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PRESS RELEASE – For immediate distribution

Forest Street Elementary School Selected as 2018 National ESEA Distinguished School for 2018
*A local elementary school, nominated by the NJDOE for outstanding achievement, has been selected as a nationwide winner and named a **National ESEA Distinguished School** for 2018.*

(Orange, NJ, December 12, 2018) The New Jersey Department of Education has selected Forest Street Elementary School as a National ESEA Distinguished School for 2018. Annually, up to 100 schools are nationally recognized under a project that identifies local federally funded ESEA schools that demonstrate a wide array of strengths.

Forest Street Elementary is being recognized for its excellence in serving English language learners for two or more consecutive years. Principal Dr. Yancisca Loften Cooke was thrilled to hear the school is one of two ESEA elementary, middle and high school throughout New Jersey selected for this honor. “This achievement is so significant to us,” said Dr. Loften Cooke, “Because it validates what we have been working so hard to achieve at Forest. We were given a charge by our Interim Superintendent Ronald C. Lee to be innovative and to challenge our students which prompted us to become highly focused on the individual performance, but especially on closing the achievement gap for our English-language learners. The City of Orange and the Orange School District are making significant strides!

A team of teachers, accompanied by Dr. Loften Cooke, Principal and Nyree Delgado, Assistant Principal, will travel to Kansas City, MO to accept the award at ESEA National Conference, January 30 to February 2, 2019. Dr. Loften Cooke explained, “These are just some of the dedicated teachers and administrators who created the innovative programs, made the sacrifices and did the hard work that resulted in this great honor for our school. I am so proud of all my staff—my ‘Forest family!’”

"I could not be any prouder of our school, our teachers, and our district." adds Mrs. Delgado, "We are focused on continuing to achieve academic excellence."

The *National ESEA Distinguished Schools Program* has been in place since 1996, showcasing the success of schools in one of three categories:

- Category 1 Exceptional student performance for two consecutive years
- Category 2 Closing the achievement gap between student groups
- Category 3 Excellence in serving special populations of students

The ESEA is charged with ensuring that all children—especially the disadvantaged—have an opportunity to receive a high-quality education.

“We are proud of Forest Street Elementary School for receiving this distinguished honor and bringing to the forefront the achievement levels of our students,” said Interim Superintendent Ronald C. Lee. Congratulations to the staff and students for what they were able to accomplish.”

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The National ESEA Distinguished Schools Program

The National Association of ESEA State Program Administrators (NAESPA)—formerly the National Title I Association—has been selecting examples of superior, federally funded school programs for national recognition through the National ESEA Distinguished Schools program (recently renamed from its predecessor, the National Title I Distinguished Schools program) since 1996. These schools demonstrate a wide array of strengths, including team approaches to teaching and learning, focused professional development opportunities for staff, individualized programs for student success and strong partnerships between the school, parents, and the community. What makes National ESEA Distinguished Schools' stories especially powerful are the documented student achievement gains that have resulted from their collaborative and targeted efforts and innovations.

More information about all National ESEA Distinguished Schools is available on the ESEA Network website: www.ESEANetwork.org.

Forest Street Elementary School

Forest Street Elementary School serves over 380 students from Pre-K through Grade 7. The school's mission is: Through the full collaboration of school personnel, parents, and the community, Forest Street School is committed to nurturing a generation of formidable global competitors and leaders. Our students are inspired to achieve and walk with integrity, confidence and compassion. We provide opportunities and life experiences which motivates each student to exceed their own expectations as every child is an achiever.

For more information about Forest Street Elementary School's ESL program, contact: Dr. Yancisca Loftin Cooke, Principal, 973-677-4120, cookeyan@orange.k12.nj.us