



# News Release

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## 15 Elementary Schools Earn “Missouri Gold Star” Honors

Fifteen high-performing elementary schools have been honored as Missouri’s “Gold Star Schools” for 2009, state education officials announced March 6<sup>th</sup>. The selected schools are:

### **Brentwood School District**

Farmington School District

Hickory County R-I School District  
Lindbergh School District

Nixa School District

Northwest R-I School District  
Rockwood School District  
South Nodaway Co. R-IV School District  
St. Joseph School District  
St. Louis Public Schools  
Washington School District  
Kansas City

### **Mark Twain Elementary**

Roosevelt Elementary  
Washington-Franklin Elementary  
Skyline Elementary  
Crestwood Elementary  
Truman Elementary  
Century Elementary  
Espy Elementary  
Cedar Springs Elementary  
Kehrs Mill Elementary  
South Nodaway Elementary  
Eugene Field Elementary  
Kennard Classical Jr. Academy  
Clearview Elementary  
Academie Lafayette (charter school)

Established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in 1991, the Gold Star program is designed to identify schools that are performing at a high level academically or making exceptional progress while serving a significant proportion of disadvantaged students. Mark Twain was selected as a high performing school based on MAP test scores over the past five years. Leading up to the Gold Star status Mark Twain was a Missouri “Top Ten” school in 2003, 2006, 2007, and 2008.

The Gold Star program is closely aligned with the national Blue Ribbon Schools program, conducted annually by the U.S. Department of Education. Eight Missouri schools are eligible to be nominated for the national Blue Ribbon award, which will be announced this fall. Mark Twain is one of the eight that has moved forward in hopes of achieving national recognition.

“The Gold Star Schools can be models for any school that is striving to improve. These schools are demonstrating success in every type of community across our state – urban, suburban and rural,” said Mary Ann Burns, DESE’s director of school improvement initiatives. “The staff, students and entire community should be commended for their commitment to excellence,” stated Mark Twain principal, Karen Smith. She also attributed the school’s success to a strong basis in Character Education and noted that in 2008 Mark Twain was recognized as a “Missouri School of Character.”

The Gold Star schools will be formally recognized April 7 at a forum in Jefferson City.