



## **7 ROWLAND UNIFIED SCHOOLS RECEIVE STATE'S HIGHEST HONOR AS GOLD RIBBON SCHOOLS**

**ROWLAND HEIGHTS, CA – APRIL 14, 2016** – Rowland Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Julie Mitchell announced today that seven elementary schools were officially named by the California Department of Education as ***Gold Ribbon Schools***, the state's highest designation for outstanding educational programs and practices. The seven exemplary elementary schools from Rowland USD are: **Hollingworth Elementary, Jellick Elementary, Shelyn Elementary, Stanley G. Oswalt Academy, Telesis Academy of Science & Math, Villacorta Elementary, and Ybarra Academy of the Arts and Technology.**

"The Board of Education and I are extremely proud of our schools selected for the Gold Ribbon recognition, as these schools exemplify the innovative and student centered learning environments that are throughout the Rowland Unified School District," said Mitchell. "Recognitions such as the Gold Ribbon are made possible through the hard work and dedication of all of our educators and staff, working in partnership with our parents and community. The Board of Education and I are elated to congratulate them for this outstanding achievement and recognition."



The California Gold Ribbon Schools Award was created to honor schools in place of the California Distinguished Schools Program, which is on hiatus while California creates new assessment and accountability systems. Nearly 6,000 elementary schools were eligible to apply this year and 772 were selected.

Schools applied for the award based on a model program their school has adopted that includes standards-based activities, projects, strategies, and practices that can be replicated by other local educational agencies. Please visit the [California Gold Ribbon Schools Program](#) on the California Department of Education's Web site.

Below is information on the seven Rowland Unified schools and their Model Program and Signature Practice:

**Hollingworth Elementary (West Covina): AVID® Elementary**

Hollingworth is the first and only **AVID®** Elementary school in Rowland USD (AVID stands for *Advancement Via Individual Determination* and is usually offered as an elective in middle and high schools). Hollingworth is part of a national network of schools dedicated to closing the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success. Teachers incorporate **WICOR** in their classrooms where students **W**rite, **I**nquire, **C**ollaborate, **O**rganize, and **R**ead during each lesson and the campus has a strong college-bound culture with each classroom adopting a specific college.  
**Hollingworth Elementary Principal:** Dr. Michael Hoon (909) 598-3661 [www.Hollingworthschool.org](http://www.Hollingworthschool.org)

**Jellick Elementary (Rowland Heights): Character Counts!**

Jellick Elementary's **Jaguars of Character** is designed to prepare and support strong, positive role models to promote productive social and academic behavior. Jellick students receive instruction aligned to **Character Counts!** values (*Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship*). Students are encouraged through the motto, "*Jaguars Never Quit!*" to build perseverance and self-confidence. Jaguars of Character supports the schools' efforts to create a positive climate on campus to improve academic achievement, attendance, and reduce discipline incidents and bullying.  
**Jellick Elementary Principal:** John Staumont (626) 964-1275 [www.Jellickschool.org](http://www.Jellickschool.org)

**Shelyn Elementary (Rowland Heights): Writer's Workshop**

Writer's Workshop enables teachers to oversee and support each student's individualized and differentiated writing process while also facilitating sharing and feedback in a variety of groups, such as peer-to-peer, peer-groups, and teacher-led conferences. As students write within the Workshop model, they have an array of choices that may include (but are not limited to) topic, ideas, organization, and tone. In Shelyn's model of Writer's Workshop, grade levels select the order in which they teach students then move freely and at a comfortable pace through the writing process after highly structured genre specific mini-lessons around craft, drafting, revision and editing. Students move through the steps at their own pace developing creativity and confidence in their abilities and expression.

**Shelyn Elementary Principal:** Sarah Opatkiewicz (909) 444-0584 [www.Shelynschool.org](http://www.Shelynschool.org)

**Stanley G. Oswald Academy (Walnut): International Baccalaureate**

Oswald's International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) is infused with a technology focus to support 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Skills. Through the IB program, students are taught through an inquiry based approach with an international focus and an understanding of a global society. Oswald is a TK – 8 Academy, and students are given second language instruction (Spanish) starting in the First Grade. The Laptop 1 to 1 Learning Program is for all students in grades 5 to 8 and provides 24/7 access to an Apple MacBook Air laptop computer. TK-4 classrooms use technology with a set of iPad Mini's or iPod touches. This technology is used for students to be able to collaborate on group work, access rigorous non-fiction text, and research for projects.

**Oswald Academy Principal:** Kevin Despard (626) 810-4109 [www.Oswaltacademy.org](http://www.Oswaltacademy.org)

**Telesis Academy of Science & Math (West Covina): Science, Technology, Engineering & Math with No Excuses University:**

As a TK-8 Academy, Telesis students get a head start when it comes to being College and Career ready and receiving STEM instruction beginning in Kindergarten. Every student is given explicit exposure on what a college is, why they should attend and culminating with an understanding that they need to take ownership of how to get to college. NEU at Telesis (the national program No Excuses University) is found schoolwide, and is embraced by every staff member in a clear and committed manner. Students who attend Telesis beginning in TK are given the opportunity to get to know ten different colleges on an intimate basis and are therefore better equipped to make a decision for themselves when they become a senior in high school. NEU at Telesis has been the vehicle to introduce college readiness, implement the new Next Generation Science Standards through environmental engineering, incorporate technology and a school wide writing emphasis.

**Telesis Academy Principal:** Johan Schmitz (626)965-1696. [www.TelesisAcademy.net](http://www.TelesisAcademy.net)

**Villacorta Elementary (La Puente): Be Viking**

Villacorta's *Be Viking* campaign is a character development approach that promotes respect and responsibility. Students and adults work daily to make decisions and act in ways that meet three *Be Viking* themes: *Develop Character, Persevere in Learning, and Crusade for Yourself and Others*. Teachers and staff developed *Be Viking* to address factors believed to be impeding high levels of student achievement - student absences, student engagement, self-confidence, underdeveloped social skills, stamina for tasks that are perceived as difficult, disruptive and defiant behavior, and bullying.

**Villacorta Principal:** John Martinez (626) 964-2385 [www.villacortaschool.org](http://www.villacortaschool.org)

**Ybarra Academy of the Arts & Technology (Walnut): International Baccalaureate (IB)**

The foremost goal of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) is to foster students who live the IB Learner Profile traits: *Caring, Principled, Risk-Taker, Thinker, Knowledgeable, Balanced, Inquirer, Open-Minded, Communicator and Reflective*. Students are taught through an inquiry based approach with an international-minded focus and an understanding of a global society. Through the IB PYP program, students are also given second language instruction starting at age seven. Ybarra Academy students attend Spanish lessons once a week and students in TK and Kindergarten receive Spanish through the arts, song, dance and poetry.

**Ybarra Academy Principal:** Annette Ramirez (909)598-3744 [www.ybarraacademy.org](http://www.ybarraacademy.org)

The California Department of Education's Gold Ribbon Schools program recognizes California schools that have made gains in implementing the academic content and performance standards adopted by the State Board of Education. These include the California Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, California English Language Development Standards, and Next Generation Science Standards. Please visit the [California Gold Ribbon Schools Program](#) on the California Department of Education's Web site. The CDE California School Recognition Program is presented by San Mateo-based California Casualty.

The Rowland Unified School District has garnered numerous state and national awards and is proud of its 19 schools with 15,000 students in the communities of Rowland Heights, Walnut, La Puente, City of Industry, and West Covina. More than 5,000 adults (16+) are also served by the Rowland Adult and Community Education School. For more information about Rowland Unified, the community can call (626) 965-2541 or download the free Rowland USD Mobile App for iOS and Android phones/devices that has news, school calendars, a safety Tip Line, and helpful parent and District resources. The public can also follow Rowland schools on Facebook.com/RowlandUSD Twitter @RowlandSchools or visit [www.RowlandSchools.org](http://www.RowlandSchools.org).

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