



# HACIENDA LA PUENTE

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## Four Hacienda La Puente Unified Schools Honored for Excellence in Real-World, Civic Learning

**CITY OF INDUSTRY** – Hacienda La Puente Unified School District's Workman Elementary School and Newton, Sierra Vista, and Sparks middle schools are four out of 21 schools to receive Civic Learning Awards for 2024, an esteemed honor that celebrates their commitment to promoting civic education and engaging the entire District community in civic learning initiatives.

The awards were announced by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond on May 1 to elementary, middle, and high schools at four levels – the Award of Excellence, Distinction, Merit and Honorable Mention. Newton Middle School was one of three schools presented with the Award of Distinction, and Workman Elementary School was one of four that earned the Award of Merit. Additionally, Sierra Vista and Sparks middle schools were two of 11 campuses to receive an honorable mention.

"What an honor to have received the most recognitions of any school District in the state for the second year in a row," Board President Christine H. Salazar said. "These consistent achievements would not be possible without the hard work of our students, teachers, staff, administrators, Superintendent Dr. Alfonso Jiménez and of course, our strong partnership with our beautiful community."

The rigorous selection process involved reviewing and scoring applications by a panel of judges comprised of representatives from the California courts and the California Department of Education. Newton Middle School's achievement included a campus visit by Chief Justice Guerrero, who congratulated the campus community on its accolade and efforts in promoting civic education excellence.

Newton Middle School encourages civic engagement through various opportunities, including its longstanding GATE program, which empowers students to create solutions to real-world problems. Newton is dedicated to boosting campus culture by recognizing students and staff who exemplify the 'Knight Code of Conduct' weekly and awarding those who showcase accountability, dependability, responsibility, and empathy.

"Our students take great pride in our civics program here at Newton, so learning that we earned the Award of Distinction was such an exciting moment for us all," Newton Principal Ann Hanson said. "Our students are committed to cultivating a campus that embraces diversity, raises awareness and is built upon respect. As we say, It is a good day to be a Knight!"

**MORE**

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Schools with Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP) that included civic learning initiatives received additional points. Hacienda La Puente Unified's LCAP earned recognition for its partnership with "New Pedagogies for Deep Learning," a transformative program that empowers students to tackle global challenges and succeed in a rapidly changing world.

"Congratulations to all four schools on this well-earned accomplishment," Hacienda La Puente Unified Executive Director of Elementary Dr. Angela Lin said. "Civic education is recognized as an invaluable and fundamental tool at Hacienda La Puente Unified and we are thrilled to accept this prestigious honor."

Notable contributions also include Hacienda La Puente Unified's Project Life Experience About Democracy (LEAD) program, which allows students to actively shape their community by collaborating with various neighborhood affiliations. The program, which received a 2023 Golden Bell Award, is available at Workman Elementary School, and Sparks and Sierra Vista middle school campuses.

Alongside Project LEAD, each school site provides its students with innovative learning experiences such as interactive assemblies, informational field trips, and mobile classroom experiences designed to deepen knowledge and foster whole-system change.

The Civic Learning Awards, initiated in 2013, stem from Chief Justice's Civic Learning Initiative, championed by the Power of Democracy Steering Committee, and aimed at cultivating educated and engaged citizens for a thriving democracy.

"We are immensely proud of our schools' 2024 Civic Learning recognitions," Superintendent Dr. Alfonso Jiménez said. "This achievement underscores our unwavering commitment to equipping our students with the values and skills necessary to actively participate in society. From here, we continue to empower our students to become thoughtful, engaged citizens who positively contribute to their communities and the world at large."

## PHOTO CAPTIONS:

**HLPUSD\_CIVICLEARNING1:** Newton Middle School celebrates its Noble Knights of the Week who went above and beyond to help others on Feb. 4.

**HLPUSD\_CIVICLEARNING2:** Workman Elementary School Principal Erika Valenzuela and students learn more about Project LEAD with City of La Puente Mayor Gabriel Quinones on Jan. 26.

**HLPUSD\_CIVICLEARNING3:** Sparks Middle School leadership students were recognized by the County of Los Angeles and City of La Puente for their efforts to boost a positive school culture on Feb. 24.

**HLPUSD\_CIVICLEARNING4:** Sierra Vista Middle School students learn more about the importance of civic learning during a Project LEAD LEADership Conference on Jan. 30.

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