

White Hall Elementary among 320 schools recognized as Blue Ribbon Schools



United States Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced Tuesday that White Hall Elementary was one of 320 schools recognized as 2008 No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools. The No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools award distinguishes and honors schools for helping students achieve at very high levels and for making significant progress in closing the achievement gap.

"White Hall Elementary has proven to be a school that is student centered because of the high expectations set for every student," said Superintendent Tommy Floyd. "White Hall Elementary is a shining example of a school community that uses formative learning results to identify and establish assistance when a student

struggles."

White Hall Elementary was one of nine elementary schools in the district that met Adequate Yearly Progress according to NCLB requirements this year. White Hall also scored among the top performing schools statewide on the Kentucky Core Content Test last year – increasing their academic index from 115.5 in 2006 to 118.9 in 2007. White Hall's test scores continue to far exceed the state's expectations – scoring more than 120 in five content areas this year.

"Our staff has shown tremendous teamwork and dedication to each and every child that walks through our door," said White Hall Principal Randy Neeley. "This is certainly an award that everyone in the White Hall community can be proud of – staff, students, and parents."

White Hall Elementary was one of five schools in Kentucky to receive the honor this year. The others included Veterans Park Elementary in Lexington, Our Lady of Lourdes in Louisville, May Valley Elementary in Martin and Highland Elementary in Owensboro.

"For the last several years, the Madison County School System has observed the staff at White Hall Elementary as they establish specific new goals for targeted students which has resulted in continuous improvement and extremely high achievement," Floyd said.

The NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools that are either academically superior or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement to high levels. The schools are based on one of two criteria:

- Schools with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance to high levels on state tests; and
- Schools whose students, regardless of background, achieve in the top 10 percent of their state on state tests or in the case of private schools in the top 10 percent of the nation on nationally-normed tests.

"White Hall Elementary has reached and surpassed the Kentucky Department of Education 2014 school goal for the last several years," Floyd said. "Randy Neeley has exhibited quality instructional leadership that takes student-centered data and applies it to daily practice. He and his staff have created a school culture that centers on individual student achievement."

"This goes to show that White Hall is a leader in following the district's mantra of 'Every Student Counts' because they do," Neeley said.

White Hall Elementary houses about 630 students in Preschool through fifth grade.

Winners of the NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools awards are invited to attend an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. on October 20 and 21.

"It is my hope that the district further examines White Hall Elementary's current best practices and duplicates them across the board," Floyd said.