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South Dakota schools recognized as 2022 National ESEA Distinguished Schools

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Education is pleased to announce that Lake Preston Elementary and Whitewood Elementary (Meade School District) have been named 2022 National ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) Distinguished Schools. They will be honored at the National ESEA Conference to be held in February 2023.

Lake Preston Elementary was recognized for excellence in serving special populations of students (e.g. homeless, migrant, English learners, etc.), and Whitewood Elementary was recognized for exceptional student performance.

"At Lake Preston, we feel the culture that we have established within our school and classrooms fosters our 'Every Child, Every Day' motto," said Superintendent and Elementary Principal Dana Felderman. "The atmosphere is positive and engaging and you feel that excitement and energy shift into the teaching and learning daily. The teachers, students, parents, and community have truly bought into the high expectations and hard work it takes to achieve our goals."

"When you walk into our school, you're greeted with a mural that says, 'Every student, every day, every way,' a motto our staff and community have taken to heart," said Whitewood Elementary Principal Brittan Porterfield. "With this individualized instruction and attention, students thrive, and they certainly deserve this recognition. I am so grateful to our students, families, staff, and community for their dedication to academic rigor and excellence."

The National Association of ESEA State Program Administrators—formerly the National Title I Association—has been selecting examples of superior, federally funded school programs for national recognition through the National ESEA Distinguished Schools program (recently renamed from its predecessor, the National Title I Distinguished Schools program) since 1996.