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Steve Marshall
Alabama Attorney General



For More Information, contact:

Mike Lewis (334) 353-2199

Joy Patterson (334) 242-7491

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**AG STEVE MARSHALL PRESENTS PINE LEVEL ELEMENTARY
WITH 2017 SAFE SCHOOL INITIATIVE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE**

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Steve Marshall today presented Pine Level Elementary School with the Attorney General’s Safe School Initiative Award of Excellence for Alabama State Board of Education District 5. Schools were selected as winners for 2017 from seven* Alabama State School Board of Education districts, as well as private schools for three regions of the state.

“In these times, we are all intensely aware of the serious responsibility our schools carry for the safekeeping of our children,” said Attorney General Marshall. “Recent events have been heartbreaking reminders that we must remain vigilant and committed to provide the best protections possible in Alabama’s schools. I am pleased to carry on this important tradition of the Attorney General’s Office, to recognize schools throughout our state for dedication and excellence in keeping students safe. Each day that parents leave their children at school, they are entrusting what they hold most precious into the care of schoolteachers, principals, school resource officers and other staff. With these awards, we honor those who have achieved particularly high standards and set examples that others may follow. We are grateful for their service and commitment to protecting the children of Alabama.”

In presenting the award today Attorney General Marshall said, “The Attorney General’s Office is proud that Pine Level Elementary School was selected as one of the 10 winning schools in Alabama for 2017. In making this decision, judges noted many things that distinguished Pine Level Elementary School: equipping teachers with blue bags that contain vital student information for emergencies, using initiatives like ‘Wise Owl’ and ‘Bully Proof’ to make the school culture safer by reducing bullying and promoting respect for one another, and using a telegram app for communication between staff and officials during drills and emergencies.”

Pine Level Elementary Principal Christen Harry said, “The 2017 Attorney General’s Alabama Safe Schools Award of Excellence encompasses so many areas. Receiving such a prestigious award begins with a strong Safety Committee, a solid School Safety Plan, unfailing support and collaboration from local law enforcement and local emergency response agencies, involvement from Autauga County Sheriff’s Department, community participation and mentoring initiatives, fire prevention, drug free initiatives, anti-bullying, and anti-cyber-bullying prevention. Pine Level Elementary School has assembled an outstanding team of faculty, community members, and first responders to help keep our children safe. We at Pine Level feel privileged to receive such an honorable award.

Attorney General Marshall is presenting awards for the 2017 Safe School Awards of Excellence winners to the 10 winning schools during April and May. Other winning schools throughout the state include Opelika Middle School in Lee County, Satsuma High School in Mobile County, Nichols-Lawson Middle School in Talladega County, Austin High School in Morgan County, Simmons Middle School in Jefferson County, Bob Jones High School in Madison County, Sumiton Christian School in Walker County, Coosa Valley Academy in Shelby County and The Lakeside School in Barbour County.

**Alabama has eight public school districts but no submissions were received from District 4.*

