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News Release

Six Colorado Schools Awarded 2010 Blue Ribbon Schools

Commissioner of Education Dwight D. Jones today congratulated six Colorado schools named by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan as 2010 Blue Ribbon Schools.

"Despite the odds, these schools are setting a shining example in our state," said Commissioner Jones. "Congratulations on all your success. Being a high-performing school doesn't happen by chance. You strive for the highest level of achievement, and it shows."

The five public schools are Dennison Elementary in Lakewood (Jeffco Public Schools); Douglass Elementary School in Boulder, (Boulder Valley School District); Pine Grove Elementary School in Parker (Douglas County School District), Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School in Colorado Springs (Colorado Springs School District 11) and Orchard Avenue Elementary School in Grand Junction, (Mesa Valley County School District 51). A sixth private school, Colorado Springs Christian Middle School also received Blue Ribbon School recognition.

"Our nation has a responsibility to help all children realize their full potential," said Secretary Duncan. "Schools honored with the Blue Ribbon Schools award are committed to achievement and to ensuring that students learn and succeed. Their work reflects the conviction that every child has promise and must receive a quality education."

The award honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools whose students achieve at very high levels or have made significant progress and those schools that have helped close gaps in achievement, especially among disadvantaged and minority students.

The schools are selected based on one of two criteria:

- 1) Schools whose students, regardless of backgrounds, are high-performing. These are schools ranked among the state's highest-performing schools as measured by their performance on state assessments or, in the case of private schools, score at the highest performance level on tests referenced by national norms in at least the most recent year tested.
- 2) Schools in which with at least 40 percent of students are from disadvantaged backgrounds and that improve student performance to high levels as measured by the school's performance on state assessments or nationally normed tests.

In addition, public schools must meet Adequate Yearly Progress, or AYP, for the past two years, including the award year, in order to receive the award.

A total of 413 schools nationwide can be nominated. This number is determined based on the number of K-12 students and the number of schools in each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Each state's chief state school officer (or commissioner) nominates public schools, and the Council for American Private Education (CAPE) submits private schools' nominations. The schools are invited by Secretary Duncan to submit an application for possible recognition as a Blue Ribbon School.

This year's winners, 254 public and 50 private, will be honored at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 15-16. For the past 28 years, more than 6,000 of America's schools have received this coveted award.

A list of the 2010 Blue Ribbon Schools is available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/nclbbrs/awards.html>

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