



Stewart County's Highly Effective Teachers chosen by the state

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The Tennessee Department of Education and Battelle for Kids recognized the practices of highly effective teachers in K-12 public school districts in Tennessee as part of the First to the Top program.

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The state identified 50 teachers across the state in each subject area as Highly Effective teachers for the Battelle for Kids research.

The following were chosen from Stewart County Middle School: Lee Ann Barrow, language arts; Kim Runyon, math; and Robin Wallace, science.

The teachers were invited to participate in a one-day focus group in Nashville with other Highly Effective teachers in respective subject areas from across the state. They were able to share the factors and practices leading to their success in the classroom.

Based on the participants' feedback, Tennessee Department of Education and Battelle for Kids will identify commonalities among the practices of Highly Effective educators then create professional development resources to replicate these best practices across the state.

Barrow was also chosen to participate in an interview for a video with Battelle for Kids discussing her best practices and an inspiring story.

In order to be effective, teachers need to produce value-added scores at least two standard errors above expected in math and science and nearly three standard errors above expected in reading.

Teachers are then placed in a category of levels, level one being the least effective and level five being the most effective. Stewart County had numerous teachers on the Effective Teacher list.

Runyon, a seventh grade math teacher, was one of the 13 math teachers selected across the state to participate in the TCAP Achievement Program. The group analyzed about 240 future seventh- and eighth-grade TCAP questions, answered them and made sure each question met the Tennessee standards.

Also, Dr. Heather Genz, a seventh-grade language arts teacher, earned a position for the state of Tennessee as a Regional Value-Added Leader. Candidates across the state were required to submit resumes, and finalists had to undergo a panel interview process.

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Once selected, Dr. Genz attended a training conference in Nashville to become proficient in interpreting value-added data and reports, which are obtained from state testing scores.

Value-added is now used to evaluate teacher performance, and Dr. Genz is a resource that regional school systems can utilize to help facilitate understanding among various stakeholders.

These selections of Stewart County teachers help the county to have a voice and a decision in the TCAP assessments.

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