



# HACIENDA LA PUENTE

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Hacienda La Puente Unified Middle Schools Recognized as 2022 Schools to Watch

**CITY OF INDUSTRY** – Newton Middle School and Orange Grove Middle School have been named 2022 California Schools to Watch by the California Department of Education (CDE), recognizing their continued success in boosting student achievement, social equity and robust student support programs for all students.

Newton and Orange Grove middle schools are among 16 schools to be newly designated as Schools to Watch this year and were honored alongside 31 re-designated model schools at the California League of Schools Conference, held March 3 – 5 in Monterey.

"Congratulations to the Newton and Orange Grove community on this well-deserved recognition," Board President Jeffrey De La Torre said. "This achievement validates our District's efforts to increase student engagement by providing an enjoyable, innovative and hands-on learning environment, tailored to the needs of all HLPUSD students."

Each school completed an extensive application and hosted a site visit by middle school experts to earn the designation; Newton and Orange Grove will be re-evaluated every three years to retain the title.

The California Schools to Watch program is sponsored by the CDE, the California League of Schools and the California Middle Grades Alliance in association with the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform.

During the conference, Hacienda La Puente Unified educators showcased the programs and initiatives that support student success. Newton Middle School Principal Dan Ma and teacher representatives highlighted programs such as Newton's Academic Success Conference Week and the student of the month program "Noble Knights," which recognizes exceptional character values.

Orange Grove Middle School Principal Dr. David Nieto and staff attendees presented their intervention support program called "The Three M Initiative," which focuses on mentoring, monitoring and motivating students to ensure academic and socio-emotional growth.

The California League of Schools conference was attended by Hacienda La Puente Unified administrators, HLPUSD Board members and Superintendent Dr. Alfonso Jiménez. Attendees left with templates, blueprints and a plan to implement best classroom practices and actionable innovations for school systems to build equity and accelerate learning.

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"Thank you to the Board of Education, principals and the extraordinary leadership teams at Orange Grove and Newton for supporting and challenging our students each and every day," Superintendent Dr. Alfonso Jiménez said. "Hacienda La Puente Unified will continue to deliver curriculum throughout our District that emphasizes deep understanding of important concepts and provides the support students need to meet rigorous academic standards."

### PHOTO CAPTION:

**HLPUSD\_SCHOOLSTOWATCH:** Hacienda La Puente Unified educators, administrators and Board of Education members celebrate the District's Schools to Watch designations at the California League of Schools Conference on March 3. Top row, left to right: Newton Principal Dan Ma, Superintendent Dr. Alfonso Jiménez and Orange Grove Principal Dr. David Nieto. Middle row, left to right: Newton teachers Jeff Mora and Jean Hamabe, Orange Grove teacher Terri Serey and Orange Grove counselor Eva Torres. Bottom row, left to right: Board member Anthony Duarte and Board Vice President Christine H. Salazar.

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