



# Bellflower Unified School District

## Media Release

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## **Bellflower Unified Strengthens Health Career Pathways Program**

### **New Course Introduces Students to Careers in Health Industry**

**BELLFLOWER** – A new career technical education course showcasing 17 health industry careers is drawing strong interest from Bellflower Unified students, with 233 students enrolled in eight classes at the District's two comprehensive high schools.

The course, launched in fall 2014, stems from a District effort to strengthen career technical education with a program of rigorous academics, in-depth industry instruction and a focus on training students for high-skill, high-wage and high-demand occupations.

The effort began with a District re-alignment of career technical program oversight – previously clustered with other federal and state programs – to ensure offerings are integrated with high school academics, allowing educators to more effectively prepare students for college and careers.

Career readiness is one of the primary goals outlined in the California Common Core Standards, the instructional guidelines that became a statewide rule at the start of 2014-15, as well as an educational priority of colleges and employers attempting to meet the needs of an increasingly technologically sophisticated 21st century marketplace.

“Today, we need a more integrated program that provides academic-rich pathways for students at all levels for exploring a variety of career fields,” Bellflower Superintendent Dr. Brian Jacobs said. “It’s a big plus if we can ground those options in the highly sought-after science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields that are helping lead the way in generating new career paths.”

**MORE**

## Standard of Excellence - Nothing Less

Bellflower Unified School District provides a pathway for all students to attain the expertise and develop skills of academic excellence that will empower them to become lifelong active learners, demonstrate respect for themselves and others in a dynamic, diverse and global society, become responsible, informed, productive, independent and contributing citizens, and perform successfully in their chosen field and in society.



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For example, the new health course provides an introduction to health fields through a modular format that meshes hands-on, project-based activities and traditional classroom lessons. Instruction includes information on colleges that provide training, cost of higher-education options and career salary details.

“When most people think of a career in the health industry, they think of becoming a doctor or nurse,” said Lisa Azevedo, Assistant Superintendent of Academic Accountability & Curriculum Improvement. “But it’s much more than that. Jobs range from hospitality to engineering, from radiology to phlebotomy. Right now, seven out of 10 of the top U.S. jobs in demand are in the health care field.”

Azevedo said the course fills a gap in an existing health career pathway that begins with a freshman health class with a segment on careers and concludes with a junior/senior level program in which students shadow medical professionals through a partnership with Lakewood Regional Medical Center.

Azevedo’s team is looking at ways to strengthen the District’s other career technical programs, offered through the Regional Occupational Program, including STEM, business and finance, engineering, visual arts and performing arts.

“We provide a wide array of programs now, but we can take this instruction to a higher level – one that plays off the strengths of our academic instruction and which gives students extraordinary preparation in a field of their passion,” Azevedo said.

## PHOTO CAPTIONS:

**HEALTH 1:** Bellflower High School science teacher Melissa Ellis helps students Razel Ramacula, left, and Jasmine Burton as they measure a pelvic girdle for a forensics investigation case as part of a new career technical education class that introduces students to 17 health industry professions.

**HEALTH 2:** Bellflower High School student Luz Colon checks the blood pressure of classmate James Serna during the nursing unit of a hands-on course that introduces students to 17 health industry professions. The course is part of the District’s expanded health career pathways program.

Additional photos available at [www.caschoolnews.net](http://www.caschoolnews.net)

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