

Foskett Ranch Elementary a distinguished school

Stephanie Dumm, News Messenger Reporter



Michael Kirby/News Messenger

Amanda Walker, left, and Jared Collins, both fourth graders in the fourth-fifth grade combo class, select some books to reach their reading goal. "One of the goals of the library is to promote a love of learning and it starts with being able to locate the right information," said library media tech Tina Everett.



Foskett Ranch Elementary School is now recognized by the California Department of Education as a California Distinguished School.

"We are very proud of the outstanding work of our district's teachers, support staff, administrators, parents and students. We are delighted to have another school earn the distinguished label in our district," said Western Placer Unified School District Superintendent Scott Leaman on Monday.

Foskett Ranch Elementary School was one of 484 elementary school selected in the state to receive the award, according to a press release from the California Department of Education.

"It is an honor to recognize the schools, and the students, parents, teachers and administrators who helped earn this most prestigious distinction," State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell said. "The 2010 California Distinguished Schools have been selected because of their academic excellence and for narrowing achievement gaps. These schools have persevered, despite state budget cutbacks that have cut deeply into the budgets of local school districts."

Schools were eligible to be a Distinguished School based on their Academic Performance Index and Adequate Yearly Progress results, as well as "their success in narrowing the achievement gap that exists to the California Department of Education.

between higher-performing and lower-performing students," according

Each school was required to describe two signature practices that have led to an increase in student achievement and a narrowing of the achievement gap.

Leaman said Foskett Ranch Elementary School is one of seven schools in Placer County that received the award this year.

"It was intervention and cohesiveness of the staff on campus that they have in place," Leaman said when asked what led to the school's success.

Intervention occurs when a student "receives additional assistance on a subject or concept" they might not totally understand, according to Leaman.

Leaman said elementary schools were chosen to receive the California Distinguished School title this year and middle schools and high schools will be chosen next year.

"I'm proud of the staff's hard work," Foskett Ranch principal Kelly Catillo said. "We set a goal when we opened the school five years ago that we would work toward becoming a distinguished school and our target was 2010. The staff has worked hard and now we get to celebrate the success of the staff and students."

Castillo also attributed the school's success to parents, who have helped shape the school's programs and culture.

"That's great! It's a good school," Bob Mack said, who has a son at the school, when asked about the school winning the award. "They really put a large emphasis on the Star testing and all the kids know what it is."

Stephanie Woodard, another parent, credited the teachers and staff for the award.

"They have excellent teachers, who pretty much put the students first," Woodard said.

Adam Burke has two children at Foskett Ranch Elementary School and credited the philosophy of the school for the Distinguished School title.

"They teach the kids to be respectful, responsible and safe," Burke said.