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Three Bellevue Schools Named “Schools of Distinction” *Schools among the top five percent of highest improvement schools in the state*

Three schools in the Bellevue School District have been honored with a 2011 “School of Distinction” Award. Enatai Elementary, Spiritridge Elementary and Interlake High School have been recognized for outstanding improvement in student achievement. The award is presented by The Center for Educational Effectiveness (CEE), the Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD) and several partner organizations across Washington State.

School of Distinction award recipients have demonstrated the most improvement in reading and math over the last five years. Only the top five percent of highest improving schools in the state receive the award. Students at the winning schools must perform at or above the state median for their grade level. This year’s assessment included scores from the Measure of Student Progress (MPE) and High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) given last spring.

“This award reflects the extraordinary dedication and hard work of our teachers, students and their families, as well as their commitment to learning and success,” says Bellevue Superintendent Dr. Amalia Cudeiro. “The Bellevue School District is committed to making sure every child succeeds. The School of Distinction winners set an impressive standard of achievement, here in Bellevue and across the state.”

Spiritridge Elementary Principal Alexa Allman says staff at the award-winning school focus on pre-assessing students and providing instruction where needed. “Data drives the instruction at Spiritridge so that we are strategic and intentional about the work we do with kids,” says Allman. “If students need the support, teachers will provide additional scaffolding and practice. For students who have already demonstrated knowledge and skill, teachers are providing extra challenge.” Allman also credits the involvement of the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA), which provides daily support for students.

At Enatai Elementary, there has been a building-wide focus on reading comprehension. Principal Audrey Meyers also credits the implementation of a Response to Intervention program and Professional Learning Communities. “Response to Intervention utilizes individual student data to develop small group learning experiences targeted to students’ specific needs. Teachers work together in professional learning teams to assess their students and then analyze the data to determine their next instructional steps,” says Meyers.

Interlake High School is a repeat winner, having also received the School of Distinction award in 2010. Interlake has a nationwide reputation for success. It is consistently ranked one of the best high schools in the nation.

The 2011 School of Distinction award winners will be recognized at an upcoming award ceremony hosted by the Puget Sound Educational Service District.

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