



What's Next for Our Blue Ribbon School

Voices (in order of appearance)

Thomas W. Schmidt, Superintendent, Sherman Central School District, Sherman, NY

Wayne Ryan, Principal, Crosby S. Noyes Education Campus, Washington DC

Marc Johnson, Superintendent, Sanger Unified School District, Fresno, CA (winning school: John Wash Elementary School, Fresno, CA)

The next step is to keep doing what we've been doing to get the award. You have to keep moving forward. Our next step is to say, "Alright, how do we get this for our high school? How do we get this for our middle level area?" We're very excited about this, but this is just the beginning for us, to make sure that our students keep succeeding and become good citizens when they graduate.

I heard someone say this morning, "We in this room represent the best of the schools in the nation, so what are you doing for us? Where do we go next? That's a question I think we've all been thinking of. It's more than having to just maintain, you've got to go to the next step. What the next step is for Noyes, I'm don't know, but I know that my vision for the school has always been that I wanted Noyes to be the best school in the District of Columbia. Not the best black school, not the best school with low form children, with low-academic children—the best school in the District of Columbia. And I didn't understand why we couldn't be. So we're still on that road.

Our determination, our dedication, is to return the favor. Others have helped us to become successful, and we have a moral obligation to do the same for our neighbors. I think across the district, we all embrace and celebrate the recognition that John Wash has received. But in our valley, Sanger Unified looks like almost every other district there. We have the highest concentration of poverty and the lowest parent education rate in America, and it's a very challenging situation with the student needs that come to us. And what we see happening now is that others are looking at the success of John Wash and they're realizing, "their kids look just like our kids." And if John Wash can do it, if Sanger Unified can do it, then we can too.