



SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENTS

SOLANA BEACH SCHOOL DISTRICT
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Making School's Core Beliefs Their Own at Solana Ranch

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"To Inspire Greatness in Tomorrow's Leaders!" Mission Statement, Solana Ranch

Solana Ranch students and staff are guided by several core paradigms—*Everyone can be a leader; everyone has genius; and change starts with me.* We purposely create learning and leadership opportunities with these beliefs in mind and, as a result, our students feel pride in themselves and their school, and they are empowered to make a difference here and in their communities. How do we help them see themselves as leaders? There are many opportunities at Solana Ranch.

Student-Led Conferences: All students, Kindergarten-grade 6, take an age-appropriate leadership role in conferences. They discuss strengths and areas of growth, set goals, and develop self-efficacy and a growth mindset to be successful.

Photos: (Below) The Solana Ranch Leadership Council is visible on campus with bright red t-shirts; (Top right) This group of students, called the Galaxy Girls, meets outside of school and recently researched ways to create a universal playground that visually impaired children can safely enjoy.



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When I delivered blankets to the homeless, I felt grateful for what I have and that I could show others that they matter and are important and cared for.”

Dax, 5th grade student

“

Sometimes the jobs in the classroom are specifically for you. This makes me feel special.”

Jenna, 6th grade student



“

I get the responsibility to speak in front of the school and this makes me feel happy and proud, and it prepares me for life and my future career as I pursue my dreams.”

Ariana, 6th grade student

“

Genius Hour is fun, because you have choice; you can try something new, you can be creative, you can help others, you can synergize with others at school.”

Sajan, 5th grade student



Making Beliefs Their Own (cont.)

Genius Hour: Held in the afternoon once each week, these provide a chance for students to explore their interests and talents, teach others, present information, and lead through action. Projects include: writing a play; discovering a new molecule; hosting a YouTube channel; developing a mini-arcade for people with disabilities; composing music; making a fidget spinner that is not distracting to others; building a foosball table; and, creating an allergy-conscious cookbook.

Classroom Leadership Roles: These roles, which students can apply for through a resume process, help children contribute to their school.

Morning Leadership Assemblies: Our student-driven assemblies involve speeches, music, recognitions, and community service projects.

Hawk News Network: This weekly news broadcast is a before-school club where students write, film, and produce a show that supports a positive school culture. One student, Kaelyn, said, “HNN makes you feel like an empowered leader because you can spread awareness on issues and important events, and it is completely student-produced.”

Community Service Projects: We support academic growth, as well as a service mentality among students, which is earned through the coordination of school-wide collection drives.

EnviroHawks: Students meet once a month to raise awareness about the environment, zero waste, and sustaining the earth. Participation includes morning announcements, classroom visitations to talk about sorting trash and packing zero-waste lunches, Board meeting presentations, green waste and worm composting from our Child Nutrition Services Department, and research on eliminating single-use plastics.

Student Leadership Council: These students demonstrate leadership through tours, assemblies, and event-planning in order to help make Solana Ranch the best possible place for students.

Outside of School: The Solana Ranch bulletin board is a celebration of student leaders in their roles outside of school through photos.

It is a joy to see our students showcasing their unique abilities and demonstrating one of our main mantras: **Be Great! Be a Leader!**

Photo: (Left) Students participate in Operation Gratitude, writing letters to U.S. troops.

