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**DEPARTMENT NOMINATES TWO SCHOOLS FOR NATIONAL
BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

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(BOISE) – Idaho State Department of Education has recently nominated two schools for the US Department of Education National Blue Ribbon Schools (NBRS) Program. The NBRS Program recognizes schools based on overall academic excellence or progress in closing the achievement gaps among student subgroups. Idaho’s two school nominees were submitted in the category of Exemplary High Performing Schools. These schools are among the highest performing schools as measured by state assessments.

The two Idaho schools nominated for this prestigious honor are:

- Horseshoe Bend Elementary School- Horseshoe Bend District #073
- J. Russell Elementary School- Moscow District #281

In order to be nominated for this national award, the school must meet national and state requirements including:

- Be in the top 15 percent of all schools in the state when schools are ranked on the performance of all students who participated in the most recently administered state assessments in reading/English language arts and mathematics.
- Be in the top 40 percent of all schools in the state when ranked on the performance of all students in the subgroup who participated in the most recently administered state assessments in reading/English language arts and mathematics.

The schools nominated in Idaho also met the criteria of at least 40 percent of students being from disadvantaged backgrounds, which Idaho defines as being eligible for free/reduced cost lunch.

Each Idaho Blue Ribbon nominee school will receive a monetary award from the state Title I Academic Achievement Award fund.

The US Department of Education will invite NBRS nominees to apply for recognition in the national award program. At the end of January, invited schools will be asked to complete an NBRS application. The Secretary of Education will announce the 2017 NBRS recipients in September.

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