



Perris Press Release

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Rockets Take Flight at Railway Elementary School

Up, up and away was the sentiment expressed by Railway Elementary School students Thursday, as the magnet school in Perris took to the playground to launch a variety of rockets on the next-to-last day of the school year.

About 800 kindergartners through sixth-graders unleashed their rockets at the start of the school day. The younger classes used lung power to fire off the simple creations they made in school, taking a deep breath and exhaling as hard as they could when the launch countdown reached zero.

Older students shot off rockets powered by the tried-and-true fuel combination of baking soda and vinegar. Others stomped on a foot pedal, which forced air through a vacuum tube connected to their rockets and propelled them upward. Still others used muscle power to throw their rockets into the air.

Black powder powered the biggest rockets, which were sent skyward from a pad as students, teachers and Railway



Kindergarten students use lung power to launch the rockets they made in class.



A chemical-fuel rocket takes off from the basketball court at Railway Elementary School in Perris as part of the campus' second annual Rocket Day program. Some rockets reached heights of 1,100 feet.

administrators led the ignition-sequence countdown from 10 to zero and the launch button was activated. Those rockets reached heights of 1,100 feet before falling back to earth under small parachutes to the cheers of youngsters and adults.

Principal Rob French said Railway is a science, math and technology and launching rockets marked the perfect application to lessons learned throughout the course of the school year. And there was another reason, French said.

"It's fun!" he said. "Launching rockets never gets old, no matter how old you are. It really helps get the students interested and engaged in learning."

French said the school's motto is "going above and beyond."

"This fits into everything we do in terms of science and academic achievement," he said.

Students Jatnael Montez and Alejandro Acosta said they have studied energy, motion and propulsion this year—good stuff to know when designing, building and launching rockets.

Jatnael, 10, used a foot pedal to stomp his rocket upward while Alejandro, 12, launched his from the pad.

"It's fun to see all the colorful rockets fly through the air," Jatnael said. "It's fun being like young NASA scientists."

Alejandro said he learned that different rocket designs mean some will fly higher than others. A more streamlined rocket, for instance, will cut through the air better than a stout model because it produces less drag and resistance.

"We got to see a lot of different designs and see how high they go," he said.



Caleb Orozco's t-shirt says it all: he's a future rocket scientist.



Alejandro Acosta, 12, smiles as he pushes the launch button on his rocket.