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Virginia Schools Earn Federal Blue Ribbon Honors

The U.S. Department of Education has designated seven Virginia public schools and three parochial schools as 2008 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools. The Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private K-12 schools that are either academically superior or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement.

The public schools receiving federal Blue Ribbon School status are as follows:

- Edgemont Primary in Covington
- Graham Road Elementary in Fairfax County
- Ocean View Elementary in Norfolk
- Open High in Richmond
- Springwoods Elementary in Prince William County
- Temperance Elementary in Amherst County
- Virginia L. Murray Elementary in Albemarle County

“These schools share a commitment to instruction and accountability that is grounded in the belief that all children can succeed,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Billy K. Cannaday Jr., who nominated the schools for federal recognition.

All of the public 2008 NCLB Blue Ribbon Schools earned awards earlier this year through the Virginia Index of Performance program that recognizes schools and divisions that exceed state and federal accountability standards. Virginia L. Murray Elementary in Albemarle County earned the Governor’s Award for Education Excellence while the others received the Board of Education’s VIP Excellence Award.

Three schools in the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, Holy Spirit School in Annandale, St. John Academy in McLean and Nativity School in Burke, were also recognized as Blue Ribbon Schools. The Council for American Private Education nominates private and parochial schools for Blue Ribbon awards each year.

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program was established in 1982 to spotlight the country’s most successful schools. The program, which allows both elementary and secondary schools to be recognized in the same year, was renamed and modified last year to emphasize the goals of NCLB.

The U.S. Department of Education will honor Virginia’s Blue Ribbon Schools during an awards ceremony in October. Two people from each school, the principal and a teacher, will be invited to the ceremony where the schools will receive a plaque and a flag signifying their Blue Ribbon Status. Since 1982, more than 100 Virginia public and private schools have received federal Blue Ribbon designations.

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