

# Local districts win national recognition

Advocate Staff Report

The Eminence Independent school district turned the traditional education model upside down and because of that, has found itself right-side up in a national recognition competition.

The district's School on F.I.R.E. program has been named as one of five first-place Magna Award winners in its enrollment division. The award was presented during the National School Boards Association's annual conference in San Diego, April 13-15. The program, which highlights best practices of school district leadership, is cosponsored by the *American School Board Journal* and Sodexo School Services.

Eminence's Framework of Innovation for Reinventing Education program was the result of a complete reevaluation of its approaches, emphasizing providing students with the kind of education they want. The changes included a one-to-one laptop program, dual college credit opportunities and the jettisoning of the traditional schedule at the high school. The schedule builds in time for struggling students to get immediate interventions and also time for students to work on more comprehensive projects. Mastery of content has become the byword.

The district last year won a KSBA PEAK (*Public Education Achieves in Kentucky*) Award for the School on F.I.R.E. program.

Three other Kentucky districts were Magna honorable mention winners in their enrollment division:

*Kenton County*, for its Investing in Students, Making Math Count program. The middle school-level program's goal is to engage students in math through a long-term investment simulation game that introduces students to stocks, dividends, compounding, diversification and related math concepts. In particular, it reinforces new math standards. The project is a partnership among the district, a private investment firm and Northern Kentucky University, which is tracking the related student achievement data.

*Jenkins Independent*, for its Dual Credit and Mentoring Program. Its two-prong goal is to provide opportunities for at-risk students to attend college at no cost and to mentor younger students into the program. The Jenkins board picks up the tuition and transportation tab for

qualifying students to attend dual-credit courses at the University of Pikeville. The students in turn mentor younger pupils and motivate them to attend college as well. The program not only enables students to earn college credit, but it acclimates them to a college campus experience.

*Taylor County*, for its district Performance-Based Education Model. A previous KSBA PEAK winner, the district's performance-based model allows students in grade-level content areas to progress based on mental capacity rather than chronological age. The model includes a bring your own device option, districtwide wireless connections, on-line college courses and college/career readiness instructors. It has contributed to the system's zero dropout rate. ☞



Above: an Eminence teacher helps a student with a lesson on his laptop. Technology is a large part of the district's School on F.I.R.E. (Framework of Innovation for Reinventing Education) program, which won a first-place Magna Award from the National School Boards Association.

Left: Superintendent Buddy Berry (second from left), a school principal and members of the Eminence Independent Board of Education accept a first place Magna Award from representatives of NSBA's *American School Board Journal* and Sodexo School Services, sponsors of the program.