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# NEWS RELEASE

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## **TWO PUSD SCHOOLS WIN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

*Hamilton Elementary and Willard Elementary Honored for Accelerating Achievement for All Students*

**Pasadena, CA** – Two Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) schools have won the 2009-10 Title I Academic Achievement Awards. Hamilton Elementary and Willard Elementary are among a select roster of California schools that will be honored by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell at a ceremony in April.

Hamilton and Willard are honored for demonstrating that all students are making significant progress toward proficiency on California's academic content standards. To qualify, the schools' socioeconomically disadvantaged students must have doubled the achievement targets set for them for two consecutive years.

"I congratulate Hamilton and Willard on this important award," said Superintendent Edwin Diaz. "These schools share a focus on academic rigor, a school culture that values and is responsive to individual student learning styles, and strong teachers, administrators, staff and parents. Working as a team, they have accelerated achievement for all students."

This is the sixth consecutive year that Willard Elementary School has won the award. Hamilton Elementary was also named a National Blue Ribbon School last year.

"These award recipients prove that with hard work and high expectations, students can overcome challenges and achieve academic success," said O'Connell. "By working together, administrators, teachers, staff, students, and parents have raised student achievement and narrowed the achievement gap. I congratulate these schools and everyone who worked hard to make them deserving of this significant award."

The Title I Academic Achievement Award is given only to schools receiving federal Title I funds as authorized by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Title I is the single largest federal educational program for K-12 public education. Title I funds assist schools in meeting the educational needs of students living near or at the poverty level. Of the more than 9,000 schools in California, more than 6,000 of them participate in the Title I program.

The criteria to qualify for the Title I Academic Achievement Award have become more rigorous in recent years. For more information about the Title I Academic Achievement Awards please visit the California Department of Education web page at: [www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/aa/index.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/aa/index.asp).

The 2009-10 awardees will be honored at a reception and banquet at the Disneyland Hotel on April 21, 2010.

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