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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two Alaska Schools Named Blue Ribbon Schools

JUNEAU – Unalaska Junior/Senior High School in the Unalaska City School District and Chugach Optional Elementary School in the Anchorage School District have been named Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education. They are among just 255 public schools nationwide to receive the honor.

The Blue Ribbon program honors public and private schools that are academically superior or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement to high levels. Both Alaska recipients were honored for their high student performance.

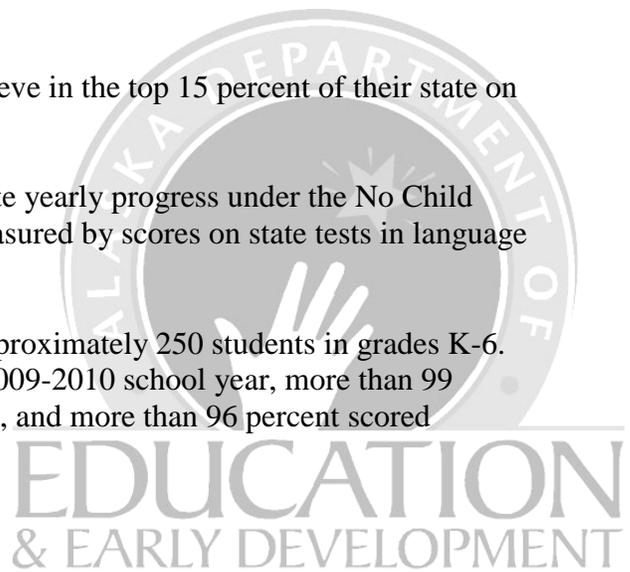
“National Blue Ribbon Schools are committed to accelerating student achievement and preparing students for success in college and careers. Their success is an example for others to follow,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan in a statement.

Public schools are selected for the Blue Ribbon award on one of two criteria:

- 1) at least 40 percent of their students are from disadvantaged backgrounds, the school shows great improvement, and it achieves in the top 40 percent of schools in the state on state tests; or
- 2) their students, regardless of background, achieve in the top 15 percent of their state on state tests.

Additionally, awardees must have made adequate yearly progress under the No Child Left Behind Act in 2009, 2010 and 2011, as measured by scores on state tests in language arts and math.

Chugach Optional Elementary School serves approximately 250 students in grades K-6. Of the 153 students tested in grades 3-6 in the 2009-2010 school year, more than 99 percent scored proficient or advanced in reading, and more than 96 percent scored proficient or advanced in math.



Unalaska Junior/Senior High School serves approximately 200 students in grades 7-12. Of the 139 students tested in grades 7-10 in the 2009-2010 school year, more than 94 percent scored proficient or advanced in reading, and nearly 85 percent scored proficient or advanced in math.

“These two fine schools, one rural and one urban, are inspiring in their excellence, which goes far beyond test scores,” said Alaska Education Commissioner Mike Hanley. “Their achievement represents the efforts of students, educators, parents and community members to forge schools where all students have the opportunity to reach their potential.”

The schools will be honored at an awards ceremony November 14-15 in Washington, D.C. For more information about Blue Ribbon Schools, see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/nclbbrs/index.html>.

School contacts: Unalaska Jr./Sr. HS, Principal Glenn Cole, 907-581-1222; Chugach Optional ES, Principal Anne Salzer, 907-742-3730.

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