



# WEST COVINA

## UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

1717 W. MERCED AVENUE WEST COVINA, CA 91790 626.939.4600 WCUSD.ORG

### NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Jan. 15, 2020

**CONTACT:** Lauren Creiman

(909) 833-9853

## West Covina Elementary School Recognized as 2020 California Distinguished School

**WEST COVINA, CA** – Merced Elementary School has been recognized as a 2020 California Distinguished School by the California Department of Education, praised for taking an innovative approach to bolstering English language arts, reading and math skills.

This is Merced's second designation as a Distinguished School. It was previously honored in 2010.

"This is a tremendous recognition for the school," Merced Principal Dr. Damian Kessler said. "We could not achieve this honor without the hard work and diligence of our Merced faculty and staff, as well as the engagement and support from the community. It's a team effort that is entirely focused on turning the students of today into the leaders of tomorrow."

Merced's positive school climate – students begin their day exchanging handshakes and fist-bumps with their teachers – and District support have paved the way for an increase of nearly 7 percentage points in students meeting or exceeding English language arts standards on state tests since 2016.

Merced's team of reading support teachers and college tutors rotate through nearly 500 students in kindergarten through fourth grade for small group instruction four days a week. Students are placed into groups based on their English proficiency and literary skills.

Merced also offers an array of special programs to promote creativity and mental health, including musical physical education for all students, Folklorico for first to third grade and a robotics class for fourth- and fifth-graders.

**MORE**

Join us on social media    @westcovinausd

BOARD OF  
EDUCATION

CAMIE POULOS  
Board President

EILEEN MIRANDA JIMENEZ  
Vice President

ROSE LOPEZ, Ed.D.  
Clerk

MICHAEL FLOWERS  
Member

DANIEL C. MONARREZ  
Member

CHARLES D. HINMAN, Ed.D.  
Superintendent



# WEST COVINA

## UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

1717 W. MERCED AVENUE WEST COVINA, CA 91790 626.939.4600 WCUSD.ORG

At the beginning of the school year, students create and sign a social contract, detailing their commitment to treating their teachers and classmates with respect and dignity.

"Merced Elementary's innovative and inspirational approach to learning resonates throughout the District," WCUSD Superintendent Dr. Charles D. Hinman said. "West Covina Unified is committed to producing lifelong learners with a passion for knowledge. When we work together there is no limit to what we can achieve."

###

Join us on social media    @westcovinausd

BOARD OF  
EDUCATION

CAMIE POULOS  
Board President

EILEEN MIRANDA JIMENEZ  
Vice President

ROSE LOPEZ, Ed.D.  
Clerk

MICHAEL FLOWERS  
Member

DANIEL C. MONARREZ  
Member

CHARLES D. HINMAN, Ed.D.  
Superintendent