

Back to school: Changes await students, teachers at some districts

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By U-T staff

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NORTH COUNTY — Some students have already returned to school and others will start this week or within a week. Many North County school districts are undergoing changes during the new academic year. Here’s a rundown from some of the larger districts in the area:

Carlsbad Unified

Carlsbad High School students will hit the books in fresh classrooms when the campus opens its new classroom complex in December. The school’s wrestling team will also have a new home in November when it moves into the new wrestling building that is half finished.

Other districtwide additions include a new food service sales system set to go live in November, and new fencing at Buena Vista, Kelly, Magnolia, Jefferson, Pacific Rim and Calavera elementary schools and Miccle and Aviara Oaks middle schools.

Carlsbad Unified serves more than 10,700 students at 14 campuses.

Escondido Union School District

Teachers, administrators and other staff members in Escondido’s K-8 district are returning with a new motto: “It begins with me.”

“A Culture of Universal Achievement — It Begins With Me” is the theme for the school year and beyond, said Superintendent Jennifer Walters. The district launched the effort at a first-of-its-kind back-to-school event Wednesday at the California Center for the Arts, Escondido. More than



year, bringing it to 180.

An estimated 7,975 students are enrolled in Escondido's four high schools and nontraditional programs. Classes resumed Monday.

Oceanside Unified

Oceanside Unified plans to reopen Santa Margarita Elementary School on

begin this winter. Student parking and parent drop-off have been moved to two lots on San Marcos Boulevard across Discovery Street, said Superintendent Kevin Holt. Campus supervisors will monitor the residential area near campus, particularly Lake San Marcos, to remind students to use the “ample” student parking rather than neighborhood streets, Holt said.

San Marcos Unified has nearly 19,000 K-12 students at 18 schools.

Vista Unified

Some parents and students in Vista Unified School District will have drastic changes to their daily routines, as Olive Elementary has been moved onto the campus of Washington Middle School and Crestview Elementary has been closed.

A divided school board decided in February to move Olive, which had shown significant academic improvement in recent years. They also decided unanimously to close Crestview. Both were to save money and adapt to declining enrollment.

The move, once projected to cost \$382,000, is now expected to cost as much as \$615,000. That will be paid for with redevelopment money, allowing the district to save about \$230,000 a year from the general fund, school officials say.

Another noticeable change in the district is at a sports field at Vista High, where grass has been replaced with artificial turf.

The school district plans to offer additional support classes for English learners and accelerated instruction to bring students to grade-level reading skill with a program called “Language!”, on top of traditional English classes.

Vista Unified has 31 schools, including an adult education school, and about 22,000 students.

Other North County school districts

- The Encinitas Union School District is replacing portable buildings at Mission Estancia Elementary School with four classrooms and a media center, a \$1.65 million project, roughly half of which came from city developer fees. Construction is scheduled to be complete by November. The district is also setting up its nine campuses for wireless Internet, a \$1.7 million cost paid for through Proposition P bond measure funds.

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