



## **NJDOE News**

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### **Commissioner Hespe Announces [Winners of Parent Participation Awards](#)**

Commissioner of Education David Hesper today announced the winners of a new award designed to recognize schools in the Abbott districts that have developed outstanding parent participation programs. Commissioner Hesper and State Board of Education President Maud Dahme presented 22 schools with the first Parent Participation Award.

The Parent Participation Program is a state initiative proposed by the Urban Advisory Committee, a 15-member panel appointed by the Commissioner. The committee is co-chaired by Dr. Daniel Rodriguez, superintendent of the Old Bridge School District, and Margaret McLeod, former director of the Association for Children of New Jersey in Newark.

"This program is designed to highlight a critically important and too-often overlooked aspect of whole school reform - parent participation and community involvement," Commissioner Hesper said. "Motivating parents to become active partners in their children's academic development is extremely important to the success of all of our schools, but especially those in the Abbott districts.

"We hope that the school-based programs recognized today can become models worthy of emulation in other schools throughout the state," Hesper said.

Each award-winning school received an award of \$3,000 (see attached list). The award recognizes creative and successful parent involvement and parent education programs that are either in the beginning stages or have been in effect over time.

Schools applying for consideration filed applications that were evaluated and selected by two independent panels.

Programs selected for recognition included training seminars and other efforts to prepare parents serving on School Management Teams or in other school governance capacities as part of whole school reform. They also include parent and intergenerational education programs, parent volunteer programs, and other efforts to stimulate parent interest and participation in the schools.

The Cicely Tyson School of Performing and Fine Arts Concert Choir from East Orange sang at the event. Following the awards ceremony, the recipients participated in a luncheon in which the featured speaker was author and professor, Dr. Maurice Elias.