



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 4, 2009

CONTACT: Diana Gulotta, assistant superintendent for communications
(314) 953-5005 or (314) 575-0503 cell

HSD elementary, middle schools recognized for successful school behavior programs

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) will recognize five schools in the Hazelwood School District for exemplary Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) programs with Awards of Excellence.

Arrowpoint and Russell elementary schools earned silver Awards of Excellence for 2008-2009.

Hazelwood North Middle, Hazelwood Southeast Middle and Walker Elementary schools earned bronze Awards of Excellence for 2008-2009.

Each school met high standards and criteria set by DESE for schools with the PBIS program.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is a system designed to establish and maintain effective school environments that benefit all students with specific school-wide expectations, rules and procedures and is led through active teaching and acknowledgment of appropriate social and behavioral skills. PBIS has been implemented in schools across the nation.

“It’s a great accomplishment,” said Hazelwood Southeast Middle School seventh grade math teacher John Koenecker. “We were a little surprised that we won but we have done a lot of hard work for PBIS.”

Koenecker and Rachel VanDernoot, sixth grade science teacher, help coordinate the school’s PBIS efforts.

“PBIS has made a huge difference at Southeast Middle because the process has helped us to clearly define the behavior expectations for our students,” said Principal Dr. Carol Fouse. “We intentionally teach behavior lessons that focus on our expectations. We have used the “Stallion Medallion” reward system to create a positive environment where excellent behavior is recognized.”

At Hazelwood North Middle School, art teacher Shannon McCarty-Nixon and sixth grade math teacher Sarah Brommelhorst help coordinate their school's PBIS efforts.

"We're very, very excited about the award," McCarty-Nixon said. "We have all worked very hard to achieve this. Last year, we came so close.

"I think it works well in the classroom on an everyday basis," she said. "Students work better when they are seen doing something positive instead of something negative."

She added that Hazelwood North's PBIS effort encompasses every aspect of the school.

"It's become our environment, not just an expectation," said McCarty-Nixon.

Walker Elementary School is in its second year as a PBIS school. This is their first PBIS award.

"It's wonderful for our teachers and students to be recognized for all of their hard work," said Principal Dr. Eric Arbetter.

"PBIS has helped us use data to respond to our students' needs, making Walker safer for our students. Each month, our PBIS committee meets to look at the previous month's discipline data and develop strategies to help in problem areas," he said.

More than 130 schools in Missouri will be honored by state education officials at the fourth annual Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support Summer Institute, scheduled June 7-9, and sponsored by DESE and the University of Missouri Center for Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support.

Arrowpoint and Russell elementary schools also earned silver Awards of Excellence in 2007-2008.

-30-

The Hazelwood School District serves nearly 19,000 students and is the second largest district in St. Louis County. Communities in the district include Hazelwood, Black Jack, Spanish Lake, a large section of Florissant, portions of Bridgeton, Bellefontaine Neighbors and Ferguson, and several square miles of unincorporated St. Louis County. The mission of the Hazelwood School District is to launch learners on a quest for high standards, fairness and distinguished achievement.