



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION REMOVES DRUID HILL FROM PRIORITY STATUS**

The Nebraska State Board of Education has voted to approve moving Druid Hill Elementary in Omaha off of the list of the state's three priority schools. Druid Hill becomes the first school to successfully transition since the creation of the current performance rating system, developed in 2014.

All of the state's 1,130 schools and 245 school districts are rated as either excellent, great, good, or needs improvement, based on current NeSA status, graduation rates, non-proficiency, and other factors.

The priority schools were selected from among 87 schools deemed most in need of support for improvement. The designation and support of three priority schools is a vital part of the AQuESTT accountability system and required by Nebraska legislative bill 438.

Staff at Druid Hill worked with Omaha Public Schools and an education consultant to make major improvements for more than a year before being named a priority school. Since the priority school designation, Druid Hill has made great strides. For example, student referrals to the office at Druid Hill have dropped from 770 a year to just 253, equating to 21 more days of instruction for the students. There have also been improvements in attendance, test scores, and the overall culture of the school. The improvement has truly been a community effort.

The Board of Education praised the staff at Druid Hill for their efforts to improve and promised to continue to work with the school. "We should be celebrating right now the achievement of Druid Hill in regards to the progress they've made in student achievement, community involvement, and the enthusiasm of the teachers" said State

Board Vice President John Witzel. They have come a long way in a short period of time. Well done."

There has also been significant improvement at the remaining two priority schools, Santee Middle School in Niobrara and Loup County Elementary in Taylor. They are moving forward with their progress plans and will continue to get support from NDE by remaining on priority status for the 2017-2018 school year.

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