

Mike Hanley
Commissioner

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



Eric Fry
Information Officer
907.465.2851
cell: 907.321.5564
eric.fry@alaska.gov

Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dec. 16, 2014

Two Alaska Schools Named National Title I Distinguished Schools

JUNEAU -- Salcha Elementary School in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District and Beryozova School in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District have been named National Title I Distinguished Schools by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Commissioner Mike Hanley announced today.

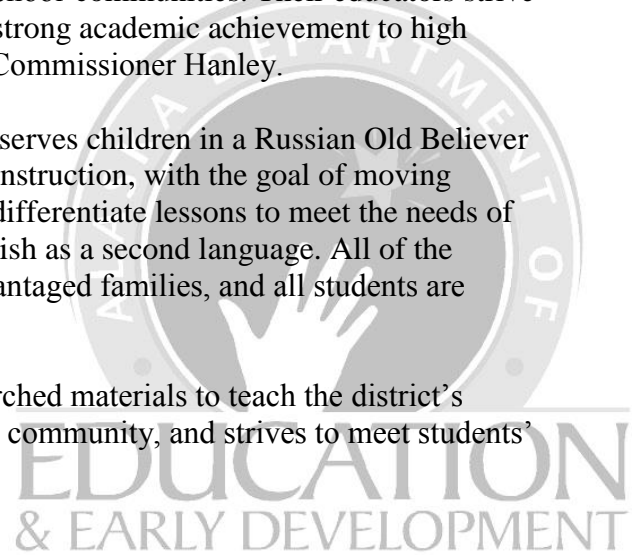
Beryozova School was recognized for exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years. Salcha Elementary was recognized for significantly closing the achievement gap between student groups.

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 been recognized by the state as a reward school in either the highest performing category or the highest progress category. Each state, using its own selection process, may select one school in each category for the honor.

"I am pleased to recognize the efforts of these school-communities. Their educators strive to serve all of their students, who respond with strong academic achievement to high expectations from educators and parents," said Commissioner Hanley.

Beryozova School, in a two-room schoolhouse, serves children in a Russian Old Believer community near Willow. Teachers use explicit instruction, with the goal of moving students toward independent learning, but they differentiate lessons to meet the needs of each student. All Beryozova students learn English as a second language. All of the school's students are from economically disadvantaged families, and all students are proficient or advanced on state assessments.

Salcha Elementary uses brain science and researched materials to teach the district's curriculum. The school involves parents and the community, and strives to meet students'



physical and emotional needs, so that learning can flourish. Salcha Elementary provides immediate help to students who are struggling with a lesson. Under the Alaska School Performance Index -- which takes into account academic achievement, growth, and attendance -- Salcha is a five-star school, the highest ranking.

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.

Beryozova Principal Carl Chamblee, 907-746-9247
Salcha Elementary Principal Tori Brannan, 907-488-3267, ext 10110

###

