



WHITTIER UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Aug. 27, 2024 **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia **PHONE:** 909-447-2403

Whittier Union Unveils New Swimming Pool, Aquatics Center at La Serna High School

WHITTIER – La Serna High School made a big splash with the Whittier Union community during a ribbon-cutting for its new Aquatics Center, which is anchored by a newly constructed, regulation-size 35-meter swimming pool, a state-of-the-art timing system and scoreboard, and an expanded bleacher section, on Aug. 24.

Rousing cheers sounded as the La Serna High aquatics teams and coaches, Whittier Union Board of Trustees, Superintendent Dr. Monica Oviedo, and La Serna Principal Griselda Castro gathered to cut the ribbon and kick off a celebratory afternoon highlighted by a ceremonial “jump-in” to christen the pool, and a luau complete with food, games, and Polynesian dancers.

“This is a groundbreaking moment for our team and our school's aquatics programs, propelling us to the next level,” said La Serna junior Caden Homes, a swim and water polo athlete. “The new pool, space, and equipment have a collegiate feel, and I believe this will bring new opportunities for growth, recruitment, and school pride.”

During the event, La Serna’s aquatics teams – boys and girls water polo and swim – held a silent auction and raffle to help raise money to ensure that each program is equipped to succeed for years to come.

“This is a great day for La Serna High,” Castro said. “Our mission is to provide everything a student needs to succeed in high school, which includes ensuring our athletic facilities are up-to-date and conducive to our students performing at their best.”

Student-athletes on La Serna’s swim and water polo teams will primarily use the pool, as well as the school’s physical education classes and Associated Student Body for certain leadership events. The City of Whittier also plans to use the pool during the summer for community swimming lessons.

La Serna’s modernized aquatics center positions the school to host future CIF Southern Section postseason water polo games, along with the Del Rio League Swimming Championships with its new state-of-the-art timing system.

“I have been waiting for this pool for a long time,” said Erin Verstegen, who has served as La Serna’s head swim coach for the last 15 years. “Having the most up-to-date timing system will allow our competitive swimmers many more opportunities to qualify for CIF. I am extremely thankful that Whittier Union thought to ask for input from coaches, parents, and students alike to design a facility that will exceed our needs and expectations.”

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Whittier Union funded the construction of La Serna’s aquatics center through the District’s \$183 million Measure AA facilities bond, passed by voters in November 2020. The bond continues to fund a number of large-scale infrastructure projects throughout the District.

La Serna High’s pool is the first of five replacement/renovations to be completed with Measure AA funds, including California High School, which expects its aquatics center to be completed by summer 2026.

“We are indebted to the Whittier Union community for its continuing support as we transform our schools into modern, state-of-the-art learning centers that allow our children to thrive academically,” Whittier Union Board President Gary Mendez said. “It’s wonderful to see the spirit and enthusiasm for the opening of the La Serna Aquatics Center.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

WUHSD_POOL1: La Serna High School swim athletes, coaches, and administrators, along with the Whittier Union Board of Trustees and Superintendent Dr. Monica Oviedo, celebrate the grand opening of La Serna’s new Aquatic Center and pool during a ribbon cutting ceremony on Aug. 24.

WUHSD_POOL2: La Serna High School swim athletes and coaches celebrate the opening of the school’s new Aquatic Center and pool with a ceremonial “jump-in” to christen the pool during a ribbon cutting ceremony on Aug. 24.

WUHSD_POOL3: Students, families, community members, and La Serna High School teachers and staff gathered on Aug. 24 to celebrate the opening of the new Aquatic Center and pool with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

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OUR MISSION

The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement. Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.

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