



## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Fontana Unified to Launch Private Network, Offer Wireless Access to All Students at Home

**FONTANA, CA** – Fontana Unified School District will provide high-speed internet access for its more than 36,000 students – at home and in their community – by creating the nation’s first Citizens Broadband Radio Service (CBRS) private network of its scale dedicated to education.

The Board of Education on April 15 approved a five-year initiative, in partnership with Crown Castle Fiber LLC, to establish a private cellular network that students can access on District-issued devices.

“We believe learning can occur at any time, any place, and at virtually any pace given the right conditions. This network ensures that our students receive access to critical online resources regardless of their socio-economic status,” Fontana Unified Superintendent Randal S. Bassett said. “Establishing this network is a significant step in providing equitable access and closing the digital divide in our community. We are thankful to our partners at Crown Castle for their support.”

The network is part of a long-term District plan to ensure access to instructional materials and close the achievement gap. It will support the District’s 1:1 device initiative, which recently concluded the first phase of its three-year rollout. It will also allow the District to explore Internet of Things (IoT) connectivity safely and securely.

“We’ve estimated that 55 to 60 percent of our students do not have reliable internet access outside of school,” Bassett said. “We want to ensure that all students have to opportunity to safely explore the emerging opportunities around them to become leaders in our digital age.”

The Federal Communications Commission approved CBRS for commercial use in the United States in late January. Labeled “The Innovation Network,” CBRS can offer businesses and communities connectivity without the restrictions of individual carriers.

Supported by Crown Castle Fiber, Fontana Unified’s private network will deliver high-speed, unmetered access using the existing CBRS spectrum, supported by nearly 400 cellular nodes positioned throughout school district boundaries. Those nodes can also benefit the Fontana community by laying the infrastructure to support the expansion of technologies, such as 5G.

The network will launch with a trial service in a limited portion of the community; eventually, it will cover the entirety of Fontana Unified’s service area. It will also reduce the long-term, per-student cost of providing wireless access to students.

The District's contract with Crown Castle Fiber goes into effect in July; a timeline for the network is being determined.

Fontana Unified is a frequent pioneer in digital instruction. The District established the first two Code to the Future computer science immersion schools in the Inland Empire and is home to one of just 241 Microsoft Showcase Schools in the world.

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