



## Chapter 20: *Distinguished Schools*

When State Superintendent Torlakson recently announced that 17 L.A. Unified elementary schools had been named **2018 California Distinguished Schools**, I was filled with excitement, and paused to reflect on what exactly makes a school “**distinguished**.”

**Distinguished** schools push the boundaries of what students often expect a school to be.

Students expect school to be filled with routine—**distinguished** schools are filled with dynamic and engaging lessons that change every day.

Students expect school to prepare them for the test at the end of the year—**distinguished** schools prepare students for the obstacles they’ll face throughout life.

Students expect school to end each day around 3:00 p.m.—**distinguished** schools inspire a boundless love of learning that never expires.

Students expect school to help them achieve a piece of the American dream—**distinguished** schools teach students how to dream of a more peaceful and equitable America.

Students expect school to be a collection of classrooms, hallways, offices, and auditoriums—**distinguished** schools are safe havens, villages, communities, homes.

When understood this way, every school in L.A. Unified is **distinguished** in one or more aspects. Strengths and weaknesses may exist, but every school provides something special that enables students to realize their fullest potential.

Be proud of the transformative work you do each day to make our schools **distinguished**, and join me in celebrating the L.A. Unified schools that have been formally recognized as **2018 California Distinguished Schools** by the California Department of Education:

Brainard Elementary, Broadway Elementary, Carpenter Community Charter, Castlebay Lane Charter, Chandler Learning Academy, Clifford Street Magnet, Colfax Charter Elementary, Delevan Drive Elementary, Dr. Sammy Lee Elementary Medical and Health Science Magnet, Hamlin Charter Academy, Harding Street

Elementary, Mayall Street Academy, Porter Ranch Community, Stagg Street Elementary, Superior Street Elementary, Warner Avenue Elementary, and 156th Street Elementary.

The following independent charter schools authorized by L.A. Unified were also recognized as California Distinguished Schools: Ararat Charter, Gabriella Charter, and KIPP Comienza Community Prep.

Have a wonderful weekend.

Vivian Ekchian  
Interim Superintendent

*Enjoying the Employees' Connection?*  
Click [here](#) to see past chapters.

[lausd.net](http://lausd.net)