

CYPRESS SCHOOL DISTRICT
9470 Moody Street
Cypress, California 90630
714/220-6900

P R E S S R E L E A S E
Greater Anaheim Special Education Local Plan Area (GASELPA)
Community Advisory Committee Awards Presented
Cypress School District Recognizes Eileen O'Connor and Diana Jones

The Greater Anaheim Special Education Local Plan Area (GASELPA) is a consortium of six districts formed to provide services to meet the needs of local special needs children. Member districts in the Greater Anaheim SELPA include Anaheim Union High School District, Centralia School District, Cypress School District, Los Alamitos Unified School District, Magnolia School District and Savanna School District, serving approximately 6,100 special education students.

Each Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) is required to form a Community Advisory Committee, with membership including parents of school-age children (a majority must be parents of students with special needs); school personnel; and representatives of public, community, and private agencies. This committee advises school administrators and local school boards regarding the Local Plan for Special Education, assists districts with parent education, and promotes public awareness and understanding of individuals with special needs.

The Community Advisory Committee also annually acknowledges outstanding contributors to the academic, social, and/or emotional growth of students with special needs, including teachers, aides/paraprofessionals, bus drivers, custodians, volunteers, students, and community members. Guidelines for nomination and selection of individuals for the CAC Recognition Award include people who have taken extra initiative and gone beyond the job description and those who have smoothed transition, eased anxiety, and promoted student value and worth. Each of the six school districts in the SELPA selects people worthy of recognition to be honored. This year two award winners from the Cypress School District were honored.

Eileen O'Connor, School Psychologist at Vessels School in the Cypress School District was honored for her tireless work with students with autism, developing a social skills program that has been instrumental in giving students with autism the skills they need to socialize with others. She recognizes how difficult it can be for parents to deal with the challenges of autism, and is always supportive.

Diana Jones, Program Specialist with the GASELPA, who works directly with the Cypress School District, was also selected for this award. Ms. Jones was honored for her work with staff to enhance special education programs and resources. She collaborates with school psychologists and provides staff development for staff and administrators. Through her leadership, the focus is always on what is best for the students and improving their academic performance.

Recipients were recognized at a GASELPA Board meeting on February 16, 2011.