

## Press Release

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Emily Schoen

(304) 342-7849

[Emily@educationalliance.org](mailto:Emily@educationalliance.org)

### **Geary Elementary/Middle School Achieves Program Success** ***Local principal receives honorarium for parental involvement program***

**Left Hand, W.Va.** – A Roane County school principal has been recognized by The Education Alliance for her work to increase achievement and influence positive attitudes about education. Brenda Chadwell, principal of Geary Elementary/Middle School, recently received an honorarium and an award from The Education Alliance for her leadership in the Student Educational and Economic Development Success (SEEDS) program. As part of the two-year SEEDS effort, Chadwell created an initiative that addressed reading/language arts academic performance, and increased communication with parents about the role of education and the importance of student achievement.

SEEDS is an exclusive professional development experience for public school principals in West Virginia that links them with a professional education consultant and a seasoned business CEO. Together, they develop and execute a business plan that targets key challenges at their schools. The benefits of SEEDS include enhanced principal leadership skills, increased student achievement and community involvement, and improvements in facilities and management processes. Chadwell was assisted by Dr. Mike Cunningham, a Marshall University faculty member who served as her SEEDS' consultant, and by John Golden who served as her business mentor.

Chadwell and her team focused specifically on students from low-income families. She put a structure in place to increase student achievement in reading/language arts through specialized instructional strategies. In an effort to garner more parental support for education and achievement, the team developed better avenues of communication with parents. These included a series of informative newsletters and special after-school meetings with parents. Chadwell also hired an attendance mentor who worked closely with families to reduce absences and tardies. Students who participated in the program and illustrated academic and/or behavior improvements were given special recognition and incentives.

"We understand the critical role parents play in the education of our children. Our goal has been to work directly with moms, dads, grandparents and guardians so they can be more involved in the education process," Chadwell said. "Opening the door of communication and making parents partners in education has been so helpful for the school and for our students," she said. "We have definitely built a solid foundation for future academic success, and SEEDS has made it possible," she said.

"This program has not only been informative for parents, but it has also empowered them to be education and achievement advocates for their children," said Dr. Patricia Kusimo, president/CEO of The Education Alliance. "By eliminating communication barriers, Ms. Chadwell has improved relationships and changed lives in the process," explained Dr. Kusimo.

Geary Elementary/Middle will receive \$50,000 in SEEDS assistance from The Education Alliance during a two-year period to help meet the goals and objectives of its program.

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