



NJDOE News

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DOE Names 2008 New Jersey Title I Distinguished Schools

Elementary schools in Phillipsburg and East Orange have been honored as New Jersey's National Title I Distinguished Schools, Education Commissioner Lucille E. Davy announced today.

Green Street Elementary School, a grade 3-5 school in Phillipsburg, was selected as a Title I school that has significantly closed the achievement gap between student subgroups.

Dionne Warwick Institute, a preK-5 school in East Orange, was selected as a Title I school that has exceeded adequate yearly progress for two or more years.

"This is a tremendous honor for these schools and an acknowledgement of years of hard work by everyone involved with the school," said Commissioner Davy. "They are proving that when schools focus on the way they do things, all children can achieve success. We commend these committed and dedicated school leaders, teachers, parents, and students."

The Title I Distinguished Schools Program is sponsored annually by the National Association of State Title I Directors. Each state nominates two schools based on the following criteria:

- A minimum school poverty rate of 35%
- Student achievement data demonstrating a high level of success
- *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* adequate yearly progress targets met or exceeded for two consecutive years

Under New Jersey's nomination process, eligible schools are first identified through an analysis of their recent state test data. Each school is then evaluated based on its demographics, academic and extracurricular programs and history of student achievement.

DOE personnel conduct site visits at the schools to determine their overall effectiveness in curriculum and instruction, professional development, partnerships with families and other members of the community, and other factors contributing to their extraordinary student success.

Dionne Warwick Institute, a school at which 85 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced cost lunch, has made AYP in five of the last six years.

"The things that most impressed us there during our site visit were the high level of parental and community involvement in the school and the exceptional professional development opportunities provided to the teachers," said DOE Title I Director Suzanne Ochse. "They are clearly working to address the needs of the whole child, not just the academic aspects, and they are not afraid to try new things."

At Green Street, the scores of children in a number of subgroups - including Hispanic students, special education students and economically disadvantaged students - have improved over the past few years and the achievement gap among the subgroups has narrowed considerably.

"Green Street has a very diverse student population," Ochse said. "It's very clear that the teachers and the administrators are working together across grades and across the curriculum to make sure all the children are making progress."

Green Street Elementary School and Dionne Warwick Institute, along with the schools nominated from the other states, will be formally honored at the National Title I Conference in San Antonio, Texas, in February. They were also recognized at the New Jersey DOE's *NCLB* conference on January 22.

The principals of the two schools - John Finkin at Green Street and Gloria Watson at Dionne Warwick Institute -

will each receive an award of \$1,000 to be used in continuing the school's academic achievement efforts. Each school will also receive funds for staff to participate in the conference in San Antonio.

For more information, please contact the Department of Education's Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126.