



NORWALK-LA MIRADA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

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Vanessa laquinta recognized for her impact on students

Norwalk High School Counselor Honored by U.S. Congresswoman and Board of Education

Norwalk High School guidance counselor Vanessa laquinta was recently recognized by Congresswoman Linda Sanchez for her impact on students. At its Feb. 23 meeting, the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified Board of Education presented laquinta a commendation from Sanchez, who stood before Congress on Feb. 10 to read a tribute outlining laquinta's 17 years of work with Norwalk High School students.

"I rise today on the conclusion of National School Counseling Week to honor a deserving school counselor in my district. Vanessa laquinta joined Norwalk High School in 1998, and is the heart and soul of the school's counseling team. She has made a tremendous impact on the lives of Norwalk students because she believes that every one of them should be given the tools necessary to succeed in both college and life," Sanchez read.

The comments were entered into the Congressional Record - the official record of the proceedings and debates of the United States Congress.

"Vanessa is a wonderful representation of the staff at all of our schools, who work so hard to ensure that students have the support, resources and guidance to achieve their goals," said Norwalk-La Mirada Unified Interim Superintendent Ginger Shattuck. "We are so proud to have her as a counselor at Norwalk High and commend her for this recognition."

Norwalk-La Mirada Unified Board Member Margarita Rios, who worked with Sanchez's office to submit laquinta's nomination, congratulated the school counselor at a recent board meeting and presented her with a copy of the official Congressional Record, which outlines laquinta's dedication to students.

While laquinta continues to keep parents informed, she has used a personalized approach to meet the needs of all her students and utilizes social media to connect with seniors with reminders about student aid and scholarship deadlines.

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Rios spoke about Iaquinta’s “countless hours” spent working with her students on filling out college applications, applying for financial aid, and walking them through the college registration process.

“The best part about the work that Vanessa has done in these areas is that she has coordinated with her colleagues to make these things systematic at Norwalk High School. She and her team have developed a comprehensive and personalized approach to counseling that meets the academic, social-emotional, and post-secondary needs of all of our students,” Rios said.

Iaquinta is also the counselor for Norwalk High’s AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program that provides necessary support to students who have demonstrated potential and who plan to attend college, often the first in their families to do so.

In addition to her other work, this year she has helped expand Norwalk High’s Project Lead the Way program, which exposes students to the field of biomedicine.

“As a school district, we value the work of our employees and it’s so important that they’re recognized for the great work they’re doing on our school campuses,” said Norwalk-La Mirada Unified Board President Jesse Urquidi. “Our counselors are central to the success of students as they provide social-emotional and academic guidance for students. I want to thank Vanessa for her service to Norwalk-La Mirada Unified.”

The full text of the tribute can be viewed at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CREC-2015-02-10/pdf/CREC-2015-02-10-pt1-PgE185-2.pdf>

PHOTO CAPTION

IAQUINTA1: Norwalk High School Counselor Vanessa Iaquinta, center stands with, from left, Board Member Sean Reagan, Vice President Karen Morrison, President Jesse Urquidi, Norwalk High Principal Ryan Smith and Board Members Margarita Rios, Chris Pflanzner and Darryl Adams.

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