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### **Ira Rupley Elementary School Recognized as Blue Ribbon School**

Tuesday U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced 314 schools as 2009 National Blue Ribbon Schools. Ira Rupley Elementary School in Elk Grove Village was among this prestigious group, one of only six elementary schools in the State of Illinois to receive this honor.

The ***No Child Left Behind—Blue Ribbon Schools Program*** honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools that are either academically superior, or have made dramatic gains in student achievement and helped close gaps in achievement among minority and disadvantaged students. Each year since 1982, the U.S. Department of Education has sought out schools where students attain and maintain high academic goals. Using standards of excellence, as evidenced by student achievement measures and the characteristics known from research to exemplify school quality, the Department celebrates schools, including those that beat the odds.

“These Blue Ribbon Schools have shown that all children can learn with appropriate supports,” Duncan said. “They are producing outstanding results for their students. Some have shown dramatic improvements in places where students are overcoming the challenges of poverty, and others serve as examples of consistent excellence that can be a

resource for other schools. They are places where improved teaching and learning benefits every student, and where students are challenged to meet high expectations with the active support of teachers, parents and the community.”

Ira Rupley School meets eligibility requirements for the Blue Ribbon School Program by having at least 40 percent of its students from disadvantaged backgrounds and by dramatically improving student performance to high levels on state or nationally-normed tests.

“One of Rupley School’s core values is ‘students come first’, said Rupley Principal Karen Osmanski. “This is demonstrated in practice by meeting the academic, social and emotional needs of all learners. This Blue Ribbon recognition is a celebration of how focused our students and staff are on learning.”

Under No Child Left Behind, schools must make Adequate Yearly Progress, or AYP, in reading and mathematics. Each state -- not the federal government -- sets its own academic standards and benchmark goals, because each state knows best what goals and criteria are most appropriate for its school districts.

The 2009 No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools will be honored at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. on November 3, 2009.

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