

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

200 East North Avenue • Baltimore, Maryland 21202

**Catherine E. Pugh**  
*Mayor, City of Baltimore*

**Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

**Marnell A. Cooper**  
*Chair, Baltimore City Board of  
School Commissioners*

CONTACT:  
**Edie House Foster**  
410-545-1870 (o)  
410-852-5637 (m)

For immediate release:  
January 12, 2017

## **Three Schools Win Award for Exceptional Programs for Gifted and Talented Students**

(Baltimore, MD) – Three Baltimore City public schools—Cecil Elementary, Mount Royal Elementary/Middle, and Thomas Jefferson Elementary/Middle—have received the Excellence in Gifted and Talented Education (EGATE) award from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) this year.

MSDE awards EGATE to schools with gifted and talented programs aligned with Maryland’s criteria for excellence. In an extensive application process, schools must provide documentation for 21 different criteria under four program objectives. Seven Baltimore schools have now received this distinction. The three newly recognized schools will be honored with schools from other Maryland districts at a reception on February 16 at North County High School in Anne Arundel County.

“To thrive in the classroom, students need academic programs that challenge them, spark their interests, and motivate them to learn,” said Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises, chief executive officer of Baltimore City Public Schools. “The EGATE award is a wonderful recognition of the work we are doing to engage our gifted and advanced learners and meet their needs with rich learning experiences.”

“The EGATE award recognizes our teachers’ commitment to gifted education,” said Cecil Elementary School Principal Roxanne Forr. “Our school’s priority has always been providing rigorous instruction to meet the needs and accelerate the learning of all students. Receiving this EGATE award confirms that our teachers are integrating resources above and beyond the curriculum for our gifted and talented students.”

“We’re so excited to receive this award,” said Angela Henry, principal at Thomas Jefferson. “This award recognizes our continued efforts to develop and support all the gifts and talents in all of our students now—and in the future.”

“Receiving the EGATE award is a distinct honor for our school community. It validates all of the hard work our staff and students exhibit on a daily basis in order to reach their highest potential,” said Mount Royal’s Principal Job Grotsky. “Our students and staff really deserve this recognition, and I couldn’t be more proud to be their principal.”

In the 2016-17 school year, gifted and advanced learning programs are in place in 28 elementary and elementary/middle schools. The programs provide identified students with advanced content, curricula, and activities in order to develop and reach their full potential.