



# Fontana Unified School District

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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Fontana Unified School District Named a 2021 Model School Attendance Review Board in California

**FONTANA, CA** – Fontana Unified School District has been designated as a 2021 Model School Attendance Review Board (SARB) in California, honoring the District’s efforts to reach disengaged students during the COVID-19 pandemic and connect families with resources and support.

Fontana Unified is among 20 Model SARB Award winners this year, which include 19 school districts and one county office of education, and is the only SARB in San Bernardino County recognized this year.

“We are honored to be recognized as a Model School Attendance Review Board,” FUSD Director of Child Welfare and Attendance Jose Bárzaga said. “This honor is a testament to the dedication of our District, our school sites and our SARB, who work tirelessly to support our families using a student-first, community-driven approach. I am proud of our efforts and thrilled to see the positive impact they have on our students.”

Fontana Unified’s SARB consists of members from the District’s offices of Child Welfare and Attendance, Multi-Tiered System of Supports, and Special Services, as well as the San Bernardino County District Attorney’s and Public Defender’s offices.

The District SARB takes a restorative approach to student disengagement, with panel members drawing on their expertise and personal experience to identify concerns, connect families with the necessary resources, and follow up with continued support to encourage lasting re-engagement.

Over the last year, the SARB focused on how to best meet students’ needs during distance learning, working to connect families with resources and support services to address connectivity issues, encourage mental health and wellness, support virtual attendance for students with unique needs and more.

The SARB also set out to provide additional support for students with housing instability, who often struggled to engage in distance learning, and worked with the After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program to create Learning Centers across the District.

These centers have provided unhoused students with an on-campus, in-person space to engage in distance learning while being supported by paraprofessional staff. The centers have also offered social-emotional support and wellness activities for students, including community building circles and mindful movements, as well as three full meals – breakfast, lunch and dinner.

– more –

State Superintendent Thurmond annually convenes the State's School Attendance Review Board, which brings together key agencies and community partners to score applications submitted by district and county SARBs throughout the state.

The Model SARBs will be honored at the California Association of Supervisors of Child Welfare and Attendance state conference on April 27.

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