



PRESS RELEASE

15250 Avenue of Science ■■ San Diego ■■ California 92128-3406

Phone (858) 521-2700 ■■ FAX (858) 485-1075

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Contact: Christine Paik, Director of Communications (858) 521-2707

Poway Unified School District Named California Exemplary District for San Diego County

Poway Unified School District has been selected as San Diego County's California Exemplary District awardee for 2019.

This award celebrates the achievements of districts that have implemented model practices that have had a positive impact on student outcomes.

"Poway Unified School District's effort to increase student engagement and to support the needs of transgender and non-binary students stood out as did their partnership with the Anti-Defamation League," said Dr. Paul Gothold, San Diego County Superintendent of Schools. "It is clear Poway Unified is building better, more responsive educational environments so your students succeed and thrive."

The selection of the award recipient is based on a school district's positive culture and climate with an emphasis on student and family engagement, as well as a district being able to make exceptional strides in student achievement.

"The Poway Unified School recognizes that students cannot achieve their full potential when they don't feel safe or welcome at school," said Dr. Marian Kim Phelps, Superintendent of Poway Unified School District. "Through our partnerships with the Anti-Defamation League's "No Place for Hate" program as well as Sandy Hook Promise's "Start With Hello" program, we are empowering student leaders at our schools to help transform their schools."

The District's school safety work was also highlighted. For the 2018-19 school year, PUSD conducted a School Safety Facilities Assessment and convened its first-ever Safety Planning Committee, consisting of parents, students, staff, and community members. To build further awareness, the District partnered with local city and county law enforcement agencies to implement a 24-hour school threat tipline, which is available to all Poway Unified stakeholders. The tipline has been

utilized to investigate numerous concerns, and was rolled out concurrently with the District's "See Something, Say Something" public service announcements.

To address the issue raised during the LCAP process of equitable access to physical education, STEM, and visual and performing arts (VAPA) curriculum for elementary students, the District created the X-Ploration program. X-ploration is an innovative model of instruction that provides over 16,000 students in grades TK-5 with standards-based learning experiences in P.E., STEM, and VAPA. PUSD's team of 20 teachers visits two of 26 elementary schools per day, providing engaging, standards-aligned lessons to every classroom of students. While students are experiencing X-Ploration, the classroom teachers are released for job-embedded professional collaboration time to work with colleagues. Teachers utilize this time to plan units of study, engage in professional learning in specific content area, and plan high quality lessons. This invaluable time allows classroom teachers to improve their teaching practice and design learning experiences that will have the greatest impact on student success.

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