



UPLAND UNIFIED

SCHOOL DISTRICT

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PRESS RELEASE

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Upland Unified Provides Student Wellness Supports with Dedicated Centers Across All 14 Campuses

UPLAND – Upland Unified School District is transforming student wellness with dedicated wellness centers on all 14 campuses, providing safe and welcoming spaces that nurture mental health, foster connection, and ensure every student feels seen and supported, all through a bold initiative funded by District resources and grants.

Each wellness center is tailored to meet the unique needs of its school community, but all share a calming atmosphere and dedicated staff who provide individualized and group support. Beginning in elementary school, students can visit centers to practice calming strategies such as deep breathing, light yoga stretches, or taking a short break with a book. At the middle school level, counselors lead proactive social skills groups and teach stress management strategies. High school wellness centers focus on student check-ins, emotional regulation, and quick “brain breaks” that allow students to reset and return to class ready to learn.

To further enhance services, Upland Unified partners with local universities to host six post-master’s interns and eleven pre-master’s trainees who are completing clinical hours toward licensure. These professionals provide short-term, school-based mental health care through California’s Child and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative. For students with ongoing needs, the District works with the Department of Behavioral Health to provide therapy for Medi-Cal eligible students.

“We believe in meeting the social and emotional needs of our students so they are better prepared to thrive academically,” Director of Support Services Mario Jacquez said. “By expanding our wellness centers, we have reduced wait times for students and brought essential services directly onto campuses. What once required referrals to outside providers can now often be handled in-house, which means students get help more quickly.”

Teachers also play a key role in supporting student well-being. The District provides professional development in social-emotional curriculum, suicide risk assessment, and strategies for recognizing when a student may need extra help. Middle and high school students also receive lessons on how to support peers who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts.

These comprehensive efforts recently earned Upland Junior High the national Recognized American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Model Program (RAMP) designation.

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This honor follows a rigorous three-year evaluation process that highlighted the school's data-driven counseling program and its measurable impact on student outcomes. Only 190 schools across 29 states earned the designation this year.

The District also partners with Care Solace, a mental health concierge service that helps families navigate the often-overwhelming process of finding private or community-based providers. The service streamlines eligibility checks, provider searches, and appointment scheduling, reducing barriers that families may face in accessing care.

"From the Board of Education to our educators and support staff, Upland Unified is committed to ensuring every student learns in an environment where they feel safe, supported, and connected," Superintendent Lynn Carmen Day said. "We care deeply for our students, and our wellness centers, partnerships, and training reflect our deep belief that supporting mental health is an essential part of supporting student success."

PHOTO CAPTIONS

UUSD_MentalHealth1: Sierra Vista Sports Academy's wellness center provides a quiet place where Ellie Magana reads a book during a short break from class.

UUSD_MentalHealth2: Asher Sanderlin (left) and Jasper Kuara (right) unwind with a friendly game of chess in the Sierra Vista Sports Academy wellness center. Each of Upland Unified's 14 campuses features wellness centers that provide a calm, inviting atmosphere when students need time to recenter.

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