

2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Award

The Secretary of Education and Department of Education recognized 312 schools as National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2019 based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. These schools demonstrated that all students can achieve high levels. The Department formally recognized the 300 public and 50 private schools at an awards ceremony at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center on November 14 and 15, 2019 . The 2019 cohort represented public and non-public elementary, middle and high schools, including traditional, charter, magnet schools, parochial and independent schools in 46 States, the District of Columbia and Department of Defense Education Activity schools in Fort Benning, Georgia, Germany and the United Kingdom.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools award affirms the hard work of students, educators, families, and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging and engaging content. The National Blue Ribbon Schools flag gracing a school's building is a widely recognized symbol of exemplary teaching and learning. National Blue Ribbon Schools are an inspiration and a model for schools still striving for excellence. Now in its 37th year, the U. S. Department of Education has bestowed this coveted award on more than 9,000 schools.

All schools are honored in one of two performance categories, based on all student scores, subgroup student scores and graduation rates:

- **Exemplary High Performing Schools** are among their state's highest performing schools as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests.
- **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 over the past five years.

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).

The following schools were named 2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools representing the state of Arkansas:

Exemplary High Performing Schools

City Heights Elementary

Van Buren School District
Mary McCutchens, Principal
Harold Jeffcoat, Superintendent

Sequoyah Elementary

Russellville School District
Barbara McShaner, Principal
Dr. Mark Gotcher, Superintendent