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**PISGAH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NAMED
NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL**

Only third Buncombe County School to earn this award since 1982

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(CANDLER)- The U.S. Department of Education today announced that Pisgah Elementary School has been named a 2016 *National Blue Ribbon School*. Recognized as an Exemplary High Performing School, Pisgah Elementary was selected because of its student achievement, community partnerships, and outstanding educators that are making a difference for their students every day.

Last school year, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction invited nine schools across the state to submit a portfolio to be considered for a *Blue Ribbon Award* because of exemplary performance on state assessments. Former Principal Jay Dale, who has moved to Haw Creek Elementary School as principal, worked with the Pisgah Elementary staff on this exciting opportunity. He said their portfolio reflected the school's straightforward, yet effective teaching philosophy.

"Our formula was simple. We got to know our students at Pisgah and tailored our teaching to meet their needs. This student-centered approach led to tremendous success in our classrooms," said Principal Dale.

The *National Blue Ribbon School* award designation is a special and rare distinction. Last year, only three public schools in North Carolina earned this status. Since the program started in 1982, only two Buncombe County Schools, Emma Elementary School (2001) and A.C. Reynolds High School (2002), have earned this designation.

"There is no question that being recognized as a *National Blue Ribbon School* is a major point of pride for the school, Enka Community, and everyone who is a part of Buncombe County Schools," says Superintendent Dr. Tony Baldwin.

"I offer my highest congratulations to the students and staff at Pisgah Elementary School for this prestigious accolade in recognition of their phenomenal work, innovation, and achievements over the last several years."

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New to Pisgah Elementary this year, Principal Jeanann Yates said, “I am extremely proud of Pisgah Elementary for achieving such a prestigious award. This is a huge accomplishment for our school, students, and community. I feel honored to share in this wonderful recognition.”

Pisgah Elementary staff members submitted a 20-page portfolio that was evaluated for the *National Blue Ribbon Award*, which highlighted much more than just impressive test scores. The teachers and staff maintain high expectations for students as they learn their core curriculum such as reading and science. Technology also plays a pivotal role in the classroom, encouraging learning for all students. Students are motivated to be well-behaved with various incentives for showing good citizenship. Families and the community are engaged in helping students succeed by supporting various fundraising efforts for the schools. Educators have multiple opportunities for professional development in key subjects, but also intensive training in incorporating digital learning into their lessons.

A group from Pisgah Elementary is invited to attend the national award ceremony in Arlington, Virginia on November 7 and 8 where they will receive a National Blue Ribbon School flag and an engraved plaque.

To learn more about the *National Blue Ribbon Award Program*, see: nationalblueribbonschools.ed.gov

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