



# F O N T A N A U N I F I E D

# FORWARD

## Newsletter

## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



As the new superintendent of Fontana Unified School District, I am honored to join the members of the Board of Education in their pursuit to inspire and nurture every student. To this end, we are launching: **Reconnecting: Listen, Learn, Lead Together**. The purpose of this plan is to establish a set of intentional and inclusive activities as a foundation for the first 100 days of my tenure as Superintendent. This plan reflects my strong desire to make a thoughtful and deliberate entry into Fontana Unified School District by taking the necessary time to Listen. Learn. Lead Together. As the school year draws to a close, I want to commend all our students on their incredible accomplishments and thank our dedicated teachers and staff for empowering our students to dream bigger and explore their full potential. Thank you for all of your hard work this year; I know that great things await for Fontana Unified in 2023-24!

## HUMAN RESOURCES ROUNDUP RECRUITMENT/HIRING

The Human Resources team has experienced a whirlwind of recruiting, testing, interviewing and hiring in recent weeks, conducting several interviews for numerous positions – including a Director III position, special education teacher aide positions, principal positions and various custodial positions. The department has also reviewed and initiated plans regarding a classification study of management positions in FUSD, which was initiated at the start of this school year. The District contracted Ewing Consulting for this work; they have completed a substantial amount of the study and are finalizing their findings and recommendations. In the brief preview they have shared, it was indicated that there are areas of focus the District needs to address, including competitive compensation levels, defined scope of work, relationship between job classifications and the structure of departments to maximize the ability to better serve FUSD students and their families. Work is also being done to upgrade and modify job descriptions. More information will be provided in the coming weeks as the study is completed and a systematic plan for making the necessary transitions is implemented.

## OTHER HR ACTIVITIES

The District will honor the certificated and classified employees of the year, who go above and beyond to provide high-quality education services, with a celebration on May 10 at Jurupa Hills High School. The event will have a country theme, and attendees are encouraged to don their cowboy boots and join in the festivities.

## DOLORES HUERTA INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY EARNS SEAL OF EXCELLENCE FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION



Dolores Huerta International Academy (DHIA) has earned the 2023 Seal of Excellence School Award from the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE), celebrating its commitment to preparing students for college and careers through its popular dual-language immersion (DLI) program. DHIA is one of few K-6 full DLI and International Baccalaureate (IB) authorized schools in the country. The Seal of Excellence is one of CABE's highest awards and recognizes schools for their vision of biliteracy, multicultural competency and commitment toward educational equality for all. DHIA, which opened its doors in 2016 as the District's first DLI school, serves as a globally focused, multilingual educational pathway for elementary school students, offering both Spanish/English DLI and the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP).

# AROUND CAMPUS

## FONTANA UNIFIED STUDENTS MAKE PROFESSIONAL THEATER DEBUT IN “SCHOOL OF ROCK,” “THE LITTLE MERMAID”



Fontana Unified elementary school students sang and danced their way into the hearts of their classmates and community during their stage debut as cast members in “School of Rock,” a musical adaptation of the 2003 box office smash, this spring at the storied California Theater in San Bernardino. Canyon Crest Elementary and Dorothy Grant Innovations Academy students rehearsed for weeks with A.B. Miller High School multimedia design and drama teacher Joseph Henson, who served as producer and director of the play. The students were choreographed and coached by professionals and performed alongside professional actors. “This is a really great opportunity for our youngest students to discover the joy of theater and work as actors in a professional show,” Henson said. “The goal is to get the students interested in pursuing a CTE drama pathway by giving them their first live theater experience, and also to have their classmates see them perform with the intent of getting them interested as well.” Following the well-received “School of Rock” performances, rising stars from Dorothy Grant, Canyon Crest and Beech Avenue Elementary took the stage with A.B. Miller High students to perform “Disney’s The Little Mermaid” in April. The productions are part of a Districtwide effort to introduce elementary and middle school students to the performing arts and inspire them to pursue CTE pathways in the arts when they enter high school. Working with tutors from Cal State University San Bernardino, Henson provides afterschool theater instruction at nearly two dozen Fontana Unified elementary schools.

### FUN FACT

Did you know that more than 125,800 students applied to UC Berkeley for the fall 2023 semester? At least nine students from Kaiser High School have been accepted to the prestigious university, demonstrating the culture of high academic achievement fostered on the Kaiser campus. Great job, Kaiser Cats!



### WATCH D.O.G.S. PROGRAM PROVIDES POSITIVE ROLE MODELS FOR STUDENTS



Schools across Fontana Unified School District are boosting family involvement on campuses through the Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) program, a nationwide initiative that aims to encourage dads and male family members to become school volunteers and be positive role models for students. Through the Watch D.O.G.S. program, fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and other father figures can volunteer at their child’s school and assist with a variety of activities, including helping with morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up, monitoring hallways and lunchrooms, playing games with students during recess and assisting teachers in the classroom. The program is designed to provide positive and active role models for students, promote a safe and secure learning environment and encourage families to be partners in their child’s education. Studies by the U.S. Department of Education have shown that a positive male role model has a uniquely positive impact on the development and educational success of a child.

## CYPRESS ELEMENTARY STUDENTS LEARN LIFE SKILLS THROUGH SEWING CLUB



Cypress Elementary School fourth and fifth grade students are developing valuable life skills in the school's newest afterschool learning opportunity: the sewing club. The club, which meets once a week for two hours, will teach students the basics of sewing, including how to use a sewing machine, load thread, fix torn clothes, sew on buttons and more. Students also learn how to follow directions and work in a team environment. The sewing club was formed when Cypress Elementary School Assistant Principal Michael Rodriguez heard that the City of Fontana had additional funds available to provide after-school programs for students. Rodriguez reached out to Fontana Adult School sewing teacher Mr. Hayes, who expressed his interest and excitement in teaching elementary students how to sew. The city provided Cypress Elementary School with six sewing

machines, which students have already put to good use in making their own scrunchies and pillows. "I wanted to bring new opportunities to our students and help them develop a skill that they can build upon and use in their future," Rodriguez said. "I am always trying to think outside of the box of what we can do here at Cypress Elementary to provide more enrichment for our students."

## FONTANA HIGH HONORS SEAL OF BILITERACY RECIPIENTS

Fontana High School honored 162 students who have qualified to receive the State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB), an honor that recognizes students' proficiency in bilingualism and biliteracy. To receive the SSB, marked by a gold seal on a graduate's diploma and notation on their transcript, students must meet requirements outlined in the California Education Code that demonstrate high levels of achievement in speaking, reading, and writing in both English and one or more partner languages. Students can also earn the Fontana Unified Seal of Biliteracy – an honor with even more rigorous student expectations – by attaining exceptional scores on proficiency exams that measure bilingualism and biliteracy, completing community service hours that engage their partner language, composing an autobiography in their partner language and undergoing a panel interview.



## FONTANA HIGH SCHOOL MCJROTC CADETS CONTINUE TO ACHIEVE AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS



Fontana High School's Marine Corp Junior ROTC (MCJROTC) program continues to excel at the competition level, both regionally and nationally, setting a high bar of achievement for student cadets striving to expand their skill sets on their way to becoming responsible citizens and community leaders. FOHI's MCJROTC Raider physical fitness team showed they had the right stuff, traveling to Macon, Georgia to compete in the Hurricane Raider Challenge on April 22-23, and capturing a second-place finish in the mixed division, which consists of males and females. The 11-cadet team took first place in cross country rescue, a running race where cadets carry equipment

such as stretchers and rucksacks; second place in the gauntlet, Raider fitness challenge and rope bridge challenges; and third place in tire flip and team run. The Raider Mixed Team are seniors Oswin Estrada, Itzel Jimenez, Jesse Perez and Fabian Quintanar; juniors Ezkiel Almanza, Katherine Hernandez, Brian Jimenez, Juliet Lopez and Jasmine Orozco; and sophomores Johnathan Lopez and Randy Rodriguez. For the second consecutive year, the FOHI MCJROTC Marksmanship team has qualified for the National and Junior Olympics, to be held in June in Port Clinton, Ohio, after finishing in eighth-place at the CMP Western Regionals on April 13-15. The all-female cadet team is made up of seniors Ashley Padilla and Yaira Castro, junior Alma Negrete, freshman Stephanie Mendoza and sophomore Ana Porras, who served as alternate. Additionally, FOHI's MCJROTC Armed Drill Team and Color Guard made impressive showings in a recent drill meet in Arizona, with both teams finishing third in their divisions, and narrowly missing out on being invited to national events.

## **KAISER HIGH SENIOR MAKES SCHOOL HISTORY AS FIRST MUSICIAN NAMED TO ALL-STATE HONOR BAND**



When Kaiser High School senior Matthew Basilio was in middle school, he was asked to make a tough choice: to continue playing the clarinet as he had since elementary school, or take up the bass clarinet? Basilio's decision to switch instruments would prove to be momentous, catapulting him into the upper stratosphere of music performers. Today, Basilio is recognized as one of the top high school bass clarinetists in California after being selected to perform with the California Band Directors Association (CBDA) All-State High School Honor Concert Band earlier this year. Basilio is the first Kaiser High musician in school history to be selected to the All-State Honor Band. "I still can't fathom it. It's been really rewarding," Basilio said. "It took blood, sweat and tears to get into these ensembles, because you're going up against the best musicians in the state. I'd like to thank all of my instructors over the years, who have inspired me and pushed me to do my very best. It feels great to represent Kaiser High and my community in the All-State Honor Band."

## **CITRUS HIGH SCHOOL WINS ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP**



Citrus High School student-athletes hit all the big shots and showed all the right moves during an inspiring 2023 basketball season that saw the team go undefeated with a 13-0 record, on their way to the Inland Empire Alternative Schools League (IEASL) championship. This is the second year in a row that a Fontana Unified school has won the IEASL title, following Eric Birch High School's championship season in 2022. The Citrus High intramural program, administered through a partnership with the IEASL, has provided an incentive and opportunity for students to work hard, experience success and find the motivation to recover their credits before graduation.

## **JURUPA HILLS TV PRODUCTION STUDENTS TAKE STAR TURNS AT SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY COLLEGE FILM FESTIVAL**

Jurupa Hills High School TV Production students Kira Flores and Eddie Lopez rose early every Saturday for months so that they could film students participating in the Fontana Leadership Intervention Program (FLIP), a 16-week enrichment camp for at-risk teenagers seeking to turn their lives around. Originally looking to provide a short video for a FLIP graduation ceremony, Flores and Lopez realized they had enough compelling footage to produce a standalone documentary, titled "FLIP," that tracks the personal journey of several FLIP students as they learn life skills through the program offered through a partnership between Fontana Unified, the City of Fontana, and the school and city police departments. "FLIP" was one of three Spartan TV Production videos to be screened at the San Bernardino Valley College 2023 International Student Film Festival, held in early March. "FLIP" received four award nominations, including Best Directing, Best Editing, Best Documentary and Best Cinematography.

## **A.B. MILLER HIGH STUDENTS EXPLORE HEALTHCARE CAREERS THROUGH KAISER PERMANENTE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

Thirty-seven A.B. Miller High School Health Services Academy (HSA) seniors were recognized for completing the five-week Kaiser Permanente Internship Program, during which students networked and explored potential careers in healthcare at Kaiser Permanente's Fontana Medical Center. The Kaiser Permanente Internship Program serves as a capstone course for A.B. Miller's HSA, a three-year career technical education (CTE) pathway that introduces students to a wide range of medical careers. The HSA first began in 2005 and launched internships in 2006. This internship program returned this year following a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. "We are so happy these opportunities are coming back again," said Ryan Augustine, Fontana Unified Coordinator of Colleges, Careers, and Economic Development. "These work-based experiences are so valuable to our students. It really gives them a leg up when they're applying for jobs, colleges, and looking to grow their careers."

