

music, languages, special education, technology, media, and the arts has set the standard for secondary education in Minnesota. In 2004 and 2005, the school ranked as one of the top six schools in the State on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments reading and math scores.

Thomas Jefferson High School, which opened in 1970, has 1,748 students and prides itself for its academic rigor. During the past 3 years, 30 students have earned distinction as National Merit Scholar Semifinalists and Commended Scholars. Each year, over 150 students earn college credits at Jefferson by scoring three points or higher on advanced placement tests. After graduation, more than 80 percent of Jefferson students go on to postsecondary educational opportunities.

Academics alone, however, do not present the whole picture. According to the Thomas Jefferson High School mission statement: "The Jefferson High School Community will develop and nurture responsible leaders and enlightened citizens who challenge themselves to create the present and enrich the future." The teachers and administrators at Jefferson High are proud of their students' academic, athletic, and artistic accomplishments, especially when achieved in the spirit of the Thomas Jefferson core ethical values of respect, responsibility, integrity, citizenship, and honesty.

For example, in keeping with Jefferson's broad mission statement, students demonstrated their personal integrity and desire to serve others by working to raise over \$12,000 for hurricane relief and \$10,000 for the Red Cross relief efforts.

In addition, the Jefferson Marching Band, which is fondly known as the Pride of Minnesota, is a source of special luster and has performed at the Cotton Bowl, Alamo Bowl, Fiesta Bowl, and Tournament of Roses Parade. Students are also offered a choice of two orchestra programs.

The school does well in athletic competition. Over its 35-year history, Jefferson High School has won 51 State championships in hockey, soccer, football, baseball, and other men's and women's sports. Recent accomplishments of Jefferson sports teams include a 2004–2005 Boys State Soccer Championship, a 2004–2005 Boys' Hockey Lake Conference and 6AA Championship Title, and a 2003–2004 Girls State Alpine Ski Academic Championship.

Much of the credit for Thomas Jefferson High School's success belongs to its principal, Steve Hill, and the dedicated teachers. The students and staff at Thomas Jefferson High School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at Thomas Jefferson High School

should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Thomas Jefferson High School in Bloomington for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

WILSHIRE PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SAINT ANTHONY VILLAGE, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor Wilshire Park Elementary School, in Saint Anthony Village, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Wilshire Park Elementary School is truly a model of educational success. Wilshire's motto is: "Making Kids #1 for Over 40 Years." The school's reputation is reflected in the fact that nearly half its pupils enter through open enrollment, and there is a long waiting list for acceptance. Families choose Wilshire because it is known for academic excellence and for its safe, caring environment.

Test scores at Wilshire Park Elementary School are well above the State average and continue to improve every year. Three years ago, Wilshire received three stars in reading and math from the Minnesota Department of Education. Two years ago, the school received four stars in reading and three in math. Last year, Wilshire received four stars in reading and five stars in math.

However, test scores and ratings alone do not fully represent a school's true success. The principal and teachers at Wilshire Park Elementary believe many other factors influence children's ability to learn, qualities often better revealed through personal stories describing an atmosphere of caring and nurturing.

The true sense of the Wilshire community is evident from the support the entire school gives to children experiencing tragedies in their lives. One Wilshire student has been on kidney dialysis for several years, waiting to receive a transplant. Last fall, the school held a dance to raise funds to help cover the family's medical expenses. Also, earlier this year, staff rallied to support a first-grader whose mother died suddenly.

Wilshire was the first school in the five-State area to have a K-Kids Club, which is a Kiwanis Club for children to work on projects to benefit the whole community.

Wilshire Park Elementary School is also proud of the tremendous volunteer support it receives from the community. The school currently has 252 active volunteers, of whom 70 to 80 work at the school at least 1 to 2 days per week. These volunteers not only include parents of Wilshire pupils; aunts, grandparents, and community members are also regulars in the volunteer room.

Much of the credit for Wilshire Park Elementary School's success belongs to its recently retired principal, Dr. Bonnie Kirkpatrick, and the dedicated teachers and staff. The pupils and staff at Wilshire Park Elementary School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where children can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and pupils at Wilshire Park Elementary School should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Wilshire Park Elementary School in Saint Anthony Village for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

RENVILLE COUNTY WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT, RENVILLE, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor Renville County West School District, in Renville, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Renville County West School District is truly a model of educational success. The district has struggled financially for many years, primarily as a result of declining enrollment. It has addressed its financial problems through multiple consolidations of many districts into a single district, and last year, the closing of yet another school building. These moves, while financially necessary, are extremely hard on the students, staff, and community.

While the district has been plagued by falling enrollment due to population trends, statutory operating debt, reductions in staff and programs, and staff development funds that have been suspended, the district maintains its commitment to quality education. Its schools have consistently made yearly progress toward the goals of No Child Left Behind.

Despite these challenges, test scores in Renville County West schools have improved over the past few years. Last year, Renville County West Elementary School earned four-star ratings in math and reading; and its high school earned a four-star rating in math. Renville County West's continued academic progress has also overcome changes created by greater numbers of special education, low-income, and minority students.

The statements of teachers and students offer yet another reflection of the success of the district. Social sciences teacher Daniel Rohman writes: "I have developed a senior economics class that gives kids a springboard into life. In this class, I teach the concepts of micro and macro but try to put it into real life examples that the kids have to work at. In this class I teach investments. We do mock