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TONY THURMOND
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State Superintendent Tony Thurmond Announces 2019 California Distinguished Schools and Exemplary Districts

SACRAMENTO—State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond today announced that 162 middle and high schools are being honored under the 2019 Distinguished Schools Program. Sponsored by the California Department of Education and California Casualty, the program recognizes outstanding education programs and practices. Schools are awarded for achieving exceptional student performance for two consecutive school years or closing the achievement gap between two school years.

The list of recognized schools is attached at the end of this press release.

“I would like to commend these schools for fighting for a better future for our students, closing achievement gaps, and improving academic performance,” Thurmond said. “Thanks to teachers, administrators, classified employees, and parents working together, these schools meet the needs of all of their students, provide high-quality educational experiences, and put kids on a pathway to great careers.”

A component of the California School Recognition Program, the Distinguished Schools program was on a three-year pause while California transitioned to its new assessment and accountability system. From 2015 to 2017, California recognized schools that demonstrated exemplary achievements with the California Gold Ribbon Schools Program. The Distinguished Schools program returned last year. It recognizes elementary and middle and high schools in alternate years and allows eligible schools to apply once every two years. Schools recognized as awardees hold the title for two years.

Schools that applied were eligible based on their performance and progress on the state indicators as described on the California School Dashboard. Indicators include test scores, suspension rates, and graduation rates. Schools were also eligible to apply for a California Exemplary Program Award in Arts Education, Physical Activity and Nutrition Education, or Career Technical Education—which will be announced at a later time.

Distinguished School award winners represent examples of not just excellent teaching, learning, and collaboration, but also highly successful school climate efforts ranging from real-time conflict resolution to positive behavior intervention. Some examples of this year's honorees are:

Downtown Business High School, Los Angeles Unified School District

Downtown Business High School, an urban school in downtown Los Angeles, is a school serving about 1,000 students, with 80 percent of those living at or below the poverty line. Yet the school maintains some of the highest test scores in the district: 69–80 percent proficiency in mathematics and 85–98 percent English Language Arts proficiency rates over the last four years. It practices an “Opportunity for All” program to target absenteeism and close the achievement gap, especially for black and Latino students. The school implements a “Building Blocks” program, a system of monitoring starting in the ninth grade, to create supports and benchmarks to assist struggling students. For students struggling with attendance, the school reviews attendance data and provides a system of positive supports through counselor, coordinator, teacher, and parent involvement. In 2018, 100 percent of black and African American eleventh graders achieved a “nearly met,” “standard met” or “standard exceeded” score for both math and English on the California

Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASSP) assessment. Students with Ds and Fs shrunk from 500 to 424 this year, a decrease of approximately 16 percent. Schoolwide attendance rates have grown 1–2 percent annually for the last two years, and more than 90 percent of parents indicate they feel the school is emotionally and physically safe for their children, according to the School Accountability Report Card.

Union Middle School, Union Elementary School District

Located in San Jose, Union Middle School adopted a collaborative model of instruction in 2006 to help close the achievement gap for its special education students. Students are placed in services, courses, and interventions based on the results of common pre-assessments that indicate when and where additional support is necessary. Every effort is made to guarantee that schedules and services remain flexible enough to change as students' needs change. Over the past 14 years, a number of students with disabilities are now enrolled in collaborative classrooms—classes with standards-based curriculum taught by a highly qualified teacher that result in their higher achievement, often paired with the support of an instructional aide or special education teacher. Within the first five years of the collaborative model, the school saw an increasing number of students prepared to mainstream into grade-level instruction.

Grossmont High School, Grossmont Union High School District

Located in El Cajon, a suburban area in San Diego, Grossmont High School implemented a social and emotional learning program to support the needs of students through leadership, celebrations, rituals, traditions, and emotional learning. To better support social and emotional learning, the school established behavioral interventions such as a time-out reflection room that provides an immediate consequence combined with a reflection on problem behaviors. As an alternative intervention to detention or a referral, students can be sent to this room by a teacher to reflect on their behavior. Twice a week, the school also teaches emotional intelligence, dealing with how to recognize, understand, label, express, and regulate emotions—with the goal of gaining confidence that will cross over to their academics, which will then result in overall student improvement. The results for Grossmont High School over the past three years from the

California Healthy Kids Survey—School Climate Report Card show that the efforts are making a difference on campus. The school climate index has increased over the past three years with a score of 343 in 2017, 332 in 2018, and 356 in 2019. Scores on this survey also showed a lowering of violence, substance abuse, harassment, and bullying. Intervention referrals received by staff and counselors have also increased over time, as well as those connected to therapeutic services and participation in support groups.

Mammoth Middle, Mammoth Unified

Located in the rural Eastern Sierra Nevada mountain range, Mammoth Middle school serves just 306 students, 58 percent of whom are classified as socioeconomically disadvantaged, with 12 percent also classified as English Learners. Using a Focused Schools program that began three years ago, the school studied CAASPP and district benchmark data to identify the gaps and had staff create an instructional focus statement. One main goal in the first year was for students to show growth in their ability to read actively and think critically. Students created their kid-friendly version of the focus, which was called “Read Actively, Think Critically, and Strive to Grow.” The school had poster contests, and student winners had their displays in all the classrooms and in the main office. In a later year, the school focused on parent and community engagement. Last year in CAASPP, English Language Arts results increased by 25.1 points, which is seven points above standard. In mathematics results, the school increased overall by 16.4 points but is still 16.1 points below standard. According to the California School Dashboard, the school is still steadily closing the achievement gap and raising performance levels for all students.

Los Molinos High School, Los Molinos High School District

Located in rural Tehama County, Los Molinos High School is serving 60 percent socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and about half of the students are Hispanic or Latino. It meets the educational needs of students by promoting technology, academic excellence, and career technical education. The high school has implemented a Google Chromebook program to facilitate the use of Google Classroom and daily use of technology by every student. This streamlined and easy-to-use tool makes giving out assignments, editing writing, giving feedback, and general communication with students easy.

Students may take advantage of dual enrollment with Shasta College, taking online courses or participating in site-facilitated college courses. Parents have access to their student’s attendance as well as grade books. They also have access to curriculum through their student’s Google Classrooms and teacher web pages. Both math and English CAASSP scores increased by 10 percentage points in 2017–18. In addition, the math teachers held a math camp for students whose data analysis showed a specific need in segments of the curriculum.

In addition to Distinguished Schools, California will recognize exemplary districts that have made a positive impact on student outcomes. These schools and districts, California Exemplary Arts Education Schools, California Exemplary Physical Activity and Nutrition Education Schools, California Exemplary Career Technical Education Schools, California Green Ribbon Schools, Civic Learning Award Schools, Model Continuation High Schools, National Blue Ribbon Schools, and National ESEA Distinguished Schools all will be honored in April during a ceremony at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim. For more information, please visit the [California Distinguished Schools Program](#) on the California Department of Education’s website.

2019 California Distinguished Schools

County	District	School Name
Alameda	Alameda Unified	Alameda Science and Technology Institute
Alameda	Dublin Unified	Dublin High
Alameda	Dublin Unified	Eleanor Murray Fallon
Alameda	Fremont Unified	American High
Alameda	Fremont Unified	John F. Kennedy High
Alameda	Fremont Unified	Mission San Jose High

Alameda	Fremont Unified	William Hopkins Junior High
Alameda	Livermore Valley Joint Unified	Livermore High
Alameda	Oakland Unified	Claremont Middle
Alameda	Piedmont City Unified	Piedmont Middle
Alameda	Pleasanton Unified	Foothill High
Alameda	San Lorenzo Unified	KIPP King Collegiate High
Alameda	San Lorenzo Unified	KIPP Summit Academy
Butte	Durham Unified	Durham High
Butte	Paradise Unified	Paradise Charter Middle
Contra Costa	Acalanes Union High	Miramonte High
Contra Costa	Mt. Diablo Unified	Foothill Middle
Contra Costa	San Ramon Valley Unified	California High
Contra Costa	San Ramon Valley Unified	Los Cerros Middle

Contra Costa	San Ramon Valley Unified	Pine Valley Middle
Contra Costa	San Ramon Valley Unified	Windemere Ranch Middle
Contra Costa	West Contra Costa Unified	Middle College High
El Dorado	Rescue Union Elementary	Marina Village Middle
Fresno	Clovis Unified	Granite Ridge Intermediate
Fresno	Fresno Unified	Baird Middle
Fresno	Fresno Unified	Design Science Middle College High
Imperial	Imperial Unified	Frank M. Wright Middle
Kern	Delano Joint Union High	Cesar E. Chavez High
Kern	Delano Joint Union High	Delano High
Kern	Rosedale Union Elementary	Rosedale Middle
Kings	Lemoore Union High	Lemoore Middle College High
Los Angeles	ABC Unified	Cerritos High

Los Angeles	ABC Unified	Whitney (Gretchen) High
Los Angeles	Alhambra Unified	Mark Keppel High
Los Angeles	Antelope Valley Union High	SOAR High (Students On Academic Rise)
Los Angeles	El Segundo Unified	El Segundo High
Los Angeles	Glendale Unified	Anderson W. Clark Magnet High
Los Angeles	Glendale Unified	Crescenta Valley High
Los Angeles	Glendale Unified	Rosemont Middle
Los Angeles	Hawthorne	Hawthorne Math and Science Academy
Los Angeles	Hermosa Beach City Elementary	Hermosa Valley Elementary
Los Angeles	Lancaster Elementary	Fulton and Alsbury Academy of Arts and Engineering
Los Angeles	Long Beach Unified	Helen Keller Middle
Los Angeles	Los Angeles County Office of Education	International Polytechnic High
Los Angeles		

	Los Angeles Unified	Alfred B. Nobel Charter Middle
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	Alliance Judy Ivie Burton Technology Academy High
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	Alliance Marc & Eva Stern Math and Science
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	Alliance Patti And Peter Neuwirth Leadership Academy
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	Downtown Business High
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	Francisco Bravo Medical Magnet High
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	George Ellery Hale Charter Academy
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	Granada Hills Charter High
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	High Tech LA
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	James A. Garfield Senior High
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	James Jordan Middle
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	KIPP Los Angeles College Preparatory

Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	Linda Esperanza Marquez High B LIBRA Academy
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	Middle College High
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	PUC Lakeview Charter High
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	Renaissance Arts Academy
Los Angeles	Los Angeles Unified	Sherman Oaks Center for Enriched Studies
Los Angeles	Rowland Unified	John A. Rowland High
Los Angeles	San Marino Unified	San Marino High
Los Angeles	SBE—New West Charter	New West Charter
Los Angeles	Temple City Unified	Temple City High
Los Angeles	Torrance Unified	Casimir Middle
Los Angeles	Torrance Unified	J. H. Hull Middle
Los Angeles	Torrance Unified	West High
Los Angeles	Walnut Valley Unified	South Pointe Middle

Los Angeles	William S. Hart Union High	Rancho Pico Junior High
Los Angeles	William S. Hart Union High	Valencia High
Mendocino	Ukiah Unified	Redwood Academy of Ukiah
Mono	Mammoth Unified	Mammoth Middle
Monterey	Carmel Unified	Carmel High
Monterey	Carmel Unified	Carmel Middle
Orange	Anaheim Union High	Lexington Junior High
Orange	Anaheim Union High	Oxford Academy
Orange	Capistrano Unified	Bernice Ayer Middle
Orange	Capistrano Unified	Carl Hankey Middle
Orange	Fountain Valley Elementary	Fulton (Harry C.) Middle
Orange	Fountain Valley Elementary	Masuda (Kazuo) Middle
Orange	Fountain Valley Elementary	Talbert (Samuel E.) Middle

Orange	Fullerton Joint Union High	Sunny Hills High
Orange	Garden Grove Unified	Bolsa Grande High
Orange	Garden Grove Unified	Garden Grove High
Orange	Garden Grove Unified	Pacifica High
Orange	Huntington Beach City Elementary	Ethel Dwyer Middle
Orange	Huntington Beach City Elementary	Isaac L. Sowers Middle
Orange	Huntington Beach Union High	Edison High
Orange	Huntington Beach Union High	Marina High
Orange	Irvine Unified	Irvine High
Orange	Irvine Unified	Rancho San Joaquin Middle
Orange	Irvine Unified	Sierra Vista Middle
Orange	Irvine Unified	Woodbridge High
Orange	Laguna Beach Unified	Thurston Middle

Orange	Newport-Mesa Unified	Early College High
Orange	Ocean View	Mesa View Middle
Orange	Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified	Yorba Linda Middle
Orange	Santa Ana Unified	Nova Academy
Orange	Tustin Unified	Arnold O. Beckman High
Placer	Placer Hills Union Elementary	Weimar Hills
Placer	Roseville City Elementary	Robert C. Cooley Middle
Placer	Tahoe-Truckee Unified	North Tahoe High
Placer	Western Placer Unified	Twelve Bridges Middle
Riverside	Corona-Norco Unified	Corona Fundamental Intermediate
Riverside	Hemet Unified	Western Center Academy
Riverside	Nuview Union	Nuview Bridge Early College High
Riverside	Riverside Unified	Riverside Virtual
Riverside		

	San Jacinto Unified	San Jacinto Leadership Academy - Magnet
Sacramento	Elk Grove Unified	Pleasant Grove High
Sacramento	Natomas Unified	Natomas Pacific Pathways Prep
Sacramento	Sacramento City Unified	School of Engineering & Sciences
Sacramento	Sacramento City Unified	West Campus
San Bernardino	Alta Loma Elementary	Vineyard Junior High
San Bernardino	Chino Valley Unified	Canyon Hills Junior High
San Bernardino	Chino Valley Unified	Ruben S. Ayala High
San Bernardino	Etiwanda Elementary	Day Creek Intermediate
San Bernardino	Etiwanda Elementary	Etiwanda Intermediate
San Bernardino	Etiwanda Elementary	Heritage Intermediate
San Bernardino	Etiwanda Elementary	Summit Intermediate
San Bernardino	Redlands Unified	Redlands Senior High

San Bernardino	San Bernardino City Unified	Richardson Prep Hi
San Bernardino	Silver Valley Unified	Fort Irwin Middle
San Bernardino	Victor Valley Union High	University Preparatory
San Diego	Chula Vista Elementary	Mueller Charter (Robert L.)
San Diego	Grossmont Union High	Grossmont High
San Diego	Poway Unified	Meadowbrook Middle
San Diego	Poway Unified	Mt. Carmel High
San Diego	San Diego County Office of Education	Literacy First Charter
San Diego	San Diego Unified	Challenger Middle
San Diego	San Diego Unified	School for Entrepreneurship and Technology
San Francisco	San Francisco Unified	Lowell High
San Joaquin	Jefferson Elementary	Jefferson
San Joaquin	Lammersville Joint Unified	Mountain House High

San Joaquin	Lodi Unified	Middle College High
San Joaquin	Stockton Unified	Pacific Law Academy
San Joaquin	Stockton Unified	Stockton Early College Academy
San Luis Obispo	Coast Unified	Santa Lucia Middle
San Luis Obispo	Lucia Mar Unified	Paulding Middle
San Mateo	Belmont-Redwood Shores Elementary	Ralston Intermediate
San Mateo	San Mateo-Foster City	Borel Middle
San Mateo	San Mateo-Foster City	Bowditch Middle
Santa Barbara	Buellton Union Elementary	Jonata Middle
Santa Clara	Evergreen Elementary	Chaboya Middle
Santa Clara	Evergreen Elementary	Quimby Oak Middle
Santa Clara	Fremont Union High	Lynbrook High
Santa Clara	Fremont Union High	Monta Vista High
Santa Clara	Gilroy Unified	

		Dr. TJ Owens Gilroy Early College Academy
Santa Clara	Mountain View Whisman	Crittenden Middle
Santa Clara	Mountain View Whisman	Isaac Newton Graham Middle
Santa Clara	Oak Grove Elementary	Bernal Intermediate
Santa Clara	Oak Grove Elementary	Herman (Leonard) Intermediate
Santa Clara	Union Elementary	Union Middle
Shasta	Anderson Union High	Anderson High
Shasta	Anderson Union High	Anderson New Technology High
Shasta	Gateway Unified	Central Valley High
Shasta	Shasta Union High	University Preparatory
Sonoma	Petaluma Joint Union High	Petaluma Accelerated Charter
Tehama	Los Molinos Unified	Los Molinos High
Tulare	Tulare County Office of Education	University Preparatory High

Ventura	Oak Park Unified	Medea Creek Middle
Ventura	Oak Park Unified	Oak Park High

2019 California Exemplary Districts

County	District Awardee
Alameda	Fremont Unified
Butte	Durham Unified
Fresno	Clovis Unified
Imperial	Imperial Unified
Kern	Delano Joint Union High
Kings	Lemoore Union High
Los Angeles	William S. Hart Union High
Monterey	Carmel Unified
Orange	Huntington Beach Union High
Placer	Western Placer Unified
Riverside	Corona-Norco Unified
San Bernardino	Etiwanda Elementary
San Diego	Poway Unified

San Francisco	San Francisco Unified
San Joaquin	Lammersville Joint Unified
Santa Barbara	Buellton Union Elementary
Shasta	Anderson Union High
Ventura	Oak Park Unified

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