



## Maryland State Department of Education Blue Ribbon School Program

Revised: April 2015

<p><b>What is the Blue Ribbon Schools Program?</b></p>	<p>The Blue Ribbon Schools Program is a national and state program that recognizes and honors elementary, middle, and high schools that exhibit high performance and/ or significant improvement in student achievement. Reducing the achievement gap for disadvantaged students is also a criterion. Up to six Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools are identified each year by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). These schools become Maryland honorees and win numerous gifts and prizes. They are recommended to the US Department of Education for National Blue Ribbon Awards and if selected are honored in Washington DC by the US Secretary of Education.</p> <p><i>Schools cannot apply for the National Blue Ribbon School Program until they have been selected by MSDE based on the categories below.</i></p>
<p><b>What are the selection criteria?*</b></p>	<p><u><i>Exemplary High Performing Schools</i></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The performance for all students in reading and math must be in the Top 15 percent of all schools in the state in the most recent year tested.</li> <li>2. The performance of students in both reading and math in each subgroup must be in the top 40 percent of all schools in the state in the most recent year tested based on the performance of their own subgroup at the state level.</li> <li>3. The graduation rate of nominated high schools must be within the top 15 percent of all high schools in the state.</li> </ol> <p><u><i>In Addition</i></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. The school must have met all AMO's in School Progress for "all students" and all subgroups for the past two consecutive years and must do the same for the year in which they are nominated.</li> <li>B. The school must have at least 100 students enrolled. Also, nominated schools must have assessment data for at least 10 students in each tested grade for both reading and mathematics.</li> <li>C. The school must have been in existence for five full years and tested grades must have been part of the school for at least the past three years.</li> <li>D. The nominated school should not have received the Maryland or National Blue Ribbon Schools awards in at least the past five years.</li> </ol> <p>**Two of the six schools submitted for National Blue Ribbon Awards must represent disadvantaged students – either economic or language related.</p>

For more information, call 410.767.0370 (Baltimore area) or 1.888.246.0016 (toll free) or visit our website at [MarylandPublicSchools.org](http://MarylandPublicSchools.org)

Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201

<b>What is the application process?</b>	Each year MSDE selects six Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools which are designated as Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools. These schools then receive an invitation from the U.S. Secretary of Education to apply for the National Blue Ribbon Schools Award. At that time, each school must complete a National Blue Ribbon School Application.
<b>What do Blue Ribbon Schools receive?</b>	<p>A Blue Ribbon School is recognized as a high achieving school in Maryland and in the nation. This recognition brings significant prestige to the school, the community and the state. Winning schools receive numerous prizes and honors.</p> <p>Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools are commended by the Maryland State Department of Education and the General Assembly at a dinner in Annapolis followed by a General Assembly tribute. Winners receive a Governor’s Proclamation, State Department of Education citation, General Assembly honors, and Maryland Blue Ribbon Flag of Excellence. Each school is visited by the State Superintendent of Schools and other dignitaries. Monetary prizes are typically awarded to each school by MSDE and its corporate sponsors.</p> <p>Substantial gifts and prizes are also donated to each Maryland Blue Ribbon school. For example, Smart Technologies donates to each school a “Smart Board and other technology”.</p> <p>National Blue Ribbon School winners attend a two-day conference in Washington, D.C. hosted by the U.S. Secretary of Education. They receive the National Blue Ribbon flag and an inscribed plaque.</p>
<b>How many schools can be selected?</b>	Up to six Maryland schools can be identified as Blue Ribbon Schools by the Maryland State Department of Education. At least two of these schools must represent high numbers of disadvantaged students.

**The Maryland State Department of Education administers this program with support from the following corporations:**

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