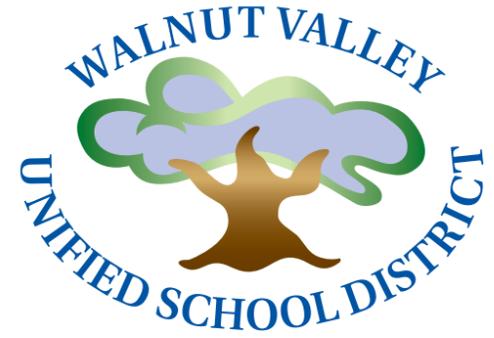


Outlook



Issue 35 FALL 2016

Message from the Superintendent



Dear Walnut Valley family,

As the Southern California weather begins to cool our evenings, it's a signal that Thanksgiving and the holidays are upon us... and, once again, we have so much to be thankful for in Walnut Valley.

In no particular order, I would like to share a few thanks (although, I really do have so many more):

- Thank you to our community for all that you do to support our students. Most recently, thank you for your overwhelming support of Measure WV. Your generous support will be seen, felt, and experienced for decades to come in the form of school facility projects that address aging buildings, updated safety and security precautions, a well-rounded educational experience, including an intensive focus on the Arts, and a true 21st Century Learning environment. Longtime Walnut Valley resident and retired educator, Ray McMullen, once shared with me that there is nothing more impactful and long-lasting that a community can do for its schools (and thus, the future of the community) than passing a School Bond. So, on behalf of our Board of Trustees, our staff, our 14,500 students, and hundreds of thousands of future students, THANK YOU for your ongoing support!
 - Thank you, on behalf of our students, for the nationally-recognized education that our students receive. As you'll read throughout this publication, our kids are being prepared for a bright, healthy, and all-encompassing future. The opportunities are seemingly endless...Project Lead the Way programs at all levels of schooling that provide a targeted focus on STEAM; peer-led programs and resources that improve a person's level of well-being such as Peer Counseling groups across the district, an emphasis on character development, and the Wellness Center, recently awarded by Facebook and Yale; and access to a World-Class faculty and staff, rightfully being recognized in all areas and at all grade levels across Walnut Valley including the recent state recognition for our Adaptive Physical Education teachers.
 - Thank you for our kids. I have the opportunity to meet on a regular basis with 25 students, ranging from grades 5 through 12, as part of the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council. It provides an opportunity for our students to have a voice and, somewhat selfishly, an opportunity for me to learn from them. They represent all of our students...insightful, intelligent, curious, funny, and caring.
- Finally, I'm thankful for my family (my wife and 3 wonderful children), the people who work in Walnut Valley and dedicate their careers to our students, our supportive community, and, again, our magnificent students. Please take time to enjoy the holiday season and give thanks!

Take care,
Dr. Robert P. Taylor



Golden Bell Award Recognizes Evergreen's Recipe for Success

Engagement and excitement are key ingredients in making Evergreen Elementary a great place to learn!



The school's innovative Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) and Project Lead the Way (PLTW) programs are developing globally competitive citizens with character, problem solving skills, and social skills. The engineering design process, scientific method, and inquiry are utilized at all levels as students learn collaboratively through hands-on activities and challenges.

Evergreen's STEAM and PLTW programs have earned the enthusiasm of those involved and the admiration of the experts in education. This month, the California School Boards Association (CSBA) selected Evergreen to receive the prestigious Golden Bell Award to honor this exceptional educational endeavor.

The Golden Bell recognizes innovative and sustainable programs that make a demonstrated difference for students.

Evergreen's Golden Bell marks the 3rd time a Walnut Valley Unified School District program has received the honor in the past decade.

Superintendent Dr. Robert Taylor announced the award during the October 19 Board of Trustees meeting.

"We couldn't be prouder of this well-deserved recognition for Evergreen. In all my years in education, I have never seen a school move so far, so quickly. I have witnessed a dramatic change in student engagement at Evergreen in the past four years with the advent of STEAM and PLTW," Dr. Taylor said.

Evergreen will receive its award at the annual CSBA Golden Bell Awards Luncheon December 3 in San Francisco.

National Merit Semifinalists Named

Thirty-two Walnut Valley USD high school seniors are among 16,000 students nationwide named 2017 National Merit Scholarship semifinalists. These students have been recognized for demonstrating exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies:



WALNUT HIGH SCHOOL

Listed in alphabetical order: Farhan Baig, Brittany Chiu, Stephanie Djajadi, Hannah Hu, Nellie Kwang, Rachel Lee, Savannah Lee, Joyce Lin, Vivian Lo, Tiffany Loo, Cynthia Lu, Ayesha Ng, Jo Ann Sun, Shiaw-Hern Wu, and Brian Zeng.

These students represent less than 1 percent of the U.S. high school seniors and are the highest-scoring entrants in each state. Last fall, about 1.6 million juniors across the country entered the prestigious contest by taking the 2015 Preliminary SAT college-readiness exam.

The semifinalists are now eligible to advance to the finalist level in February, 2017 and compete for \$33 million in scholarships offered by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, private companies, colleges, and foundations.

DIAMOND BAR HIGH SCHOOL

Listed in alphabetical order: Jason Ahn, Shannen Rikki Barrameda, Vinay Bhupathiraju, Benjamin Chen, Connie Chen, Justin Chuang, Brandon Hung, Peyrin Kao, Su Min Kim, Vickie Kuo, Aaron Lee, Adeline Lee, Monica Lin, James Lo, Leslie Sim, Sabrina Tseng, and Joanna Zhang.



DISTRICT Teacher of the Year

Every child deserves a champion according to Frank De Anda who was recognized as the 2016 District Teacher of the Year during Salute to Teachers on October 19.

Frank has taught Science and Independent Study for the past three years. His expertise in the classroom is only surpassed by his ability to connect with and counsel students.

"At Ron Hockwalt Academies, we are an alternative school with alternative approaches to education, but our goals are the same – to do whatever it takes to put 'Kids First' everyday," he said.

The school has created a culture of hope, and an environment where students feel safe, valued, and have a sense of pride in school.

Every year, when Frank's students walk across the stage at graduation, he feels a sense of accomplishment that he played a part in their success.

"The key is being consistent in my strategies and being genuinely sincere in all my interactions with my students!"



He firmly believes that every student can learn, and works hard to provide structure and support for students.

"However, I realize that no significant learning can take place without a significant relationship."

Frank is passionate about developing the three R's – respect, rapport, and significant relationships with the teens. He ensures that each day will be consistent, and treatment will be equitable for all students.

"When trust develops, the students begin to soar!" he adds.

Classroom Heroes 2015-16 Teachers of the Year

Congratulations to the following top teachers who represent Walnut Valley's outstanding educators with exemplary dedication, classroom practices, and commitment to excellence.

- Shannon Cooper**, Castle Rock Elementary
- Denise Loera**, Chaparral Middle School
- Christa Richard**, Cyrus J. Morris Elementary
- Linda Freedman**, Collegewood Elementary
- Emily Clark**, Diamond Bar High
- Katherine Royer**, Evergreen Elementary
- Kathy Hurley**, Maple Hill Elementary
- Pam Leslie**, Quail Summit Elementary
- Frank De Anda**, Ron Hockwalt Academies
- Susan Willmering**, South Pointe Middle School
- Lauri Ujita**, Suzanne Middle School
- Sara Shilz**, Vejar Elementary
- Jill Takayama**, Walnut Elementary
- Corey Wicks**, Walnut High
- Kimberley Dalton**, Westhoff Elementary



Career Exploration

ROP Gives Teens Firsthand Career Experience

Sometimes experience is the best teacher.

Regional Occupation Program (ROP) career and technical education courses can prepare students for success in college and careers. From using AutoCAD software to produce 3D graphic models in Architecture Design to learning first aid and CPR in Sports Physical Therapy, students select from a variety of hands-on courses offered right on their high school campuses.

Specialized classes help build marketable skills, work ethics, and job training needed for entry-level jobs or transitioning to post-secondary education.

WVUSD courses are offered through a partnership with the East San Gabriel Valley ROP Technical Center.

"ROP provides students the opportunity to get a head start in their future careers," says Candice Marsano, from Walnut High's Career Center. Many classes offer college credits approved by UC colleges and are articulated through Mt. San Antonio College.

Students enrolled in Early Childhood Education are gaining valuable firsthand experiences with local students. Each Wednesday, about 15 students spend about an hour with transitional kindergarten (TK) classes at Vejar Elementary.

The teens partner with the school's youngest children for mentoring, reading, and enrichment activities. The new cross-age endeavor has the support of TK teachers Carolyn Campbell and Irene Carter.

"Our students are so excited to see their high school helpers each week," Campbell said.

The high school students work hard learning about children's physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development prior to jumping into the TK environment each week, according to ROP teacher Denise Sandoval.

"These work-based learning programs expose our students to careers they might be interested in," she added.

Senior Isabella Leon plans to pursue child psychology next year in college. Classmate Kelly Choi is interested in the field of child development.

"This is a really good experience for me. It's giving me insight on what I want to do," Choi said.

"Our students are graduating empowered with experience and confidence towards their future career goals," Marsano added.

DBHS Wellness Center Receives Award

Diamond Bar High School's Wellness Center was one of ten high schools nationally awarded the 2016 InspirED Changemaker Award sponsored by Facebook and Yale's Center for Emotional Intelligence on October 7 at Facebook's Headquarters in Menlo Park, CA.

The wellness program was recognized for its pioneering efforts to provide social emotional support, educational resources, and events for students, as well as promoting a more positive school climate. The award included a \$5,000 grant and an all expense trip paid to attend the 2016 two-day InspirED Summit with nearly 200 students and staff represented nationwide.

Shown: DBHS Principal Reuben Jones, Peer Counseling Advisor Albert Lim, student wellness consultant Brandon Tang, alumna wellness consultant Nikka Pisigan, Director of Yale's Center for Emotional Intelligence Professor Marc Brackett, Wellness Center Coordinator/Peer Counseling Advisor Sandy Davis, and Deputy Superintendent Dr. Matthew Witmer.



Hometown School Leaders Appointed

Several veteran educators have been named to key positions during the past months. And they all have one thing in common - a long history with WVUSD!

Jeff Jordan, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services

Jeff Jordan has worked his entire 27-year career in Walnut Valley, most recently serving as Administrative Director of Educational Services. Prior to that, he was principal at Walnut High, his alma mater, for six years, and principal at South Pointe for two years. He also served in numerous roles at Walnut High as an instructional dean, grade level coordinator, athletic director, and teacher.

"I started in this wonderful district as a 6th grader at Vejar Elementary School 40 years ago. I have been fortunate to work with amazing people who have been kind to my family and me."

Reuben Jones, Principal, Diamond Bar High

With 20 years of educational experience, Reuben Jones returned to WVUSD as the 5th Brahma leader in the school's 34-year-history. He was first hired at DBHS as a social science teacher and basketball coach. He later served as instructional dean and grade-level coordinator at Walnut High.

Kelly Morris, Principal, Maple Hill Elementary

During the past two years, Kelly Morris has served as an Elementary Learning Specialist at Maple Hill and Castle Rock elementary schools. She also spent 15 years as a teacher at Maple Hill. Kelly attended Castle Rock, Chaparral, and is a Diamond Bar High grad.

Mary Wendland, Principal, Collegewood Elementary

Mary Wendland returned to WVUSD bringing 16 years of educational experience. She spent 13 years in WVUSD as a classroom teacher and Title 1 Coordinator at Vejar Elementary. Mary attended Walnut Valley schools and is a Walnut High graduate.

Petria Gonzales, Assistant Principal, Walnut High

Petria Gonzales, a Walnut High grad, has returned to Walnut Valley with 15 years of educational experience. The former assistant principal and Language Arts teacher, was also director of activities at Diamond Bar High for six years.

David Hong, Assistant Principal, Diamond Bar High

David Hong returned to DBHS with 25 years of experience, where he served as instructional dean, and AP Environmental Science, AP Physics, and Chemistry teacher. He also coached the school's Science Club, Science Bowl, Solar Boat, and golf teams.

Measure WV Passes!

Thank you, Community!

On November 8, 2016, the Walnut Valley USD community wholeheartedly showed their support of bond measure WV at the polls. The general obligation bond received 64.02% in YES votes, far surpassing the needed 55% for approval. This means that our students, schools, and community will ultimately benefit from nearly \$153 million in local funding.

It was an exciting campaign season, with a grassroots group of volunteers working countless hours to benefit Walnut Valley students. These dedicated supporters worked behind the scenes phoning, writing postcards, precinct walking, putting up lawn signs, and

talking with friends and neighbors. They joined forces with banners and signs during several community rallies in Diamond Bar and Walnut. On Saturday, November 6, volunteers hosted a “Get Out the Vote” flash mob dance in a local shopping center. Thank you ALL for your support!

Measure WV will:

- ✓ Provide classrooms and labs for career and technology education to help prepare students for college and careers.
- ✓ Improve student safety and school security systems
- ✓ Provide classrooms and technology to support science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) instruction
- ✓ Repair older schools, including outdated wiring, plumbing, roofs floors, lighting, and other deteriorating systems where needed



A full list of Board approved projects is posted on the District website at www.wvusd.k12.ca.us.



Castle Rock VOTES!

Castle Rock Elementary students put their International Baccalaureate (IB) skills into action by participating in a mock election with students around the nation. Through the Studies Weekly website, students were able to participate in an online voting activity called Every Kid Votes. A total of 15 participating classrooms totaling 429 students cast votes for their top candidate. Students were able to vote in the “Polling Place” and received an “I Voted!” sticker to conclude their experience in civic responsibility!

“Lights, Camera, Unify”

APE program receives state award



Each day, Adapted Physical Education (APE) teachers Kris Rote, Greg Sasaki, Deanne Rodriguez, and Mika Chan strive to make a positive impact on children’s lives. On November 4, the specialists were acknowledged for their extraordinary efforts with the 2016 Exemplary Program Award by the State Council of Adapted Physical Education.

Since its inception in 1992, the WVUSD program has grown to serve 250 students in preschool through age 22 at 16 sites. In addition to developing grade-appropriate skills, the team focuses on peer integration, social play skills, self-responsibility, lifetime skills, community recreation, and inclusion in extracurricular activities.

History and Innovation

Looking Back at WVUSD’s 46-Year History



When Walnut Valley staff members gathered for the annual kick-off program, they were joined by three legendary team members: Dr. Ken Gunn, retired Walnut High principal, Denis Paul, retired Diamond Bar High principal, and Ray McMullen, retired assistant superintendent of Human Resources.

The trio mingled with old and new friends at the event held at Calvary Chapel in Diamond Bar.

“We work in an environment that is so rich in history that we need to honor and celebrate and at the same time give students life-changing experiences through innovation,” said Superintendent Dr. Robert Taylor during his keynote message.

Paul and Gunn were introduced on stage and lauded for their combined 65+ years of dedicated service in Walnut Valley.

“This next special guest probably knows more about Walnut Valley history than anyone,” said Taylor as he welcomed McMullen to the stage.

McMullen, who was first hired as an 8th grade teacher over 60 years ago, shared a few favorite memories from the early days. He described Walnut Elementary School, originally a K-8 school built in the 1950’s, that was located at the Ron Hockwalt Academies site. A “bungalow” was the original duplex where the superintendent/principal lived along

with the custodian/bus driver. There were seven teachers, two classified employees, and 160 kids when McMullen joined the staff in 1954. When he retired after 40 years of service, the K-12 district had grown to 13,000 students and 1,100 employees.

“I began a career that has been both wonderful, exhilarating, and fulfilling,” he said.

In 1970, Walnut Valley USD began official operations as we know it today with the merger of K-12 students within the defined district boundaries in Diamond Bar and Walnut.

McMullen recalled WVUSD’s first superintendents Cyrus Morris, David Brown, and Ron Hockwalt as well as several teachers and staff members.

McMullen said the motto “Cy” Morris used for most decisions was, “If it was good for kids and staff, it had to be good for the District.” It’s an abiding philosophy that McMullen adopted, and WVUSD leaders still use today.

When he was promoted to head of Personnel, McMullen needed a District logo for a recruiting brochure. He went home and asked his wife, Nancy, a talented artist and teacher, for her assistance.

“She sat down that night and designed our Walnut tree,” he proudly shared. “Walnut was and still is more than a job for us. I’ve been very blessed to be a part of it.”



Walnut Valley Retirees, Dr. Ken Gunn, Denis Paul, and Ray McMullen.



Walnut Schoolhouse circa 1920.

News CLIPS...



Suzanne hosts robot rally

Suzanne Middle School hosted its very first FLL robotics tournament on October 14, with eight school teams and four Collegewood Elementary teams participating. "Their hard work and dedication was evident throughout the tournament," said technology teacher and robotics club advisor Vicky Silcock. Diamond Bar and Walnut High School student volunteers from Walnut Valley Robotics, Aluminati, and Fusionyx, were instrumental in running the event.

C.J. Morris compete in Science Olympiad trials

Forty C.J. Morris Elementary students competed for 15 spots on the school's Science Olympiad team during trials held September 27-29. Students showed off their creativity and skills during Egg Drop, Pasta Mobile, and Can Race events judged by several retired educators.



Shown: A crowd of students and staff cheered as Suzanne retiree Steve Cusson launched egg "bundles" from about 15-feet atop a supply shed.

Schools stomp out bullying with kindness

Walnut Valley schools focused on changing hearts and minds during October's National Bullying Prevention Month. Westhoff Elementary students moved out of their comfort zone to connect with someone new during Mix It Up at Lunch Day. Collegewood Elementary students had their footprint or "STOMP" traced on a "Kindness Starts Here" banner, filling it with positive messages, colorful art, and names to show support against bullying. Suzanne Middle School students accepted good deed "dares" including "Help someone you don't know," "Smile at 15 people," and "Help your teacher after school."

"We say YES to choosing kindness, YES to choosing empathy, and YES to becoming responsible, resourceful, respectful, and ready 21st century citizens," said counselor Erica Robledo.

DB High Ranks Number One in California

A report issued in September ranked Diamond Bar High as the #1 high school in California for college readiness, grad rates, and more.

The Start Class ranking was based on exam passing rates in math, reading and language arts over the last three years; college preparatory measures including the number of students who pass an AP exam, or take the ACT or SAT; student-teacher ratios; disciplinary actions; and graduation rates. Diamond Bar High, with an enrollment of nearly 3,000 students, received a 9.64 rating.

Sports Highlights

Diamond Bar High: Girls Golf won its 11th consecutive League Championship led by League MVP Kailee Vongsaga, Angelica Kusnowo, Crystal Wang, and Esther Lee who were named 1st team All-League. The team won the CIF-SS Central Division Championship with Kailee leading the way shooting 5-under par. Kailee & Angelica qualified to compete at CIF Individual Championships. Girls Volleyball qualified for the playoffs in Coach Katie Swetnam's first year as head coach. Girls Tennis finished 3rd in the Palomares League and qualified for the playoffs. Jaida Wilson & Angeline Chang won the League Championship in doubles.

Walnut High: After an undefeated season, Girls Golf won the 2016 CIF State title on November 15. Anabelle Chang won the CIF Individual Championship for the Northern Division, and Abigail Wiranatha, Trussy Li, and Katherine Muzi advanced to the State Tournament Qualifier. Girls Cross Country team remain undefeated and repeated as the reigning Hacienda League Champions. Chloe Arriaga, defending Division I CIF Champion, was featured in Sports Illustrated's 'Faces in the Crowd' September 26 issue. Girls Tennis Vivian Lee and Sara Santos were named Hacienda League MVP's for doubles.

Outlook

Issue 35 Fall 2016



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Dr. Robert P. Taylor
Superintendent

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
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IMPORTANT DATES:

Thanksgiving Break - Nov. 23-25
Winter Break - Dec. 19, 2016 - Jan. 2, 2017
Martin Luther King Day - Jan. 16, 2017
Presidents' Day - Feb. 20, 2017
Spring Break - Apr. 9-14, 2017

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Sometimes It Just Takes One!

Children's author and illustrator Kathryn Otoshi recently brought her message of tolerance, acceptance, and kindness to Quail Summit and Castle Rock elementary students.

She read from her number books "One" and "Zero" that focus on standing up for each other and making sure everyone counts.

"These stories touch my heart!" commented Castle Rock 5th grader Nicolas Matias after the September 9 assembly.

The picture books feature symbolic characters with layered messages that teach children they can be part of the solution.

"Sometimes it just takes one to make a difference!" the author said.

Otoshi penned "Zero" to pay tribute to a new classmate from another country that was bullied during the fourth grade.

"I didn't say anything because I was afraid," she admitted.

Now, Otoshi circles the country to empower the next generation to become "upstanders" and not bystanders.

"Inside you lives courage and kindness. Don't be afraid to tell someone in charge," she urged.



A 20-foot mural featuring handprints of all 650 students and staff members inspired by Otoshi's "Beautiful Hands" book was unveiled at Quail Summit Elementary on September 8.

For three days, artist and former parent Margot Bloom carefully brushed red, green, yellow, or blue paint on every hand before positioning as leaves on the giant tree.

"It is our hope that the mural will be a "living piece of art" that will inspire students, staff, and parents to reach out and make a difference in the lives of others," added ELS Leann Legind.

Walnut High Crowns King & Queen



Stephan Capps, 18, may only stand three-feet-tall, but lately he's been feeling like a giant. The Walnut High senior was crowned 2016 Homecoming King. He began campaigning for the crown weeks before the annual dance.

"I'd ask everyone to vote for me," he said. "I really wanted to be king!"

Senior Kayli Brown, a member of the school's Academic Design Program was announced as the school's Homecoming Queen.

About two years ago, Capps was profiled in the school's Mustang Update broadcast about disability awareness. His message remains the same: "I'm just like everybody else - who cares about size?"

"It's really nice here (at Walnut High) and everyone accepts me. In every class, I've met some really cool people," he added.

Building Stronger Communities

A delegation from the Walnut Valley USD recently traveled to Lexington, Massachusetts to meet with town, school, and Asian community organizations about cultural inclusion and citizen involvement.

Superintendent Dr. Robert Taylor, Board President Helen Hall, and parent leader and newly appointed Personnel Commissioner Cecilia Yeh led a panel discussion during a televised public forum held at the Cary Memorial Library on September 29.

The leaders also guided two days of sessions on innovative strategies that foster inclusion in WVUSD including dual immersion elementary programs, Diversity Think Tank, exchange program with China, multiple ethnic parent volunteer organizations, recruitment of Mandarin-speaking teachers, and training staff on cultural issues.

Lexington officials are looking to see what lessons they can learn from WVUSD as they experience a growth in enrollment of students of Asian ancestry.

WVUSD embraces and celebrates its diverse student population that boasts over 35 languages on the 15 Diamond Bar and Walnut campuses. The current student body demographic is 60 percent Asian and 17 percent Hispanic.

The event was sponsored by the Subcommittee on Asian Communities of the Lexington 20/20 Vision Committee. They will send an education group to visit WVUSD in the coming months.

"We are excited to offer the Lexington officials a first-hand glimpse of how we are addressing diversity in our schools," Dr. Taylor said.