



## SAINT GABRIEL SCHOOL

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September 15, 2011

An important message to students, parents, parishioners, and friends of Saint Gabriel School:

Today we received great news! The U.S. Department of Education has named Saint Gabriel School as a 2011 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. This prestigious award puts Saint Gabriel School in a select group of 49 private and 255 public schools across the nation that have been so recognized.

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle, and high schools that are either high performing or have improved student achievement to high levels, especially among disadvantaged students. The program is part of a larger Department of Education effort to identify and disseminate knowledge about best school leadership and teaching practices. Each year since 1982, the U.S. Department of Education has sought out schools where students attain and maintain high academic goals, including those that beat the odds ([www.ed.gov/nationalblueribbonschools](http://www.ed.gov/nationalblueribbonschools)). Saint Gabriel School is recognized because all of our grades (3-7) tested using the standardized IOWA Test of Basic Skills for the 2009-10 school year ranked in the top 15% of schools in the nation in Reading and Math.

Those of us closely associated with Saint Gabriel School have always been aware of its academic excellence, but it is gratifying to have its merits recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. On November 14-15, Mrs. Andrea Mazzola (Grade 4 Teacher) and I will be traveling to Washington, D.C. to take part in the award ceremonies. Throughout the year, we will be celebrating this great achievement within our school and parish community as well. To begin the celebrating, tomorrow will be a dress down day for students and staff. Also tomorrow, each student and staff member will receive a blue ribbon pin to wear in commemoration. These pins will be used throughout the year at future gatherings, ceremonies and celebrations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who made this award possible: our dedicated teachers and staff; our hard-working students; and you, the supportive parents who have entrusted your children to our care. We recognize that Catholic education is a partnership of home, school and parish. Therefore I am grateful for the support given by our pastor, Father Richard Neumann, and by the entire Saint Gabriel Parish community. I hope everyone will join us as we celebrate this great accomplishment.

Sincerely,

*Patricia Martin*

Patricia Martin  
Principal

