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Pedley Elementary School Earns Grant for School Garden

Earth Day Celebration Planned for Friday, April 22

JURUPA VALLEY - Pedley Elementary School in the Jurupa Unified School District will celebrate Earth Day this year in the school's new garden with a special ceremony that will include a grant check presentation from the California Fertilizer Foundation (CFF).

The ceremony will be held at 9:15 a.m. on Friday, April 22 at the school, 5871 Hudson Street, Jurupa Valley, 92509.

Representatives from CFF will attend the event and present the school with a large check. Pedley is the recipient of a \$1,200 CFF grant. Teachers Dinah Palagi, Yolanda Tapia, Sarah Yates, and Griselda Huizar collaborated to write the grant application. Grant funds will be used to buy materials such as carts, hoses, rakes, seeds, soil fertilizer and other essentials to build a garden in the school's courtyard. The team also received a grant from Western Municipal Water District.

"We're thrilled to welcome the California Fertilizer Foundation to JUSD to celebrate Earth Day and to recognize the many creative ways our teachers are literally bringing science to life for our students," said Superintendent, Dr. Trenton Hansen. "Through this project, our students will gain lasting and meaningful knowledge and self-confidence while they enjoy time outdoors."

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All Pedley Elementary teachers have been invited to participate in the project and several classrooms are already actively tending the garden. So far, students have planted sunflowers, pumpkins, melons, cilantro, onions, tomatoes, peppers and radishes.

"For years, I have been wanting a garden for our Pedley students, especially our students in the Functional Skills (special education) program," Ms. Palagi said. "We know the value of kinesthetic learning and we wanted this opportunity for our students to experience the joy of seeing a garden from start to finish. Participating in this project gives them pride in our school...This is a dream come true for our students."

"This grant is a great opportunity to teach students that the sky is the limit," added Ms. Tapia. "We saw an opportunity and followed our hearts. Here we are, with the support of many, building a garden at our school."

She added that students will build confidence and character as they take pride in a garden that they helped to grow.

"What a great learning experience for students!"

CFF Director of Public Outreach and Communications Kayla Gangl will be representing CFF on Earth Day and will be presenting the garden grant during the Earth Day ceremony.

"The California Fertilizer Foundation has a goal to help interested schools across the state of California implement a garden program on their campus or enhance existing garden programs via the school garden grants. It is so incredibly important and beneficial for kids to get hands-on experience in growing fruits and veggies while really gaining an understanding of what it actually takes to produce the food they eat."

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ABOUT JURUPA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Jurupa Unified School District is located within Riverside County. JUSD is proudly made up of twenty-six schools total; fifteen elementary schools, one TK-6 music academy, one K-8 STEAM academy, three middle schools, three high schools, one continuation school, one adult alternative school, and one Pre-K school readiness center.