



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dulles Elementary Staff to be Recognized for Life-Saving Efforts

Three Staff Members Rescue Choking Second-Grader

The quick-thinking staff members at Dulles Elementary, including one teacher's aide who performed the Heimlich Manuever, are being hailed for rescuing a second-grade boy who began choking while eating his lunch in the school cafeteria this month. **The Board of Education will formally recognize the staff members during its meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Nov. 3.**

"I'm extremely proud of their quick and calm response to this life-threatening situation," said Dulles Elementary School Principal Robin Padget. "I've always known of their dedication to students, but this serves as a wonderful example of how they will go above and beyond to ensure that our children are safe."

On Oct. 2, Kevin Sandoval was eating his lunch when he began choking and hit his hands on the table. Caryn Cerdá, a teacher's assistant who works with the school's special education students, including Kevin, noticed that Kevin was turning red. She and fellow teacher's assistant Jimmy Perez immediately responded, with Perez calmly performing the Heimlich maneuver multiple times until the food was dislodged from his throat. The two staff members were assisted by custodian Juan Lara.

"I am very glad that Mr. Jimmy was there next to my son because he saved my son's life," said Kevin's mother, Lucy Sandoval, adding that Kevin is a happy and outgoing kid who loves to ride his bike and give lots of hugs. "I love my son so much and I don't even want to think about what might have happened if Mr. Jimmy wasn't there."

Perez attended training for the Heimlich maneuver and CPR in January with the encouragement of special education teacher Andrea Wooldridge.

"Our teachers and staff members at all of our schools have the tremendous responsibility of not only preparing students to be successful when they graduate from our schools, but also for their safety," said NLMUSD Interim Superintendent Ginger Shattuck. "I want to personally thank Mr. Perez for taking the initiative to obtain this critical safety training that no doubt made an impact on this child's life."

Perez and his colleagues will be recognized by NLMUSD Board of Education during Monday's board meeting. In addition, the staff members will be presented with \$50 gift cards courtesy of Clearman's Northwoods Inn in La Mirada.

"I commend our staff for recognizing that there was a problem and quickly responding to a student in distress," said NLMUSD Board of Education President Margarita Rios. "I feel honored to be able to highlight these staff members, who truly represent what it means to be part of the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District family."

PHOTO CAPTION: Kevin Sandoval, left, pictured with his younger brother Anthony, was recently assisted by Dulles Elementary staff members, who noticed he was choking during lunch. The staff members will be recognized during the NLMUSD Board of Education meeting on Nov. 3

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