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# News Release

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## **Eight L.A. Unified schools honored by Magnet Schools of America**

Eight of L.A. Unified's premiere magnet schools have been recognized for exceptional merit and innovation by Magnet Schools of America, a national organization that represents nearly 4,000 theme-based programs across the U.S.

The schools will be honored at the organization's national convention in May for their ability to raise academic achievement, promote racial and socioeconomic diversity, provide integrated curricula and instruction, and create community partnerships that enhance the school's theme.

"By providing a full range of top-notch programs, our magnets help to engage students in ways that make education relevant to their lives," said Superintendent Michelle King. "I'm very proud that so many of our schools have been recognized for the outstanding work they are doing to help our students succeed."

Two programs will receive Magnet School of Excellence awards, the organization's highest distinction:

- The Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Magnet, which was established in 1981 at Franklin High School in Highland Park.
- The Downtown Business and Electronic Information/Multimedia Magnets, a high school that opened in 1981 in the heart of Los Angeles.

The second-highest level, Magnet Schools of Distinction, will be conferred on six other L.A. Unified schools:

- Cleveland Charter Humanities Magnet High School in Reseda.
- John F. Kennedy Architecture/Digital Design/Filmmaking Magnet High School in Granada Hills.

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- Lawrence Gifted Magnet Middle School in Chatsworth.
- Lomita Science/Technology/Math Elementary School in Lomita.
- Los Angeles Center for Enriched Studies on the Westside.
- Melrose STEAM Elementary School in the Melrose District.

“This recognition confirms that our team’s passion and commitment to providing quality choices for L.A. Unified families is substantial,” said Keith Abrahams, executive director of Student Integration Services for the District.

“MSA and other school districts nationwide are impressed with the rigor and innovation present in our schools and view L.A. Unified magnets as models,” he said. “As a graduate of an LAUSD magnet school, I could not be more proud.”

L.A. Unified’s magnet programs were created in the early 1980s under a court-ordered desegregation plan designed to alleviate the harms of racial isolation. The voluntary busing programs provide themed magnets to draw minority students and those from underserved communities.

The academic innovation and success of the programs have made them attractive to students and parents seeking a nontraditional education. The District now offers 210 magnets.

“Merit awards are given to our highest quality theme-based schools and programs. They are models of success and represent the best in public education,” said Todd Mann, executive director of Magnet Schools of America. “It is a great way for our association to acknowledge the creativity, passion and dedication of so many people.”

Principals and representatives from each of the winning schools will receive a merit award plaque during the awards ceremony held at the 34<sup>th</sup> annual MSA National Conference in Miami on May 3-7.

L.A. Unified will host next year’s MSA National Conference, which will be held at the Bonaventure Hotel, April 27-30, 2017. During the conference, educators from across the country will observe best practices at L.A. Unified’s magnet schools and engage in rigorous conversations about curriculum and instruction, technology integration, school leadership and magnet school design.

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