

St. Bernadette School
266 Main St., Northborough, MA 01532
www.stb-school.org

FOR RELEASE:

Sept. 30, 2014

CONTACT:

Melissa Kane, Director of Advancement, St. Bernadette School
(508) 351-9905 or mkane@stb-school.org

**ST. BERNADETTE SCHOOL RECEIVES NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON HONOR FROM
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: One of Only 50 Non-Public Schools in the United States**

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan today recognized St. Bernadette School in Northborough, MA as a 2014 National Blue Ribbon School. Nationally, 337 schools were recognized as National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2014 based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. St. Bernadette School is one of only 50 Non-Public schools in the Nation and the only Non-Public school in all of New England to receive this honor and was recognized as an “Exemplary High Performing School.”

“The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has long declared that all Catholic Schools must be schools of excellence. Bishop Robert J. McManus of the Worcester Diocese, has supported all Catholic schools in their efforts to provide a rigorous academic program grounded in faith values. St. Bernadette School is honored to have been named a 2014 National Blue Ribbon School and recognizes that we share this distinction with our 500 colleagues and school families of nearly 7,000 students enrolled in Catholic schools throughout the Diocese.” said Deborah O’Neil, M.Ed., Principal of St. Bernadette School.

Secretary Duncan made this announcement live via the Department's USTREAM channel <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/education-department> at 1:30 pm, viewed by recognized principals, teachers, and students assembled across the country. The Department will honor 287 public and 50 private schools at a recognition ceremony on Nov. 10-11 in Washington, D.C.

“These great schools are fulfilling the promise of American education—that all students, no matter their name or zip code, can flourish when schools provide safe, creative, and challenging learning environments,” Secretary Duncan said. “National Blue Ribbon Schools are models of consistent excellence and a resource for other schools and districts. We celebrate them for their tireless effort and boundless creativity in reaching and teaching every student.”

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle, and high schools where students either achieve very high learning standards or are making notable improvements in closing the achievement gap.

All schools are recognized in one of two performance categories, based on all student scores, subgroup student scores and graduation rates:

- Exemplary High Performing Schools are among their state's highest performing schools as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests. Student subgroup performance and high school graduation rates are also at the highest levels.
- Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools are among their state's highest performing schools in closing achievement gaps between a school's subgroups and all students over the past five years. Student subgroup performance and high school graduation rates for each subgroup are at high levels.

Specifically, for the 2013-2014 award year, the Department strengthened the focus of both categories' performance criteria around subgroups within a school and improving graduation rates for all students.

St. Bernadette School, a Roman Catholic elementary and middle school located in Northborough, Massachusetts, was established in 1997 by the Diocese of Worcester. The school is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. St. Bernadette School serves girls and boys in Pre-K3 through Grade 8 and offers a rigorous academic program to a diverse student body of 470 students, which includes many international students. Limited class size and a talented and dedicated faculty enable the School to maintain consistently high standards for all students while ensuring individual attention.

The mission of St. Bernadette School is deeply rooted in firm Catholic beliefs and traditions. We are committed to providing a high-quality education that develops the intellect, inspires the spirit, and guides students to do what is right and just. In partnership with the Church and family, we encourage our students to exemplify Christian values and to become life-long learners.

St. Bernadette School is proud of the high level of commitment shown by its faculty and students to its mission and are honored to be recognized on a national level.

The Department of Education invites National Blue Ribbon School nominations from the top education official in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Department of Defense Education Activity and the Bureau of Indian Education. The Council for American Private Education (CAPE) nominates private schools. A total of 420 schools nationwide may be nominated, with allocations determined by the numbers of K-12 students and schools in each jurisdiction. The U.S. Secretary of Education invites nominated schools to submit an application for possible recognition as a National Blue Ribbon School.

NOTE TO EDITORS: Photographs and brief descriptions of the 2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools are available at <http://www.ed.gov/nationalblueribbonschools>

###