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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 13, 2026

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Covina-Valley Unified Wrestling Programs Continue Legacy of Excellence

COVINA, CA – Covina-Valley Unified is helping transform wrestling into a more mainstream sport, with strong programs at every middle and high school. This commitment is exemplified by longtime powerhouse Northview High School, an up-and-coming program at Covina High School, and South Hills High School, where the wrestling program has undergone significant growth in recent years.

Starting with just one female wrestler during the 2024-25 season, the South Hills program has grown to include 35 girls on the roster. This year, the South Hills boys wrestling team placed second in the CIF Southern Section Coastal Division, and the girls team placed third, both achieving the teams' goals of finishing in the top five.

"To see my student-athletes fully commit and buy in to our philosophy really means a lot," Chris Lopez, South Hills head coach for boys and girls wrestling, said. "I just want them to be successful, and I am incredibly proud of what they've been able to accomplish."

Six South Hills boys and six girls also qualified for the Masters State Qualifying Meet, the most wrestlers the program has sent to Masters since 2008. From that group, two boys and one girl advanced to the State Championships, marking another milestone for the program.

Lopez, a Northview High alumnus who has been involved in wrestling since he was five years old, previously served as head wrestling coach at Northview before joining South Hills. Drawing on Northview's championship legacy, he has focused on rebuilding the school's proud wrestling tradition while emphasizing strong character both on and off the mat, including responsibility, accountability, hard work, and determination.

"These are essential life skills that will pay off all throughout life," Lopez said. "From high school and college to job interviews and future careers, I want my student-athletes to carry the confidence of a wrestler wherever they go. That's what will help them stand out."

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Across the District, wrestling programs continue to demonstrate growth and resilience. Northview High continues its tradition of excellence, with the girls wrestling team capturing the CIF Central Division title, claiming first place at the CIF Southern Section Masters Meet, and finishing third at the CIF State Championships. The boys team finished third in the CIF Inland Division, and both teams earned Valle Vista League championships. Covina High is also building momentum with an emerging wrestling program for both boys and girls.

The foundation for this success starts early, with all three middle schools offering wrestling programs that feed directly into the high schools, each supported by dedicated coaching staff and specialized wrestling rooms.

“Our wrestling teams really become a family unit,” Lopez said. “Young students see what has been built here and want to be part of it. The support from our school and District administration has been essential in helping wrestling grow into a more mainstream sport.”

South Hills stands out as one of the only schools in the San Gabriel Valley with two dedicated wrestling rooms, one for boys and one for girls, reflecting the District’s investment in expanding opportunities for student-athletes.

“Covina-Valley Unified is proud to offer outstanding athletics at all middle and high schools, providing more opportunities for students to pursue their interests and reach their full potential,” Interim Superintendent Dr. Jonathan Blackmore said. “The continued growth of our wrestling programs reflects the dedication of our coaches, the commitment of our student-athletes, and the strong support from our school communities.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

CVUSD_WRESTLING1: Covina-Valley Unified wrestling programs in every middle and high school reflect the District’s investment in expanding opportunities for student-athletes.

CVUSD_WRESTLING2: This year, the South Hills High School boys wrestling team placed second in the CIF Southern Section Coastal Division and the girls team placed third, both achieving the teams’ goals of finishing in the top five.

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