

SCHOOL TO WATCH: Olmstead Elementary

The National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, an alliance of more than 60 national associations and organizations, created a vision and criteria for high-performing middle-grades schools in 1997. Schools that meet those criteria are designated Schools to Watch.

Twelve schools received a site visit, and nine received recognition as 2008 Schools to Watch in Kentucky. Olmstead Elementary in Logan County was one of the nine to receive this special recognition.

OLMSTEAD ELEMENTARY CHARACTERISTICS AND REPLICABLE PRACTICES

Academic Excellence

- “I Can” statements are posted throughout the school and in classrooms.
- Teachers are encouraged and provided time to visit other schools in the district.

Developmental Responsiveness

- Ram-bassadors provide students an opportunity to participate in the real-life experience of preparing an application and interviewing for a job.
- A T-shirt is designed annually and given to students at the beginning of the year.

Social Equity

- Teachers flex the schedule as needed to accommodate classroom activities.
- An interpreter for Spanish-speaking students is available daily for English as a second language students.



— Photo by Amy Wallot, Kentucky Department of Education

Sixth-grade students Matt Richardson, left, Elijah Abston, center, and Austin Brinkley work on a sign in Leslie Smith’s class for the Schools to Watch celebration at Olmstead Elementary.

Organizational Support

- Students are dismissed early on Fridays to provide time for teachers to meet and plan.
- The district offers a Professional Growth Academy for new teachers.

Principal Ben Kemplin said the relationships his teachers build with their students and how they go beyond expectations to see that students’ needs are being met is what makes his school special. A GEAR UP congratulations to you, Principal Kemplin, and to your

staff, faculty, and students!

Olmstead Elementary, also named a School to Watch in 2005, has participated in the GEAR UP Kentucky program since 2005. For more information on Olmstead Elementary, visit: www.olmstead.logan.k12.ky.us/

Source: Kentucky Department of Education, Kentucky Teacher, October 2008, by Matthew Tungate, matthew.tungate@education.ky.gov

College planning day a hit

On Saturday, Oct. 11, 2008, GEAR UP-Northern Kentucky held its first College 101/102 conference at Northern Kentucky University. The conference targeted students from Newport and Covington Independent Schools grades 8-10 and their parents for a great day of college planning.

Students and parents were welcomed to campus by Dr. Gail Wells, NKU’s Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost. Conference participants attended information and skill building workshops, toured campus, and finished the day with lunch and an inspiring message from Dr. Zebulun Davenport, the Vice President of Student Affairs.

Attendees were encouraged

to use the day well, to get their questions answered about the “how” in accessing the postsecondary arena so that all would leave the day confident that they had an increased understanding of the steps necessary to get to college.

GEAR UP would like to thank the KnowHow2GOKy campaign for providing the financial resources to make this day possible, and also our conference planning partners, Northern Kentucky University and members of the staff of Newport and Covington Schools that gave of their time and energy to create a unique opportunity for our students!

By Wendy Holtman, GEAR UP Project Associate, N. Ky.



Northern Kentucky University hosted College 101/102 for students and parents to learn how to plan for college last month.

Teachers are winners

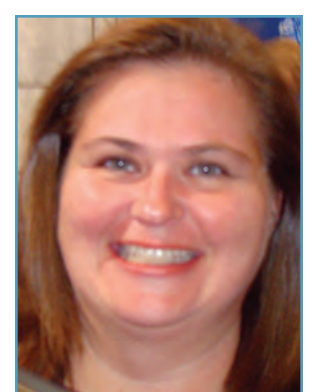
The Kentucky Department of Education and Ashland Inc. selected 24 outstanding Kentucky educators as recipients of the 2009 Ashland Inc. Teacher Achievement Awards. And, good news — two GEAR UP teachers made the grade! Congratulations to Ms. Margaret Mattingly of Thomas Jefferson Middle School in Jefferson County and Ms. Melissa Singleton of Rockcastle County Middle School!



Melissa Singleton

All 24 teachers were honored at a ceremony in Frankfort on October 22. Representatives from the Kentucky Department of Education, the Governor’s Office, and Ashland were on hand to honor the teachers and to recognize the Kentucky Elementary, Middle, and High School Teachers of the Year.

Ashland presented the recipients with cash awards and framed certificates. Again, a GEAR UP congratulations to Ms. Mattingly and Ms. Singleton — you’ve made us proud!



Margaret Mattingly

Source, Kentucky Department of Education, ParentInfo, Oct. 2008

??Questions/Comments??

Do you have questions or comments about this issue of the *GEAR UP Gazette*? Would you like to submit your own story for publication? If so, please contact:

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