

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **South Whittier Educator, Administrator to Retire After 52 Years in the District**

**SOUTH WHITTIER** – Following a 52-year career as an educator and administrator in the South Whittier School District, Associate Superintendent Cecilia Laidemitt will retire in June. Laidemitt holds the distinction of being South Whittier's longest-serving employee.

Laidemitt, who has been the District's associate superintendent of administrative services and personnel management for 10 years, has served as a teacher, principal and director during her five decades with South Whittier.

"Students think that educators live and breathe for the school, that it is their home," Laidemitt said. "South Whittier has become my home. It was a hard decision to retire, but it's time to go forward and enter the next chapter of my life."

Laidemitt dreamed of being an educator from childhood, playing teacher to her brother and friends and assigning homework and grading reports. She attended Whittier College, majoring in history and Spanish. She later earned teaching credentials.

She began teaching at Los Altos Elementary School in 1965 before becoming a curriculum specialist in 1982, working with kindergarten through sixth-grade students.

"I loved seeing the light go on for students, when they understood what was being taught and were excited about learning," Laidemitt said. "It was always heartwarming and fulfilling to see that I made a difference in their lives."

She served as a resource teacher for four years, and then as acting principal at Lake Marie Elementary and principal at Los Altos Elementary in 1987. From 1991 to 1999, Laidemitt oversaw curriculum as a director and assistant superintendent.

In 2007, Laidemitt was promoted to her current position, where she handles administrative matters, works with certificated and classified staff, and hires new teachers and employees.

"The experience has been interesting and fulfilling knowing that we look for the best teachers to instruct our students," Laidemitt said.

After retiring, Laidemitt plans to garden and spend time with her two grandsons. She also hopes to travel, specifically to see American landmarks like the Gettysburg Battlefield.

“Cecilia Laidemitt has become a staple of South Whittier, ensuring that our students receive a high-quality education from qualified staff who have their best interests at heart,” Superintendent Gail Baxter said. “Her drive and commitment will be tremendously missed. We wish her all the best on this exciting milestone, and we thank her for her leadership over the past 52 years.”

**PHOTO CAPTION:**

**051117\_SWSD\_LAIDEMITT:** South Whittier School District Associate Superintendent Cecilia Laidemitt – the District’s longest-serving employee – will retire from her post in June after 52 years.

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**MISSION/VISION:** The South Whittier School District holds students and staff to rigorous standards in order to prepare every scholar for 21st Century success in college and the workforce, within a safe and supportive environment. Our students are challenged to reach their full potential and develop their curiosity and thirst for discovery. Our district celebrates our families' diverse traditions, cultures, and languages as foundations for learning.