



Dallas' Peak Preparatory School a finalist for national award

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Uplift Education, the largest charter school network in North Texas, says that its **Peak Preparatory School** near downtown Dallas has been named one of five high school finalists for the National Excellence in Urban Education Award.

The nonprofit Uplift Education organization operates 20 tuition-free college-preparatory public charter schools in Dallas, [Arlington](#) and [Irving](#). They provide a rigorous, multidisciplinary curriculum with an emphasis on college preparation, and all of Peak Preparatory School's graduates have been accepted in college.

Uplift Education has more than 5,700 students, most of whom are low-income and minority students who will be the first ones in their families to attend college.

Peak Preparatory opened its doors in 2005 and has more than 900 students in grades K-12. Its alumni include two Dell Scholars and one Gates Millennium Scholar. It was ranked No. 11 in the *Washington Post's* High School Challenge last year.

"These schools are among the best urban schools in the nation," said Dr. **Joseph F. Johnson Jr.**, executive director of the **National Center for Urban School Transformation**, which administers the award program.

"Although these schools serve low-income communities with an array of challenges, every finalist boasts achievement results that exceed state averages for all students."

Peak Preparatory senior director **Teresa Khirallah** said: "Peak Preparatory is focused on nurturing strong relationships between teachers, students and parents while maintaining the highest expectations. The school provides a curriculum with the highest academic standards that truly prepares students for college."

Each school that was a finalist received a site visit from an evaluation team of researchers and practitioners last week.

"We recognize schools that are great for every group of students served," said Dr. **Lynne Perez**, associate director of the National Center for Urban School Transformation. "Our focus is all about results: Are all students learning?"

The National Center for Urban School Transformation will announce 10 to 15 award winners in March among the three divisions: elementary school (16 finalists), middle school (six finalists) and high school (five finalists).

Each winning school will receive \$2,500 and will be honored May 23-25 at the National Excellence in Urban Education Symposium in San Diego.

Johnson said the results are "all about curriculum, instruction, and climate. They expect students to excel even when they might have difficult home situations. Furthermore, in great urban schools, teachers provide a caliber of instruction that helps students learn challenging content.

"Teachers present content in ways that make it easier for students to relate and understand. School administrators and teachers work together to establish a climate that engages parents, supports students and breeds success."

For more information, visit uplifteducation.org or facebook.com/uplifteducation. To learn more about the National Center for Urban School Transformation, go to ncust.org.

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