



# SAN JUAN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** All Administrators  
PTA or PTO Presidents  
Special Education Staff  
Other Interested Persons

**Date:** November 9, 2015

**FROM:** Community Advisory Committee for Special Education  
Nominating Committee  
Shelley Ellinghouse, SELPA Director, Special Education

**SUBJECT:** "YOU LIGHT THE WAY" AWARD

For the past 26 years, the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for Special Education has sponsored a special "Recognition Dessert" to honor persons who make outstanding contributions on behalf of special education students. This could include teachers, administrators, classified personnel at sites, transportation personnel, parent volunteers, students, agency staff, community workers, etc.

Your assistance is needed in promoting people who deserve recognition or encouraging people in your building to nominate someone they know who deserves recognition. The attached nomination form with guidelines is designed to be "user friendly". Please feel free to make additional copies as needed. Please return "You Light the Way" nominations by email attachment, fax or district mail to Kathy Olcese at [Kathy.olcese@sanjuan.edu](mailto:Kathy.olcese@sanjuan.edu), Special Education/Kenneth Avenue, fax 979-8921.

In our effort to expand the possibility of nomination into the school community, we ask that you include information about "You Light the Way" in your school newsletter. To help in this endeavor, a sample news item is provided below. You may use it as it is or change to fit the needs of your newsletter. If you have any further questions, please feel free to call Kathy Olcese in the Special Education Office at 971-7953.

### Sample News Item:

#### NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION'S "YOU LIGHT THE WAY" AWARD

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC), a board appointed committee of parents and community members, who advise the district on special education issues, is seeking nominations for "You Light the Way" recognition awards. The "You Light the Way" Award recognizes parents, teachers, administrators, students, classified workers, volunteers and community members who have made or are currently making an outstanding contribution to the special education program in the district. If you know of an individual who you believe is deserving of such recognition, there is a brief nomination form available at school or by calling Kathy Olcese at 971-7953. Completed nomination forms are due to the District Office/Special Education Department, Attention Kathy Olcese, *by Wednesday, January 20, 2016*. The CAC will evaluate the nominations and inform the person(s) nominating the individual of those chosen to be honored. A special Recognition Dessert is planned for Thursday, March 10, 2016, at 7:00 P.M., at the San Juan High School Auditorium. Please feel free to call Kathy Olcese in the Special Education Office at 971-7953 if you have any questions.

# **YOU LIGHT THE WAY AWARD**

*The You Light the Way celebration began in 1989 as a ceremony to recognize individuals within the educational system and the community who have gone above and beyond the scope of their assigned roles to offer special support or services to special education students in the San Juan Unified School District. The overwhelming success of this event has resulted in an ever increasing list of nominees. To date, 301 distinguished individuals have been recognized for their above and beyond efforts on behalf of special education students.*

*Annually, the You Light the Way Committee has the difficult task of selecting up to 18 award recipients from the many nominations received. The committee strives for a broad based representation of persons providing special services to children of all ages and grade levels throughout the San Juan community.*

*Examples of the "above and beyond" include:*

- *The nominee attended community events in support of the students*
- *The nominee volunteered in leadership roles*
- *A student nominee who became an active buddy/peer/tutor*
- *The nominee volunteered significant time outside of the normal school day to provide support and tutoring.*
- *The nominee demonstrated unusual commitment over a period of time working with community services or agencies.*

**The entire San Juan Unified School District community is invited to attend the You Light the Way Award Ceremony on Thursday, March 10, 2016, at 7:00 P.M., at the San Juan High School Auditorium, 7551 Greenback Lane, Citrus Heights, CA 95610.**

## **NOMINATION GUIDELINES**

1. *Award recipients receive recognition at the You Light the Way ceremony and all nominees receive a letter of recognition.*
2. *A person nominated more than one year has an increased chance of being recognized.*
3. *Individual nominations and multiple signature nominations shall receive equal consideration.*
4. *It is unusual for more than one individual to be selected from one school site or organization but not impossible.*
5. *Nominations are accepted in writing from an individual or a family.*
6. *The committee may request further clarification of nominations and may call to request further written clarification.*
7. *Recipients are chosen by a subcommittee of the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education and reviewed by the entire committee.*
8. *The committee welcomes all feedback. Comments may be sent to:*

***San Juan Unified School District  
Special Education Department, District Office  
4825 Kenneth Avenue  
Carmichael, CA 95608***

