



THE PIVOT POST

WINTER 2025

Pivot Goes to the Pumpkin Patch



Photo Credit: Kaleb McDowell. From Left to Right: Javier Cervantes, Kaleb Aguirre, Caleb Cano-Moreno, Zoe Martinez, Vanity Rodriguez, Gail Gonzalez Coloyan, Alexia Knight, Aiden Ilaoa, Samantha Brito, Lily Longoria, Liam Wending, Bree Cassady

Liam Wending Staff Writer

On October 23, 2025, students partook in a field trip to Bates Nut Farm in Valley Center California. A minimal \$12 fee bought students tickets to enter the hayride, participate in the corn maze, and take home a trickster pumpkin of choice. Optional activities for an additional fee included riding the mechanical bull, horse and pony ride, eating at the Hawaiian Barbeque stall, or grabbing ice cream or funnel cake.

Students also enjoyed strolling through the rustic-themed gift shop, described as having sweet smells, dozens of barrels of candy, trinkets and random things, souvenirs, Halloween decorations, Christmas decorations and fresh fudge (a pound of fudge was \$20). Students received a free half pound of fudge for every pound and a half purchased.

Students had mixed opinions about what they enjoyed most about this field trip. For Alianna Amador and others, it was shopping. "Going to the gift shop," Amador, 7th grade, stated. "I bought candy corn," Lily Longoria, an 11th grade student, noted. For Leilani Lerma it was "Getting Takis."

Just outside the maze was a lineup of scarecrows creatively decorated by local community members. Bates Nut Farm celebrated their 34th Annual Scarecrow Contest this year. The first prize winner receives a cash prize of several hundred dollars.

Multiple students mentioned that "punching tickets" in the maze was the highlight of the trip. "I liked the scavenger hunt - finding the mailboxes and hole-punching my ticket," Kaleb Aguirre, 7th grade student, said.

"The food was the best." Caleb Cano-Moreno, another 7th grade student, mentioned. "The funnel cake was my favorite. The cookies and cream ice cream was sweet. I was leaving and had to go back and get the chocolate covered strawberries."

Quite a few students had changes they wanted to be made for the next field trip including "more time," Amador stated. "I would have liked to have done the petting zoo," Longoria commented.

Recommendations for next year are to "Wear shorts, but bring a jacket for the morning," Aguirre stated. "Bring enough money" Longoria stated. "Twenty dollars is not enough," Aguirre added.

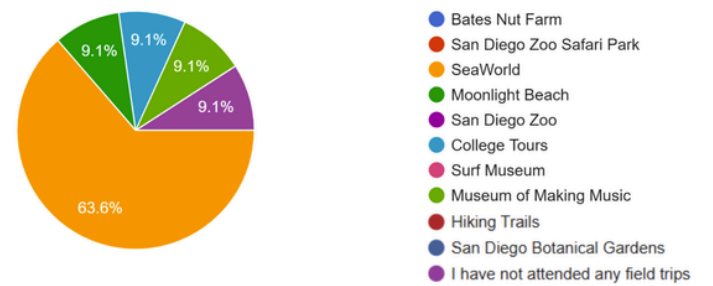
Student Survey Results

Kaleb Aguirre Staff Writer

Curious about what students are interested in at Pivot, a poll asking about field trips, movies and activities was given. Here are the results.

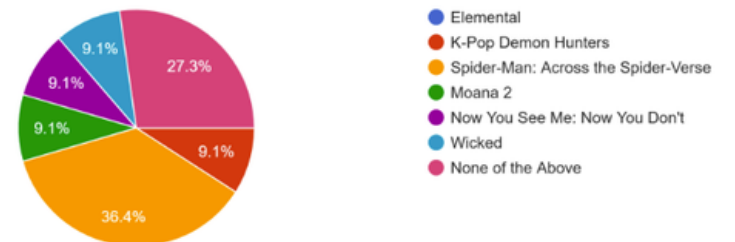
The majority of students enjoyed Sea World as a field trip.

What is your favorite field trip at Pivot?



When it came to movies that were recently released, students selected *Spiderman: Across the Spider-Verse* as the favorite.

What is your favorite movie that was recently released?



Amongst the favorite TV Shows were, *Stranger Things*, *Disney Twisted-Wonderland the Animation*, *9-1-1 Lonestar*, *Jujitsu Kaisen*, *Two Broke Girls*, *All America*, and *Amazing World of Gumball*.

Classes that Pivot doesn't currently offer that students would like to see are: Dance, Chemistry Labs, Running, Art, Choir, Robotics, Pickleball, and Shirt Design.

Meet the New Co-Site Administrator



Image Credit: Alex Ritz

Caleb Cano-Moreno Staff Writer

Alex Ritz is the Co-site Administrator and Educational Coordinator based out of the San Diego location. Ritz has been teaching for 7 years, 5 years as a full-time teacher and 2 years while earning his teaching credential. Ritz attended UC Santa Barbara as an undergraduate, earning a degree

in Philosophy and Psychology. He then attended Cal State Long Beach for his teaching credential.

Ritz was not always a teacher. “Before being a teacher I was a counselor for adults with developmental disabilities,” Ritz said.

When asked what made him want to transition into teaching, Ritz responded, “I have always loved education and working with kids. I want to inspire them to find a love of learning.”

Ritz’s background in counseling gave him a unique perspective on teaching. Counselors provide support for life skills, social and emotional learning and help people advocate for self-sufficiency. His role as an educator at Pivot Charter School has allowed him to bring over these valuable skills to youth.

Ritz attributes his successful transition into teaching to his wife. “My wife, Kate, inspired me to achieve my goals,” Alex shared. “She encouraged me to get into teaching and helped me through the tough times.”

When not teaching, he spends much of his free time with his family, dogs, and friends. He also enjoys listening to and playing music, hiking in the woods, and visiting the beach. When asked what advice he has for students, he emphasized perseverance. “Keep your goals in mind, especially when things get tough. Practice resilience and you can achieve whatever you put your mind to,” Ritz added.

Meet Your Other Site Administrator



Photo Credit: Gail Gonzalez Coloyan

Lily Longoria *Editor in Chief*

Gail Gonzalez Coloyan serves in a similar position to a principal here at Pivot San Diego. Gonzalez Coloyan is a confident, positive, trustworthy person and excellent at math.

Gonzalez Coloyan was born in the Philippines, but grew up in San Francisco Bay. Teaching was not her first profession. She received her Bachelor of Science from

UC Berkeley (Cal), and then worked in tech in Silicon Valley for 8 years. She wouldn’t start teaching for many years later. When asked why she started teaching, Gonzalez Coloyan shared, “When I was in high school I moved to LA and moved back and noticed a lot of my friends from high school had dropped out and realized I wanted to make a difference.”

Gonzalez Coloyan enrolled in a new program starting on her new path. “I then went back and got my masters and teaching credential at Stanford,” Gonzalez Coloyan said. “Math Curriculum in Teaching and Instruction. After teaching for about a decade I got my doctorate at USC in Educational Leadership.”

Gonzalez Coloyan had many options, so why did she choose Pivot Charter School? “I felt like I could make a big difference at this school as opposed to just teaching math and lecturing all day in a traditional classroom.” Gonzalez Coloyan shared. “I do like the small community. We give each student what they need as opposed to having the same instruction for every student. At Pivot, the curriculum is customized.”

Pivot Charter School does not follow a traditional school day. “There is no normal day,” Gonzalez Coloyan explained. “I come in at 8am and check my students’ progress. I check their attendance from the previous day and work with students from 9am-12pm. Depending on which day, I am leading or helping students directly. Then I usually have meetings back to back until 4pm. I am on campus on Tuesdays, Thursdays and some Fridays.”

Like all teachers, Gonzalez Coloyan also has a life outside of her academic profession. “I enjoy traveling with my family and friends,” Gonzalez Coloyan commented. “I like to dance Salsa and Hip Hop. I like to do Yoga. I like to run and bike. I am a certified Yoga instructor and have performed Polynesian style dance for Royal Caribbean Cruise lines back in the day before I had three kids.”

Gonzalez Coloyan has traveled all over the European continent, Asia, the Caribbean, Central America and South America. Gonzalez Coloyan left us off with one encouraging piece of advice. “Keep your eye on your goals and make a plan to get there,” she concluded.

Back to School Beach Day



Photo Credit: Bree Cassady. Left to right Back: Vanity Rodriguez, Promyse Edanks-Flood, Liam Wending, Alianna Amador, Alexia Knight, Lily Longoria, Samantha Brito, Gail Gonzalez Coloyan, Kaleb McDowell.

Alianna Amador *Managing Editor*

Pivot students took a break from school for a few hours and headed down to the shoreline.

On September 30, 2025 students from Pivot San Diego attended a field trip to Moonlight Beach in Encinitas, CA for their annual Back to School Barbeque. Students engaged in a variety of activities including building a bonfire, playing volleyball, football, walking on the beach, wading in the water, collecting shells, eating lunch and participating in community service beach cleanup.

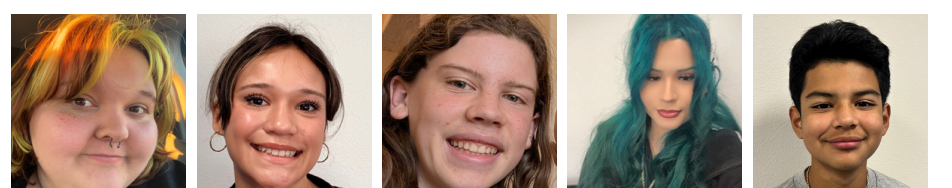
“It was nice to have more than a 15 minute break to hang out with friends” Liam Wending, an 8th grade student, commented.

Although they called the field trip a barbeque, it was done picnic style. “Well, it wasn’t really a barbeque, but the sandwiches were really good,” Josiah Sauls, an 8th grade student shared.

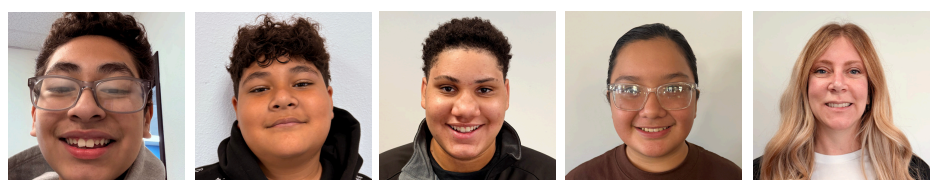
“It was a sunny day,” Javier Cervantes added.

Overall this field trip was received well. When asked what they might change on future trips, students varied in response. “More time there would have been good,” Sauls stated. Staff chooses the chaperone groups. “[I would have liked to] be able to choose our own car groups, instead of having them assigned to us,” Cervantes recommended. “I would have liked to have walked to the rock garden a couple of blocks down the street,” Wending requested.

Meet the Staff



Lily Longoria Editor in Chief Alianna Amador Managing Editor Liam Wending Staff Writer Leilani Lerma Staff Writer Caleb Cano-Moreno Staff Writer



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