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On behalf of our School Board and administrators, I am thrilled to share the news that Van Buren Elementary School was introduced today as a National Blue Ribbon School.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes public and private elementary, middle, and high schools based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. Every year the U. S. Department of Education seeks out and celebrates great American schools, schools demonstrating that all students can achieve to high levels. For 2019, 362 schools are being honored; 12 of those are in Indiana.

Under the leadership of Principal Ray Helmuth, the culture of Van Buren has evolved to focus on joy, encompassing character development and physical activity while continuing to celebrate outstanding academic performance.

Van Buren Elementary is the first Plainfield school to earn the national Blue Ribbon School designation since Brentwood Elementary did so in 2010.

In mid-November, Mr. Helmuth and two teachers will accompany me to Washington, D.C. for the awards ceremony. At that time, we will celebrate this accomplishment throughout the community.

The National Blue Ribbon School award affirms the hard work of students, educators, families, and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging content. The National Blue Ribbon School flag gracing an entry or flying overhead is a widely recognized symbol of exemplary teaching and learning.

Van Buren Elementary School was built in 1956 and currently serves 520 students in Kindergarten through grade five.

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