



Before Friday's pepfest, high school students lined the hallways and congratulated elementary students as they headed for the new gym. All the students and staff

gathered to celebrate Fertile-Beltrami being selected a Blue Ribbon School.

Fertile-Beltrami is Blue Ribbon School

Friday was a blue day at the Fertile-Beltrami School but the mood was far from blue. It was exuberant. Most of the students and staff were wearing blue to celebrate Fertile-Beltrami being a National Blue Ribbon School.

On Friday morning, high school students lined the halls and cheered the elementary students on as they walked through on their way to the pepfest in the new gym.

"I'm on top of the world," Principal Natty Messick told the 480-plus students and staff. "What you have done at Fertile-Beltrami is amazing."

He said the school is being "recognized by the entire United States of

America."

Fertile-Beltrami is one of eight schools in Minnesota and one of 349 schools in the entire country to have earned this distinction this year. "This is pretty awesome," Messick said.

He asked the teachers to stand up for a round of applause. The students responded by clapping, cheering and the bleachers rattled with thunderous stomping.

"I was excited when the Commissioner of Education Dr. Brenda Cassellius called to congratulate us and inform us that the Minnesota Department of Education has nominated the Fertile-Beltrami Elementary as a National Blue Ribbon School,"

Messick said.

Blue ribbon schools are among the state's highest-performing schools as measured by state assessments, based on all student scores, student group scores and graduation rates.

"Being named a 2018 National Blue Ribbon School is a culmination of many years of hard work. The Fertile-Beltrami School has an awesome staff that is passionate about what they do, and committed to their students," Messick said.

The Fertile-Beltrami School uses research-based practices that are data driven.

"Our number one priority at Fertile-Beltrami is the education of our students," Messick said. "These stu-

dents have taken the knowledge their teachers have given them and applied that knowledge, showing great success in academic achievement."

"In athletics when our Falcons perform well we celebrate, and we need to need to do the same thing when our Falcons perform well in the classroom," Messick told the students.

They emphatically agreed, roaring their approval.

It was a great way to start a Blue Ribbon day.

As the students filed out after the pepfest, they were invited to help themselves to candy – blue Tootsie Rolls.