

Valencia Middle School Students Earn Amateur Radio Licenses

On Thursday, April 11, 2025, seven students from Valencia Middle School demonstrated their hard work and growing technical skills by successfully passing their amateur radio licensing exams. Three students earned their Technician licenses, officially joining the ranks of licensed amateur radio operators, while four others—who had previously earned their Technician licenses earlier this school year—successfully passed the more advanced General class exam, upgrading their operating privileges.

This most recent testing session brings the total number of Valencia Middle School students who have earned amateur radio licenses during the 2024–2025 school year to 14. In addition, five of those students have now advanced to the General class level, a significant achievement that allows for greater access to amateur radio frequencies and expanded operating capabilities. These milestones are a testament to the students' enthusiasm for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and their commitment to exploring real-world applications of communication technology.

A key figure in the program's success is Mr. Kennedy, a science teacher at Valencia Middle School and a licensed amateur radio operator himself, with the callsign KJ5AEV. Mr. Kennedy has been instrumental in organizing the program, preparing students for the exams, and integrating amateur radio into the school's curriculum. Thanks to his leadership and dedication, amateur radio is now offered as an elective class, giving even more students the opportunity to explore this exciting field in a structured, hands-on learning environment.

In December 2024, the school proudly received its own radio club callsign, KJ5DZQ, issued by the FCC. This official callsign has given the students a sense of identity and pride, and it allows them to participate in real-world radio communication under the school's banner. The formation of the club has also opened doors to activities like contacting operators across the globe, participating in contests, and learning about emergency communication protocols.

These accomplishments were made possible through the support of grants from META (Facebook) and the ARRL Teachers Institute, both of which helped fund resources and equipment for the school's amateur radio program. Central to the program's success has been the strong partnership between Valencia Middle School and the Valencia County Amateur Radio Association (VCARA). Members of VCARA have played a vital role in making the program a reality—securing funding, building the school's amateur radio station, mentoring students throughout their studies, and serving as volunteer examiners during FCC testing sessions.

This collaboration has not only provided students with hands-on learning opportunities but also fostered a lasting interest in science, electronics, and communication. It exemplifies the power of community involvement in education and the impact of exposing students to new and exciting fields.

The Valencia County Amateur Radio Association extends heartfelt thanks to all who have contributed their time, expertise, and support to the amateur radio program. With continued partnership, passion, and the guidance of dedicated educators like Mr. Kennedy, the future looks bright for the next generation of young radio operators.