



SAN MATEO
COUNTY
OFFICE OF
EDUCATION

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NEWS RELEASE

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SMCOE Receives Award for School Safety Work

REDWOOD CITY, CALIF. – In March, the San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) received a "2015 Excellence in Communications" Award of Merit from the California School Public Relations Association (CalSPRA) for its work to inform its communities about San Mateo County's school safety protocols.

The implementation of these protocols, known as "The Big Five," is overseen by the Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities, a collaboration between SMCOE, local school districts, the San Mateo County Community College District, the San Mateo County Health System, the San Mateo County Human Services Agency, the San Mateo County Probation Department, local police and fire departments and other partner agencies. These independent organizations have come together to support young people in San Mateo County and provide wrap-around services for schools as they work to better prepare students and staff for potential emergencies.

The award-winning entry was a poster designed to inform readers about The Big Five's emergency responses: Shelter in Place; Drop, Cover, and Hold on; Secure Campus; Lockdown/Barricade; and Evacuation. The poster was printed in English and Spanish and distributed to schools and partner organizations across the county. Many school districts have already trained staff and students in The Big Five, but this broader outreach brings San Mateo County one step closer to having common, county-wide language that will help streamline our local emergency response.

The review board praised the County Office for its work to bring together Coalition partners and create a public message that could be easily understood by a variety of stakeholder groups.

To learn more about The Big Five and the Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities, please visit <http://www.smcoe.org/thebigfive>.

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The San Mateo County Office of Education is dedicated to serving our county's 23 school districts and helping deliver a top-rate educational experience for our nearly 94,000 students.