



The Center for Educational Effectiveness



**Washington's Highest Improving Schools Honored  
*School of Distinction Awards announced for 2011*  
Award for 5-year Improvement in Reading and Math**

**Redmond – October 17, 2011** – Outstanding improvement in student achievement led to a special honor for 99 schools today; all received the 2011 *School of Distinction* Award from The Center for Educational Effectiveness (CEE), the Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD), the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP), Phi Delta Kappa-Washington Chapter (PDK-WA), Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA), Washington State ASCD and Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA). The 2011 *School of Distinction* award winners include 53 elementary schools, 22 middle / junior high schools, 17 high schools and 7 alternative schools. This represents the 5<sup>th</sup> annual *School of Distinction* award recognition in Washington State.

In North Central Washington, 3 schools earning that distinction include **Icicle River Middle School** in the Cascade School District, **Entiat Middle and High School** in the Entiat School District and **Ephrata Middle School** in the Ephrata School District.

Each regional Educational Service District throughout the state will recognize the School of Distinction award winners within their districts. Cindy Duncan, Assistant Supt. of North Central Educational Service District (NC ESD) in Wenatchee stated, "The success and hard work of these highest improving schools across our state needs to be celebrated and shared in order to support improvement efforts across Washington and make this difference for all students."

Specifics of the methodology used to determine 2011 winners are summarized in the following bullets:

- The 2011 performance, as with the previous five years, is translated into a "Reading/Math Level Index" and must meet the minimum threshold: at or above the state median for the grade band.
- Unlike previous years where enough longitudinal data only existed in grades 4, 7 and 10, we now have longitudinal data from 2006-2011 in all grades.
- Three grade bands are used for calculation: 3, 4, and 5 for elementary schools, 6, 7 and 8 for middle or junior high schools and 10 for high schools. A school must have data in two of three grades to be considered for that band.
- The final data point was calculated using the Measures of Student Progress (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade) and High School Proficiency Exam (10<sup>th</sup> grade) from spring 2011.
- Using data from 2006 – 2011, provides six data points which identifies five improvement steps.
- A Reading/Math Level Index is calculated for all grades in band... e.g., a K-8 school would be eligible in both elementary and middle/junior high bands.
- A school must have data in at least three of six years to be considered, one of which must be 2011.
- "Improvement" is defined as the slope of linear trend over the five years.
- The number of schools comprising 5% is based on the number of schools at each grade band with 2011 data.

Greg Lobdell, Co-founder and President of CEE noted, "even though the diversity and context of the communities served by each of these schools across our state are vastly different, the hard work represented by this award is the same and the students are the real winners".

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