

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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U.S. Department of Education Names Vernon's Skinner Road School a National Blue Ribbon School *Skinner Road School Recognized for Closing the Achievement Gap*

VERNON, Conn. – For the second time in five years, a Vernon elementary school is being honored by the U.S. Department of Education as a National Blue Ribbon School.

Skinner Road School was recognized for the hard work of its students, teachers, administrators and families to close the achievement gap. In 2020 Vernon's Northeast School was designated a National Blue Ribbon School.

"I could not be more proud of our schools, our teachers and the students at Skinner Road School who have demonstrated that with hard work and commitment, great things can be achieved," Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne said. "This national recognition is a tremendous honor for our students and for our community."

The annual awards program recognizes schools for their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing the achievement gap.

"This is like winning an Olympic gold medal," Vernon Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph P. Macary said. "We are only one of four schools in Connecticut being recognized for our achievements. I am very proud of the students, teachers, families, staff and administration at Skinner Road School. They have been working diligently over the last seven years to close the achievement gap and this is a testament to their efforts."

Skinner Road School serves 321 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 5. More than 60 percent of its students are designated with high needs. It is one of five elementary schools in Vernon, which is an Alliance District. The school's accountability index in 2021-22 was 82.8, its highest ever. Since 2016-17, Skinner Road School has been identified annually as a School of Distinction.

The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.

Skinner Road School Principal Bryan Kerachsky said he is proud and humbled by his school's achievement.

"The teachers and staff of Skinner Road School are committed to making sure each student gets what they need to become well-rounded, responsible citizens of our community," Kerachsky said. "As the principal of Skinner Road School, I am so proud of our entire school community. Everyone has worked so hard to build relationships with families and to provide a school experience where all students can succeed. To be recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School is extremely humbling. But we are not done. We will continue to work hard, if not harder, for all of our students and families."

A twice-a-day focus on mathematics at Skinner Road School resulted in students showing particularly strong growth in mathematics. Students with high needs, on average, met 92.7 percent of their mathematics growth targets.

"Our goal is for every student to achieve or exceed yearly expected progress," Dr. Macary said. "We are indeed moving the needle on student achievement."

Student growth provides a more accurate measure of how schools contribute to student learning by demonstrating achievement over time.

"This remarkable achievement by our students is due to the hard work and dedication of our teachers, administrators and staff and the leadership of Dr. Macary and his central office team," Town Administrator Michael Purcaro said.

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