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**CAPE member
organizations:**

Agudath Israel
of America
American Montessori
Society
Association Montessori
International—USA
Association of Christian
Teachers and Schools
Association of Christian
Schools International
Association of Waldorf
Schools of N.A.
Christian Schools
International
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
Friends Council
on Education
Lutheran Church—
Missouri Synod
National Association of
Episcopal Schools
National Association of
Independent Schools
National Catholic
Educational Association
National Christian
School Association
Oral Roberts University
Educational Fellowship
Seventh-day Adventist
Board of Education
United States Conference
of Catholic Bishops
Wisconsin Evangelical
Lutheran Synod Schools
31 Affiliated State
Organizations

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Dear Private School Administrator:

Thank you for your interest in the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. CAPE has been selected by the U.S. Department of Education to facilitate the application process for private schools. We are honored to do so.

CAPE's Web site (www.capenet.org/brs.html) and the Department's application contain important information, including significant changes in eligibility standards, reporting requirements, and narrative questions for the 2012 program. You should review the Web site and application very carefully. We generally receive many more applications that we are able to submit to the Department (our quota is 50), so we often have to eliminate schools because of noncompliance with detailed technical requirements. To avoid this unfortunate outcome, read the requirements closely. The "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) section of our Web site will be updated as necessary to provide clarification regarding the rules governing the program and to respond to evolving questions. You should review it periodically. Private school applications will be evaluated and processed according to the guidance, standards, procedures, and timeline published on CAPE's Web site.

Please note that the application procedures for private schools differ somewhat from the procedures for public schools. Here is the private school process at a glance:

- **By December 15, 2011:** School officials must register for the program using CAPE's online registration form. Schools not registered by December 15 are not eligible to apply.
- **By January 6, 2012:** CAPE must receive from the school (a) two hard paper copies of the school's online application, (b) an original application cover sheet signed by all appropriate parties, and (c) all appropriate assessment verification document(s). CAPE must receive the package by 5 p.m., January 6.
- **By January 30, 2012:** CAPE provides school officials with feedback from the application review process and advises them whether or not their school will be among the 50 to be nominated.
- **By February 24, 2012:** School officials from nominated schools submit their final online applications to the Department of Education.
- **Fall 2012:** Secretary Duncan announces the 2012 Blue Ribbon Schools.

Throughout the process, please do not hesitate to contact CAPE with any questions you might have regarding the application or the program. We'll be sure to do our best to find the answer and to help you get through the process. E-mail messages about the program are best sent to brs@capenet.org.

Best wishes for great success with this program.

Sincerely,



Joe McTighe
Executive Director