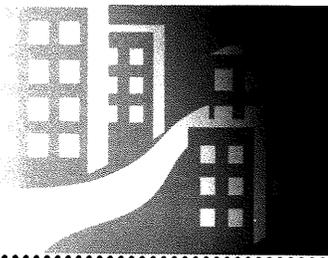


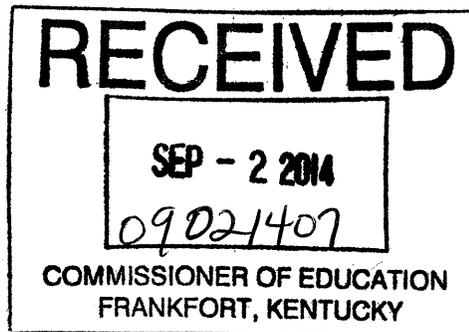
NCUST

National Center for Urban School Transformation



August 20, 2014

Dr. Terry Holliday
Commissioner of Education
Kentucky Department of Education
500 Mero Street, 1st Floor
Frankfort, KY 40601



Dear Dr. Holliday:

Each year our National Excellence in Urban Education Award Program identifies and celebrates some of the nation's best urban schools. Since 2006, we have awarded 89 elementary, middle, and high schools in 22 states. (See attached list of prior winners.) These urban public and public charter schools serve low-income communities, do not use selective admission criteria, and boast achievement results that exceed state averages for all students. In fact, in our award-winning schools, every demographic group achieves at levels that exceed the overall state average for all students. We are seeking your assistance in identifying qualified schools in your state and encouraging them to consider applying for our award.

Attached, please find a list of our award criteria. The criteria and the award application are available on our website at <http://www.ncust.org>. We would appreciate your assistance in sharing this information with school and district leaders. Particularly, we hope you share this with your highest achieving urban schools (schools in metropolitan areas with a population greater than 50,000 residents), including Blue Ribbon Schools, Title I Distinguished Schools, and schools that have earned other academic distinctions from your state agency. This year, we also hope to award outstanding alternative schools, so please encourage your best urban alternative schools to apply.

The application deadline is November 14, 2014. So, it is important to share this information as soon as possible. If you have questions about the application or criteria, please call us at 619-594-7905 and ask for Dr. Lynne Perez, our Associate Director. Or, you can communicate with us via e-mail at lperez@mail.sdsu.edu.

Thank you for sharing this information with great urban schools in your state. We look forward to helping celebrate their accomplishments through our National Excellence in Urban Education Award Program.

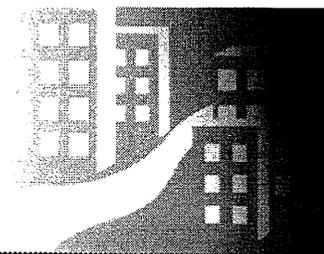
Sincerely,

Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., Ph.D.
Executive Director

NCUST



National Center for Urban School Transformation



AWARD WINNING SCHOOLS

89 schools in 58 school districts and 22 states have won Excellence in Urban Education Awards since 2006.



Alabama:

- **Birmingham City Schools** (Birmingham, AL): Glen Iris Elementary School (2013 Bronze Winner)
- **Dothan City Schools** (Dothan, AL): Morris Slingluff Elementary School (2013 Bronze Winner)

Arizona:

- **Phoenix Elementary School District** (Phoenix, AZ): Magnet Traditional School (2013 Bronze Winner and 2014 Silver Winner)
- **Tucson Unified School District** (Tucson, AZ): C.E. Rose Elementary (2012)

California:

- **Bakersfield City School District** (Bakersfield, CA): Franklin Elementary School (2008)
- **Centinela Valley High School District** (Lawndale, CA–Los Angeles): Lawndale High School (2009)
- **Chula Vista Elementary School District** (Chula Vista, CA): Lauderbach Elementary, Montgomery Elementary, Otay Elementary, Mueller Charter (2012)
- **Compton Unified School District** (Compton, CA–Los Angeles): Bursch Elementary (2009)
- **Cucamonga School District** (Rancho Cucamonga, CA–San Bernardino): Rancho Cucamonga Middle School (2007)
- **EJE Academies** (El Cajon, CA – San Diego): EJE Elementary Academy (2014 Gold Winner)
- **Glendale Unified School District** (Glendale, CA–Los Angeles): Horace Mann Elementary (2010), Columbus Elementary (2012)
- **KIPP Charter** (San Diego, CA): KIPP Adelante Academy (2009)
- **Long Beach Unified School District** (Long Beach, CA–Los Angeles): International Elementary (2010), Signal Hill Elementary (2008), Tucker Elementary (2008), Thomas Edison Elementary (2007)

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Kansas:

- **Wichita Public Schools** (Wichita, KS): Horace Mann Dual Language Magnet (2010)

Maryland:

- **Montgomery County Public Schools** (Silver Spring, MD): Highland Elementary School (2010)

Massachusetts:

- **Lawrence Public Schools** (Lawrence, MA): Community Day Charter Public School (2006)
- **Revere Public Schools** (Revere, MA): Revere High School (2014 Gold Winner)

Michigan:

- **Public Charter School** (Detroit, MI): Detroit Edison Public School Academy (2007)

Missouri:

- **Center School District** (Kansas City, MO): Boone Elementary (2013 Silver Winner)

New Jersey:

- **Newark Public Schools** (Newark, NJ): Branch Brook School (2010), Harriet Tubman Blue Ribbon School (2008)

New York:

- **Mt. Vernon Public Schools** (Mt. Vernon, NY-NYC): Cecil H. Parker Elementary School (2007)
- **NYC Dept. of Education** (Bronx, NY): Marble Hill High School of International Studies District 10 (2010)
- **Rochester City School District** (Rochester, NY): Dr. Charles T. Lunsford School #19 (2010), World of Inquiry Elementary (2009)

North Carolina:

- **Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District** (Charlotte, NC): Mallard Creek High School (2014 Silver Winner)
- **Durham School District** (Durham, NC): R.N. Harris Integrated Arts (2012)

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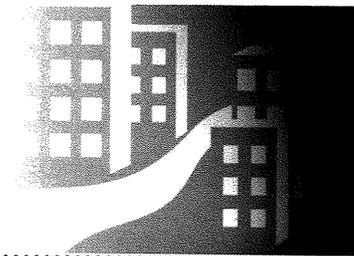
- **Houston Independent School District** (Houston, TX): Sylvan Rodriguez Elementary (2014 Bronze Winner), Park Place Elementary School (2014 Bronze Winner), George I. Sanchez Elementary (2014 Bronze Winner)
- **Pasadena Independent School District** (Houston, TX): Thompson Intermediate (2014 Bronze Winner)
- **Socorro Independent School District** (El Paso, TX): Escontrias Elementary (2010 and 2014 Bronze Winner)
- **Uplift Education Charter School Network** (Dallas, TX): Uplift Education Peak Prep (2012)
- **Ysleta Independent School District** (El Paso, TX): Eastwood Middle School (2013 Bronze Winner and 2014 Gold Winner)

Virginia:

- **Norfolk Public Schools** (Norfolk, VA): Dreamkeepers Academy at J.J. Roberts Elementary (2008)
- **Richmond Public Schools** (Richmond, VA): Thomas H. Henderson Middle School (2008), Ginter Park Elementary (2006)
- **Roanoke City Public Schools** (Roanoke, VA): Fallon Park Elementary (2009), Preston Park Elementary School (2014 Bronze Winner)



National Center for Urban School Transformation



2015 National Excellence in Urban Education Eligibility Criteria



The National Excellence in Urban Education Award (NEUE) is presented annually to the nation's highest performing urban schools. In May 2015, the National Center for Urban School Transformation (NCUST) will present this award to elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and alternative schools. In order to compete for a National Excellence in Urban Education Award, schools must meet or exceed the following criteria.

General Criteria

- 1. Urban Location:** The school must be located in a metropolitan area with 50,000 or more residents.
- 2. Non-Selective Admissions:** In general, the school may not require students to meet academic criteria in order to attain or retain admission. For example, a school that requires students to possess/maintain a certain test score or possess/maintain a minimum grade point average would not be eligible for consideration. Schools may house programs (e.g., programs for students identified as gifted or talented) that admit children from beyond the school's attendance area through selective admissions if fewer than 10 percent of the school's students are enrolled through selective admissions.
- 3. Low-Income Eligibility:** For elementary schools in which the highest grade is grade six or lower, at least 60% of the students enrolled (both in the prior and the current year) must have met eligibility criteria for free- or reduced-price lunch. For middle schools (grade nine or lower), at least 50% of the students must have met the same criteria. In high schools, at least 40% of the students must have met the same criteria.
- 4. High Rates of Academic Proficiency:** The school must be able to demonstrate that the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency on state assessments, in both 2013 and 2014, was higher than the average of all schools in the state (within the same grade span grouping). The school must have exceeded the state average in at least half of the subject areas/grade levels assessed in 2013 and 2014. **NOTE:** In states where rates of academic proficiency are not being tabulated in 2014 because of new assessments, NCUST will use 2012 and 2013 data to assess this criterion. This note applies to items 4 through 7.
- 5. High Rates of Academic Proficiency for Every Racial/Ethnic Group:** The school must indicate the percentage of students from each racial/ethnic group who achieved academic proficiency. The school may be eligible to compete only if, in at least two academic subjects, the percentage of students proficient in each racial/ethnic group exceeds the average of all schools in the state.

14. High Graduation Rates: Each high school must present the latest four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (as defined by the U.S. Department of Education). The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate must be at least 70% for every racial/ethnic group of students.

15. Number of Dropouts Recovered: Each school must present data regarding the number of dropouts they helped re-enter into school. As well, schools must present data indicating the success of recovered students in earning credits and graduating.

Criteria for Alternative Schools

Alternative school applicants must meet criteria one through three above. Regarding item two, alternative schools may be considered if they selectively enroll students who have experienced academic and behavioral difficulty in typical schools. Additionally, alternative schools must present data regarding all other criteria (four through 15); however, there are not minimal eligibility criteria associated with these criteria. Alternative schools will be reviewed and considered on a competitive basis.

Please check www.ncust.org for the new application, which will be available in July 2014.