



# Fontana Unified School District

Every Student Successful, Engaging Schools, Empowered Communities

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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Fontana Unified Middle School Continues Innovative Leadership With Microsoft Showcase School Recognition

**FONTANA, CA** – For the eighth year in a row, Southridge Tech Middle School has been recognized as a Microsoft Showcase School for the 2025-26 academic year in recognition of its ongoing commitment to educational innovation and use of digital tools to support student success.

Southridge Tech was first welcomed into the global network of Microsoft Showcase Schools in 2018, joining campuses across six continents recognized for their forward-thinking integration of technology to improve student outcomes and promote inclusive learning. Only 32 schools across North America – and just three in California – received this honor this year.

“It is an honor for Southridge Tech to be recognized each year as a Microsoft Showcase School,” Southridge Tech Principal Amber Knight said. “The strength of our programs and implementation of new learning tools are the result of the collaborative efforts of our teachers and staff, and a shared commitment to ensuring each student receives a personalized and engaging learning experience.”

As an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme campus, Southridge Tech integrates Microsoft 365 tools throughout its rigorous curriculum. Students use Teams, OneNote, PowerPoint, and Forms for project-based learning, collaboration, and digital discussions across core subjects. Each spring, students demonstrate their skills during a campus-wide Microsoft Showcase event, highlighting how they apply digital tools to enhance their learning.

To strengthen digital literacy daily, Southridge Tech launched a new “Tech Skill of the Month” initiative this school year. Each month, students focus on a foundational technology skill using Microsoft tools. September’s focus was on effective and professional email writing, with lessons on developing clear subject lines, structured content, and appropriate closing statements. Departments rotate monthly, taking the lead on implementing that month’s skill across grade levels.

Christopher Fisher, a Southridge Tech Microsoft Innovative Educator (MIE) Expert and a member of the District’s artificial intelligence taskforce, helped lead the transition to virtual learning during the pandemic by training staff and integrating digital tools to keep students engaged. Now, he works with department chairs and the instructional leadership team to design lessons, coach teachers, and ensure consistent, high-quality instruction powered by Microsoft tools.

Southridge Tech teachers like Fisher, apply Microsoft 365 digital tools to enhance creativity, accessibility, and student engagement in the classroom. These tools include Microsoft Immersive Reader, which personalizes the students’ reading experience by allowing them to read at their own

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pace, listen to text being read aloud for proper pronunciation, and follow along with highlighted words to help build reading confidence. Students also gain valuable skills and knowledge that prepare them for high school, college, and future career opportunities.

“Part of learning is just playing with the applications,” Fisher said. “You have to be comfortable with the tools before you can make students excited to use them.”

Beyond classroom instruction, Southridge Tech offers enrichment opportunities through an afterschool robotics program that emphasizes mechanical engineering and coding. The program actively encourages participation from students historically underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, to ensure that they envision themselves in these future careers.

As a Microsoft Showcase School, Southridge Tech gains access to a global professional learning community, certification vouchers for educators, exclusive training resources, and direct engagement with Microsoft product and program teams.

“Every student at Southridge Tech is learning essential digital skills that will serve them far beyond middle school,” Fontana Unified School District Superintendent Miki Inbody said. “This redesignation reflects our commitment to preparing students for success in college, careers, and life through technology, innovation, and access for all.”

#### **PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**FUSD\_MICROSOFTSHOWCASE1:** Christopher Fisher (right), a Southridge Tech Middle School Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert, applies Microsoft 365 digital tools in the classroom to enhance creativity, accessibility, and student engagement. Southridge Tech has been recognized as a Microsoft Showcase School for the 2025-26 academic year in recognition of its ongoing commitment to educational innovation and use of digital tools to support student success.

**FUSD\_MICROSOFTSHOWCASE2:** Fisher’s students used Microsoft tools to present on solutions to solve housing issues, specifically for unhoused individuals.

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