

Veterans Park touts its Blue-Ribbon qualities

[Veterans Park Elementary](#) opened its doors one afternoon to show the Kentucky Department of Education why it's a national award-winning school.

“What we hope to learn is what makes this Blue Ribbon School unique so we can share it with others,” Ruth Webb, a KDE deputy commissioner, said before the one-hour tour in early February.

Principal Amy McVey pointed out examples of everything from student artwork and PTA projects to classroom teaching methods and the spic-and-span quality of the building.

She also noted the school has a wide variety of teachers with different styles, which helps VPE meet students' needs. “It's not all paper and pencil,” she said. “There are lots of activities so the kids know it's real.”

Veterans Park found out last semester that it was among the latest [Blue Ribbon Schools](#). The federal No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools program honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools that are either academically superior or demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement to high levels.

“Part of our success is everything we do has a purpose, and the kids are so engaged,” McVey said. “It's the teamwork that makes the difference.”

Also touring Veterans Park on Feb. 6 were state Board of Education member C.B. Akins, KDE spokeswoman Lisa Gross, Fayette County Superintendent Stu Silberman and Carmen Coleman, a FCPS elementary schools director.

Silberman praised McVey's efforts. “We have a good leader right here. The kids really respond well,” he told Webb in the hallway. “Everything is excellent, and that's what we have to have.”

Webb, who chatted with individual children as the group stopped by classrooms, agreed. “It's the leadership. It starts at the top. She knows what it means to be a winner,” she said of McVey.

Gross, who has visited Veterans Park a few times, said the positive atmosphere is evident when people walk through the front door.

“Everybody seems happy to be here. They all seem to be moving toward a common goal,” Gross said. “It's a culture, an attitude – and you can't put a price on that.”