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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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Alaska Names Title I Distinguished Schools

JUNEAU -- Haines Elementary School in the Haines Borough School District and Delta Elementary School in Delta/Greely School District have been named National Title I Distinguished Schools by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Commissioner Mike Hanley announced today.

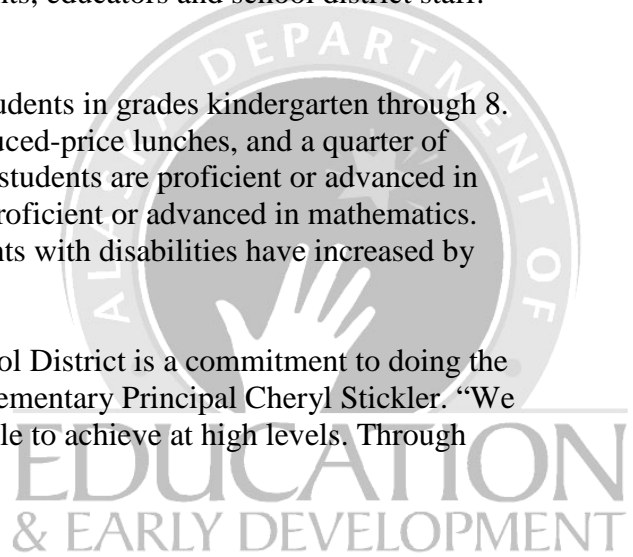
Delta Elementary was recognized for exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years. Haines Elementary was recognized for significantly closing the achievement gap between student groups.

Title I schools receive federal funds to support programs that supplement instruction to meet the educational needs of low-achieving students in high-poverty schools. The National Title I Distinguished Schools Program is a project of the National Title I Association. Selected schools must have a poverty rate of at least 35 percent and have met or exceeded state standards for making adequate yearly progress for two or more consecutive years. Each state, using its own selection process, may select two schools for the honor.

"These two distinguished schools demonstrate the power of communities to provide all students the opportunity for a good education," said Commissioner Hanley. "The awards recognize the dedicated efforts of students, parents, educators and school district staff. Their achievements are an inspiration."

Haines Elementary serves approximately 180 students in grades kindergarten through 8. About half of its students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, and a quarter of students are Native. More than 90 percent of its students are proficient or advanced in reading and writing, and nearly 85 percent are proficient or advanced in mathematics. Over the past two years, the test scores of students with disabilities have increased by approximately 30 percent.

"Our guiding focus in the Haines Borough School District is a commitment to doing the right work for the right reasons," said Haines Elementary Principal Cheryl Stickler. "We are committed to the belief that every child is able to achieve at high levels. Through



community involvement, district leadership, passionate teachers, and student desire, our children are achieving and maintaining standards of excellence. We are very proud of our community, our students, our families, and our school.”

Delta Elementary serves approximately 270 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 3. More than half of its students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, nearly a third of students are English language learners, and a fifth experience disabilities. In the 3rd-grade state assessments, each of these groups consistently makes adequate yearly progress. Overall, 93 percent of its 3rd-graders scored proficient or advanced in reading, 91 percent in writing, and 89 percent in mathematics.

“Delta Elementary is a very successful school due to the dedication of the staff and the commitment to education shown in our wonderful community,” said Principal Michelle Beito.

Alaska identifies eligible schools for the award based on their students’ performance on state standards-based assessments in reading, writing and math. Identified schools then must choose to apply for the honor, providing evidence of effectiveness in research-based instructional strategies, opportunities for all children to achieve, coordination of Title I with other programs, professional development of staff, and partnerships with parents, families and communities.

For more information about the National Title I Association Distinguished Schools program, see www.nationaltitleiassociation.org.

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