



home > city hall > press releases

## High-Tech Orange Vista High School Set to Open

City of Perris officials joined with their education counterparts Wednesday to dedicate Orange Vista High School, a \$47 million campus that will provide students necessary skills for immediate employment upon graduation.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, Mayor Pro Tem Rita Rogers and City Councilmembers Tonya Burke and Mark Yarbrough attended the ribbon-cutting and dedication, which also drew numerous other public officials and educators from Riverside County.

Perris City Manager Richard Belmudez and Deputy City Manager Darren Madkin represented municipal administration. Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley, a Perris resident, also attended.



The official ribbon-cutting at Orange Vista High School in Perris Aug. 3 brought smiles from City elected officials and educators.

Orange Vista High School, at Evans Road and Orange Avenue, will open next week with about 1,100 freshman and sophomores. The newest Val Verde Unified School District Campus provides a high school to residents living in north Perris and will relieve overcrowding at other campuses, including Rancho Verde High School.

At full capacity in two or three years, the campus will become home to 2,970 students.

Perris representatives were excited because Orange Vista serves as a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) campus and comes complete with fully equipped laboratories aimed at providing work skills in demand in Southern California right now. The school's career technical education program bases itself on the Norco College model, which is considered the nation's leading campus for logistics training.



Val Verde Unified School Board President Shelly Yarbrough said the dedication of Orange Vista High School proves "dreams do come true."

### Praise from elected representatives

Mayor Busch hailed the opening of the new campus, saying students, parents and City officials have waited for years to see it move from drawing board to reality.

"This is a beautiful campus," Busch said. "Not only will Orange Vista ease overcrowding, it will allow the students who attend classes here to grow up with the school. This is a great day for our students, educators, parents and the entire Perris community."

Val Verde school district president Shelly Yarbrough said the state-of-the-art campus will inspire students. Orange Vista High School boasts several classroom buildings, athletic fields, along with biology, chemistry and physics labs and an engineering lab complete with a robot.

"It is important for us to have a beautiful school in which to learn," Shelly Yarbrough said. "That shows that education is important to us. We've waited a very long time for this day. It's proof that dreams do come true."

Councilwoman Burke took a special interest in the ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony. Her daughter, Jaylyn, 14, starts her high-school career at Orange Vista and already is a member of the Associated Student Body, students considered campus leaders.

"Today is a really big deal," Burke said. "It provides a great neighborhood school for north Perris residents." Councilman Yarbrough called Wednesday's dedication "a great day for our community."

"Orange Vista High School is a state-of-the-art, cutting-edge campus that will bring tremendous educational benefits to our City," he said.

Yarbrough worked with Mayor Pro Tem Rogers, Val Verde representatives and area developers to complete an overpass on Orange Avenue that enables traffic easier access to the new high school. He called the partnerships another example of Perris' ability to forge relationships that benefit the entire City.



Perris Valley Daryl Busch, Val Verde school district President Shelly Yarbrough and her husband, Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough, flank the Orange Vista High School Coyote mascot.

### Bots on campus

Following the ribbon-cutting, Mayor Pro Tem Rogers joined Burke, City Manager Belmudez and Deputy City Manager Madkin on a tour of the campus. They toured the cafeteria, teachers' lounge, math classrooms and anatomy labs.

Both were particularly impressed with an engineering lab that boasted a sorting and packaging robot, just like the kind used in logistics centers throughout the country.

Joe Russo, the school's new manufacturing and logistics instructor, said by the time many students graduate from Orange Vista, they will have gained gain sufficient skills to work in the logistic industry. That pleased Rogers and Burke, as Perris is home to several large distribution centers that employ hundreds of workers who can earn a living wage without having to commute long distances.

"This is awesome," Rogers said. "This is thinking outside the box. This is about teaching Perris students all areas of logistics training. This is a really huge plus for our City. I'm very excited."

Burke's job with the State of California includes working with youths and adults looking for steady employment.

"I'm blown away by what I see in this laboratory," she said. "This is exactly what we need in Perris. It will create so many opportunities for our youth. It will allow us to create a pool of workforce-ready people."

City Manager Belmudez echoed those sentiments as he perused the lab.

"This is exciting for us because a lot of our students want to do this kind of work," he said.



Perris Mayor Pro Tem Rita Rogers and City Councilwoman Tonya Burke stand in front of a robot in an Orange Vista High School engineering lab, a campus set up to train graduates in the logistics industry.

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