Twelve Newport-Mesa Schools Receive Gold Ribbon School Award
April 14, 2016

The California Department of Education (CDE) awarded twelve elementary schools in Newport-Mesa Unified School District (NMUSD) with the California Gold Ribbon Award, in recognition of their outstanding educational programs and practices that contribute to closing the achievement gap.

The Gold Ribbon program replaces the California Distinguished Schools program during the two years that California is developing new assessment and accountability systems. The California Gold Ribbon Schools Award was created to honor schools while the California Distinguished Schools Program is on hiatus as California transitions to new assessment and accountability systems. Traditionally, the Distinguished Schools Program honored public schools that showed improved student outcomes as measured through standardized testing and reporting scores and additional measures.

The Gold Ribbon program is different from the California Distinguished Schools program in that it focuses on recognizing schools that demonstrate academic progress through the implementation of the new State standards.

The twelve NMUSD schools that were honored with the California Gold Ribbon Award include:

**Andersen Elementary**
Andersen Elementary was recognized as a Gold Ribbon School for their success in closing the achievement gap through their Response to Intervention Program: Scholar Rotations Program. The Scholar Rotations Program has resulted in more than 90 percent of students scoring proficient or advanced in English language arts.

Students at Andersen Elementary consistently rank in the top ten percent of statewide standardized testing. Learn more about Anderson Elementary at [http://andersen.nmusd.us](http://andersen.nmusd.us).

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**Davis Magnet School**

Davis Magnet School was recognized as a Gold Ribbon School for their success in closing the achievement gap, engaging parents and community and use of technology through their project based learning, which focuses on improving achievement in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

Sample project based learning at Davis Magnet School include a rollercoaster challenge, where students create a rollercoaster to learn about motion and force; develop a bio-waste digester, which teaches students about waste matter, renewable energy, chemistry and more. The project based approach to learning has resulted in 75 percent of Davis students meeting or exceeded English language arts standards and 74 percent meeting or exceeded math standards, based on the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium data. These percentages are 39 to 125 percent higher than district, county, and state averages. Learn more about Davis Magnet School at [http://davismagnet.nmusd.us](http://davismagnet.nmusd.us).

**Eastbluff Elementary**

Eastbluff Elementary was recognized as a Gold Ribbon School for their success in closing the achievement gap through their Response to Intervention Program, professional learning communities, data-driven decision making and use of technology.

Since implementation of Eastbluff Elementary’s Response to Intervention problem-solving model and Professional Learning Community model, all students show improvements in proficiency and/or advancement in English language arts and math, narrowing the gap between subgroups. Eastbluff Elementary’s Academic Performance Index for 2013 shows 86 percent proficiency in English and 81 percent proficiency in math.

Eastbluff Elementary has been recognized as a California Distinguished school in prior years and prides itself on continuous improvement with individualized support for students. To learn more about Eastbluff Elementary please visit [http://eastbluff.nmusd.us](http://eastbluff.nmusd.us).

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Harbor View Elementary
Harbor View Elementary School was recognized as a Gold Ribbon School for their success in closing the achievement gap. The success is attributed to the school’s Response to Instruction and Intervention program, in addition to cultivating an involved and supportive parent community and using hands-on approaches with technology to improving achievement in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

In three years, Harbor View Elementary has seen an increase in California Standards Test scores for English language arts and math, with grades two through four scoring an average of 92 percent in English language arts and 91 percent in math in 2014. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students and special education students also showed an increase in scores, which exceed State averages. Learn more about Harbor View Elementary at http://harborview.nmusd.us.

Kaiser Elementary
Kaiser Elementary uniquely serves students in grades three through six and was selected as a Gold Ribbon School for their success implementing their Read All Day (RAD) Program. The RAD program includes various tiers of instruction, grounded on new state standards, student assessments to determine the tier of instruction that best suits each student’s need, and creating a community culture of reading.

The RAD program has resulted in a 24 percent increase in student reading proficiency. Based on 2015 Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium data, English learners exceed state averages by nine percent, socio-economically disadvantaged students exceed state averages by 11 percent and special education students exceed state standards by 18 percent. To learn more about Kaiser Elementary please visit http://kaiser.nmusd.us.

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**Killybrooke Elementary**
Killybrooke Elementary School was recognized as a Gold Ribbon School for their success in implementing a college and career readiness program centered on universal achievement (as a No Excuses University school) and technology integration.

Killybrooke has made great strides in increasing achievement of all students and closing the achievement gap for English Learners and socio-economically disadvantaged students, through six systems designed to help all students achieve, with technology (including 1:1 Chromebooks for students in grades 3-6) used as a tool to maximize student learning.

Assessments show improvement, with Academic Performance Index increasing from 667 to 867, English language arts proficiency increasing from 27 percent to 67 percent, and math proficiency increasing from 31 percent to 75 percent. Student scores exceed County and State averages. Learn more about Killybrooke Elementary at [http://killybrooke.nmusd.us](http://killybrooke.nmusd.us).

**Lincoln Elementary**
Lincoln Elementary School was recognized as a Gold Ribbon School for their success in implementing their Full STEAM Ahead Academic Support Program, which emphasizes rigorous curriculum in science, technology, engineering, arts and math instruction.

Teachers’ commitment to cost-effective educational technology resources has contributed to students not only mastering basic skills, but also being excited to learn with contemporary approaches to teaching and closing the achievement gap.

Overall data shows that proficiency has improved at Lincoln Elementary in both English language arts and math. Results from the 2015 Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium testing also show that Lincoln students exceed state averages for all traditionally low-achieving subgroups. Learn more about Lincoln Elementary at [http://lincoln.nmusd.us](http://lincoln.nmusd.us)

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**Mariners Elementary**  
Mariners Elementary School was recognized as a Gold Ribbon School for their approach to creating a culture of Innovation, centered upon student and teacher leadership and use of technology.

Classroom environments are becoming more inviting at Mariners Elementary, not just through the implementation of technology, but also through piloted programs such as the use of yoga balls instead of chairs and 1:1 Chromebooks in grades 4-6. Students are taking leadership roles and guiding younger students on the playground, as well as serving as “techsperts” to assist other students and teachers with the use of new technologies.

Teachers also are continuously improving their skills to keep up with changing educational technologies to ensure welcoming learning environments and maximize student engagement. Learn more about Mariners Elementary at [http://mariners.nmusd.us](http://mariners.nmusd.us).

**Paularino Elementary**  
Paularino Elementary School was recognized as a Gold Ribbon School for their success in creating a culture of universal achievement through their program, Reading Our Way to College. Paularino Elementary became a No Excuses University school to inspire students to attend college and also implemented an Accelerated Reader program to encourage students to read independently.

Implementation of these reading programs and other programs, focused on improving students’ character virtues- such as fairness, responsibility, respect, caring, trustworthiness and good citizenship- have resulted in a 21 percent decline in the number of students reading two or more years below grade level. To learn more about Paularino Elementary please visit [http://paularino.nmusd.us](http://paularino.nmusd.us).

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Pomona Elementary
Pomona Elementary School was recognized as a Gold Ribbon School for their reading instruction program, which uses small group dynamics to deliver adaptive reading instruction for students to achieve academic success. Students that require intensive intervention are placed in groups as small as two, while students who have mastered grade level foundational skills receive teacher support to move beyond grade level expectations.

The reading program, which is flexible and adjusted throughout the year, has resulted in ten percent more students scoring at benchmark reading levels. STAR testing data showed an 18 percent drop in students reading two or more years below grade level. Learn more about Pomona Elementary at http://pomona.nmusd.us.

Sonora Elementary
Sonora Elementary School was recognized as a Gold Ribbon School for their No Excuses University: We are College Bound program.

The We are College Bound program is designed to close the achievement gap between students in traditionally low-achieving sub-groups by implementing continuous data assessments to develop individualized academic intervention plans and address social-emotional and behavioral needs of students.

Sonora Elementary has twice been named a California Distinguished School and a Title 1 Achieving School. Learn more about Sonora Elementary at http://sonora.nmusd.us.

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Woodland Elementary
Woodland Elementary School was recognized as a Gold Ribbon School for their Early Literacy Skills Development Response to Intervention Program, which focuses on developing early childhood skills and identifying individual learning styles.

Prior to this program, the focus was on below proficient students, who were most at risk of struggling with reading and English language arts skills. The current program addresses all students’ needs, including the nearly 40 percent in the “bubble” group, which are students needing to increase from basic to proficient levels. Results of the intervention model show that kindergarteners struggling with letter and sound recognition increased their skill level by 60 percent. Scores for students in the “bubble” group increased 125-160 percent. Learn more about Woodland Elementary at http://woodland.nmusd.us.

Early College High School
In 2015, the first year of the California Gold Ribbon Program, the California Department of Education recognized NMUSD’s Early College High School (ECHS) with a Gold Ribbon Award. ECHS partners with Coastline Community College to offer students the opportunity to earn both a high school diploma and a year or more of transferable college credit.

With a 100 percent graduation rate, ECHS offers smaller classes, on-campus college classes, dual-credit classes, easier transition to higher education and financial savings of completing college credits in high school.

ECHS is top ten ranking among all public high schools Orange County and has the highest California Department of Education rating of 10/10, for seven consecutive years. Learn more about ECHS at http://earlycollege.nmusd.us.

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