

Fontana Unified School District

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MEET MARIBEL LOPEZ-TYUS, PRINCIPAL OF DOLORES HUERTA INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY

FONTANA, CA – The Fontana Unified School District is proud to welcome Maribel Lopez-Tyus as the Principal of Dolores Huerta International Academy (DHIA). Opening in August 2016, DHIA will offer a K-5 Pre-International Baccalaureate/Dual Language Immersion magnet program.

Ms. Lopez Tyus was born and raised in the San Gabriel Valley. Her parents came from Mexico at a young age, so she entered school not speaking English. “However, I had Spanish literacy in my home, as our parents ensured we keep our first language by having us attend bible studies and church in Spanish,” she said. “I am very grateful for their tenacity.”

After graduating from El Monte High School, she attended Mt. San Antonio Community College where she earned an Associate’s degree in Criminal Justice. “My original career focus was to go into Law Enforcement. However, when I transferred to Cal State, Los Angeles in 1988, it was there where I fell in love with teaching and changed my career dreams.”

In 1991, she began her teaching career as a Bilingual Teacher in Baldwin Park Unified School District. “I was very passionate about my job and making a true difference in the lives of children. I went on to teach junior high school for four more years with an emphasis on English Language Development and Biliteracy.”

When she completed her Master’s degree from Cal State, Los Angeles in 1997, her previous Superintendent and mentor told her she had a special gift with students and should pursue a career in administration to make a difference in more lives. “I pursued that recommendation and in 2000, became the principal of Tracy Elementary School in Baldwin Park and found that my passion for children grew more and more. While at Tracy, we established a successful Dual Language Program, which went on to receive the Seal of Excellence from California Association of Bilingual Education in 2005.”

In 2008, she accepted a principalship in San Bernardino City Unified School District where they built another successful Dual Language Program and it too received the Seal of Excellence from the California Association of Bilingual Education in 2012. “During my tenure in San Bernardino City Unified School District, I had the privilege in opening a brand new Dual Language School in which is in its third year of existence,” she said.

"I credit my parents for creating the strong passion I have for Dual Language Programs and for their hard work in keeping our first language alive and well in our home," said Ms. Lopez-Tyus. "My two children, Cameron (a sophomore in college) and Michaela (a senior in high school) also went through the Dual Language Program and are both bilingual and biliterate."

"I am honored to have been selected to join the Fontana Unified School District and open Dolores Huerta International Academy," she continued. "I am very impressed with the strong parent support here in Fontana and I am truly committed to continue to build community/parent partnerships."

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For more information, call Olivier Wong Ah Sun, Ed.D., Chief of Staff at (909) 357-7600, ext. 29106.

