

Quarterly Newsletter *Winter*

Acton-Agua Dulce Unified School District's Official Newsletter

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Reflection

Eric Sahakian, Ed.D.- AADUSD Superintendent

Welcome to our winter edition of our newsletter showcasing the accomplishments of AADUSD during the winter season.

Please take a moment to "get in the know" of the many successes we have been a part of during these past few months thanks to our students, staff, parents, and community partners.

It is hard to believe that we are three quarters through the school year. We are now in the home stretch making that final push to the end of the school year while providing guidance to students in order for them to be successful.

AADUSD is stronger together!

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Meadowlark Highlights



At Meadowlark Elementary School, we've had a plethora of enjoyable events from January until now. We kicked off the festivities with a lively celebration of 100 days of school, where everyone got into the spirit by dressing up as centenarians.

Smokey the Bear paid us a visit to impart valuable wisdom on fire safety, while the leap year provided an extra day for special festivities.



The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) marked the occasion by hiding tiny frogs throughout the school campus, much to the delight of the students who enthusiastically embarked on a frog-finding mission.

Meanwhile, some classroom teachers organized engaging leap year activities for the kids.

Our after-school program commenced, drawing a consistent attendance of 30 eager students every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, dedicated to improving their reading and math skills.

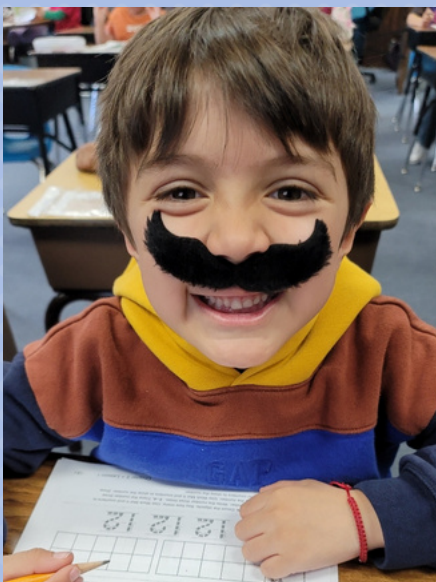


First grade dazzled us with a fabulous Aesop Fables play, which captivated the entire school and over 100 parents.

Meadowlark Highlights (continued)



We also embraced the novelty of "Barbie and Ken" National Day for the first time in Meadowlark's history. The staff and students had a great time.



During Read Across America week, our students enjoyed a spirit week filled with various activities and special guests who shared their talents and stories. The week included themed dress-up days like favorite animal print, favorite fun hat, and wacky Wednesday.

Meadowlark Highlights (continued)



The California Milk Dairy made a memorable visit to our school, introducing us to their beloved cow, "Cowlafornia," and educating us on the role of cows in providing dairy across America.

As a delightful surprise, Cowlafornia allowed us to meet her adorable baby calf.



March concluded with a visit from Lucky the leprechaun, who brought an air of mystery and excitement to the school. Students eagerly searched every nook and cranny of the campus to spot our elusive friend. Those who successfully found Lucky were rewarded by placing their discovery in the lucky box for a chance to win a prize.

High Desert Highlights



Breakfast is Served

Mrs. Acuna inspires her students to excel in the classroom and to develop skills that will take them far beyond the school campus. On Friday, December 15th, Mrs. Acuna's Room 301 Restaurant opened its doors and served pancakes to all of the staff on campus. Students learned the science about states of matter and how heat changes the physical properties of food. They also learned customer service, how to take orders and fill them, including providing a wide menu of options for the pancakes. Thank you to Mrs. Acuna for her amazing work with her students and to her class for the excellent

customer service with a smile! VFW Patriot's Pen 2023 Winners

For the Veteran's of Foreign War's Quartz Hill Post – Patriot's Pen Scholarship Competition, the requirement was to submit a 300–400 word essay on the topic, "What inspires you about America?" Congratulations to our High Desert Hawks for their great work representing themselves, our school, and our community.

1st Ailen Cabrera

2nd Alexis Van Ornum

3rd Connor Koopman

3rd Aiden Duenas – Joe Walker Middle School

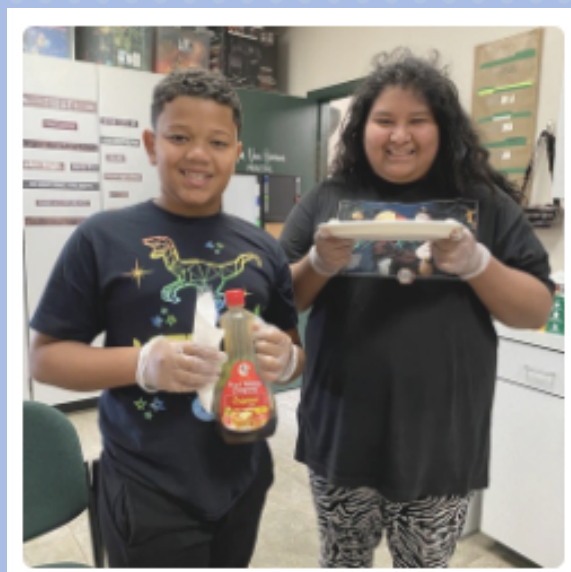
Honorable Mention Esther Rivas

Honorable Mention Valeria Gonzalez–Medina

Honorable Mention Addison Walker

Mr. Rowland and Harmonic Bronze Handbell Ensemble

This week's Hawk Highlight is for Mr. Rowland and the Harmonic Bronze Handbell Ensemble for their beautiful performance on December 16 at Universal Studios! The group included students from High Desert and Vasquez High School. The five numbers they performed captivated the audience and brought the holiday spirit to all. Their precision, professionalism, and poise made High Desert proud! Congratulations!



High Desert Highlights (continued)



Semester 1 Awards

Students were honored with awards for: Academic Scholars, Principal's Honor Scholar, Medal of Honor, Athletics, 100-Mile Club, STAR Reading and Math Growth, and Attendance. Congratulations to our High Desert Hawks for their great work representing themselves, our school, and our community.

High Desert Opens New Learning Spaces at Lunch

We are working on opening new spaces for the students to keep them engaged during break and lunch. Students have access to the Learning Lab for support with assignments, the Education Center for access to books and lunch clubs, the Quad for visiting and playing with friends, and the courts/field for game play. Our supervision staff take on each new task with enthusiasm and a positive attitude. We are so grateful for their hard work and dedication to our students that allows kids to play outside, engage in activities, and open new extended learning spaces. Great work team!



Hawks Family STEAM Night an Engaging Success

Thank you to all of the students and families that joined up for STEAM Night at the Hawk's Nest! Thank you to our staff members who supported the event: Mrs. Goodstein, Mrs. Acuna, Ms. Alford Walsh, Ms. Walker, Miss Ayers, Mrs. Blalock, Mrs. Hulbert, and Mrs. Campbell. Special thank you to Mr. Fallgatter and Mrs. Valdovinos for their help with the egg drop. We couldn't have done it without their support and bravery.





High Desert Highlights (continued)



AADUSD 2024 Spelling Bee is a Buzzing Success

We want to thank all of our students for their amazing efforts in the AADUSD Spelling Bee. Last year's winner, Riley Ragon, along with our teachers, Mrs. Goodstein and Mr. Knee served with distinction as judges for the event. We are so proud of all of the participants for their courage and poise during the Spelling Bee. Participants: Abigail Seymour, Ella Bernero, Emely Moya Escamilla, Ernesto Moya, Micah Rivas, Noah Honicky, Ben Fatool, Mia Caplinger, Olivia Bacon, Kylie Finn, Bentleigh Arndt, McKenzie Goodman, Hartlee Cochran, Emma Bailey, Bethany Keeter, Andranik Hounanian, Patty Rios, Drue Fallgatter, Max Davis, Cassidy Olson, Kamryn Phillips-Towery, Chris Burns-Haser, Lillian Martin, Jasmine Hernandez, Valerie Narcizo, Haley Guerrero, and Holden White Eagle. Heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Mr. Rowland for being our Spellmaster and Advisor for the Spelling Bee! The event was a big success for all!

Congratulations to this year's winners:

1st Place – Lillian Martin

2nd Place – Andranik Hounanian

3rd Place – Holden White Eagle



Color Run is a Bright Success!

The Color Run on February 23rd was covered in fun! Thank you to our ASB for creating this amazing event! Shout out to Mrs. Reveles for the amazing t-shirts for her whole class to ensure that all of them were ready to participate in the Color Run!



High Desert Highlights (continued)



Photography with Andrew Lewis



Sketch to Pastels with Paula Bradley



Unique Instruments with Cris Bernero

High Desert Arts Exploration Day an Engaging Success

Thank you to all of the community members who joined us for Arts Exploration Day! We want to share heartfelt gratitude to them for spending their day with our students to create an incredible Arts Exploration experience for our Hawks. It was the highlight of our week and the students are still talking about all of their engaging experiences.



Medal of Honor Speaker's Forum at Reagan Library.



On February 8th, students in Mrs. Goodstein, Mr. Cieslik, and Miss Ayers's class were able to attend the Medal of Honor Speaker's Forum to hear from Medal of Honor Recipient, Sgt. Bellavia. Our Hawks were honored to have him as our guest at our kick-off Zoom meeting this year. It was a special treat to be able to meet him in person at this event. His stories of leadership, integrity, and selfless service were impactful. "Leaders build leaders. They build trust. Leadership is inclusion." He reminded our students that "You can do anything, you just have to want to and go out and get it." "If your school is a better place after you leave it, you are a great leader." We encourage our students to take these lessons and use them to grow the leadership within them.

Vasquez High School Highlights



JANUARY

January 30th: The VHS counselors held a COC Application Workshop to assist students with registering for College of the Canyon in the VHS library.



February

February 3rd:

Mrs. Waggoner's Cooking Up Class Competition!!!



Based on our C-CAP students performance at the February 3rd's preliminary competition, VHS students Brett Dawson and Jonathan Rocha will advance as our TWO finalists in this year's C-CAP College Scholarship Competition.

VHS is thrilled to take two students this year to compete in the finals in March at Mission College. Just so you know they competed in the prelims against 89 other culinary students from 19 different high schools and were two of the 32 chosen to move on, a great accomplishment!

We won't know what they are awarded until Friday, April 19th at the awards breakfast held at the Jonathan Club in Downtown LA.... Good Luck Jonathan and Brett!!!

Vasquez High School Highlights (continued)



February 13th: Over 100 VHS Students attended the National College Fair in Pasadena to gather information from colleges across the country.

MARCH

March 25–29: VHS students are being asked to be a part of our school's California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) sponsored by the California Department of Education (CDE). This is a very important survey that will help promote better health and well-being among our youth, improve the school learning environment and combat problems such as drug abuse and violence. The students do not have to take the survey. If you do not want your child to complete the survey, you must notify your school.

Survey Content. The survey gathers information on developmental supports provided to youth and school connectedness and barriers to learning.



March 15th, LET's GO TO THE MOVIES: We are excited to announce that Vasquez High School hosted a Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) movie event at our school Friday, March 15th. As part of our PBIS program, we believe in recognizing and celebrating positive behavior, and this movie event is one of the ways we do so. Students awarded 100 points since the beginning of the school year were invited to participate in this event. All they needed to do was enter their name on the PBIS Rewards Raffle, get a permission slip completed and submit!

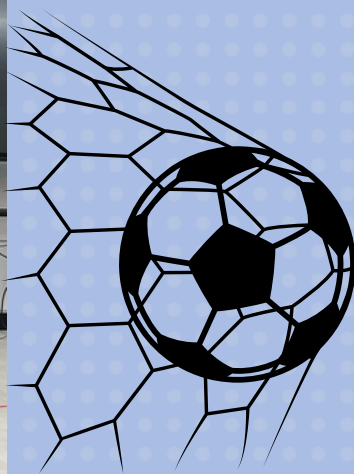
Meadowlark PTO Activities

*We ♥ our
Volunteers*



Meadowlark Elementary is always full of fun and exciting things. February 5th we celebrated our hundredth day of school! Such a great accomplishment for all students. PTO hosted a dress up day for students and staff to dress like they were 100 years old. Students really got into character, accompanied by canes, suspenders and, of course, very slow walking.

PTO also hosted a staff luncheon that really turned out beautifully. It's always nice to show our appreciation to our teachers and staff who work very hard for the students of Meadowlark.



Other fun events include our Meadowlark soccer team who played at High Desert School. Our team really represented how dedicated and athletic our Meadowlark students are. PTO was able to provide the team jerseys to represent our school colors.

Meadowlark PTO Activities (continued)



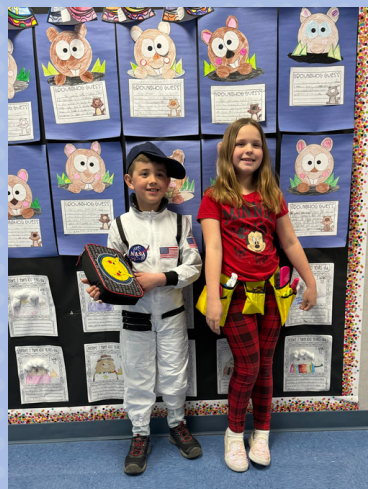
Leap year only comes around every four years, so Meadowlark had to celebrate! On February 29th PTO hid over 2,000 small plastic frogs on the playground for students to find. The winning class received a pizza party. The students enjoyed that small event so much they have asked us to do it again so we will be hosting an Easter egg hunt for them!



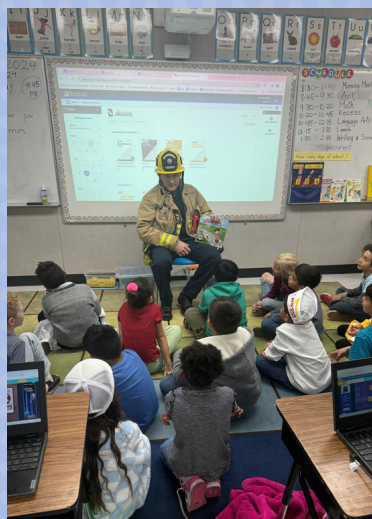
On March 6th Meadowlark families came and enjoyed the First grade Aesop fables play put on by our two wonderful, first grade teachers, Mrs. Stumpf and Mrs. Jacobsohn . The play was very well put together, and students must have really practiced because this play was absolutely flawless. PTO was able to provide stage shirts for all first graders and their teachers.

We ♥ our
Volunteers

Meadowlark PTO Activities (continued)



We kicked off Read Across America with fun and exciting dress up days for the whole week. Some days included wearing animal print and fun hats. We even had wacky Wednesday where students came mismatched and colorful. Then we concluded with wearing silly mustaches to look like the Lorax from Dr. Seuss. Friday was dress up as what you want to be when you grow up.



Friday had to be the best day for the students Because we had many special guest come read to every class. Guests included Burbank Fire Kenny Maler, CHP officer Penza, Superintendent Dr. Sahakian, School Board Clerk Brianna Taksony and School Board President Ken Pfalzgraf . We also had the Acton Royal Court and Forest Fire come and read. Students were thrilled.

Meadowlark is full of fun and educational activities every day . Stay tuned to see what the rest of the year Meadowlark PTO has planned!



High Desert Booster Activities



The HDS Booster Club has hit the ground running since returning from winter break. Booster Club needed a mission and we decided our new mission was to Light it up, the athletic fields that is. We are raising \$20,000 for portable generator lights. We have received a generous \$500 donation from a parent.

February, we showed our love to the staff. Jen Olson decorated the lounge in Valentine decor. Booster Club members came together under the leadership of our hospitality chair Magen Laviolette and put on a "Very Brady Brunch". This was a fun theme and the food was amazing. Booster Club also supported the winter dance by serving food and chaperoning.



March, has brought to us our first ever Chili Cook-off at High Desert. We joined in the fun at STEAM night. Parents really enjoyed tasting and voting. Staff and community members all participated. On March 14th we also hosted a luncheon for the demonstrators for Arts Day at HDS. We will be serving a spaghetti dinner. Arts day is truly on the students favorite days.

Mrs. Corrin Bailey- HDS Booster Chair

Vasquez PTSO



The winter months brought fun items to students as well as the tradition of a luncheon for staff, as PTSO continues serving the amazing individuals at Vasquez High School.

Through the monetary donations received, especially those of Supervisor Barger and the Agua Dulce Women's Club from the annual 'shark tank' pitches, PTSO was able to purchase an inflatable movie screen and sports tunnel for Mustangs to enjoy!

The February luncheon was a significant success– thanks to PTSO members who donated brunch/lunch items such as casseroles and desserts for staff to delight in. Thank you to hospitality co-chairs Dawn Mayes and Veronica Honicky who did an extraordinary job planning, and all those who assisted with setting up and clean-up. Additionally, thank you to Mary Fife for always leading the efforts in decorating the staff lounge.

Our final monetary donations for the school year were given to spring sports to provide assistance with end of season awards and trophies.

PTSO along with our 'sister' presidents at High Desert and Meadowlark are putting on a 'mixer' in March to engage new and current parents to boost membership and share what future venues are on the 2024/25 calendar.

Thank you to everyone who has supported PTSO throughout the years either monetarily or volunteering at events. Your generosity has helped us provide an increase in donations to each class and sports teams and help make staff appreciation days a little more special; as this year, with the purchase of an ice machine that was gifted to the staff lounge.

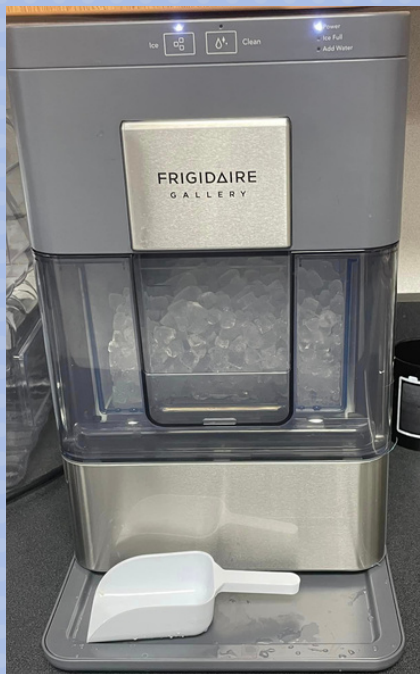
Together is Better!

Tracy Costan
PTSO President



Vasquez PTSO (continued)

*We ♥ our
Volunteers*



Showcasing High Desert School Athletics



Mrs. Gina Botton– High Deseert School Athletic Director

Soccer

Tournament Teams – this was our first Invitational soccer tournament hosted by High Desert Athletics. Schools consisted of grades 4th–6th with 2 teams from High Desert (Green and Black), 2 teams from Meadowlark (Yellow and Blue), and HELUS (Lake Hughes, Lake Elizabeth school district). It was a fun, competitive, active event enjoying the pure love of the game of soccer. Thank you to our girls VHS Soccer Coaches – Allyanna Blaha, Natalie Sanchez, Charlotte Sanchez, and Brooklyn Berger, HDS Coaches Matt Prosser, Mr. Leo Rivas, and Pat Tucker for helping coach, run, and support our event. The tournament could not have happened without all of them!!

Varsity Soccer is almost done with the season. Both our Girls and Boys Teams have been strong competitors thanks to their hard work and dedication. The girls team is led by our team Captains Addie Walker, Ivy Rios, and Sophia Motto and coaching staff Girls Head Coach Pat Tucker and assistant Matt Prosser. The Boys are led by our team captains Alejandro Benitez, Damien Martinez, and Noah Honicky Head Coach Leo Rivas and asst. Matt Prosser. We have our Silver League Championships on March 19th at Vasquez High School. Come out and support our teams!!



GOAL!



Showcasing High Desert School Athletics (continued)



Dance Force

The High Desert Dance Classic just celebrated their 20th year of hosting dance competitions all over the Antelope Valley. High Desert School came out and represented in the Dance Force competition!! This was our 3rd year participating in Dance Force and our Dancers were ready! Congratulations to all our Dancers for making it the Semi-Finals for all our dances!! Thank you to the Coaches Gina Botton and Christine Beaumont. Ms. Christine, you have been a wonderful addition to our team. Thank you so much for all your time and energy you have given to our kids, we can't wait for next year.

5th Grade there were 69 couples, so a total of 138 participants and our team was able to represent in the Finals for all 3 dances. Middle school there 33 couples, 66 participants and we represented in all Final dances as well

Showcasing High Desert School Athletics (continued)



5th Grade Final Awards:

Dance Force "Buddy" Award – Valentina Gomez Cordova

Most Improved Leader – Valentian Gomez Cordova

Most Improved Follow – Kamila Grasso

Foxtrot – 3rd Place : Micah Rivas / Kamila Grasso

East Coast Swing : 5th Place Micah Rivas / Kamila Grasso

6th Place Emma Bailey / Valentina Cordova

Merengue : 5th Place Emma Bailey / Valentina Cordova

Middle School Final Awards:

Most Improved Leader: Seth Beaumont

Most Improved Follow: Kylie Finn

Cha Cha : 1st Pace – Aubree Keillor / Rylei Scantlin

7th Place – Lexi VanOrnum / Atossa Makanvand

Viennese Waltz : 2nd Place – Aubree Keillor / Esther Rivas

4th Place – Myah Saba-Freudiger / Myla Adeleye

7th Place – Ezra Beaumont / Rylei Scantlin

Bachata : 2nd Place – Lexi VanOrnum / Rylei Scantlin

7th Place – Aubree Keillor / Esther Rivas

East Coast Swing : 1st Place – Lexi VanOrnum / Rylei Scantlin

3rd Place – Aubree Keillor / Atoosa Makanvand

7th Place – Myah Saba-Freudiger / Myla Adeleye

Jack & Jill Bachata : 2nd Place – Lexi VanOrnum

3rd Place – Aubree Keillor

6th Place – Atoosa Makanvand

8th Place – Rylei Scantlin

Junior West Coast Swing : 3rd Place – Rylei Scantlin

Showcasing High Desert School Athletics (continued)



Showcasing Vasquez HS Athletics



Winter sports for the 23–24 school year have concluded.

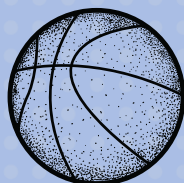
The boys' soccer team secured second place in the league and qualified for CIF playoffs for the 12th consecutive year. Similarly, the girls' soccer team also claimed second place in their league, earned a spot in CIF playoffs, and reached the third round before bowing out.



Despite not making it to CIF, boys' basketball had a commendable season, showing promising progress towards contending for a league title next season.

On the other hand, girls' basketball enjoyed a historic campaign, finishing fourth in the league and making it to the CIF playoffs. They reached the semifinals before losing to the eventual champions, AV High School.

Furthermore, they made history by qualifying for the California State Basketball Tournament, though they were eliminated in the first round. This achievement marks the first time a team from Vasquez High School has qualified for the state championship.



Mr. Sheldon Sparks– VHS Athletic Director



STRATEGIC PLAN

2030 AADUSD Newly Adopted Strategic Plan

"Empowering Minds, Building Futures: Our Small District, Infinite Possibilities"

Full document, click here:

<https://www.aadusd.k12.ca.us/domain/431>

AADUSD VISION:

The AADUSD is a learning community in which students, staff, parents, and community work together to provide powerful learning experiences that ensure all students meet the goals established in our graduate profile. AADUSD has a safe and supportive culture that provides our students with the intellectual and social-emotional support that helps them become life-long and socially responsible learners.

AADUSD MISSION:

To provide engaging learning experiences in a safe, supportive culture which prepares all students to become life-long learners and productive, socially responsible citizens.



STRATEGIC PLAN

"Empowering Minds, Building Futures: Our Small District, Infinite Possibilities"

We believe:

- all students deserve a high quality education that prepares them for higher education and/or a career path.
- some students will require more support than others to achieve academic success and that it is our responsibility to provide that support.
- the principles of equity, inclusion, and diversity must shape our culture.
- the district will provide meaningful ways for parents and guardians to be engaged in the education of their children.
- the district will actively partner with other groups and stakeholders to provide the meaningful learning experiences all our students deserve.
- academic success requires a safe and orderly learning environment and strong social-emotional support systems.



STRATEGIC PLAN

"Empowering Minds, Building Futures: Our Small District, Infinite Possibilities"

We value:

Excellence

Equity

Integrity

Respect

Inclusion

Empathy

Collaboration

Graduate Profile:

Our graduates successfully

- completed the academic and vocational coursework necessary to prepare them for higher education and/or a career with growth potential.
- have been involved in a variety of student activities, and community service and leadership.
- have participated in activities which prepare them to be active, productive, and socially responsible citizens.
- possess good communication skills and the ability to collaborate with others
- gained a clear sense of their College and Career goals and the steps necessary to prepare for their future.
- prepared to succeed in higher education, career, and citizenship with a strong academic record, a variety of extracurricular experiences, and a clear sense of their career goals.



STRATEGIC PLAN

"Empowering Minds, Building Futures: Our Small District, Infinite Possibilities"

Strategic Goal 1:

Student Achievement Improve student academic, behavioral and social-emotional success for all students in order to graduate from our schools ready to be independently productive and, purposeful leaders in college, career, and life.

Strategic Goal 2:

Effective Instruction and Leadership Strengthen the quality of instruction and leadership within the AADUSD with a focus on meaningful, productive interactions and implement equitable, high-quality data-informed instruction.

Strategic Goal 3:

Community Engagement Establish and maintain a culture which encourages positive relationships among our students, staff, and parents as well as educational, business, and community partners.

Strategic Goal 4:

Student Safety and Connectedness Heighten AADUSD's commitment to fostering a culture that promotes the emotional health, safety, and well-being of students, staff, and parents.

Strategic Goal 5:

Utilization of Fiscal Capital AADUSD will operate efficiently and effectively with the resources available to support students and meet the district goals and expectations.



SPRING BREAK: APRIL 1 – APRIL 5

Dear AADUSD Parents, Guardians, Staff, Students and Community Partners-

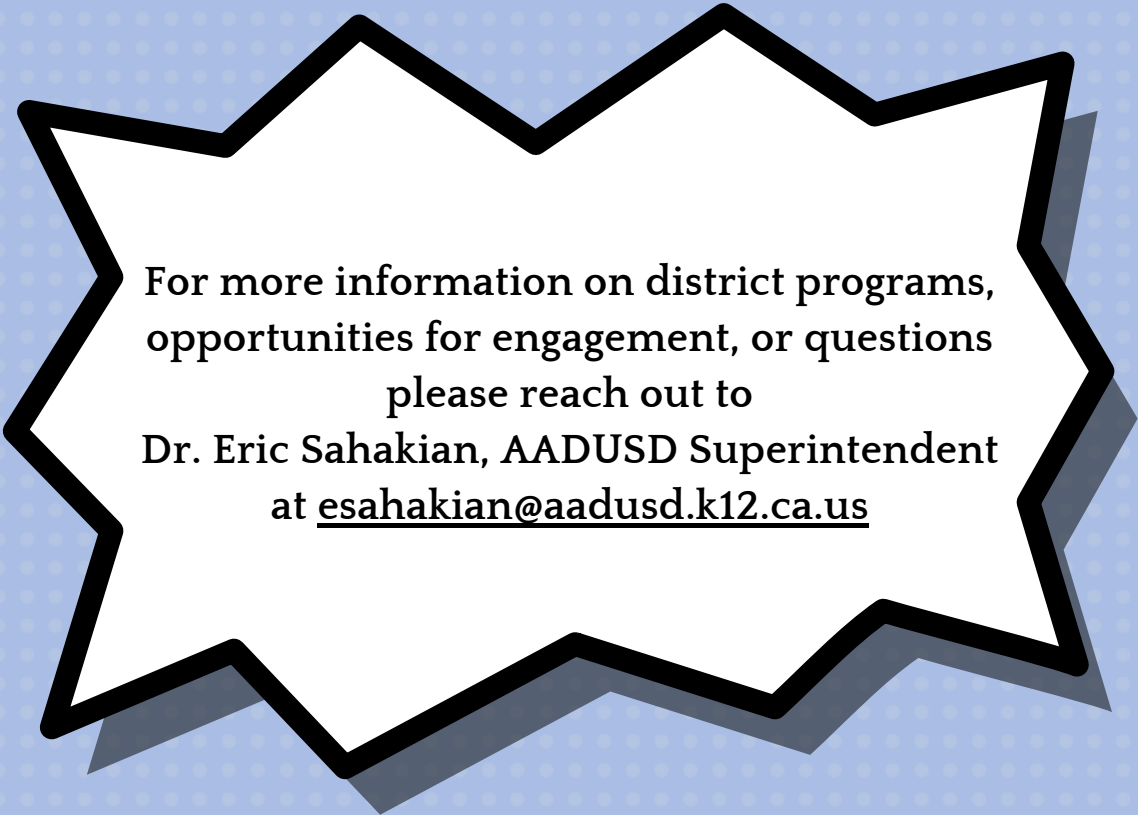
We are three quarters through the school year and spring break is just about here.

I hope that during Spring Break you are able to take the time to relax and be with family and friends. Once we return, we will be in the home stretch making that final push to the end of the school year while providing guidance to students in order for them to be successful.

We know that all of this would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our AADUSD staff. Thank you for all you do for students. I genuinely appreciate your commitment.

Wishing you the very best,

Eric Sahakian, Ed.D.- AADUSD Superintendent



For more information on district programs,
opportunities for engagement, or questions
please reach out to
Dr. Eric Sahakian, AADUSD Superintendent
at esahakian@aadusd.k12.ca.us