

HIGHLAND ISD RECEIVES 2015 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL AWARD

On September 29, 2015, the U.S Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced the 335 schools that are recognized as National Blue Ribbon Schools. This award is based on overall academic excellence or progress in closing achievement gaps. Highland was one of only 25 schools recognized in Texas.

In a video message that was sent to awardees, Duncan said, "This honor recognizes your students' accomplishments and the hard work and dedication that went into their success." In a news release prepared by the U.S. Department of Education it states that the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle, and high schools where students either achieve very high learning standards or are making notable improvements in closing the achievement gap.

Highland ISD was honored as an Exemplary High Performing School. The U.S. Department of Education explains that Exemplary High Performing Schools are among their state's highest performing schools as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests. Student subgroup performance and high school graduation rates are also at the highest levels.

The application process included the following brief summary of the school district: High expectations and academic excellence are a priority for Highland students and faculty. Students eagerly embrace these challenges and continue to meet and exceed standards set by the Texas Education Agency. The success of Highland ISD can be attributed to a partnership of staff members, parents, and community members working together to create a positive learning environment that includes an academically challenging core curriculum and a variety of electives and extracurricular activities. The faculty at Highland ISD actively pursues professional development opportunities and applies excellent instructional methods to ensure successful student learning. Continual progress monitoring is used to drive instruction and make necessary curriculum adjustments to meet individual student needs. Students are not only successful in the classroom, but also in the community as well. Many students strive to give back to the community through community service projects and volunteer opportunities. The educational experience and caring environment at Highland Independent School District creates the perfect atmosphere in which to learn and work.

Superintendent of Highland ISD, Duane Hyde, says, "I am very proud of our students and staff for receiving this prestigious honor. It is extremely gratifying to be recognized on a National level for all of their hard work. Thanks also to our very supportive community and parents who made this award possible." Highland ISD representatives will travel to Washington, D.C., in November to be honored and receive the coveted award along with representatives from the other 285 public and 50 private schools. More information regarding the National Blue Ribbon Schools program can be found on the website nationalblueribbonschools.ed.gov .