



Fontana Unified School District

Every Student Successful, Engaging Schools, Empowered Communities

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A Second Chance: Fontana Unified FLIP Programs Help Students Find a Better Path

FONTANA, CA – For 30 years, Fontana Unified School District’s Fontana Leadership Intervention Program (FLIP) and Junior FLIP have helped more than 1,000 students overcome challenges and make positive choices, with the 2025-26 school year cohort reporting some of the programs’ strongest data yet.

Led by the Fontana School Police Department (FSPD), FLIP uses a “court of your peers” model to help students break patterns affecting their attendance, behavior, or academic progress. The 16-week course provides students with tutoring, mentorship, and structured lessons focused on discipline, emergency preparedness, and the importance of attending school. Participants take part in field trips and leadership development activities, and receive support in making positive choices at school and home. Families are also connected with additional needed resources to ensure students are supported every step of the way.

“FLIP is important because it allows us to mentor students who need additional support and helps keep them from entering the court system,” FSPD Chief Rich Randolph said. “We can step in, help them grow, and provide resources not only to the students, but to their families and schools as well.”

During the 2025-26 school year, 20 students graduated from the FLIP program, representing the communities of Eric Birch, Fontana, Jurupa Hills, Kaiser, Summit, and Etiwanda high schools. The cohort recorded a 50% reduction in tardiness during the program, while student absences decreased by 38%.

In spring 2026, 14 Junior FLIP students graduated from the program, representing Alder, Almeria, Canyon Crest, Cypress, Maple, Palmetto, Sierra Lakes, West Randall, Southridge Tech, and Truman middle schools. While enrolled in the program, student tardiness decreased by 6%, and the cohort had no suspensions, representing a 100% decrease in the suspension rate.

Students are referred to FLIP and Junior FLIP by school counselors and complete an intake process to determine whether the programs can provide the best support. Participants receive tutoring and take part in field trips and lessons focused on discipline, first aid, respect for parents, and the importance of attending school.

FSPD strengthened the programs during the 2025-26 school year by improving data collection and graduate tracking. These changes allow program staff to better evaluate student progress and remain connected with participants after they complete FLIP. When students or families need continued assistance, staff can connect them with services available through Fontana Unified or community organizations.

Fontana Unified Senior Director of Maintenance and Operations Luis E. Estrada supports FLIP by providing CPR and emergency preparedness training aligned with American Heart Association guidelines.

“One of the benefits of the training is awareness,” Estrada said. “Students learn how to respond to an emergency, recognize an obstructed airway, and understand signs and symptoms. Those skills can benefit them at school, at home with family members, or in the community.”

Estrada was one of several honorees recognized during the inaugural FSPD Public Safety Awards, which celebrated individuals across the District for their excellence and contributions toward public safety.

“We have to be mentors and leaders for our students,” Estrada said. “We want them to understand their importance, the value they bring to the community, and that Fontana Unified supports their learning and growth.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

FUSD_FLIP1: Led by the Fontana School Police Department, Fontana Unified School District’s Fontana Leadership Intervention Program (FLIP) and Junior FLIP have helped more than 1,000 students overcome challenges and make positive choices.

FUSD_FLIP2: Fontana Unified Senior Director of Maintenance and Operations Luis E. Estrada is honored during the inaugural Fontana School Police Department Public Safety Awards for his contributions to student safety and emergency preparedness.

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