Schools Recognized for Incorporating Student, Teacher, Parent Voices in Local Education Planning

Project Tomorrow Recognizes Schools and Districts Who Are Empowering Students, Teachers and Parents in Decision Making

Irvine, Calif. — Last year, more than 500,000 students, parents, educators and members of the community representing more than 7,600 schools nationwide participated in the 2015 Speak Up Research Project on Digital Learning. Out of those schools, this group of more than 200 are being recognized as Speak Up Loud and Clear Schools for their total student participation, length of time involved with Speak Up and use of data in local decision making. Many of these schools exceeded 80 percent student survey participation, allowing for an extremely rich dataset for schools to use in their own local planning and research.

“Each year, we recognize schools and districts who are incorporating authentic feedback from their students, educators, parents and community as they develop strategic plans, make budgeting decisions, enhance their curriculum and determine professional development needs,” said Dr. Julie Evans, CEO of Project Tomorrow. “Speak Up is a free service to schools and districts that allows them to collect direct feedback from their local stakeholders and contribute to the national education debate at the same time.”

Based upon total participation and demonstrated commitment to engaging their stakeholders in local decisions on education issues, five school districts were recognized as Speak Up Loud and Clear Top Districts for this year:

- Klein Independent School District (Texas) (Klein also had the top teacher and administrator participation.)
- Baltimore County Public Schools (Maryland)
- Brevard County School District (Florida)
- Weslaco Independent School District (Texas)
- El Paso Independent School District (Texas)

In addition, Fairfax County Public Schools (Virginia) earned top recognition for parent participation in 2015.

The schools selected for the Speak Up Loud and Clear list represent a broad range of educational institutions in rural, suburban, and urban communities. The complete list of Speak Up Loud and Clear recognized schools are highlighted on the Project Tomorrow website at http://www.tomorrow.org/speakup/speakup-loud-clear.html.
Speak Up 2016 will be open to all schools in the United States from October 12th through December 16th at http://www.tomorrow.org/speakup/. All schools in the United States are pre-registered to participate. Schools can receive their free data, along with helpful promotional materials, by registering a main contact via the website.

The Speak Up Research Project on Digital Learning collects K-12 student, parent, educator and community member viewpoints on technology use and aspirations, professional development needs, parent and community expectations and more through an annual online survey, and shares that data with national, state and local policymakers to improve education for all children.

About the Speak Up Research Project and Speak Up 2015
Speak Up is an initiative of Project Tomorrow®, the leading global education nonprofit organization dedicated to the empowerment of student voices in education. Each year, the Speak Up Research Project polls K-12 students, parents and educators about the role of technology for learning in and out of school. This survey represents the largest collection of authentic, unfiltered stakeholder voices on digital learning. Since fall 2003, nearly 4.5 million K-12 students, parents, teachers, librarians, principals, technology leaders, district administrators and members of the community have shared their views and ideas through Speak Up. K-12 educators, higher education faculty, business, and policy leaders report that they regularly use the Speak Up data to inform federal, state and local education programs.

In fall 2015, Project Tomorrow surveyed 415,686 K-12 students, 38,613 parents, 38,157 teachers, 2,061 librarians, 662 district administrators, 2,868 school administrators, 736 technology leaders, 270 communication officers and 6,653 members of the community representing 7,825 public and private schools from 2,660 districts. Schools from urban (25%), suburban (40%), and rural (35%) communities are represented. More than half of the schools (58%) that participated in Speak Up 2015 are Title I eligible schools (an indicator of student population poverty). The Speak Up 2015 surveys were available online for input between October 1 and December 18, 2015.

The online survey is supported by many of our nation’s most innovative companies, foundations and nonprofit organizations including Blackboard, BrainPOP, CDW, DreamBox Learning, Qualcomm® WirelessReach™ and Scholastic.