



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 5, 2019

CONTACT: Lauren Creiman

(909) 833-9853

Fontana Unified Schools to Expand STEM Curriculum through Partnership with Discovery Education

FONTANA, CA – Shadow Hills Elementary School students, challenged by their teachers to use science to create solutions to real-world problems, are exploring ways to reduce single-use plastic consumption on campus. Shadow Hills students will collect milk cartons and straws at lunch, conduct research and present their findings to the Fontana Unified director of food services.

Shadow Hills is one of five Fontana Unified elementary schools – joining Canyon Crest, Randall Pepper, South Tamarind and Tokay – that will partner with digital curriculum provider Discovery Education for a multiyear program that includes professional development and digital resources to expand K-5 science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) curriculum.

“The Discovery Education model is a good fit for our school,” Shadow Hills Principal Joel Avina said. “We want STEM studies to be fun and engaging for our students, and it will help us toward our goal of collaborating with students around the world on global issues we can work together to solve. The program is already paying dividends through our recycling project.”

Through the Discovery Ed partnership, the schools are receiving access to digital tools, including STEM Connect, which provides course materials designed for K-5 students and which give teachers the option of integrating up to eight course units into their curriculum.

“STEM is a great tool for helping our students develop life skills,” Tokay Elementary Principal Rebecca Hinojosa said. “Through the professional development we can develop curriculum to integrate across content areas, not just science, but also English, the arts and even physical education.”

Each school has also been assigned a Discovery Ed mentor, who will work throughout the school year to train teachers. Designated as “Innovators,” the teachers will share what they have learned with colleagues, tailoring their coursework to achieve “moonshot” goals conceived before the school year began.

“We want our students to start at the beginning, by learning the process of how science and engineering works,” South Tamarind Principal Dr. Rita Bayne said. “Before we bring out the biomes and robots, we want the kids to learn the concept of critical thinking and understand that technology doesn’t appear out of thin air; it has to be developed first. We feel this is the best way to spur their creativity.”

All Fontana schools in the Discovery Ed partnership will take part in a three-year professional development program that provides full-staff training that meets the Global STEM Alliance’s STEM Education Framework, which will help teachers to develop STEM lessons and tailor curriculum to student needs.

“Fontana recognizes that for our students to develop their technological skills, our teachers must push forward with bold ideas and access a support team that shares our vision,” Superintendent Randal S. Bassett said. “We are excited about our partnership with Discovery Education, which is already spurring creativity and innovation in our classrooms.”

###