



AMERICAN SCHOOL BOARD JOURNAL • THE SOURCE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Richardson Independent School District wins first place honors in Magna Awards program**

*American School Board Journal Also Announces Grand Prize Winners, Honorable Mentions*

*Alexandria, Va.* (March 18, 2009) – Richardson Independent School District in Richardson, Texas, has been selected as a first place winner in the *American School Board Journal's* 15<sup>th</sup> annual Magna Awards program.

The district was recognized in the over 20,000 enrollment category for “Enterprise City,” a free-standing indoor “city” that students visit to put into practice the economics skills and classroom concepts learned over the previous six weeks. Students apply for business loans, create advertising, pay taxes, purchase goods and services, and keep a checking account. They also apply for jobs in one of 16 businesses – including a bank, newspaper, radio station, television station, and snack shop – and elect officials to city government.

The Magna Awards recognize districts across the country for outstanding programs that advance student learning and encourage community involvement in schools. This year’s three grand prize, 15 first place, and 15 honorable mention winners were selected based on three enrollment categories: less than 5,000 students, 5,000 to 20,000, and 20,000 and above.

This is Richardson’s second Magna Award. The district also won a first place honor in 2002.

Three other Texas districts – Hidalgo, Houston, and Mesquite – will be recognized in this year’s awards contest, which is presented with the support of Sodexo School Services. Indiana’s Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation, Oregon’s Springfield Public Schools, and Washington’s Bridgeport School District earned grand prize honors.

All of the winning districts will be recognized at the National School Boards Association’s annual conference in April in San Diego.

“As schools face unprecedented challenges in today’s difficult economy, the Magna Awards are an opportunity to showcase innovation and the bold steps taken by districts every day,” said Marilee Rist, *ASBJ's* publisher and associate executive director of the National School Boards

Association (NSBA). "This year's entries reflect the hard work of school boards, superintendents, and staff who strive to meet changing community needs in creative and innovative ways."

Lorna Donatone, president of Sodexo School Services, said, "Sodexo is proud to support the Magna Awards because they celebrate partnerships that encourage fresh approaches to education. This year's winners inspire others by showing us how school boards and communities can innovate and persevere to advance student learning."

*American School Board Journal* initiated the Magna Awards in 1995 to recognize school boards for taking bold and innovative steps to improve their educational programs. An independent panel of school board members, administrators, and other educators selected winners from more than 340 submissions. This year's applicants came from more than 45 states; districts in 22 states were winners or honorable mention recipients.

The 2009 winners are highlighted in a special supplement to the April issue of *ASBJ* and will be formally recognized on Monday, April 6, at the School Leaders Luncheon at the Hilton Bayfront Hotel in San Diego, Calif. The luncheon is part of NSBA's 69<sup>th</sup> annual conference scheduled for April 4-7 in San Diego.

*American School Board Journal* ([www.asbj.com](http://www.asbj.com)) is the award-winning, editorially independent education magazine of NSBA. Founded in 1891, *ASBJ* covers a broad range of topics pertinent to school governance and management, policy making, student achievement, and the art of school leadership. In addition, regular departments cover education news and trends, school law, research, communications, governance, and school finance issues.

Sodexo, Inc. ([www.sodexoUSA.com](http://www.sodexoUSA.com)) is a leading integrated facilities management services company in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, with \$7.7 billion (USD) in annual revenue and 120,000 employees. Sodexo serves more than ten million customers daily in corporations, health care, long term care and retirement centers, schools, college campuses, government, and remote sites. Sodexo, Inc., headquartered in Gaithersburg, Md., is a member of Sodexo Group, and funds all administrative costs for the Sodexo Foundation ([www.sodexofoundation.org](http://www.sodexofoundation.org)), an independent charitable organization that, since its founding in 1999, has made more than \$11 million in grants to fight hunger in America.

**Magna Awards website:** [www.asbj.com/magna](http://www.asbj.com/magna)

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## **List of Magna Awards winners**

### **GRAND PRIZE WINNERS**

#### ***Category 1 -- under 5,000 enrollment***

Bridgeport School District, Bridgeport, Wash.  
“College in the High School”

#### ***Category 2 -- 5,000-20,000 enrollment***

Springfield Public Schools, Springfield, Ore.  
“Gift of Literacy”

#### ***Category 3 -- over 20,000 enrollment***

Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation, Evansville, Ind.  
“Feel the History”

### **FIRST PLACE WINNERS**

#### ***Category 1 -- under 5,000 enrollment***

Albany County School District #1, Laramie, Wyo.  
“Service Learning Mini Grant Program”

Hidalgo Independent School District, Hidalgo, Texas  
“Hidalgo Early College High School”

Honeoye Falls-Lima Central School District, Honeoye Falls, N.Y.  
“HF-L Diversity Awareness”

Owensboro Public Schools, Owensboro, Ky.  
“Owensboro Public Schools’ Instructional League”

Passaic Valley Regional High School, Little Falls, N.J.  
“Science in the Cinema – STARS (Students, Teachers and Research Scientists)”

#### ***Category 2 -- 5,000-20,000 enrollment***

Bay Shore Union Free School District, Bay Shore, N.Y.  
“Board of Education-Sponsored Community Summit”

Lee’s Summit R-7 School District, Lee’s Summit, Mo.  
“21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning”

Manassas City Public Schools, Manassas, Va.  
“Growing Up Green”

Minnetonka Public Schools, Minnetonka, Minn.  
“Positioning Minnetonka as a District of Choice”

West Seneca Central Schools, West Seneca, N.Y.  
“Partners in Education Breakfast”

***Category 3 -- over 20,000 enrollment***

Hawaii Board of Education, Honolulu, Hawaii  
“Healthy Hawaii”

Houston Independent School District, Houston, Texas  
“ASPIRE Educational-Improvement Model”

Poudre School District, Fort Collins, Colo.  
“21<sup>st</sup> Century Blueprint for Student Success: Using Expert Panels for Community Engagement”

Prince William County Public Schools, Manassas, Va.  
“SEAPerch Program: TEACH, BUILD, BECOME”

Richardson ISD, Richardson, Texas  
“Enterprise City”

**HONORABLE MENTION**

***Category 1 -- under 5,000 enrollment***

El Dorado School District, El Dorado, Ark.  
“Waiting to Excel”

Geauga County Educational Service Center, Chardon, Ohio  
“Gateway High School”

Mitchell School District 17-2, Mitchell, S.D.  
“Mitchell Community Scholarship Foundation”

Salem City Public Schools, Salem, Va.  
“Personal Finance as a Graduation Requirement”

Upper Freehold Regional School District, Allentown, N.J.  
“Random Drug Testing (RDT) at Allentown High School”

***Category 2 -- 5,000-20,000 enrollment***

Hanover County Public Schools, Ashland, Va.  
“Preparing and Planning for the Future”

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, Soldotna, Alaska  
“Workforce Development Program”

San Gabriel Unified School District, San Gabriel, Calif.  
“Board Advisory Improvement Committee”

Vail Unified School District, Vail, Ariz.  
“Beyond Textbooks”

Vestavia Hills City Schools, Vestavia Hills, Ala.  
“Collaboration: Synergy in the Visionary Classroom”

***Category 3 -- over 20,000 enrollment***

District School Board of Pasco County, Land O' Lakes, Fla  
"Environmental Education Programs"

Guilford County Schools, Greensboro, N.C.  
"Guilford County Schools Newcomers School"

Mesquite ISD, Mesquite, Texas  
"Mesquite ISD A.L.I.V.E. Program"

New Hanover County Schools, Wilmington, N.C.  
"Lake Forest Academy"

Sacramento City Unified School District, Sacramento, Calif.  
"Charles Jones Skills and Business Education Center"