



# Fontana Unified School District

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## PRESS RELEASE

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## Fontana Unified Dedicates New Academy to Civil Rights Champion Dolores Huerta

**FONTANA, CA** – Fontana Unified School District officials dedicated the new Dolores Huerta International Academy during an Oct. 11 community celebration that featured musical performances from students and inspiring remarks from the nationally renowned labor leader, who inspired students to forge ahead with their educational endeavors and pursue their dreams.

“I just want to thank you all for being here today and tell you how very grateful I am and so honored to have this incredible and beautiful school dedicated to my name,” Huerta said before an audience of hundreds of academy scholars, community members and parents. “All of us are so blessed to be in a school district that’s going to really love and care for their children and make sure they are not only prepared for college, but are prepared to go out into the world.”

The state-of-the-art dual-language magnet school opened its doors to 350 students in kindergarten through third grade in August 2016, launching opportunities for Fontana’s young learners to explore innovative English-Spanish dual-language and pre-International Baccalaureate (IB) magnet programs.

“I know we’re going to have a great future,” Huerta said. “You are setting an example for the rest of the schools in the state of California with what you are doing here.”

The academy was named after Huerta, a civil rights leader and co-founder of the United Farm Workers who, alongside Cesar Chavez, played a critical role in securing rights for farm workers. Community members advocated for naming the school after Huerta – a champion for workers’, immigrants’ and women’s rights whose courageous activism will serve as an inspiration for generations of students.

“I can’t think of a more exemplary role model for our students than Ms. Dolores Huerta, who has spent a majority of her life being a powerful voice for those in need and empowering the community she has long represented,” Fontana Unified Board President Lorena Corona said. “This school is a wise investment in our students’ futures. I want to thank Ms. Huerta for being here to witness our dreams of providing our youngest learners a high-quality education come to fruition.”

The ceremony included musical performances by kindergarten and first-grade students, who sang their respective songs – “Himno de las Americas” and “De Colores” – in Spanish. The program also featured a welcome speech from third-grade scholars and an IB scholar from Jurupa Hills High School, which offers the prestigious IB program.

“The vision we have for our students is built on collaboration and dedication to promoting academic excellence and global compassion by providing an innovative and multi-lingual education,” said Maribel Lopez-Tyus, principal of the Dolores Huerta International Academy. “I am proud to serve as principal and to uphold the vision and core values our parents have set forth for our scholars, educators and community.”

The Dolores Huerta International Academy’s featured programs aim to inspire students to gain multilingual skills through its English-Spanish dual-language program and prepare for enrollment in rigorous high school IB courses – pathways that will lead to high levels of achievement in college and careers.

It was recently named a candidate school for the IB Primary Years Programme, laying a foundation for the school to pursue authorization as an IB World School, enabling young learners to follow a rigorous course of study preparing them for college-level course work as they advance in their academic careers.

The school will add fourth and fifth grades over the next two years as it expands to its maximum capacity of 650 students. Its international flair is on display in the school’s foyer – with flags from multiple countries hanging to acknowledge the diverse heritage of the students.

“This has been a dream come true for the Fontana Unified community, and we are excited to offer such a unique program to our students and their families with the encouragement and support of such an extraordinary leader as Ms. Huerta,” Fontana Unified Interim Superintendent Randal Bassett said.

#### **PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**FUSDDEDICATION1:** Labor leader Dolores Huerta greets students at the Dolores Huerta International Academy during a dedication ceremony in her honor on Oct. 11. The academy, which offers English-Spanish dual-language and pre-International Baccalaureate (IB) magnet programs, opened in August 2016.

**FUSDDEDICATION2:** Labor leader Dolores Huerta, right, speaks to students during a tour of the Dolores Huerta International Academy following a dedication ceremony on Oct. 11. Hundreds of academy scholars, community members and parents celebrated the dedication of the academy, which opened its doors to 350 students in kindergarten through third grade in August 2016.

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