

PRESS RELEASE

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Pomona Unified Nationally Recognized as a Trailblazer In World of Digital Education

POMONA, Calif. – Pomona Unified Superintendent Richard Martinez was recently recognized as a leader in integrating technology and innovation into the classroom during the White House’s “ConnectED to the Future” Superintendent’s Summit, where more than 100 superintendents and educators from across the country joined President Obama to discuss education, technology and the Future Ready Pledge.

Martinez was invited to participate in the day-long Nov. 19 gathering, which provided exemplary Future Ready school chiefs the opportunity to discuss digital education and learning and explore promising approaches to using technology in the classroom, an effort that Pomona Unified has successfully led.

“I am proud that Pomona Unified has been able to stay ahead of the pack in our efforts to bring technology into the classroom and revolutionize learning, ensuring our students’ success and strengthening our rigorous and award-winning academic program,” Superintendent Richard Martinez said. “It is an honor for our District to be recognized nationally for what we have been doing to foster innovation, digital learning and student engagement through the effective use of technology.”

Martinez was among the leaders lauded by President Obama for offering children a world-class education and ensuring that technology, cutting-edge software programs and digital devices are within their reach.

“We’ve made gains in education thanks to the hard work of school leaders like you,” Obama told the superintendents. “Dropout rates are down. The graduation rate is the highest on record. More young people are earning college degrees than ever before.”

For several years, Pomona Unified has incorporated technology into classrooms to equip students with 21st century skills and promote an integral part of the new Common Core standards essential to flourishing in the digital world – communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.

Pomona Unified’s efforts recently earned two Golden Bell Awards from the California School Boards Association for the District’s innovative use of technology in Early Childhood Education and educational excellence at the Palomares Academy of Health Sciences.

Across the District, every PUSD classroom provides Internet access and campus-wide WiFi is expanding at all sites. Digital devices such as iPads, Chromebooks and laptops are available in PUSD's K-12 schools, creating access, equity and excellence in educational technology. To prepare for online Common Core testing, 32 assessment-ready labs are being completed. Through community partnerships with EveryoneOn and Southeast Community Development Corp., PUSD is bridging the digital divide for PUSD families.

Additionally, PUSD offers students career pathways in computer science in partnership with Harvey Mudd College and Microsoft Corp., as well as courses in robotics through Cal Poly Pomona. Village Academy High School offers career courses in Film Studies and Computer Science/Information Technology.

"You've found innovative ways to reach your students and improve your schools," President Obama said. "In your districts, I know there are just extraordinary teachers and principals who are putting everything they've got into making sure our kids are getting a great education."

Obama launched the ConnectED Initiative in 2013. It is a five-year program that aims to provide 99 percent of students with high-speed Internet connectivity at the classroom level.

As part of the summit, the president hosted a Future Ready blended learning pledge ceremony, where Martinez and other superintendents who exemplify outstanding school leadership and strategies formally signed the pledge on tablets, joined virtually by 1,200 educational leaders nationwide.

"By signing the Future Ready Pledge, I am reiterating my commitment to continue leading a culture of empowerment, providing families universal access to powerful digital tools to support learning and preparing our children for success in college and career," Martinez said.

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OUR MISSION: The Pomona Unified School District provides a well-rounded and challenging educational program of the highest quality, empowering students to lead productive, fulfilling lives as lifelong learners. Supported on a foundation of integrity and respect, students will gain academic excellence and take personal and community pride as responsible citizens and productive participants in a diverse society and global economy.

