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SEQUOIA DISTRICT, SCHOOLS RECEIVE KENT AWARDS

REDWOOD CITY, Calif., May 11, 2009 - At an awards ceremony this evening at the San Francisco Airport Doubletree Hotel, Burlingame, the San Mateo County School Boards Association will be presenting this year's recipients of the J. Russell Kent Award.

Designed to recognize outstanding educational programs in San Mateo County public schools, the award program provides an opportunity for school districts to share and learn about award-winning programs across the county.

Among the awards being presented this evening are three to schools in the Sequoia Union High School District:

- **Medical Science Magnet Program, Carmont High School** - Developed to provide real-life exposure to juniors and seniors interested in pursuing careers in the medical science field, Carmont partners with Cañada College and Sequoia Hospital to provide a combination of classroom instruction, presentations by outside speakers, and a hospital internship. Through the program, students are able to explore a medical science career that matches their personality type, individual skills and strengths, and educational goals. Courses are offered through Cañada College on the Carmont campus, and students earn college credit for the courses. During internships at Sequoia Hospital, students rotate through a variety of departments, including oncology, radiology, physical therapy and the laboratory.
- **Co-Teaching: The Future of Education, Menlo-Atherton High School** - Through this unique co-teaching program, general education teachers partner with the special education department in an effort to help ensure that all students have access to standards-based curriculum and high-quality learning strategies. By the spring of 2006 - midway through the five-year program - students with disabilities had already improved their performance on the State Academic Performance Index (API) by 63 points, and students in the program earned higher grades in world studies, biology and English than their peers who weren't enrolled in the co-teaching program. Students were also reported to feel better about themselves once enrolled in the mainstream classes, and staff members report on the professional development gained through participation in the co-teaching program.
- **Kids Learn Empathy & Respect (KLEAR), Woodside High School** - KLEAR is a program that uses peer conflict mediation and mentoring, anger management and other creative solutions to eradicate language and behavior that promote hate. Success is achieved by addressing the underlying belief system and opinions that lead to the unacceptable behavior. This year, Woodside piloted a new extension of KLEAR - the Safe School Ambassadors Project, which is a nationally recognized, research-based program that trains students to notice and intervene in harassment on campus and on the bus. The Kent award will enable Woodside to train an additional 40 students in the new year.

In addition to the three school awards, the Sequoia district will be one of the partners receiving a Kent award for the Center for Teacher Efficacy. The Center is a partnership with the Sequoia, Jefferson and San Mateo school districts, Cañada College, San Francisco State University and the San Mateo County Office of Education. Initiated in 2006 to address the challenges of educating a diverse student population, the Center partners set out to develop a depth and breadth of

professional development activities that could be both immediately utilized in the classroom and sustainable over time.

The Center links high school teachers in the county with educational leaders at San Francisco State who are immersed in theory and involved in research into best practices. More than 100 teachers have participated in Center courses thus far, and a new course on technology - Designing Learning for the 21st Century - has just been introduced this semester. Teachers who participate in the Center exchange information and suggestions with peers across the county, which has resulted in exposure to new perspectives they might not have been gained otherwise.

Applications for Kent awards are initially screened and evaluated, and then site visits are conducted to verify the findings of the screening committee. For more information about the Kent awards, visit www.smcsba.org.

Established in 1895, Sequoia Union High School District serves the diverse needs of students in the San Francisco Mid-Peninsula region through four award-winning, comprehensive public high schools as well as a model continuation high school, a middle college (in collaboration with Cañada College) and an adult school. Through its robust portfolio of schools and specialized programs and services, state-of-the-art facilities and technology, and highly qualified teachers and staff, the District is committed to ensuring that all students are engaged and prepared to excel in a 21st century global society. For more information, visit www.seq.org.

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