

Quarterly Gold

Acton-Agua Dulce Unified School District's Official Newsletter



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Winter reflection

by Eric Sahakian, Ed.D.- AADUSD Superintendent

Welcome to our winter edition of "Quarterly Gold", a newsletter showcasing the accomplishments of AADUSD.

I'd like to start off by thanking our AADUSD teachers for engaging all of our learners throughout the first semester. In addition, the District would like to express its gratitude to all AADUSD educators, administrators, staff and community partners for continuing to ensure high achievement for all learners. We would also like to thank our families as we continue to work together as full partners to ensure educational needs are met and exceeded. Please take a moment to "get in the know" of the many successes we have been a part of during these past couple of months. Together we will continue to nurture and support our future leaders. AADUSD is stronger together!

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Get in the know...

Making it happen: Meadowlark,
High Desert, and Vasquez Highlights

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Announcements!

Meadowlark ES



In December, Meadowlark had its annual Winter Holiday Concert. Ms Emma Benatar did an amazing job leading our students in traditional holiday songs from around the world.

In January the Solar Panel project began and it is nearly completed. Students and staff are excited to have additional shade on the playground. PTO is looking into purchasing tables and benches so the students will have a shady place to play during the hot summer months. February 7th, marked the 100th day of school. Students and staff celebrated by dressing up like they were 100 years old. The garden club has done an amazing job of transforming the Meadowlark Garden. Students are continuing to learn about plants as they care for our garden each week. Students in our Spanish club have learned how to introduce themselves and talk about their favorite things. Ms. Emma started a 3rd and 4th-grade choir club during lunch. Students in the choir will have extra opportunities to perform in the community.

PTO has provided Meadowlark with a new mascot!

Meadowlark is celebrating Read Across America March 6th-10th. On March 9th, ML welcomed guest celebrity readers from the community.

High Desert School

Agua Dulce Women's Club - Parade of Tables Community Sponsorship

On December 3, 2022, Agua Dulce Women's Club hosted their annual Parade of Tables. Acton-Agua Dulce Unified School District sponsored a table for each of our schools and our High Desert Booster Club brought our incredible Hawks pride and spirit to the event. Staff and Booster parents attended the event and our very own ASB Advisor, Mr. Knee made our Shark Tank pitch. With the support of the Agua Dulce Women's Club and Acton Women's Club, we have been able to purchase asound system for the gym and a Hawk mascot. This year, our pitch is for a scoreboard for our lower field, which is scheduled to be redone and reopen in Fall of 2023. Big thank you to Mrs. Adaliz Giron, Mrs. Corrin Bailey, and Mrs. Laura Beebee for their inspired work in theme, table decor, and treats for the event. Thank you to the staff at High Desert who support our school by attending to represent our Hawks!



HAWK'S EYE VIEW

VFW Patriot's Pen 2023

Each year more students in grades 6-8 enter the VFW's youth essay contest. The essay contest encourages young minds to examine America's history, along with their own experiences in modern American society, by drafting a 300- to 400-word essay, expressing their views based on a patriotic theme chosen by the VFW Commander-in-Chief. This year's theme: My Pledge to Our Veterans.

The winners are as follows:
 1st Francis Cabrera also 2nd in the District
 2nd Connor Koopman
 3rd Esther Rivas
 Honorable Mention Leonardo Rivas
 Honorable Mention Rylei Scantlin
 Honorable Mention Lina Rose Rodriguez

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High Desert School (continued)



VHS Roadshow - Hawks Prepare to Become Mustangs

Our 8th Grade High Desert Hawks enjoyed a morning at Vasquez High School as they toured the campus, visited classrooms, and participated in events hosted by the VHS ASB during the 8th Grade Roadshow. Students enjoyed a video all about the school including electives, athletics, dances, and academics opportunities created by the VHS Mustang Television Crew. Culinary Arts and our AADUSD Cafeteria staff treated our students to delicious meals and desserts. VHS Principal, Dr. Chamberlain welcomed the students along with the counseling team. VHS Counselors followed up the day with classroom presentations and work on class enrollment for next year. We are grateful for their dedication and commitment to our students. Thank you to the VHS team for hosting our Hawks as they prepare to become Mustangs next year!



Vasquez High School



Culinary Arts classes continue to work their magic! Kudos to our VHS students.

The Advanced Culinary was gingerbread making!

AVID kept busy with Slime and Tower Building.



Q & A with our new Assistant Superintendent

Q: Welcome to AADUSD! You come to AADUSD as our Assistant Superintendent of Business Services. What were your previous positions?

A: Over the past 10 years I have held a variety of positions at Newhall School District in Santa Clarita. I began as a Fiscal Services Accountant in 2012, where I was responsible for Accounts Payable for the District. After two years I was promoted to Business Services Coordinator where I was tasked with the purchase of everything from pencils to asphalt. In 2018, I was promoted to Assistant Director of Business Services. During this time I oversaw the Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Purchasing and Attendance functions for the District. I also assisted the Director of Fiscal Services in preparing the District's budget. From May 2020 to March 2023, I was Newhall School District's Director of Business and Fiscal Services, where I was in charge of the entire Fiscal Services Department which added Payroll to the other areas I previously handled.



Welcome!

Q: What attracted you to fiscal services/education as a career?

A: I was attracted to the fiscal services career because I enjoyed math and the business application of it. I was introduced to the education world because my mom worked in payroll for Saugus Union School District. After I graduated high school I got a job at Saugus as a Warehouse Helper where I completed the daily intra-district mail.

Q & A with our new Assistant Superintendent (continued)

Q: What led you to move into administration?

A: When I was young and through high school I played soccer and I typically ended up being the leader or captain of the team. Also during my college career I had many group projects and I always tended to be the leader of the group. So I think that I naturally gravitated towards leadership or administration as I wanted to guide and teach those around me.

Q: What attracted you to the position of Assistant Supt. of Business Svcs.?

A: During my time at Saugus I always had great respect for their Assistant Superintendent of Business, Robert "Bob" Cutting. He was so knowledgeable and a great people person and I told myself from that point that I wanted to model myself after him.

Q: Could you tell us what your main day-to-day responsibilities would entail?

A: The main day-to-day responsibilities of the Assistant Superintendent of Business Services is to make sure that the District operates as smoothly and efficiently as possible so that the teachers, students and administration can focus on learning and education. This includes overseeing the District's Fiscal, Maintenance, Technology, Custodial, Transportation, and Nutritional Services Departments.

Q: Is there anything miscellaneous you'd like to share about yourself — family, interests outside of your job, favorite books, movies, sports teams, etc.?

A: I have a wonderful wife and two daughters aged 5 and 2. I am a big hockey fan and supporter of the Los Angeles Kings. I also play ice hockey and am the team captain for an adult league team at The Cube in Santa Clarita. In my free time I enjoy spending time with my family and friends on our boat at Lake Mead.



U.S. Department of Education Awards AADUSD



Research shows a direct correlation between student well-being and student achievement.

On January 5th, AADUSD received notification of a grant being awarded through the U.S. Department of Education. The superintendent's office submitted the grant Request For Proposal back in early November.

Per the Project Director at the U.S. Department of Education, "This year's competition was highly competitive; we received more than 185 applications and made only 67 awards. Our application was among the highest-scoring applications received and therefore recommended for funding."

AADUSD will embark on the grant initiatives with the following projects:

- Hiring of 1 full-time LCSW- Licensed Clinical Social Worker (this would be in addition to the 1 full-time LCSW being hired through the U.S. Dept. of Justice grant recently awarded)
- Hiring of 3 full-time MSWs- Master of Social Workers
- Supervision of 3 Social Worker Interns
- Purchasing an Anonymous Reporting Solution platform for the district website and its coordination
- Purchasing of Suicide Prevention Modules (curriculum to be facilitated by the social worker team)
- Purchasing "Bounce Back" which is a cognitive-behavioral, skills-based group intervention aimed at relieving symptoms of child anxiety and depression among elementary school children (ages 5-11) who have been exposed to traumatic events.

Funding amount awarded: \$3.6 million over the course of the grant's duration which is 5 years.

HDS: Update From Athletic Director

The High Desert Hawk student-athletes have had a busy winter! In November, the Silver League implemented a trial season of co-ed flag football. Led by volunteer coaches Pat Tucker and Gina Botton, the Hawks had a fantastic time learning the game. February kicked off the soccer season. Returning coaches, Braulio and Brando Barron, have been hard at work teaching fundamental skills to the Hawks on the pitch. Both soccer teams hope to qualify for the Silver League Championship Tournament which will take place on Thursday, March 16th at Vasquez High School. Immediately, following the conclusion of soccer, the basketball season will begin. New coaches Leonard Rivas and Amy Hagiu are actively preparing for basketball tryouts. Cheering and supporting Hawk athletes during various games are the Spirit Squad members. Adaliz Giron had a vision to bring together enthusiastic students to cheer on and support the athletes. Under her tutelage, the spirit squad has added a warm, spirited presence to volleyball, flag football, and soccer games.

Dawn Schneider, HDS- A.D.



HDS: Update From Athletic Director (continued)



VHS: Update From Athletic Director



VHS had an amazing winter season. For the first time in school history, all four sports, (girls and boys basketball, and girls and boys soccer) made CIF playoffs. That has never been accomplished during any sporting season. To have both basketball teams and soccer teams qualify is truly a remarkable achievement in light of the COVID shut down.

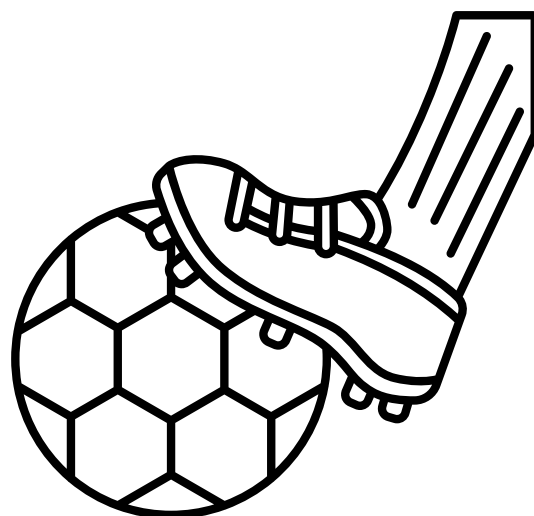
The girls basketball team had the most remarkable season. They finished 13-8, 3rd in the league. No girls' basketball team in VHS history has ever had a winning record. In addition, they also return all their starters except one for next season and they are poised to challenge for a league title Coach EJ did an amazing job rebuilding this program and deserves a ton of praise. The future looks bright for this young team for the next few years.

Boys basketball had a dramatic turnaround compared to last season. Last year the team was 1-19 and this season they were 13-16. They also qualified for the quarter-finals in the CIF playoffs this season. This is the second time in the last four years, that Brody Villasenor and Adam Frank have pushed their team to the quarterfinals. No other duo has accomplished this feat ever in VHS basketball history. We are graduating five seniors this year and Coach Mario will have a tough time finding a team that played as hard as the boys did this year.

Girls Soccer and Boys Soccer

Girls' and Boys' soccer have been the two most successful sports in VHS history. Girls' soccer was 13-6-1 and finished 3rd in the league this year They qualified for the playoffs and were eliminated in the first round. The boys' team finished second in league play with a 13-4-2 record. They qualified for playoffs and were eliminated in the second round. The Vasquez Boy's and Girl's Soccer Teams have proudly represented Vasquez High School in CIF. The Boys have made it to CIF Southern Section playoffs for the last 13 years, while the Girls have a streak of 15 years in a row. Coach Terry and Coach Pete are outstanding coaches and built programs based on respect and hard work.

VHS: Update From Athletic Director (continued)



Here are some reflections from our boys' soccer captains summarizing this year and the importance of their Team and the Vasquez Soccer Program to them:

"Being a part of this team was one of the hardest and most enjoyable experiences I've had. And it wasn't because I have a love for soccer, it's because I love the team. Every year I looked forward to our season, to be able to play with the guys and battle our way through each game and make it as far as we could. But it never mattered to me if we won or not, I just wanted to know we gave everything for each other on the field and had fun doing it."

Dillon Anderson/Captain (Senior)

"The best part about playing (soccer) during high school was the Team. Being able to become a good captain is impossible without teammates (and) that makes me proud... they come to play and there's nothing more I can ask for, than a team that picks each other up during wins and losses. That's what I will miss most about the 4 years I've had with them."

Owen Coonis/Captain (Senior)

Go Mustangs!!

Sheldon Sparks, VHS- A.D.

Highlights from ML PTO

Meadowlark PTO is always brainstorming ideas to make Meadowlark Elementary a fun exciting place for the students to come and learn and truly be excited for each day ! We hosted Meadowlarks very first glow dance for all students and their families. The turn out was amazing and everyone had a blast . It was such a treat to see all the smiling faces enjoying themselves at our wonderful school.

We are pleased to announce Meadowlarks newest additions. The students will see Meadow the Meadowlark at future events and maybe even strolling the hallways . We also added a beautiful mural of bird wings to the front entrance . We cant wait to see the growth of all Meadowlark students standing with these wings through the years to come !

Heather Miliotti, PTO President



Highlights from HDS Booster Club

Over the past few months, the booster club has engaged in some really enjoyable activities. We sold candy grams on Valentine's Day to raise money for our sports sweatshirts, our athletes make us extremely proud. Soccer is in the middle of its season, what fun it has been to watch our hawks. Our snack bar is up and running, what a hit it is.

We also held a luncheon for the teachers and staff. We organized a soup and salad day, we received incredible parental volunteer assistance and donations.

We have a lot of activities coming up, including STEM night and an open house. Don't forget to join us and keep an eye out for dates.

Thank you,
Adaliz Giron, HDS Booster Club President



Highlights from VHS PTSO



PTSO sponsored a staff luncheon in February which was catered by the Original Acton Market. There was bbq chicken, tri-tip, potato salad, baked beans and rolls. Everything was delicious with generous portions to feed all of our amazing teachers and staff. Additionally, PTSO members baked cookies, brownies and cupcakes for dessert.

With monetary donations given to PTSO by families and community members, we were fortunate to be able to make larger donations to each sports team, class (freshman, sophomore, junior and senior) and counselors this year. These funds will help with end of season banquets, sporting equipment, dances, field trips and supplies.

The December Parade of Tables sponsored by the Agua Dulce Women's Club (ADWC) raised over \$3000 for Mustangs- between the ADWC donation, Supervisor Kathryn Barger and guests at the event. Some of these funds will be allocated for the next phase of the gym beautification which is to include 'door wraps'. We look forward to springing ahead with fun-filled week-long festivities in May as we prepare to pamper staff as the school year winds down!

Together is better!

Tracy Costan

PTSO President



Strategic Plan Update: Part II

We kicked off our Strategic Plan Development Team Sessions on March 20th and March 21st. The 2, 5-hour sessions covered the following areas:

- ACTIVITY ONE: LESSONS FROM KEY DOCUMENTS
- ACTIVITY TWO: GRADUATE PROFILE
- ACTIVITY THREE: SWOT ANALYSIS – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
- ACTIVITY FOUR: VISION STATEMENT
- ACTIVITY FIVE: MISSION STATEMENT

The team is comprised of a total of 30 participants- parents, students, community members, and staff. From these sessions, we will synthesize feedback and narrow down the key elements needed to update our existing strategic plan and goals.

Thank you to our educational partners for signing up to be on the development team.

We would like to especially thank our student participants for a job well done!

Our third and final session is scheduled for April 6th.





COMMUNICATION STATION

Acton-Agua Dulce Unified School District

*Please communicate your idea, comment, suggestion with AADUSD.
Your communication will be delivered to the Superintendent's office.*

We look forward to hearing from our educational partners!

*Please use the QR code for access or feel free to find the
Communication Station logo on our district website for access.*



! ATTENTION PLEASE

THE WIZARDS ARE COMING TO TOWN!



VS.

The Meadow Hawk Mustangs!

Teachers & Staff from Meadowlark , High Desert & Vasquez

Venue:

Vasquez High School Gym

Date: **April 20**

Game Time: **6:30** Doors Open: **5:30**

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