



East Baton Rouge Parish School System  
1050 S. Foster Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70806  
Phone (225) 922-5400 FAX (225) 226-7900  
[www.ebrschools.org](http://www.ebrschools.org)

**MEDIA CONTACT:**  
**Sonya T. Gordon, APR**  
Public Information Officer,  
Department for  
Communications &  
Community Engagement  
(225) 922-5611 office  
(225) 328-4763 cell  
[sgordon@ebrschools.org](mailto:sgordon@ebrschools.org)

## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 17, 2010

### **Once Again, the East Baton Rouge Parish School System Has the Best: Four Schools Win National Awards for Magnet Programs**

**Baton Rouge, LA** – When you want your child to have the best education, you send them to **East Baton Rouge Parish School System**. As proof, **four schools in the School System** recently earned national honors from **Magnet Schools of America (MSA)** in Washington, D.C.

MSA will present its **Merit Awards to Baton Rouge Magnet High, South Boulevard Foreign Language Academic Immersion, Sherwood Middle Academic Magnet and Westdale Heights Academic Magnet** schools **Tuesday, May 4, at the Opening General Session at the 28<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Magnet Schools in Tampa.**

“The big thing for **Baton Rouge Magnet High School** is that we have applied since 2004, and this year is the first year we have received the top award, **Magnet School of Excellence,**” said **Principal Nanette McCann**. “We are so pleased that the hard work of our students and educators is being recognized. The students, parents and staff are all deeply committed to learning and strive daily to exemplify the goals of a magnet school.”

Baton Rouge Magnet High School has a rich, long and proud history. Built in 1928 to serve as a premier high school, Baton Rouge Magnet High School became a dedicated academic magnet high school in 1976, featuring honors and advanced placement courses as well as enhanced visual and performing arts and talented arts programs.

The school is noted for its outstanding faculty, comprehensive course offerings and the excellence of its technology and multimedia opportunities. A Blue Ribbon School, Baton Rouge Magnet High School offers a rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum that ensures success to all of its students. It has built a solid reputation as one of the leading high schools in East Baton Rouge Parish and is propelled by its commitment to a diverse multi-cultural community. Named a U.S. News & World Report school for the second time in the fall of 2009, Baton Rouge High provides an award-winning college preparatory and visual and performing arts curriculum. The high school offers 18 Advanced Placement, 22 Honors and four foreign language courses. In addition, the school also maintains a strong curriculum in visual and performing arts, with special classes for those students identified as "talented."

-more-

## **MAGNET AWARDS/2**

Baton Rouge High has received the following awards:

- 2008 Magnet Schools of America
- 2007 College Readiness Award
- 2007 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics & Science Teaching
- 2007 Toshiba/NSTA Exploravision Award
- 2006 Siemens Awards for Advanced Placement
- 2006 Magnet Schools of America School of Distinction
- 2005 Magnet Schools of America School of Distinction
- 2004 Creative School Ticket of Excellence
- 2003 Blue Ribbon School

**Sherwood Middle Academic Magnet School** was selected for the **MSA Magnet School of Distinction Award**. This national award is based on a commitment to high academic standards, curriculum innovation, successful desegregation/diversity efforts and the consistent delivery of high quality education to students.

“This is a great honor for our students and faculty,” said **Principal Phyllis Crawford**. “We strive to excel in all academic areas and challenge our students to be the best they can be. Our 747 students represent a variety of cultures, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds. Strong academic performance, proven student success, a dedicated faculty and supportive administrators have made our school the highest performing public middle school in the district for the last four years.”

Sherwood Middle Academic Magnet School has met and exceeded the state-mandated growth targets for the last four years. The mission of Sherwood Middle Academic Magnet is that all students will achieve and succeed. “We feel that it is not only our job to provide a rigorously challenging academic curriculum to prepare our students for higher learning opportunities, but also to encourage our students to become productive citizens of a global community,” Crawford said.

**South Boulevard Foreign Language Academic Immersion Magnet School (FLAIM)** also was named a **Magnet School of Excellence by Magnet Schools of America**.

According to **Principal Cheryl Miller**, South Boulevard Elementary was selected from among school candidates nationwide based on criteria such as desegregation, innovative instructional strategies, student achievement and parent and community involvement.

“We are so pleased that the hard work of our students and educators is being recognized,” Miller said. “The students, parents, and staff are all deeply committed to learning and strive daily to exemplify the goals of a magnet school.

“What makes us different is the use of the foreign language to teach content. The foreign language is not taught as a separate subject. Students learn the new language by using it to acquire Math, Science and Social Studies information. “Parents choose for their child to study Spanish or French when they first enter the program in kindergarten or first grade. We are an academic magnet school that offers an advanced curriculum with the added bonus of foreign language acquisition taught by native speakers.”

Students complete the fifth grade as bilingual learners, fluent in their native language and either Spanish or French. Students may enter the program in kindergarten or first grade. After first grade, they may enter if transferring from an approved immersion program.

The school is located in downtown Baton Rouge and serves students in grades Pre-K through fifth. It is the only public, foreign language academic immersion school in the East Baton Rouge Parish targeting French and Spanish with an advanced academic curriculum. The school has been a foreign language academic immersion magnet school for six years.

**-more-**

### **MAGNET AWARDS/3**

In addition, **Westdale Heights Academic Magnet School** was chosen for the national **Magnet School of Distinction Award**. In 2008, Westdale Heights was named a Magnet School of Excellence and a national Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. The school's "Geaux Green" theme focuses on environmental science and efforts to reduce, re-use and recycle school resources.

“Great student diversity, outstanding teachers and involved parents make this one of the most sought after schools in the area. This year the school attained ‘five-star status’ in the state accountability program, only one of 13 in the state,” said **Principal Cheryl Singer**. “The school is focused in developing not only students who excel academically, but also students who will become future leaders in our community, state and world. The students spend time daily with inquiry and project based learning, especially in Science and Mathematics, using the latest technology in every classroom.”

For more information about MSA or the awards, visit [www.magnet.edu](http://www.magnet.edu). The MSA awards include a plaque and cash awards.

###