



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Leading the Drive to Top 5!

Phone: (307) 777-5399

Email: tom.lacock@wyo.gov

Website: edu.wyoming.gov

FOR RELEASE- January 17, 2014

Visit edu.wyoming.gov/press for contact details

THREE WYOMING ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS RECEIVE NOMINATIONS AS BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS

Honored schools located in Sheridan, Powell, and Cody

CHEYENNE - Among the highest accolades for a school in the United States is the National Blue Ribbon Schools award. This year Glenn Livingston Elementary in Cody, Highland Park Elementary in Sheridan, and Southside Elementary in Powell were nominated for the Blue Ribbon Schools honor by the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE).

The United States Department of Education will announce its nationwide list of Blue Ribbon Schools in Sept. of 2014.

Founded in 1982, The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and non-public elementary, middle and high schools where students perform at very high levels or where students are making significant gains in academic achievement.

The program recognizes schools in one of two performance categories. The first category is "Exemplary High Performing," in which schools are recognized among their state's highest performing schools, as measured by state assessments or nationally-normed tests. The second category is "Exemplary Improving," in which schools that have at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds demonstrate the most progress in improving student achievement levels as measured by state assessments or nationally-normed tests.

Glenn Livingston, Highland Park, and Southside have all been nominated by the WDE in the category of Exemplary High Performing Schools. Only three schools per year in Wyoming receive this nomination. The schools will be contacted in the near future from the US Department of

Education and asked to complete an application for the program. The schools will need to attain the rating of “Exceeding Expectations,” in the school performance ratings used by the Wyoming Accountability in Education Act for the 2013-14 school year. If the school maintains these rankings, and completes the Blue Ribbon Schools application, they will be eligible for the award.

Tom Cook, Principal of Glenn Livingston Elementary, said his school was honored as a Blue Ribbon School in 2007 and his staff was elated to be nominated again.

“I attribute our success to the climate of our school and the focus on each and every student’s success,” Cook said. “I also believe the team work in our Professional Learning Community (PLC) groups has helped in our efforts to reach each child. We have a consistent approach to student behavior that focuses our time and efforts on teaching and learning.”

Highland Park Elementary Principal, Brent Leibach, said the nomination means that the work done to educate the complete child every day at Highland Park is being recognized. We simply focus all of our efforts on student learning. . . . nothing else matters. He attributed the success at Highland Park to the people who walk through the doors each day.

“This staff is simply the best I have ever worked with in my thirty-three years in the profession,” Leibach said. “They combine high quality instruction with a passion for each child. They refuse to let each other, their children, or their parents down. They hold themselves accountable for excellence, and through the PLC modes collaborate on best practices to insure the highest possible instructional delivery. They are a very special group of educators, who have become family.

Powell’s Southside Elementary School Principal Scott Schiller said the recognition serves as a confirmation to Southside’s staff, students, and parents that the school truly puts learning at the forefront and creates a special place for all students.

“Many changes have taken place over the years, but the most significant is the commitment our staff has made towards becoming an effective Professional Learning Communities,” Schiller said. “We take part in meaningful collaboration (horizontally and vertically), use our data on a daily basis to drive instruction, continually focus on student learning, provide focused and rigorous interventions, and celebrate student and staff success.”

Last year Wyoming’s three honorees were Coffeen Elementary in Sheridan, Jackson Hole High School and Lovell High School.

For more information on the Blue Ribbon Schools program, contact Dr. David Holbrook at 307-777-6260 or david.holbrook@wyo.gov. More information on the program is also available at: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/nclbbrs/index.html>.