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NEWS RELEASE

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Covina-Valley Unified Students Get a Head Start on College Through Advanced Academic Programs

COVINA, CA – Covina-Valley Unified School District empowers students to challenge themselves academically through advanced programs and college-level courses that allow them to earn college credit and begin building their futures while still in high school.

At Covina High School, students can participate in both the longstanding dual enrollment program and the newly launched Early College Pathway (ECP), two opportunities that allow them to earn college credit while completing their high school education. These programs give students a head start on their college journeys while helping families save time and money on future coursework.

“Dual enrollment is great because students can get ahead and save both time and money by already completing several college-level courses,” Covina High senior Lucas Rodriguez said. “I have taken 11 dual enrollment classes and five special admit classes throughout high school, and I have already earned 42.5 college credits.”

Dual enrollment classes are offered on Covina High’s campus, ensuring students can take advantage of the program without needing to travel to another location. Classes are taught by Covina High teachers as well as professors from Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC). Covina High also offers an Aviation Career Technical Education pathway that serves as a dual enrollment course taught by a Mt. SAC professor, providing students with early exposure to careers in aviation.

In addition to dual enrollment, Rodriguez has taken advantage of Mt. SAC’s Special Admit Program, completing five additional asynchronous college-level courses during the summer to further accelerate his academic progress.

Beyond academics, Rodriguez serves as president of his school’s National Honor Society and participates in Interact, the Latino Culture Club, and STEM Club. He is also a three-sport student-athlete, competing in cross country, soccer, and track and field. Rodriguez plans to attend the University of California, Los Angeles, and hopes to pursue a career as an anesthesiologist.

Covina High is one of only 32 schools in California to be named a recipient of the 2026 California Exemplary Dual Enrollment Award, which honors schools that provide students with early access to college courses at no cost.

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“This recognition is a testament to the strong academic culture we have developed at Covina High,” principal Dr. Daisy Carrasco said. “Providing access to college-level coursework at no cost empowers students to challenge themselves, build confidence, and take meaningful steps toward their future goals.”

Covina High’s ECP offers another pathway for students to begin earning college credits as early as their freshman year. By the time ECP students graduate, many will have completed the general education requirements for a California State University or University of California school, meaning some students could enter college as juniors.

“I wanted to join ECP to get experience with college courses in high school, save my parents money, and earn college credits to get ahead of the game,” Covina High freshman Gwen Gutierrez said. “I also wanted to challenge myself and see how I could handle college-level classes early on.”

Now enrolled in her third ECP course, Gutierrez is already building momentum toward her future goal of pursuing a career in the medical field. At Covina High, she is also involved in the school’s medical pathway, participates in Associated Student Body, and competes on the volleyball and stunt teams.

Students across Covina-Valley Unified’s three comprehensive high schools have access to similarly rigorous academic opportunities designed to prepare them for college and career success.

At South Hills High School, students can participate in the International Baccalaureate Programme, a globally recognized curriculum that develops well-rounded, globally minded learners with strong critical-thinking and research skills. At Northview High School, students can pursue the Advanced Placement Capstone Diploma Program, an innovative academic framework that encourages independent research, collaboration, and analytical thinking.

Both programs allow students to engage in college-level coursework and earn college credit while still in high school.

“At Covina-Valley Unified, we pride ourselves on preparing every child for success,” Superintendent Dr. Jonathan Blackmore said. “These outstanding learning opportunities allow students to immerse themselves in rigorous academics while gaining a valuable head start on their higher education journeys. Programs like these demonstrate why Covina-Valley Unified truly is a destination district.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

CVUSD_ACADEMICS1: At Covina High School, students can participate in both the longstanding dual enrollment program and the newly launched Early College Pathway, two opportunities that allow them to earn college credit while completing their high school education.

CVUSD_ACADEMICS2: In Covina High School’s Early College Pathway, students can begin earning college credits as early as their freshman year, many earning enough to enter college as juniors.

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