



U.S. Congressman
Nick Rahall
WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 24, 1994

CONTACT: KENT KEYSER
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BLUE RIBBON HONORS FOR LEWISBURG & LORY-JULIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

WASHINGTON, DC--U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) announced today that the U.S. Department of Education will present Lewisburg Elementary School and Lory-Julian Elementary School the prestigious Blue Ribbon School Award.

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program adheres to the Department of Education's GOALS 2000 initiative, a long term strategy designed to promote higher educational standards for our nation's schools. The Blue Ribbon Program seeks to achieve these higher standards on a national scale through the collaborative self-evaluation required of local school communities that participate. "Our two Blue Ribbon Schools demonstrate that schools can indeed achieve the level of excellence called for by GOALS 2000," declared Rahall.

Blue Ribbon Schools have demonstrated a proficiency in meeting local, state, and national goals. Their status is predicated on strong leadership, high quality teaching, environments conducive to learning, and a clear vision and sense of mission among all associated with the school. Blue Ribbon Schools also boast parent and community support, organizational vitality, high student retention, and a high success rate among their alumni.

"These Blue Ribbon Schools provide models for other schools and communities throughout the nation to emulate," said Rahall. "I congratulate Lewisburg Elementary and Lory-Julian Elementary for their honorable distinctions and exemplary efforts."

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NICK J. RAHALL II
3d DISTRICT, WEST VIRGINIA

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FAX FROM: CONGRESSMAN NICK J. RAHALL, II

STAFF MEMBER: Jennifer Madalen

DATE: 5/26/94

FAX TO: Charlotte

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STAFF MEMBER: Jennifer Madden

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

May 23, 1994

RECEIVED
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Honorable Nick Joe Rahall, II
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Dear Mr. Rahall:

The Department of Education is pleased to announce the selection of 260 elementary schools to be presented the prestigious Blue Ribbon School award. Enclosed is a list of the winning schools from your state, of which one or more is located in your district.

Blue Ribbon Schools are judged effective in meeting local, state, and national goals, such as the National Education Goals. These schools also display a number of the qualities of excellence that will be necessary in tomorrow's schools. Blue Ribbon School status is awarded to schools with such characteristics as strong leadership; a clear vision and sense of mission that is shared by all connected with the school; high quality teaching; appropriate, up-to-date curriculum; policies and practices that ensure a safe environment conducive to learning; strong parental interest and involvement; and evidence that the school helps all students achieve, regardless of their abilities.

After a selection process by the State Department of Education, the Department of Defense Dependents Schools, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, or the Council for American Private Education, nominations are forwarded to the U.S. Department of Education. A 105-person panel of outstanding educators and other professionals reviews the nominations, selects schools for site visits, and makes recommendations to the U.S. Secretary of Education, who announces the names of the schools selected. In the Fall of 1994 these schools will be honored at a national ceremony in Washington.

Enclosed is also a fact sheet on the program. The schools will be notified of their awards by the Department on Thursday, May 26 should you wish to congratulate them first. If you have any questions, please call Gayle Tauzin in my office at 401-1028.

Sincerely,

Kay Casstevens
Assistant Secretary

Enclosures

400 MARYLAND AVE., S.W. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

Based on the quality of the application, the most promising schools are recommended for a site visit. The purpose of a visit is to verify the accuracy of information the school has provided in its nomination form and to gather any additional information requested by the panel. Experienced educators, including principals of recognized schools, visit and observe the schools for two days and submit a written site visit report for each visit. The panel considers the reports and makes recommendations to the U.S. Secretary of Education, who then announces the names of the schools selected for recognition.

What Selection Criteria Are Used?

The Review Panel considers the following "Conditions of Effective Schooling" in each school:

- Leadership
- Teaching environment
- Curriculum and instruction
- Student environment
- Parent and community support
- Organizational vitality

The Review Panel also considers objective "Indicators of Success," such as:

- Student performance on measures of achievement
- Daily student and teacher attendance rates
- Students' postgraduation pursuits
- School, staff, and student awards
- High student retention/graduation rates

Each year, two special emphases are designated. The subjects chosen represent areas in which, according to national and international assessments and professional judgment, school performance needs to be greatly improved and where effective models are sought. Excellence in these areas, however, is not a condition of national recognition.

What Are the Benefits?

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program has proven to be effective in numerous ways:

- Recognition itself is a powerful energizer for further improvement in recognized schools as well as a stimulus for continued efforts by schools striving for national recognition.
- Public confidence in recognized schools increases, often resulting in higher local funding for schools, greater parent and community involvement in education, and success in the search for outside funds and other resources.

BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Through the Department of Education, President Clinton has initiated GOALS 2000: Educate America. This long-term strategy has been designed to help move the nation toward the six National Education Goals that the President and the governors adopted in 1990. The Blue Ribbon Schools Program fits perfectly with this national agenda by showing that schools can achieve excellence and by providing examples of outstanding programs and practices.

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program identifies and gives national recognition to a diverse group of public and private schools that are unusually effective in meeting local, state, and national goals and in educating all of their students. The Program seeks to promote school improvement nationwide through the collaborative self-evaluation required of local school communities that participate. In addition, recognized schools serve as models for other schools and communities seeking to provide high quality education for all their students.

Which Schools May Be Nominated?

Public and private schools from the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as Bureau of Indian Affairs and Department of Defense Dependents Schools, may be nominated. Elementary and secondary schools are eligible to participate in the Blue Ribbon Schools Program in alternate years.

Elementary schools with some combination of grades K through 8 may participate in the elementary program. Identifiably distinct elementary components of K through 12 and 1 through 12 schools are also eligible for consideration.

High schools and junior high schools are eligible to participate in the secondary program. Specifically, schools with some combination of grades 5 through 12, as well as identifiably distinct secondary components of K through 12 and 1 through 12 schools, are eligible for consideration.

Middle schools may choose to participate in either the elementary or the secondary program.

How Are Schools Chosen?

Each state administers its own program for selecting public schools to be nominated to the national level. Chief state school officers make their nominations to the U.S. Department of Education. The number of schools each may nominate is indexed to the state's population. The Council for American Private Education nominates private schools, and officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of Defense Dependents Schools nominate their schools.

A panel reviews the nominations. The panel consists of some 100 outstanding public and private school educators, college and university staff, state and local government officials, school board members, parents, the education press, medical professionals, and business representatives. Experts from specific areas of special interest designated each year also serve on the Review Panel.

- The public spotlight shines on recognized schools; they are frequently the subject of articles in national, state, and local publications. They are sometimes designated as the universe from which schools, teachers, or students are selected for special awards from business and industry.
- Recognized schools share with and learn about effective education techniques from other schools.

What Do We Know About Successful Schools?

Successful schools have the following common attributes:

- Strong visionary leadership
- A sense of shared purpose among faculty, students, parents, and the community
- A school climate that is conducive to effective teaching and teacher growth and recognition
- An environment that conveys the message that all students can learn
- Programs that challenge gifted, average, and at-risk students
- Evidence of impressive academic achievement and responsible student behavior
- Actively involved parents and broad community support
- A commitment to an ongoing program of student assessment and school improvement
- A "can-do" attitude toward problem-solving, preferring to view "problems" as "opportunities"

WEST VIRGINIA

Mr. Steven L. Paine
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Mrs. Carol Hager
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Troy Elementary School
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
1993-94 Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Overview of National Participation

Total # of Schools nominated to the Program	529
Total # of Public Schools Nominated	424
Total # of Private Schools Nominated	105
Total # of Schools Site Visited	297
Total # of Public Schools Visited	239
Total # of Private Schools Visited	58
Percentage of Schools Site Visited	56%
Percentage of Public Schools Visited	56%
Percentage of Private Schools Visited	55%
Total # of Schools Selected for Recognition	276
Total # of Public Schools	220
Total # of Private Schools	56
Percentage of Nominated Schools Selected for Recognition	52%
Percent of Public Schools Selected	52%
Percent of Private Schools Selected	53%
Percentage of Site Visited Schools Selected for Recognition	93%
Percent of Site Visited Public Schools Selected	92%
Percent of Site Visited Private Schools Selected	97%
Number of States with Schools Selected for Recognition (plus the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Dependent Schools)	45

Additional Information (# and % of schools):

Suburban	95 (34%)	Low-income (25% or more)	89 (32%)
City/Lrg Town	114 (41%)	Low-income (50% or more)	40 (14%)
Rural/Sm Town	67 (24%)	Minority (25% or more)	89 (32%)
Elementary Schools	259	Minority (50% or more)	37 (13%)
Middle Schools	17	Smallest Public	65 (Pre-K-8)
		Largest Public	1,646 (5-6)

Private Schools:

Catholic	38	Episcopal	3
Independent	6	Christian	1
Special Education	4	Montessori	1
Hebrew	3		

Total # of Schools Recognized 1982-83 through 1993-94	2,547
Total # of Public Schools	1,963
Total # of Private Schools	584