



East Baton Rouge Parish School System
1050 S. Foster Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70806
Phone (225) 922-5400 FAX (225) 226-7900
www.ebrschools.org

MEDIA CONTACT:
Sonya T. Gordon, APR
Public Information Officer,
Department for
Communications &
Community Engagement
(225) 922-5611 office
(225) 328-4763 cell
sgordon@ebrschools.org

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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****3 PHOTOS ATTACHED****

Schools Celebrate Their Blue Ribbon Awards With Song, Dance

Baton Rouge, La. – Two schools in the East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS), out of only six in the state, won national Blue Ribbon Schools awards this year. And their official celebrations got underway Thursday, November 20, with singing, dancing and much more.

Representatives from the US Department of Education were in Baton Rouge to recognize **Forest Heights and Westdale Heights elementary schools** for their accomplishments as 2008 Blue Ribbon Schools. In the past 23 years, only 11 area schools have been named a Blue Ribbon School, and seven of those were from the EBRPSS.

Special guests and speakers at both school ceremonies included: Tracy D. Young, deputy regional representative for US Department of Education Secretary Margaret Spellings; Patrice A. Saucier, division director of the Professional Development Office of Louisiana State Superintendent of Education; Charlotte D. Placide, superintendent of EBRPSS; and Jerry Arbour, president of the EBRPSS School Board.

In addition, **Louisiana First Lady Supriya Jindal** (*first photo with Principal Myra Varmall*) and **Board member Vereta Lee** spoke at **Westdale Heights Academic Magnet School's ceremony**, which included performances by the school's Dance Ensemble, Honor Band and Choir and by the Glen Oaks High School Band. **Each student also released a blue balloon** into the sky at the end of the celebration (*second photo*).

The Westdale Heights Academic Magnet School's ceremony (*third photo with Principal Cheryl Singer and Superintendent Placide in back, at right*) featured a special performance by teacher Joy Hammatt's kindergarten class and the WHAM Whiz Kids.

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