



Bellflower Unified School District

Media Release

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Bellflower Unified Wins Prestigious Golden Bell for Innovative Health Sciences Career Program

BELLFLOWER – Bellflower Unified School District is being recognized with a 2015 Golden Bell Award – the California School Board Association’s most prestigious honor – for a health science career pathway that provides high school students with hands-on career exploration, job shadowing at a regional hospital and internship opportunities.

The award, now in its 36th year, honors school programs that are innovative, data driven, make a difference for students, connect to the local Board of Education’s vision and show evidence of board leadership and support.

“This award is a resounding validation of the deep commitment by our Board of Education and our team of educators to ensuring students receive rich and rigorous preparation for college and careers,” said Superintendent Dr. Brian Jacobs. “Health industry jobs especially have been one of the economy’s strongest components, thriving even when other industries struggled. Our program ensures Bellflower Unified students are positioned to take advantage of those opportunities.”

Bellflower will receive its award at a presentation at noon Saturday, Dec. 5 during the California School Board Association’s annual convention in San Diego. The non-profit education association represents elected officials who govern nearly 1,000 public school districts and county offices of education.

“California’s K-12 public schools continue to produce some of the nation’s best and brightest students, and our Golden Bell recipients are a reflection of that excellence. The Golden Bell Awards recognize the quality and the determination of school leaders from across California in meeting the needs of California’s students through award-winning programs and services,” said Vernon M. Billy, CSBA CEO & executive director.

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Standard of Excellence - Nothing Less

Bellflower Unified School District provides a pathway for all students to attain the expertise and develop skills of academic excellence that will empower them to become lifelong active learners, demonstrate respect for themselves and others in a dynamic, diverse and global society, become responsible, informed, productive, independent and contributing citizens, and perform successfully in their chosen field and in society.



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Bellflower launched its program in 2011 as a partnership with Lakewood Regional Medical Center. The District started with presentations on health careers for freshmen led by visiting medical professionals. In 2012, it added the signature summer job-shadowing program, with students rotating through 10 departments at Lakewood Regional. The highly popular course quickly fills each year.

In 2012, the program won the Association of California School Administrations Region 14 – Partners in Educational Excellence Award.

In 2014, the District added a sophomore-level course that exposes students to 17 health-related career fields through a series of two-and-a-half week hands-on modules. For example, students practice trauma care, take blood, treat animals and conduct eye exams.

The District also began partnering with the VA Long Beach Healthcare System to accommodate internship requests that were overwhelming Lakewood Regional.

Surveys show that 99 percent of students who go through the careers course say they want to enter a health field, and 98 percent say their decision was influenced by the program.

The program has become a model that regularly draws observers from other school districts.

“We are proud of the teachers and students who have made this career pathway so successful over the last four years,” Board of Education President Jerry Cleveland said. “Our Board is committed to supporting career technical programs, and providing students with learning experiences that will make them competitive in the job marketplace.”

Jacobs said Bellflower Unified is developing additional career pathways at its high schools along the lines of the health sciences model.

LINK: View a [CityTVLakewoodCA video](#) on the Bellflower Unified health sciences pathway.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

HEALTH 1: Bellflower High School science teacher Melissa Ellis helps students Razel Ramacula, left, and Jasmine Burton in 2014-15 as they measure a pelvic girdle for a forensics investigation case.

HEALTH 2: Bellflower High School student Luz Colon checks the blood pressure of classmate James Serna in 2014-15 during the nursing unit of a hands-on course that introduces students to 17 health industry professions.

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