



Rosemead School District

3907 Rosemead Blvd.
Rosemead, CA 91770
www.rosemead.k12.ca.us
@rosemeadsupt

Contact: Cynthia Bracamonte
Exec. Asst. to the Superintendent
cbracamonte@rosemead.k12.ca.us
Tel 626.312.2900 x212
Fax 626.307.6148

News Release

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Rosemead SD Announces the Recognition to Encinita Elementary School Students and Staff by the Panda Restaurant Group, Inc. for its Achievements in *The Leader In Me* Program through their Annual Holiday Party

Rosemead, California: The Panda Restaurant Group, parent company of Panda Express hosted its 8th annual holiday party for local elementary school students on Friday, December 11, 2015 in recognition of their accomplishments as a “Lighthouse School” in *The Leader in Me* program.

This year, Panda has chosen to acknowledge Encinita Elementary School for achieving the “Lighthouse” status within the *Leader in Me* program. “Lighthouse recognition comes because of the results a school is achieving and the impact it is having on staff, students, parents, and the greater community. We are very proud of our principal, students and staff at Encinita School,” said Superintendent Dr. Enomoto-Perez.



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The celebration begins at 9:00 a.m. at the Panda Restaurant Group headquarters in Rosemead, California, where over 475 students were treated to a delicious Panda Express lunch, a carnival created by the Support Center associates and organized through Panda Cares program, special appearances by Santa & loved characters, along with a fun filled day.

The Panda Restaurant Group is a business partner in the *Leader in Me* program. The Panda Charitable Foundation which supports the health and educational needs of underserved children is of great assistance. *The Leader in Me* program is a school program that integrates timeless leadership principles with practical character and life skills relevant to today's challenges. By building self-confidence, interpersonal skills, elevating student achievement and reducing school-wide discipline problems, this program helps children become leaders in their field of interest.

Encinita's journey toward becoming a Lighthouse School has been a very authentic process of growing student leaders and realizing they are capable of much more than we ever expected. Our school was already a good school, but visiting A.B. Combs, the first Leader in Me and Lighthouse School and meeting Muriel Summers, their principal, inspired us and gave us a vision for how our school can become great. Achieving the Lighthouse status means so much to our students, staff, and parents, as well as community. To us, being a Lighthouse means each of us is a "light", serving as a beacon shining positive character and brightening the world around us.

For the past eight years, principals previously Mrs. Dawn Rock, now Dr. Jennifer Fang, and the entire Encinita Team worked together to create an authentic leadership culture that has transformed the school and community. Every single child is a leader on campus with special roles/jobs in every classroom and school-wide. Becoming a Lighthouse School was no easy feat. The rigorous new process involves 144 criteria that must be met. The areas involved include: lighthouse team, leadership environment, integrated instruction and curriculum, staff collaboration, student leadership environment, parent involvement, goal tracking, measurable results, and leadership events.

“Achieving this milestone is a wonderful recognition of all of our hard work. We are all very proud of our school, students, staff, parents, and community,” said Principal Dr. Fang. “The entire staff consistently models the Leader in Me paradigms. The leadership framework guides our actions. Every staff member has a key role to play in the development of student leaders. Last year, we synergized to create our school mission statement: "Inspired to Learn, Empowered to Lead, Enriched to Give." This statement exemplifies not only what we want as a school but has become each person's individual life mission. It's truly extraordinary that our students realize how much they have been given in life, which motivates them to give back to others. Every class comes up with their own giving projects each year and they blow us away with their generosity and kind hearts. We feel like we are a Mini Panda Corporation, where each Panda staff voluntarily gives of their time, resources, and finances, so we are also doing the same. The spirit of giving has been very contagious,” said Dr. Fang.

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“Encinita School and the Rosemead School District appreciate all of the efforts of Panda Restaurant employees on behalf of our children,” said both Principal Dr. Jennifer Fang and Superintendent Dr. Amy Enomoto-Perez.

The Rosemead School District Board and administration are proud to have Encinita students selected and honored during Panda’s annual holiday party. On behalf of Encinita Elementary School students and staff, the Rosemead School District thanks the Panda Restaurant Group for the honor.

For more information regarding the Rosemead School District programs and student accomplishments, contact the Superintendent’s Office at (626) 312-2900 x212, via fax (626) 307-6148, email cbracamonte@rosemead.k12.ca.us or visit www.rosemead.k12.ca.us.

For more information regarding The Panda Restaurant Group please visit www.pandaexpress.com or become a fan on Facebook. The Panda Restaurant Group, Inc. is the world leader in Asian dining experiences with more than 1,761 locations in 46 states as well as Canada, Dubai, Mexico and Korea. Founded in 1973, the privately held chain of fast casual, full service and quick service restaurant concepts includes Panda Express, Panda Inn and Hibachi-San.

For more information regarding Panda Charitable Foundation please visit www.pandacares.org. Panda Charitable Foundation’s mission is to bring hope to children in need. Our purpose is to support non-profit organizations serving the health and education needs of underserved children.

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The Rosemead School District (RSD) is a Local Education Agency led by Superintendent Dr. Amy Enomoto-Perez. For more information, please visit www.rosemead.k12.ca.us or contact the Superintendent’s office at (626) 312-2900 x212. Follow Superintendent Enomoto-Perez on Twitter @rosemeadsupt.