



PRESS RELEASE

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Paramount Unified Special Needs Students Learn Life Skills in New Adult Apartment

Paramount, CA – Paramount Adult School student Raul Flores loves to enter his adult skills classroom each day and fill a baking sheet with fresh cinnamon rolls. He applies just the right amount of frosting swirls before heating the treats and serving them to his classmates.

Flores is one of some 50 students with special needs who are using a newly built apartment on the school's campus as a tool for learning the skills they need to transition to independent living. The class is the first to use the apartment, which was constructed in spring, and features a living room, kitchen and bedroom spaces along with a washer and dryer.

"Making cinnamon rolls is my favorite part of the apartment. But I also like learning how to do different things, like sweeping floors and washing clothes," Flores said.

The District's adult living apartment is a project that took one year to come to fruition. Scott Law, Paramount Unified's Director of Facilities and Project Development, led the renovation of a bungalow on campus that now equips students to thrive in life after graduation.

The apartment is one open area room that sections off its kitchen, bedroom, living room space and laundry area. It is designed to allow teachers to be able to see across the room at all times without obstruction. The coffee table is adorned with flowers, and pictures hang from the walls to give it a cozy feel.

"It was very important for us to create a space where students would actually want to live and spend time in," Paramount Superintendent Ruth Pérez said. "We wanted the apartment to represent our very best so that students would be inspired to give theirs."

Classes rotate use of the apartment throughout the day and experience curriculum that includes cooking and caretaking. Students prepare meals that include fettucine and desserts like banana splits. Each class concludes with washing dishes and restoring areas of use.

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“A big part of our curriculum is teaching our students to be accountable for themselves,” Paramount Adult School Principal Yvonne Rodriguez said. “By giving our classes responsibility, we are empowering them to be authoritative adults long after they leave our school.”

The Paramount Unified Board of Education recently took a tour of the adult transition apartment and was pleased with the layout.

“The apartment has such a personal touch, and was clearly designed with care,” PUSD Board President Vivian Hansen said. “Through this new facility, we are continuing to help our students grow inside the classroom as well as outside of it.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

112618_PARAMOUNT_ADULTAPARTMENT1: Paramount Adult School is offering a new adult apartment to help special needs students transition to independent living.

112618_PARAMOUNT_ADULTAPARTMENT2: Paramount Adult School’s new adult apartment features cozy decorations to help students feel comfortable as they learn real-world skills.

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