



Home / Newsroom / News Releases / Year 2023

California Department of Education News Release

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State Superintendent Tony Thurmond Congratulates High-Performing Middle Schools Named 2023 Schools to Watch

SACRAMENTO—State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond today announced that 77 high-performing California middle grades schools have been recognized for 2023 by the California Schools to Watch program. There are 36 new California Schools to Watch this year. An additional 41 schools reapplied to the program, demonstrated their sustained progress, and have been redesignated as 2023 California Schools to Watch. Altogether, there are now 186 California Schools to Watch.

“Congratulations to these schools for building systems that support all students from all backgrounds and who bring a wealth of individual and family assets,” Thurmond said. “These middle grades students attend programs that help them believe in themselves, discover their interests, and work toward their academic, life, and career goals. These middle schools are exceptional role models of how educational innovation and an enthusiastic school community can keep students engaged and learning through a critical stage in their K–12 journey.”

These high-performing model schools demonstrate academic excellence, social equity, and responsiveness to the needs of young adolescents. For example, Alta Sierra Intermediate School has a targeted intervention program for students called Support for Success that includes supports such as reteaching; study hall; lunch labs with teachers; a homework center; pull-out tutoring from PE class; and Program Reach, designed to support victims of bullying, harassment, or racially motivated behavior to teach coping skills, conflict resolution, and empathy. And La Paz Intermediate School’s culture and climate is enhanced by a fully developed Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program implemented schoolwide as well as a year-round Where Everybody Belongs (WEB) program that connects with students during lunch activities, nighttime social events, and classroom lessons.

Newly Designated 2023 California Schools to Watch



- Adams Middle School, Redondo Beach Unified School District
- Alpha: Cornerstone Academy Preparatory, Santa Clara County Office of Education


- Alta Loma Junior High School, Alta Loma Elementary School District
- Animo Florence-Firestone Charter Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District
- Chipman Junior High, Bakersfield City School District
- Coalinga Middle School, Coalinga-Huron Unified School District
- College Preparatory Middle School, SBE College Preparatory Middle School District
- Don Juan Avilla Middle School, Capistrano Unified School District
- E.O. Green Junior High School, Hueneme Elementary School District
- East Avenue Middle School, Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District
- El Rancho Charter School, Orange Unified School District
- Ellen Fletcher Middle School, Palo Alto Unified School District
- Hollencrest Middle School, West Covina Unified School District
- Hosler Middle School, Lynwood Unified School District
- ICEF Vista Middle Academy, Los Angeles Unified School District
- James Workman Middle School, Palm Springs Unified School District
- Jefferson Middle School, San Gabriel Unified School District
- Ben F. Kolb Middle School, Rialto Unified School District
- March Middle School, Val Verde Unified School District
- Melva Davis Academy of Excellence, Adelanto Elementary School District
- Nellie N. Coffman Middle School, Palm Springs Unified School District
- Oxford Preparatory Academy - Saddleback Valley
- Oxford Preparatory Academy - South Orange County
- Palm Desert Charter Middle, Desert Sands Unified School District
- Pleasant View Elementary School, Pleasant View Elementary School District
- Portola Middle School, Orange Unified School District
- Prairie Vista Middle School, Hawthorne School District
- Riverview Elementary School, Kings Canyon Joint Unified School District
- Robert C. Fidler Elementary School, Fullerton Elementary School District
- Shoreline Middle School, Live Oak Elementary School District
- STEAM Academy @ Burke, El Rancho Unified School District
- Thomas Law Reed Elementary School, Kings Canyon Joint Unified School District
- Vineyard Junior High School, Alta Loma School District
- Vista View Middle School, Ocean View School District
- William Mendenhall Middle School, Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District
- Yorba Middle School, Orange Unified School District

Redesignated 2023 California Schools to Watch

- Alondra Middle School, Paramount Unified School District
- Alta Sierra Intermediate School, Clovis Unified School District
- Alvarado Intermediate School, Rowland Unified School District
- Arlie F. Hutchinson Middle School, Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District
- Carmenita Middle School, ABC Unified School District
- Chaparral Middle School, Walnut Valley Unified School District

- Clifton Middle School, Monrovia School District
- Creekview Ranch School, Dry Creek Joint Elementary School District
- Dartmouth Middle School, Union Elementary School District
- El Segundo Middle School, El Segundo Unified School District
- Elizabeth Pinkerton Middle School, Elk Grove Unified School District
- General Grant Middle School, Kings Canyon Joint Unified School District
- Hall Middle School, Larkspur-Corte Madera School District
- Haskell STEM Academy, ABC Unified School District
- Hawthorne Middle School, Hawthorne School District
- Heber Elementary School, Heber Elementary School District
- Huron Middle School, Coalinga Huron Unified School District
- Kennedy Middle School, El Centro Elementary School District
- Kastner Intermediate School, Clovis Unified School District
- La Cañada High School (7–8), La Canada Unified School District
- La Paz Intermediate School, Saddleback Valley Unified School District
- Landmark Middle School, Moreno Valley Unified School District
- Leona Jackson Middle School, Paramount Unified School District
- Los Alisos STEM Magnet Middle School, Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District
- Louis Armstrong Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District
- Mountain View Middle School, Beaumont Unified School District
- Rancho Milpitas Middle School, Milpitas Unified School District
- Rancho-Starbuck Intermediate School, Lowell Joint School District
- Ray Wiltsey Middle School, Ontario Montclair School District
- Ross Academy of Creative and Media Arts Middle School, ABC Unified School District
- San Geronio Middle School, Beaumont Unified School District
- Silverado Middle School, Dry Creek Joint Elementary School District
- South Pointe Middle School, Walnut Valley Unified School District
- Sunnymead Middle School, Moreno Valley Unified School District
- Suzanne Middle School, Walnut Valley Unified School District
- Tetzlaff Accelerated Learning Academy, ABC Unified School District
- Thomas S. Hart Middle School, Pleasanton Unified School District
- Torch Middle School, Bassett Unified School District
- Twin Rivers Charter School, Yuba City Unified School District
- Vista Verde Middle School, Val Verde Unified School District
- Washington Academic Middle School, Sanger Unified School District

The California Schools to Watch program is sponsored by the [California Department of Education](#), the [California League of Educators](#) , and the California Middle Grades Alliance in association with [The National Forum](#) . To earn this designation, schools must complete an extensive application and host a site visit by middle grades experts. In order to retain the designation, each school is reevaluated every three years.

The 2023 schools will be recognized at the California Schools to Watch Celebration in Monterey on March 9, 2023. For more information about the program, please visit the [California League of Educators California Schools to Watch web page](#) .

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