



Fontana Unified School District

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NEWS RELEASE

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Fontana Unified Principal Honored for Commitment to Social Justice Through Technology

FONTANA, CA – Almeria Middle School Principal Felix Jones was named the IACUE 2022-23 Administrator of the Year, celebrating his vision to provide equity and social justice to all students through technology. Jones will receive his award during the IA CUE Reimagine EDU Conference in January 2023.

Jones, who grew up in Fontana and became Almeria’s principal in 2021, is an advocate of blended learning – a combination of in-person and computer-based learning – and making educators the facilitators of the learning experience. For Jones, the IACUE award reflects the hard work and dedication of the Almeria faculty and staff.

“The teachers are the heroes here. They are getting the professional development, they are coming up with new ideas and taking risks,” Jones said. “I am humbled by the award because there are so many principals doing great things with tech in the classroom. I am grateful for all the support I have received in advocating for student agency.”

The IACUE award was presented by the Inland Area affiliate of the nationally based nonprofit Computer-Using Educators (CUE), whose mission is to transform teaching by connecting educators with ideas, resources and networking opportunities to prepare all students to succeed.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Jones began his initiative with a vision to bring a stronger focus on social justice and instruction, providing teachers with high quality professional development (PD) and feedback. While focusing on schoolwide PD he also provided differentiated PD for incorporating technology and creating more equitable and culturally responsive experiences in the classroom.

Working with Sonal Patel, a Digital Learning Program Manager for the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, Jones implemented a professional development program that combined blended, social justice and visible learning. The goal is to inspire students to have greater choice and voice, driven by their own interests, and supported by their teachers.

“Mr. Jones’ superpower is building relationships with his staff and other educational partners,” Patel said. “He has set high expectations for his staff and created a three-year plan which he has stayed committed to. He is already seeing positive results through the success of his students and staff. Felix works tirelessly to ensure every single one of his students are provided with a chance to succeed.”

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During the 2021-22 school year, Jones selected six teachers to become the first professional development cohort, guided by Patel, stressing to the educators that he wanted them to pursue their own professional learning journeys and goals. Each cohort member also chose a focus area, such as instructional design or personalized learning in technology. This year, a second cohort of four teachers was selected.

“The support and leadership of Mr. Jones has paved the way for blended learning and culturally responsive practices to be incorporated into my classroom daily,” Almeria eighth-grade teacher Brittany Bush said. “Mr. Jones values the individual identities of our students and strives to make the future better for each one of them. I appreciate that he is dedicated to creating a culture of inclusivity for all staff and students.”

Jones’ ultimate goals for the program are to have every teacher participating in professional development, led by the previous cohorts, and to have his teacher leaders make presentations at future IACUE conferences.

PHOTO CAPTION:

FUSD_IACUEJONES: Almeria Middle School Principal Felix Jones was recognized as the IACUE 2022-23 Administrator of the Year for his commitment to providing equity and social justice to all students through technology. IACUE is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to transform teaching by connecting educators with ideas, resources and networking opportunities to prepare all students to succeed.

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