



Press Release

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MUSD/ELAC Initiative Receives \$6 Million in California Career Pathways Grant Funds

MONTEBELLO – In a first of its kind effort in the Montebello community, the Montebello Unified School District, in partnership with East Los Angeles College, has been awarded a \$6 million grant in order to coordinate regional resources to develop educational pipelines in high-skilled industries that will allow students to excel, while boosting the regional economy.

"Our partnership with ELAC allows us to marshal our collective resources, expertise and partners with the goal of boosting the regional economy through our most valuable asset, our students," said MUSD Board President David Vela. "This integrated approach helps students build a strong foundation for success in college and career, while fostering a strong economic base in our community."

MUSD has been a strong proponent and practitioner of Linked Learning, which connects strong academics with real-world experience in a wide range of fields, including engineering, culinary arts and health sciences. Pathways that link learning with student interests and career preparation lead to higher graduation rates, increased college enrollments, and higher earning potential.

"This grant is critical in successfully meeting the Board of Education goal that 50 percent of all high school students participate in a Linked Learning Pathway," said MUSD Board of Education Vice President Benjamin Cárdenas. "Overall, this grant illustrates our unwavering commitment to excellent education and validates the good work being done in MUSD's high schools."

The grant is part of a statewide effort to support Linked Learning. Assembly Bill 86, which was signed by Governor Edmund G. Brown last year, invested \$250 million into the California Career Pathways Trust (CCPT), which funds the building of systemic partnerships between K-12 schools, community colleges and regional employers, while integrating rigorous academics with engagement in real-world professions.

"As a District, we have developed many meaningful and collaborative partnerships with local businesses, community leaders, stakeholders and colleges to provide work-based learning opportunities for our students that foster long-term and high-quality education," said Susanna Contreras Smith, Superintendent of Education. "This grant allows us to deepen these alliances, while forging new ones, as we strive to

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Montebello Unified School District is a dynamic learning institution employing top-quality educators. It is the combined work of many that allows the District to continue educating more than 30,000 students every year using the 40 Developmental Assets at all of our school sites. It is through everyone's efforts – students, parents, teachers, staff and administrators – that we are achieving the District's number one goal of raising student achievement. Learn more online at www.montebello.k12.ca.us.

prepare each student for the next step in their academic and professional lives."

The grant, which is a joint effort with East Los Angeles College (ELAC), a long-time MUSD partner, will achieve three overarching outcomes for MUSD: institutionalize work-based learning through the support of workforce investment boards, local advisory boards and deputy sector navigators; create a seamless transition for students to participate in dual enrollment and articulation programs to enhance college success; and strengthen the regional economy by focusing on pathways that contribute to the health of the local economy.

"ELAC is dedicated to working with MUSD to continue building partnerships that have and continue to benefit students," said ELAC President Marvin Martinez. "With this grant, we look forward to strengthening those partnerships and building additional ones both locally and regionally."

"Education and employers must work together," said Paul De La Cerda, ELAC's Dean of Economic & Workforce Development and Career Technical Education. "Our work will continue to ensure that young people are well prepared for college and careers in high-demand and high-wage fields and our programs align with workforce needs, which is critical for student success and economic growth."

The targeted pathways that will be funded by the CCPT are those aligned with high-need, high-growth or emerging regional economic sectors. Utilizing a labor market analysis, student career interest, and local employer skill requirements, the chosen MUSD and ELAC pathways that will be supported by the grant include: Architecture, Construction and Engineering; Engineering & Design; GREEN (environmental science and conservation pathway); DRIVEN (alternative energy and transportation technology pathway); iCARE (education, child development and family services pathway); and Health Sciences.

"MUSD has already shown itself to be a regional leader in developing and sustaining relevant pathways for our students, engaging them in instruction that provides hands-on, real-world experience," said Ayele Doodoo, MUSD's Director of Curriculum & Instruction. "Our success, from student achievement to collaboration with local community colleges and regional businesses, will only become stronger moving forward."

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