



San Ysidro

School District

EST - 1887

QUALITY EDUCATION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS TO SUCCEED

District Highlights

Superintendent - Gina Potter, Ed.D.
Week of May 23, 2025

SUPERINTENDENT

Gina Potter, Ed.D.



MEMORIAL DAY MESSAGE

As we observe Memorial Day on Monday, May 26th, the San Ysidro School District honors and remembers the brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country.

This day powerfully reminds us of the courage, dedication, and selflessness of those who gave their lives to protect the freedoms we cherish. We deeply thank their families and loved ones for their immeasurable sacrifice.

May this Memorial Day be a time of reflection, appreciation, and unity as we remember our fallen heroes and commit to carrying forward their legacy of service.

Wishing our San Ysidro community a safe and meaningful Memorial Day.

GOVERNING BOARD MEETING PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

San Ysidro Middle School Elementary 8th-grade student Ximena Orendain proudly led the Pledge of Allegiance at the May 23, 2025, Governing Board meeting. The board and attendees recognized and appreciated her leadership and confidence.



BOARD DISTINGUISHED CHAMPIONS: SAN YSIDRO MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT AND STAFF RECOGNITIONS

On Thursday, May 22, 2025, the Governing Board and Superintendent proudly recognized two outstanding individuals for their remarkable contributions to the school.

Eighth grade student Mariana Carreño Cruz was honored for her Outstanding Academic Achievement. Mariana's commitment to excellence is reflected in her consistent academic performance, leadership in the classroom, and unwavering dedication to her education. Her achievements serve as a powerful example of the academic potential and promise of San Ysidro Middle School students.

Marci Begins, Instructional Media Resource Aide (IMRA), was recognized for her dedication and support to both staff and students in advancing literacy across the school. Her creative approach, collaborative spirit, and tireless efforts in promoting a love for reading and learning have had a lasting impact on the academic success and engagement of our students. Marci's work continues to inspire and empower the SYMS community.

San Ysidro Middle School extends heartfelt congratulations and gratitude to both honorees for their exceptional accomplishments.



BOARD RECOGNITION DISTINGUISHED CHAMPIONS: SUPERINTENDENT'S STUDENT COUNCIL 2024-2025 LEADERS

On Thursday, May 22, 2025, the Governing Board and Superintendent proudly recognized the **2024–2025 Superintendent's Student Council leaders** from each school for their exceptional commitment to service, leadership, and student voice. These student leaders exemplify integrity, initiative, and a deep dedication to creating a positive and inclusive school community.

As part of the recognition, each school's student leadership team presented their **2024–2025 student school projects**, showcasing their goals, accomplishments, and initiatives designed to strengthen school spirit, increase student engagement, and support a vibrant learning environment across the district.

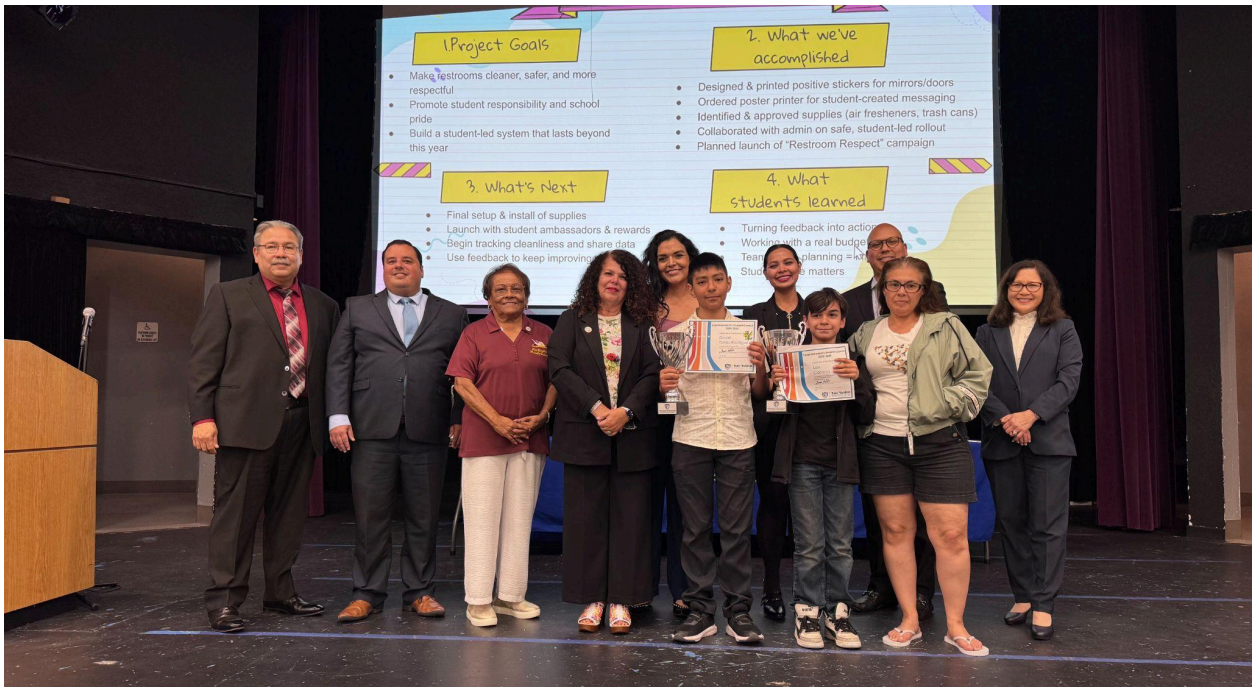
La Mirada Elementary School: Jose Salazar (Student Body President), Sol Romero (Student Representative), and Sophia Morales (Student Representative)



Sunset Elementary School: Luis Navarro (Student Representative), Naomi Figueroa (Student Representative), and Damian Medina (Student Representative)



Smythe Elementary School: Lex Corona (Student Representative), David Rodriguez (Student Representative), and Daniel Ontiveros (Student Representative)



Ocean View Hills Elementary School: Kevin Afokpa (Safety Patrol Student Leader), Aiden Barthuly (Safety Patrol Student Leader), Anette Duran (Safety Patrol Student Leader), Justin Patriarca (Safety Patrol Student Leader), and Victor Villanueva (Safety Patrol Student Leader)



Willow Elementary School: Ikeer Garcia (President), Roberto Capoeman (Vice President), Michelle Arreola (Co-Secretary) & Emma Jasso (Co-Secretary), Braxton Lechuga (Treasurer), and Aria Llamas (Co-Publicity Manager) & Maya Rincon (Co-Publicity Manager)



San Ysidro Middle School: Ximena Orendain (ASB President), Claudia Muller (ASB Vice President), Rihanna Maldonado (Student Representative), Saul Cerberos (Student Representative) and Iker Loreto (Student Representative)



Vista Del Mar Middle School: Jennalyn Alipio (ASB President), Daniel Herrera (SSC President), and Keyarra Washington (NPFH President)



BOARD RECOGNITION DISTINGUISHED CHAMPIONS: LA MIRADA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RECOGNITIONS

On Thursday, May 22, 2025, the Governing Board and the San Ysidro School District proudly recognized two outstanding students whose talents and dedication reflect the district's core values of academic excellence and creative expression.

Arthur Barraza Coates, a 6th grade student, was honored for being an AVID reader who consistently demonstrates a love for learning and critical thinking. Arthur's passion for reading and inquisitive mindset inspire those around him and contribute to a rich learning environment in the classroom.

Ximena Flores, a 3rd grade student, was recognized for her exceptional creativity and dedication to the arts. Ximena's artistic talents and commitment to expression through the arts bring joy to her school community and highlight the importance of creativity in education.

The Governing Board and Superintendent commend Arthur and Ximena for their achievements and thank them for being shining examples of the diverse strengths and potential within the San Ysidro School District.



BOARD RECOGNITION DISTINGUISHED CHAMPIONS: DISTRICT SPELLING BEE STUDENT HONOREES

On May 22, 2025, the Governing Board and Superintendent proudly recognized all district Spelling Bee participants for their hard work, determination, and outstanding performance. These students represented their schools with pride and demonstrated exceptional spelling skills, perseverance, and academic excellence. Their participation reflects a deep commitment to learning and showcases the intellectual curiosity that thrives throughout the San Ysidro School District. The Board and Superintendent commend each student for their achievement and applaud the supportive staff and families who helped prepare them for success.

Spelling Bee Student Participants: Victoria Sophia Montañó (La Mirada), Miranda Abigail Zazueta (Ocean View Hills), Renee Alexandra Santillan (Smythe), Irina Monserrat Diaz (Willow), Sophia Morales (La Mirada), Cayla Faye Neria (Smythe), Santiago Nuñez (Willow), Eiji Fabricio Nakao (La Mirada), Fidel Osuna Jr. (Ocean View Hills), Azael Giovanni Camberos (Smythe), Yaretzy Sobeida Sandoval (Willow), Arthur F. Barraza Coates (La Mirada), Lex F. Corona Velasquez (Smythe), Sofia Isabella Lopez (Vista Del Mar), Karen G. Martinez Rodriguez (Willow), Iliana Julieth Sierra (San Ysidro Middle), Marcos Sanchez Jr. (San Ysidro Middle), Aaliyah Lobo Darvin (Vista Del Mar Middle)

District Spelling Bee Student Winners:

- 3rd Grade: Ava Sophia Figueroa (Sunset)
- 4th Grade: We had a tie: Kai Lorenzo Green (Ocean View Hills) and Valentyna Rangel (Sunset)
- 5th Grade: Dahiana Campa Cardozo (Sunset)
- 6th Grade: Naomi Angela Figueroa (Sunset)
- 7th Grade: Matthew Santos Ebriega (Vista Del Mar)

Spelling Bee Staff Leads: Earl Kim (La Mirada), Mariana Barrera (Ocean View Hills), David Salazar (Smythe), Alejandro Vargas (Sunset), Raymond Barrera (Willow), Eduardo Coronado (San Ysidro)

Middle), and Jerry Herrera (Vista Del Mar); **Spelling Bee Pronouncer:** Kathy Applegate; and **Spelling Bee Judges:** Elva De Baca, Gloria Mena, and Sandra Guzman



BOARD RECOGNITION DISTINGUISHED CHAMPIONS: SAN YSIDRO WOMEN’S CLUB 25TH ANNIVERSARY “TEDDY BEARS FOR KIDS” STUDENT LOGO WINNER

On Thursday, May 22, 2025, the Governing Board, Superintendent, and San Ysidro Women’s Club recognized Brenda Zazueta, a 6th grade student at Vista Del Mar Middle School, for being selected as the winner of the San Ysidro Women’s Club 25th Anniversary “Teddy Bears for Kids” Student Logo Competition. Brenda’s art work stood out for its creativity, thoughtfulness, and meaningful representation of the club’s mission to bring comfort and care to children in need. Her winning design will be featured in the 25th anniversary celebration of the Teddy Bears for Kids event, serving as a symbol of compassion and student talent within the San Ysidro community.



BOARD RECOGNITION DISTINGUISHED CHAMPIONS: DISTRICTWIDE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS STUDENT LOGO WINNERS

During the May 22, 2025, Board Meeting, the Governing Board and Superintendent proudly recognized the top three student art winners for their creativity, insight, and powerful messages of support and awareness:

- 1st Place: Kevin Afokpa, 5th grade student, Ocean View Hills Elementary School
- 2nd Place: Latifa Hammad, 2nd grade student, Smythe Elementary School
- 3rd Place: Kamila Martel, 6th grade student, Willow Elementary School

Each of these students demonstrated exceptional artistic talent and a deep understanding of the importance of mental health. Their contributions will serve as inspiring symbols of compassion and resilience across the district.



VISTA DEL MAR TRACK & FIELD TEAM CELEBRATES ANOTHER STELLAR SEASON

The Vista Del Mar Middle (VDM) School Track & Field Team wrapped up back-to-back outstanding seasons!!

The VDM Sharks once again excelled in the 100m, 200m, and 4x100m relay sprints, as well as in the long jump. At their most recent meet at Eastlake High School, the Sharks medaled in 7 out of 14 events, with nearly all runners achieving personal records (PRs) in their races.

Congratulations to our top 10 finishers:

- Braylon Randall placed 3rd in the 100m with a time of 12.50
- Damien Blossom finished 7th in the 100m with a time of 12.99
- Shaville Peckoo took 1st place in the 100m with a time of 13.49
- Jai Toliver placed 9th in the 100m with a time of 14.83
- Braylon Randall finished 2nd in the 200m with a time of 25.86
- Shaville Peckoo came in 2nd in the 200m with a time of 28.44
- Kianna He placed 6th in the 400m with a PR of 1:08.07 and 5th in the 800m with 2:50.75
- Damien Blossom took 2nd place in the Long Jump with a jump of 16'11"
- Giselle Garcia came in 5th in the Long Jump with a mark of 12'5"

Relay Highlights:

- The Boys Relay Team — Joel Baffoe, Damien Blossom, Elijah Brackens, and Braylon Randall — placed 2nd overall!
- The Girls Relay Team — Jai Toliver, Kianna He, Ariana Escorcia, and Shaville Peckoo — also placed 2nd overall!

Adding to the season's success, former VDM runners returned to assist at the meets — earning community service hours while mentoring and cheering on their middle school team. Many of these athletes now compete at high schools across the Sweetwater and Grossmont high school districts,

including San Ysidro High School, Otay Ranch, Olympian, Hilltop, Bonita Vista, and Mount Miguel. One of our current 8th graders is even set to join the track team at Mater Dei!

Congratulations to the VDM Sharks on another incredible season! A very special thanks to their awesome team Coach Nikole Kempf-Scarlett!



BOARD PRESIDENT ZENAIDA ROSARIO ADVOCATES FOR EDUCATION AS A NEW STATE CSBA DELEGATE ASSEMBLYMEMBER

The San Ysidro School District proudly recognizes Board President Zenaida Rosario for her participation in the California School Boards Association (CSBA) Delegate Assembly, held May 16–18, 2025, in Sacramento. She is a newly elected state CSBA Delegate Assemblymember!

As a dedicated representative of the San Ysidro community, Board President Rosario joined school board members/delegates from across the state to advocate for policies that support equity, access, and a high-quality education for all students. Her active involvement in the Delegate Assembly reflects a continued commitment to student success, educational advancement, and the belief that every child deserves the opportunity to thrive.

We commend President Rosario for her leadership and advocacy on behalf of San Ysidro's students and families.



DISTRICT STUDENT ANTHOLOGY CEREMONY

On Tuesday, May 20, 2025, the San Ysidro School District proudly hosted the **Young San Ysidro Writers and Artists Celebration** at Vista Del Mar Middle School — and it was truly an unforgettable evening! The event honored the remarkable creativity of about 100 of our students with a showcase of inspiring writing and stunning artwork. A beautifully crafted anthology, featuring contributions from every school site across the district, was unveiled and shared with our cherished families, students, and staff.

A heartfelt thank you to Superintendent Dr. Gina Potter and Board President Zenaida Rosario for their visionary leadership and unwavering support for this meaningful program. We also extend our deep appreciation to editor Pablo Sainz, and event founders Penny Cline, Melanie Miller, and the entire Educational Services Department for their passion, dedication, and tireless efforts in bringing this celebration to life.

To our incredible teachers, families, and students, thank you for being the heart of this event. Your commitment and enthusiasm helped shine a well-deserved spotlight on the extraordinary work of our young creators.

A special shout out to our brave and talented student readers who stood proudly before an audience of over 250 guests to share their voices and stories. Your courage and creativity truly inspired us all.

Let us continue to uplift and celebrate the brilliance within our community. Here's to the artists and authors of tomorrow — your journey is just beginning!







Ms. Romero, a teacher at the CDC, with her students and their anthology art.

SOUTHWEST ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION (SAA) SUPERINTENDENTS' MEETING

On Tuesday, May 20, 2025, during the Southwest Administrators' Association (SAA) Superintendent's Meeting, Superintendent Dr. Gina Potter and Iván Carrillo, ACSA Senior Director of Policy and Governmental Relations, delivered a presentation titled *From Sacramento to D.C.: Key Policy and Budget Updates*. The session provided valuable insights into current and upcoming legislative priorities, budget considerations, and policy developments at both the state and federal levels. Their presentation emphasized the importance of staying informed to effectively support students, staff, and school communities.



EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION CEREMONY

On Wednesday, May 14, 2025, the San Ysidro School District held its Employee Recognition Ceremony to celebrate the outstanding contributions of its dedicated staff. The event honored employees for their years of service, recognized the Teachers of the Year and Classified Employees of the Year, and celebrated the careers and retirements of those concluding their service to the district. It was a heartfelt evening of appreciation, gratitude, and community.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the following employees for their unwavering commitment to excellence in education:

- 10 Years of Service- 26 employees
 - CERTIFICATED: David Alkass, David Alvarado, Cindy Barron, Iliana Cornejo, Rita De La Cruz, Alexander Gacuya, Sarina Hemungkorn, Irene Herrera-Cevallos, Christine Hills, Kimberly Karpel, Maria Knutas-Hallmark, Ginny Panzella, Maria E. Raygoz and Mayura Vongsavath
 - CLASSIFIED: Sara Almeida, Jean Avila, Jorge Clayton, Gianfranco Fimbres, Lorena Flores, David Gomez, Irma Gomez Vargas, Catalina Hernandez, Lorena Hippensteel, Yesenia Nuñez, Pablo Jaime Sainz and Yesenia Soderberg
- 15 Years of Service- 12 employees
 - CERTIFICATED: Alana Arciaga-Laurino, Christian Cali, Dianna Flores and Thelma Sotelo

- CLASSIFIED: Priscilla Bojorquez, Lucieline Cortes, Ernesto Marquez, Karla Montanez Meza, Juana Murillo, Melissa Sanchez and Eugenia Teodoro
- 20 Years of Service- 22 employees
 - CERTIFICATED: Irma Beltran, Holly Black, Carmen Blanco, Lenore E. Garcia, Karla Garciadealba, Elizabeth Gomez, Diana Hernandez, Jose Herrera, Catalina Jauregui, Carmen Luna, Cynthia Mosqueda, Luis Ramos, Aleyda Santoyo and Loreana Torres
 - CLASSIFIED: Lorenzo Buenrostro, Raul Casillas, Ana Castillon, Ivonne Dueñas, Araceli Felix, Edith Ortega, Alexandra Paul and Denise Ramirez
- 25 Years of Service- 25 employees
 - CERTIFICATED: Adriana Aguilar, Nancy Alvarado, Guillermo Arcadia, Maricela Banuet, Drina Bedoya Norma Campos Maria Carriedo Jimmy Delgado Alma Laura English Helen Godoy, Veronica Hernandez, Eliud Lagarda, Mary Padilla, Lourdes Quezada, Ruth Rivera and Veronica Schmitz
 - CLASSIFIED: Jorge Aceves, Patricia Caro, Begonia Hidalgo, Maria Michel, Araceli Montes-Carapia, Maria V. Perez, Thelma Valenzuela and Teresa Villagomez
- 30 Years of Service- 4 employees
 - CERTIFICATED: Efrain Burciaga
 - CLASSIFIED: Guadalupe Barrera, Jose Luis Mejia and Elizabeth Originales
- 35 Years of Service- 3 employees
 - CERTIFICATED: Catherine Bishop
 - CLASSIFIED: Maria Avalos Ana Bush

We congratulate our four retirees for their dedication to the district:

- Anita Gillchrest, Nurse
- Irene Herrera-Cevallos, VDM Principal
- Alejandra Rodriguez, Willow Teacher
- Marlyn Moreno, Child Nutrition Specialist
-













DISTRICT JOB OPENINGS



Please click on the link to access our current district job openings:
<https://www.edjoin.org/Home/Jobs?countyID=37&districtID=650>

TRANSCEND



TRASCENDER