



PRESS RELEASE – ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

For immediate release

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FAIRHAVEN ELEMENTARY NAMED NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

ORANGE, Calif., October 11, 2012 - Fairhaven Elementary School has been awarded the National Blue Ribbon Award for producing outstanding student achievement results for six consecutive years as an Exemplary Improving School. This is the first nomination and award for both Fairhaven Elementary School and Orange Unified School District.

The United States Department of Education maintains that The National Blue Ribbon Schools award sets a standard of excellence for all schools striving for the highest level of achievement. Each year since 1982, the U.S. Department of Education reports that it has sought out schools where students attain and maintain high academic goals, including those that beat the odds just like Fairhaven Elementary. This year, 35 schools in the State of California were nominated for the recognition. Only 17 of those schools were awarded 2012 National Blue Ribbon status. Fairhaven Elementary school is the only public elementary school in Orange County to receive the distinction.

According to the United States Department of Education, the award gives acknowledgment to both public and private schools throughout the country based on one of two criteria: 1) **Exemplary High Performing:** a school, whose students, regardless of backgrounds, is high performing. This means the school is ranked among the state's highest performing schools as measured by performance on state assessments; or 2) **Exemplary Improving:** a school, with at least 40 percent of its students from disadvantaged backgrounds that has reduced the achievement gap by making the most progress in improving student performance as measured by the school's performance on state assessments. Fairhaven Elementary School was recognized in the Exemplary Improving category.

“Fairhaven Elementary school staff have done an outstanding job meeting the needs of each and every student and encouraging family participation in school. They are a shining example of the fine schools in the Orange Unified School District,” said Executive Director of Elementary Education Anne Truex.

Fairhaven Elementary is a Title I and Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) Class-Size Reduction Funding School with just over 550 students. Classrooms are capped at 20 students in grades Transitional Kindergarten through third and at 25 in grades fourth through sixth. The smaller student ratio has allowed for more attention to each student’s specific needs and has propelled individualized academic success.

Principal Kelli Keller reports that, “Our staff, families, and students have worked diligently to produce six consecutive years of growth, exceeding all state growth requirements. This recognition is a confirmation of the hard work and the attainment of a long-held dream for our learning community. We believe and are proof that ALL students can meet and exceed their achievement goals.”

Fairhaven Elementary is one of 27 elementary schools in the Orange Unified School District. The District serves over 30,000 students from the cities of Garden Grove, Orange, Santa Ana, Tustin, Villa Park, and areas of unincorporated Orange County.

For more information on the National Blue Ribbon Schools award, please visit:
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/nclbbrs/2012/index.html>

A related article in the Orange County Register may be viewed here:
<http://www.ocregister.com/news/schools-374614-students-school.html>.

The Orange Unified School District is located at 1401 N. Handy Street, Orange, CA

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