



**GROSSMONT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
"HOME OF CALIFORNIA DISTINGUISHED SCHOOLS"**

Grossmont High School, Grossmont Middle College High School, Helix Charter High School and Valhalla High School



The Middle College High School Staff displays their Distinguished School Plaque



Grossmont High School displays both their Distinguished School Plaque and the CTE Distinguished School Award



Cathy Zemlick, GMCHS, Doug Smith, principal Helix HS and Theresa Kemper, Principal, Grossmont HS

RECORD NUMBER OF GUHSD SCHOOLS RECEIVE CALIFORNIA DISTINGUISHED SCHOOLS AWARD

Grossmont High School, Helix Charter High School and Grossmont Middle College High School Receive Prestigious Honor

On April 1, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell announced that 125 California high schools were awarded the prestigious 2009 California Distinguished Schools Award. This marks the first year that a record three GUHSD schools have been recognized by the state for outstanding academic achievement. The honored schools include Grossmont High School, Helix Charter High School and Grossmont Middle College High School. "California Distinguished Schools must meet the challenge of providing all their students with a rigorous education and to fully prepare today's students for success in postsecondary education or the workforce," O'Connell said. "In an increasingly competitive global economy, it is important that the academic success of all of today's students is directly linked to the effectiveness, competitiveness, and resiliency of our not-too-distant future workforce." O'Connell added, "In addition, these extraordinary high schools have shown they are able to increase the achievement of all their students and have provided evidence that they are closing the achievement gaps that, unfortunately, exist at many schools."

"We are pleased that Superintendent O'Connell has recognized these three Grossmont Union High School District schools as California Distinguished Schools," said Grossmont Union High School District Superintendent Robert Collins. "The honor recognizes the exceptional academic program at each of these schools and we congratulate the teachers, school and community leadership." Valhalla High School also attained this prestigious honor in 2001, which was renewed in 2007.

This year, the selection process required schools to provide an in-depth description of two "signature" practices implemented at the schools that are replicable, and directly related to the success of their students. During an intensive site visitation by a trained team of external educators, additional evidence about the effectiveness of the "signature" practices was gathered and analyzed. Information about these successful signature practices will be shared through the CDE Web site later this year.

Grossmont High School also was recognized as a California Distinguished School for Career Tech Education, one of five in the State.

An awards ceremony honoring the Distinguished Schools was held Friday, May 29 at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim.