



It is an honor for Father Brad and me to share that at noon today, September 26, **Old St. Mary's School was named a 2019 Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education in recognition of exemplary teaching and learning!** This award is given through the USDA's National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, which recognizes public and private elementary, middle, and high schools based on academic excellence.

We will be celebrating this award with students at an OSM Pep Rally next Friday, October 4 at 2:30. We invite you to join us; more details to follow! Please click [HERE](#) to see our newly designed website!

The National Blue Ribbon School Award acknowledges and validates the hard work of students, educators, families, and communities in striving for – and attaining – exemplary achievement. National Blue Ribbon Schools serve as models of effective school practices for state and district educators and other schools throughout the nation.

Nationally, only 50 not-for-profit private schools receive this award. Schools are nominated by the Council for American Private Education and must meet the following school performance eligibility criteria of Exemplary High Performing Schools:

- The achievement of the school's students in the most recent year tested places the school in the top 15 percent in the nation in English language arts and mathematics as measured by a nationally-normed test (for OSM, the Aspire scores).

The USDE has bestowed this coveted award on more than 8,500 American schools in the past 35 years. National Blue Ribbon Schools represent the full diversity of American schools: public – including charter, magnet/choice and Title I schools, and private – including parochial and independent schools. They are urban, suburban, and rural; large and small; traditional and innovative; and serve students of every social, economic, and ethnic background.

For further information about the Blue Ribbon Award, please click [HERE](#)

We are grateful to all OSM pastors, principals, teachers, students, and families, past and present: this distinguished honor is yours! Congratulations on your Blue Ribbon School!

Diana Smith,  
Principal