

January 22, 2021

## Notes from Ojai Valley School

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Dear OVS Families,

Congratulations parents and students! We have officially come to the end of our first semester at Lower Campus and what a semester it has been. I am so proud of all of our students and staff for their hard work and adaptability as we ventured through online learning, new protocols and staying 6 feet apart from our friends while keeping a positive attitude. I can't thank the families enough for their support and encouragement.



One of the many wonderful OVS traditions is the All-School Class Hikes. This much-loved event is a fun way to end the semester while getting students in grades PK-8 outdoors to explore and appreciate the wilderness at our backdoor. Unfortunately, with the current spike in coronavirus cases, the challenges of maintaining our health protocols off campus, and the logistics involved in transporting more than 165 students and staff members to trail heads, we do not feel it is safe to go on hikes at this time. We do plan on getting every class out on the trails soon.

In the meantime, we are starting to offer weekend adventures for small groups of students. This past weekend the 8RC cohort kayaked at Ventura Harbor. After a land-based class about paddling techniques and harbor protocols by Mr. Inman and Mr. Wallace, they shoved off and explored the three branches of the Ventura Keys. Highlights included stopping at a private beach to play sand volleyball, playing tennis-ball tag while they paddled, resting in the grass at the picnic tables, jumping off boats, paddling out to the harbor entrance where open-ocean swells were rolling through, and Starbucks hot cocoa at the end of the day. Students also connected with their academic content with discussions about harbor design, construction methods, competing land use, coastal erosion, and conservation of wetlands.

Outdoor learning experiences are core to the OVS philosophy and the benefits of those experiences are arguably more important now than ever. We want students to get outside and develop an understanding of and appreciation for our environment. Outdoor pursuits also build confidence and help students develop strong communication and collaboration skills. It seems simple, but you won't get very far paddling a double kayak without good communication!

Mr. Wallace and Mr. Inman were very impressed with the kids last weekend, who were thrilled to be out with their peers having an adventure. Our goal is to continue to offer these small group outdoor experiences. Next week, the 8IT cohort will travel to Jalama County Beach Park for a day of boogie boarding, surfing, and hiking.

We look forward to sharing more photos and stories from these trips. For now, stay safe. Rain is on the way and if you have any questions about the [Rain Plan](#) we sent yesterday please let us know.

Kind regards,



Laurie Clark,  
Head of School  
Lower Campus

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### Lower Campus Virtual All School

Social studies teacher John Rowan leads this week's [Virtual All School](#). We're celebrating Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., taking inspiration from Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman at the Presidential Inauguration, and introducing our character emphasis for the month: integrity. Join us every week for our Virtual All Schools highlighting

teachers, staff, and students of the Lower Campus.

The inauguration came on the heels of moving MLK remembrances on both campuses. [Click here](#) to read more about those.

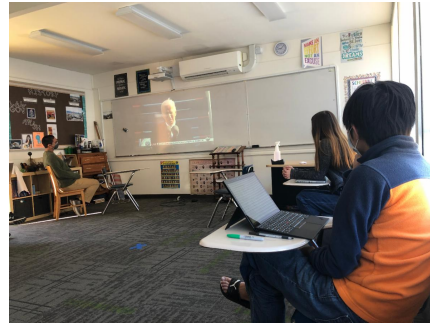


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## Presidential Inauguration

Wednesday was a historic day and our students were watching! OVS seniors viewed the inauguration during their Law and Society class, witnessing Joe Biden being sworn in as the 46th president of the United States and Kamala Harris being sworn in as the first woman, first Black and first Asian-American VP.

"Inaugurating the president is a historic moment," social studies teacher Laurel Colborn said, "and I wouldn't want my students to miss it." Mrs. Colborn also used the event as a lesson, having students write about Biden's speech by analyzing the tone and imagery.



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## Get Ready for Rain!

Remember umbrellas? Have rubber boots? Well, it's time to break out the rain gear! The National Weather Service is forecasting cool temperatures and 1-3 inches of rain next week. At the Lower Campus, we have developed an early dismissal plan for days when we may experience heavy rain. Read more about the [Rain Plan](#) on the website, and please make sure students in all grades dress appropriately for inclement weather!



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## Lunar New Year with a Mellow Ox

After the chaotic events of 2020, freshman Allyanna Westcott (L20) decided that 2021 needed a calm start. That's why, when deciding what to draw for the school's annual Lunar New Year greeting card contest, she went the untraditional route, choosing a napping ox, rather than a strong standing ox, to start off a new year. Every year Ojai Valley School hosts a Lunar New Year greeting card contest that features the animal of the year. The year 2021 is the Year of the Ox.

"I felt that after 2020, we needed a mellow ox kind of year more than a big aggressive ox kind of year," Allyanna said, won this year's competition by wowing the judges with her artistic ability.

[Read more](#) in a story by sophomore Ella Schuette on the student journalism website, On The Hill.



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## Summer Camp

OVS Summer Camp registration is open! Ojai Valley School offered a day camp experience in 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic. We adjusted our program by adopting strict health and safety protocols. Looking ahead to Summer 2021, we hope to offer both a day and resident camp experience that focuses on academic readiness for the fall while also giving campers the opportunity to make friends, be outside, and engage in healthy, fun activities that foster learning and skills development. Two-week camp sessions will be offered June 27-August 7. Learn more at [summer.ovs.org](https://summer.ovs.org).

