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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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Alaska Names Two Schools as Distinguished Title I Schools

JUNEAU -- Two Rivers School in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District and Manokotak 'Nunaniq' School in the Southwest Region School District have been named National Title I Distinguished Schools by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Acting Commissioner Les Morse announced today.

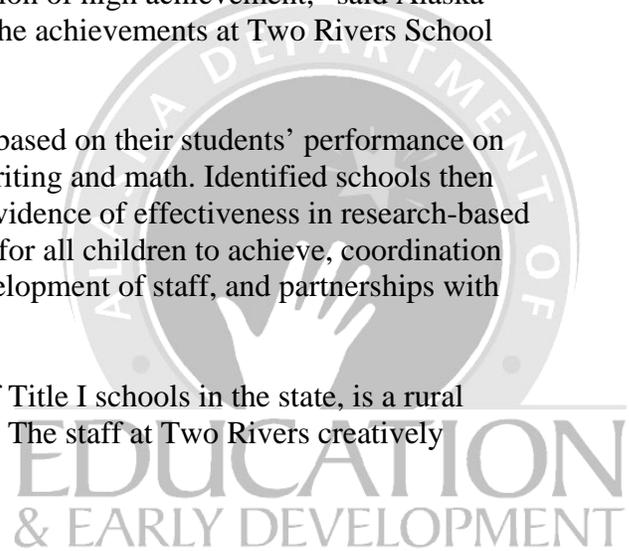
Two Rivers was recognized for exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years. Manokotak Nunaniq was recognized for significantly closing the achievement gap between student groups in the Alaska Native, economically disadvantaged, and limited English proficient categories.

Title I schools receive federal funds to support programs that supplement instruction to meet the educational needs of low-achieving students in high-poverty schools. The National Title I Distinguished Schools Program is a project of the National Title I Association. Selected schools must have a poverty rate of at least 35 percent and have met or exceeded state standards for making adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two or more consecutive years. Each state, using its own selection process, may select two schools for the honor.

"Alaska's Title I Distinguished Schools demonstrate that learning flourishes when communities, educators and students share a vision of high achievement," said Alaska Acting Education Commissioner Les Morse. "The achievements at Two Rivers School and Manokotak Nunaniq are inspiring."

Alaska identifies eligible schools for the award based on their students' performance on state standards-based assessments in reading, writing and math. Identified schools then must choose to apply for the honor, providing evidence of effectiveness in research-based instructional strategies, providing opportunities for all children to achieve, coordination of Title I with other programs, professional development of staff, and partnerships with parents, families and communities.

Two Rivers School, one of the top 10 percent of Title I schools in the state, is a rural school located thirty miles outside of Fairbanks. The staff at Two Rivers creatively



addresses the challenges inherent to being a Title I school by finding effective ways to identify and intervene with students achieving below or above grade level expectations. By utilizing research-based curricula and instructional strategies, fostering partnerships with other significant programs and community members, all Two Rivers students have the opportunity to achieve high aspirations and become well-rounded, high performing, productive citizens.

Manokotak ‘Nunaniq’ School has made significant gains in student achievement in the Alaska Native, economically disadvantaged and limited English proficient student groups and continues to strive for academic excellence. This success cannot be attributed to any single reason, but is a combination of several key factors including weekly collaborative staff meetings focusing on student data, and extended school day, job-embedded professional development for teachers, partnerships with local and regional organizations, and leadership with an academic focused vision that involves all stakeholders, including a strong student voice.

For more information about the National Title I Association Distinguished Schools program, see www.nationaltitleiassociation.org.

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