



# WHITTIER UNION

## HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

*To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...*

NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Aug. 14, 2025 **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia **PHONE:** 909-447-2403

## Whittier Union Ushers in New School Year with Celebration, Commitment to Excellence

**WHITTIER** – Whittier Union High School District kicked off the 2025-26 school year with three days of vibrant back-to-school events that culminated in the first day of school on Aug. 13, when more than 9,582 students returned to campuses across the District ready to learn, grow, and thrive.

Students were greeted with lively band performances, balloon displays, welcome signs, and smiling teachers and staff, setting the stage for another year of doing *Whatever It Takes* "To Achieve and Maintain Excellence."

"I helped work on the backdrops and the welcome back posters for the school. It was fun getting everything ready for all the students' first day," Pioneer High School senior and Associated Student Body (ASB) member Devin Raya said. "This year I'm excited to start college applications and graduate as a Titan."

The back-to-school festivities began on Aug. 11 with Whittier Union's annual Day One event, bringing together staff from every campus to reflect, reconnect, and launch the school year with purpose and enthusiasm. During the event, Whittier Union Board President Dr. Russell Castañeda Calleros, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Jamero, and Superintendent Dr. Monica Oviedo shared remarks to help set a positive and celebratory tone for the new school year.

On Aug. 12, the District continued its tradition of Freshmen First Day, giving incoming ninth-graders a special opportunity to explore their campuses, engage in team-building activities, and meet their new classmates in a supportive and welcoming environment. Incoming freshmen across campuses kicked off the year with welcome assemblies, icebreaker activities, spirited performances from cheer, band, and choir, and campus tours.

"I really enjoyed meeting new people this morning, there was a lot of good energy," California High School freshman Yuma Enriquez said. "I'm really looking forward to joining the school's color guard team this school year."

As the new year begins, Whittier Union is building on a strong foundation of academic excellence. In the 2024-25 school year, the District raised its graduation rate to 93.8% – up from 93% in 2023-24 – and maintained or improved its California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress test scores in English, math, and science.

A-G college readiness completion rates also rose, emphasizing the strength of the District's many college-readiness programs, including Puente, Advancement Via Individual Determination, dual enrollment opportunities through Río Hondo College, and unique career-oriented academies.

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This school year also welcomes four new administrators, including Michele Jones, Whittier Union Director of Professional Learning and Leadership Development; Dyan Acevedo, Pioneer High School Assistant Principal of Business and Activities; Stephen Feng, La Serna High School Assistant Principal of Guidance; and Jennifer Medina, Whittier Union Director of Student Support Services. Each administrator brings a wealth of experience and a deep dedication to student success to the District.

"This is set to be another incredible year at Whittier Union, and I can't wait to see the passion, creativity, and hard work that our students and staff bring to every classroom," Oviedo said. "Together, we will continue to build on our legacy of excellence and ensure every student is prepared to succeed in college, career, and life."

PHOTO CAPTIONS

**WUHSD\_FIRSTDAY1:** Whittier High School students proudly display their Disney-themed artwork and prepare for a Welcome Assembly during the District's Freshmen First Day on Aug. 12.

**WUHSD\_FIRSTDAY2:** California High School Link Crew students line up to welcome the school's incoming ninth-graders during Freshmen First Day on Aug. 12.

**WUHSD\_FIRSTDAY3:** Pioneer High School students are welcomed back to campus with a photo backdrop and celebratory tunnel during the First Day of School on Aug. 13.

**WUHSD\_FIRSTDAY4:** Whittier Union staff gather for a welcome breakfast during the District's annual Day One event on Aug. 11.

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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.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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