



# Fontana Unified School District

Every Student Successful, Engaging Schools, Empowered Communities

9680 Citrus Avenue | Fontana, CA 92335 | Phone: (909) 357-5000 | [www.fusd.net](http://www.fusd.net)

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Dec. 13, 2022

**CONTACT:** Lauren Creiman

(909) 833-9853

## Fontana Unified Elementary School Receives \$9,200 Grant for STEM Learning Space

**FONTANA, CA** – Canyon Crest Elementary School students will benefit from a \$9,200 Cultivating Innovation in STEM Schools (CISS) grant by San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools' Alliance for Education, which will enable the school to add virtual reality (VR) to the STEM learning opportunities available in its Innovation Space.

Canyon Crest Elementary is one of just 10 schools in the county to receive the grant. The CISS project, supported by funding from San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, provided the grants to elementary schools to help them create or enhance a science, technology, engineering and mathematics learning space that strengthens STEM learning at the K-6 grade levels, as well as promote STEM career exploration.

"We're thrilled to receive this grant and add to the resources available in our Innovation Space," Canyon Crest Elementary School Dr. Principal Kelly Wilbert said. "This space has had such a positive impact on our students, providing them with a dedicated place where they feel confident to ask questions, take risks and developing vital life skills – all while having fun."

When Wilbert came to Canyon Crest in 2013, she brought with her a determination to transform the culture and instructional experiences for her students, prepare them for careers of the future and pursue technologies that are still on the horizon.

These efforts led to Canyon Crest's recognition as a 21st Century Learning Exemplar School by the Battelle for Kids Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21) in 2019. Canyon Crest was one of 18 K-12 schools, school districts, early learning centers and beyond-school programs across the country to receive the designation by P21, a national advocacy group that encourages educators to infuse technology into their curriculum, incorporating the 4 Cs of education: critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity.

The Innovation Space was also born out of these efforts, providing students with a dedicated room stocked with a variety of equipment, tools and resources to foster exploration, creativity and problem-solving.

With help and supervision from parent volunteers and a Cal State San Bernardino student, the space will reopen to students in mid-January 2023, following a two-year closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When the Innovation Space reopens, students will be able to experiment with newly purchased VR headsets, as well as Ozobots, Legos, Snap Circuits, art materials and more.

Students will have the opportunity to visit the Innovation Space during lunch, and teachers can sign up to bring their students to the space during class and bolster their lessons with the resources available in the room.

Wilbert said the Innovation Space helped students adopt a growth mindset when it first opened – teaching students not to fear failure and to embrace opportunities to learn from mistakes – and hopes to see the same impact when the space reopens in January.

“It’s amazing to see the kinds of questions students were inspired to ask, or the looks on their faces when they found a solution to a challenge,” Wilbert said. “This space has shown our students that fun and learning go hand in hand, and helps them feel connected to school. I cannot wait to see how our students will make the most of the Innovation Space in the future.”

CISS grant recipients are expected to demonstrate outcomes for their STEM learning space that includes: student participation of at least 50% of the site’s enrollment across all grade levels in 2022-23; a wide variety of innovative and engaging hands-on/virtual learning experiences that expose all students to STEM career skills; designated, on-site STEM leaders or innovators that promote year-round use of the space; and parental exposure to STEM skills and careers through the use of the space.

Canyon Crest Elementary will hold a STEM Showcase on Saturday, Feb. 4, 2023, inviting parents and families to tour the new and improved Innovation Space and gain insight into the STEM learning that occurs in and out of the classroom.

“Congratulations to Canyon Crest Elementary School on developing an exciting space that fosters student innovation and receiving funding to help support this effort,” Fontana Unified Interim Superintendent Juan M. López said. “We are proud of how our Fontana Unified teachers, staff and administrators strive to ensure every student feels empowered to learn, dream and explore.”

**PHOTO CAPTION:**

**FUSD\_CCREST\_CISS:** Canyon Crest Elementary students experiment with coding and robotics in the school’s Innovation Space in 2019. The space, which will reopen in January 2023 following a two-year closure, will soon be equipped with virtual reality headsets thanks to a \$9,200 Cultivating Innovation in STEM Schools grant.

###