

**Mike Hanley**  
Commissioner

P.O. Box 110500  
Juneau, AK 99811-0500  
education.alaska.gov

SEAL OF THE STATE OF ALASKA  
**STATE OF ALASKA**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT**

**Eric Fry**  
Information Officer

907.465.2851  
cell: 907.321.5564  
eric.fry@alaska.gov

## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Dec. 11, 2013**

### **Mentasta Lake Katie John School Named a National Title I Distinguished School**

JUNEAU – Mentasta Lake Katie John School in the Alaska Gateway School District has been named a National Title I Distinguished School by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Commissioner Mike Hanley announced today. Mentasta Lake was recognized for high progress in student achievement.

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 been recognized by the state as a Reward School in either the highest-performing category or the high-progress category.

“This distinguished school demonstrates the power of communities to provide all students the opportunity for a good education,” said Commissioner Hanley. “The award recognizes the dedicated efforts of students, parents, educators and school district staff. Their achievements are an inspiration.”

Mentasta Lake, in the heart of the Alaska Range, has a population of about 150 residents. The school’s three teachers serve about 30 students, all Alaska Native and all eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. The principal and staff have focused on engaging the community and celebrating student success.

Each week the staff meets to discuss student learning, student data, and effective instructional strategies. The school district’s instructional coach visits Mentasta Lake each week to model instruction and be a resource to the teachers. The school follows research-based curriculum in reading, writing, and math, and provides instruction differentiated to each student’s needs.

Alaska identifies eligible schools as Reward Schools based on their students’ performance on state standards-based assessments in reading, writing and math. Title I

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schools identified as Reward Schools then must choose to apply for the honor of being a Distinguished School, 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](http://www.nationaltitleiassociation.org).

Mentasta Lake Katie John Principal Craig Roach, 907-505-5282

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