



Fontana Unified School District

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9680 Citrus Avenue | Fontana, CA 92335 | Phone: (909) 357-5000 | www.fusd.net

NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Andrew Shortall

(909) 204-6013

Fontana Unified Fire Technology and Law Enforcement Pathways Receive National Certifications of Excellence

FONTANA, CA – Fontana High School’s highly acclaimed Fire Technology and Law Enforcement Public Service pathways were each awarded national certification from the Law and Public Safety Education Network (LAPSEN), representing the commitment to excellence and quality of both programs.

Both of FOHI’s career technical education (CTE) Public Service pathways join a prestigious cohort of secondary and post-secondary schools across the country to be named a LAPSEN National Program of Excellence (NPE). A LAPSEN national certification signifies a program has reached the apex in terms of preparing students for careers in law enforcement, firefighting, emergency management, legal studies, and related fields.

Fontana High’s Fire Technology and Law Enforcement CTE pathways are hands-on electives that prepare students for jobs in the public safety sector, with more than 170 students enrolled across both pathways. The pathways fulfill a student’s A-G requirements and are dual-enrollment programs that articulate with Chaffey College, allowing students to earn both high school and college credits and putting them on a fast track for industry certifications.

“FOHI is the first CTE fire program to attain this designation,” FOHI Fire Technology and Emergency Services CTE Director George Rojas said. “A big thank you goes out to our amazing administration on campus and at the District office, our partners, and our amazing students, who put the work in every day to complete their tasks with incredible attention to detail. This is proof that hard work pays off.”

LAPSEN is a national nonprofit that promotes law and public safety CTE instruction, providing schools with resources and professional development to help “the best get better.” Both FOHI CTE pathway programs completed a yearlong LAPSEN evaluation, which included on-site visits, with nearly perfect scores. Certification lasts for five years with both FOHI programs serving as exemplar sites and mentors for other programs.

FOHI’s Fire, Medical, and Emergency pathway is a two-year elective course that prepares students for careers in the fire service. In the pathway’s first year, students learn the history of fire service while completing a series of life skills, which include filling out job applications, writing resumes, completing a series of certifications within a set period, and participating in a mock interview.

In the pathway’s second year, students have been “hired” by the FOHI Fire Department and learn about fire behavior and occupational safety.

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Students also earn certifications for CPR, basic first aid, and hazardous materials first responder awareness. Upon completion, students can apply to local fire agencies that use fire hand crews or need a wildland firefighter.

Fontana High's Law Enforcement pathway consists of two 16-week, Saturday-only fast-track elective programs, which are designed to offer student cadets a rigorous look into the duties and responsibilities of law enforcement officers. Cadets receive court and correctional system training and learn from practical experiences and character development activities.

The first-year course, Law Enforcement, focuses on introducing cadets to the criminal justice system while the second-year course, Advanced Law Enforcement, introduces cadets to the corrections system. The pathway prepares students for a variety of careers while teaching professionalism, punctuality, empathy, communication, teamwork, and the importance of respect, duty, honor, and integrity.

"Much of our law enforcement curriculum is tailored toward inspiring student cadets to volunteer in their community," FOHI Law Enforcement Instructor Jeannifer Heredia said. "Our students are active in working with local law enforcement groups, youth courts, veteran's support groups, church groups, and local charities."

The LAPSEN accreditation is especially meaningful for the Fire Technology program and its late founder, Michael McGinnis, a former firefighter who helped establish fire and EMS programs at both FOHI and Chaffey College before he died in 2021. The Fontana Unified Board of Education voted to rename Fontana High's Fire Technology classroom, which is now known as McGinnis Station 815, earlier this school year.

"Congratulations to our public service and safety pathway administrators and staff for their dedication and determination in developing these nationally recognized CTE programs, which can serve as templates for other schools to follow," FOHI Principal Ofelia Hinojosa said. "Our students are the big winners here, with access to college-level and professional training at the high school level."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

FUSD_CERTIFICATION1: Fontana High School's Law Enforcement Public Service career technical education (CTE) pathway was certified a National Program of Excellence by the Law and Public Safety Education Network in March. The two-year pathway offers student cadets a rigorous look into the duties and responsibilities of law enforcement.

FUSD_CERTIFICATION2: Fontana High School's Fire Technology pathway was nationally certified for excellence by the Law and Public Safety Education Network in March. The Fire Technology pathway is a hands-on elective where students earn both high school and college credits putting them on a fast track for industry certifications.

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