

**FREE**

# School News

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## Covering the Orange Unified School District

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 29

AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2010

### SUPERINTENDENT



**Renae Dreier, Ed.D.**

The beginning of a new school year brings excitement, enthusiasm and a renewed focus. The Orange Unified School District is known for its quality instructional

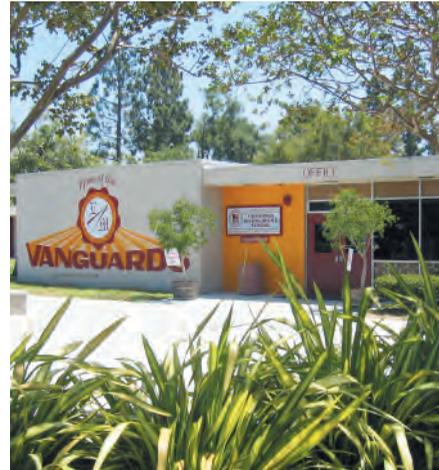
programs and high expectations for all students. Coupled with a dynamic teaching and support staff we bring a rigorous educational program to nearly 30,000 students that we serve in grades kindergarten through twelve every day.

The District has a long history of excellence that continues to grow and be enriched by the accomplishments of its students, teachers, staff and community.

Since 1987, twenty-four OUSD schools have been awarded the honor of California Distinguished School, with four of these schools

SEE SUPERINTENDENT • PAGE 15

## Three OUSD High Schools on Newsweek List



Canyon, El Modena and Villa Park High Schools represented top high schools nationwide.

Each year, *Newsweek* magazine chooses the best high schools in the country based on how hard school staffs work to challenge students with advanced placement college-level courses and tests. This year, three Orange Unified School District high schools made the list.

El Modena High School, Canyon High School and Villa Park High School represented the top high schools nationwide. Just over 1,600 schools made the list. This is quite an accomplishment

SEE TOP HIGH SCHOOLS • PAGE 13

### BOARD OF EDUCATION



**John H. Ortega**  
President

On behalf of the Orange Unified School District's Board of Education, I would like to say welcome to the 2010-2011 school year to all of our staff, students, and parents. The summer gives us the opportunity to look back on the past school year and prepare for a fresh start in August. Each summer is a chance for educators to rejuvenate lesson plans, choose new and exciting classroom materials, and gear up for a new classroom of students.

We are looking forward to another positive year of working together in the best interest of all students. While these are challenging times in education we recognize that there is much to be proud of here in Orange Unified.

We are fortunate to have teachers and staff who are dedicated to the ideal of student-centered education. We recognize that we must prepare our

children to live and work in an ever-changing global society. Our best work is done when we draw upon the wealth of talent within OUSD.

Also, I would like to welcome new administrators to our District:

- Dr. Gunn Marie Hansen, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services
- Ernest Gonzales, principal, Orange High School
- Kerrie Torres, principal, Yorba Academy of the Arts Middle School
- Erika Krohn, principal, Sycamore Elementary School

Finally, the Board of Education welcomes the support of parents and the community in our efforts to achieve excellence in education. The Board of Education is available to the community should you have any questions or concerns.

Please feel free to contact the Board at any time through the Superintendent's office at 714-628-4048, or via e-mail at Board@orangeusd.k12.ca.us.

### Electives Inside:

**Principal Bio's**  
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Founder / Publisher



Those lazy days of summer are behind us and classrooms are buzzing with excitement. Kindergartners are embarking on their new journey while their parents are accepting the fact that their little ones are growing up far too quickly. Returning students are reuniting with friends and making new ones as they experience the next level of their journey.

This issue we are highlighting the principals. Do you remember the first time you saw your teacher outside of school? They actually have families, pets, and hobbies. It is amazing how many principals are products of the OUSD and some are leading the schools they attended. Enjoy...

## School News

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Covering the  
**ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**



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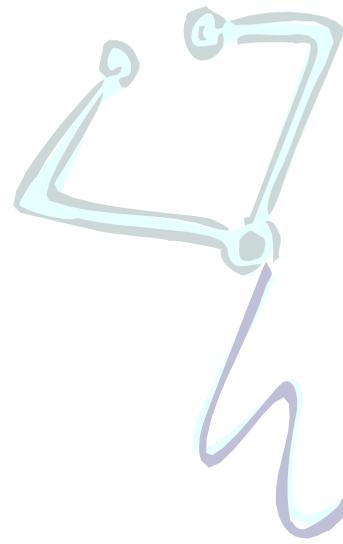


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"I'm yelling as loud as I can!"

# Anaheim Hills *Elementary*

6450 E. Serrano Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/997-6169



**Sandra Miller**  
*Principal*

Sandi has been in education for 15 years serving as an elementary teacher, vice principal, and principal. She holds a Bachelor's degree in English with an emphasis in Literature from California State University, Fresno and a Masters Degree in Education with an emphasis in Early Childhood Development from California State University, Long Beach. Sandi and her family live in San Clemente. Sandi has two school age daughters, Marisa 12 and Emma 9.

# California *Elementary*

1080 N. California St., Orange, CA 92867 • 714/997-6104



**Cyndi Paik**  
*Principal*

It is a privilege to be serving as California Elementary Principal because of the fabulous staff that I am able to work with. Our staff has high expectations for the students, themselves and their colleagues. Also, it is a delight to work with families at California, as they are supportive of the school's programs and focus on increasing student achievement.

My situation is unique in that I have a long standing history at California Elementary. I began teaching at California, served as the Assistant Principal and now serving as the Principal. When I was a classroom teacher, I enjoyed teaching students to overcome their

barriers by stretching their potential through the use of various strategies. I am pleased to working with a staff that also has the same mindset.

My educational background includes a Bachelor degree from UCI, Master's degree from Alliant University and Doctorate from USC. Go Trojans! In my spare time, I enjoy golfing because it is a fun sport that is difficult to master and reminds me that there is always hard work and frustration before every success.

# Canyon *High School*

220 S. Imperial Hwy., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/532-8000 • www.oranged.usd.k12.ca.us/canyon



**Dr. Greg Bowden**  
*Principal*

Dr. Bowden has a varied background in his 30 years in education. He has served in the elementary, middle school, high school, community college and university levels. His career began teaching middle school music classes, and moved to the high school level where he spent 15 years teaching band, orchestra, English, math and computer applications. He served at El Rancho Middle School as assistant principal, then spent four years as principal of Crescent Intermediate before moving to principal of Running Springs Elementary School. He was promoted in 2007 to be principal of Canyon High School.

Dr. Bowden holds degrees from San Diego State University, Pepperdine University, and he completed his doctoral work at the University of San Diego, where he studied principal leadership and teacher job satisfaction. In addition to his experience in public schools, he has taught at Rancho Santiago College, Azusa Pacific University, and Concordia University. He was honored as OUSD Elementary Principal of the Year in 2004-2005.

Dr. Bowden thoroughly enjoys his work at Canyon High School. He sees his role as a supporter and facilitator of his teachers – and relishes the job of helping them to be successful. The philosophy he learned through years of teaching music guides his attitude and strategy at work – the role of a conductor is to ensure that each player can be the best he or she can be – and to do “whatever it takes” to ensure the success of those around him.

# Cambridge *Elementary*

425 N. Cambridge St., Orange, CA 92866 • 714/997-6103



**Karen Merkow**  
*Principal*

A native Californian, Karen Merkow has spent her career as a life long learner, right along with the hundreds of students she has taught and teachers she has lead. She celebrates and values her career in education of over 34 years. Karen earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from UCLA, holds elementary teaching and reading specialist credentials, and an administrative credential.

Beginning her teaching career in Los Angeles, Karen taught grades K-6 and served in many leadership roles. She began her Orange Unified career teaching at Chapman Hills Elementary.

Mrs. Merkow then served as Assistant Principal at California Elementary and Principal at Anaheim Hills Elementary and Chapman Hills Elementary before coming to Cambridge two years ago.

Proud of her continuing participation advancing education for children, Karen has served as a member of curriculum planning and presentation teams, Leadership Team-Orange Board of Directors, and has been awarded the California Distinguished School recognition at Anaheim Hills Elementary and the California Businesses for Educational Excellence Award at Chapman Hills. She attends numerous trainings to refine and develop innovative educational programs at her school.

Her children are both graduates of OUSD. Daughter Deanna teaches in Nevada and son Phil is working in the entertainment management industry. Husband of 34 years, Jeff, owns advertising agencies in Tustin and Glendale.

Mrs. Merkow is excited to begin the new school year as continuing principal of Cambridge Elementary School. She looks forward to a wonderful year working with her staff and community to provide an outstanding educational program.

# Canyon Hills

260 S. Imperial Hwy., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/998-5000



**Dr. William Gee**  
*Principal*

William Gee, Ed.D., Canyon Hills's principal, began his career in 1981 teaching ninth-grade social studies in Wisconsin. After returning to graduate school, he worked as a school psychologist at Head Start and K-12 education. He also worked as a private therapist with families of extremely intellectually gifted but who also demonstrated social problems or severe underachievement.

Several years later, Dr. Gee moved to California, and he began teaching with the Anaheim City School District, later moving to a resource specialist program teaching position.

In 1993, Dr. Gee moved to Orange Unified School District where he has worked as a program specialist, elementary assistant principal, principal, and administrative director of pupil services. This is his fourth year as the principal at Canyon Hills School working with an exceptional staff of teachers and instructional assistants.

During Dr. Gee's years at Canyon Hills, he has noted that the staff's extraordinary commitment has frequently been heightened by their own personal experiences with family members who are severely disabled. These personal experiences have informed the practice of the teachers and aides in ways that greatly enrich the teaching quality of our staff's efforts.

Second, Dr. Gee said that the level of teamwork of the staff at Canyon Hills is higher than at most schools. The teachers and aides must rely on each other and trust one another to operate smoothly and effectively. The level of mutual dependence is necessary for the staff, and this trust contributes to an environment of safety and caring that is remarkable.

# Canyon Rim *Elementary*

1090 S. The Highlands, Anaheim, Ca 92808 • 714/532-7027 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/cr



**David Appling**  
*Principal*

David A. Appling, Jr. will be entering his second year as Principal of Canyon Rim Elementary School. The past year has been rewarding for Mr. Appling collaborating with students, parents, and staff of Canyon Rim. Over the last year, Mr. Appling and the staff have been enhancing the elements that make Canyon Rim ES successful such as Cognitive Guided Instruction, Thinking Maps, ExCEL grouping, data collection and analyzing, differentiation, and interventions. Mr. Appling has been creating a mantra for the staff "Work smarter, not harder."

Mr. Appling structured the year so that all stakeholders would be sharing goals that were directed to student achievement, student engagement, safe and welcoming schools, and parent/community partnerships. Response to Intervention was given a foundation at the school as the Student Success Team and the staff researched the effectiveness of the RtI process and its make-up. This foundation has been set giving the 2010-11 school year the fresh start of Canyon Rim's full implementation.

Mr. Appling was raised in the city of Los Alamitos, California and a product of its K-12 educational system. After graduating from Los Alamitos High School, he continued his education earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the California State University of Long Beach. David received his teaching credential and Masters of Science in Educational Administration from National University.

Mr. Appling looks forward to another year collaborating with the teachers, parents, students, and community of Canyon Rim continuing to move forward achieving student success.

# Chapman Hills *Elementary*

170 N. Aspen St., Orange, CA 92869 • 714/532-8043 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/chapman



**Julie Lucas**  
*Principal*

Julie Lucas will begin her third year as Principal of Chapman Hills this fall. A transplant in California, Mrs. Lucas graduated from the University of Akron in 1998 with a degree in Elementary Education. After teaching for one year in Ohio, she moved to Southern California, which she now calls home. Before receiving her Masters in Educational Administration from Concordia University in Irvine, she taught for nine years in the Tustin Unified School District. In her years as a teacher, Mrs. Lucas taught Kindergarten, third, fourth and fifth grades. Once she earned her Administrative credential, Mrs. Lucas was an Assistant Principal in the Saddleback Valley Unified School District for two years.

Mrs. Lucas has two children with her husband Matt; Abbey, age two and Matthew, two months. Her husband is a teacher and coach at El Dorado HS in Placentia. In addition to her position as Principal at Chapman Hills, Mrs. Lucas enjoys spending time with her family, reading, golfing and the beach.

Teaching and leadership have always been a passion for Mrs. Lucas. From her early days as an athlete and student, then as a coach and teacher, to her current role as an administrator, she has always pursued excellence in all that she does.

"I am proud to be the Principal at Chapman Hills," Lucas stated. "I have an outstanding staff, the students are bright, happy and hardworking, and the parent community is actively involved and supportive!" "I am looking forward to another successful and memorable year."

# Cerro Villa *Middle School*

17852 Serrano Ave., Villa Park, CA 92861 • 714/997-6251 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/cv



**Dr. Ken Miller**  
*Acting Principal*

I have been a member of the Leadership Team in Orange Unified School District for the past three years serving as Assistant Principal, Curriculum/Instruction and Athletics at El Modena High School. Before joining Orange Unified, I served as a social studies teacher and football coach at the comprehensive high school level for four years and a vice principal for nearly ten years in the Downey Unified School District. I sought a leadership position in Orange Unified because I wanted to be part of the outstanding team that provides such a great education for all children including my kids.

My wife Jennifer and I have two children: Katelyn, 14, attends Canyon High School and Kenny, 12, attends El Rancho Charter Middle School. We have a black Labrador retriever named Justice and a cat named Chaplin. These individuals firmly believe they are the third and fourth Miller children.

My daily experiences in Orange Unified have been excellent as the District Leadership and El Modena staff has truly made me feel right at home. I am thrilled to be a part of the OUSD leadership team and I am absolutely elated to now be part of the Cerro Villa Middle School family. I look forward to working with the wonderful Cerro Villa staff and surrounding community and leading our students to reach optimal levels of mastery knowledge.

# Crescent *Elementary*

5001 E. Gerda Drive, Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/997-6371 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/ci



**Randi Leach**  
*Principal*

Randi Leach earned her undergraduate degree from UCLA, and then attended USC where she earned her Masters Degree in Special Education and both an elementary and learning handicapped teaching credential. She began her teaching career as a 3rd – 8th grade Special Day Class teacher in the Castaic Union School District.

Randi Leach was actively involved in the Westminster School District for 20 years, first as a parent and 12 of those years as an educator. She has a strong background in curriculum and staff development, and as a Math Mentor for many years, she was the creator of their District "Math Mania" competition. Over the years, she also provided staff development for teachers in Orange County and presented annually at county and state reading and math conferences. In 1996 Randi received the OCDE Excellence Award for Outstanding Contributions to Education and was named Westminster School District's "Teacher of the Year."

Randi Leach began her administrative career in 2001 as the Assistant Principal of Handy Elementary in the Orange Unified School District, and then served seven years as principal of Canyon Rim Elementary. She was honored as an OUSD 2008 "Administrator of the Year," and is currently serving her second year as principal of Crescent Elementary.

Randi Leach's passion for curriculum and instruction also continues as she has been a part of the OUSD writing team for years, creating and presenting Staff Development trainings for teachers and principals in order to support effective instructional strategies.

Randi looks forward to another great year partnering with the Crescent community, staff and students.

## School News

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# El Modena *High School*

3920 Spring St., Orange, CA 92869 • 714/997-6331 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/emhs



**John Briquet**  
*Principal*

John Briquet began his career in education as a district intern and Language Arts teacher at Foshay Junior High School in South Central Los Angeles. He then spent two years at Washington Middle School in La Habra City School District before joining the Sunny Hills High School staff as an English teacher and football/wrestling coach. After five years as a Lancer, John and his wife anticipated buying a home in central Orange County, so he headed to Tustin High School where he served as a teacher and English department chair. Although John truly enjoyed being a Tiller, he found himself drawn toward a career in school administration;

therefore, after four years at Tustin High, he accepted a position as assistant principal at Loara High School in Anaheim. During his four years at Loara, John served in virtually every administrative capacity, including summer school principal.

In 2006 John rejoined old friends in La Habra City School District and served as an assistant principal at Imperial Middle School, a change that permitted him to finally experience the “full spectrum” of secondary education as an administrator, before joining the staff of El Modena High School in May of 2007.

John is beginning his fourth full year as a Vanguard and remains thoroughly convinced there is no better place to be. John, his wife Jill, and their three children—Bruce, Grace, and Griffin—live in Huntington Beach.

# El Rancho Charter *Middle School*

181 S. Del Giorgio Road, Anaheim, CA 92808 • 714/997-6238 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/rancho



**John Besta**  
*Principal*



**Michele Walker**  
*Principal*

El Rancho Charter School will begin the 2010-11 school year with a concept seen at few schools throughout the United States—two principals. Mrs. Michele Walker will join current principal John Besta in guiding the school through its’ next phase. Mrs. Walker will oversee the academic programs with a specific goal of taking El Rancho’s Academic Performance Index over 900 and beyond. Mr. Besta will be responsible for business and operations functions of the school. His goal will be to build a new science building and a new arts building on the El Rancho campus.

John Besta has just completed his 13th year as the El Rancho principal and has worked in Anaheim Hills schools a total of 23 years.

Michele Walker has just completed her sixth year at El Rancho as a Management Team member. Prior to El Rancho, Michele worked at Foothill High School for eight years as a history teacher and volleyball coach.

# Esplanade *Elementary*

381 N. Esplanade St., Orange, CA 92869 • 714/997-6157



**Amy Hitt**  
*Principal*

Mrs. Amy Hitt has been the principal at Esplanade School since 2008. Before that time, she worked in Anaheim City School District where she served as a vice principal, curriculum specialist, teacher on special assignment, and classroom teacher. Mrs. Hitt has worked at several schools teaching third through sixth grades, and specializing in curriculum, program evaluation/assessment, and technology. She has an Administrative Credential from California State University, Fullerton; a Master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Azusa Pacific University; and an undergraduate degree in Professional Writing from Baylor University.

Mrs. Hitt’s roots in Orange run deep—she attended Orange Unified schools as a child and still lives in Orange, very near Esplanade. Her children also attend Orange Unified schools as fifth and eighth graders in the 2010-2011 school year.

Most importantly, Mrs. Hitt loves the community of committed learners represented by Esplanade’s staff, teachers, parents, and students. The school’s similar school ranking of a 10 shows how seriously the whole community takes teaching and learning.

# Fairhaven *Elementary*

1415 E. Fairhaven Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/997-6178



**Andrew Fisher**  
*Principal*

Andrew Fisher experiences range from teaching at the K-12 levels and at the University level, as well as being an administrator at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

His administrative experiences include development, coordination, and supervision of a K-12 continuum and supported instructional strategies, and coordination of districts Consolidated Programs (S.I.P., Title I, Chapter II, E.I.A., and School Base). He has coordinated W.A.S.C., Program Quality, and Coordinated Compliance Reviews, served as a member of state compliance review teams, assisted with state textbook adoption programs, Student Attendance

Review Boards (SARB), worked with student discipline programs, attendance accounting programs, counseling services, special education programs, music, athletic, and academic booster clubs, Bilingual Advisory Committees, Chapter I Advisory Committees, American Indian Education Advisory Committee, low and high performing schools, as well as being involved in the “Program Improvement Process”.

Most recently, he has been involved with the implantation of the new state academic standards, No Child Left Behind legislation, California Peer Assistance and Review Program (PAR), and AB1226, Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA), in which he was a consortium trainer. He is also a state reviewer for the “California Distinguished Schools” program, a trainer for the “40 Developmental Assets” program, “Field Colleague” for state CCR teams, and a quest lecturer at Cal State Fullerton, Chapman University, and Concordia University education departments.



**Are you looking for me? I am part of the Puzzle Contest on page 9.  
Find the other three pieces hidden in this publication.  
Then follow the instructions to enter the Contest.**

**Good luck!!**

# Fletcher *Elementary*

515 W. Fletcher Ave., Orange, CA 92865 • 714/997-6181



**Helen Chung**  
*Principal*

As I continue my second year as principal of Fletcher Elementary School, it has been my sincere pleasure and honor to be a member of this great school community. I feel fortunate to continue at a school culture focused on student learning, a commitment to high expectations, innovation and collaboration. It is my intention to carry on these important traditions and practices.

Let me share some information about my educational background and professional experience. I attended Claremont Graduate University where I earned a Masters of Arts in Education and Teaching Credential. I began my professional career as an

Elementary Assistant Principal at Baldwin Park USD. For the past 6 years, I served as an Elementary School Principal at Hacienda La Puente USD and Tustin USD.

I am excited to continue as part of the Fletcher family and to closely work with everyone to make our school even better. My goal is to provide the leadership that will facilitate a school environment to provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of each student to the best of our ability. The educational program must be academically challenging, engage each student by linking the curriculum to previous knowledge and experience, and also to promote further exploration of new ideas. Parents, teachers, support staff, and administration all have an important role to encourage our children to become active learners. It is my sincere desire to provide expanded opportunities for our students to acquire the skills to become productive citizens in a vastly changing society. We are looking forward to another successful year at Fletcher Elementary School!

# Imperial *Elementary*

400 S. Imperial Hwy., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/997-6282 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/imperial



**Tim Biland**  
*Principal*

I began my career in education as middle school teacher of English and History. My emphasis in education shifted to reading intervention, English Language Development, and working with struggling students, families, and school staff.

My experience in school administration began in Orange Unified School District in 2004, as assistant principal of Portola Middle School. In 2007 I became assistant principal of McPherson Magnet School.

Since fall of 2008, I have served as principal of Imperial Elementary. In this time, we have implemented Thinking Maps as a school-wide best practice, developed a school wide technology plan which resulted in the addition of document cameras and LCD projectors in every classroom and broadening the role of technology on campus, and we have had an increase in both our school API and statewide and similar school rankings.

I have had the fortune of successful experience because of individuals who have provided great guidance and camaraderie. Participating in our local chapter of Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), this year as president, has also provided opportunities to develop relationships with other school administrators throughout our region and state.

When I'm not working, I stay busy with my wife and three children. I participate whenever possible in my children's activities such as coaching or assisting with soccer or little league. I have just finished my first year as a Cub Scout Den Leader. Overall, I am blessed to be supported by my terrific wife and family.

# Handy *Elementary*

860 N. Handy St., Orange, CA 92867 • 714/997-6183



**Sandra Schaffer**  
*Principal*

It has been my pleasure to have worked in the Orange Unified School District since 1998. I began as an Assistant Principal at West Orange Elementary and have since been principal of Fletcher Elementary and Handy Elementary.

I received my Bachelors of Business Administration from Loyola Marymount University, my teaching credential from Chapman University, and my Masters of Education Administration from Cal State Fullerton. Although my formal education has given me the foundation needed for this job, I learn something new everyday at school!

Prior to becoming a principal, I was a teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District and Pomona Unified School District. I am privileged to have taught Kindergarten through sixth grade and enjoyed each one in a different way. Teaching is a truly rewarding profession, and I continue to enjoy working with children as a site principal.

# Jordan *Elementary*

4319 E. Jordan Ave., Orange, CA 92869 • 714/997-6187



**Elizabeth Gosnell**  
*Principal*

This is Mrs. Gosnell's second year as a principal with Orange Unified. She completed both her Bachelor's degree in Communications with an emphasis in language acquisition and Master's degree at the University of California, San Diego. She has served as an educator for over 17 years gaining experience as a teacher, bilingual resource specialist, literacy coach and vice principal and principal. Aside from her principal position at Jordan Elementary, Liz enjoys spending time in gardening, at the beach and visiting family in New York and California.

# La Veta *Elementary*

2800 E. La Veta Ave., Orange, CA 92869 • 714/977-6155



**Gwendolyn Green**  
*Principal*

Gwendolyn Green comes to the Orange Unified School District from the Saddleback Valley Unified School District where she has been serving as an elementary school assistant principal. Prior to her administrative experience in Saddleback Valley Unified, Gwendolyn served as an elementary assistant principal in the Moreno Valley Unified School District. She also has experience as an instructional coach and classroom teacher in Moreno Valley Unified and in the Banning Unified School District. Gwendolyn Green holds a Masters degree in Education from Chapman University as well as a Bachelors degree in Psychology from the

University of California, Riverside. She holds an Administrative Services Credential, a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential with a Cross-cultural, Language & Academic Development (CLAD) Emphasis, and a Reading Certificate.

## School News



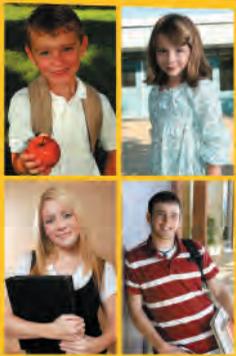
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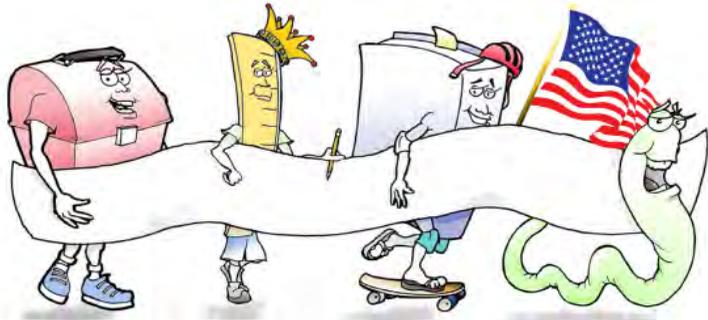
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Your entry must be received by September 30, 2010.  
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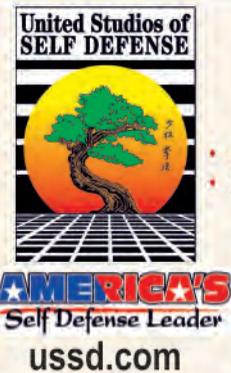
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# Lampson *Elementary*

13321 Lampson Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92840 • 714/997-6153 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/lampson



**Laurie Dieppa**  
Principal

Mrs. Laurie Dieppa is happy to be returning to Lampson. This will be Mrs. Dieppa's third year as principal. She came to us from Taft Elementary where she was a fourth grade and third grade teacher for four years and the reading resource teacher for five years. She holds an Administrative Credential, a Reading Specialist Credential, as well as a Multiple Subject Credential and CLAD certification with the state of California. In her life before Orange Unified Mrs. Dieppa worked as a private school director and kindergarten-first grade teacher in Arizona. She and her family are twenty-five year residents of the City of Orange. Her husband and three sons are all products of the Orange Unified School District. Mrs. Dieppa looks forward to continuing to work with the Lampson staff, students, and parent community who have been so warm and supportive. Plans for the new school year include deepening the focus on differentiated instruction and developing a closer working relationship with the various parent groups on campus.

# McPherson Magnet

333 S. Prospect, Orange, CA 92869 • 714/977-6384 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/mcpherson



**Jeanne Bentley**  
Principal

Jeanne Bentley is beginning her sixth year at McPherson Magnet School, two of these years as an assistant principal and three as principal. She has over twenty years of experience in education. Prior to receiving her Master's of Science in Educational Leadership and an administration credential at CSU Fullerton, she taught first through sixth grade in both Stockton and Tustin, California. "McPherson Magnet School is a unique and very special place for our students, and I am looking forward to continuing my work with our school community of educators, support staff, parents and guardians. It takes a team to maintain and improve the educational experiences in a student engaging environment here on campus, and McPherson thrives in this accomplishment."

Mrs. Bentley is looking forward to an exciting year filled with learning and fun-filled events for our children. The challenge of learning in a 21st Century world, through math, science, and technology is one of her joys. It is her firm belief that these are tools necessary for students to become the next generation of innovators and leaders for the future.

# Nohl Canyon *Elementary*

4100 E. Nohl Ranch Road, Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/997-6203



**Dominique Polchow**  
Principal

As a former roadrunner, who attended Nohl Canyon, Mrs. Polchow is looking forward to her third year as principal. With homegrown roots in Anaheim Hills, she truly enjoys serving the community she lives in.

Polchow always knew she wanted to work with children and make a difference in their lives. With this in mind, she obtained her bachelor's degree at California State University Fullerton in Child Development, with a minor in sociology. She continued her education at National University where she received her master's in cross cultural education, a multiple subject teaching credential with Cross Cultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) certification, as well as her administrative credential.

On a personal note, Polchow is a wife and mother. She has been married for nine years to her husband who is a paramedic. They enjoy their 5 year old son who is a burst of energy and keeps them on their toes. Polchow's hobbies include reading, shopping, decorating, traveling and hiking with her family.

As we return to the 2010-2011 School-Year, Polchow looks forward to again working with a top notch school community. Polchow's passion as an educator is to offer the very best to each child so he or she can reach the highest potential as a learner.

# Linda Vista *Elementary*

1200 N. Cannon, Orange, CA 92869 • 714/977-6201



**Sally Hughson**  
Principal

Mrs. Sally Hughson became the principal of Linda Vista Elementary School in August of 2008. She has been an educator for 20 years. She has worked at Cambridge, Handy, West Orange and Running Springs where she was the Assistant Principal. Mrs. Hughson taught lower and upper grades and was a reading resource teacher, ELD resource teacher and an Instructional Coach.

Mrs. Hughson grew up in the Orange area and attended Orange Unified schools beginning in kindergarten and graduated from El Modena High School. She earned her BA in Communication Disorders and a Master degree in Educational Administration from California State Fullerton; she earned her teaching Credential from Chapman University.

Mrs. Hughson lives in Santa Ana with her husband Steve of 30 years. Her son Grant lives at home while attending ITT, daughter Katie and new husband Danny Quesada live in Orange. Mrs. Hughson enjoys trips to Catalina, relaxing in the desert, walking in Peter's Canyon and spending time with her family and friends.

2010-2011 will be Mrs. Hughson third year at Linda Vista. She looks forward to working with the supportive teachers, staff and the community.

# Olive *Elementary*

3038 N Magnolia Ave., Orange, CA 92865 • 714/637-8218 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/olive



**Kathryn Martin**  
Principal

This August 25th, it will be an honor and privilege for Mrs. Kathy Martin to begin another fabulous year as the Principal of Olive Elementary School. Mrs. Martin is a product of Orange Unified, having attended OUSD schools for kindergarten through twelfth grade. Mrs. Martin earned her BA in psychology from UCLA, and will forever be a "Mighty Bruin." She admits she morphed into an Anteater for a short time while earning her teaching credential at UCI. She received her MA in Education from Concordia University in Irvine.

Having been in education for more than twenty years, Mrs. Martin can attest to the fact there is no nobler profession or purpose than helping to shape the next generation. Not a day goes by that she is not grateful for and humbled by the staff and families at Olive. John Wooden put it best when he said, "The main ingredient of stardom is the rest of the team." Mrs. Martin is proud of her team at Olive.

On a personal note, Mrs. Martin and her husband met at UCLA and wouldn't miss a UCLA football or basketball game. Their greatest joy is their two terrific daughters who attend middle school and high school. When she is not serving in OUSD, Mrs. Martin enjoys speaking at technology and education conferences, playing the flute and traveling with her family.

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# Orange *High School*

525 N Shaffer St., Orange, CA 92867 • 714/997-6211 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/ohs



**Ernest Gonzalez**  
*Principal*

Ernest Gonzalez joins the OUSD as the new principal of Orange High School. He grew up in a small city east of Los Angeles. After high school, Ernest completed his undergraduate work at the University of San Diego and advanced degree from Azusa Pacific University. He is a 17 year veteran from Montebello Unified School District where he served as teacher, AVID coordinator, Activities Director, Federal and State Project Director, and Assistant Principal. Ernest brings with him K-12 experience, most recently as an assistant principal of a comprehensive high school serving 3,400 students.

Mr. Gonzalez is married to Denise Quan who is a high school counselor. They have two children Kaleiah and Christian. The Gonzalez family resides in Diamond Bar, CA and enjoys vacations together and spending time with friends and family. Mr. Gonzalez looks forward to working together with students, parents, staff, and community to help the continued success of Orange High School.

# Panorama *Elementary*

10512 Crawford Canyon Road, Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/997-6265



**Michelle Moore**  
*Principal*

Principal Michelle Moore was born and raised in beautiful Southern California and has spent most of her life living in South Orange County. She has been happily married to her husband for ten years and they have a beautiful daughter. She was educated in Orange County and attended California State University of Fullerton for her Bachelor's degree. From there, she went on to pursue her Master's degree in education. Throughout her career she has taught various grade levels Kindergarten – 8th grade. She has been serving in the Orange Unified School District (OUSD) for approximately eleven years. She has enjoyed teaching in OUSD as well as serving two years as McPherson Magnet School's Assistant Principal and now as Panorama Elementary School's principal. As we are now opening the 2010-11 school year Moore states.

The beginning of a new school year has always had special meaning. It is a time that marks a fresh start, exciting possibilities, and great promise. For students, it also means new friends, new learning, discovery, and growth.

As Panorama's Principal, I am privileged to be going into my sixth year with our outstanding team. When I reflect on what makes our school so special, it is evident that it is our entire community. I could not imagine a better family of staff, students, and families; it is truly a unique environment.

For the 2009-10 school year, Panorama achieved California's Highest Ranking Public School Award (10-10) for its fourth consecutive year. Thanks to the efforts of the entire community. Congratulations Panorama we are all very proud. Go Panthers!!

# Palmyra *Elementary*

1325 E Palmyra Ave., Orange, CA 92868 • 714/997-6207



**Connie Smith**  
*Principal*

Palmyra Principal, Connie Smith, celebrates her 29th year in education and the beginning of her eighth year at Palmyra Elementary. Her experience includes classroom teacher, mentor teacher, IBM education consultant, site administrator and district curriculum coordinator.

Through Connie's many professional associations, as a former Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Region 17 Elementary Administrator Representative, Adjunct Professor at Concordia University and membership on the Tustin Public Schools Foundation Board of Directors, she continues to support

Palmyra's efforts to expand partnerships with community members inside and outside the City of Orange. Connie shares her administrative expertise by serving as an assessor for the Orange County Department of Education in their Developing the 21st Century Principal program. Under her leadership, Palmyra was led to the distinction of being a 2008 California Distinguished School.

Currently her Professional Learning Community at Palmyra also includes the District's SUCSESS (Systematic Utilization of Comprehensive Strategies for Ensuring Student Success) program, addressing the needs of students with Autism, as well as a 3rd through 6th Grade Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program.

"It is such a privilege to be the principal at Palmyra," Smith says, "Students, teachers, staff, parents and community members all work hard to make a difference—each and every day!"

# Parkside *Pre-K*

2345 E, Palmyra Ave., Orange, CA 92869 • 714/997-6202



**Kristi Franco**  
*Coordinator*

Presently I am the District's Special Education Preschool and Kindergarten Program Coordinator and the site administrator for Parkside Preschool and Kindergarten; it has been an honor to work with amazing staff, students and families.

I began my career in education in Orange Unified School District in 1998 as a Special Education Preschool and Kindergarten Teacher; I have also worked for OUSD as the Service Coordinator for Low Incidence Infants, the Case Manager for one of our Nonpublic Agencies, as an Administrator Designee and a Special Education Elementary School Program Coordinator. I not only work in the district, I also live in its attendance area. We are proud parents of two Panorama Panthers. I have been happily married for 13 years to a wonderful and supportive husband. I have two amazing stepsons; Blake is 18 and Brandon is 16, our daughter Kenzy is 10 and our youngest son Kade is 8.

I am thankful for the clarity of career direction that I had at a young age and am privileged to fulfill my calling to Special Education in the Orange Unified School District.



**Are you looking for me? I am part of the Puzzle Contest on page 9.  
Find the other three pieces hidden in this publication.  
Then follow the instructions to enter the Contest.  
Good luck!!**

# Portola *Middle School*

270 N. Palm St., Orange, CA 92868 • 714/997-6361



**Deborah Backstrom**  
Principal

Born and raised in Southern California, Mrs. Debbie Backstrom began her education in Downey, California, where she attended elementary, middle, and high school. She continued her education, receiving an Associate of Arts Degree in Sociology from Cerritos College. She continued her education graduating from Calif. State University, Long Beach with a degree in Sociology. She also received her teaching credential from CSULB. Mrs. Backstrom received her administrative credential and Master of Science Degree from Calif. State University, Fullerton.

Mrs. Backstrom's career in Education began in 1984 when she was employed as a teacher for Orange Unified School District.

Her passion has always been working with students and guiding them to be the "BEST" they can be. Since 2000, Mrs. Backstrom has served in an administrative capacity. Before coming to Portola, Mrs. Backstrom was the Principal at Richland High School in Orange.

Mrs. Backstrom has been married to her high school sweetheart for 38 years and he also teaches for Orange Unified at Orange High School. They have one daughter, Kelli, who is married to Steve Vermillion. They have two beautiful children, Andrew and Megan.

"I am so excited to part of such a wonderful school district and to be at Portola Middle School." My door is always open to all students, parents and staff. I am looking forward to another great year.

# Prospect *Elementary*

379 N. Virage St., Orange, CA 92869 • 714/997-6271



**Elena Stoces**  
Principal

Prospect Elementary's principal Elena Stoces is an alumnus of Orange Unified School District. Once graduated from Canyon High School, Ms. Stoces, pursued a degree in Child Development at Cal State University at Fullerton. She realized then that she loved working with children, but was unsure of what career path to take.

Ms. Stoces went on to earn her teaching credential at Chapman University and begun her career in Orange Unified School District as a bilingual 1st grade teacher at Sycamore Elementary in 1994. A few years later she became the Assistant Principal at Sycamore while it was still a multi track school. After three years as Assistant

Principal and completing her Masters Degree at Azusa Pacific University she became principal at Imperial Elementary in Anaheim Hills.

Ms. Stoces served as principal at Imperial Elementary for five years. The time at Imperial was a great training ground to develop skills a principal needs to lead a school community which had prepared her for her next principalship at Fairhaven Elementary, a Title I/Program Improvement school. The three years at Fairhaven enabled her to enhance her leadership skills in working with the diverse communities our district serves. Now entering her third year at Prospect, she looks forward to continue the path to increased student achievement by working collaboratively with staff and community.

Ms. Stoces has two sons who are also products of Orange Unified School District. Her youngest son Robert, will be a senior this year at Canyon High. Having had her own children attend the same schools she did, gives her such great pride to say that she is an alumnus, parent and an employee of Orange Unified School District.

# Richland *High School*

615 N. Lemon St., Orange, CA 92867 • 714/997-6167



**Ed Madrid**  
Principal

I was born and raised in Silver City, New Mexico. I loved the small town living that helped me become the person I am today. We moved around the state as my father sought opportunities for advancement in public education. Both my parents were in education. My mother was a Kindergarten teacher and my father became an administrator at the district level. Our discussions around the dinner table usually centered on schools and kids. With that kind of family life it was easy for me to step into education as a career.

I taught for several years in southern California then moved into administration as an assistant principal at the middle school. I've had the wonderful opportunity to work in elementary, middle, and high school levels. Each level presented challenges which I have loved. What I most enjoy about my profession is the opportunity to see the transformation that students undergo as they take advantage of what schools have to offer.

Richland High School is a unique school that offers students a second chance. With a caring staff, support from home, and the hard work of the students we were able to graduate over 140 students this year. I look forward to working with the students at Richland this year.

# Running Springs *Elementary*

8670 E. Running Springs Drive, Anaheim, CA 92808 • 714/281-45120



**Lydia Roach**  
Principal

Mrs. Lydia Roach became the principal of Running Springs Elementary School in May 2007. She has been an educator for 25 years and has worked in various elementary schools in the Orange Unified School District including Handy, Riverdale, Canyon Rim, Lampson, and Running Springs. Mrs. Roach has taught both primary and upper grades, was a bilingual resource teacher, and a reading resource teacher. In addition, she was the assistant principal at both Running Springs and Lampson for four years.

Mrs. Roach grew up in the city of Orange and is a product of the Orange Unified School District. As a student, she attended Esplanade Elementary, Fairhaven Elementary, Santiago Jr. High and El Modena High School. Mrs. Roach continued her education at San Diego State University where she earned a Bachelor's degree and an elementary teaching credential. She then graduated from Cal State Fullerton with a Master's degree in Educational Administration and an administrative credential.

Mrs. Roach currently resides in the Anaheim Hills area with her husband Russ of 26 years and her two children Kyle, age 21, and Lara, age 16. She enjoys watching her children's sporting events and golfing with her family. Mrs. Roach is excited to be a Redhawk and looks forward to working with the wonderful families in the Running Springs community!



**Are you looking for me? I am part of the Puzzle Contest on page 9.  
Find the other three pieces hidden in this publication.  
Then follow the instructions to enter the Contest.**

**Good luck!!**

# Santiago Charter *Middle School*

515 N. Rancho Santiago Blvd., Orange, CA 92869 • 714/997-6366 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/santiago



**Mary Henry**  
Principal

Mrs. Henry has been principal at Santiago for six years. She takes great pride in being a member of the Santiago team – working with the students, the staff, and the community. She has the unique distinction of having had many roles at Santiago, having been a parent, a teacher, the curriculum manager, and an assistant principal before becoming principal. Besides Santiago, high on her priority list are love of family and the appreciation of her roots.

Students and parents are usually surprised when they first hear Mrs. Henry speak Spanish. Mrs. Henry was raised in Calexico, California, a very small town that borders Mexicali, Baja California.

She learned and spoke both languages as she was growing up. A close family friend and neighbor could only speak German and so Mrs. Henry learned German too.

Mrs. Henry attended UCLA where she met and married her husband Frank. The three Henry children, Sean, Rory, and Tara are all UCLA graduates. The family enjoys going to Bruin sporting events, especially the Softball College World Series where they were able to see Tara play.

It should be no surprise that her office is decorated in blue and gold. Also present in her office are several John Wooden books. One of her favorite John Wooden quotes is: Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.

Mrs. Henry considers this valuable advice. Working at a charter school keeps everyone busy and thinking out of the box. There really is no time to think about why something cannot happen. Instead, the thought is how we can make it happen!

# Sycamore *Elementary*

340 N. Main St., Orange, CA 92868 • 714/997-6277 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/sycamore



**Erika Krohn**  
Principal

Orange Unified School District proudly welcomes Mrs. Erika Krohn as the new principal of Sycamore Elementary School. As a former Taft Tiger, Cerro Villa Viking, and Villa Park Spartan, Mrs. Krohn looks forward to serving the district she grew up in and becoming a Sycamore Sea Lion!

Mrs. Krohn is an experienced educator who has been principal the past six years of a school that is very similar demographically to Sycamore. She has an extensive background in brain/mind learning principles, English Language Development, and differentiated instruction. She earned a Bachelor's degree at California State

University, Fullerton, a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential at Chapman University, and a Master's Degree at National University. As a lifelong learner, she has continued her education by participating in a Community of Practice to hone her skills as an educational leader and keep abreast of the latest research regarding effective strategies in the classroom.

On a personal note, Mrs. Krohn is committed to public education not only professionally, but to contribute to a strong foundation for all students including her two small children: Kendall (7 years old) and Wyatt (four years old.) Mrs. Krohn's favorite pastimes are reading in her hammock-either professional books or the latest Jodi Picoult novel, working out, and snow skiing with her family.

Mrs. Krohn is very excited to start the 2010/2011 school year at Sycamore Elementary. She is ready to work collaboratively with the staff and community to provide extraordinary learning experiences for Sycamore students.

## TOP HIGH SCHOOLS • FROM PAGE 1

El Modena High School principal John Briquet said, "El Modena has consistently scored an overall AP pass rate of better than 70% every year since 1999, making us the top scoring high school in OUSD. Perhaps even more impressive, El Modena students took only 390 AP exams in 1999; by comparison, our students took 643 exams in 2009-10! This year's *Newsweek* ranking places El Modena in the top 4% of all high schools in the nation, a standing of which we are very proud."

Villa Park High School principal Ed Howard added, "It is always nice to be recognized as one of the best at what you do. Our students and staff are certainly worthy of the praise. We are proud of what we do every day to prepare our students to be productive citizens. Spartans are and will continue to be ready for what is next."

# Serrano *Elementary*

17741 E. Serrano Ave., Villa Park, CA 92861 • 714/997-6275



**Bobbie Lansman**  
EdD  
Principal

Serrano was selected as a 2010 California Distinguished School, and I feel proud to begin my third year as principal at such a fine school. My tenure as an administrator in OUSD began in 1994, and I have been afforded many unique and memorable opportunities.

I earned my Doctorate in Educational Leadership from USC. My Masters Degree, and Reading Specialist Credential is from California State University Long Beach, my Bachelor of Arts Degree (Summa cum Laude) in Social Studies/History is from Northern Michigan University, and my Administrative Credentials are from California State University Fullerton and Chapman University.

My first principal position in OUSD was at Handy Elementary.

I was then selected principal to open the brand new Running Springs Elementary where I served until 2002, and for 6 years I was fortunate to be principal at West Orange Elementary. I can honestly say that each experience was wonderful and fulfilling. I was also very proud to have been recognized as the 2006 OUSD Administrator of the Year.

Although I have lived in a number of states across the country, I am a native Californian. I currently live in the city of Fullerton with my husband. We are blessed with a wonderful family, including our brilliant grandson! Our younger daughter is beginning her second year of medical school.

I feel fortunate to have had such diverse, challenging, and wonderful administrative opportunities. I am looking forward to an exciting school year with the Serrano community, and all of OUSD.

# Taft *Elementary*

1829 N. Cambridge St., Orange, CA 92865 • 714/997-6254



**Antionette Coe**  
Principal

Mrs. Antoinette Coe is beginning her second year as principal at Taft Elementary. She stated, "I am proud to be a part of the Taft Family and look forward to another great year." She has been with Orange Unified School District for nine years serving as a literacy coach and teacher. Before joining the Taft staff she most recently served as the assistant principal for both La Veta and Lampson Elementary Schools.

A native Californian, Mrs. Coe attended school in Anaheim and graduated from Magnolia High School. She received a bachelor's degree and a multiple subject teaching credential from California State University, San Marcos. Mrs. Coe earned an administrative credential from University of California, Irvine and a master's degree in administration from California State University, Fullerton.

Currently, Mrs. Coe resides in Yorba Linda with her husband Eric, a director at a local staffing firm. She has three school aged children: her daughter Taylor (17), her son Zachary (16), and her youngest daughter Madeline (13). In addition to spending time with her family, she is a member of National Charity League Yorba Linda where she volunteers to support local charities.

Mrs. Coe is passionate about learning and continues to share her enthusiasm with the students and staff at Taft Elementary. Her goal is to educate students and assist them in realizing their fullest potential. Her dream is for all students to leave Taft Elementary School with the desire to be successful and have a life plan in process.

"We are pleased that Canyon is named to this list. Unlike other measures, this scale is an indication of how much we are challenging our students to perform at a high level. We want all our students to experience a challenging course of study, one that will prepare them for the college, university, or post-secondary learning venue of their choice. Most of our International Baccalaureate program students come back to tell us that their transition to the work load of the university was seamless, thanks to the rigorous programs offered at Canyon," said Canyon High School principal Dr. Greg Bowden.

These schools have made *Newsweek's* list numerous times. El Modena was on the list in 2005-08. In addition, Villa Park made the list in 2006 and Canyon in 2008.

# Villa Park *Elementary*

10551 Center Drive, Villa Park, CA 92861 • 714/997-6281



**Debra Larson**  
*Principal*

Principal Debra Larson is a longtime Orange County Native, educated in the Newport-Mesa Unified School District and living for 33 years in the Anaheim Hills area. She has taught for 23 years in Orange Unified School District (OUSD). Throughout her career, she taught kindergarten through sixth grade, spent three years as an assistant principal and six years as principal at Anaheim Hills Elementary School. She was chosen as the California Teacher of the Year among the state's first year teachers in 1986. She currently serves as the principal of Villa Park Elementary, where she has been for the last year.

Larson earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Southern California. She did not choose a career in teaching until her youngest daughter was nearing school age. After serving as a parent volunteer in her daughter's classroom, she decided to pursue her teaching credential at California State University, Fullerton and began teaching when her youngest daughter was in first grade. She later received her administrative credential from Azusa Pacific University.

"It is a privilege to be the principal of Villa Park Elementary," Larson said. "I know I have chosen the perfect profession, and I gain energy from the students, staff and parents I work with every day. What else do I need in a profession, knowing that I can make a difference in the life of one child?"

# Villa Park *High School*

18042 Taft Ave., Villa Park, CA 92861 • 714/628-4300



**Ed Howard**  
*Principal*

Ed Howard became the Principal at Villa Park High School in April of 2007. Born in the Bronx, New York, Ed has been a resident of Orange since 1976. After graduating from Villa Park High School he attended Cypress Community College and then transferred to California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, CA where he was a recipient of the Sparky Anderson Baseball Scholarship. Ed received his Bachelors of Art Degree in Political Science and teaching credential from Cal Lutheran. He returned to Orange and began working in the Orange Unified School District as a government and economics teacher, as well as coaching baseball, football, and has worked as Athletic Director at Orange High School. After receiving his Master's Degree in School Administration, Ed took a job as the Director of Athletics for the Orange Unified School District.

Ed is married to Amiee and has two children—Savannah and Eddie. The entire family believes in community and volunteerism. Ed is a Rotarian, a member of the Santiago Canyon College Advisory Council and a Board of Director for the Community Foundation of Orange. Spending time with family and friends is one of his greatest pleasures. Boating, camping, or catching a ball game, is where Ed likes to spend his recreational time.

# Yorba *Middle School*

935 N. Cambridge St., Orange, CA 92867 • 714/997-6161 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/yorba



**Kerrie Torres**  
*Principal*

I am proud to be the new Principal of Yorba Middle School. I have worked tirelessly over 13 years to build a strong personal foundation in education, emphasizing work in the areas of curriculum, instruction and program development. My journey into education began years ago as I watched generations of children be educated through a family daycare center that I shared with my mother. After working with young children for several years, I moved onto college to study where I obtained my bachelors and masters degree and began to pursue a career in education.

I was hired in 1997 by the Downey Unified School District where I have spent the last 13 years. My first assignment in the classroom was as a 7th grade science teacher where I shared the wonderings of life science through inquiry-based learning. After seven years in the classroom, I transitioned into administration as a middle school vice principal for two years where I focused on school culture, climate and student safety. I followed my promoting class in 2007 to Warren High School where I was the Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Guidance. I have been fortunate to work in a diverse community of learners, providing equity and education for all students. I look forward to bringing a staff together to create a unified and comprehensive continuous improvement model to increase student achievement and personal student success. I welcome all parents to get involved and create a lifelong partnership with your student and Yorba Middle School.

# West Orange *Elementary*

243 S. Bush St., Orange, CA 92868 • 714/997-6283 • www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/wo

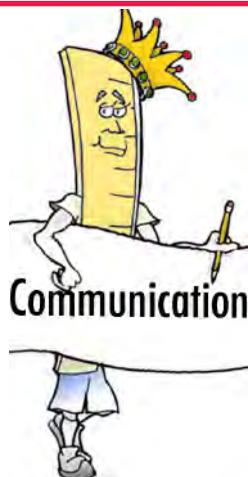


**Michael Olander**  
*Principal*

My name is Michael Olander and I am the principal of West Orange Elementary School. I was born in San Diego and lived there for 27 years before moving to Temecula, then Orange County. In the summer of 2009 I married my wife, Blythe, who works as a Speech and Language Pathologist at Loma Linda Medical Center.

My career in education began when I worked as a behavior specialist and therapist-trainee at Anza Elementary School in San Diego, as I completed a master's degree in marriage family and child counseling. I had planned on being a family therapist and worked at Anza in order to earn the supervised therapy hours necessary to be a state licensed therapist. However, after working in the school setting I realized the true power and importance that a teacher has on a child's life. I decided to begin the pursuit of a teaching credential while finishing my master's degree in counseling. Shortly after, I was hired to teach a third through fifth grade special education class at Anza.

After working at Anza Elementary School for a total of four years, I moved to Temecula and taught first grade, second grade, and a first/second grade combo at Nicolas Valley Elementary School. I worked at Nicolas Valley for four years, and then was hired as the Assistant Principal at Temecula Elementary School. I worked at Temecula Elementary School as the AP for two years before being hired in my current position at West Orange.



**Are you looking for me? I am part of the Puzzle Contest on page 9.  
Find the other three pieces hidden in this publication.  
Then follow the instructions to enter the Contest.  
Good luck!!**

## Protecting Student Athletes



**William M. Habermehl**  
Superintendent

In the 2008-2009 school year, four students in Orange County schools succumbed to cardiac-related deaths while playing organized sports. In the spring of 2008, Chip Prather, the Orange County Fire Authority Chief at the time, called me to have a discussion about the safety of our student athletes. He was interested in talking about three very important issues. First was the importance of proper hydration while engaging in sports activities, second was the school's use of the 911 system, and third was the availability and use of Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) in the schools.

Many partners, including doctors, school administrators, educators, parents, and first responders gathered to address the tragic student deaths and ways to prevent them. This group came to be known as

the Life-Threatening Events Associated with Pediatric Sports (LEAPS) collaborative. The group met regularly to discuss the concerns that Chief Prather had brought forward, hydration, emergency preparedness in the schools, and also raised the issue of screening student athletes who may be at high risk for sudden cardiac events.

One of the first outcomes of the LEAPS collaborative was the Hydrated and Healthy campaign which had its debut at Beckman High School in the Tustin Unified School District. The goal of this program is to educate the public about the importance of youth staying hydrated during physical activity, especially in warmer weather. The key message of the campaign is that hydrating before, during, and after physical activity is essential to preventing heat-related illness.

The Orange County Fire Authority urged schools to call 911 immediately in case of a possible emergency rather than waste critical minutes trying to determine whether a student is in crisis or not. Educating all students and staff in CPR was another recommendation of the collaborative. In addition, the group encouraged schools to consider the use of AEDs. An AED is a simple, voice-automated machine that, when attached to the chest of a victim, will introduce a mild electronic shock to bring the heart back into life-saving rhythm. Currently there are 10 school districts in Orange County that have implemented AED programs and have the devices available for use at school sites and at athletic events.

Determining which student athletes might be at risk for cardiac events is an important piece of the puzzle in keeping our students safe. The use of Electrocardiograms (EKGs) as part of the pre-participation athletic physical can be used to determine if a student has a congenital heart condition that may put them at high-risk for a sudden cardiac event. A pilot program is ongoing at one of our local high schools, offering EKGs to the student athletes.

It has been great to see how physicians, educators, school board members, and other community representatives have joined together to face the serious issue of life threatening events of student athletes. This work will change the way our communities support our athletes and enable us to continue to provide a world class education where every student succeeds.

For related resources and video clips, visit the Hydrated & Healthy website at <http://hydration.ocde.us>.

Visit the Hydrated & Healthy website  
at <http://hydration.ocde.us>.

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### SUPERINTENDENT • FROM PAGE 1



**Renae Dreier, Ed.D.**

receiving the award more than once. In addition, California Elementary School and West Orange Elementary School each received the Title I Academic Achievement Award in recent years.

Each of the high schools in our District offer programs to provide students enrichment opportunities. For example, Canyon High students may participate in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. The OUSD Laptop program is offered at Canyon, El Modena and Villa Park, and students at Orange High School have the opportunity to take part in the Agriculture and AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) programs.

As we move forward in these most challenging times, it is more important than ever to keep our focus on student achievement. Our work here in OUSD is driven by the District's Strategic Plan's six goal areas: 1) Student Achievement; 2) Student Engagement; 3) Safe, Welcoming Schools; 4) Parent and Community Partnerships; 5) Communication; and 6) Effective Use of Resources.

While these are challenging budget times, we have much to be proud of here in Orange Unified. The students and employees of OUSD greatly appreciate the support from our families, business, and community members.

## Orange Unified School District Board of Education



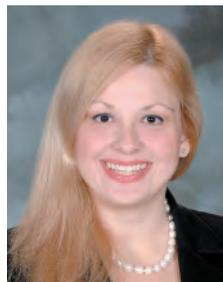
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