



# BUENA PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## PRESS RELEASE

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## Buena Park School District Students Recharge at New WellSpace Centers

**BUENA PARK, CA** – Buena Park School District’s middle school students are recharging while creating their own miniature Zen gardens, applying stress management techniques and boosting their social-emotional growth at newly established WellSpace centers.

Buena Park Middle School and Gordon H. Beatty Middle School WellSpace centers are areas where students can express themselves, decompress and seek out relaxation and mindfulness techniques with support from school counselors. Students participate in activities such as journaling, aromatherapy, art therapy and physical movement. The centers are also furnished with comfortable chairs, calming music and encouraging slogans.

The WellSpace centers were created through a partnership between the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) and CHOC. The Orange County pediatric healthcare system contributed \$20,000 for both centers.

The centers opened at the start of the 2021-22 school year and were designed with support from CHOC’s population health division, under the direction of its Vice President Dr. Michael Weiss, OCDE Manager of Mental Health and Wellness Care Coordination Mayu Iwatani, the District’s Student and Community Services Director Dr. Elsie Briseño Simonovski, and the school’s principals, staff and students.

“I appreciate connecting with students and having them relax and enjoy the WellSpace center,” Buena Park Middle School Counselor Ashley Rifsdal said.

Gordon H. Beatty Middle School Counselor Jodie Reddingius said the WellSpace centers are important for not only teaching students about stress management, but also helping boost their social skills and make connections with new people.

“I come here to catch up on homework and de-stress. I feel so relaxed and calm when talking to my friends at the WellSpace center,” Buena Park Middle School eighth-grader Cecilia A. said. “Everything in here is designed to help with nervousness and it’s all so calming.”

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Buena Park Middle School seventh grade student, Raphael E. and Gordon H. Beatty Middle School eighth grade student, Trisha P. both agreed that their school's WellSpace centers are perfect for taking breaks and focusing on their emotional well-being. They also mentioned visiting the WellSpace center at least once a day when able.

"The emotional well-being of our students is paramount in assuring they remain happy and successful, and our new WellSpace centers provide them with the relief they need," Superintendent Dr. Ramon Miramontes said. "I encourage all of our middle school students to use the new WellSpace center facilities to learn about relaxation and self-care."

## PHOTO CAPTIONS:

**BUENAPARK\_WELLSPACE1:** Gordon H. Beatty Middle School eighth-grader Sarah B. and Counselor Jodie Reddingius discuss the soothing nature of crafting a Zen garden while at their school's well-space center. The center was created to give students a space to express themselves, decompress and seek out new forms of relaxation.

**BUENAPARK\_WELLSPACE2:** Buena Park Middle School Counselor Ashley Rifsdal compliments seventh-grader Yahaira G. on her art work, which was created at the school's WellSpace center.

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