



MEDIA RELEASE
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ROMONA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GETS NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON RECOGNITION

(Wilmette, Illinois...) Romona Elementary School has been named one of 342 National Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education. The announcement was made today by U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos. The school was previously honored with the Blue Ribbon award in 2006.

Romona Elementary is one of six schools in District 39. It serves approximately 474 students in grades K-4 and is the home of the District's early childhood program that serves 68 pre-school students. The Blue Ribbon Schools will be honored at an awards ceremony on November 6-7 in Washington, D.C. A celebration at Romona will be scheduled soon after the ceremony. Ms. Cynthia Anderson, Principal of Romona School, will travel to Washington to accept the award along with District 39 Superintendent Dr. Raymond Lechner.

Principal Cindy Anderson was thrilled with the news. "I am so proud that Romona is being recognized in this way," said Ms. Anderson. "The wonderful Romona spirit comes from our students, faculty, staff, and parents. We have an amazing team that makes this school so special!"

District 39 Superintendent Ray Lechner commended Romona School. "Every member of the team – faculty, staff, principal, and assistant principal, as well as all the Romona students and their parents – deserve to be recognized for their part in this achievement," commented Dr. Lechner. "To win this award once is a testament to excellence; to win it twice is an extraordinary accomplishment. It is most well-deserved!"

Romona received the "Exemplary High Performing Schools" designation. To qualify, schools had to achieve in the top 15 percent of all schools in the state when ranked by student performance on the most recently administered English language arts and math state assessments or by student performance on state assessments in combination with other student performance measures, such as attendance and/or graduation rates. The state may nominate a school only once within a five-year period.

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.

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).

NOTE TO EDITORS: Find the 2017 Blue Ribbon Schools at www.ed.gov/nationalblueribbonschools