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News and Information from Superintendent Dr. Gregory Franklin for employees of the Tustin Unified School District

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Superintendent's Message: Is College a Good Investment?

There has been a great deal of media attention on the soaring cost of college tuition, the increase in student debt and defaults on student loans, and the lack of jobs for recent college graduates. This media coverage begs the question, "Is college a good financial investment?" The short answer is YES!

On average, four-year degree completers will earn \$1 million more in their lifetime than high school diploma earners. In addition, four-year degree completers are:

- 47% more likely to have health insurance through their employer.
- 72% more likely to have retirement benefits through their employer.
- 21% more likely to be married.
- 44% more likely to report they are in very good to excellent health.

There are many factors for students and their families to consider when planning their post-secondary options (such as a two-year versus four-year program, public, private, or for-profit schools, and majors), but the data is clear. College completers (two-year or four-year) are far more successful than people who only have a high school diploma or some college without a degree.

That is why Tustin Unified will continue to strive to provide all students with a rigorous K-12 experience. Upon leaving TUSD, students should have as many post-secondary options open to them as possible, and then they can pick the path that best suits their interests, goals and desires. Thank you for your role in ensuring that TUSD students thrive now, and in their future!

Go TUSD!

Gregory A. Franklin, Ed.D.



W.R. Nelson Elementary School fourth-grade teacher Carrie Murillo (top photo) and Tustin High School AVID teacher Joanna Vandal are TUSD's Teachers of the Year and will represent the District at the Orange County Teachers of the Year Program.
Photos courtesy of John Garrett

TUSD Announces 2018 Teachers of the Year

W.R. Nelson Elementary School fourth-grade teacher Carrie Murillo and Tustin High School AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) teacher Joanna Vandal have been selected as the 2018 Teachers of the Year by the Tustin Unified School District. They will represent the District in the 2018-19 Orange County Teachers of the Year program.

The Orange County Department of Education will interview the selected candidates and announce winners in May. The county finalists will then go on to the California and National Teacher of the Year programs. Tustin Unified's annual awards program recognizes outstanding teachers who have displayed extraordinary teaching, creativity and excellence at their school and community.

Murillo and Vandal were chosen from a field of 28 candidates. Additionally, Murillo was named Elementary (grades K-5) Teacher of the Year and Vandal was selected as Secondary (grades 6-12) Teacher of the Year.

Murillo has taught in public education for 14 years – four in Tustin Unified. Besides teaching fourth grade at Nelson, she is Student Council coordinator, Read Across America coordinator, grade-level lead teacher, Master Teacher, and TUSD Summer Institute Professional Development facilitator for teachers. Murillo readily takes on additional projects and always takes them to the next level. For this year's Read Across America Day, she reached out to the Tustin High School Drama Department and asked the drama students to perform skits based on Dr. Seuss stories for Nelson students.

Each spring, Murillo teaches her students the art of square dancing, including the Buffalo Gals, The Virginia Reel and Square Dance Fair. Additionally, her former students return to help teach the dance steps to the current students.

Murillo and her students are involved in many community service projects. They participate in an African Pen Pal Project writing letters to orphaned and abandoned children at the Treasures of Africa Children's Home in Tanzania, East Africa. The class also raises funds for Canine Companions for Independence, which provides therapy dogs free of charge for adults, children and veterans with disabilities.

"I want my students to learn that from a young age they can make a positive impact not only in our city, but also across the globe," Murillo said.

This year Murillo empowered Nelson's student leadership team to launch a schoolwide Kindness Campaign. Student leaders created a kindness banner "Hall of Fame" where Nelson students posted random acts of kindness and used Flipgrid to upload videos detailing acts of kindness at home or at school. Teachers award students who demonstrate kindness with "#Be Kind" T-Shirts and hats.

"Being a teacher is part of who I am," Murillo said. "Instilling a sense of confidence and love of learning is what I treasure. It is igniting that spark within each child so that they can grow and reach their full potential." Joanna Vandal has taught in public education for 24 years – all at Tustin High School. Over the years, she has taught AVID, English, Leadership, cheer/athletics, English Language Development, and science at the school.

As a daughter of two teachers who met while teaching at Columbus Tustin Middle School in the 1960s, Vandal has teaching in her DNA. She is an innovative AVID teacher, National Honor Society advisor, Master Teacher and a member of the Tustin High Leadership Team, TUSD Tech Task Force, and TUSD Summer Institute Professional Development Staff. Vandal's contribution this year at Tustin High was particularly significant as she organized and facilitated a high-stakes accreditation visit from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

Vandal embodies the school's saying, "Once a Tiller, always a Tiller." She is a Tustin High alumna who introduced the AVID program to Tustin High in 1997, with the goal of increasing the number of students who enroll in four-year universities. Under her leadership, the program has not only grown in size – 25 percent of all Tustin High students are in AVID – it has become one of the top programs in the United States as a National Demonstration School.

As a result of her dedication to AVID and her students, Vandal received the 2014 AVID Advocacy Award from the AVID Center. This award is given to teachers who "typify AVID's spirit and have become leaders for college readiness for all cultures on their campus." Vandal also helped develop a College and Career Readiness curriculum that is delivered to all students throughout the school year to ensure they have the information they need to attend college after graduation.

Outside of the classroom, Vandal and her students volunteer at the Tustin Public Schools Foundation's annual Dinosaur Dash, Big Brothers/Big Sisters events, and Tustin Host Lions Club Free Vision Screening Clinic. She also has been involved in the Girl Scouts organization and Tustin AYSO (American Youth Soccer Organization) with her daughters.

“As a teacher, I want to inspire students, make a positive difference in their lives and open up the world of possibilities for them,” Vandal said. “I treasure each student and the opportunity to help them become intelligent, compassionate and independent adults I know they are destined to be.”

The other 2018 School Site Teachers of the Year include:

Elementary School: Tara McHugh, third-grade teacher at Arroyo School; Jenny Onstott, special day class teacher at Barbara Benson School; Tracy Long-Brillhart, specialized academic instructor at Benjamin Beswick School; Jennifer Sandland, fourth/fifth-grade teacher at Helen Estock School; Kendal Dudley, second-grade teacher at Guin Foss School; Robyn Barnum, specialized academic instructor at Robert Heideman School; Felisa Gibbs, second-grade teacher at Heritage School; Kristin Bailey, fourth-grade teacher at Hicks Canyon School; Megan Donovan, fifth-grade teacher at Ladera School; Kalleen Yeaw, third-grade teacher at Loma Vista School; Anita Beres, first-grade teacher at Myford School; Tiffany McMillan, fifth-grade teacher at Peters Canyon School; Debbie Ludes, first-grade teacher at Red Hill School; Nancy Stretz, kindergarten teacher at Jeane Thorman School; Kristi Taylor, third/fourth-grade teacher at Tustin Memorial Academy; Kristin Huff, third-grade teacher at Tustin Ranch School; and Iris Martin, second-grade teacher at Marjorie Veeh School.

Middle School: Barbara Stachelski, special day class teacher at Columbus Tustin School; Brittany Bruley, seventh-grade core and drama teacher at Currie School; Grace Bibona, specialized academic instructor at Hewes School; Kristin Paulson, eighth-grade honors core teacher at Orchard Hills School; David Bowers, seventh-grade science and honors core teacher at Pioneer School; and Gail Foley, algebra, geometry and math teacher at C.E. Utt School.

High School: Tracy Scott, AP environmental, Earth and physical sciences teacher at Beckman; David Waibel, honors world history and U.S. history teacher, and activities director at Foothill; and Judith Watts, English and music appreciation teacher at Hillview.

The two winners and all the District’s nominees will be honored at the 24th annual Teachers of the Year Dinner at 5 p.m. on Friday, May 18, at the Irvine Marriott Hotel. The event is co-sponsored by the Tustin Public Schools Foundation and Tustin Unified School District.



Superintendent Dr. Gregory Franklin, TUSD Board President Tammie Bullard, and Luis Reyes, representative for Congresswoman Mimi Walters, congratulate Tustin Ranch Elementary School Principal Tracy Barquer, TUSD Chief Personnel Officer Dr. Chuck Lewis, and Director of Elementary Education Maggie Villegas for being selected as the 2018 Orange County Administrators of the Year at a recent school board meeting.

Photo courtesy of John Garrett

Three TUSD Administrators Chosen as O.C. Administrators of the Year

TUSD Chief Personnel Officer Dr. Chuck Lewis, Director of Elementary Education Maggie Villegas, and Tustin Ranch Elementary School Principal Tracy Barquer have been named 2018 Orange County Administrators of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), Region 17.

ACSA annually recognizes outstanding administrators for their leadership skills, professionalism, creativity, innovation and commitment to a quality education. Region 17 represents 28 school districts in Orange County.

Barquer was named Elementary Principal of the Year. In addition, she was selected as a state finalist for ACSA's Administrator of the Year awards. Only 25 individuals were chosen for state recognition throughout California, representing candidates from all 19 ACSA regions.

Barquer has worked in public education for 37 years. She joined the District in 2009 as principal of Jeane Thorman Elementary School and has served as principal of Tustin Ranch School for the past five years. Under her leadership, Tustin Ranch School was selected as a California Distinguished School in 2014 and California Gold Ribbon School in 2016 by the California Department of Education. Additionally, Rocky's Creativity Den, a student-designed technology center, received Project Tomorrow's 2016 Innovation in Education Award in science, math and technology. Barquer has built a positive school culture that celebrates diversity, encompasses 21st century learning and prepares students to be problem-solvers, inventors, and pioneers of tomorrow.

Lewis was selected as Personnel/Human Resources Administrator of the Year. He has worked in public education for 28 years – five years in TUSD. As Chief Personnel Officer, Lewis maintains high standards for hiring of certificated and classified staff, is committed to developing skills of employees in order to meet the needs of students, and uses the Interest-Based (IB) Approach for negotiations and decision making with the employee associations. Lewis also plans and facilitates an employee Leadership Academy each year and fosters a climate of employee wellness through annual health fairs, free flu shots, weight loss contests, and a commitment to quality health care for employees.

Villegas is the recipient of the prestigious Tracy Gaffey Award for mentoring other administrators, dedication to the profession, and appreciation of the work and importance of educational leadership. Villegas has worked in public education for 25 years – 22 years in TUSD. She taught at W.R. Nelson Elementary School and served as principal of Arroyo Elementary School – a National Blue Ribbon School and California Distinguished School – and Barbara Benson Elementary School – a state Distinguished School. In 2008, she was selected as Orange County Elementary Principal of the Year by ACSA.

As a school leader, Villegas has demonstrated a commitment to high achievement for all students. For the last three years as Director of Elementary Education, Villegas has mentored teachers and principals, and developed the District's "bench" of principal candidates through her work with instructional coaches and coordinators. Her creativity, collaboration, and caring approach has contributed to cultivating strong leaders throughout the school district.

All three administrators will be honored at the 45th annual ACSA "Administrators of the Year and Friends of Education Awards" Dinner at 5:30 p.m. Monday, May 7, at the Irvine Marriott Hotel.



Estock school secretary and Orange County Classified Employee of the Year Patty Ellis was given flowers and balloons during the surprise announcement at the school.

Photo courtesy of John Garrett

Patty Ellis Selected as Orange County Classified Employee of the Year

Helen Estock Elementary school secretary Patty Ellis has been named Orange County 2018 Classified School Employee of the Year. She is one of six finalists for the O.C. Classified School Employee of the Year program and will be recognized at the Orange County Board of Education meeting on Wednesday, April 11. She is the first-ever in Tustin Unified School District history to be named a county classified employee of the year.

Ellis was nominated in the "Office and Technical" category. She will now move on to the California Classified School Employee of the Year program

Tustin Unified nominated Ellis for the 2018 Orange County Classified School Employee of the Year program. She was selected as TUSD's 2017 Classified School Employee of the Year last spring and represented the District in the Orange County Department of Education program. The goal of the program is to recognize the professional efforts of exemplary classified school district employees.

Ellis has worked in the District for 17 years. She has gone "above and beyond" for the students and staff at Estock School. She takes great pride in her work, makes sure everyone is welcome when they come through the front office door, and is always available to support the staff and help the students.

Last fall, Ellis spent many hours at night and weekends to ensure a smooth transition for Lambert students and families when they merged with Estock School. She made it so effortless that most of the staff and school community had no idea of her time commitment and hard work.

"Patty makes every day special at Estock School," Principal Wendy Hudson said. "She is exceptional at her job; handles every challenge with grace and a smile; is loved by the students, staff and parents, and is truly one-of-a-kind and so deserving of this honor."



Foothill school counselor Julie McGinis, left, and Beckman school counselor Luz Arellano display their certificates of recognition at the Orange County Board of Education meeting.
Photo courtesy of Scott York, OCDE

High School Counselors Luz Arellano and Julie McGinis Honored as Orange County Counselors of the Year

Beckman High School counselor Luz Arellano and Foothill High School counselor Julie McGinis are among nine local school counselors who were honored through a new awards program established by the Orange County Department of Education in partnership with the College Board and OC Pathways.

OCDE's Counselor Recognition Program was launched this year to highlight the county's top counselors and their contributions to student success. Awards were handed out in three separate categories, each with their own unique criteria — K-8 Counselor, OC Pathways Counselor and College Board Counselor. This year's winners were announced during National School Counseling Week and introduced at the Orange County Board of Education meeting on February 14.

Arellano received the College Board Counselor Award. The College Board is a national nonprofit organization that connects students to college success. McGinis received the OC Pathways Counselor Award. The OC Pathways initiative connects educators and industry leaders to prepare students for advance college and high-demand careers.

"Counselors play a critical role in the success of our students, assisting with everything from academic scheduling and college applications to mental health," said Orange County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Al Mijares. "Through the Counselor Recognition Program, we aim to spotlight those who are working tirelessly to advance college and career readiness while promoting equity and opportunity for all."

Arellano has worked in education for eight years – the past seven years as a counselor at Beckman. She started as a community liaison and then became a counselor at the school. McGinis has served as a school counselor for 26 years. She joined Foothill in 2004 as a counselor and has remained there since.

In addition to being honored at the Orange County Board of Education meeting, Arellano, McGinis and seven other recipients will be celebrated in front of their colleagues at the upcoming Orange County Counselor Symposium in fall 2018. Arellano, along with two other College Board Counselor Award winners, will attend the 2018 American School Counselor Association Conference.



Connect Coach Kerri Braun is recognized by Superintendent Dr. Gregory Franklin and TUSD Board Vice President James Laird for achieving National Board Certification.

Photo courtesy of John Garrett

Kerri Braun Named National Board Certified Teacher

Kerri Braun, Connect Coach at Jeane Thorman Elementary School, has achieved National Board Certification – the highest professional credential in the field of teaching.

National Board Certification, a voluntary process, is achieved through a rigorous performance-based assessment that takes one to three years to complete and measures what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. Through the assessment process, teachers document their subject-matter knowledge, provide evidence that they know how to teach their subjects to students most effectively, and demonstrate their ability to manage and measure student learning.

Braun received her certificate in the area of Literacy: Reading-Language Arts for Early Childhood/Middle Childhood. To achieve her certification, Braun committed more than 150 hours of rigorous study, self-evaluation and student analysis. She completed a portfolio documenting her classroom techniques and teaching materials, participated in assessment exercises and passed an examination. The certification is valid for 10 years.

Braun is in her third year as a Connect Coach for TUSD. Prior to coming to Tustin Unified, she was a teacher on special assignment for a school district in the state of Washington, taught kindergarten for the Alameda Unified School District and was a first- and second-grade teacher for the Department of Defense Education Activity at West Point Elementary School in New York and overseas in Heidelberg and Giessen, Germany. Braun is currently enrolled in the doctoral program at USC.

The process to become a Nationally Board Certified Teacher was challenging and inspiring at the same time for Braun. The process has transformed her instruction and the work she does with students. It required Braun to become more reflective in her practices and examine her work against rigorous standards for teaching.



Every Student Succeeding recipients by grade and school: top row, from left: Jacqueline Guerrero Lopez, fifth grade, Thorman; Sherlyn Vazquez, first grade, Loma Vista; Audrey Damikolas, second grade, Guin Foss; Leilani Yost, second grade, Beswick; Macey DiRoberto, second grade, Arroyo; Max Wilson, fifth grade, Nelson; Autumn Metcalfe, first grade, Tustin Memorial Academy; Miguel Mendoza, fifth grade, Veeh; Miguel Mendoza, fifth grade, Veeh; Sabrina Yost, fifth grade, Beswick; Jonathan Lopez, third grade, Heideman; Joshua Zarate, fourth grade, Estock; Lillian Shortes, third grade, Red Hill; Jonathan Robert "JR" Hall, fifth grade, Peters Canyon; and bottom row, Audrey Kwok, fourth grade, Hicks Canyon; Felix Molina, seventh grade, Currie; Alben Jimenez, eighth grade, Utt; Larkin Davis, 11th grade, Tustin Connect; Lorena Cruz, 12th grade, Foothill; Ashley Capistrano, 12th grade, Hillview; Maya Puterbaugh, 12th grade, Beckman; Kaylene Mendez, 12th Grade, Tustin; Arianah Garcia, fifth grade, Heritage; Archer Andrade, fourth grade, Tustin Ranch; William Warren, fifth grade, Ladera; Cassandra Esquivel, eighth grade, Hewes; and Jonathan Martinez, eighth grade, Columbus Tustin.

Photo courtesy of Peter Proud, South Coast Photographic

T SMA Hosts Every Student Succeeding Breakfast

The Tustin School Management Association (T SMA) held its fifth annual Every Student Succeeding Breakfast on February 21 at Pioneer Middle School. The event is inspired by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Every Student Succeeding Award program that recognizes students who achieve success in the face of adversity.

T SMA recognized 28 students – one student from each elementary, middle and high school in the Tustin Unified School District – for their outstanding achievements while overcoming challenges that are social, emotional, physical, or financial. The challenges may be large or small, anywhere from an adverse physical disability to unfortunate living conditions.

“The breakfast was a very rewarding experience for TUSD students, staff and parents,” said T SMA President and Pioneer School Assistant Principal Troy Fresch.





Rotary Club 2018 Good Idea Awards winners pose for a photo at the organization’s luncheon. They are, seated, from left, Jennifer Quinn, Cathy Lien, Debra Bessen, Gia Meade, Kathi Denny, Szarka Davenport, and Aileen Townsend; and standing in the back row, Anastasia Macy, Brooke Carreras, Meghan Myhra, Jeannette Sweet, Jonathan Parker, Kerri Braun, Felisa Gibbs, Brandee Ramirez, Gina Dearborn, and Kim Gullo.

TUSD Educators Win Rotary Club Good Idea Awards

The Tustin-Santa Ana Rotary Club has announced the winners of its 2018 Good Idea Awards. Approximately 17 educators in the Tustin Unified School District were honored at the Rotary Club’s annual awards luncheon. Their projects were chosen among many proposals submitted by teachers and staff in the school district.

The club awarded more than \$4,000 in grants to individuals for the development of quality educational programs in the classroom or school. Either a new concept or a supplement to an ongoing project was eligible for consideration. The winners will use the money to purchase materials, supplies or equipment. Individual awards varied in amount according to requirements of the proposed projects.

The purpose of the program is to encourage classroom teachers’ ideas and methodology, to enhance the instructional program offered to students in the District, and to recognize the more exemplary efforts of the “eager beavers” in the TUSD school system.

The winners and their projects are as follows:

- Debra Bessen and Cathy Lien, second-grade teachers at Robert Heideman Elementary School, “Can You Hear This?”
- Kerri Braun, TUSD Connect Coach at Jeane Thorman Elementary School, “Lego Mania – Unplugged Coding.”
- Brooke Carreras, principal of Peters Canyon Elementary Middle School, “Crazy for Coding!”
- Szarka Davenport, special day class teacher at A.G. Currie Middle School, “But I’m not finished with my work!”

- Gina Dearborn, AVID and sixth-grade core teacher at Pioneer Middle School, “Collaboration – Building Skills for Success.”
 - Kathi Denny, TUSD Connect Coach at Loma Vista Elementary School, “Maker Mania Cart.”
 - Felisa Gibbs, second/third-grade teacher at Heritage Elementary School, “K’nex for STEAM Education.”
 - Kim Gullo, sixth-grade honors core teacher at Orchard Hills School, “NaNoWriMo: The Ultimate Writers’ Challenge.”
 - Anastasia Macy, fifth-grade teacher at Guin Foss Elementary School, “Inspiring Writers, One Read at a Time.”
 - Gia Meade, TUSD Connect Coach at Columbus Tustin Middle School, “Spark! Lab for Innovation and Invention.”
 - Meghan Myhra, second/third-grade teacher at Marjorie Veeh Elementary School, “Inno-Veeh-tion Studio.”
 - Jonathan Parker, fourth-grade teacher at Robert Heideman Elementary School, “Digital Storytelling.”
 - Jennifer Quinn, fourth-grade teacher at Tustin Ranch Elementary School, “Mighty Mindful Scholars.”
 - Brandee Ramirez, TUSD Connect Coach at Hicks Canyon Elementary School and Tustin Memorial Academy, “Alexa...Who’s Your Best Friend?”
 - Jeannette Sweet, first-grade teacher at Hicks Canyon Elementary School, “Passport to Global Awareness.”
 - Aileen Townsend, Makerspace Lab paraeducator at Arroyo Elementary School, “Cooking Up Math Skills with Osmo Pizza Company.”
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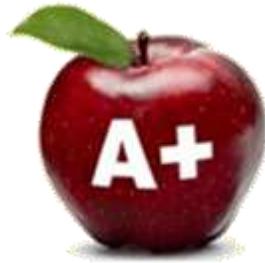


Technology: Big Technology Transitions Ahead

With summer on the horizon, the Tustin Unified School District Information Technology (IT) Department is already planning for a huge transition. In the coming weeks, the first-ever Measure S student device change will take place. Therefore, IT needs to collect and inventory over 11,000 K-8 student iPads, purchase new iPads, image each device to support our TUSD Connect instructional initiative, deploy the new devices to school sites, and then issue each one to students. It is a daunting process to execute,

especially in a short amount of time. With that said, the TUSD IT team is confident that the past five years of learning from device collection and distribution processes will lead to an efficient transition between the initial Measure S devices and the new ones.

Tustin Unified is able to provide its students with the best instructional technology available thanks to the generosity of the tax payers who supported Measure S. TUSD high schools will also begin a pilot process in the fall of 2018 to determine which student device they will transition to for the 2019-20 school year. Once a device is selected for use in grades 9 through 12, IT will face another summer involving device transitions. While this sounds like a lot of work to get devices into student hands, the reward of watching the amazing things students and teachers do with them each day in class is well worth it. We are TUSD, and we will get things done!



Educational Services: CDE Releases California School Dashboard Reports

The California Department of Education (CDE) released the new California School Dashboard reports through DataQuest early this year. The reports identify how districts and schools are performing on a variety of indicators from California's school accountability system. Created as part of the Local Control Funding law passed in 2013, the Dashboard provides a more complete understanding of student achievement through multiple measures with a focus on equity and local decision-making.

The Dashboard highlights six state measurements including, student academic achievement in English language arts and mathematics, English learner progress, chronic absenteeism, graduation rate, suspension rate, and college and career readiness. Additionally, four local indicators are included in the report. Tustin Unified School District selected measurement areas include: Basics (Teachers, Instructional Materials, and Facilities), Implementation of Academic Standards, Parent Engagement, and Local Climate Survey.

Each Dashboard area is measured by a colored pie chart, ranging from blue indicating high performance (5) to red indicating low performance (1). Each of the six state indicators are further broken down into subgroup reports highlighting achievement of each subgroup. Tustin Unified exhibits high marks in student academic achievement, graduation rate, and English learner progress. College and career readiness and absenteeism performance indicators will be available during the 2018-19 school year once data is reported for a second year.

The Dashboard is available at <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>.

Kindergarten Readiness Program Now Accepting Applications

The Tustin Unified School District's Kindergarten Readiness Program is now accepting applications for its 5-Star half-day preschool program. The Kindergarten Readiness classes located on the campuses of Beswick, Estock, Heideman, Heritage, Nelson, Thorman, and Veeh elementary schools are the only free preschools in the Tustin area that are run and operated by TUSD.

Children who turn four years old by September 1 of the current school year and live within the District boundaries have priority for enrollment. Children turning four years old between September 2 and March

30 can enroll after all qualified four-year-olds have been enrolled. In order for a child to attend preschool, families must qualify based on family size and income. Classes for students are free for families who meet the state's income guidelines. TUSD does not offer a fee-based preschool program.

The mission of the Kindergarten Readiness Program is to provide developmentally appropriate activities to enhance each child's intellectual, language, social-emotional, academic and physical development, and to prepare children to enter kindergarten with the skills needed to be successful. The Kindergarten Readiness classes strive to provide each child with a program that is developmentally, linguistically and culturally appropriate, while giving them the academic skills they need to be successful in kindergarten.

The Kindergarten Readiness Program operates 10 months a year and generally follows the TUSD calendar. Classes are conducted five days a week, Monday through Friday. Sessions are held from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 12:15 to 3:15 p.m.

Enrollment packets are available at the Kindergarten Readiness office at Veeh School, 1701 San Juan Street. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The preschool sessions for 2018-19 will begin Thursday, August 16, and continue through May 29, 2019. For more information, call (714) 730-7592.



Benson students Arii Torres, Kaiden Kordorwu, Phillip Daniel Florez, and Luc Bouscary receive certificates of recognition from Superintendent Dr. Gregory Franklin and TUSD Board President Tammie Bullard.

Photo courtesy of John Garrett

Nutrition Services: Wellness Video Contest Winners Announced

The Tustin Unified School District Wellness Committee held its fifth annual Wellness in Action Video Contest. Students were challenged to create a video that highlights either nutrition education, school meals or physical education/activity. The winners received a "Front of the Line Pass" for school meals and were recognized at a TUSD Board of Education meeting.

The video contest winners in the elementary (grades K-5) and secondary (grades 6-12) categories are as follows: Kaiden Kordorwu, Luc Bouscary, Arii Torres, and Phillip Daniel Florez – fourth grade, Barbara Benson Elementary School; and Zoe Ahrens, seventh grade, C.E. Utt Middle School. An award was also given for Most Creative: Natalie Salvatierra, eighth grade, Hewes Middle School. The winning videos can be seen at <http://tustin.healtheliving.net/>

Tustin Unified has had an active Wellness Committee since 2005. Research has shown that there is a strong link between student health and learning. Increased physical activity and healthy eating habits help students stay focused in school and can reduce and prevent overweight and obesity. The committee sponsors the video contest to promote student wellness.



Solar shade structures are being built at many TUSD schools, including Orchard Hills School (above).

Maintenance and Operations: Solar Structures and Summer Projects Update

Construction is nearing completion on the new two-story classroom building at Robert Heideman Elementary School and the building will open for use next school year. Staff is also gearing up for additional work on the Heideman campus this summer including the replacement of various HVAC (heating/ventilation/air conditioning) units, carpet replacement, and a front entry aesthetic improvement project.

Solar work across the District is progressing well with new solar carports and/or shade structures completed at nine schools: Hicks Canyon, Myford, Red Hill, Thorman, C.T., Currie, Hewes, Orchard Hills, and Utt. Six other sites – Heritage and Ladera elementary schools; Pioneer Middle School; and Beckman, Foothill and Tustin high schools – are scheduled for completion by the end of this summer. Moreover, staff is working on securing the necessary state agency approvals to move forward with the next phase of facilities projects.

Planning and design work is currently underway on the following improvements: Tustin Connect relocation, Orchard Hills School's Child Development Center, Red Hill Elementary School shade structure, Utt Middle School science lab modernization, Beckman High School Career Tech addition, Columbus Tustin Middle School front entry enhancement, and the proposed new Legacy Magnet School (submitted to State Architect).

Additionally, the District will work on several maintenance projects at various schools under its Deferred Maintenance Program this summer. The list of projects includes:

- Carpet replacement at Arroyo, Beswick, Heideman, and Hicks Canyon elementary schools
- Perimeter fencing at Arroyo, Benson, Nelson, Thorman, and Tustin Memorial Academy elementary schools; Currie Middle School; and Hillview High School

- Exterior painting at Hillview High School
 - Playground replacement at Ladera, Myford, Nelson, Peters Canyon, and Tustin Ranch elementary schools
 - Slurry and striping at Heritage, Hicks Canyon, Ladera, and Myford elementary schools; Orchard Hills School; and Beckman, Foothill, Hillview, and Tustin high schools
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Students at Tustin Summer Academy can choose from a variety of fun and challenging courses, including Creative Cooking, as illustrated by this crew of beginning bakers. The Academy is gearing up for another season full of innovative learning, such as STEAM, technology, and some new and exciting classes.

Photo courtesy of John Garrett

Tustin Public Schools Foundation: Classroom and Schoolwide Grant Program

The Tustin Public Schools Foundation has awarded grants to each TUSD school through the Classroom and Schoolwide Grant Program. Schoolwide grants were awarded for library refurbishment, teacher collaboration lab, Outdoor Education Science Camp, robotics kits, STEAM labs and makerspace labs, music equipment, and more. Grants will also help fund iPads and chargers, dual-immersion books, and even a STREAM lab (STEAM plus reading). In addition, many TUSD teachers submitted applications for TPSF's Innovative Grant Program, which rewards creative, forward-thinking ideas. Congratulations to all!

TPSF Gets Into the Swing with Upcoming Events



The Foundation's fifth annual Golf Classic will take place on Thursday, April 19, at the Tustin Ranch Golf Club. TPSF is planning a fun day on the beautiful golf course, an exciting auction and a delicious dinner. The event raised more than \$125,000 in 2017, which allowed TPSF to provide dozens of scholarships to the Tustin Summer Academy, fund innovative grants for teachers, and fortify TUSD's robotics program. The 2018 goal is \$140,000. Friends, neighbors, TUSD staff, and the local business community are invited to join in support of Tustin Unified schools and students. For more details, visit www.tpsf.net/golf.

The 24th annual Teacher of the Year Dinner will take place on Friday, May 18, at the Irvine Marriott. This exciting event honors teachers nominated by each of Tustin Unified's schools. It's a night of celebration and inspiration as the audience hears the accomplishments of those who help TUSD students reach their potential. More information can be found at www.tpsf.net/toy.

Summer Academy Registration is Now Open!

The Tustin Public Schools Foundation is offering a one-of-a-kind, hands-on summer experience that will stretch your student's imagination, increase confidence, and build new skills. Registration is now open for the Academy, which will run June 18 through July 12. Summer Academy courses are taught in two- and four-week sessions Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The Academy offers enriching courses designed to expand knowledge and nurture creativity and curiosity, all without homework, tests, or grades. Favorite courses are returning as well as some exciting new learning opportunities. Visit www.tpsf.net/summeracademy for more information and registration.

Follow Superintendent Franklin and TUSD on Twitter!

During the year, get the latest news and information! You can always follow Superintendent Dr. Gregory Franklin and the Tustin Unified School District on Twitter: @SuptFranklin and @TUSDschools. "Like" us on Facebook: TUSDschools. Stay in touch with us!



TUSD Calendar of Events

- April 9 ~ TUSD Board of Education Meeting, District Office, 6 p.m.
- April 14 ~ Tustin Host Lions Club's Free Vision Screening and Free Recycled Eyeglasses Clinic, Columbus Tustin Middle School Activity Center, 8 a.m.- 2 p.m.
- April 17 ~ Principal for a Day – Business and community leaders participate at all schools.
- April 17 ~ Coordinating Council Special Recognition Awards Ceremony, Columbus Tustin Middle School Multipurpose Room, 6 p.m.
- April 19 ~ TPSF Golf Classic and Dinner/Auction, Tustin Ranch Golf Club
- April 23 ~ TUSD Board of Education Meeting/Study Session, District Office, 3:30 p.m.
- April 25 ~ National Secretaries Day
- May 7 ~ ACSA Administrators of the Year Awards Dinner, Irvine Marriott, 6 p.m.
- May 18 ~ TPSF/TUSD Teachers of the Year Dinner, Irvine Marriott, 5:30 p.m.
- May 19 ~ Lemonade Day: Entrepreneurship for fourth-grade students – TUSD and City of Tustin Collaborative Program
- May 21 ~ Classified Employees of the Year Celebration, District Office Courtyard, Reception – 4:30 p.m., Ceremony – 5 p.m.
- May 21 ~TUSD Board of Education Meeting, District Office, 6 p.m.
- May 28 ~ Memorial Day holiday (no school)

The Franklin Almanac is produced by the TUSD Communications Office.

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