

NEWS RELEASE

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Covina-Valley Unified Launches Summer Pilot Program to Bring CTE to Middle Schoolers

COVINA, CA – Covina-Valley Unified is opening new doors for middle school students through a pilot career technical education (CTE) summer program, giving incoming seventh- and eighth-graders early exposure to hands-on, real-world learning.

The program, open to Las Palmas, Traweek, and Sierra Vista middle school students, quickly reached full capacity after its launch. Organized into three sessions, the program offers students the chance to explore two CTE programs per session, including studio art and business entrepreneurship, sports patient care and medical patient care, aviation/aerospace, and theater production.

“We found that when students get to high school, they don’t always know which CTE pathway they want to try out,” CTE Coordinator Harmonie Redding said. “We wanted to introduce CTE at a younger age to give students earlier exposure to their options, helping them connect their interests and strengths to future possibilities. When students see how their education aligns with real-world careers, it not only builds motivation but also deepens engagement in the classroom.”

High school CTE teachers are leading the program, bringing their expertise and enthusiasm to the middle school level. Through interactive and thoughtfully designed lessons, teachers are helping students build foundational skills while also helping them identify which pathways they want to explore in high school.

Incoming Traweek Middle School seventh-grader Ethan Huerta is participating in the aviation/aerospace and acting CTE pathways. Huerta, who is inspired by his uncle – a professional pilot – said the experience has already deepened his interest in aviation.

“My favorite hands-on activity so far has been getting into ‘Clifford,’ the flight simulator,” Huerta said. “The whole simulator moves with you, and it’s just like flying an actual plane. I was even able to make the plane take off — I loved it.”

During the regular school year, Covina-Valley Unified middle schools offer a range of career-oriented electives and programs, including journalism, computer science, robotics, animation, and more.

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At Traweek Middle School, the Project Lead the Way program introduces students to foundational concepts in engineering, biomedical science, and computer science, while robotics and coding courses deepen their science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning. Sierra Vista Middle School's STEM course engages students in hands-on projects using the LEGO curriculum, sparking creativity and critical thinking. As a National Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Demonstration School, Las Palmas Middle School empowers students with the tools and strategies needed for college and career success. Across all campuses, these programs aim to ignite curiosity, foster confidence, and prepare students for the future.

Looking ahead, the District plans to explore further expanding CTE offerings at the middle school level. These efforts aim to strengthen alignment between middle and high school programs and give students a head start on discovering their passions.

"We are thrilled to bring this pilot summer program to life for our middle school students," Interim Superintendent Dr. Jonathan Blackmore said. "By introducing CTE earlier, we're helping students find their interests and setting them up for success in high school, college, and beyond."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

CVUSD_CTE1: Covina-Valley Unified is opening new doors for middle school students through a pilot career technical education summer program, giving incoming seventh and eighth-graders early exposure to hands-on, real-world learning.

CVUSD_CTE2: Organized into three sessions, the new middle school career technical education summer program offers students the chance to explore two CTE programs per session, including studio art and business entrepreneurship; sports patient care and medical patient care; aviation/aerospace; and acting.

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