



Fontana Unified School District

Every Student Successful, Engaging Schools, Empowered Communities

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 13, 2026

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Fontana Unified Elementary School Celebrates 10-Year Anniversary with Community Gala

FONTANA, CA – With a mariachi band serenading more than 200 attendees, Dolores Huerta International Academy (DHIA) celebrated its 10-year anniversary with a community gala on Sept. 18, spotlighting the award-winning K-6 school's commitment to promoting multicultural and multilingual students through its International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme and Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program.

Representatives of Congresswoman Norma Torres, State Senator Eloise Reyes, and Assemblymember Robert Garcia presented special proclamations and certificates to DHIA during the celebration, recognizing the dedication of the administrators, faculty, staff, and students who have helped build the school into a community treasure.

"This is a wonderful day for Dolores Huerta International Academy and the Fontana community," DHIA Principal Lorena Huizar said. "In 10 years, DHIA has established itself as a leader in dual language, as well as being the first step in a K-12 IB journey for our scholars. We look forward to many more successful years."

At the core of DHIA's success is a rigorous DLI program that begins in kindergarten. The program uses a 90/10 classroom model, in which Spanish is used 90% of the time and English is used for 10%. English instruction increases by 10% at each grade level until each language is represented equally by fourth grade. In 2023, DHIA received the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) Seal of Excellence award for excellence in bilingual education and educational equity for multilingual learners.

DHIA assistant principal Janet Rivera came to Fontana Unified in May 2016 to be part of the school's DLI curriculum and IB Primary Years Programme. In 2022, DHIA, along with Southridge Tech Middle School, was certified as an IB World School.

"Dual language is my passion. I've been a dual language teacher and parent, and was very excited to launch this school's DLI program," Rivera said. "The fact that we are an IB school makes it even more fun and challenging. We worked hard to get everyone on board, from our teachers and staff to our community partners."

At DHIA, students have the opportunity to immerse themselves in a range of intellectual and artistic pursuits designed to spark passion, develop new talents, and build confidence.

— more —

These programs include visual and performing arts, American Sign Language, gardening club, esports, and gifted and talented education, where students learn to think critically, solve complex problems, and expand their academic potential.

In their final year, DHIA sixth-grade students complete an IB exhibition project, an in-depth, collaborative endeavor that has made an impact both locally and beyond the United States, including projects that have provided care packages to women's and animal shelters, and others that sent books and supplies to El Salvador and Colombia.

IB exhibition projects also have the ability to create change within Fontana Unified. As a DHIA student, Cyrus Moss, now a freshman at Jurupa Hills High School, created a petition drive for his project that resulted in the renaming of Randall Pepper Elementary School to O'Day Short Elementary School, which preserves the legacy of the O'Day Short family. Earlier this year, Moss was recognized by the Equal Justice Initiative with its Community Remembrance Award for his efforts.

"We are proud to celebrate Dolores Huerta International Academy and their milestone with our students, families, staff, and entire community," Superintendent Miki R. Inbody said. "This gives us the opportunity to recognize a decade of student achievement, global learning, and opportunities that have helped our scholars grow as learners and make real impact as leaders within the District and beyond."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

FUSD_DLIA10YEAR1: Dolores Huerta International Academy celebrated its 10-year anniversary on Sept. 18, spotlighting the award-winning K-6 school's commitment to a multicultural and multilingual learning environment.

FUSD_DLIA10YEAR2: DHIA students celebrated a decade of their school providing an immersive and hands-on experience, including having both an International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme and a Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program.

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