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December 17, 2021



California School News Report

Media Opportunities...

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On a weekly basis, California School News sends to reporters and editors upcoming school events and other news compiled to facilitate coverage of the schools we serve. Visit caschoolnews.net for our latest media advisories, breaking news, updates, press releases and high-resolution images.

Happy holidays! California School News Report will be on hiatus until Jan. 7, 2022.

PODCAST

California School News Radio Features Parent Mentor Program

California School News Radio this week features Whittier Union High School District Director of Federal & State Categorical Programs Francisco Meza and parents Artisia Alcazar and Claudia Hernandez discussing the District's Parent Mentor Program, which is designed to increase parent engagement and support parents of English learners. Podcasts are archived at California School News Report. *Media contact: Kevin Ausmus, 909-624-3347*

UPCOMING

Fontana Unified Holds 24th Annual 'Fontana Santas' Toy Drive

Fontana Unified will bring holiday cheer to families in need on **Saturday, Dec. 18** with its annual Fontana Santas Toy Drive distribution, a drive-thru event that will provide students with toys and gifts. Held at the District office, 9680 Citrus Ave., Fontana, the event will culminate Fontana Unified's 24th annual holiday toy drive, for which community organizations, District employees and Fontana residents donated toys and gifts cards. *Media contact: [Lauren Creiman](#), 909-833-9853*

Whittier Union High School District Hosts Weekly Vaccine Clinics

Whittier Union High School District, in partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, will host weekly vaccine clinics for the community. The clinics will be open from 5 to 7 p.m. every Wednesday until December at the District Board Room, 9401 Painter Ave., Whittier, on the Mulberry Drive side. The next scheduled clinic is **Wednesday, Dec. 22**. Parent consent is required for students under 18 years of age, and those under 14 years of age must be

accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. *Media contact:* [Andrea Garcia](#), 909-447-2403

El Monte Union to Hold Sixth Public Hearing, Narrow Draft Maps

The El Monte Union Board of Trustees will continue discussion on and narrow the number of draft trustee area maps for final consideration during a public hearing at the next Board meeting at 6 p.m. on **Wednesday, Jan. 5**. As the District's process to create by-trustee areas moves forward, the public is urged to participate in-person or virtually to share their feedback on the maps. Visit <https://emuhsd-by-area-trustees.com/> to view the maps and submit comments. *Media Contact:* [Maria Hernandez](#), 909-447-2406

Fontana Unified Expands COVID-19 Testing Clinics to Community

Fontana Unified School District is expanding its ongoing COVID-19 testing clinics to be available to the greater community at no cost. Testing clinics are available at all high school sites from 12:15 to 6:15 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and from 12:35 to 4:15 p.m. on Fridays; at middle school sites from 7:35 to 11:15 a.m. on Fridays; and at District office from 7 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and from 12:35 to 4:15 p.m. on Fridays. Appointments are available, but not required. Community members who are not Fontana Unified students or employees may register for testing at <https://www.covidclinic.org/fusd/>. *Media contact:* [Lauren Creiman](#), 909-833-9853

NEWS & EVENTS

Whittier Union Superintendent to Retire After 40-Year Career in Education

Whittier Union High School District Superintendent Martin J. Plourde has announced he will retire effective June 30, 2022, bringing to a close a storied 40-year career in education in which he has served in nearly every capacity, beginning as an English teacher and basketball coach and finishing as top administrator of a diverse and thriving district that serves more than 11,000 students. Hired as Whittier Union Superintendent in 2016, Plourde has overseen a host of successful initiatives, building upon the core values embraced by the District to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education and establishing a culture of success and academic achievement for all students. The Whittier Union Board of Trustees will reach out to community members in the new year for input in helping shape the hiring process for Plourde's replacement. **Photo is available.** *Media contact:* [Andrea Garcia](#), 909-447-2403

Fontana Superintendent, Educators Honored as C-STEM Innovators

For overseeing the successful implementation of an innovative curriculum designed to help struggling students discover a love for mathematics, Fontana Unified Superintendent Randal S. Bassett was recognized by the UC Davis C-STEM Center as its 2021 Superintendent of the Year. North Tamarind Elementary School fourth-grade teacher Janice Taylor and Elementary Education Coordinator Honey Sacro Swem were also recognized as C-STEM Teacher of the Year and C-STEM Administrator of the Year, respectively, during the center's virtual conference, held Nov. 29 to Dec. 2. FUSD introduced C-STEM into its middle school curriculum in 2018; it is now available at 23 FUSD elementary schools, five middle schools, and one high school. *Media contact:* [Lauren Creiman](#), 909-833-9853

El Monte Union Spreads Holiday Spirit and Cheer with Family Posada

The El Monte Union High School District hosted its fourth annual Family Posada on Dec. 10, welcoming more than 1,000 families to the event with featured appearances from Santa Claus, folklórico dancers, school swag giveaways, snow, and food such as tamales and pan dulce. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Family Posada was transformed by staff and parent volunteers into a drive-thru parade, during which cars lined up outside the District office before touring through a snowy Christmas light tunnel. **Photos are available.** *Media Contact:* [Maria Hernandez](#), 909-447-2406

Hacienda La Puente Unified Launches Holiday Reading Campaign

Hacienda La Puente Unified School District has partnered with Scholastic Inc. to provide free, carefully curated book packs to students before winter break, supporting the District's inaugural Holiday Reading Campaign beginning Dec. 17. Hacienda La Puente Unified's new District Librarian, Lesley Jarrett, has played an integral part in the campaign, selecting and distributing the reading material for every HLPUSD student in transitional kindergarten through grade 12. The Holiday Reading Campaign aims to foster a reading culture in the home and promote the skills and knowledge that lead to longtime academic advantages. **Photo is available.** *Media contact:* [Andy Torres](#), (909) 573-813

Buena Park School District Families Receive Holiday Cheer at Giveaway

Buena Park School District students and their families beamed with excitement as they received presents from Santa Claus during the Orange County Union Carpenters' Christmas Toy and Food Giveaway on Dec. 11. More than 85 Carl E. Gilbert Elementary School families participated in the drive-through event, where they received toys and food to help during the holidays. Participants were also given KN95 masks to protect themselves from the COVID-19 virus and household supplies such as shampoo. **Photos are available.** *Media contact:* [Raymond Mendoza](#), 909-374-1534

Fontana Unified Alumna Receives NLPOA Scholarship

Fontana High School Class of 2021 graduate Therelin Segura was honored by the National Latino Peace Officers Association (NLPOA) Inland Empire Chapter, receiving a \$500 scholarship during its 2021 Officer Down Memorial Scholarship banquet on Dec. 5. A four-year member of FOHI's Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps, Segura rose to the rank of Cadet Lieutenant Colonel and served as Cadet Commanding Officer for the entire program in her senior year. Segura is currently attending Cal Baptist University and studying law enforcement while working toward becoming a commissioned officer in the Marine Corps. **Photo is available.** *Media contact:* [Lauren Creiman](#), 909-833-9853

Fontana Unified Named County's District Winner in 'Race to Submit'

Fontana Unified was named the district winner for San Bernardino County in the Race to Submit campaign for achieving the highest percentage of financial aid applications completed by the Class of 2021 in the county. The District was recognized by the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools for the achievement, verifying that 60.46 percent of Fontana Unified students in the Class of 2021 had completed financial aid applications. Race to Submit is a statewide campaign to increase the number of financial aid applications completed by high school seniors in California. *Media contact:* [Lauren Creiman](#), 909-833-9853

Baldwin Park Unified Board of Education Reorganizes Officers

Baldwin Park Unified's Board of Education held its annual organization meeting on Dec. 14, selecting Betsabel Lara as president and Diana E. Miranda-Dzib as clerk/vice president. This is Lara's first term as president of the Board, succeeding Board member Christina Lucero. After the reorganization, the District honored Lucero and outgoing clerk/vice president Lara for leading the Board and District during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Media contact:* [Amanda Nieto](#), 626-513-6018

Covina-Valley Unified Conducts Board of Education Reorganization

The Covina-Valley Unified School District welcomed Board of Education members to new leadership positions at their reorganization meeting held on Dec. 13. The Board of Education selected Rachael Robles as the new president. Sue L. Maulucci was selected as vice president and Gary C. Rodriguez was selected as clerk. Members Maria M. Caceres and Maria E. Roman round out the Board of Education. *Media contact:* [Riana Basuel](#), 909-445-1001

Whittier Union High School District Board of Trustees Reorganizes

Whittier Union High School District's Board of Trustees held its annual reorganization meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 14, which saw Dr. Russell Castañeda-Calleros step into his new role as president. The Board also selected Jeff Baird to serve as vice president and Leighton Anderson to serve as clerk. Outgoing Board President Dr. Ralph Pacheco and Board member Jaime Lopez will assume their roles as members of the Board of Trustees. Pacheco was honored as outgoing president for his commitment to students and managing the shift to remote learning during the 2020-21 school year. Pacheco was presented flowers and a wooden Whittier Union bookstand made by Santa Fe High School woodshop students. *Media contact:* [Andrea Garcia](#), 909-447-2403

Buena Park School District Reorganizes Board of Education

Buena Park School District's Board of Education selected Jerry Frutos to lead as president and Rhodia Shead to serve as clerk and president pro tem during its annual organizational meeting on Dec. 13. During the same meeting, held via Zoom and in-person at the District office, outgoing President Jason Chong congratulated Frutos and wished him luck for the coming year. *Media contact:* [Raymond Mendoza](#), 909-374-1534

Fontana Unified Board of Education Selects New Leadership

Fontana Unified School District's Board of Education held its annual organizational meeting on Dec. 15, voting its members into new leadership roles for 2022. The Board selected Dr. Jennifer Quezada as president and Joe Armendarez as vice president/clerk. Members Adam Perez, Mary Sandoval and Marcelino "Mars" Serna complete the Board of Education. *Media contact:* [Lauren Creiman](#), 909-833-9853

About California School News Report

California School News Report (CaSN) is an online media service developed by VMA Communications to facilitate coverage of events, programs and services at schools throughout Southern California. Through our website, social media and e-Blasts, CaSN informs assignment editors and reporters of upcoming events, programs and student success to facilitate news coverage, as provided by member school districts. We are a clearinghouse of regional school news, allowing media outlets to use the information as a resource to cover education in your

communities. We can also provide event coverage and interviews, and supply high-resolution photos and other information relevant to your articles. The service is free and available to all media.

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