



The National Association for Magnet and Theme-based Schools

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2019 Merit Awards Recognize Our Nation's Most Prominent Magnet Schools

Washington, DC, January 31, 2019 - Magnet Schools of America (MSA) is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2019 national merit awards. These 109 Magnet Schools of Excellence and 179 Magnet Schools of Distinction located in 20 states are recognized for their commitment to high academic standards, school diversity, specialized curricula and instruction, family engagement, and community partnerships. This year, 395 magnet schools applied for national merit awards, making 2019 the most competitive year in the award program's history.

"National merit awards are presented annually and are only given to the most prominent magnet schools in the country," said MSA Executive Director, Todd Mann. "These extraordinary schools have been through a rigorous review process and adhere to the five pillars of magnet school excellence. Merit awardees embody the best in public education and should be celebrated as such in their community."

To receive a national merit award, MSA member schools must submit a detailed application that is scored by a panel of educators. These schools are judged on their demonstrated ability to raise student academic achievement, promote racial and socioeconomic diversity, provide specialized curricula and instruction, and leverage community partnerships to enhance the school's theme-based program.

There are two categories of merit awards: (1) *Magnet Schools of Excellence*, the top merit award given to a select group of magnet schools and (2) *Magnet Schools of Distinction*, the second highest award of recognition. Principals and representatives from each of the winning schools will receive a merit award plaque during an awards ceremony held at the 37th National Conference on Magnet Schools in Baltimore, MD April 10-13, 2019.

The highest ranked magnet schools in the excellence category are eligible to receive monetary awards and the chance to be named the nation's top Elementary, Secondary, or New & Emerging Magnet School. One of the schools of excellence will also be selected to win \$5,000 for the Dr. Ronald P. Simpson Distinguished Merit Award, which is considered the most prestigious merit award.

Magnet Schools of America (MSA) was founded in 1986 and authorized as a 501(c)3 nonprofit education association in 1994. It sponsors a national awards program, hosts professional development activities, and provides technical assistance through the National Institute for Magnet School Leadership (NIMSL). MSA supports the leaders and teachers of magnet and theme-based schools, while promoting the development of new magnet programs and public schools of choice.

To learn more about the national merit awards program, please visit www.magnet.edu

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MISSION STATEMENT

Providing leadership for high quality innovative instructional programs that promote choice, equity, diversity, and academic excellence for all students.