

## LETTER TO THE CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

Dear :

I am pleased to invite you to nominate schools from «**state\_name**» for the *2009 No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Program*. This program recognizes elementary and secondary schools that exemplify the great promise of the No Child Left Behind Law and its call for high standards and accountability for results.

Specifically, the program honors schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap or whose students achieve at the highest levels. First, it recognizes schools that have at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds and have dramatically improved student performance to high levels in reading and mathematics. Second, it recognizes schools whose students, regardless of background, achieve in the top 10 percent.

I ask you to send me the names of «**state\_Nomination\_Quota**» schools that meet the criteria for the 2008-2009 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Program*. At least one-third of the schools must have 40 percent or more of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds. In submitting the applications, «**state\_name**» certifies that the nominated schools have all met the minimum requirements established by your state for “dramatically improved” and have made adequate yearly progress for the past two years, including the year of application.

Please send me the list of your nominated schools by November 19, 2008, along with the information requested in the attached *2008-2009 Guidance for Chief State School Officers*. Please submit your list of nominated schools and complete state nomination form by logging onto <http://blueribbon.rmces.com>. Your state ID code to log on is «**nominator\_id**». Final selection of the schools will be in September 2009.

Enclosed also is a 2009 application package for your information. If you have any questions, please contact Aba Kumi at 202-401-1767.

On October 20-21, 2008, we will honor the 2008 No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools at a Washington, D.C. ceremony and celebrate them as exemplary schools. Thank you again for your commitment to excellence in education for all children.

Sincerely,

Margaret Spellings

Enclosures