



For Immediate Release

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October 4, 2023

FULLERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT ***Rising Stars Launch the 2023-24 School Year***

(Fullerton, CA) – As students got settled into the new school year, they aren't the only ones returning to the classroom. Fullerton School District (FSD) staff along with dedicated community partners volunteered to participate in Rising Stars, a mentoring program that pairs staff members with students in FSD. The 2023-24 school year is the third year the mentors will spend with this group of students.

The first meeting of the school year is a time for the Rising Stars and mentors to talk about summer break and any new challenges and accomplishments in the new year (photo attached). FSD staff mentors get just as excited hearing about summertime fun as the students get telling the stories. FSD staff meet regularly with the Rising Stars and provide exposure to new experiences, special activities, and field trips to recognize and celebrate achievements throughout the year.

The Rising Stars are students who have amazing potential and can benefit from an additional adult in their lives to make sure they are attending school, completing assignments, and getting assistance, when and if needed. The mentors serve as cheerleaders to the Rising Stars and an additional resource to help them. The mentors are there to make a positive impact on the students. For example, during one year with additional tutoring and encouragement from the Rising Stars program, 30% of the participants demonstrated an improvement of two grade levels.

The Rising Stars program has made a difference in the lives of FSD students. Staff in the Superintendent's Office began mentoring a student in 5th grade at Richman School. Despite going through personal loss and challenges, this student promoted from Nicolas Junior High School in June 2023. Through support from being a Rising Star and others at the school sites, this student was able to experience, find his passion, and thrive, in water polo. Now a freshman at a local high school, this FSD Rising Star competed in the Southern California Junior Olympics in Texas and helped his team win a gold medal in the 16 and under boys age bracket (photo attached).

"Rising Stars helps to give students exposure to new experiences to help broaden their horizons and discover their passions. A student who discovers their passion and is able to gain support to thrive in doing what he/she loves is an important step in future success for themselves, for the community, and for all of us," shared Dr. Bob Pletka, Superintendent of Fullerton School District, and Rising Star mentor.

The Fullerton School District is located in northern Orange County, California and serves over 11,600 students in grades TK – 8th. The Fullerton School District includes 21 schools, 15 elementary schools, two K-8th grade schools, three middle schools, and a distance learning and home school model. The mission of the Fullerton School District is to work collaboratively with the community to provide an innovative, high-quality educational program for all students in a safe learning environment. The District motto, “*Great Schools - Successful Kids*” exemplifies the belief that all students will achieve academic excellence, acquire interpersonal skills, and develop technological expertise to contribute as productive citizens in a democratic society. For more information, call 714/447-7400 or visit www.fullertonsd.org.

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For more information, please feel free to contact Pam Chow/Project Liaison at 714/447-7480



Nicolas Rising Stars: This group started with staff in the Superintendent’s Office as 5th graders at Richman School

Raymond Rising Stars

The group spends time cultivating the Raymond gardens



Former Richman and Nicolas Rising Star who competed in the Southern California Junior Olympics in Texas and helped his team win a gold medal