



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Mary Nash Wood, Assistant Director of Communications

(318) 603-5711 (o)

(318) 422-7487 (c)

Two Caddo schools recognized as National PTA Schools of Excellence

National PTA has recognized South Highlands Elementary Magnet School and Eden Gardens Fundamental Elementary as National PTA Schools of Excellence for their achievement in building effective family-school partnerships. The announcement now makes Caddo Parish Public Schools home to seven National PTA Schools of Excellence.

“Parent involvement is a vital component of a successful school and thriving community and I applaud the parents and community members at South Highlands and Eden Gardens for their efforts to better our schools,” said Dr. Lamar Goree, Superintendent of Caddo Schools. “The parents at these campuses have put in long, tireless hours alongside our students and staff and they have made all the difference in ensuring our campuses thrive.”

Beginning in 2014, National PTA launched its National PTA School of Excellence program to strengthen family-school partnerships across the country and make measurable progress in the areas of education, health and safety, and arts and cultural exploration. At a National PTA School of Excellence, families feel welcomed and empowered to support student success, and PTA is a key partner for continuous school improvement.

“The partnership between South Highlands and Eden Gardens with the PTAs is a true example of what can be accomplished when schools and families work together,” said Otha Thornton, president of National PTA. “These schools and their partner PTAs have put strong practices into place that involve families in the life of the school, and we are pleased to recognize them as a National PTA School of Excellence.”

To be recognized as a National PTA School of Excellence, PTAs evaluate their current family engagement strategies and submit a goal for school improvement that families, teachers and administrators have set together. They improve upon their family engagement strategies throughout the year, while focusing on their goal. The National PTA School of Excellence designation is awarded with demonstrated improvement in the family-school partnership and significant progress toward their goal.

“Research continues to show that when families and schools work together student achievement increases, schools improve and communities grow stronger,” said Amy Failla, Caddo District PTA president. “Being recognized as a National PTA School of Excellence demonstrates leadership and commitment from not only South Highlands and Eden Gardens but their PTAs who partner to support student success and continuous school improvement. “

Winning schools will each receive a National PTA School of Excellence banner to be hung at their campus.

“Being named a National PTA School of Excellence is an amazing honor for South Highlands,” said Mary Harris, Principal of South Highlands. “Our parents and families work extremely hard for our school and are always there to support and work with us in every way possible. There is not a need unmet because of what our parents, grandparents and friends do for our school. We are a truly a family and team and I am so proud of the spirit that South Highlands represents.”

At Eden Gardens, school staff cheered and applauded at the national accolade.

“Our parents are absolutely phenomenal,” said Sydney Allen, Principal of Eden Gardens. “Their dedication is unparalleled and their commitment to not only our children, but to each of our teachers and staff is continuously supported and encouraged. Our parents are essential to what we do at Eden Gardens. We could never show the many ways that our school is better through their efforts, and we are forever grateful to have our fantastic parents by our side to aid us in whatever we need to ensure all of our children are successful.”

For more information on National PTA and the National PTA School of Excellence program, visit PTA.org/excellence.