



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 7, 2017

CONTACT: William Diepenbrock

PHONE: 909-206-5304

Baldwin Park Unified Students Explore Science, History and the Outdoors

BALDWIN PARK – Students at Holland Middle School and Sierra Vista Junior High camped overnight at San Clemente State Beach, where they learned how to pitch tents and roasted s'mores by the seaside.

Students at Vineland Elementary School explored a planetary research station and experienced a simulated helicopter ride at the Discovery Cube Los Angeles.

Students at Pleasant View Elementary journeyed through the history of locomotives and the Western railroads at the Travel Town Museum.

All the activities were part of a monthlong summer enrichment program that combined academic instruction with hands-on activities and field trips. The program mixes the fun and excitement of summer with learning opportunities that expand the experiences of students and combat summer learning loss.

More than 1,000 students in kindergarten through eighth grade attended the program, offered at seven schools through a partnership with THINK Together. Activities centered on standards-based learning, interactive science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) projects and healthy living.

"I've learned that having fun isn't always about playing and that you can have fun while you learn," Sierra Vista seventh-grader Nathan Alfonso said. "My favorite thing is the STEM projects because I can learn how things work and then I can practice creating things with my friends to see what works the best."

Daily STEM activities challenged students' communication and critical thinking skills with projects that ranged from engineering balloon-powered cars to creating roller coasters with pipe-tubes. After each task, students competed to test their models and to measure the success of their projects.

Students also engaged in physical activities like tennis and volleyball and explored cultural studies, which included Native American, Latin American and Pacific Islander customs and histories.

"I like spending time with the program leaders, they are like family," Vineland third-grader Vanessa Marquez said. "They work with us on reading and times tables and they make it fun."

MORE



News Release

The program was hosted at De Anza, Pleasant View, Walnut, Kenmore and Vineland elementary as well as Sierra Vista and Holland. Each site adopted an overall theme, such as Sierra Vista's focus on superheroes with lessons that explored not only fictional heroes but cultural and personal ones as well.

Daily themes were also incorporated, which included students and staff dressing in funny attire for wacky Wednesday's and jerseys for a sports day.

Through community partnerships, students experienced special events like a reptile show and one elementary enjoyed a puppy party where students interacted with puppies.

THINK Together coordinators and volunteers worked at each school to plan events and activities, while Baldwin Park Unified certificated teachers provided language arts instruction.

English learners were provided additional help with fluency, vocabulary and sentence structure.

At the start of the program, certificated teachers conducted learning assessments for each student and concluded the month with a closing assessment to gather data on individual progress and academic growth.

Students performing below grade level during the school year were given priority in registering for the program.

"Summer enrichment programs are proven to better prepare students for the upcoming school year by ensuring they stay academically engaged and challenged," Superintendent Froilan N. Mendoza said. "We are grateful to have a strong partnership with THINK Together, and through our collective hard work we can ensure that there is a strong impact on our students."

THINK Together is a nonprofit organization founded in 1994. It is the largest provider of expanded learning programs in California.

PHOTOS

BPUSD_SUMMER_1: Baldwin Park Unified seventh-graders Christian Mema and Nathan Alfonso proudly display their winning balloon-powered car and popsicle-stick catapult constructed for THINK Together's science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) projects. THINK Together's month-long summer enrichment program combines the fun of summer through hands-on activities and field trips with learning opportunities to prevent summer learning loss.



News Release

BPUSD_SUMMER_2: Students from Vineland Elementary were tasked with a teamwork-building exercise to test their communication and critical thinking skills. More than 1,000 kindergarteners through eighth-graders participated in a month-long summer enrichment program through THINK Together.

BPUSD_SUMMER_3: Through a partnership with THINK Together, Baldwin Park Unified hosted a month-long summer enrichment program at seven school sites to personally enrich and academically motivate more than 1,000 students. Baldwin Park Unified certificated teachers instructed students in small groups on reading and writing strategies.

###