



TANI G. CANTIL-SAKAUYE  
Chief Justice of California  
Chair of the Judicial Council

TOM TORLAKSON  
State Superintendent  
of Public Instruction

November 4, 2015

Dear County and District Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, High School Principals and Elementary School Principals:

### 2015-16 CALIFORNIA CIVIC LEARNING AWARDS

*The qualifications for self-government are not innate. They are the result of habit and long training.*

Thomas Jefferson

We recognize and value the crucial role that public schools play in preparing each generation for participation in our democracy, so it is with great enthusiasm that we invite you to apply for the California Civic Learning Award. Following the recommendation of the [California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning](#) that civic learning begin in kindergarten, the 2015-2016 awards will focus on all California's public elementary, middle, and high schools. However, schools will be compared only with schools that serve similar grades. The awards are designed to celebrate successful efforts to engage students in civic learning and to identify effective models that can be replicated in other schools.

The Civic Learning Award program has three levels: Awards of Excellence, Distinction, and Merit. Winners will be selected by a panel of experts based on the depth and breadth of their civic learning classes, clubs, and programs. Award of Excellence winners will receive a personal visit from Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye; Award of Distinction winners will be visited by an appellate court justice; and superior court judicial officers will provide recognition to schools receiving the Award of Merit. In addition, each winner in the top two categories will receive a plaque and be invited to a California Gold Ribbon Award banquet hosted by the California Department of Education.

We hope that you will take this opportunity to recognize the civic educators at your school and share the attached application with them. The application is also available online at [www.courts.ca.gov/23201.htm](http://www.courts.ca.gov/23201.htm) and [www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/civiclearningaward.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/civiclearningaward.asp). If you have questions, please contact Deborah Genzer, Judicial Council of California, by phone at 415-865-8755 or by e-mail at [deborah.genzer@jud.ca.gov](mailto:deborah.genzer@jud.ca.gov), or Stacey Greer, California Department of Education, by phone at 916-323-5818 or by e-mail [at\\_sgreer@cde.ca.gov](mailto:at_sgreer@cde.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

TANI G. CANTIL-SAKAUYE  
Chief Justice of California and  
Chair of the Judicial Council

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State Superintendent of Public Instruction