New Teacher Academy

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When state funding was cut for the Kentucky Teacher Internship Program, the Warren County School district took matters into its own hands by partnering with WKU’s School of Teacher education.

Amy Bingham has more on the partnership in this week’s View from the Hill.

This mentoring program between first year teachers and more seasoned educators was too important to lose. That’s why Warren County Schools and WKU are working together to make sure new teachers are given the support they need to succeed.

Thomas Poole is in his first year of teaching agriculture classes at South Warren High School.

 “I teach ag construction skills and that class consists of hydraulics, robotics, welding, electricity and woodworking.”

He’s also part of the New Teacher Academy that pairs him with a more experienced teacher.

 “As a first year teacher I’ve got a lot of questions. I’ve got a lot of things I’m not sure about and I kind of need a little bit of guidance.”

That’s where Julie Waddell comes in. She has twelve years of experience in the classroom.

 “We spend one hour a week together and to have a conversation with him after school. He’s just so enthusiastic and excited about teaching you can’t help but become excited and inspired to go take that back to your own classroom.”

Thanks to a partnership between WKU and Warren County Schools, there are approximately sixty first year teachers like Poole getting this extra attention.

 “In Warren County that was one of our requirements that all of our teachers who are new to teaching go through this internship process.”

 “We have great teachers that are prepared and ready to go but they need somebody coaching them and when they run into challenging circumstances they have the support needed to get beyond that and be successful.”

When state funding was suspended for a similar internship program, Warren County reached out to WKU to find another way.

 “We want to be able to say we didn’t drop the ball and we didn’t let our teachers flounder and ultimately our students, it’s all about the kids.”

 “We’ve really learned what my weak parts are and how we can improve them.”

The New Teacher Academy, which held its end of the year banquet tonight, also had five seminars throughout the academic year on topics including classroom management, gifted education and ways to improve family participation.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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