



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • 410-767-0100 • 410-333-6442 TTY/TDD • msde.maryland.gov

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D. *KBS*

DATE: December 5, 2016

SUBJECT: Announcement and Recognition of the 2016-2017 Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools

PURPOSE:

To recognize the new 2016-2017 Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROGRAM, SPONSORS, AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Since 1982 the U.S. Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Schools Program has celebrated many of America's most successful schools. For almost as many years, Maryland has partnered with the U.S. Department of Education. Maryland schools have consistently been honored as National Blue Ribbon Schools in Washington, D.C. by the U.S. Secretary of Education and sometimes by the President of the United States.

The **Blue Ribbon Schools Program** gives Maryland an opportunity to put the spotlight on high achieving and dramatically improving schools in our State. In Maryland, we recognize these schools with a **State Dinner and a Legislative Tribute at the State House in Annapolis**. In addition, we visit each Blue Ribbon School with the State Superintendent and other leaders in a Maryland Tour of Excellence. Schools also win monetary and other prizes as Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools.

Each year in Maryland, up to **six schools** can be selected as **Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools**. These state *winners* are identified based on results of their past year's State assessments. This year, PARCC results for 2016 were used. Schools do not apply for the State Award but rather are identified by leaders at the Maryland State Department of Education with verification of their achievement rendered by district officials.

Schools from all **twenty-four local school systems** are eligible for Blue Ribbon School Awards. Maryland schools must rank statewide in the top 15 percentile or higher on state assessments in reading and mathematics. In addition, subgroups must rank in the 40 percentile or higher. Two of the six schools must also reflect 40% or higher economic or other disadvantaged populations.

State Board Ceremony

Approximately 50 guests of the new Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools are expected to attend the Board Ceremony, including superintendents, principals, board presidents, teachers from each school and corporate sponsors.

ACTION:

The State Superintendent and State Board President will present each Blue Ribbon School with a Maryland State Board Citation and a Maryland Blue Ribbon School Flag.

Commemorative photos will be taken.

MARYLAND BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS 2016-2017

Anne Arundel County - Shipley's Choice Elementary – Beth Burke, Principal

Shipley's Choice students have consistently excelled on local and state assessments. For this year's PARCC assessments, math scores were 89.4% proficient and above and English/language arts scores were 86.9%. In addition to classroom instruction that incorporates STEM activities, a strong writing curriculum, and infusion of technology to foster learning at the highest levels, students benefit from a wide array of extracurricular opportunities. The Makerspace Club, for example, includes almost 100 fourth- and fifth-graders. Students also participate in the First Lego League, Running Club, Dance Club, and Mini Rock & Roll Revival Concert. Students also participate in service projects, such as supporting children at the Johns Hopkins Oncology unit or supporting soldiers through Operation Welcome Home. The environmental committee also has created an outdoor classroom and teaches students about recycling and conservation.

Calvert County – Sunderland Elementary School – Pamela Kasulke, Principal

Sunderland Elementary students scored overall at 73% proficient or above in math and 70% in English/language arts sections of the PARCC. The school encourages volunteerism and has a Family Student Organization (FSO) that also assists with fundraising efforts. All students become "future ready" by using Ipads, HP Streambooks, document cameras, SMARTBoards, and computers. In grades 4 and 5, a 1:1 device program has students utilizing technology in daily instruction. The school offers services for special needs students, as well as regional programs that include Inclusive Pre-K, Co-Taught Kindergarten and HeadStart. The Seahawk Kindness Crew works in partnership with Huntingtown High School's Key Club to foster respect and kindness. Community partnerships with local churches provide support for families in the school through the HeartFelt Backpack Program and The Angel Tree Project.

Frederick County - Centerville Elementary School - Tracy Hilliard, Principal

Centerville Elementary with over 1000 students, had PARCC proficiency scores of 82.4% in math and 77% in English/language arts. It is the 2015-2016 top fundraiser for Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Hearts in Frederick County and 15th in the state with a \$22,000 donation to the American Heart Association. Students exemplify what a star scholar should be each day by displaying Star Pride and they are celebrated during an assembly in front of parents and peers. Our Star Staff members participate in a Helping Hoops basketball game to collect food for the local foodbank. During the 2016 Helping Hoops campaign, the students and staff contributed well over 5000 food and hygiene items. The schoolyard garden produces crops that are harvested by the students and donated to the local foodbank and shelters. The staff challenges the students with the MakerSpace Club, Coding Club, Book Club, STEM Club, and track club.

Howard County – Manor Woods Elementary School – James Weisner, Principal

Manor Woods Elementary with over 700 students, emphasizes respect among teachers, students, and community members. Students' PARCC scores showed proficiency of 75% in math and 71% in English/language arts. Manor Woods is a Maryland Green School. Its PBIS program provides positive reinforcement to students for demonstrating respect, responsibility, and readiness. The school excels in the arts, with nearly 300 students participating in the Manor Woods band and strings programs. The school's students also participate in district-level honors chorus, and are represented in visual arts at local and statewide shows. Students are also strongly committed to community service and participate in local food drives as well as in the Grassroots Change Matters campaign, and Heavenly Hats programs.

Montgomery County – Farmland Elementary School – Mary Bliss, Principal

Farmland Elementary has a diverse international student population with a motto - "Together We Can.". At Farmland, students come from 23 different countries, with 179 ESOL students speaking 24 different languages. In spite of language challenges, PARCC proficiency in math was 74% and English/language arts was 66%. A highlight of the school year is the International Night Celebration which serves as a vehicle for parental collaboration. The faculty and administrators have high expectations for themselves and the students, and focus on critical thinking skills for all students. Each student sets achievable personal goals and meets regularly with teachers to monitor his or her performance and achievement success. Farmland Elementary also has a mentoring program, morning messages, celebration assemblies, and charitable events geared to developing social responsibility in all the students.

Montgomery County – Ronald McNair Elementary School – Sherilyn Moses, Principal

Ronald McNair, with an enrollment of 875 students with a diverse population including economically disadvantaged, ESOL, and special education students. The school has made strides in achievement with over 62% of its students proficient or advanced in both math and English/language arts. The school's Home School Model program has special education students fully included in co-taught classes at all grade levels, K through 5th grades. McNair was ranked as the 11th best public elementary school in the state of Maryland, and #1 in Montgomery County Public Schools for the 2015 NICHE Ranking of Best Schools. As a 4th year PBIS school, classes mark their progress with coupons, awards, and Quarterly Town Hall Meetings. The school was awarded the prestigious Bronze Award for its implementation of PBIS and is a Professional Development School with Towson University, training up to fifteen teachers each year.