



News Release

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Baldwin Park Unified High School Unveils \$175,000 High-Tech Library

New configuration fosters student collaboration

BALDWIN PARK – Baldwin Park Unified educators on Thursday unveiled a \$175,000 transformation of Sierra Vista High School's library that features five tech-infused project centers and other upgrades that foster student collaboration.

Already, the changes have prompted a surge in library use, with an expanded cadre of librarians regularly hosting as many as 80 students until the facility closes at 5 p.m.

"This library has surpassed anything I could possibly dream of – it is beautiful," Board of Education President Christina Lucero told a gathering of teachers, staff and students during the grand opening celebration. "I believe the only thing that is going to change our lives is education. It can set us on a path that gives us options that are unimaginable. That's what this library does."

The project is designed to be the first in a series of library makeovers that will provide students with state-of-the-art tools. Foremost among the changes are the project centers, including two located in private study chambers. Each center includes a flat-screen TV that can link to laptops via Bluetooth, wheeled chairs and upgraded Wi-Fi. The private rooms feature stereo sound systems.

As part of the tech expansion, students can check out 42 new HP laptops for in-library use and work in a computer lab that hosts 20 HP desktops. The library will take delivery of 20 iPads in the coming weeks and educators hope to add Mac desktops next year. Other upgrades include brighter lighting, reconfigurable furniture, two student lounges and café tables.

Associated Student Body President Fabiola Gonzalez said the library makes students feel at home.

"The new enhancements give students a comfortable, positive and safe environment to work on homework, projects or just a place to collaborate with friends," Gonzalez said.

Superintendent Froilan N. Mendoza said the transformation is part of a District effort to improve student access to the latest in educational tools.

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"These tools are critical as we continue to expand the vistas of achievement for our students and I'm incredibly proud of what we've accomplished here at Sierra Vista High School," Mendoza said.

"This transformation is just the first step," he added. "As we place more of these new tools in the hands of our students, we are providing them with new ways to develop the skills they will need to compete in college and in our global economy."

Sierra Vista Principal Christine Simmons said she also has extended the library's hours with an extra hour in the morning and evening. After students began to use the facility three weeks ago, demand rose so sharply that Simmons hired two more staff members to assist students. The library, which used to draw about 10 students in the afternoons, now bustles with dozens right up until closing time. Students often check out all available laptops and are quick to reserve the study chambers for their projects.

Board member Carlos Lopez, a 1989 Sierra Vista graduate, said the new tools are essential to prepare students for the challenges of college.

"Our library now reflects the tools and collaboration we see at most colleges and universities," Lopez said. "Having these tools now, in high school, will create a smooth transition when our students take the next step in their education."

PHOTO

BPUSD_Library_1: Sierra Vista High School seniors Krishor Carrillo and Lluvia Santiago collaborate on the school yearbook in a study chamber that includes a tech-infused work stations. The school's \$175,000 library makeover, which includes five such centers, was unveiled Dec. 8.

BPUSD_Library_2: Students in Sierra Vista High School teacher Maggie Santiago's English class explore one of the library's five new tech-infused collaboration centers unveiled Dec. 8.

BPUSD_Library_3: Two lounge seating areas provide students with a comfortable place to do homework and collaborate on projects as part of Sierra Vista High's \$175,000 library makeover.

BPUSD_Library_4: Baldwin Park Unified Superintendent Froilan N. Mendoza, Board member Santos Hernandez, Jr., Board President Christina Lucero, Board member Carlos Lopez and Sierra Vista High School Principal Christine Simmons cut a ribbon during a Dec. 8 grand opening celebration for the school's library transformation.

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