



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**September 15, 2009**

**THE FIRST ACADEMY LOWER  
SCHOOL RECEIVES  
2009 BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS AWARD**

We are pleased to announce that U. S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan today designated The First Academy Lower School as a Blue Ribbon School for 2009.

This year, 314 public and private schools achieved this status, out of more than 120,000 public and private schools in the nation. The First Academy Lower School is one of 13 public and private schools from Florida to receive this award for excellence in education. This award acknowledges their efforts to help ensure that every child achieves and attains higher levels of performance and recognizes the school's improvements in student achievement. The schools – 264 public and 50 private – will be honored at an awards ceremony on November 3 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. For the past 27 years, more than 6,150 of America's schools have received this coveted award.

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private schools that are academically superior or have shown dramatic improvement in student achievement to high levels. They are models of improved student achievement from which others can take inspiration. There are no "one-size-fits-all" approaches, but these schools provide ideas and strategies that other schools may be able to adapt to their own unique needs. Details of the achievements will be shared with others on the U. S. Department of Education's website at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/nclbbrs/awards.html>.