



NJDOE News

**For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:
Kathryn Forsyth, Director
609-292-1126**

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DOE Announces 2005 Title I Distinguished Schools Honorees

Three elementary schools in Union City, Camden and Vineland have been selected as New Jersey's 2005 Title I Distinguished Schools, Acting Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy announced today.

The schools are Henry Hudson School in Union City, Ulysses S. Wiggins School in Camden and Dr. William Mennies School in Vineland.

While all three urban schools have large at-risk populations, they have shown continual improvement in their test scores, making adequate yearly progress (AYP) and closing the achievement gap, Commissioner Davy said.

The three were selected by DOE officials from among the almost 1,400 New Jersey schools that receive federal funding under Title I of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*.

"We are very, very proud of these schools," said Acting Governor Richard J. Codey. "They are proof that every child can learn when administrators, teachers and families all work together to create a supportive environment focused on achievement."

Commissioner Davy said the three schools share many of the same characteristics. "When you combine high-quality leadership, a focus on staff development opportunities to help teachers become the best they can be and inspire their students, and the active involvement and commitment from the whole community, it translates into success," she said.

The principals of the three schools will each receive a \$1,000 award to be used in continuing the school's academic achievement efforts.

Two of the schools were also nominated for national recognition under the US Education Department's Title I Distinguished Schools program.

Ulysses S. Wiggins school will represent New Jersey Title I schools that have "exhibited exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years." Henry Hudson school will be the state's representative of Title I schools that have "made the most progress in significantly closing the achievement gap between student groups."

They will be formally honored at a special breakfast during the national Title I Conference in Dallas in January.

The Title I Distinguished Schools Program is sponsored by the National Association of State Title I Directors. In order to be nominated, schools must have a minimum school poverty rate of 40%, demonstrate a high level of success in assessment achievement and meet or exceed *NCLB* AYP goals for two consecutive years.

In New Jersey, DOE officials first identified potential nominees based on an analysis of each school's state test data. Administrators at identified schools were asked to submit a narrative describing their demographics, academic and extracurricular programs and history of student achievement. Following site visits by DOE personnel, the final nominees were selected.

Key elements considered in the selection process included the schools' overall effectiveness in curriculum and instruction, professional development, partnerships with families and the community, and other factors contributing to their extraordinary student success.

For more information, please contact the Department of Education's Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126.