



Bellflower Unified School District

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 6, 2015

CONTACT: Valerie Martinez, William Diepenbrock 909-445-1001

Leadership, Service, Academic and Career Programs Earn Bellflower Unified's Somerset Recognition as Model Continuation High School

BELLFLOWER – A quartet of leadership, academic, career technical education and service programs has earned Bellflower Unified's Somerset High School recognition as a 2016 Model Continuation High School by the California Department of Education (CDE).

The three-year designation comes during Somerset's first period of eligibility since its last win in 2013.

This year, the honor went to just 37 of California's 460 continuation schools, which serve students who lag in high school credits or require flexible school schedules due to employment outside of school, family needs or other circumstances.

Somerset is being celebrated for adding an Associated Student Body government program, Leo and Key service clubs, a SkillsUSA career technical competition program and a Model United Nations program. Somerset is the first continuation school in California to run a Key Club or a Model UN program.

"We wanted to provide our students with an opportunity to see their potential for leadership, for service and for competing head to head with students from any school in the region," Principal Mark Kailiponi said. "Too often, students arrive here discouraged, blind to their potential. We hope to open their eyes and show them they have no limits."

Already, the efforts are bearing fruit.

The student government recently hosted a leadership conference for 200 students from area continuation schools. Service club membership at the 280-student school has swelled to 25 apiece, and about the same number of students participate in student government.

MORE

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.



Bellflower Unified School District

About 125 students are taking career tech courses related to the SkillsUSA competition; two of 12 competing students advanced from the group's regional contest to the state finals. Lastly, a student delegate from Somerset won special recognition in February during the 24th annual Model UN Conference held at Laguna Hills High School.

"Our students are competing with kids in comprehensive high schools, with kids in Advanced Placement programs. They are realizing they are just as good as these other guys, that they can accomplish anything with enough hard work," Kailiponi said.

The latest recognition carries on a tradition for Somerset, which has been designated a model school six times.

"Somerset's well-deserved honor is a testament to Bellflower Unified's promise that all our students will receive every opportunity to succeed, especially those who may face greater challenges," Superintendent Dr. Brian Jacobs said.

The Model Continuation High School program is a partnership between the CDE and the California Continuation Education Association (CCEA). Somerset and the other winners will receive their awards at the 2016 CCEA State Conference, scheduled April 29-May 1 in Riverside.

###

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.