1999

Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence Institute

Nova Southeastern University

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Winners' Words

"The National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence process was the most incredible school-improvement tool I have ever used. What a sensational feeling it was to be named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. With this award comes a feeling of pride that instills a work ethic to continue to be the best."

Katherine H. Howard, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent, Spartanburg District #7
National Blue Ribbon Principal
South Carolina Administrator of the Year 1998
National Distinguished Principal
Spartanburg, South Carolina

"The Blue Ribbon School application and review process has been by far the most thorough and helpful self-reflection/auditing tool for a school. I have ever come across as a principal. It is a 'win-win' opportunity."

Rocky Wallace
Caledburg Elementary School
National Blue Ribbon Principal
Caledburg, Kentucky

"Blue Ribbon Schools Program has elicited, through 'effective schools research,' an impressive body of educational practices which has led the way in identifying 'what works' and 'what doesn't work' in schools. Schools that are awarded Distinguished School, Blue Ribbon Recognition, have a rich curriculum and dynamic teaching practices."

James G. Toli, Ed.D., Superintendent,
Julian Union School District
National Blue Ribbon Review Panelist
Julian, California

"The Blue Ribbon process helped us better understand all the good things we were doing. It helped us develop a stronger sense of teamwork and collaboration. Whether we once again receive the official recognition or not, the Blue Ribbon process has helped us to stay focused on our goals, and to celebrate our accomplishments."

Edward Sternich
Beachwood Middle School
National Blue Ribbon Principal
Beachwood, Ohio

"The Blue Ribbon Schools Program has provided the perfect tool for teachers and school communities to reflect upon the teaching and learning that occurs in their school. With this opportunity comes the impetus to focus on what still needs to be done in order to further improve the quality of education delivered in your own unique environment."

Lynne D'Agostino, Ed.D
Mandshy Elementary School
National Blue Ribbon Principal
Walden, New York

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Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence Institute

The Blue Ribbon Schools award is one of the most prestigious academic honors in the United States.

- Adopt practical and proven programs that have worked in our nation's best schools
- Build a school of excellence by using ideas, concepts, and programs from National Blue Ribbon Schools
- Analyze all parts of your school and measure them against the best
- Move your school to the next level by using the National Blue Ribbon process

Nova Southeastern University admits students of any race, color, sex, age, non-discriminatory disability, religion or creed, or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school, and does not discriminate in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Nova Southeastern University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; telephone number: 404-657-4500) to award bachelor's, master's, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees.

How to become one of the most outstanding schools in the world by using the National Blue Ribbon Process

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Nova Southeastern University's Fischler Graduate School of Education and Human Services has established the Institute for Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence to drive an international school-improvement movement. This initiative uses practical programs, concepts, and ideas that have been successful. The National Blue Ribbon Process is a comprehensive approach that works for:

- Schools that have reached a high level of success and desire to fine-tune their programs to serve as national models
- Schools that plan to use the criteria from the Blue Ribbon Schools process as a comprehensive framework for identifying areas that need improvement
- Schools that have challenging demographics, and need a starting point and a climate of assessment, discussion, and problem solving
- Districts and states that desire to reenergize their school community, bringing a sense of pride, confidence, focus, and shared agendas for change and improvement.

Some features of the framework that produces a Blue Ribbon School:

- Safety
- Conflict resolution
- Technology
- Professional development
- Leadership
- Business involvement
- Fine arts
- Parent involvement
- School to career
- Team-building concepts
- Peer mediation
- Many additional programs

The Institute for Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence is a service of the Fischler Graduate School of Education and Human Services of Nova Southeastern University.

The Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence Program promotes and supports the improvement of education in America by:

- Identifying and recognizing schools that are models of excellence and equity, schools that demonstrate a strong commitment to educational excellence for all students
- Making research-based, self-assessment criteria available to schools looking for a way to reflect on how they are doing
- Encouraging schools, both within and among themselves, to share information about best practices based on the standards that demonstrate educational success

Since 1982 the U.S. Department of Education has celebrated many of America's most successful schools. A Blue Ribbon flag waving overhead has become a trademark of excellence, a symbol of quality recognized by everyone from parents to policymakers in thousands of communities.

The emerging secret of the Blue Ribbon Schools Program is its power to stimulate and focus school-improvement initiatives. "The Blue Ribbon nomination package pulls together what is cutting-edge in education today," said one educator. "The school that goes through the process is examining itself in terms of what works in the best schools in the country."

"Regardless of the direction you're going in school improvement, the Blue Ribbon Program gives you a vehicle to get on track," said one principal. "It gives you a framework and standard, so you know where you stand." The process allows them to reflect, "not just on the surface level, but down deep." One educator said, "If you want a tool for school improvement, there's nothing out there better than the Blue Ribbon Schools Program. It's the best you can find."