



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
**NEWS RELEASE**

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December 28, 2007

**State Schools Chief Jack O'Connell  
Announces Education's Top 10 Year-End List**

SACRAMENTO — State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell today released the California Department of Education's (CDE) top 10 achievements for 2007.

"The California Department of Education accomplished a lot this year with the help of students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community when it comes to improving student achievement and preparing children for college or careers," said O'Connell. "But our work is never done in helping all children succeed and closing the achievement gap. The start of the new year will bring us a renewed commitment to prepare students for a more challenging future."

**CDE's Top 10 Accomplishments**

**1. Moving Toward Closing the Achievement Gap**

O'Connell created a new arm of the CDE called the Policy Development and External Affairs Branch to address the racial and economic achievement gaps that threaten the competitiveness and quality of life in California. In November, CDE held its Achievement Gap Summit of 4,000 California educators who heard from more than 125 leading education experts. Ideas collected by the Superintendent's California P-16 Council during the Summit soon will be presented to O'Connell, who will discuss them during his State of Education Address on January 22. For more information, please visit [Closing the Achievement Gap - Initiatives, Projects, & Programs](#).

**2. Test Scores Improve**

- The Base Academic Performance Index (API) report shows the median Base API for elementary schools is 758, up 8 points from 2005. Middle school and high school median scores show similar gains of 10 points and 7 points respectively. [Base API, Growth, and Ranks for 2006 - Year 2007](#).
- The Academic Performance Index's median score grew from 745 last year to 751 this year, and the percentage of schools at or above the performance target of 800 grew by 1 percentage point, from 30 percent to 31 percent. [Accountability Progress Report for 2007 - Year 2007](#).
- Results of the California High School Exit Examination show 93.3 percent of the Class of 2007 passed the exam, up 2.1 percent from last year. [CAHSEE Results through May 2007 - Year 2007](#).
- Students' annual physical fitness scores this year increased for all three grades tested: 1.5 percent for fifth grade students, 1.3 for seventh graders, and 2.7 percent for ninth graders. [Physical Fitness Test Results for 2007 - Year 2007](#).

**3. Record Number of Students Take Courses to Prepare for College**

- More than 20 percent of California students, the most ever, took Advanced Placement (AP) courses this year in high school and succeeded on AP exams, scoring a "3" that is predictive of college success. This follows a positive trend over the last five years of increased participation in AP by students in all ethnic subgroups and students who are low-income. [Student Participation in Advanced Placement - Year 2007 and College Board Press Release - 02/06/07](#) [<http://www.collegeboard.com/press/releases/152694.html>] (Outside Source).
- In addition, 61,830 California students, the most ever, took the American College Testing (ACT) program this year, resulting in an increase in their average composite score to 22.1, up from last year's score of 21.6. [O'Connell Comments on ACT Results - Year 2007](#) and [ACT High School Profile Report](#) <http://www.act.org/news/data/07/pdf/states/California.pdf> (Outside Source; 143KB; 32pp.).

#### 4. Advancements in Career Technical Education

- The State Board of Education adopted a Career Technical Education Framework organized into 58 "pathways" within 15 industry sectors as a tool for providing rigorous and relevant career technical education instruction to students in grades seven through twelve. [Career Technical Education Framework - Year 2007](#) and [New Career Technical Education Framework - Year 2007](#).
- Successfully advocated for expansion of California Partnership Academies with inclusion of \$53.8 million in the state budget to fund up to 150 new academies over the next five years.
- CDE released two studies that show how quality career technical education programs are working to increase graduation rates and help students succeed academically. [Career Technical Education Studies - Year 2007](#).
- CDE and the California Community Colleges released a draft of the federal Perkins Act Career Technical Education Plan for public review in order to qualify for federal career technical education funds. [Career Technical Education Plan Review - Year 2007](#).

#### 5. Progress Made in Student Data Collection

Ninety-three percent of public school districts in the state have submitted important student information in preparation for the 2009 launch of the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System. The information will be used for calculating enrollment and long-awaited, more accurate graduation and dropout rates. However, the state budget did not include funding to support the collection and maintenance of this data by local school districts. [Milestone in Tracking Students - Year 2007](#).

#### 6. Building Partnerships to Improve Student Academic Success

- For the fourth year in a row, CDE has won the prestigious Partnership State Award from the National Network of Partnership Schools for excellent leadership in developing family, school, and community programs to help students succeed in school. [Partnership State Award Winners - 2007](#) <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/P2000/awards/2007/state/index.htm>] (Outside Source).
- O'Connell and the Consul General of Italy signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work together to expand the teaching of Italian in California schools to help teachers and students meet the needs of the new global economy. [O'Connell Signs MOU with Italy - Year 2007](#).
- CDE partnered with three other state agencies to directly certify low-income students for free meals at school more quickly through a state-level automated matching system. [Direct Certification Program Launched - Year 2007](#).
- California has been accepted as one of five states to participate in the prestigious National Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Equity Pipeline Project to attract more women into the fields of math and science. [California Selected to Participate in STEM Project - Year 2007](#).

#### 7. CDE, Teachers, and Schools Recognized for Excellence

- 4 middle schools were designated as California's 2007 Schools to Watch —Taking Center Stage for starting programs that improve student academic achievement. The schools were Canyon Middle School, Edna Hill Middle School, Frank M. Wright Intermediate School, and Oliver Wendell Holmes International Middle School. [Model Middle Schools for 2007 - Year 2007](#).
- 2 schools were awarded the National No Child Left Behind Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Award for having rigorous curricula and high expectations that challenged and inspired their students. The awardees were Manchester GATE School and KIPP Adelante Preparatory Academy. [National Title I Nomination - Year 2007](#).
- 13 schools were named 2007 Model Continuation High Schools for their outstanding programs designed to help at-risk students succeed in school. [Model Continuation High Schools for 2007 - Year 2007](#).
- 461 schools received the 2006-07 Title I Academic Achievement Award for demonstrating success in ensuring that all students made significant progress toward proficiency on California's academic content standards. [Title I Academic Achievement Awards for 2007 - Year 2007](#).
- 171 middle and high schools were selected as 2007 California Distinguished Schools for providing students with exemplary programs leading to college or careers. [Distinguished School Awards for 2007 - Year 2007](#).
- 4 adult education programs received the 2007 Programs of Excellence Award for offering innovative programs that address the needs of adult learners. The awardees are Grossmont Adult School, Napa Valley Adult School, Santa Clara Adult Education, and Tehachapi Mountain Adult School. [Programs of Excellence - Year 2007](#).
- CDE's Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology was selected as a winner of a 2007 Digital Education Achievement Award. The Web-based system is designed to help students with disabilities access curriculum used in the state's public schools. [CDE Web Site Wins National Award - Year 2007](#).
- 24 public schools were recognized by the federal government as 2007 No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools for being national models of excellence. [National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2007 - Year 2007](#).
- 5 remarkable educators were named California Teachers of the Year for 2008. The awardees were Andee Aceves, Lewis Chappelle, Michael Allen Long, Gregory McFall, and Tamara "Tammy" Reina. [California](#)

Teachers of the Year for 2008 - Year 2007.

- 35 schools were nominated to the 2008 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) — Blue Ribbon Schools Program for making great strides in ensuring their students are learning to their full potential. The winners will be named next year. NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools for 2008 Nominees - Year 2007.
- 2 teachers were named winners of the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching for excellence in education. The honors went to Tapp Hancock and Anne Marie Wotkyns. PAEMST Winners Announced - Year 2007.

## **8. Guidelines and Recommendations Issued for Youngsters and Autistic Children**

- CDE and WestEd released the research-based publication, *Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Program Guidelines* to enhance the well-being of children enrolled in early care and education programs. Infant Toddler Guidelines - Year 2007.
- The Superintendent's Autism Advisory Committee submitted its recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor on how public and nonpublic schools can better serve students with autism spectrum disorders and their families. Autism Advisory Committee Recommendations - Year 2007.

## **9. Legal and Legislative Victories for Students and Youngsters**

- CDE and the American Diabetes Association came to a landmark agreement to ensure California students with diabetes will have access to legally required care during the school day. K.C., et al. v. O'Connell, et al. Settlement - Year 2007.
- Emergency preschool regulations were passed to help military families qualify for state preschool. Emergency Preschool Regulations - Year 2007.

## **10. Measures Sponsored by O'Connell Are Passed Into Law**

- Assembly Bill (AB) 347: The measure would ensure that students who fail to pass the California High School Exist Exam may receive an additional two years of academic assistance from their school districts.
- AB 485: Prohibits a nonpublic, nonsectarian school, or agency whose certification has been revoked from being eligible to apply for recertification for two years from the revocation date.
- AB 647: Changes the method of allocating Tobacco Use and Prevention Education funds to a single competitive grant.
- AB 685: The bill will make technical changes to existing law regarding special education and make them conform with new federal regulations.
- AB 1663: This measure will make various revisions conforming state law to federal requirements relating to pupil identification, assessment, and eligibility; individualized education program development, and pupil information confidentiality.
- Senate Bill (SB) 132: The California *Education Code* assigns various duties to state and local educational agencies and governs the operation of public schools, community colleges, and universities in the state. This bill will make various clarifying and technical changes to the *Education Code* and also delete obsolete provisions from the code.
- SB 733: Reauthorizes the Instructional Materials Funding Realignment Program for six years.
- SB 734: Reauthorizes the follow-up adoption review by the California Department of Education and fee charged to publishers, as well as places in statute the review for social content compliance and fees charged to publishers.

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