



**For Immediate Release**

**October 19, 2006**

**San José Unified School District**

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**SIMONDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RECOGNIZED BY CALIFORNIA  
BUSINESS COMMUNITY FOR HIGH STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT  
AND CLOSING ACHIEVEMENT GAPS**

*Simonds School was Selected by  
California Business for Education Excellence Foundation  
&  
Just for the Kids-California  
For their  
Prestigious Honor Roll*

October 19, 2006, San Jose, CA – San Jose Unified School District announced today that Simonds Elementary School has been selected by the California Business for Education Excellence (CBEE) Foundation and Just for the Kids-California (JFTK-CA) as one of 304 public schools in California to receive the title of 2006 Honor Roll school.

Schools receiving this distinction from California's business community have demonstrated consistent high student academic achievement and have made significant progress toward closing achievement gaps among all their students. The CBEE Foundation/JFTK-CA Honor Roll is made up of two different awards, the Star Schools Award (100 schools) and Scholar Schools Award (204 schools).

"We are very proud that Simonds Elementary School has been selected as an Honor Roll school and recognized by California's business community," said Don Iglesias Superintendent of SJUSD. "Even with regular high API scores, the administration, teachers, staff, parents and students at Simonds School continually set high goals and expectations which drive student achievement and success."

No other school recognition program in California uses hard data, individual school and student subgroup performance data based on the California Standards Tests and the California High School Exit Exam, to evaluate school academic performance. It is only by looking at this hard data, student test scores, and evaluating students and schools based on grade-level proficiency of the California standards, that educators, parents and the public can thoroughly understand what is happening in our schools and ensure that schools are on track to get all kids to grade level proficiency.

Honor Roll schools are being recognized because they are on track to meet the goal of 100% grade-level proficiency by the 2013/2014 school year as required by federal law.

A full list of the Honor Roll schools, sorted alphabetically by county, can be found at [www.cbefoundation.org](http://www.cbefoundation.org).

“We know from the success of these schools that it’s possible for all schools and all students in California to reach high levels of academic achievement, to close achievement gaps and to reach 100 percent proficiency by grade level on the California Standards Test,” said Jim Lanich, Ph.D., president of CBEE. “Every one of the schools on the Honor Roll is on track to do it. By highlighting these schools, recognizing their achievement and giving them a voice we hope other schools can learn from these schools’ proven ‘best practices’ and achieve the same results.”

“Schools on the Honor Roll dispel the myth that certain students can’t reach grade-level proficiency and that schools with a challenging student population won’t be able to succeed,” said Greg Jones, CBEE Foundation Chair. “Instead of complaining about their challenges, these schools have tackled them head on and are overcoming them. They set goals and hold themselves and their students to high expectations.”

CBEE Star Schools (100 schools) are those with significant populations of socio-economically disadvantaged students that have shown a significant increase in grade-level proficiency over four years for all subgroups.

CBEE Scholar Schools (204 schools) are schools that are showing significant academic achievement gains, but do not have a significant socio-economically disadvantaged student population.

### **The California Business for Education Excellence Foundation**

The mission of the CBEE Foundation ([www.cbefoundation.org](http://www.cbefoundation.org)) is to drive the debate beyond the usual questions of “if” we should have standards or accountability or “where” those standards should be set to instead demonstrate that standards CAN be met. We focus our attention on improving individual student achievement and giving a voice to those that are raising academic achievement and closing achievement gaps.

High achievement is happening across all ethnic and socioeconomic lines in every corner of the state. By connecting low performing schools with high performing schools

with similar student populations in an organized way, we dispel the myths perpetuated by the defenders of the status quo, used as excuses for the lack of performance.

CBEE Foundation works with the media and public opinion leaders to bring this strategy to scale and help low performing schools replicate the practices found in the high performing schools. When this is done in an organized campaign, we have concluded that all schools in California can get 100% of their kids to grade level by the 2013/14 school year.

### **Just for the Kids-California**

The non-profit organization Just for the Kids -- California ([www.jftk-ca.org](http://www.jftk-ca.org)) provides a powerful on-line data and school improvement system free of charge to California's public schools and communities. JFTK-CA promotes measurably improved academic achievement in public schools through focused use of achievement data, research and effective school improvement strategies from across the state and nation.

The JFTK-CA website presents an accurate academic picture showing the strengths, weaknesses, long-term progress, and realistic improvement targets for every public school in California through data from the state accountability tests. Schools access an on-line best practice framework, self-assessments and specific examples from high performing schools and districts based upon what is working to raise achievement.

The JFTK-CA school improvement system has become the largest longitudinally linked, student academic achievement database in California and is receiving more than one million hits a month from our California schools.