



Grove Avenue Elementary School students celebrate.



Countryside Elementary School Principal Jennifer Barnabee and students.

## A Host of Distinguished Awards for Barrington 220

Receiving the National Blue Ribbon Schools award from the U.S. Department of Education is something Barrington 220 is accustomed to. This prestigious honor has been given to eight Barrington 220 schools, some multiple times, over the National Blue Ribbon Schools' 32-year lifetime. Only about 7,000 schools in the entire country have ever received this award, given to Exemplary High Performing and Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing schools since 1982.

Both Countryside and Grove Avenue Elementary Schools received the honor in 2016 making Barrington 220 one of just two districts in the entire state of Illinois this year with multiple schools on the list. *Quintessential Barrington* caught up with Superintendent Dr. Brian Harris to learn more about why Blue Ribbon awards are something to be celebrated.



Superintendent Dr. Brian Harris

**QB:** *The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program was created in 1982 by the second U.S. Secretary of Education, Terrel H. Bell. How has the distinction changed over the years?*

**BH:** The honor was created by Secretary Bell as a way to draw attention to the exemplary schools across the nation. The requirements for a school to be eligible for the award have amplified over the years. In 2003, the program was restructured to place more emphasis on state assessment data. Schools were also required to show methods used to foster student success.

Currently, a school designated as Exemplary High Performing must have students achieving in the top 15 percent in English and math according to state assessments. Schools noted as Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing have made the greatest advances in closing the achievement gap in English and math as measured by state assessments.

**QB:** *This is the first time Countryside Elementary School has earned National Blue Ribbon School status. Why did Countryside earn the award this year?*

**BH:** Countryside was recognized as an Exemplary High Performing School by the U.S. Department of Education. This was not by chance. The staff at Countryside

are extremely passionate about what they do and are always striving to find improved instructional methods to produce higher outcomes for our students. Countryside also places a high value on community and parent involvement and emphasizes philanthropic efforts and opportunities for children. Students come to school prepared and excited to learn. This combination has resulted in social-emotional wellness for students, as well as academic success.

**QB:** *Grove Avenue Elementary School is the only Barrington 220 school that has earned the National Blue Ribbon School designation three times. What makes Grove Avenue such a special place for students?*

**BH:** Grove Avenue Elementary School earned the Blue Ribbon award in 1992 and again in 2008. The 2016 designation does

make Grove the only Barrington 220 school to receive this award three times, which is an outstanding honor that very few schools nationwide ever achieve. Grove Avenue is a Blue Ribbon School for many reasons. Staff are focused on meeting the unique needs of each student and providing an exemplary learning environment both academically and emotionally. Students are equally enthusiastic about learning and strive for excellence on a daily basis. The staff and parents of Grove are a collaborative team working together to support the needs of all kids and foster independent and productive learners.

We are extremely proud of both Countryside and Grove for receiving this outstanding honor.

**QB:** *Both schools will be honored in Washington, D.C., in early November. What happens at the official ceremony?*

**BH:** Both school principals and a handful of staff members will travel to Washington, D.C. on Nov. 7 for the recognition ceremony. At the ceremony, school representatives and supporters are able to collaborate and share ideas, meet with U.S. Department of Education officials, and attend a networking reception. Each school will receive a National Blue Ribbon School flag and plaque. 

## A Lifetime Achievement Award for Dr. K

Retired Grove Avenue Elementary School Principal Dr. Cindy Kalogeropoulos (“Dr. K”) has received the prestigious Lifetime Terrel H. Bell Award for Outstanding School Leadership, presented by the U.S. Department of Education in memory of former U.S. Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell.

one school. Recipients of this award have transformed their schools. Their vision and collaborative leadership styles have produced outstanding results for all students, regardless of race, language proficiency, or socioeconomic status. They have shown that with effective leadership and teaching and a firm conviction, all students can learn.

IN THE 34-YEAR HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS PROGRAM, DR. CINDY KALOGEROPOULOS IS THE ONLY PRINCIPAL TO EARN THREE BLUE RIBBONS FOR ONE SCHOOL.

This award is given to only a few principals across the country each year. Dr. Kalogeropoulos was a longtime principal at Grove, holding the position for 31 years before retiring in June 2016. During her tenure at Grove, the school earned three National Blue Ribbon Schools recognitions (1992, 2007, and 2016). In the 34-year history of the National Blue Ribbon Schools program, she is the only principal to earn three blue ribbons for

“The leadership Dr. Kalogeropoulos provided to the Grove Avenue Elementary School community and Barrington 220 School District was exceptional,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Brian Harris. “This award is well-deserved and gives appropriate recognition to her outstanding career achievements.” Dr. Kalogeropoulos will be honored by the U.S. Department of Education on Nov. 7 during a special ceremony in Washington, D.C.



Dr. K at the 1992 National Blue Ribbon Award Recognition Ceremony held at the White House.



Dr. K in recent years prior to her retirement from Grove.

## Don Thompson Honored By BHS

DON R. THOMPSON, Class of 1961, has been named Barrington High School’s 2016 Distinguished Graduate for his esteemed career in education and its impact across the Barrington area and for the Barrington 220 School District.

A lifelong resident, Thompson attended Barrington public schools from kindergarten through grade 12, graduating from BHS in 1961. He then attended Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa, receiving his degree in Education in 1965. In addition to a Master’s degree in Educational Administration from Roosevelt University, he completed studies at Northern Illinois and Northwestern Universities.

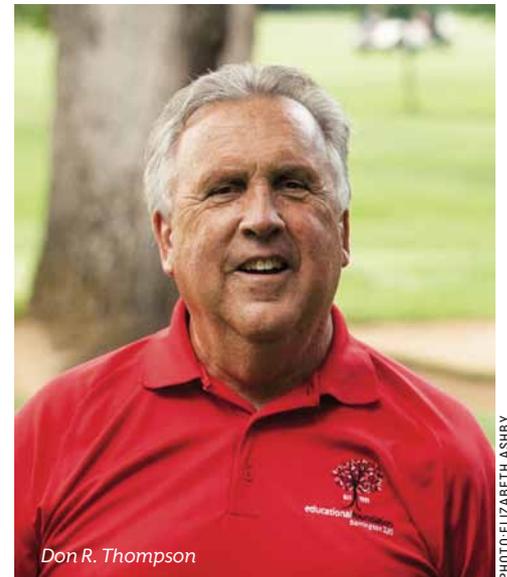
His career began at Sunny Hill Elementary School in 1966, spending six years as a classroom teacher there. He also taught for four years at Countryside Elementary and was Assistant to the Principal. During his 34-years with Barrington 220, he served as a teacher, associate principal, and principal at two elementary schools and three

middle schools. Thompson is the only person to ever serve as principal at all three Barrington 220 middle schools: Prairie, Station, and Hickory Hill.

Thompson had the honor of opening Barrington Middle School–Prairie Campus in the fall of 1992, and was the spokesperson for the Board of Education for the building referendum that made the campus possible. He also chaired the successful building referendum for the construction of two new elementary buildings and high school expansion in the year 2000. Upon retiring from Barrington 220 in 2000, he continued serving as a part-time consultant to the Superintendent of Schools through 2003.

Thompson and his wife, Mary Ann, were married in 1965, and raised two children, Stacy and Christopher, in Barrington. Mary Ann passed away in 1997 after a long illness. Thompson was remarried, to Nancy Johnson, in 2002. In addition to Stacy and Christopher, Thompson has two stepchildren and seven grandchildren.

Thompson’s record includes being is a past



Barrington 220 Educational Foundation board member, founding member of the Suburban Middle School Association, founding president of the BHS Alumni Association, member of the National Middle School Association, member of the Illinois Principal’s Association, member of the Barrington Area Development Council, and past president of the Barrington Lions Club and he is a Melvin Jones Award winner.

# Happy Homecoming 2016!



