



# Whittier Union HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

*To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...*

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Feb. 10, 2021    **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia    **PHONE:** 909-447-2403

## **Whittier Union Schools Recognized by College Board for Diversity in Advanced Placement Program**

**WHITTIER** – The College Board has honored two Whittier Union high schools for expanding young women’s access to Advanced Placement (AP) Computer Science classes, recognizing Santa Fe and Whittier high schools with its 2020 AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award.

Santa Fe and Whittier received the award for fostering equal gender representation in AP Computer Science Principles (CSP) during the 2019-20 school year. The schools are two of 1,119 high school campuses across the United States recognized by the College Board.

“While computer science is traditionally a male-dominated field, Santa Fe is breaking the mold with a flourishing female interest in all things computer,” Santa Fe computer science teacher Monica Dixon said. “We are committed to opening doors for all students, but especially where they may have been closed before.”

Whittier High has offered AP CSP since the 2017-18 school year, while Santa Fe High has offered it since the 2018-19 school year.

“Diversity in computer science is important because we need all different sorts of minds learning, creating and developing new ideas,” Whittier High computer science teacher Dan Whittington said. “As women join the computer science world, it inspires more female students to study it. We want to see people with different ideas take their computer science expertise and apply it to their field of interest.”

Santa Fe and Whittier instructors and counselors work hard to recruit female students for computer science courses, providing access to role models, including software engineers and other prominent industry leaders, emphasizing that computer science education opens the door to an expanded field of career opportunities.

“AP CSP is more accessible than traditional computer science courses, encouraging the enrollment of underrepresented students and providing good preparation for more advanced courses,” Santa Fe High computer science teacher Benjamin Balarie said. “At Santa Fe, the enrollment is due to a combination of direct recruitment efforts, counselor recommendations and student word of mouth.”

Santa Fe began offering AP Computer Science A, an advanced level course that focuses on coding, since 2019.

**– MORE –**

“Whittier Union continues to champion equity in education, providing underrepresented students with the support and resources they need to achieve their higher education goals and dream careers,” Superintendent Martin J. Plourde said. “Congratulations to Santa Fe and Whittier for their College Board recognition. The schools are setting a high bar of success for the entire District.”

###

**OUR MISSION:**

The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement. Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:**

**Dr. Ralph S. Pacheco**  
*President*

**Jeff Baird**  
*Clerk*

**Jaime Lopez**  
*Member*

**Dr. Russell Castañeda-Calleros**  
*Vice President*

**Leighton Anderson**  
*Member*

**Martin Plourde**  
*Superintendent*