



PRESS RELEASE

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Fontana Unified's Dorothy Grant Elementary Named California Distinguished School

FONTANA, CA – Fontana Unified's Dorothy Grant Elementary is being honored as a California Distinguished School for providing engaging instruction and hands-on learning activities through the school's science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) academies.

The California Distinguished School award is the state's top honor for high-achieving schools, recognizing elementary schools in alternate years with middle and high schools. Schools earning the designation keep it for two years.

"I am overjoyed that our school is being recognized, and I am exceptionally proud of our entire staff at Grant Elementary," Dorothy Grant Principal Anne-Marie Cabrales said. "This would not have been possible without the dedication and passion of our teachers and parents who work together to provide our students with the best education possible."

The honor – given to 287 of California's more than 5,800 elementary schools – is the first awarded since 2014. The program was on hiatus while the state adopted a new accountability and assessment program, including new standardized tests and the dashboard, a collection of academic and school climate measures.

Dorothy Grant Elementary demonstrated exemplary academic achievement by earning the second-highest rating on the dashboard for the school's performance on the state's English language arts and math standardized tests.

The school's STEAM academies, launched in 2016, provide students with challenging academic opportunities for six-week sessions that are held three times a year.

Teachers from each grade highlight various fields of STEAM instruction through engaging projects, including structural engineering activities that test student ability to construct a sturdy bridge, and art lessons that introduce mediums like sculpting and painting.

"We are proud of Dorothy Grant Elementary School for continuing to find new ways to boost achievement and provide our students with a world-class education," Fontana Unified Superintendent Randal S. Bassett said. "This recognition is a testament to the dedication of our Fontana Unified teachers and staff, and the hard work of our outstanding students."

The state will recognize Dorothy Grant and the other winners at the California School Recognition Program Awards Ceremony on Thursday, May 3 at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim.

The dashboard replaces the Academic Performance Index (API), which had generated a single number for each school based primarily on test scores. The dashboard tracks performance and growth for a series of measures, including graduations, discipline, attendance and test scores. For this year's distinguished schools program, the state looked at performance and growth indicators for 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years.

See the full report at www.caschooldashboard.org/#/Details/36677100102517/3/EquityReport.

PHOTO CAPTION:

041118_FUSD_GRANT_CA_AWARD: Dorothy Grant Elementary fifth-grader Christina Castillo displays a bridge she built as part of structural engineering lessons taught in the school's STEAM academies. Grant's efforts to provide engaging instruction and hands-on learning helped earn the school its 2018 California Distinguished School award.

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