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**Two CPS Schools Earn Prestigious National Recognition**

*Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy on the South Side and Thomas A. Edison Regional Gifted Center Elementary on the North Side Named 2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Schools announced today that Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy High School and Thomas A. Edison Regional Gifted Center Elementary have been named among the 349 best schools in the nation through the U.S. Department of Education's 2018 National Blue Ribbon Award recognition. Brooks, located on the South Side of Chicago, and Edison, located on the City's North Side, are two of only 16 public schools in Illinois and 349 schools nationwide to be honored with this distinction in 2018.

"I am proud to join Edison Elementary and Gwendolyn Brooks Prep in celebration of their recognition as 2018 National Blue Ribbon schools," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "This national recognition is a testament to teachers, students, principals and parents who worked hard, raised the bar for academic success, and made Chicago proud."

"For the second year in a row, two of our schools - Edison on the North Side and Brooks on the South Side - are being recognized as two of the top schools in the nation," said CPS CEO Dr. Janice K. Jackson. "I want to congratulate the administrators, teachers, students, and parents of Brooks and Edison. This prestigious award reflects their hard work and achievements, and serves as a source of school pride for their communities and for the City of Chicago."

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools where students perform at very high levels, or where significant progress has been made in raising student achievement. Both Brooks and Edison have received the honor in the Exemplary High Performing Schools category for testing in the top 15 percent of all schools in Illinois, achieving high performance among key subgroups and completing a rigorous application process that evaluated everything from social and emotional learning supports to professional development to quality classroom instruction.

"Brooks and Edison, which are already known for their achievements in Chicago and Illinois, are now being recognized as the best in the nation for their academic excellence," CPS CEo LaTanya D. McDade. "Congratulations to these schools and their communities for their tireless commitment to students and their academic success."

Now in its 36th year, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has bestowed recognition on more than 8,800 schools. In November, Brooks and Edison will be formally recognized at an award ceremony in Washington, D.C., where they will hear from other esteemed educators, share best practices, and celebrate their hard-earned achievements.

**About the Schools:**

Brooks is a selective enrollment academic center and high school serving approximately 900 students in grades 7-12 on Chicago's South Side in the Historic Pullman District. Brooks has a 96.8 percent graduation rate, with 85 percent of graduates enrolling in college. Brooks subscribes to a student-first philosophy, by valuing their voices and viewing students as co-designers of their learning environment.

"Being recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School brings great pride to our school and the Pullman-Roseland communities," said Brooks Principal Shannae Bea Jackson. "As we celebrate our accomplishments, we will continue to exceed our high standards and ensure that every student leaves Brooks ready for postsecondary success and beyond."

Edison is a regional gifted center serving approximately 265 students on Chicago's Northwest Side in the Albany Park community. The school hosts a kindergarten through 8th grade accelerated gifted program that places an emphasis on thinking, reasoning, problem solving and creativity. Edison provides a variety of academic opportunities, including STEAM, Fine Arts, and French language courses, through a personalized approach to teaching and learning.

"This accolade extends to each of Edison's students, teachers, staff members, parents and community members," said Edison Principal Dr. Karen Valentine. "We are immensely proud of the remarkable achievements of our students, who are honored to represent Chicago's excellence among the best in the nation."

**Previous National Blue Ribbon Schools from CPS include:**

- Edgar Allan Poe Classical School, 2017
- Hannah G. Solomon Elementary School, 2017
- Skinner North Elementary, 2016
- LaSalle Language Academy, 2015
- Payton College Prep, 2014 and 2008
- Frazier International Magnet School, 2013
- Skinner West Elementary, 2013
- Jones College Prep, 2012 and 2006
- Lane Tech College Prep, 2012
- Audubon Elementary School, 2011
- Northside College Prep, 2011
- Jackson Language Academy, 2010
- Whitney Young Magnet High School, 2009
- Robert A. Black Magnet Elementary, 2008
- Horace Greeley Elementary, 2007

*Chicago Public Schools serves 371,000 students in 646 schools. It is the nation's third-largest school district.*