



# **PRESS RELEASE**

15250 Avenue of Science ■ San Diego ■ CA 92128-3406  
Phone (858) 521-2707 ■ FAX (858) 485-1075

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Contact: Sharon Raffer  
Director of Communications

## **Oak Valley Middle School Honored as California Distinguished School**

The Poway Unified School Board and Superintendent John Collins are proud to commend Oak Valley's achievement as a 2011 California Distinguished School.

"Oak Valley's award presented by the California Department of Education during the school's first year of eligibility reflects its strong and involved school community that focuses on the school's mission statement: 'Students are at the heart of Oak Valley and meeting their needs is our first priority'," said PUSD Superintendent John Collins. "Positive support for students is woven into the fabric of the school's environment, and everyone celebrates each student's success."

At the school Board meeting on May 24, 2011, Principal Sonya Wrisley will be presented with a plaque from the State and the California Distinguished School banner by PUSD Board President Penny Ranftle and Superintendent John Collins.

State officials who visited the school in March were very impressed with Oak Valley's Signature Practices: 1) Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support System, and 2) Staff Collaboration. Notes from the validation team reflected on the worth of these practices include:

“Parents interviewed commented on how uniquely and consistently positive the staff are all the time. There is a climate of trust, caring, and support that permeates campus life and beyond. Students feel fully supported, and this is echoed by parents.”

“It is especially noticeable that the positive approach to behavior is deeply imbedded in the culture. As students describe the behavior modification process, it was impressive that the positive language was used consistently. It was consistent with parents and staff as well. It was truly evident that the behavior expectations and responses are a part of the school culture.”

“As our newest middle school, Oak Valley has demonstrated from the very beginning the powerful school climate that can be created when everyone focuses on the students. Congratulations to the teachers, staff, and parents who motivate Oak Valley students to be the best they can be,” said PUSD Board President Penny Ranftle.

Oak Valley staff members who led the writing of the application include, Tom Downs, teacher, grades 6/7; Devora Garrison, teacher, grade 8; David Harris, counselor; Cheryl Kaiser, teacher, grade 7; Kaleb Rashad, assistant principal; and Sonya Wrisley, principal