



## **PRESS RELEASE – ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

For immediate release

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### **Four OUSD Elementary Sites Named 2014 California Distinguished Schools**

ORANGE, CA – May 1, 2014 – State Schools Chief Tom Torlakson made the official announcement yesterday that Chapman Hills, Imperial, Nohl Canyon, and Serrano were each named a 2014 California Distinguished Elementary School by the California Department of Education.

Superintendent Michael L. Christensen offered congratulations to principals Sandy Schaffer, Ginette (Gigi) Kelley, Amy Hitt, and Bobbie Lansman, respectively, as well as all members of their staff for receiving this highest of honors.

This is the first Distinguished School recognition for Imperial and Nohl Canyon. Chapman Hills was first recognized in 2000, and Serrano was previously named a Distinguished School in 2004 and 2010.

“We are very proud of our school,” remarked Principal Lansman on Serrano’s third Distinguished School recognition. “We have worked hard and this is a nice acknowledgement for the students, staff, and parents.”

“Together, we celebrate the hard work, effort, and dedication it takes to help all of our Bobcats be successful,” said Principal Schaffer on Chapman Hills’ second recognition. “The parents, students, and staff of Chapman Hills couldn’t be more proud!”

*The Orange Unified School District educates approximately 30,000 students in the Cities of Orange, Villa Park, Anaheim, Garden Grove, Santa Ana and county areas. The school district, founded in 1953, encompasses 108 square miles. The District office is located at 1401 N. Handy Street, Orange, California.*

“The Nohl Canyon community is pleased to be receiving state recognition for years of hard work and top-notch programs for students,” said Principal Hitt. “We feel strongly that this award is the cumulative effect of years of excellent staff, teachers, students, and families.”

“Cheers could be heard throughout the school when I announced that we have been awarded California Distinguished School,” said Principal Kelley. “Being awarded Distinguished School shows just how our Imperial Eagles SOAR!”

Torlakson will present Chapman Hills, Imperial, Nohl Canyon, and Serrano Elementary with a 2014 Distinguished School plaque and flag at a regional awards ceremony next month.

The 2014 California Distinguished Schools Program focuses on California's students' right to an equitable and rigorous education, and recognizes those schools that have made progress in narrowing the academic achievement gap. To apply for Distinguished School honors, schools must meet a variety of eligibility criteria, including accountability measures. Once schools are deemed eligible, the California Department of Education invites them to apply to be recognized as a California Distinguished School. The process consists of a written application, which includes a comprehensive description of two of the school's signature practices, and a county-led site validation review process focused on the implementation of those signature practices.

“I applaud these strong, thriving schools that are making such impressive strides in preparing their students for continued success,” Torlakson said. “This award is well-deserved by these school communities for their enduring dedication to high standards, hard work, and unwavering support.”

Elementary and secondary schools are recognized during alternate years.

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