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Contact: Jeff Urbanchuk, Press Secretary
(202) 225-2431
(202) 593-1040 cell
(202) 225-2486 fax
jg.urbanchuk@mail.house.gov

Shuster Congratulates 9th District Schools for their Outstanding Contribution to Education Two “Blue Ribbon Schools” Honored by Department of Education

Washington, D.C. –Congressman Bill Shuster is pleased to congratulate Homer-Center Junior-Senior High School in Indiana County and Kingwood Elementary School in Somerset for being awarded “Blue Ribbon” schools by the Department of Education.

“Congratulations to the students, faculty and parents of our newest Blue Ribbon schools,” Shuster said. “There are few jobs more important and difficult as teaching. Preparing our children for a complex world is a tremendous challenge that requires constant dedication. These schools embody the best in education and will serve as a symbol of excellence for others to follow.”

“These Blue Ribbon Schools are an example of what teachers and students can achieve,” U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings said. “Now our challenge is to help other schools follow their lead by continuing to measure progress through No Child Left Behind, and by using the knowledge we’ve gained to replicate effective strategies and help every student improve.”

“I believe being recognized as a Blue Ribbon School is a testament to our mission that at Homer-Center “Everybody is Somebody,” said Jody Rainey Principal, Homer-Center High School. “Credit for this prestigious award goes first and foremost to our students, past and present. The students have willingly accepted and continually exceed the high expectations our staff, parents, and community place on their academic performance. At Homer-Center we will continue to place our students first and develop in each student a passion for lifelong learning and personal success.”

“We are extremely proud of our students, staff and community for achieving such an honor. High quality instruction, small class sizes and a well rounded educational program have greatly contributed to the success of Kingwood elementary as a Blue Ribbon

School. We will always strive to improve student performance in our pursuit of educational excellence,” said Sam Romesberg, Elementary Principal.

The No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools that excel academically or demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement.

According to the Department of Education, the schools are selected based on one of two criteria. Either the school has at least 40 percent of its students from disadvantaged backgrounds and dramatically improves student performance; or the school achieves in the top 10 percent of their state on state tests regardless of their students’ backgrounds.

Next month, both Homer-Center Junior-Senior High School and Kingwood Elementary will be honored in Washington and presented with a plaque and a flag to recognize their achievement.

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