



STATE OF ALABAMA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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State Superintendent of Education

Alabama  
State Board  
of Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Governor Kay Ivey  
President

FIVE ALABAMA SCHOOLS NAMED  
2021 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS

Jackie Zeigler  
District I

Montgomery, Ala. – U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona today recognized 325 schools as [National Blue Ribbon Schools](#) for 2021, including five schools in Alabama.

Tracie West  
District II

The recognition is based on a school’s overall academic performance or progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. Secretary Cardona made the announcement during his [Return to School Road Trip](#), while visiting an awardee school in Illinois.

The Alabama schools named as National Blue Ribbon Schools are:

Stephanie Bell  
District III

- *Hall-Kent Elementary School*, Homewood City School System.
- *Mt. Laurel Elementary School*, Shelby County School System.
- *Brewton Elementary School*, Brewton City School System.
- *MacMillan International Academy*, Montgomery County School System.
- *Orange Beach Elementary School*, Baldwin County School System.

Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D.  
District IV  
Vice President

“This year’s cohort of honorees demonstrates what is possible when committed educators and school leaders create vibrant, welcoming, and affirming school cultures where rich teaching and learning can flourish,” said Secretary Cardona. “I commend all our Blue Ribbon honorees for working to keep students healthy and safe while meeting their academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. In the face of unprecedented circumstances, you found creative ways to engage, care for, protect, and teach our children. Blue Ribbon Schools have so much to offer and can serve as a model for other schools and communities so that we can truly build back better.”

Tonya S. Chestnut, Ed.D.  
District V

The coveted National Blue Ribbon Schools award affirms the hard work of educators, families, and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging and engaging content.

Cynthia McCarty, Ph.D.  
District VI

*Now in its 39th year, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has bestowed approximately 10,000 awards to more than 9,000 schools.*

Belinda McRae  
District VII

The U.S. Department of Education recognizes all schools in one of two performance categories, based on all student scores, subgroup student scores and graduation rates:

Wayne Reynolds, Ed.D.  
District VIII  
President Pro Tem

- **Exemplary High-Performing Schools** are among their state’s highest performing schools as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests.

Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.  
Secretary and  
Executive Officer

–more–

- **Exemplary Achievement Gap-Closing Schools** are among their state's highest performing schools in closing achievement gaps between a school's student groups and all students.

Up to 420 schools may be nominated each year. The U.S. Department of Education invites National Blue Ribbon Schools 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.

**NOTE TO EDITORS:** Photographs and brief descriptions of the 2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools are available at <https://www.nationalblueribbonschools.ed.gov/>.

Media Contact for Additional Information

- The *U.S. Department of Education Press Office*, (202) 401-1576 or [press@ed.gov](mailto:press@ed.gov)

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