



UPLAND UNIFIED

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education

Wes Fifield, President
Mary Locke, Vice President
Chris Cruz, Clerk
Jack Young, Member
Sherman Garnett, Member

Superintendent

Lynn J. Carmen Day, Ed.D.

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 27, 2025

CONTACT: Hannah Flanagan

PHONE: (909) 929-1271

Enrollment Opens at Pathways Prep Academy, a New Middle College Charter High School in Upland

UPLAND – Pathways Prep Academy, a new 9-12 charter high school opening in the 2026–27 school year, is coming to the city of Upland and expanding high school options in the West End region of San Bernardino county. Pathways Prep Academy is a “middle college,” a specialized high school model that allows students to earn up to two years of college credit tuition-free while completing their high school diploma, giving them a head start on college and career readiness.

Upland Unified’s Board of Education recently approved the charter petition, and enrollment applications are now open. Designed to prepare students for success in both college and career, Pathways Prep Academy features small class sizes, capped at 25 students, and a smaller than average counselor-to-student ratio to ensure individualized academic and personal support. The program will cater to first generation high school students who are traditionally underrepresented or less successful in college settings, creating a supportive pathway to higher education.

Enrollment is free, and college courses will be embedded into the regular school day, allowing students to take Chaffey College classes on campus. In addition to rigorous academics, students will participate in college visits across California, the East Coast, and even international destinations, giving them early exposure to higher education environments.

Virtual information meetings for families interested in learning more about the program are scheduled for Wednesdays at 6 p.m. on Nov. 19, Dec. 10, and Dec. 17.

Pathways Prep Academy was founded by Upland Unified’s Chief Academic Officer Dr. Shinay Bowman, who was inspired by her own educational journey. Having attended six different high schools while growing up in foster care, Dr. Bowman said she envisioned a school that would meet students where they are and help them reach beyond their circumstances.

“Pathways Prep Academy is the kind of school I wish had existed when I was a student — small, joyful, rigorous, and future-focused,” Dr. Bowman said. “Our mission is to open doors for every learner, especially those who may not see themselves as ‘college-ready.’ At Pathways Prep, they will not only be prepared for college but will thrive in it. We are deeply grateful to the Upland Unified Board of Education for championing innovation and access for all students.”

Courtney Miller, who has served as Assistant Principal at Upland High School since 2021, will lead Pathways Prep Academy as its founding principal. The new school will be located on the Upland Elementary School campus, where Miller will oversee the launch of the program and its first cohort of students.

Miller began her career as a high school science teacher in Los Angeles charter schools, teaching college-prep, honors, and Advanced Placement science courses. As a founding teacher at the California School of the Arts – San Gabriel Valley, she helped develop the school’s academic framework before being promoted to Assistant Principal. At Upland High School, she led efforts to expand dual enrollment and strengthen student success programs, resulting in measurable growth in both participation and achievement. In May 2025, she completed the California Coalition of Early & Middle Colleges (CCEMC) Leadership Academy.

“It is a privilege to serve the Upland community as the founding principal of Pathways Prep Academy,” Miller said. “At Pathways Prep Academy, we believe every student has a unique gift. Our mission is to help them discover that gift and prepare them to use it to make a meaningful impact in college, career, and the world.”

Pathways Prep Academy represents a major step forward in Upland Unified’s long-term commitment to educational innovation and access. As part of the District’s Vision 2030 initiative, the academy is one of “The Great Eight” programs designed to expand opportunities, personalize learning, and prepare students for the future.

For more information about Pathways Prep Academy or to register for an upcoming information session, visit www.pathwaysprepacademy.org.

PHOTO CAPTION

UUSD_NewCharter1: Courtney Miller visits with Pioneer Junior High students about Pathways Prep Academy. Miller will be the inaugural principal at the 9-12 Pathways Prep Academy charter high school when it opens on the campus of Upland Elementary for the 2026-2027 school year.

###