



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: December 3, 2025  
To: Local Educational Agency Leads  
Route To: Principals, Assistant Principals, ESEA Directors  
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Educational Services

## National ESEA Distinguished School for 2026

The New Jersey Department of Education is pleased to announce that Jersey City Golden Door Charter School has been named a 2026 National Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Distinguished School. This recognition honors the school's outstanding work in serving its multilingual learner population and its commitment to fostering an inclusive, high-quality educational environment where all students can succeed.

The 2026 [ESEA Distinguished Schools Program](#) is sponsored by the National Association of ESEA State Program Administrators (NAESPA). The Program honors schools demonstrating exceptional student progress and strong performance on ESEA indicators. Selections are made at the state level, and Jersey City Golden Door Charter School was chosen by the New Jersey Department of Education for this prestigious recognition in 2026.

As part of the award, the school will receive up to \$15,000 to enhance Title I, Part A programs, which support schools serving high percentages of children from low-income families. In addition, Golden Door Charter School will be celebrated alongside other ESEA Distinguished Schools nationwide at the NAESPA Conference in February 2026. Attending staff will have the opportunity to engage in workshops, professional development sessions, and best-practice presentations, fostering continued growth and excellence.

c: Members, State Board of Education  
NJDOE Staff  
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network  
Garden State Coalition of Schools  
NJ LEE Group