



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

Magnolia Science Academy-San Diego is Recognized as a California Blue Ribbon School for Success in Closing Student Achievement Gaps

The award honors high-performing schools for positive school culture and academic success.

San Diego, Ca. – “Make it a great day or not, the choice is yours,” are the words of existential wisdom uttered each morning by educators at [Magnolia Science Academy – San Diego \(MSA-SD\)](#) during DONUTS, which stands for Daily Online News Uncut Through Streaming, a 12-minute student-teacher collaboration that broadcasts school news. The self-agency and commitment responsible for the school’s overall success, this year garnered it a top award. Today, Magnolia Science Academy–San Diego was recognized as a [California Blue Ribbon School](#) by the California Department of Education for its success in closing achievement gaps for all students and positive school culture. They join the thirty schools statewide who will be officially recognized and celebrated in spring of 2026.

With a 20% special education student population, MSA-SD is the highest performing Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM)-focused middle school (Grades 6-8) in San Diego, scoring a whopping 72.42% in ELA, 60.09% in math, and 64.93% in science – far surpassing San Diego Unified School District and the state on Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) scores. By comparison, in recently released state data, San Diego Unified scored 56.17% in ELA, 45.31% in math, and 39.98% in science. Similarly, California showed 48.82% in ELA, 37.30% in math, and 32.66% in science.

MSA-San Diego school leaders credit the school’s culture with its success in what is referred to as the “Wizard Way” (Wisdom, Integrity, Zeal, Accountability, Respect, Determination). “We’re very excited to get this recognition,” said Megan Craig, principal at MSA-San Diego. “Our dedicated and passionate teachers care deeply about every student’s learning and growth. We’ve built a culture grounded in a multi-tiered system of support that embraces the whole child, academically through high-quality instruction, behaviorally through a caring and inclusive community, and socially through enriching STEAM learning experiences. It’s the Wizard Way,” added Craig.

In addition to its positive school culture and strong academic programs, MSA-San Diego, which this year celebrates its twentieth year, has a variety of stellar expanded learning opportunities

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for students. The school boasts three robotics programs including: [First Lego League](#), [VEX Robotics](#), and [SeaPerch](#) underwater robotics; a Wizard Student Council; and 22 different clubs, teams and sports activities, including an archery program with a national level archery team, whose members happen to be state and conference champs.

“We’re breaking barriers and perceptions about student potential,” said Magnolia Public Schools CEO Alfredo Rubalcava. “Our test scores and recognitions like the California Blue Ribbon Schools are a testament to the hard work of our dedicated teachers and staff. Nearly half of the schools in our 12-school network surpassed local school district SBAC scores. MSA-San Diego also surpassed state scores,” he added.

In 2024, Magnolia Public Schools was awarded the *Hart Vision Equity and Innovation Award* by the California Charter Schools Association. The U.S. Department of Education also awarded the high-performing schools network a grant to expand and replicate its model. Each year, many of its schools rank among the top schools regionally and at the state level. In the last three years, [Magnolia Science Academy 2](#) in Van Nuys, [Magnolia Science Academy 7](#) in Northridge, and [Magnolia Science Academy-San Diego](#) were recognized as [California Distinguished Schools](#), further underscoring the network’s commitment to excellence and equity in education.

For more information visit www.magnoliapublicschools.org, and follow us on Facebook @MagnoliaPublicSchools, Twitter @MagnoliaSchools, and Instagram @magnoliapublicschools.

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About Magnolia Public Schools

[Magnolia Public Schools \(MPS\)](#) are tuition-free charter schools with campuses throughout Southern California focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM)-based teaching to ensure students are well-rounded and college-ready. MPS offers smaller class sizes, individualized attention from teachers, as well as safe campuses that foster ideal learning conditions for students.