

Belfair Elementary Earns 2016 WA State Achievement Award

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Students in Washington State must excel on many different levels to graduate. Washington State Achievement Awards reflect the diversity of student achievement by recognizing exceptional schools. There are seven categories on which the schools are judged: Overall Excellence, High Progress, English Language Arts Growth, Math Growth, Extended Graduation Rate, English Language Acquisition and Closing the Achievement Gap.

Belfair Elementary School (BES) received an award in one of the most challenging of the seven categories: **Closing the Achievement Gap** (for the subgroup Students with Disabilities). Over the past two years, and for an exceptionally difficult category, BES has moved the needle of educational progress forward by 10%.

This Achievement Award for “Closing the Achievement Gap” is based on BES Students with Disabilities’ improvement on the Smarter Balanced Assessment (state standardized test) in language arts and math over two years.

How big is this? Of the 2,300 schools in the state only 281, including BES, won in one or more award categories. With this award, BES is recognized as a model for the state in one of the most difficult categories of all in contemporary education.

Another mark of success besides what the school is being recognized for with the Achievement Award, is that BES students, as a whole made great gains on state assessments in each subject area during the 2015-2016 school year. BES rated on the top performing tier for Growth on the Washington Achievement Index in Science, English Language Arts, and Math.

Dan King, Principle of BES, credits the success of his school to the dedication, hard work and the ever-advancing professional development of his teachers. During Monday professional collaboration time, teachers look at formative assessment data to determine where

students are in relation to the state standards. They use this information to determine next steps for subgroups and individual students in order to help them make progress toward the standards. Teachers use the collaboration time to discuss and plan the implementation of effective research-based strategies aimed at meeting the needs of all learners.

At BES Dan notes the focus is on each student individually as a learner, and on each teacher individually as a continually developing and growing professional educator.

Let's Hear It for an Outstanding Team of Professionals at BES!