



## **PRESS RELEASE – ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

For immediate release

Information: Superintendent's Office (714) 628-4487

# **Sycamore Elementary Named 2013 National Blue Ribbon School Nominee**

ORANGE, Calif., December 20, 2012 – Sycamore Elementary School has been selected as a nominee for the U.S. Department of Education's 2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. This prestigious recognition is reserved for schools that set a standard of excellence in striving for the highest level of student achievement.

Sycamore was nominated for the national award as an "Exemplary Improving School" based on students' performance on the 2012 English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments in the State Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. Sycamore Elementary has experienced dramatic gains in the number of proficient and advanced students on the STAR test over the last five years, meeting adequate yearly progress for two years and exiting Program Improvement in 2012. Sycamore Elementary is among the top 10% of California schools showing the greatest improvement with more than 40% of the students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The total Academic Performance Index (API) gain for Sycamore Elementary from 2008-2012 was 113 points, resulting in a 2012 API of 805, surpassing the California State API goal.

This is the first-ever nomination for Sycamore Elementary School, and the second nomination for Orange Unified School District (OUSD). Fairhaven Elementary School became a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence earlier this year.

Sycamore Principal Erika Krohn credits her staff, students, and community for the National Blue Ribbon School nomination. "It is extremely validating to know that our intense focus on goal setting, quality first instruction, strategic interventions, and family involvement has paid off. I am very proud of our staff, scholars, and parents. What a tremendous honor!" she noted.

Completion of the full U.S. Department of Education application is due mid-February. In addition, nominees must make adequate yearly progress in all subjects and subgroups on the 2012-13 state assessments (STAR) to be eligible for final selection. The U.S. Department of Education is scheduled to announce its 2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools in September 2013.

More information about the 2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Nomination can be found at the California Department of Education Website: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/>.

*The Orange Unified School District is located at 1401 North Handy Street in Orange, CA*

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