



Westside Wire



Cottonwood Students Get New Classrooms

It is with great pleasure and excitement that we have completed our first phase of Cottonwood's modernization plan. Last school year, students were able to watch with excitement as their new school was being built and were able to see first-hand the engineering process. We were able to open the doors to our new permanent classrooms two weeks before the start of the school year. Faculty and staff eagerly prepared their classrooms to welcome our Cottonwood students on Back to School Night.

Our 22 new state-of-the-art classrooms feature LCD projectors, interactive whiteboards, enhanced sound systems, dimmers, new desks, which easily fit together in small groups so that our students can collaborate, more storage space and shelves, silent air conditioning and a teacher station. (continues on next page)

August

2016

Serving over 9,000 students spread across 346 square miles, Westside Union School District prides itself on being "the district of choice" with more choice-based programs than any other district in the Antelope Valley. Westside Union School District features 12 schools, providing world-class education to students from kindergarten to 8th grade. Continuing a tradition of high academic achievement, a majority of Westside Union School District schools exceed the coveted 800 score on the Academic Performance Index administered by the California Department of Education.

Cottonwood Continued..



Our second phase for Cottonwood will be the construction of our school's "core" building to support our focus as a science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) school. The new building and modernized existing facilities

will have a green screen studio, makerspace/art studio, engineering lab and specially designed flexible learning spaces to support our dramatic arts, performing arts, visual arts, music and concerts. The third and final phase of our project will be to convert Cottonwood's old office space into a large computer lab. We look forward to another great school year and seeing our Cottonwood students continue to thrive in their new classrooms!

WUSD Launches 2016-2017 Superhero Theme: Learning Gives Us Powers

This year, students and staff are digging deep to unlock our inner superpowers! We're learning that being a superhero doesn't mean you have to know how to fly, become invisible, or lift a building with your bare hands. Being a superhero means that each one of us has the power to develop the strengths, skills, and mindset that it takes to make our school and world a better place. We can turn the ordinary day into an extraordinary one by using superpowers like creativity, empathy, kindness, courage, grit, leadership and critical thinking. Follow our journey in 2016-2017 as all WUSD heroes will be demonstrating their super hero powers.

Board of Trustees

Linda Jones

Joan Sodergren

Steve DeMarzio

John Curiel

Patricia Shaw

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Westside!
Find, friend, follow
and like us to stay up
to date on the great
things going on!

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Rancho Vista Opens New Office



Due to the flash floods that occurred last year a few of our facilities had to go under construction for a makeover. Our maintenance crew worked diligently during the summer to get each campus ready for the school year.

Rancho Vista's main office was one of the facilities that had to be redone. Superintendent Rossall, Board

Trustee members John Curiel and Patricia Shaw, Principal Cathy Bennet and local dignitaries joined students, parents and staff for a ribbon cutting ceremony. The new space includes an expanded station for the school nurse, more front office space, new conference room and new bathrooms.



11th Annual Duck Race is Back

Adopt a duck for a day to support the West Antelope Valley Education Foundation. The 11th Annual Antelope Valley Duck Race presented by Kiwanis Club of Palmdale West is taking place at Dry Town on September 2nd. Our WAVE foundation needs your help to adopt as many ducks as you can to meet our goal. It only costs \$5 dollars to adopt a duck, which goes along way for our students. All proceeds will go directly to our schools. You may become the lucky winner of the grand prize of a \$1,000 dollar gift card to Sam's Club.

Adopt your ducks at www.duckrace.com/antelopevalley and look for our team!



A Message From The Superintendent

Welcome to the 16-17 school year,

Every August represents a new beginning for our students, and we are indeed pleased to have your children return to school with such enthusiasm for new learning. I am hopeful that you were able to spend some quality time with your children over the summer break, enjoying family activities that create fond memories. While students and staff were away preparation for the new school year continued. New classrooms were readied at Cottonwood School and work was completed at Rancho Vista, Esperanza, Hillview, Quartz Hill and Leona Valley Schools where the 1000 year flood last October created significant damage. Work is still continuing on the library at Rancho Vista School which was recently relocated. More classrooms were added at Sundown and Del Sur Schools, and a variety of other projects were completed around the District. Thanks to our Maintenance and Operations for all the hard work in making our school ready for our students. Your students now have new materials for English Language Arts. It has been over 12 years since our materials were replaced, and this will help with the implementation of the new California State Standards. You will recall that we acquired new materials in mathematics last year, and we anticipate new science materials in the coming years. If you find you have questions about the new curriculum, I encourage you to talk with your child's teacher.

Back to School Nights have been very well attended and the class visits have been most informative about the teacher's expectations for the year. We have a few Back to School events that remain to be held, so please check to see when your school's Back to School Night will be, and please attend the event so that you know what is in store for your child's academic program for this school year.

We have many ways in which parents can get involved at school. PTA/PTSA/PTO groups are at each of our sites, and they are always looking for more volunteers. Each school has a School Site Council where parents can be elected to serve as representatives of the parents on campus with the task of reviewing the school plans and providing parental input. Classroom volunteers are valued by our teaching staff and if you have an interest in either working in the classroom or doing other tasks, please let your child's teacher know. Fingerprints and a volunteer badge are required, but the extra support in the classroom is appreciated.

WAVE is a charitable foundation that serves the District and its members represent all of our schools. Volunteers are also needed for this organization, and you can get more information about it from the school principal. Don't forget to join us on our very active Facebook page. We try to keep it updated with the latest events and activities at our schools, so please visit the page. Also we are in the process of launching a new website for both the District and the schools. Please be patient as we work with this upgrade and visit the site often for new information.

Thanks for allowing us to serve the educational needs of your children, and we look forward to a most successful year.

Regina Rossall
Superintendent

Westside Round Up: A message from your principals

Cottonwood

The 2016-2017 school year is off to an exciting start at Cottonwood! We kicked off the year by unveiling our new classrooms at our Back-to-School Night celebration. Thanks to a generous donation from our community partner, Costco, every student in attendance received an awesome new backpack with school supplies. On the first morning of school, Superintendent Rossall, Trustee Jones, Trustee Shaw, and City Councilman Fred Thompson joined students for a joyous ribbon cutting ceremony at our new campus. Our superhero theme this year, is all about embarking on a hero's journey as we discover our learning superpowers and follow our "call to adventure" to becoming a STEAM school! Last year we launched PLTW in K-6th grades. This year, students will engage in robotics, coding, and art/digital media arts. K - 4th grades will have access to iPad or Chromebook carts and we are introducing our 1:1 Chromebook program in 5th and 6th grades this year. Team Cottonwood's superheroes are looking forward to an awesome new school year!

-Laura Duran, Principal

Esperanza

At Esperanza School, this year, we are focusing on the ideas of Exploration and Discovery. We've mapped out a great year. As we begin to implement our new curriculum in Language Arts and the Next Generation Science standards coming our way, we need to look at education with new eyes. Not only will students engage in the learning that they always have, but we will be challenging them with more opportunities to critically think and collaborate to solve problems. After all, adventures are the best way to learn. Let's explore!

-Nicole Hernandez, Principal

Hillview

We are off to a great 2016-17 school year at Hillview! Our PTSA will be working hard on its membership drive - please join! They support many events for our students. There are many opportunities for our students to be involved in the school including extracurricular clubs and sports. Speaking of being involved ... Don't forget to buy a duck! There is a great deal of excitement happening for our Friday SPIRIT DAYS! Spirit wear will be on sale soon to support the blue and green theme at Hillview. GO HAWKS!

-Jennifer Slater-Sanchez, & Rodney Lots Co-Principals

Anaverde Hills

Anaverde Vipers showed their spirit and excitement as many of our students and families attended our Welcome Back Ice Cream Social held Friday August 5th. Students were able to meet the many new teachers on our campus, our administrative team, and enjoy some refreshing ice cream curiosity of our PTSA! Our teachers were extremely busy over summer vacation dedicating their time to participate in conferences, trainings, or planning meetings to ensure that our students have access to rigorous curricular lessons and an engaging educational experience! We held our Super Hero themed Pancake Breakfast sponsored by PTSA on Saturday August 13th. Thank you to everyone that joined our event! This is going to be an extraordinary school year! Go VIPERS!!

-Dr. Kristin Kruizinga, Principal

Del Sur

Del Sur students and staff have started a "super" 2016-2017 school year. The Back to School Nights were well attended by our Middle School and Elementary students/families, these events provided a positive start of the year. Del Sur School also welcomes their new students/families, staff members; including a full-time counselor. This year students and staff will show their spirit in the following ways throughout the year: Tuesday is Super Hero Shirt Day, Wednesday is College Shirt/AVID Shirt Day and Friday is Spirit Wear Day. Middle School Volleyball try-outs begin this month and after school tutoring for grades 1-6 will begin in September.

Del Sur Super Heroes Lead the Way in 2016-2017!

Jessica Kott, Principal

Gregg Anderson Academy

Gregg Anderson Academy is excited about the many opportunities our students will have this school year. We will be implementing Project Lead The Way, a collaborative and interactive STEM program, in all of our classes from Kindergarten through grade six. This program offers students exciting STEM challenges in an environment that encourages collaboration, creativity and critical thinking. In conjunction with this, our school is working toward AVID certification. AVID, Advancement Via Individual Determination teaches students the skills they need to become responsible students so that they may achieve their academic potential. We are sure this year will be a wonderful year for all.

-Shelly Dearing & Thomas Morreale, Co-Principals

Joe Walker

Joe Walker Middle School is so excited to start the new school year. We are continuing to provide a STEALTH education for students in grades 6 - 8. This year, we are offering two new elective courses to our full complement of STEAM courses: Model United Nations and Science of Technology. In Model UN, the students will be introduced to the world of diplomacy, negotiation, and decision making in an authentic simulation of the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, or other multilateral body. In Computer Sciences, students will discover the principles of being a computer specialist by focusing on creativity and the design process as they create their own basic apps using MIT App Inventor. This year promises to be another outstanding school year at Joe Walker Middle School STEALTH Academy. Go JETS!!!

-Steve Wood, Principal

Leona Valley

Leona Valley is gearing up for a great 2016-17 school year. Class lists will be posted August 5th beginning at 3:30 pm. Our Back To School event will be on August 23rd at 5:30. Parents will start in the cafeteria after which they will go to the classrooms to hear the teachers talk about their procedures and other valuable information. Our site will be focusing on AVID strategies and Boys Town implementation this year, so I encourage parents to be alert for information regarding these wonderful programs. Welcome back!

-Cathy Bennett, Principal

Rancho Vista

Rancho Vista staff has been working hard to get ready for 2016-2017. One important accomplishment is that we have moved back into our office from the temporary site! Lots of hard work has gone into making this happen. On Back to School Night, students, parents and staff were accompanied by Superintendent Rossall, Trustee Curiel, Trustee Shaw, and City Councilman Fred Thompson as we held a ribbon cutting ceremony for our new office. Last year Rancho Vista became an AVID certified site and plans to continue this focus as well as working on our implementation of Boys Town. Keep your eyes open for information on these programs.

-Cathy Bennett Principal

Valley View

Valley View Vikings are celebrating a successful beginning of the 2016-2017 school year where we continue to Shine On. With an addition of a Vice Principal, Ms. Amy Brouwer, Counselor, Ms. Annemarie Sharma, and additional teachers, we are focusing on our standard based instructional practices, looking closely at data and assessment in order to improve student outcome. Our teachers spent much time this summer learning about our new exciting English Language Arts curriculum, developing our Elementary AVID site plan and receiving certification, and creating a Maker Space lab.

-Rebecca Davis, Principal

Quartz Hill

Over the summer, Quartz Hill Elementary held enrichment opportunities for our students. Students had the opportunity to participate in a drama program, a STEM camp, or Kindergarten Boot camp. All students that participated had a wonderful time, and got to participate in some unique and engaging projects. While our students enjoyed time off from their rigorous coursework, our staff spent time gaining new skills. We had teachers attend the annual AVID Summer Institute. Approximately one-fourth of our teachers attended a CUE Rockstar conference where teachers learned how to use technology in new and engaging ways with their students. We also had two teachers become lead trainers in Project Lead the Way.

-Andrea Paxton, Principal

Sundown

At Sundown Elementary School, we are excited for the beginning of our new school year. We are very excited about the new technology that has been installed in the classrooms as this will provide more opportunities for student engagement and learning. Our summer school sessions were well attended as many students enjoyed the project based learning themes. Teacher and staff are attending trainings for our new language arts curriculum, as well as, ways to support our positive campus culture to enhance student academic and social & emotional learning. Welcome to the 2016-17 school year Sundown Stallions!!

-Timothy Barker, Principal

Westside Academy

Westside Academy is off to another great start. We had a record number of students start with us this year as we continue to expand. We continue to strive to offer something new and special every year, and this year will be no different. Staff is working on a special science day later in the semester to bring the subject alive for students. Stay tuned to the Westside Wire as details unfold!

-Deborah Rutkowski-Hines, Principal

WUSD 2016-2017 School Year Calendar

JUNE - 2016

3-30 VACATION – NO SCHOOL
3-30 Extended Year School

JULY - 2016

1-31 VACATION – NO SCHOOL

AUGUST - 2016

1-5 VACATION - NO SCHOOL
8 *Classes Begin – Minimum Day*
8 First Quarter/First Semester Begins
8-9 Minimum Day
29 Minimum Day

SEPTEMBER – 2016

2 Non-Student Day – NO SCHOOL
5 Labor Day Holiday – NO SCHOOL

OCTOBER – 2016

10 & 11 Parent Teacher Conference –
NO SCHOOL
14 First Quarter Ends
17 Second Quarter Begins

NOVEMBER – 2016

11 Veteran's Day Holiday – NO
SCHOOL
18 Minimum Day
21 Lincoln's Day Holiday – NO
SCHOOL*
22-25 Thanksgiving Holiday – NO
SCHOOL

DECEMBER – 2016

5 Minimum Day

DECEMBER – 2016

16 Minimum Day
16 Second Quarter/First Semester Ends
19-31 WINTER VACATION – NO
SCHOOL

JANUARY - 2017

1-6 WINTER VACATION – NO
SCHOOL
9 *Classes Resume*
9 Third Quarter/Second Semester Begins
16 M. L. King Holiday – NO SCHOOL
23 Minimum Day

FEBRUARY – 2017

20 Presidents' Day Holiday – NO SCHOOL

MARCH - 2017

17 Minimum Day
17 Third Quarter Ends
20-31 SPRING VACATION – NO
SCHOOL

APRIL - 2017

3 *Classes Resume*
3 Fourth Quarter Begins

MAY - 2017

29 Memorial Day Holiday – NO SCHOOL

JUNE - 2017

6 Minimum Day
7 Fourth Quarter/Second Semester Ends
7 **Last Day of School – Minimum Day**

* Holiday observed on 11/21/16 in lieu
of 2/13/17

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Cottonwood

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Del Sur

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Esperanza

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Gregg Anderson Academy

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Hillview Middle School

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Joe Walker Middle School

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Leona Valley

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Quartz Hill

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Sundown

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Westside Academy

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