

Dr. Michael Johnson  
Commissioner

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Department of Education  
and Early Development

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STATE OF ALASKA

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## **Alaska School Receives National Blue Ribbon School Honor**

JUNEAU – Tuesday U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona recognized Soldotna Montessori Charter School in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District as 2021 National Blue Ribbon School.

The recognition is based on the school's overall academic performance or progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. Soldotna Montessori Charter School is one of 325 schools across the nation recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School this year.

"This year's cohort of honorees demonstrates what is possible when committed educators and school leaders create vibrant, welcoming, and affirming school cultures where rich teaching and learning can flourish," said Secretary Cardona. "In the face of unprecedented circumstances, you found creative ways to engage, care for, protect, and teach our children. Blue Ribbon Schools have so much to offer and can serve as a model for other schools and communities so that we can truly build back better."

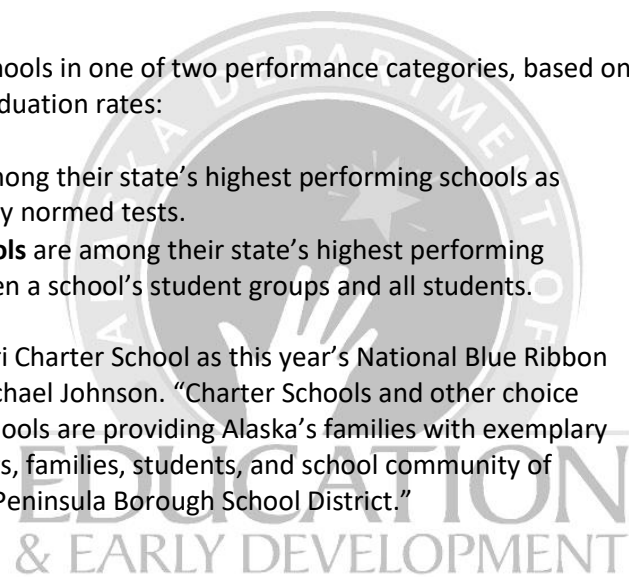
"Soldotna Montessori Charter School, you have honored Alaska with your dedication to high standards in educating our kids," said Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy. "Congratulations on being nationally recognized as an Exemplary High Performing School, an honor that I have no doubt comes, in part, from engaging students in creative field experiences outside the walls of the classroom."

The coveted National Blue Ribbon Schools award affirms the hard work of educators, families and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging and engaging content. Now in its 39th year, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has bestowed approximately 10,000 awards to more than 9,000 schools.

The U.S. Department of Education recognizes all schools 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.
- **Exemplary Achievement Gap-Closing Schools** are among their state's highest performing schools in closing achievement gaps between a school's student groups and all students.

"It is an honor to recognize the Soldotna Montessori Charter School as this year's National Blue Ribbon School for Alaska," said DEED Commissioner Dr. Michael Johnson. "Charter Schools and other choice programs such as public and private Montessori schools are providing Alaska's families with exemplary educational options. Congratulations to the teachers, families, students, and school community of Soldotna Montessori Charter School and the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District."



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*The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development provides information, resources, and leadership to support over 130,000 students in 505 public schools across the state of Alaska. The mission of the department is to ensure an “**Excellent Education for Every Student Every Day.**”*

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