

El Monte Union High School District

Community Committed to College and Career



PRESS RELEASE

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El Monte Union Launches Girls Flag Football, Celebrates First Season and Inspires Future Growth

EL MONTE – The El Monte Union High School District (EMUHSD) marked a momentous milestone this fall with the launch of its CIF-sanctioned girls flag football program, engaging student-athletes from all five comprehensive high schools and providing a platform to compete, develop skills, and enjoy a new athletic experience.

The initiative began last year when South El Monte High School (SEMHS) and Rosemead High School introduced girls flag football as a CIF sport. Their early success and strong student interest encouraged El Monte, Mountain View, and Arroyo high schools to join this school year, creating a Districtwide program that expands athletic opportunities for female students.

“Watching our student-athletes embrace this new sport with energy and teamwork has been inspiring,” Superintendent Dr. Edward Zuniga said. “This season isn’t just about wins on the field, it’s about discovering potential, challenging limits, and laying the groundwork for all students to grow as athletes.”

SEMHS led the District with a standout season, claiming the Mission Valley League championship, maintaining a 14-game winning streak, and featuring three receivers with 10 touchdowns. Rosemead High also demonstrated strong performance and teamwork, while Mountain View, El Monte, and Arroyo high schools showed growth, determination, and enthusiasm.

“At South El Monte, we’ve always aimed to balance boys’ and girls’ sports,” SEMHS Athletic Director Sonia Ayala said. “Flag football has allowed our female athletes to enhance their skills, strengthen teamwork, and enjoy the game, and our participation has grown since last year.”

On Oct. 28, Mountain View High School’s boys football and girls flag football teams toured the Rose Bowl Stadium, a visit that included a behind-the-scenes look at locker rooms, the press box, and the playing field, along with remarks from former professional football player James Washington on perseverance, teamwork, and leadership. Students were also asked to complete reflective essays before the tour, exploring their love of sports, its connection to the community, and the impact it has had on their lives to deepen their perspective during the visit.

“I’ve always loved sports, and joining flag football gave me a chance to try something new, meet teammates from different sports, and challenge myself,” Mountain View junior and flag football quarterback Marley Salazar said. “Being part of the Rose Bowl tour made it even more special, seeing the field and learning about its history has inspired me to keep pushing myself on and off the field.”

The tour was made possible through the generosity of John DeWitt, a member of the Rose Bowl Stadium’s Lasting Legacy group and whose family has been part of the local El Monte community since 1945.

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Inspired by his daughters' participation in high school and college sports, DeWitt said he wanted to provide student-athletes with a first-hand experience of the historic venue.

"Seeing the excitement and growth of these young athletes is incredible," DeWitt said. "With flag football now a recognized high school sport, it was a natural choice to invite the girls teams. We look forward to expanding this experience to other schools and sports across the District."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

EMUHSD FLAG FOOTBALL 1: Mountain View High School girls flag football players explore the California High School Football Hall of Fame inside the Rose Bowl Stadium during a tour on Oct. 28.

EMUHSD FLAG FOOTBALL 2: Mountain View High School flag football player Sara Ayala signs her name before leaving the Rose Bowl Stadium's original locker room, established in 1922, during a tour on Oct. 28.

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The vision of the El Monte Union High School District is to empower and motivate our students to be resilient, college and career ready, lifelong learners and contributing members of our global society.