was a definite feel good moment. Kids having the opportunity to play at recess together for the first time all year was the highlight of the day as I spoke with students. Seeing students eating lunch at school with a close friend despite being six feet apart, felt like a major step in the right direction towards our normal routines. These last eight weeks of school are so critical for all of us to get back into a groove before we head off to summer. Having this opportunity to work out the kinks so we are ready to hit the ground running in the fall is a true blessing. We did it!



Jeff Pelzel
Superintendent

Lo Hicimos

El lunes 19 de abril de 2021, el Distrito Escolar de Newhall finalmente abrió sus puertas para la instrucción presencial de tiempo completo por primera vez desde el 13 de marzo de 2020. ¿Quién hubiera imaginado que se necesitarían 402 días para que esto sucediera? La oportunidad de que los estudiantes se reencontran con sus compañeros es importante. Las interacciones con otros estudiantes y el personal, la parte socioemocional, realmente ha afectado a todos. Nuestros maestros trabajaron muy duro para crear lecciones de aprendizaje a distancia atractivas para sus estudiantes, pero no es lo mismo que estar dentro de las paredes de una escuela para la mayoría de nuestros niños. Entrar a los salones en ese primer día completo fue definitivamente un momento de gran satisfacción. El hecho de que los niños tuvieran la oportunidad de jugar juntos en el recreo por primera vez en todo el año fue lo más destacado del día cuando hablé con los estudiantes. Ver a los estudiantes almorzando en la escuela con un amigo cercano a pesar de estar separados por seis pies de distancia, se sintió como un gran paso en la dirección correcta hacia nuestras rutinas normales. Estas últimas ocho semanas de escuela son muy importantes para que todos podamos volver a una rutina antes de las vacaciones de verano. Tener esta oportunidad de resolver los problemas para que estemos listos para comenzar a trabajar en el otoño es una verdadera bendición. ¡Lo hicimos!

NSD Digital Learning Academies

<https://www.newhallschooldistrict.com>

A Year to Remember

*By Katrina Stroh, Janette Van Gelderen, and Melissa Wilson,
lead Administrators*



This year the Newhall School District was able to offer hundreds of families the opportunity to attend one of three online Distance Learning Academies. The DLAs provided a stable and consistent place to learn each day. We thought it would be fun to hear what the students had to say about a year of online learning.

- I really liked working in my pajamas and having breakfast at home.
- I liked that even though it was hard to do all this stuff, I liked that we still got to do fun things and games.
- I liked that even though we were at school we got to be home at the same time! :)
- I liked still seeing my friends and teachers.
- Some things I personally love about DLA this year is that I get to be with my siblings!

- Another thing is that I like getting hot meals like soup. And the soup would probably be cold by the time it's lunch at in-person. I'm happy we're doing DLA so my siblings and I get to have these wonderful things!
- I like DLA because I can do my work outside take a lot of breaks to play with my sister. And I get to use a computer.
- My favorite part of the week is "Breakfast Club" on Friday mornings.
- I got to go to school and go camping at the same time.
- I get to meet kids from other schools.
- I like that we have teachers from different schools.
- I have loved my DLA teachers the most! They have all been so sweet and taught me so much!

As the administrators of these fine academies, we could not agree more. This year has been fun and insightful and we appreciate the opportunity to service our Newhall families.

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NSD Governing Board President Corner

As not just the Governing Board President for the Newhall School District, but also as a parent of a child currently in the District, I was thrilled to see our students return to our campuses after a year hiatus. Without our students, there would be no Newhall School District. Both pre-pandemic and while we work towards a post-pandemic world, the focus of our District has been identifying the individual needs of each student and meeting them at their need, wherever that is.

That is not limited to academic supports. Some words that you may have heard in the media, in conversations with others or even something you have thought of yourself are “social and emotional wellness.” One of the Board’s focuses as our students and families isolated themselves due to public health restrictions is supporting the fundamental need of our students and families for positive social and emotional interactions, not just academic learning. Another way of describing this is a focus on the “whole child.”

The District has never been more poised to offer that support than we are at this time. Psychologists, counselors, a new wellness center and supportive teachers, administrators and staff are here to provide you and your family what you need to support your students’ wellbeing.

It was also just announced that free lunches for all students regardless of financial ability would be offered. It is yet another way we can assist as we continue to help your children blossom mentally, socially, and emotionally. Welcome home, welcome back and remember the Newhall School District has your back!



Brian Walters
President
(Area #1)

Mensaje del Presidente de la Junta Directiva de NSD

No solo como Presidente de la Junta Directiva del Distrito Escolar de Newhall, sino también como padre de un niño actualmente en el Distrito, me emocionó ver a nuestros estudiantes regresar a nuestras escuelas después de un año de pausa. Sin nuestros estudiantes, no existiría el Distrito Escolar de Newhall. Tanto antes de la pandemia y mientras trabajamos hacia un mundo posterior a la pandemia, el enfoque de nuestro Distrito ha sido identificar las necesidades individuales de cada estudiante y satisfacerlas según sus necesidades, dondequiera que sea.

Eso no se limita a los apoyos académicos. Algunas palabras que quizás han escuchado en los medios de comunicación, en conversaciones con otros o incluso algo que ustedes mismos han pensado son “bienestar social y emocional”. Uno de los enfoques de la Junta cuando nuestros estudiantes y familias se aislaron debido a restricciones de salud pública, es apoyar la necesidad fundamental de nuestros estudiantes y familias con interacciones sociales y emocionales positivas, no solo el aprendizaje académico. Otra forma de describir esto es un enfoque en el “niño completo”.

El Distrito nunca ha estado más preparado para ofrecer apoyo que en este momento. Psicólogos, consejeros, un nuevo centro de bienestar, maestros, administradores y personal de apoyo están listos para brindarles a ustedes y sus familias lo que necesitan para apoyar el bienestar de sus estudiantes.

También se acaba de anunciar que se ofrecerán almuerzos gratuitos para todos los estudiantes independientemente de su capacidad financiera. Es otra forma en que podemos apoyarlos mientras continuamos ayudando a sus hijos a florecer mentalmente, socialmente y emocionalmente. ¡Bienvenidos de vuelta a casa y recuerden que pueden contar con el Distrito Escolar de Newhall!



Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Netragrednik

Superintendent Dr. Pelzel begins this issue with his message about welcoming students back into the classrooms. Even though this is the end of the school year in many ways it seems like the beginning.

Zoom took on a whole new meaning to children as they spent hours in front of a computer screen

instead of in a classroom. There are many milestones in a child's life, but none of us were prepared for anticipating the next milestone of not wearing a mask. That will be a happy day.

Our next issue is September 8.
Have a fun summer!

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Entries must be received by July 15, 2021

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win
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LOVE	BALLOON RIDE
ENGAGEMENT	CRUISE
MARRIAGE	FIRST TOOTH



McGrath PTA

McGrath PTA Emergency Bin Donation

Parents and PTAs are vital partners for schools. This year, the pandemic truly gave the McGrath PTA time to reflect and consider preparations for the variety of natural disasters that can take place. Knowing that students activities did not require the same level of funding, the McGrath PTA chose to utilize this years funds to review the McGrath emergency bin and restock necessary supplies, thus guaranteeing that our children will be prepared and safe at school.

Preparation includes inventory and date checking, ensuring that the emergency bin is stocked with water, food and other supplies such as batteries, first-aid supplies and other materials necessary if an emergency occurred. Food, water, blankets and other basic needs were reviewed in case students were required to remain on campus for multiple days. The McGrath PTA donated \$7,000 for emergency bin supplies and the staff and students are so very grateful for their care.

Donación de Contenedores de Emergencia de parte del PTA de McGrath

Los padres y las PTAs son socios fundamentales para las escuelas. Este año, la pandemia realmente le dio tiempo a la PTA de McGrath para considerar los preparativos para la variedad de desastres naturales que pueden ocurrir. Sabiendo que las actividades de los estudiantes no requerían el mismo nivel de financiación, la PTA de McGrath decidió utilizar los fondos de este año para revisar el contenedor de emergencia de McGrath y proporcionar los suministros necesarios, garantizando que nuestros niños estén preparados y seguros en la escuela.

La preparación incluye verificación de inventario y fechas de vencimiento, asegurándose de que el contenedor de emergencia tenga agua, alimentos y otros suministros como baterías, suministros de primeros auxilios y otros materiales necesarios en caso de emergencia. Se revisaron los alimentos, el agua, las mantas y otras necesidades básicas en caso de que los estudiantes tuvieran que permanecer en la escuela durante varios días. El PTA de McGrath donó \$7,000 para suministros de emergencia y el personal y los estudiantes están muy agradecidos por su atención.



Dr. J. Michael McGrath *Elementary*

21501 Deputy Jake Dr., Newhall, CA 91321 • 661/291-4091 • www.mcgrathelementary.com



Jennifer Boone
Principal

Readers are Leaders!

McGrath Elementary School is excited to be partnering with parents on the “How to Raise a Reader” program. This program teams our school with the parents to help build a love for learning through literacy.

Reading is a fundamental skill that defines the academic success of students, and in collaboration, our parents and teachers can help them develop an intrinsic motivation to

read. Good readers interact with text, gain knowledge, and perform well academically. This McGrath partnership with parents ensures that our students are successful.

McGrath also teams up with parents to create a culture of reading at home. Along with our parenting programs, we also host several special guest presentations that include free online resources for students and families. Ms. Purdy, the librarian at the Santa Clarita Public Library, has shared with our families all of the Newhall Library’s resources for

parents. This wealth of material includes free audio books and free online tutoring. The Newhall Library has also provided our students with break time videos addressing language, movement, self-care, STEM, and social emotional learning.

Recently, a special guest, Ms. Chelsea Gutowski, one of our very own NSD library media technicians, shared different tools and tips for parents. Ms. Gutowski is a graduate student who is studying library and information science at LSU. Ms. Gutowski shared with us that mindset is everything, and in order for students to develop a love for reading, they need three things. They need access to a large variety of high-interest books, the freedom to read what they like, and adult role models who also enjoy reading.

Reading at home should be about creativity, exploration, and discovery. Our goal is to make sure that all of our students are lifelong readers.

Meadows *Elementary*

25577 N. Fedala Rd., Valencia, CA 91355 • 661/291-4050 • www.meadowselementary.com



Sarah Johnson
Principal

Meadows Reading Loft

After more than 3 years, it is thrilling to see the reading loft at its completion,

looking so much better than anyone imagined. This loft was inspired to honor the Thottapilly family, specifically, Saachi’s love of reading and her Brother Sid’s memory as well.

Overlooking our beautiful library, the reading loft will be the perfect place to curl up with a book or to have a quiet space to unwind from a busy day. Once our County restrictions ease we hope to have a commemoration to announce the grand opening of this amazing space.



We wish to thank our Meadows Foundation for the work you put into making this a special tribute to Sid and Saachi Thottapilly. Our parent volunteers spent many hours creating a loft to resemble a treehouse and the result is more than spectacular. Cheers to all of you!

Newhall Elementary

24607 Walnut St., Newhall, CA 91321 • 661/291-4010 • www.newhallelementary.net



Jackie Tapia
Principal

A Rich Diversity

Our students bring a rich diversity into our classrooms. With this beautiful diversity comes a need for our teachers to be experts in reading instruction and language acquisition. Newhall Elementary teachers are diving into the research and science behind how students learn to read, through participation in Explicit Phonics training sessions. Our teachers have assessed all of their students using the CORE Phonics Survey and are modeling how to blend and read words using charts.



As a fun way to support their dedication, each teacher participated in a Professional Development To Go. The PD To Go included a bundle of the materials needed to implement the new strategies: easel pads, markers, big sticky notes, and colored pens! For the teachers not participating in the reading instructions sessions, yet, The PD To Go was a reminder of the why, how and next steps to use anchor charts with their students.



Oak Hills Elementary

26730 Old Rock Rd., Valencia, CA 91381 • 661/291-4100 • www.oakhillsschool.com



Wendy Maxwell
Principal

Oak Hills Foundation

At Oak Hills, we not only have an awesome and active PTA but we are fortunate to have something few elementary schools have.... an incredible and hard-working Foundation solely dedicated to supporting technology and STEM resources and programs for our school. STEM stands for Science Technology Engineering and Math, and the mission of our Oak Hills Educational Foundation is to "promote STEM, while enriching the minds of our students."

During this unusual year, OHEF has continued to support technology needs and STEM programming at our school including:

- wireless headsets, printer cartridges and computer supplies for our teachers and classrooms
- science supplies for distance learning projects
- a virtual STEM Expo which led to three students advancing to the LA County Science fair and 2 students advancing to the California State Science Fair
- teacher support for virtual after-school coding and science classes
- a virtual astronomy family night
- monthly STEM challenges with prizes
- Kindergarten butterfly kits
- our yearly Brain Pop school-wide subscription

In the recent past, our OHEF has ALSO funded:

- the purchase and maintenance of a new walkie-talkie system for school safety
- the purchase of a beautiful digital marquee for our school entrance
- science lab supplies for all grade levels
- LEGO-based robotics workshops during and after school
- the 6th grade hot-air balloon experiment
- the Math Olympiad program
- a GATE trip to JPL
- in-classroom STEM Booster lessons for our kindergarteners
- an aerospace assembly led by an amazing JPL engineer who brought a mini Mars Rover
- an oceanography assembly with the Long Beach Aquarium who brought their Aquarium on Wheels
- an inflatable planetarium for a tour of the solar system

There are many more amazing experiences and opportunities OHEF plans to bring to our campus in the near future, including a Robotics team and a MakerSpace.

Old Orchard *Elementary*

25141 N. Avenida Rondel, Valencia, CA 91355 • 661/291-4040 • www.olderchardelementary.com



Daria Ramirez
Principal

Our Very Own Superheroes!

Each day, teachers make a difference, one child at a time. They bring hope, laughter and encouragement. Their classrooms serve as safe spaces where they not only teach standards but also explain how the world works.

Despite the unique challenges they encountered this past year, our teachers went to great lengths to make teaching and learning possible. They made the shift “in a single bound” to virtual teaching, helping students navigate their learning remotely and finding creative ways to support their academic success and social-emotional well-being from a distance and in person. Through it all, our teachers have provided students with a much-needed sense of community, connection and consistency.

Between May 3 and May 7, we pay tribute to our teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week for their dedication and commitment to empowering and supporting all students. Old Orchard celebrates all of our amazing teachers, and we are proud to honor Christine Worby as our 2021 Teacher of the Year Honoree!

Here is a sprinkling of appreciation notes dedicated to our teachers and written by our Old Orchard Owls:

I appreciate my teacher because...

“She helps me read better every day.”

“She is patient and kind and takes her time when she’s teaching us.”

“She is funny and shares fun stories that make us all laugh.”

“Throughout this year, she has helped me so much and has taught me so many new things.”

“She is loving, understanding, and she cares.”

“She makes learning fun, and I love her.”

To the world, you may be a teacher, but in our eyes, you are a superhero!



Peachland *Elementary*

24800 Peachland Ave., Newhall, CA 91321 • 661/291-4020 • www.peachlandelementary.net



Diana Stenroos
Principal

Our Youngest Learners

At Peachland Elementary School, we are lucky to house our district program for special-education preschoolers. Our preschool consists of four different programs that range from students who need assistance with language to more intensive academic support. Students in this program have opportunities to receive in-person services that include occupational therapy, adaptive physical education, speech and language, and instructional support. These learners come to us at the young age of 3 and progress through our program with the goal of preparing them for a rigorous kindergarten experience. We have five wonderful teachers who hold special-education credentials along with the support of many instructional assistants who all help to meet the individual needs of these young learners.

One thing that sets this program apart is our partnership with our onsite state preschool and transitional-kindergarten program. Students have the opportunity to participate in activities and instruction with same-age peers as part of our inclusion program. At Peachland, we are proud to call them a part of our Roadrunner family!



Pico Canyon *Elementary*

25255 Pico Canyon Rd., Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381 • 661/291-4070 • www.picoelementary.com



Tammi Rainville
Principal

Supporting All Students

While we may not know in detail what our school year might look like in 2021–22, we do know that we will need to continue to support each student with what they individually need, both socially-emotionally and academically. Learning-loss mitigation will be addressed beginning with districtwide programs like summer LEAP to Learning for general-education students and our traditional ESY program for students in our SDC classrooms.

One of our Blue Ribbon Practices before COVID-19 at Pico Canyon centered on What I Need time or (WIN) blocks of intervention or enrichment for our students. At each grade level, a cycle of learning in ELA or math will be followed up next year with this WIN time, giving each student what they individually need academically.

Socially-emotionally, we will support our students with

our schoolwide Positive Interventions and Support (PBIS) efforts. We have a continuum of behavior supports designed for all students and implemented in all areas of the school. Our wonderful full-time school counselor will continue to provide information to our parents; she will deliver lessons to each classroom, and she will meet with students for social skills as well as individually identified needs. Student connectedness is very much supported through the efforts of our PTA. Student-centered events such as assemblies, dances, International Night, Variety Show, Reflections, movie nights and field trips help our students to develop Husky Pride.

At the school site, we will continue to monitor our students closely at Pico Canyon as they return for a new school year. We know that our students' academic successes are a result of schoolwide systems and shared leadership. All adults at Pico will continue to ensure that we create a student-centered community from the moment a child steps onto our campus as we move into the next phase of what the future holds for us all!

Stevenson Ranch *Elementary*

25820 N. Carroll Ln., Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381 • 661/291-4070 • www.stevensonranchschool.com



Chad Rose
Principal

Welcome Back to Normal-ish!

On April 19th there were sounds that have not been heard on the Stevenson Ranch campus in more than a year, children playing. Our days of distance learning, digital learning, and hybrid schedules are now behind us. The school bells

are ringing on their regular schedule, and students once again are getting physical activity and fresh air on our playground. The school day is normal-ish. Students arrive and line up, they sit 3 feet apart in their classrooms, and are assigned by class in designated eating areas and have a rotating schedule of assigned

play areas. While our recess structures are different from our pre-COVID routines, students are getting the opportunity to try out play areas and games they may not have selected under normal circumstances. I can't thank the students, parents, teachers and support staff enough for their part in our smooth reopening!



Valencia Valley *Elementary*

23601 Carrizo Dr., Valencia, CA 91355 • 661/291-4060 • www.valenciavalleyelementary.com



Amy Gaudette
Principal

Living Poetry!

Chatter in the cafeteria, shrieks of delight in the yard!

Students' and teachers' smiling eyes, even when the work is hard!

We are so excited to have 480 students on campus with us for full days of instruction!

Every staff member contributed 110%

to prepare for students' return on April 19. As a result, we have a safe environment in which students can learn and play.

Not only do students have more access to instructional time but also we have seen the social and emotional benefits of being back on campus. Our youngest students who came on campus for the first time ever are learning how to be students in "real school," as many have called it. They can be heard

reminding one another to be "respectful, responsible and safe." Students are reconnecting with old friends and forging new friendships as well.

As we walk classrooms, students can be heard collaborating with peers and giving oral presentations. It has been a welcome change to have our Vikings back on campus!



Wiley Canyon *Elementary*

24240 La Gloria Circle, Newhall, CA 91321 • 661/291-4030 • www.wileycanyonelementary.com



Tim Lankford
Principal

Supporting Wiley Canyon Families

Wiley Canyon's English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) prides itself on providing opportunities for parents of English learners to discover more about the programs offered to their children. It is a meeting place that our parents can use as a platform to express their concerns and ideas to both the school and the district.

As we navigated this last school year, we listened to our families to determine their needs and assist with providing the type of resources that could help both parents and students. During the ELAC meetings, parents were given tutorials on how to help their children navigate Google Classroom and the other tools they use on a regular basis. Guest speakers who provided presentations included Ms. Purdy from the Santa Clarita Public Library. She showed our parents all of the resources that are readily available to them and their students free of charge.

On another occasion we had Ms. Gonzalez from College of the Canyons, who informed our Wiley Canyon families of all the different English as a Second Language courses they can take at the college. We had great success with that presentation, and had many families register for the ESL classes offered at COC.

Our parents also asked for ways to motivate their children to read, and so we had our very own librarian, Miss Chelsea Gutowski, who has an extensive background on raising intrinsically motivated readers. She conducted a special presentation for our families that they really enjoyed.

The ELAC meetings are essentially an arena where parents get to put forth their thoughts and concerns about their children's education at the site and district level. Our role is to support, inform, and empower our families to become active participants in their children's education.

Words Associated with School

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Encourage	Nutrition	Thinkers
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YOU INSPIRE

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