

Superior Court of California
County of Santa Clara

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The Superior Court Celebrates 2024 Read Across Santa Clara County

Santa Clara County Judges adopt Windmill Springs School

SAN JOSÉ, Calif. (March 5, 2024): To celebrate Read Across Santa Clara County, judicial officers from the Santa Clara County Superior Court delighted the Windmill Springs School (K-8) student body with captivating stories on Friday, March 1, 2024. This event, aimed at promoting literacy and fostering positive connections within the community. The day's engagement culminated with 22 judicial officers joyfully sharing the gift of reading with 27 classes, leaving an enduring impression on the students' love for literature and leadership.

Principal Becky Roussin shared encouraging moments from the event, recalling, "I was in a first-grade classroom where a student asked the judge if he was a real judge, and when he said yes, his eyes got big, and his jaw dropped. Seeing and interacting with a judge can make a profound impact. Later, I witnessed the excitement among the middle school students during the *Judges in the Classroom* presentation and their excitement shows their interest in becoming lawyers and judges one day."

Hon. Julia Alloggiamento, Chair of the Court's Community Outreach Committee, emphasized the significance of this annual event, "Every year, our judges eagerly anticipate this event as it presents a unique opportunity to establish meaningful connections with young students and highlight the diversity within our judicial system by exposing them to "real judges" from all different backgrounds. Since Windmills Springs is a K-8 school, instead of listening to stories, the 7th and 8th graders treated to a presentation from the Power of Democracy's Judges in the Classroom program. This interactive assembly provided students education about the role of a superior court judge followed up by an opportunity to "be the judge" themselves by wearing the robe and reaching a judgment, after listening to their classmates' arguments. Educating the younger students about the core values of our profession (fairness and justice) through age-appropriate books and the older students about the process by which judges make

difficult decisions every day through ideally provided the youth with an invaluable *and* entertaining lesson in civics."

Looking ahead, the Court remains committed to supporting educational initiatives, announcing plans to adopt another school in 2025. As demonstrated by the success of this year's Read Across Santa Clara County celebration, the Court recognizes the transformative power of reading in broadening horizons and shaping lives.

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Figure 1- Hon. Julia Alloggiamento helping a TK student try on a judicial robe.



Figure 2- Hon. Christopher Rudy reading to First Grade students.



Figure 3- Commissioner Johanna Thai Van Dat promoting the importance of kindness with kindergarteners.



Figure 4- Hon. Ram Fletcher speaking with Fifth Grade students.



Figure 5- Hon. Rebeca Esquivel-Pedroza introducing the name of the book she to read to a First Grade class.



Figure 6- Hon. Micaél Estremera sharing insight about leadership with a Fifth Grade class.



Figure 7- Hon. Julia Alloggiamento providing a "Judges in the Classroom" presentation to Seventh and Eighth Grade students.



Figure 8- Becky Roussin (Principal, Windmill Springs School), Hon. Julia Alloggiamento, Kristina Ravo (Coordinator of Extended Learning Opportunities, Franklin McKinley School District)