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National Recognition for a Twin Rivers School

Harmon Johnson Elementary is one of three schools nationwide selected to receive the prestigious Community School Award for Excellence from the Coalition for Community Schools. The ceremony will take place June 6 in Washington D.C.

It's a definite save-the-date for an ecstatic David Nevarez.

"I felt an incredible sense of pride when I first received the news," says Nevarez, the principal at Harmon Johnson for eight years. "I couldn't wait to share it with the school. I am very proud of our teaching and support staff, our parents and our community partners. Together we have created a positive working and learning environment for our students."

Harmon Johnson's selection for the national award was based on multiple factors, including:

- The strongest three year Academic Performance Index (API) gains in Twin Rivers Unified School District.
- Annual gains in Average Daily Attendance (ADA)—more than 97.5 percent during the 2012-2013 school year.
- Building a strong coalition with parents—more than 30 community-based organizations with site administrative leadership and support.
- Innovative interventions that meet the needs of students—more than half of the students are involved in before and after school tutoring.
- A significant increase in parent involvement and leadership over the past seven years.
- Bi-lingual parent education classes for GED and English as a Second Language (ESL) – at capacity.
- Physical health services, including a state-of-the-art dental health program (Virtual Dental Home Project) combining specially trained on-site dental hygienists and a supervising dentist connected via the Internet.

"Harmon Johnson has a 98 percent poverty rate and 65 percent of our students are English learners," says Nevarez. "We're located in one of the toughest areas of Sacramento, but we have one of the best attendance rates in the district. We have worked very hard to provide our students and their families the support they need to be successful, and the Community School Award for Excellence validates the hard work we do here that goes above and beyond just good teaching."

*Twin Rivers Unified School District serves approximately 27,000 preschool
through adult education students in northern Sacramento County.*

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