



## Perris Press Release

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### Student-made Rockets Highlight End of Academic Year

The 800 students at Railway Elementary School reached for the sky recently, shooting an assortment of rockets into the air to help celebrate the end of the 2011 academic year.

School principal Rob French said the experiment in rocketry was only appropriate, since the school motto is "above and beyond."

Students worked individually and in groups to construct rockets capable of reaching hundreds of feet into the atmosphere. Some were powered by motors fueled with chemicals and launched via remote control.

Others ran on a mixture of baking soda and vinegar. The simplest took advantage of lung power.

"Everyone is excited and ready to go," said Pat Rodriguez, a first-grade teacher.

Rodriguez's students built a rocket out of plastic pipe and a two-liter soda bottle. Air from a compressor was forced through the piping into the bottle, building pressure inside. The idea was to release the pressure and shoot the rocket skyward. A first attempt failed because of inadequate pressure, but a second try proved a spectacular success.

Rodriguez released the built-up pressure and the bottle leaped into the air, traveling hundreds of feet to the cheers of the assembled students.

Other classes breathed life into their rockets—literally. Those rockets were powered by air supplied from deep breaths. Still other classes took advantage of the volatile reaction of baking soda and vinegar, which propelled small plastic water bottles upward.

The sixth graders built their rockets by hand over a couple of days in class. They used Super-Glue to attach fins and a nose-cone to the rocket booster. Their rockets were powered by motors fueled with chemicals.

Students like Tino Marisa and Candice Dyson, both 12, said they liked the challenge of engineering their own rockets. And of course they liked the end results too.

"I like putting things together," said Tino, who one day hopes to become a lawyer.

Added Candice, an aspiring computer designer: "I like seeing the rockets shoot up into the air."

The pair was not disappointed. From their launching pad in the school quad area, students and teachers initiated their own countdown from "five, four, three, two, one" before giving the command for blast-off. A few rockets never left the ground but others streaked skyward with a "whoosh" as they gained altitude.

Students, staff and teachers said they had a great time. It was an appropriate way to end the current school year at Railway. The school campus specializes in learning about math, science and technology.



Tino Marisa, 12, holds the rocket he made during class at Railway Elementary School in Perris.



Estella Mihalochick prepares the first-grade rocket for launch.



Austin Escalante and Pat Escalante look skyward after launching a rocket powered by baking soda and vinegar.