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**Contact:** Charles B. Pyle, Director of Communications, (804) 371-2420

## Twelve Virginia Schools Earn National Blue Ribbon Honors

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced today that seven Virginia public schools and five private schools were named 2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools. The [Blue Ribbon Schools Program](#) honors public and private K-12 schools that are either academically superior or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement.

The public schools being recognized as National Blue Ribbon Schools are as follows:

- Central High in Shenandoah County
- Cosby High in Chesterfield County
- Crystal Spring Elementary in Roanoke
- Great Neck Middle in Virginia Beach
- Patrick Henry Elementary in Arlington County
- Riverheads High in Augusta County
- Snow Creek Elementary in Franklin County

“These schools serve very different communities but share a commitment to challenging every student to do his or her best,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Steven R. Staples said.

Six of the seven public 2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools earned awards earlier this year through the Virginia Index of Performance program. Crystal Spring Elementary earned the Governor’s Award for Educational Excellence; Cosby High and Great Neck Middle earned the Board of Education Excellence Award; and Patrick Henry Elementary, Riverheads High and Snow Creek Elementary earned the Board of Education Distinguished Achievement Award.

The Council for American Private Education nominates private schools for Blue Ribbon awards each year. The following five Virginia private schools were designated as National Blue Ribbon Schools:

- Christ the King Catholic School in Norfolk
- Immanuel Christian School in Springfield
- Our Lady of Hope Catholic School in Potomac Falls
- St. Mark Catholic School in Vienna
- Trinity Lutheran School in Newport News

The National Blue Ribbon Schools are selected based on one of two criteria: performance on state assessments, or in the case of private schools, performance on national standardized tests and high school graduation rates; or performance in closing achievement gaps between a school’s subgroups and all students over the past five years while increasing graduation rates for each subgroup.

The U.S. Department of Education will honor all of the nation’s 2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools during a conference and awards ceremony November 9-10 in Washington, DC.

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