



# PRESS RELEASE

**Poway Unified School District**

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## **Superintendent Dr. Marian Kim Phelps honored with state-level recognition as the 2021 “Exemplary Woman in Education”**

*(San Diego, CA)* – Poway Unified School District (PUSD) is proud to announce that the 2021 recipient of the Association of California School Administrators’ prestigious “Exemplary Woman in Education” Award is Superintendent Dr. Marian Kim Phelps! A record number of nominations were submitted, with Dr. Phelps being selected out of nearly 70 outstanding female educators from across the state. The award was created to spotlight women who have demonstrated courageous leadership and:

- A passion for the profession.
- A commitment to grow and develop others (seeking mentors to better herself and by becoming a mentor to others).
- A demonstrated desire to give back through public and/or community service.
- Advocacy for the value of school administrators and contributes to the improvements of the profession.
- Demonstrated effective crisis leadership during unprecedented times, especially during the pandemic.



Dr. Phelps has served as the Superintendent of the Poway Unified School District since 2017, having previously served as Superintendent of the Westminster School District and Area Superintendent in the San Diego Unified School District. She has worked tirelessly to enact positive changes in PUSD, including advancing educational technology and innovation, expanding foreign language and career pathways, improving fiscal accountability, addressing learning loss and students’ growing mental health needs, and implementing inclusive practices and racial equity. Following her creative and strong leadership to ensure PUSD was among the first and largest public school districts to reopen programs and schools for on-campus learning during the pandemic,

Dr. Phelps was named 2021 Superintendent of the Year by ACSA (Region 18 – San Diego and Imperial Counties). “Dr. Phelps’ vision and leadership have propelled Poway Unified School District into the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” praised Associate Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Burks, who nominated Dr. Phelps, “It is without a doubt that Dr Phelps is the epitome of an exemplary woman in education.” Dr. Phelps will receive her award at ACSA’s Leadership Summit, November 4-6 in San Francisco. “I am shocked and humbled to be chosen from among so many outstanding nominees, and especially after such a difficult year for educators and for the field of education as a whole. As a female leader, I want to acknowledge that this recognition does not come without sacrifice. I am truly grateful to my family, the Board of Education, and my team of colleagues who supported me, believed in me, and worked alongside me to always pursue what is best for the social, emotional, and academic welfare of our students. I feel privileged to be entrusted to continue to lead PUSD beyond this pandemic and into an exciting future as we continue to empower world-class learners,” said Phelps.

One of those world-class learners, former student board member Mariana Akins, had this to say about Dr. Phelps’ impact, “As a young black girl who was educated in the competitive Poway Unified environment, watching Dr. Kim Phelps prioritize mental health, combat racism, and encourage females to bloom into leaders was uplifting... the progress Poway Unified School District has made during her tenure as Superintendent exemplifies her ability to lead and her ability to inspire others to fulfill their potential.”

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