



NJDOE News

For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:

Jon Zlock
Kathryn Forsyth, Director
609-292-1126

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New Jersey Honors Cumberland County Teacher with 2004 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award

Theresa Bordo's classroom is a family. It's one of many reasons the Department of Education and Milken Family Foundation honored her today at a special assembly in Vineland as a 2004 New Jersey recipient of a Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award.

Bordo opens each school year at Cunningham Elementary School with her own family: "The Bordo Bunch."

"These children know that their teacher loves them and cares for them," said her principal, Patricia Phillips. "Shy, withdrawn children become confident learners under her leadership. She focuses on the talents and strengths of each individual child while weaknesses are addressed automatically."

Mrs. Bordo, who teaches fourth-grade at Cunningham Elementary, is the first New Jersey recipient of the Milken National Educator Award announced this year. Surrounded by her students, peers and community leaders, she was presented with a \$25,000 check for embodying some of the best characteristics a teacher can have: being vibrant, caring, dedicated and successful.

National Educator Awards are presented each year to educators in the state who are furthering the excellence of the nation's schools. According to peers at her elementary school, Mrs. Bordo does just that. For example, she has a special gift for reaching the "most hard to reach" students.

But with Mrs. Bordo leading them, the students are succeeding. For instance, in 2001, Principal Phillips studied her school's Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA) results. All but one of Mrs. Bordo's students scored proficient or advanced proficient in the math portion of the test.

"The only answer to this startling discovery is the giftedness of the teacher, Terry Bordo," Phillips said. "With her genuine love of these children, she shows them their worthiness and empowers them to give nothing but their best."

The state of New Jersey and the Milken Family Foundation are in the third year of a partnership for the National Educator Awards. Founder Lowell Milken, the foundation's chairman, created the award program in 1985.

"We are so very pleased to recognize and honor Terry Bordo as an outstanding educator, one who is an incredible role model for her children, many of whom are 'at-risk,'" said Commissioner of Education William L. Librera. "The success she has with her own students is something that must be recognized. She is a shining example among the many fine teachers we have in this state."

"We joined with the Milken Family Foundation three years ago because we believe they see the value in recognizing good educators, educators who have the chance to become even better," Commissioner Librera said. "We must continue to recognize, and more importantly, share, great success stories. They occur each and every day in so many fine schools across the state."

Since 1985, the Milken National Awards Program, which honors teachers, principals and specialists in public education from kindergarten through 12th grade, has become the largest teacher recognition program in the United States. There were two (2) recipients in New Jersey last year. All told, 100 will be announced this year nationwide.

The foundation's chief goal is to recognize outstanding educators who continue to learn and are essential in fostering student growth, improving schools and enhancing the education profession. This year alone, the foundation will issue \$2.5 million worth of National Educator Award in 47 states and the District of Columbia. More than \$51.9 million in awards have been doled out since the program's inception.

For more information about the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards, please contact the Department of Education Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126 or the Milken Family Foundation at (310) 998-3009.