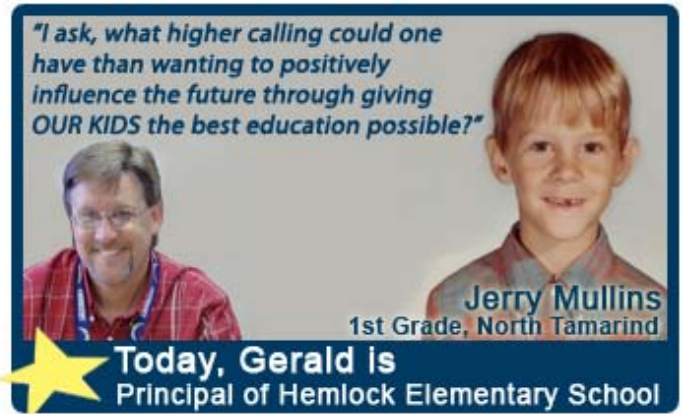




Fontana STAR

Gerald Mullins

shares how he is inspired



Profile in Excellence: Gerald "Jerry" Mullins, Principal	
FUSD Schools Attended:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Tamarind Elementary School • Live Oak Elementary School • Fontana Jr. High • Fontana High School
Higher Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cal Poly Pomona (B.A. and Teaching Credential) • Cal State San Bernardino (M.A.)
FUSD Career Experiences:	<i>Taught 7th grade Language Arts at Alder Middle School, taught one year of severely handicapped, wrote Focus on Achievement lessons and coached middle and high school teachers as a Teacher on Assignment, Assistant Principal at Redwood, Tokay, and Canyon Crest Elementary schools, and currently Principal of Hemlock!</i>
Who were the FUSD staff that affected you most as a student?	<i>The teacher I remember most was my fifth grade teacher at Live Oak, Mrs. Imbiorski. Just learning to spell her name helped me with memorization. She really made school fun but we worked hard as well. Unfortunately my family moved away to Washington state after that year and I attended 6th thru 9th grade there. However, I returned to live with my dad who still lived in Fontana half way thru 9th grade and finished my school years right here in Fontana. Another teacher that had an impact on me was my 10th grade English teacher, Mrs. Brostrom. She was the first to point out and encourage my writing.</i>
What did you dream of growing-up to be as a child that would lead you to your work with FUSD?	<i>Growing up I actually wanted to be a writer. When I saw injustices in the world I wanted to expose them through writing. Going to college I began to expand that idea and got interested in teaching writing and literature. I wanted to spread my love of the written word through teaching. Working in Fontana is where I had the greatest connection to the kids.</i>
Since you've joined FUSD as staff, what experience(s) have you been most proud of?	<i>It's really the little things every day. If a child is being bullied and I can put a stop to it (not just for that child's sake but for the bully as well, to see where they are heading down the wrong road), that's what I'm most proud of. Or a teacher who is looking for a way to reach a child, if I can be there to help in some way, that's what I'm most proud of. Or perhaps a parent asking for advice and I can in some way help them, that's what I'm most proud of that day! In addition, having the opportunity to write and have it be my "job" through writing the FOA lessons helped me quench my desire to write for a living. It's satisfying to know that out there kids are still</i>

	<i>getting some reading or writing tips from those lessons! Awesome!</i>
What keeps you up at night about your work for FUSD?	<i>Nothing!! I sleep just like a baby (even wake up crying sometimes). Not really, that's a joke! But seriously, if you work for the right things and absolutely do the best you can every day and keep striving to constantly do good, you won't ever lose any sleep (you'll be too tired from the hard work)!</i>
What do you think is the biggest misconception the public has about our work?	<i>I think that the biggest misconceptions come from people who mistake school now for what it was twenty or thirty years ago, before we really began utilizing data to guide instruction and truly looking for ways to reach every child. People sometimes just don't have their facts up-to-date. The last time I saw kids taking naps in kindergarten was when I was in kindergarten. Now days, they're learning every day in every grade! It's also partly these radio talk show hosts who make the same mistake. They have a microphone now and constantly put everything about education down on a daily basis. It's good to have intellectual dialogue, but it's important to know the difference between that and simply taking everything about education out of context and screaming about it daily. My theory is they are probably didn't do really well in school and are working out their childhood frustrations and I hope the best for them. It's discouraging, though, to hear education as a profession portrayed as anything less than it should be. I ask, what higher calling could one have than wanting to positively influence the future through giving OUR KIDS the best education possible?</i>
What can the community do to strengthen public education?	<i>Just be involved with their local schools. Join the PTA or School Site Councils. Look for ways to help, especially in these trying times! Also, if you hear people putting education down, ask some hard questions. Chances are, the "nay sayer" is just a bit misinformed. Things are much different now. We've had lower class sizes and an accountability system in place for years now that really forces everyone to look at data and achievement levels for all kids.</i>
What inspires you to give your very best for the students of FUSD?	<i>When I was subbing I worked in different school districts. But when I came back to Fontana, it was these kids who "grabbed hold" of my heart and imagination and never let go. It was these kids that I saw as being just like my sister, my brother and me that had the potential to do anything they put their minds to. They just needed to be told that they could and be given the "keys" for that success. I knew then that it was my life's mission to give them those keys for success. Today I even have a set of keys hanging in my office to remind me every day that THAT is why I'm there. Finding what you are here for, having a passion for it, and actually following through on that mission every day is truly powerful and if you find that thing and work on it, you'll never "work" a day of your life! For me, being principal is truly a privilege more than a job!</i>
What might staff or students be surprised to learn about you?	<i>Probably that one of my favorite things to do is cooking! I love to watch cooking shows or read recipes for different dishes and then spend all my time hunting down the ingredients and cooking them up for my wife and boys! Lately my cooking style of choice has been grilling. I'll grill anything! And the best places to grill are either tailgating at a Chargers game or at a camping spot at the beach! Fun!</i>

If you know of a "Fontana Star," particularly one who was an FUSD alumnus, you can nominate him or her to be featured by emailing webmaster@fUSD.net. Please provide your name, the name of the individual being nominated, contact information for both of you and a brief description as to why you think the individual qualifies as a Fontana Star.