



## Press Release

**For Immediate Release:**  
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## MUSD Builds New Playground for Head Start Students with \$245K in Federal Facilities Grant

**MONTEBELLO** – Head Start students at Montebello Park Elementary arrived for fall classes this year to find a new playground constructed especially for their use, thanks to a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. The 1,750 square-foot recreational space has a new play structure, a painted bike trail and a shade structure to protect the students on hot days.

“This grant is continued acknowledgment of our dedicated leaders, faculty and staff in Montebello Unified who have endeavored, day in and day out for years, to ensure our students benefit from available resources that will support their overall well-being and education,” Montebello Unified Board President Edgar Cisneros said. “Thank you to our Head Start administrators for their efforts in obtaining this grant for our young learners.”

The new facility provides a dedicated play area for the preschool program. It was funded through a \$245,940 grant from the U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services – Office of Head Start for facility improvements.

Aida Ramos, the District’s Director of Head Start and Early Learning, and Montebello Park Principal Gina Andujo worked in collaboration with Mike Weaver, MUSD Facilities Project Coordinator, to propose the playground’s construction and see the project through to fruition. Teachers and staff previously had to walk Head Start students to the kindergarten playground. Their new playground is in a contained area that is next to the Head Start facility and will be completed when an artificial grass turf is installed.

“This is a win-win situation,” Ramos said. “With the Head Start program now having its own playground, neither Head Start or kindergarten classes have to work around a schedule to share a common play space.”

MUSD Head Start provides a part-day preschool program for children and families. The part-day program is 3.5 hours a day, Monday through Friday, following the District’s academic calendar. The part-day program is free to families that qualify.

“The addition of this new playground for our Head Start children illustrates our priority to ensure we are making certain that all students have the modernized facilities to develop, grow and learn,” Superintendent of Schools Susanna Contreras Smith said. “We are excited for our current and future students to use this new great new facility.”

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Head Start prepares children for school by emphasizing active learning and developmentally appropriate practices. The Head Start approach to school readiness means that children are ready for school and families are ready to support their children's learning.

**Photo Captions:**

Head Start1: Head Start students at Montebello Park Elementary arrived for fall classes this year to find a new 1,750 square-foot recreational space has a new play structure, a painted bike trail and a shade structure playground constructed especially for their use, thanks to a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.  
Head Start2: Head Start students at Montebello Park Elementary arrived for fall classes this year to find a new 1,750 square-foot recreational space has a new play structure, a painted bike trail and a shade structure playground constructed especially for their use, thanks to a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

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**Montebello Unified School District** is a dynamic learning institution employing top-quality educators. It is the combined work of many that allows the District to continue educating more than 30,000 students every year using the 40 Developmental Assets at all of our school sites. It is through everyone's efforts – students, parents, teachers, staff and administrators – that we are achieving the District's number one goal of raising student achievement. Learn more online at [www.montebello.k12.ca.us](http://www.montebello.k12.ca.us).