

National Blue Ribbon School Recognition for 304 Schools

September 9, 2010

Contact:

David Thomas or Jim Bradshaw, (202) 401-1576, press@ed.gov

Aba Kumi, Program Contact, (202) 401-1767

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan today recognized 304 schools as 2010 National Blue Ribbon Schools. Secretary Duncan was joined by Washington, D.C. Mayor Adrian M. Fenty, D.C. Public Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee and George Washington University Provost Steven Lerman for the announcement at School Without Walls Senior High School, a 2010 Blue Ribbon School in Washington, D.C.

The schools—254 public and 50 private—will be honored at an awards ceremony Nov. 15-16 in Washington, D.C. In the past 28 years, more than 6,000 of America's schools have received this coveted award.

"Our nation has a responsibility to help all children realize their full potential," Duncan said. "Schools honored with the Blue Ribbon Schools award are committed to achievement and to ensuring that students learn and succeed. Their work reflects the conviction that every child has promise and must receive a quality education."

The award honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools whose students achieve at very high levels or have made significant progress and helped close gaps in achievement especially among disadvantaged and minority students. Each year since 1982, the U.S. Department of Education has sought out schools where students attain and maintain high academic goals, including those that beat the odds.

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private schools based on one of two criteria:

1. Schools whose students, regardless of backgrounds, are high performing. These are schools ranked among the state's highest performing schools as measured by their performance on state assessments or in the case of private schools, that score at the highest performance level on tests referenced by national norms in at least the most recent year tested; and
2. Schools with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that improve student performance to high levels as measured by the school's performance on state assessments or nationally-normed tests.

A total of 413 schools nationwide can be nominated, based on the number of K-12 students and the number of schools in each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The chief state school officer nominates public schools, and the Council for American Private Education (CAPE) submits private schools' nominations. The schools are invited by the secretary of education to submit an application for possible recognition as a Blue Ribbon School. education to submit an application for possible recognition as a Blue Ribbon School.