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## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **East Baton Rouge Parish School System Student of Year a State Finalist**

**Baton Rouge, LA – Of the 18 2009 Louisiana Student of the Year finalists, one is from the East Baton Rouge Parish School System – eighth grader Grace Leyrer of Westdale Middle School. Leyrer holds the title of the School System’s 2009 Middle School Student of the Year.**

The state student finalists represent the fifth, eighth and 12th grades from six regions across Louisiana, thereby allowing elementary, middle and high schools to be represented. **The finalists**, which were selected by regional committees, will convene at the Louisiana State Museum in Baton Rouge on **April 15 for the announcement of the state winners.**

**Leyrer** has a stellar academic record and active extracurricular life. She joined the Louisiana Jr. String Ensemble via the Baton Rouge Symphony in the second grade. She soon entered the School System’s Gifted and Talented Program and participated in the Duke TIP Talent Search. In third grade, Leyrer volunteered with the Mid-City Dance Project and performed with the Moscow Ballet the year after. She is taking high-school level classes in French 2, Algebra 1 and Physical Science and already has taken the SAT test.

After high school, Leyrer wants to study at Harvard Medical School and the University of Cincinnati and become a pediatric cardiologist. Until then, she’ll continue writing (she’s finished her first novel) and working with the Junior Beta Club and the Baton Rouge Little Theatre.

The state Student of the Year finalists were selected from district-level Students of the Year. Every public school in the state, including charter schools, as well as approved nonpublic schools, was asked to submit one candidate for the respective grade level. Currently, there are about 58,175 fifth graders, 61,202 eighth graders and 45,732 12th graders enrolled in eligible schools across the state. Students nominated by their schools progress to district and then regional competitions. Finalists are chosen based on criteria that measures academic achievement, leadership skills, character, and service to their schools and communities.

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