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NEWS RELEASE

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Shirley Hills Elementary Named National Blue Ribbon School



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – Shirley Hills Elementary School has been named a 2011 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. Based on student performance, the Department of Education chose 304 schools for this national award. Shirley Hills Elementary is one of nine schools chosen in Georgia and one of only three Title 1 schools in the state. Dr. Traci Jackson (pictured) serves as principal.

“We are so proud to have been selected as a National Blue Ribbon School,” exclaimed Principal Jackson. “We are relentless in our efforts to acquire and sustain excellence and are excited that our work is paying off for our school family, especially our children. As the nucleus of our community, the real challenge for our school comes with sustaining excellence to ensure academic success for *all* students. We must be the change we want to see.”

She added, “Awards and recognition are not what sets us apart from other schools. Our school is exceptional because it embodies the most positive traits of a caring, extended family. We protect, nurture, and educate our students and support and uplift our faculty and staff. We also include our families and community stakeholders in the joys and responsibilities of creating tomorrow’s ethical and competent citizens.”

Superintendent Dr. Robin Hines said, “I am so proud of Shirley Hills! They serve a population that is growing and also economically disadvantaged, and it’s rewarding to see the level of continued achievement. Principal Dr. Jackson and her faculty and staff work really hard, and this is a well-deserved award. This school is committed to academic success, and I applaud the entire school family for this recognition.”

The award uses one of two selection criteria: high performing or a school with at least 40 percent of students from disadvantaged backgrounds that improve student performance to high levels based on

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state test scores. At Shirley Hills, 68 percent of its students qualify for free and reduced meals. On the 2011 Criterion Referenced Competency Test, 100 percent of Shirley Hill's third graders scored "meet or exceed standards" in English Language Arts and 95 percent in math.

The 255 public and 49 private schools will be recognized at a conference and awards ceremony Nov. 14-15, 2011, in Washington, D.C. Shirley Hills is located at 300 Mary Lane in Warner Robins. Dr. Jackson may be reached at 478-929-7824. A list of the 2011 National Blue Ribbon Schools is available at <http://www.ed.gov/nationalblueribbonschools>.

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