

COMMUNITY MAY 23, 2016 6:30 PM

Northeast Tarrant schools rated best in county

HIGHLIGHTS

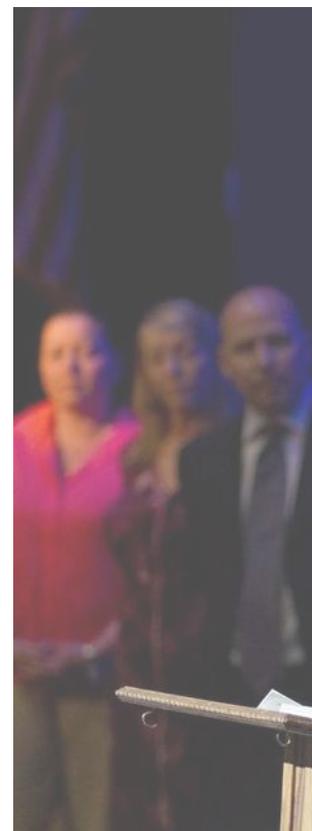
Nonprofit promotes improvement to education

Twenty-seven schools recognized in Tarrant County

Rankings also highlight high-achieving, high-poverty schools



Northeast Tarrant schools fare well in list of county's best 00:36



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BY DIANE SMITH

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FORT WORTH — Twenty-seven schools, mostly in Northeast Tarrant County, were recognized Monday as the best in Tarrant County, according to an annual report by a nonprofit group focused on education.

The five best elementary schools were all in Southlake in the Carroll district, according to Children at Risk.

Middle schools recognized were from the Birdville, Carroll, Fort Worth and Westlake school districts.

High schools were from Arlington, Hurst-Euless-Bedford, Fort Worth, Keller and Westlake.

The top campuses were announced Monday during a news conference at the Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts in Fort Worth. That campus was listed as the fourth top high school in Tarrant County. The top middle school is George Dawson Middle in the Carroll district, and the top high school is Westlake Academy.

47 percent

of Tarrant County schools made an A or B in the report, but 34 percent made a D or F.

Mechelle Brys
campus is an

“We have worked extremely hard to bring our curriculum and to bring the rigor of our classes, the safety, and that the recognition is an excellent accolade.

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Schools were measured by performance on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) reading and math tests, academic growth, with an adjustment to eliminate bias toward campuses with low percentages of low-income students, and college readiness.

Robert Sanborn, president and CEO of Children at Risk, said the rankings help bring education issues to the table while highlighting schools that are making the grade.

About 47 percent of Tarrant County schools made an A or B in the report, but 34 percent made a D or F, he said. The full report will be available in upcoming days, officials said.

“That is too many schools that aren’t up to standard,” Sanborn said.

The report on low-performing schools will be released later, officials said.

Based on the analysis, the organization ranked the top five elementary schools, the top five middle schools and the top 10 high schools in Tarrant County.

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WE WANTED TO RECOGNIZE THE REGULAR, NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL.

Jesus Davila, Children at Risk

Gold Ribbon status was awarded to neighborhood schools that have a large percentage of low-income students, said Jesus Davila, assistant director of the Center for Social Measurement and Evaluation at Children at Risk.

“We wanted to recognize the regular, neighborhood school,” Davila said of the Gold Ribbon campuses.

Sanborn said strong campuses that serve low-income families share certain characteristics, including strong supplemental programs after school or Saturdays, teachers with a “missionary zeal,” strong principals, focus on data and “a culture of high expectations.”

Blanca Galindo, principal of Charles Nash Elementary, said the school has a strong sense of community and high expectations for the students.

“No student is allowed to work below their potential,” Galindo said.

Children at Risk, which has offices in Houston, Dallas and Fort Worth, has been analyzing school performance since 2006. This year, about 7,000 Texas schools were evaluated, Davila said.

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TOP TARRANT SCHOOLS

Top elementary schools

(all schools from Southlake Carroll school district)

Carroll, Walnut Grove, Eubanks Intermediate, Rockenbaugh, Johnson

Top middle schools

Dawson (Southlake Carroll), Smithfield (Birdville), Carroll Middle (Southlake Carroll), Westlake Academy (Westlake charter), Young Women's Leadership Academy (Fort Worth)

Top high schools

Westlake Academy, Grapevine (Grapevine-Colleyville), Keller (Keller), Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts (charter school), Colleyville Heritage (Grapevine-Colleyville), Bell (Hurst-Eules-Bedford), Trinity (Hurst-Eules-Bedford), Fossil Ridge (Keller), Central (Keller), Martin (Arlington)

Gold Ribbon schools

Charles Nash Elementary (Fort Worth), Liberty Elementary (White Settlement), Sycamore Elementary (Crowley), Oakhurst Elementary (Fort Worth), Harrison Lane Elementary (H-E-B), Gunn Junior High (Arlington), Johnson Sixth Grade Campus (Everman).

Source: Children at Risk

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