



Lamar CISD

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PRESS RELEASE

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Velasquez nominated for National Blue Ribbon

Lamar CISD's Velasquez Elementary is a nominee in the 2012 Blue Ribbon Schools Program. Texas Education Commissioner Robert Scott made the announcement Tuesday.

The award honors schools across the nation for academic excellence and for significant progress in closing the achievement gap.

Since 1982, this prestigious program has honored more than 6,000 of America's most successful schools, including 538 Texas public schools. The Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools. The schools are selected for one of

two honors:

- Improving - Schools that dramatically improve student performance to high levels on state tests; and
- High Achieving - Schools whose students rank in the top 10 percent based on performance on their state standardized tests.

Velasquez is one of only 13 Texas schools in the High Achieving category and the only Fort Bend County school to be nominated in either category.

Nominated schools are chosen through an objective evaluation of student achievement statistics and other data for the more than 8,000 public school and charter campuses in the state. The selected schools must

demonstrate success in closing the achievement gap, and each school has an economically disadvantaged population of 40 percent or greater.



Lamar CISD Superintendent Dr. Thomas Randle, Executive Director of Elementary Education Laura Lyons, Velasquez Principal Heather Patterson and Assistant principal Doug Waddill

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Schools nominated for the award serve as models of best practices for schools across the state.

The nominated schools will now complete a rigorous application process through the U.S. Department of Education, and announcements of the award winners will be made in September 2012. Schools that receive the award are recognized at the Blue Ribbon School conference in Washington, D.C.

Heather Patterson is the principal at Velasquez and Doug Waddill is the assistant principal. Velasquez opened in 2006 and has been ranked Exemplary by the Texas Education Agency every year.

“We set high expectations from the first day,” Patterson said, who served as assistant principal at Velasquez before becoming principal. “We’ve been able to keep a great team of teachers together and are blessed with very supportive parents.

“The District’s Administration does a great job of making sure we have the tools we need to succeed,” she continued. “It’s not by accident that Lamar CISD has three Blue Ribbon schools.”

Austin Elementary became a Blue Ribbon School in 2006, and Ray Elementary received their Blue Ribbon in 2008.