



## PRESS RELEASE

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# CalAPS Firefighting Students to Graduate in Los Angeles City Fire Ceremony

**BELLFLOWER** – Seven high school students from the California Advancing Pathways for Students (CalAPS) program will join dozens of peers from across the region in graduating from a Los Angeles Fire Department training program in a **Saturday, Nov. 5** ceremony that will include demonstrations of rescue operations, hose deployment and ladder drills.

The ceremony – at the Frank Hotchkin Memorial Training Center, 1700 S. Stadium Way, Los Angeles – is the culmination of an eight-week course in which students learned basic firefighting skills. The event begins with a student lunch at noon; the students demonstrate their new skills at 2 p.m.

The course is a companion program to new firefighting courses offered through CalAPS, a career technical education (CTE) partnership between Bellflower and Lynwood unified school districts created to multiply each district's resources for career instruction.

The graduating students are seniors Luis Estrella, Raquel Martinez, Emilio Flores; juniors Moises Uribe, Jose Fernandez, Jose Fonseca, and sophomore Antonio Parks.

"I'm so proud of our students for dedicating their time not only to our Bellflower Unified program, but also to the extended training provided by officials at the Los Angeles Fire Department," Bellflower Unified Superintendent Dr. Brian Jacob said.

"This program is a great example of how Lynwood Unified and Bellflower Unified, working together, can provide students with an augmented program of invaluable classes," Lynwood Unified Superintendent Paul Gothold said.

CalAPS added the firefighting program this fall along with 12 other new hands-on CTE courses. Other courses include policing, nursing, culinary arts, visual arts, business and health. The semester-long courses run afternoons and on weekends.

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The CalAPS fire courses teach the standards required for firefighter training and preview skills areas such as arson investigations, emergency medical services and rescues. The twice-weekly courses meet for about three hours and include training in first aid, CPR, rescue practices and fire apparatus.

CalAPS firefighting instructor Tom Stewart, a retired engineer from the Costa Mesa Fire Department, mixes classroom instruction with hands-on drills to give students a sense of life in a firehouse. He breaks his students into companies and, at any time, might call for a timed rescue drill or another task. The students must leap into action.

"Just like in the firehouse, at any time of the day, anything can happen – including an emergency call right in the middle of whatever you're doing," Stewart said.

The L.A. Fire Department program invites students to participate in a series of eight-week courses that focus on hands-on activities. The first class, which Stewart teaches, teaches firefighting basics, such as rappelling. Advanced eight-week training courses follow, including hoses, ladders, emergency medical technician and leadership.

Students who go through the CalAPS and L.A. programs will get a jumpstart on a fire career, Stewart said.

CalAPS CEO Lisa Azevedo said an agreement with Long Beach City College helps students make the most of their experience by providing college credit for those who perform well in the classroom and pass an exit exam.

"Our students not only get the exceptional experiences at the L.A. Metro Fire Academy, but outstanding classroom experiences as well. The mission of CalAPS is to ensure that our students are both college and career ready with industry expertise. This Saturday's graduation is an outstanding example of a strong partnership between schools and the local industry," Azevedo said.

## PHOTO

**110416\_CALAPS\_FIRE\_1:** High school students study firefighting techniques through the California Advancing Pathways for Students program, a career technical education partnership between Bellflower and Lynwood unified school districts. Students will graduate on Nov. 5 from a companion program run by the L.A. Fire Department.

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