

Title I Distinguished School Award

INDIANAPOLIS – The Indiana Department of Education announced two, Title I award grants for Indiana schools today. Francis W. Parker School 56 in Indianapolis Public Schools was honored as a National Title I Distinguished School for Exceptional Student Performance for a Title I school. Additionally, Valley Grove Elementary in Anderson Community School Corporation was honored as a National Title I Distinguished School for Closing the Achievement Gap.

As a result of their efforts, both schools will be honored as invited presenters at future Indiana Department of Education events. They will also be invited to attend and be recognized at the National Title I Conference in Houston, Texas on January 28-31st, 2016.

The National Title I Association has been selecting examples of superior Title I school programs for national recognition through the National Title I Distinguished Schools program since 1996.

Selected schools must qualify for one of the following categories:

Category 1: Exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years

Category 2: Closing the achievement gap between student groups

Eligible schools have been identified based on a review of the following criteria:

- Student Achievement Data and School Letter Grade (2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014)
- Data analysis of subgroup data from 2013-2014—have met all subgroup data or only missing one
- Growth over all from year to year in “All” subgroup category
- Poverty data of 80% or higher
- Diversity of student population
- In-depth interview discussion including: programs and services that led to school’s growth and achievement, monitoring student progress, PD focus, PD implementation and fidelity, opportunities for collaboration, and family and community engagement

Schools identified have gone through the following process:

- Participated in a 30 minute phone interview with specialists from the Early Learning and Intervention, Title I Office (Principal)
- Agreed to complete a participation form and a 500 word school program description
- Outreach and Grants Management have provided insight of school/district
- Awarded schools will receive an onsite visit

Through the selection process, five schools made the final round:

Exceptional Student Performance Nominees:

- Scipio Elementary School in Jennings County Schools
- Riley Elementary School in LaPorte Community School Corporation
- Francis W. Parker School 56 in Indianapolis Public Schools

Growth and Closing the Achievement Gap Nominees:

- Valley Grove Elementary in Anderson Community School Corporation
- Paramount School of Excellence Inc.

Exceptional Student Performance Winner:

Francis W Parker School 56 in Indianapolis Public Schools

- Principal: Christine Rembert (317)-266-4256
- Superintendent: Dr. Lewis Ferebee (317) 226-4411
- Francis W. Parker 56 is a Montessori school that continues to demonstrate success around student-choice. This diverse school has maintained high achievement over the past three years and has met all NCLB subgroup data in SY 13-14 with a school poverty level of 87%. The school provides students with wrap around services through; behavior services, mental health group supports, parent involvement coordinator, a school worker, and every student has been paired with a mentor. It is known working at a high poverty school that often teachers need support and encouragement as well as students. Francis W. Parker nurtures their staff as well meeting their needs they have throughout the year to make them happy and healthy educators to their students. Teachers work collaboratively through job-embedded professional developments and data meetings to help support students direct their own education. The staff that works at Francis W. Parker wants to be there. They feel supported by their leaders and the community. The school has a motto statement with volunteering, "Everyone gives treasure, time, or talent". Through this philosophy the school has several community partnerships through; IUPUI, , food pantry, Community Council, ReadUp, Young Men's Leadership Development, Matrindale-Brightwood Neighborhood Association, Young Audiences, and PTA.

Growth and Closing the Achievement Gap Winner

o **Valley Grove Elementary School in Anderson Community School Corporation**

- o Principal: Jan Koeniger (765) 378-3393
- o Superintendent: Terry Thompson (765)-641-2027
- o As a high poverty school of 80%, Valley Grove Elementary has continued to show growth with their student achievement. The Eight Step process is a strong initiative at the school since 2010, where data is reviewed daily and weekly. This process has helped focus the school on college and career readiness. The attitude the school has is a strong front. They realize whatever new obstacle is thrown their way as a united school they can succeed. Staff is trained through job-embedded and intentional professional development. Teachers are having walkthroughs by their principal and constant feedback is given on their instruction. The school is involved with the community through local churches, and a Coca-Cola partnership. Families are engaged with Valley Grove through constant communication through social media, newsletters, Family Literacy Nights, Math Nights, and meetings on preparing parents to help educate students at home.