

Astro Blast

May 11, 2017



Next Week at Carr (5/15-5/19)

5/15-19	Mon-Fri	SBAC Makeups	Library
5/15	Monday	ILT Meeting	2:45/Room 301
5/16	Tuesday	Board of Review Meetings	8:30/6
5/17	Wednesday	Professional Development	
5/18	Thursday	Parent Meeting	8:30/6

Thank you to all of our teachers for being accommodating to our Testing Block Schedule, and a special thanks to our Math and Language Arts teachers for administering the SBAC test to our students. While we have been focusing on literacy this school year, looking forward to next year, I believe that we agree as a staff that EL strategies need to be at the forefront of our planning. Regarding reclassification numbers, in the 2014-15 school year, we were able to reclassify 22.4% (122 students) of our EL students while in the 2015-16 school year, we reclassified only 11.8% (58 students). This school year, with our focus on literacy, we are anticipating reclassifying about 80 students, but I believe that we can and should help all of our students regardless of the subject we teach. I have been looking through materials from WiDA (wida.us), an organization which is a resource for supporting the education of language learners, and would like to implement some of the ideas school-wide and within individual classrooms. Many of our teachers are already participating in these strategies, including multi-level reading materials (newsela, Encyclopedia Britannica, myON), and focus on academic language instruction (Word Walls, vocabulary). However, I believe that we have the capacity to more effectively help our ELs. In looking at our students' and their grades, we can see trends in where they seem to flourish, how they show what they know, and where they have encountered challenges. We can also consider where academic language development may be hindering academic achievement, or how to help academic achievement despite developing academic language. This is the direction that I would like to see our departments and grade levels moving towards.

In continuing to ready ourselves for next school year, your admin team has been working to bring our 2017-18 school year enrollment as high as possible by visiting the local elementary schools during their Open House nights. We have visited Jackson, Martin, Adams and King so far and will be attending Sepulveda, Diamond, Harvey and Monte Vista for their upcoming Open Houses. During our visits we gave away free popcorn to all of our incoming 6th graders and raffled Carr Spirit Wear. Our incoming sixth graders are very happy and looking forward to joining the Carr Family.

However, in finishing the current school year as strongly as possible, we do want to continue to do as much as we can to help all students to achieve their highest potential. As I mentioned last week, our High School Readiness rates improved greatly and are among the highest in the district. As staff members, we have all been publicizing the message of 2.5 or higher GPA and no Ds or Fs in Language Arts and Math, and I believe that this has been making a solid impact on our students. Last year, in preparation for 8th Grade Promotion, despite the increased expectations, our students reached the Promotion rate of the previous year. We are currently on track to have a greater percentage of our 8th graders promote, and I anticipate that the more we encourage our students to stretch, the more that they will meet our expectations. In our last 6 week period of the year, let's encourage all of our students to continue to do their best and to reach their goals in and outside of school.

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Carolyn Mendoza, Lead Counselor at Carr, has worked in 9 secondary schools in 3 school districts. She strongly believes in public education and what it brings to kids, especially Santa Ana's community of kids. Carolyn began her career in education as an ELD teacher at Parks Junior High in Fullerton Elementary School District. She taught at Parks for several years. She then had the unique opportunity to work as a Cultural Resource Teacher which allowed her to teach students about others' cultures through activities which emphasized the Hispanic, Afro-American, Asian, Native American and Jewish cultures.

Carolyn then came to Santa Ana Unified to Santa Ana high school. She taught ELD and English. She went back to school again to get her Masters in Education with a reading emphasis. She served for several years as the reading Department Chair at Santa Ana High. She taught at Santa Ana high for 11 years.

Carolyn then taught in the Anaheim Union High School District. She taught at Anaheim High, Western High, Kennedy and Savanna High and during that time worked to earn the appropriate Masters and counseling credential to reach her goal to be a counselor. Eventually, she was able to return back to Santa Ana Unified. Carolyn was hired at McFadden as the Title I Coordinator. After several years at McFadden, she was finally able to reach her goal of becoming a counselor at Spurgeon in 2002. She is now in her 4th year here at Carr.

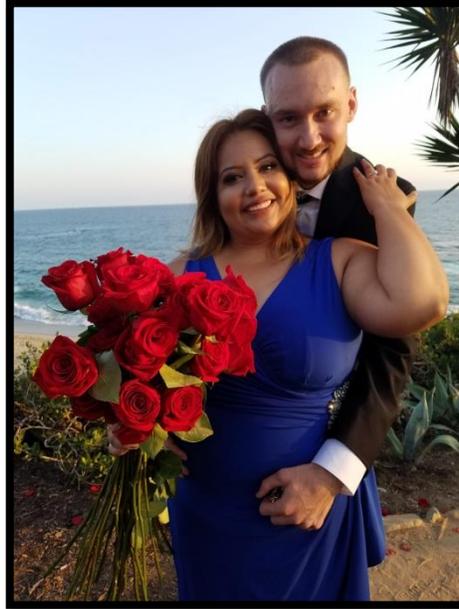
To serve the Santa Ana population, Carolyn worked hard to develop her Spanish fluency by taking classes at CSU Fullerton in Spanish, spending various summers in Mexico and Spain, as well as being corrected and coached by those around her, to develop her Spanish speaking ability.

Outside of work, Carolyn has three adopted kids, two boys and one girl. Two of them are now 28 years old and one is 27 years old. She is involved in many different hobbies including painting and drawing, particularly watercolor, as well as pen and ink drawing, yoga, gardening and reading. Carolyn is a member of a book club made of active and retired educators. Among books the club has read and discussed, Carolyn enjoyed The Zookeeper's Wife, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, and The Sympathizer, a Pulitzer Prize winning novel about the Vietnam War. She is also going through the process of updating her house, which has been a gradual process. She has begun to work on the outside of the house first. Carolyn likes to travel also. She has traveled to Spain, Portugal, Costa Rica, the Bahamas, Mexico and Canada. She enjoys travelling a lot and hopes to do more of it in the future.

What Carolyn has enjoyed most about her position as counselor is giving to kids, meeting families, and understanding what they go through, and their struggles. What strikes her are the similarities in the experiences that we all go through, these commonalities in humanity. She has learned a lot from those she comes in contact through the schools every day and is thankful to be able to make a genuine impact in doing something that she loves.

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Mayra Vidrios is a Santa Ana College graduate who received her Bachelors from UCLA in Women's Studies. Before deciding to become a counselor, she worked as an on-site social worker/wellness coach at a high school. She enjoyed the experience which led her to pursue her Counseling degree from CSU Long Beach. Mayra is also very active as an advisor for Pride Club. At another school, Mayra was a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) advisor and when students came looking for an advisor for their group, she wanted to be involved. Mayra enjoys being an advisor to the Pride Club because she feels for the kids and their struggles as they work to be accepted by their families. Mayra feels very connected to the Carr community and enjoys working with the students and parents. A graduate of Garden Grove Unified, she is able to relate to their situations because she has had experience with similar struggles and stories. Mayra is also on the PBIS and AVID committees and enjoys helping with those programs as well.

In her personal life, Mayra is engaged and busy planning her summer 2017 wedding followed by a honeymoon in Italy and Greece. She has travelled to various places beginning with being a high school exchange student to South Korea. While at UCLA, she studied abroad in Spain, and she has visited many places, especially any location where she knows someone and has a place to stay! She enjoys spending a lot of time with her family, including two brothers, a niece and a multitude of cousins. Mayra's favorite time of the year is Christmas. She loves spending time with her family during the holiday and to go shopping and buy presents for her loved ones. There's no feeling like giving someone something that they love.