

**U.S. Department of Education
Office of Communications & Outreach, Press Office
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National Blue Ribbon Honors Announced for 342 Schools

U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos today recognized 342 schools as [National Blue Ribbon Schools](#) for 2017. The recognition is based on a school's overall academic performance or progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups.

“National Blue Ribbon Schools are active demonstrations of preparing every child for a bright future,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos to the honorees. “You are visionaries, innovators and leaders. You have much to teach us: some of you personalize student learning, others engage parents and communities in the work and life of your local schools and still others develop strong and forward-thinking leaders from among your teaching staff.”

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools where students achieve very high learning standards or are making notable improvements in closing the achievement gap.

This coveted award affirms the hard work of educators, families and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging and engaging content.

Now in its 35th year, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has bestowed recognition on more than 8,500 schools. On Nov. 6-7, the Secretary and the Department of Education will celebrate with these honorees at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C.

All schools are honored in one of two performance categories, based on all student scores, subgroup student scores and graduation rates:

- **Exemplary High Performing Schools** are among their state's highest performing schools as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests.
- **Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools** are among their state's highest performing schools in closing achievement gaps between a school's subgroups and all students over the past five years.

Up to 420 schools may be nominated each year. The Department invites National Blue Ribbon School nominations from the top education official in all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Department of Defense Education Activity and the Bureau of Indian Education. Private schools are nominated by The Council for American Private Education (CAPE).

Photographs and brief descriptions of the 2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools are available at <http://www.ed.gov/nationalblueribbonsschools>.