



(Washington, D.C.) The First Academy Lower School was recently identified by the Council for American Private Education (CAPE) as one of 50 national private schools nominated to receive the *Blue Ribbon Schools* award from the U.S. Department of Education. Upon confirmation in September 2009, selected schools will serve as models for other schools throughout the nation and details of their achievement will be shared on the U.S. Department of Education's website.

The *Blue Ribbon Schools Program* honors public and private schools that are either academically superior or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement to high levels. Since 1982, the U. S. Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Schools Program has honored many of America's most successful schools. A Blue Ribbon School flag waving overhead has become a trademark of excellence, a symbol of quality recognized by everyone from parents to policy-makers in thousands of communities.

The First Academy qualified for the program as a High Performing School, which states that minimally, "schools must score in the top 10 percent on assessments referenced against national norms in at least the highest grade tested in the last year tested". In the past two years, reading and math scores from all grade levels qualified TFA as being ranked in the top ten percent in the nation. This demonstrates performance significantly above the minimum assessment criteria.