

Press Release

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Rupert Elementary School Achieves Program Success

Local principal receives honorarium for building academic success and community support

Rupert, W.Va. – The Education Alliance is pleased to recognize a Greenbrier County principal for her efforts to improve academic achievement, parent involvement and business relationships at her school. Leetha Williams, principal at Rupert Elementary School, recently received an honorarium from The Education Alliance for a multi-faceted program to advance learning and community support at her school. The program was a part of the school's two-year participation in The Education Alliance's Student Educational and Economic Development Success (SEEDS) Program.

SEEDS is an exclusive professional development experience for public school principals in West Virginia that links them with professional educational consultants and seasoned business CEOs. 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. Frankie Apel served as Williams' educational consultant and provided guidance and support to ensure the initiative's success.

Although Rupert Elementary faces a number of socio-economic challenges, there remains a commitment by educators, parents and others within the community to support student achievement. Williams and her team launched an aggressive effort to increase student performance in math and language arts; to increase the integration of technology into instruction; to facilitate more parent involvement in the school and to support additional professional development opportunities for teachers.

As a result of its SEEDS participation, Rupert Elementary was able to provide SMART boards, student responders and document cameras for each classroom. Williams hired a technology integration specialist to support teachers as they increased their use of technology in the classrooms. Student access to technology was improved with greater internet access (student-to-internet connected computers increased to 1-to-.08). The team also created a Student Assessment Leadership Team that closely monitored student achievement. Finally, the school has built a strong foundation for parent engagement that it will continue to develop in order to sustain volunteer and academic support of its activities.

"SEEDS has allowed us the opportunity to support and enrich learning in ways that we have not been able to do before," said Williams. "From the assessments, to the technology and teacher and parent support, we have created a more comprehensive educational structure," she said.

"Ms. Williams has created an open environment for learning in which students, teachers and families are supported," explained Dr. Patricia Kusimo, president/CEO of The Education Alliance. "As a result, she is improving academic enrichment while building more capacity among those who support and serve the school," she said. "Her commitment to integrating technology will have a lasting impact on the way teachers teach and the way students learn," Dr. Kusimo said.

Rupert Elementary School received a total of \$50,000 in SEEDS assistance from The Education Alliance during the past two years to help meet the goals and objectives of its program.

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