

West End Named ESEA Distinguished School

West End Elementary School has been selected to be nationally recognized by the National Association of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) State Program Administrators as a Distinguished School.

A project of the NAESPA, the National ESEA Distinguished Schools Program publicly recognizes qualifying federally funded schools for the outstanding academic achievements of their students. It highlights the efforts of schools across the country making significant improvements for their students. The program has been in place since 1996, showcasing the success of hundreds of schools in one of three categories:

Category one: Exceptional student performance for two consecutive years.

Category two: Closing the achievement gap between student groups.

Category three: Excellence in serving special populations of students (e.g., homeless, migrant, English learners, etc.)

"I am so proud that our amazing students, families, and faculty and staff are receiving this well-deserved recognition," said West End's Principal, Dr. Dennis Drummond. "I am blessed with the privilege of seeing the outstanding teaching and learning that takes place at West End on a daily basis, and I appreciate all of the extra hours our teachers spend in preparation and professional learning. We could not have achieved this honor without the support of our fantastic board of education members, our outstanding central office leaders, and the leadership and enduring legacy of our former principal, Mrs. Buffi Murphy. We look forward to continuing this success in the days ahead as we work to equip all of our students to graduate from Rome High School prepared for college or work."

Schools named are invited to participate in a conference in Kansas City, Mo. running from January 30 through February 2, 2019. West End Elementary is invited to send a team of representatives to the conference who will detail their programs to other school in the nation and also hear about efforts other nominees are using across the country to better educate their students.

Additionally, the schools chosen will be recognized by national publications via a press release from the National Association of ESEA Program Administrators. This prestigious honor is only awarded to two schools in the state, so being named an ESEA Distinguished School comes with banners to announce the honor to the local community, buttons to share with 75 teachers and a certificate suitable for framing.

"While serving as principal of West End, I was fortunate to be a member of an outstanding school that cultivates a culture of high expectations and a drive to implement 'Best Practices' teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students every day," said Buffi Murphy, now Rome City Schools Professional Learning Specialist. "The honor bestowed to West End to represent Georgia as one of the top two schools in the state at the national level is remarkable. West End defines what a distinguished school is and we are honored to represent and serve our community."

"To be recognized as one of two schools throughout the state as a National ESEA Distinguished School is quite an honor. Congratulations to the students, faculty and staff of West End Elementary School on such a wonderful achievement," added RCS Superintendent, Louis Byars.

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THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (ESEA) was passed as a part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty" and has been the most far - reaching federal legislation affecting education ever passed by Congress. In its original conception, Title I under the ESEA, was designed by President Lyndon B. Johnson to close the skill gap in reading, writing and mathematics between children from low-income households who attend urban or rural school systems and children from the middle-class who attend suburban school systems.

According to the United States Department of Education (ED), students from low-income households are "three times as likely to be low achievers if they attend high-poverty schools as compared to low-poverty schools."

Within this context, Title I was conceived in order to compensate for the considerable educational deprivations associated with child poverty. In the past 50 years, Title I has changed markedly.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides additional resources for vulnerable students and federal grants to state educational agencies to improve the quality of public elementary and secondary education. The Association is a membership organization made up of State ESEA Program Administrators, and their staff from each of the states and territories, charged with managing their state federal education program.

They ensure compliance with federal regulations, but more importantly work to see that all children — especially those living in economically disadvantaged conditions — have the opportunity to receive a high quality education. NAESPA implements the National ESEA Distinguished Schools Program to highlight selected schools that have successfully used their ESEA federal funds to improve the education for all students—including economically disadvantaged students. More information about all National ESEA Distinguished Schools is available on the ESEA Network website: www.ESEAnetwork.org.

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