

## Press Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Nicholas County Career and Technical Center (NCCTC) Achieves Program Success** *Local principal receives honorarium for innovative education-based programing*

**Craigsville, W.Va.** – A local principal has been honored for her commitment to reduce truancy and lead students along a pathway of academic success in Nicholas County. Vickie Nutter, principal of the Nicholas County Career and Technical Center (NCCTC), was recently honored with an award from The Education Alliance for her leadership in The Education Alliance's Student Educational and Economic Development Success (SEEDS) program. Nutter launched an intensive effort to reach students in jeopardy of dropping out, and to spark an interest in the field of science among high school and middle school students. As a result, she received an honorarium from The Education Alliance for the success her program has experienced.

SEEDS is an exclusive professional development experience for public school principals in West Virginia that links them with a seasoned business CEO and with a professional education consultant. 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. Nutter was assisted by Dr. Cynthia Kolsun, a Marshall University faculty member, who served as her SEEDS' consultant.

Nutter's main goal was to ensure students completed high school on time. To achieve this, she and her team focused on several challenges at the school including poor academic achievement; a lack of student motivation; and disruptive student behavior. She then employed a former principal to work solely with at-risk juniors and seniors; she implemented a credit recovery program for those students in jeopardy of not graduating on time; and she established a high-tech, learning environment for at-risk students. Nutter also partnered with Summersville Middle School to encourage academic progress through the Gateway Program. This program fosters an interest in science and pre-engineering among middle school students.

During her two-year participation in SEEDS, Nutter reports that the truancy and dropout rates were significantly decreased with only a few students not graduating with their class at NCCTC. She also reports sustained academic increases for students who received support in English. In addition, she says that disciplinary infractions were decreased by one-third among students enrolled in the Gateway Program at the middle school.

"The SEEDS program has provided a final hope for some of our students. Without participating in the program, these students could not graduate with their class or at all," Nutter said. "I am a firm believer in second chances, and this program has just reinforced my belief."

"Ms. Nutter has done an outstanding job of implementing the credit recovery and pre-engineering programs at Nicholas County Career and Technical Center," said SEEDS' Consultant Dr. Cynthia Kolsun. "Likewise, the Gateway Program at the middle schools has excited younger students about the relevance and importance of science in their lives," she continued. "Nicholas County is fortunate to have such a dedicated and innovative leader."

Dr. Patricia Kusimo, president/CEO of The Education Alliance, believes NCCTC's program exemplifies the kind of passion needed in public education. "Ms. Nutter is aggressively working for her students," Dr. Kusimo said. "She understands that education changes lives, and she is committed to positioning her students for graduation and for academic success," she said. "We are pleased that NCCTC was a part of the SEEDS program."

NCCTC will receive a total of \$60,000 in SEEDS assistance from The Education Alliance over three years to help meet the goals and objectives of its program. Principals were selected for the SEEDS program through a competitive application process. Preference was given to principals with three or fewer years of experience, and who were in the top 25 percent of their Principal Leadership Academy class.

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