



## Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## Whittier Union Schools Awarded Prestigious California Gold Ribbons

**WHITTIER, CA** – All five of the Whittier Union High School District’s comprehensive high schools on May 5 were named California Gold Ribbon Schools – the state’s highest award for academic excellence.

Gold Ribbons were awarded to California, La Serna, Pioneer, Santa Fe and Whittier high schools; the latter three received an additional award for being Title I Academic Achieving Schools that demonstrate success in meeting the educational needs of all students.

The awards come on the heels of Whittier Union’s alternative school, Frontier High School, being named a Model Continuation School in March.

“I want to congratulate each and every one of our teachers, staff and site administrators for their exemplary and collaborative leadership in making our schools an excellent place of learning and support for all students,” said Whittier Union High School District Superintendent Sandra Thorstenson.

The Gold Ribbon Award was created to honor schools in place of the California Distinguished Schools program, which is on hiatus while the state creates new assessment and accountability systems and revises how it calculates its Academic Performance Index, a key factor in the former award system.

The new awards go to secondary campuses that successfully implement the state’s more rigorous academic content and performance standards for all students as demonstrated through model programs. Campuses were recognized for best practices that can be replicated at other school sites, including literacy programs, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs, closing the achievement gap, increasing college entrance rates, reducing absenteeism and dropouts, and boosting parent and community involvement.

“I could not be more proud of all of our schools and am deeply appreciative of our team’s stellar work to provide students across Whittier Union engaging learning experiences and rigorous academic standards to ensure their success,” Thorstenson said. “Our students are the true beneficiaries of the staff’s continual drive for improvement.”

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*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.*

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