

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Science Park High School in Newark, New Jersey Named National Blue Ribbon School

**OCTOBER 28, 2009, NEWARK, NJ**—Newark Public Schools Superintendent, Dr. Clifford B. Janey announced today that Science Park High School has received the No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools award. This prestigious award is given to schools that are academically superior and have made significant progress in closing the achievement gap.

As one of Newark's premiere magnet schools, Science Park High School's curriculum exemplifies research-based approaches. All science courses, except for electives offered on site, meet for 450 minutes per week. Students follow an academic track as 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders and one for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders. The first track includes Physics, Chemistry and AP courses at Essex County College or the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

The second track includes Earth/Space/Life Science Systems, Physics, and Chemistry as well as Advanced Placement courses at local colleges. "Many of our partnerships were formed decades ago and have allowed our students to take college courses while in high school. These partnerships have also given our students the chance to work alongside Ph.D students at UMDNJ – giving our students an advantage over most other high schools nationwide," said Lamont Thomas, current principal of Science Park High School.

Science Park High School has also been the recipient of numerous grants from major corporations including Toshiba. The "Build Your Own Green Building" project gave students the opportunity to build working models to simulate the school's solar and geothermal systems. Superintendent Janey proudly said, "It is through these types of grants and partnerships that our students will be able to compete globally. They are at the forefront of academic experiences that will prepare them for careers as scientists, doctors and engineers."

Former [retired] principal Christine Taylor stated, "I am so proud of my students and their hard work. As a principal, I was honored to work with a dedicated staff who constantly challenged students to excel and seek opportunities not limited to the classroom."

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October 28, 2009

The No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools that are either academically superior or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement to high levels. The schools are selected based on one of two criteria:

- schools with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance to high levels on state tests; and
- schools whose students, regardless of background, achieve in the top 10 percent of their state on state tests or in the case of private schools in the top 10 percent of the nation on state tests.

This year 264 public and 50 private schools received this honor and on November 3<sup>rd</sup> Principal Thomas will travel to Washington D.C. where he, along with the other honorees will attend an awards ceremony with U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

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**The Newark Public Schools**

*The Newark Public Schools District is the largest and one of the oldest school systems in New Jersey. The district serves approximately 40,000 students in 75 schools ranging from Pre-K to twelfth grade, and employs approximately 7,500 staff within the schools and Central Office.*