



Fontana Unified School District

Every Student Successful, Engaging Schools, Empowered Communities

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fontana Unified Appoints Team of New Principals for 2024-25 School Year in Strategic Leadership Reorganization

FONTANA, CA – Nine Fontana Unified schools will enter the 2024-25 school year with new principals as part of a strategic reorganization designed to leverage existing leadership skills within the District and best meet the unique needs of each school community.

Almond, Citrus, Locust, Maple, Virginia Primrose, and West Randall elementary schools, along with Chaparral Academy of Technology; Alder Middle; and Summit high schools will start the new school year with new leadership. Eight of Fontana Unified's nine new principal appointments were already employed in the District, including six who served as principals at other schools in 2023-24, while a former FUSD principal is transitioning to the District office.

It continues a transformative year-and-a-half for Fontana Unified under Superintendent Miki R. Inbody, who began as superintendent in March 2023.

"Fontana Unified is home to so many exceptional leaders and this reorganization has been made to foster innovation, collaboration, and continue the success our District is known for," Superintendent Miki R. Inbody said. "By aligning our schools and leadership according to their strengths and personalities, we ensure every student receives the highest quality education and support."

The District's new school administrators and their roles are:

- **Kristin Badawi, Citrus Elementary School Principal:** Badawi steps in as Citrus Elementary's new principal after serving as an assistant principal at Ted J. Porter Elementary School. She was named Southridge Tech Middle School's Teacher of the Year in 2017-18.
- **Renee Castanon, Maple Elementary School Principal:** Castanon has worked in Fontana Unified since 2007 and spent the last seven years as Summit High School's principal after starting as an assistant principal at Fontana and Henry J. Kaiser High schools.
- **Dr. Yuliana Guerra, West Randall Elementary School Principal:** Dr. Guerra has been employed in Fontana Unified for 17 years after attending District schools as a student. She most recently served as Date Elementary's assistant principal and earned FUSD's Teacher of the Year honor in 2010-11.
- **Dr. Alejandro Lopez, Almond Elementary School Principal:** Dr. Lopez heads to Almond Elementary after acting as Virginia Primrose Elementary's principal for several years.
- **Tim McCaffrey, Chaparral Academy of Technology Principal:** McCaffrey arrived in Fontana Unified in 2006 and has filled a variety of roles, including teacher, assistant principal, and Almond Elementary's principal the last five years, where he earned the 2023 Association of California School Administrators Region 12 Elementary School Principal of the Year award.

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- **Dr. Andrea McClain, Virginia Primrose Elementary School Principal:** Dr. McClain moves to Virginia Primrose Elementary School after serving as Chaparral Academy of Technology’s principal. She was named the Computers, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (C-STEM) Administrator of the Year at Chaparral Academy in October 2023.
- **Michael McGirr, Fontana Unified Senior Director of Assessment and Accountability:** McGirr transitioned to the District office after leading as Citrus Elementary School’s principal. He was also named Truman Middle School’s Teacher of the Year in 2007-08.
- **Dr. John Richmond, Summit High School Principal:** Dr. Richmond comes to Fontana Unified from Eisenhower High School in Rialto, where he was an assistant principal and oversaw the special education, visual and performing arts, safety, and equity teams. He helped establish the African American Inland Empire Educators’ Roundtable and also served 10 years in the United States Air Force where he completed two tours in the Middle East.
- **Melissa Weber, Locus Elementary School Principal:** Weber has spent more than three years as Alder Middle School’s principal after an assistant principal stint at A.B. Miller High. She started her educational career as a middle and school English Language Arts teacher and National Board-Certified teacher.
- **Elena Zerbel, Alder Middle School Principal:** Zerbel spent the last eight years at Maple Elementary, most recently leading as the school’s principal. She has worked as a teacher and assistant principal at the elementary and middle school levels over her 18-plus-year career in education.

PHOTO CAPTION:

FUSD_PRINCIPALS: From left to right: Dr. Yuliana Guerra, Michael McGirr, Tim McCaffrey, Dr. Andrea McClain, Dr. Alejandro Lopez, Elena Zerbel, Kristin Badawi, Renee Castanon, Dr. John Richmond, and Melissa Weber are stepping into new administrative positions in Fontana Unified. Nine schools will start the 2024-25 school year with new principals.

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