

Escalante elementary recognized by Intel

The technology company names it a 'School of Distinction' for its innovative science program

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Salt Lake City School District's Escalante Elementary has been named an Intel School of Distinction for its innovative science program. Escalante will receive \$10,000 in addition to software, hardware, curriculum and training totaling more than \$160,000.

Escalante beat out hundreds of schools across the country to win the award, which is intended to "recognize schools that demonstrate excellence in implementing innovative, replicable programs supporting positive educational outcomes in the areas of math and science achievement," according to a news release. Only three science-focused schools were honored with such an award.

It was just five years ago that the Salt Lake school chose to focus on science as a means of serving a heavily diverse population. The west side school's students speak a total of 22 languages. About 72 percent of them qualify for free or reduced price lunch because of their family's low-income status.

To be honored by Intel is gratifying for the school and the west-side community, said Principal Richard Aslett.

"That was our goal; to set out and be a model science school," he said. "And to be honored by Intel says they looked at schools nationwide and what we're doing with inquiry based science they found to be superior."

The hope is that the Intel recognition will open up future opportunities with Intel and other groups for grants and more training, not to mention build local connections.

"There are so many incredible science-related businesses in the valley," Aslett said. "We hope we can partner up with more and more of them over time."

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