

The Louisiana Department of Education nominated six public schools to receive the 2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Award. The [National Blue Ribbon Schools Program](#), which is managed by the U.S. Department of Education, honors schools that are either high-performing or have closed achievement gaps, especially among minority or disadvantaged students. Winners will be announced in September 2019.

School leaders were thrilled to learn the news of their nomination. Below is a collection of their responses.

- **Karla H. Russo, Principal of Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies in Jefferson Parish:** “We are honored to be nominated as a potential National Blue Ribbon School. Our faculty, staff, students, parents, and community work together to create an environment that fosters student achievement and success, and I am proud to see their dedication and commitment to learning recognized.”
- **Alexander Melton, Principal of Early College Academy in Lafayette Parish:** “Early College Academy is honored and excited to be the recipient of a Blue Ribbon School nomination. To be mentioned in the same category as the other fine Louisiana schools who have been nominated is humbling for us. All of our stakeholders, especially our students, faculty, and staff, work hard to achieve the best results possible. We are both proud and excited to be recognized for that hard work.”
- **Jaime Zapico, Principal of Patrick F. Taylor Science and Technology Academy in Jefferson Parish:** “This nomination is not only a huge honor but also a testament to the hard work my students and my teachers do on a daily basis. They constantly strive for excellence and have such a strong work ethic. I am so proud of my Taylor Tigers!”
- **Andrew Vincent, Principal of Thomas Jefferson High School for Advanced Studies in Jefferson Parish:** “The Thomas Jefferson High School community is thrilled to be nominated for this prestigious distinction. We are proud of our students, staff, teachers, families, and community members that have continually ensured our success as a school. Thomas Jefferson High School would be honored to be recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School.”
- **Melynda Rodrigue, Principal of Bayou Black Elementary in Terrebonne Parish:** “Bayou Black Elementary (BBE) students and staff were informed to wear blue in preparation for a special announcement at an assembly. They walked a ‘blue carpet’ and were treated to blue cookies. All stakeholders were very excited to hear that BBE is one of six schools in the state receiving this nomination.”
- **Andrea Pitonyak-Delcambre, Principal of St. Charles Elementary in Lafourche Parish:** “We at St. Charles Elementary School are honored to be nominated as a National Blue Ribbon School. We have a culture of high expectations and our staff, students, parents and community are committed to excellence. We are thankful to be recognized for the extraordinary growth that our students have demonstrated.”