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Santa Clara County's 35 "Distinguished Schools" were honored May 12 at the SCCOE. This is always a gratifying and inspiring affair, and our community should be proud of these schools.

The state requires all program applicants to describe two signature practices that helped increase student achievement and narrow the achievement gap. The honorees will share these practices with other schools, serving as mentors so others can replicate their work.

This is a vital service. We must continue to develop instructional practices that will eliminate the achievement gap so that every student has an equal opportunity to

Reconstruction starts at special education site

About 60 people attended the April 28 groundbreaking for a new $4.2 million Gilroy facility that will serve SCCOE special education students.

The Gateway project will replace a facility destroyed by two arson fires in 2008. The new building will have four classrooms and a therapy room for Gateway's students with severe disabilities and medical fragility. Construction is expected to wrap by April 2011. See more pictures of the event.

Board honors employees, hires consultant

Here's a recap of the Santa Clara County Board of Education's actions at its April 21 and May 5 meetings:

- Recognized Lydia Cabrera and Donna Krein as Employees of the Month for April and May, respectively
- Allocated reserve funds toward the construction of a new science lab at Walden West, and accepted a $1.1 million donation from the Walden West Foundation to cover the remaining costs
- Accepted Magnolia Science Academy's charter petition revisions
- Allocated $100,000 to hire an outside consultant to evaluate the SCCOE's Alternative Education Program

The Board of Education is the elected governing body of the Office of Education. Its seven members serve four-year terms and are elected by different regions of the county. Learn more about the members, and view their meeting schedule, agendas and minutes.

Local staffer earns state award

An Alum Rock Union School District employee has been named one of California's six 2010 Classified Education Bulletin - May 2010
succeed. The keys are innovation and collaboration. We hear much these days about what’s wrong in education, but I believe there’s a lot that’s right, too. Our Distinguished Schools provide ample evidence of that.

- Charles Weis, Ph.D.

Kiwanis Special Games in 32nd year

SCCOE students with special needs this month will join about 800 athletes from 60 local schools to participate in the Kiwanis Special Games XXXII.

Beginning with an opening ceremony and parade of athletes, the games group students by ability.

The event runs from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on May 21 at the DeAnza College track, 21250 Stevens Creek Blvd., Cupertino.

For more information, email or call (650) 988-9900.

SCCOE employee moves to head of the class

Not only did Adriana E. Casas earn dual master’s degrees earlier this month at her graduation, but the SCCOE Human Resources staffer also received speaking duties. Adriana, a classified personnel recruitment specialist, was selected as one of two students from a pool of nearly 6,000 graduates to give Grand Canyon University’s Commencement address May 1 at Phoenix’s Chase Field, home of the Arizona Diamondbacks.

She earned master’s degrees in business administration and leadership.

The SCCOE honored Olga April 21.

Experts discuss charter best practices

Strong school culture and extended school days are among the many tools that charter schools use to reach the least advantaged pupils in Santa Clara County, an expert panel agreed.

In a recent discussion moderated by Board of Education Trustee Joseph Di Salvo, the panelists elaborated on State Superintendent Jack O’Connell’s speech at the SCCOE’s recent Charter School Summit.

The discussion will also air on CreaTV San Jose public access channel 15 at noon May 15.

SCCOE preschool teacher honored by city

Teresita Padilla was recently honored by the San Jose City Council as an Outstanding Contributor to Childcare. A lead teacher at Franklin McKinley Preschool Program, Teresita was one of five honorees recognized April 27.

The award, part of festivities surrounding San Jose’s annual designation of April as Month of the Young Child, recognizes people or organizations that help young children ages 3 to 5, and their families.

Above: San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed presents the award to SCCOE employee Teresita Padilla.

SCCSBA honors local school programs

Los Gatos Union School District earned top honors in the Santa Clara County School Board Association’s annual awards program that recognizes educational endeavors that significantly affect student success.

The district joined Alum Rock Union Elementary, Lakeside

Winners from Santa Clara Unified
Earthquake preparedness
Check out resources about earthquakes, tips, quake preparedness and special information for teachers and students.

Bullying Prevention
Learn more about how to prevent and identify bullying behavior in students.

Joint, Fremont Union and Santa Clara Unified school districts as recipients of the 26th annual Glenn W. Hoffmann Awards, presented late last month.

A committee of school administrators and board members score entries from county school programs. Awards are given to only those programs which receive the highest scores, and 18 districts submitted entries this year.

Since 1852, the Santa Clara County Office of Education has provided vital services and resources to the county's 31 K-12 public school districts and more than 250,000 students. The SCCOE strives to provide: advocacy and leadership on education issues, student programs that are models of excellence, and indispensable services to schools and community partners. The SCCOE takes pride in being a premier employer and a champion for children, schools, and community.