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KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

West Homer Elementary named a 2012 National Blue Ribbon School

Soldotna, September 7, 2012—U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan recognizes West Homer Elementary School as a 2012 National Blue Ribbon School! Based on overall academic excellence or for making progress in improving student academic achievement levels, 269 schools are honored as a 2012 National Blue Ribbon School.

Speaking in Arlington, Virginia, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said, “Our nation has no greater responsibility than helping all children realize their full potential.... Schools honored with the National Blue Ribbon Schools award are committed to accelerating student achievement and preparing students for success in college and careers. Their work reflects the conviction that every child has promise and that education is the surest pathway to a strong, secure future.”

Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski extended her heartfelt congratulations to West Homer Elementary (WHE) principal Raymond Marshall and everyone in the WHE community. Marshall believes, “West Homer Elementary School works hard to provide every student with a well-rounded, world class education. We have an exceptional teaching staff with hard working students and parents who are dedicated to their children's success. Additionally, we receive great support from our community and students come to us from Paul Banks with a strong educational foundation that we can build upon.”

KPBSD superintendent, Dr. Steve Atwater, said, “I am thrilled to learn that West Homer Elementary is the recipient of a Blue Ribbon School award. This award is an excellent way to recognize the superb work of the West Homer staff with the students as well as the wonderful level of support for the school by the greater West Homer Elementary community.”

Principal Raymond Marshall and educator Shirlye Gribble will represent West Homer Elementary school in Washington, DC, when the Department of Education will honor approximately 219 public and 50 private schools at a recognition ceremony November 12-13, 2012.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools award honors public and private elementary, middle, and high schools where students perform at very high levels or where significant improvements are being made in students' levels of 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

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ANCHOR POINT COOPER LANDING HOMER HOPE KACHEMAK SELO KENAI MOOSE PASS NANWALEK NIKISKI NIKOLAEVSK NINILCHIK PORT
GRAHAM RAZDOLNA SELDOVIA SEWARD SOLDOTNA STERLING TUSTUMENA TYONEK VOZNESENKA

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progress in improving student achievement levels as measured by state assessments or nationally-normed tests. WHE is recognized as an “Exemplary High Performing” National Blue Ribbon School.

School board member Liz Downing reflected, “I am so proud of the students, teachers, staff, and families of West Homer Elementary School. It truly is a special place well deserving of this recognition!” and Sunni Hiltz, school board member commented, “Once again a South Peninsula school has joined others in the district in demonstrating the commitment to quality education that the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District strives to offer. West Homer has been recognized for the awesome school we have known and appreciated. Congratulations!”

In its thirty-year history, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has bestowed this coveted award on nearly 7,000 of America’s schools. Between 1982 and 2010, eight additional KPBSD schools have earned the National Blue Ribbon School recognition.

Links:

[2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools](#)

[September 7, 2012 U.S. Department of Education Press Release](#)

[National Blue Ribbon School Program](#)

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