

# PRESS RELEASE

## **Manhattan Beach Unified School District**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Manhattan Beach Unified School District's Michael Hayden Recognized as a California Teacher of the Year**

**Manhattan Beach, CA, November 5, 2013**

Michael Hayden, the Director of Choirs for Mira Costa High School, was honored today by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson as one of five California Teachers of the Year. This latest recognition follows earlier honors for Mr. Hayden as Manhattan Beach Unified School District Teacher of the Year and one of sixteen Los Angeles County Teachers of the Year.

The Manhattan Beach Unified School District is extremely fortunate to have hired Mr. Hayden in 2007 as Director of Choirs for Mira Costa High School. Prior to joining MBUSD, Mr. Hayden taught choral music at both the high school and university levels, including serving as a faculty member at both Butler University and Indiana Purdue University.

Michael Hayden sets extremely high expectations for all students and creates a classroom environment in which they are comfortable taking risks and are supportive of one another. As a consequence, his students master challenging music that is typically performed by collegiate choirs or professional vocal ensembles. When asked about his profession, Mr. Hayden proudly states, "I teach students, and I use singing as my vehicle." He believes without hesitation that all students can learn to sing beautifully, regardless of talent and aptitude.

As one of the five California Teachers of the Year, Mr. Hayden will participate in public forums and share his insights regarding current issues and challenges that confront public education. He may also conduct demonstration lessons and contribute to teacher recruitment efforts. On December 2nd, Mr. Hayden and the other four California Teachers of the Year will meet with State Superintendent Torlakson and participate in a full day of professional development in Sacramento. Additionally, on February 3, 2014, all California Teachers of the Year will be honored at a luncheon in Sacramento.

When learning of Mr. Hayden's selection as a California Teacher of the Year, Ida VanderPoorte, President of the MBUSD Board of Trustees, remarked, "On behalf of my colleagues on the Board, we are incredibly proud of Michael Hayden. Through his talent and tenacity, the Mira Costa Choirs have gained national and international recognition for their excellence." Under Mr. Hayden's direction, the Mira Costa Choirs have performed in Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, and in Syros, Greece, as the only high school choir to participate in the International Festival of the Aegean.

According to Dr. Michael Matthews, MBUSD Superintendent of Schools, "Michael Hayden personifies the very best of both the art and science of teaching. He instinctively embeds all of the 'Four Cs' of an outstanding 21<sup>st</sup> century education in his classroom on a daily basis: communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity. Students learn much more than correct vocal technique and how to read music; they learn confidence, respect, reflection, and a lifelong passion for music."

When reflecting on Mr. Hayden as an educator, Mira Costa Principal Dr. Ben Dale stated, “Michael Hayden teaches with surgeon-like precision but has the heart of a giant. He demands excellence from his students, but shows empathy and understanding during the process. Michael is clearly in charge, but year after year, empowers emerging leaders through his collaborative teaching model. He presents a model of what we want all teachers to be, know, and do.”

While Mr. Hayden is enjoying the accolades that accompany recognition as a California Teacher of the Year, the feedback he cares about most comes from his students. Every year he asks each of them to write an introspective piece about their experiences in choir. At the end of last year, one student shared, “Your teaching has made me more confident in my singing and in myself as a person.” She added, “You always put your all into your teaching. You care about your students and whether they really understand what you are teaching. Perhaps most importantly, you always look like you are genuinely having a good time.”

The Manhattan Beach Unified School District Board of Trustees will honor Michael Hayden during the regular Board Meeting on Wednesday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m.

To view an excerpt of Mr. Hayden’s interview for the Los Angeles County Office of Education, log on to: <http://www.lacoe.edu/DesktopModules/UltraVideoGallery/uvq.swf?vId=212&portalId=0>

For more information about the California Teachers of the Year process, log on to: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/ct/>

## **ABOUT THE MANHATTAN BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Manhattan Beach Unified School District (MBUSD) ranks as the third highest performing unified school district in the State of California with a 2013 Growth Academic Performance Index (API) of 935. MBUSD serves approximately 7,000 students from preschool to twelfth grade at eight school campuses—one preschool, five elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Mira Costa High School’s Growth API of 913 places it in the top 1.5% of public, comprehensive high schools in California. Robinson Elementary School was recently recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School in 2013. Four MBUSD schools have been honored as California Distinguished Schools: Mira Costa High School (2011), Manhattan Beach Middle School (2009), Grand View Elementary (2010), and Pacific Elementary (2010). In 2012, Grand View Elementary was named a National Green Ribbon School, joining just 77 other schools in the United States to receive this award. In addition to outstanding students and excellent teachers, MBUSD is extremely fortunate to have a high level of parental involvement in the schools and very strong partnerships with community partners such as the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation, MBX—Beyond the Classroom, the City of Manhattan Beach, Chevron, Continental Development, the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce, and other local organizations and businesses. More information about MBUSD is available at [www.mbusd.org](http://www.mbusd.org).