



## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release  
October 24, 2013

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Inclusion Collaborative, Curriculum & Instruction take home Golden Bell awards

### SAN JOSE, CA –

The Santa Clara County Office of Education's Inclusion Collaborative and Curriculum & Instruction programs have been chosen as two of this year's 59 recipients of the prestigious Golden Bell Award. Presented by the California School Boards Association (CSBA), this award recognizes public school programs that focus on meeting the needs of all students, are innovative and sustainable, and have made a demonstrated difference in the classroom.

The Inclusion Collaborative's entry, *All Children Learning and Playing Together*, highlighted its long-term objective of removing the many barriers that prevent children with disabilities from being included in high-quality learning environments. Since 2004, the Inclusion Collaborative has supported community programs, schools and districts in the creation and implementation of inclusion models and provided professional development and on-site coaching so that teachers and staff feel confident instructing in inclusive classrooms.

Curriculum & Instruction's submission focused on the Curriculum Leadership Council (CLC), a capacity building program for teacher leaders to guide implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Over the last four years, more than 450 teachers and staff from 27 districts in Santa Clara County have participated in CLC, working to build knowledge of the CCSS, share best practices to support rigorous instruction, integrate 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into schools and close the achievement gap.

"I am extremely proud that two of the County Office's outstanding programs have been honored this year with a Golden Bell Award," said Xavier De La Torre, County Superintendent of Schools. "The support provided by the staff of these programs to our teachers, schools and districts is invaluable and has resulted in positive outcomes for the students served."

An 11-member judging panel made up of experts from school districts and county offices of education reviewed all written entries and made initial recommendations for awards. Finalists were assessed through an on-site visit, evaluating the programs in action. Both of the SCCOE's

honorees will receive their awards at a recognition ceremony to be held on Saturday, Dec. 7 at the CSBA's Annual Education Conference in San Diego.