



Sarah Moore Greene Principal Robin Curry joined her leadership team to accept the 2020 School of Promise event during the celebration this fall.

# Showing Promise

Recipients of the \$5,000 NIET School of Promise Award are selected by NIET based on their early progress and success after starting a partnership and renewing efforts to improve teaching and learning. Two schools were honored this fall to celebrate both the gains made so far and the spirit of collaboration and innovation that educators have modeled through the transition and shifts required to respond to COVID-19.

## Sarah Moore Greene Magnet Academy, Tennessee

Sarah Moore Greene is an elementary magnet school in Knoxville, Tenn., that serves almost 600 students, about 75% of whom are African American and about 80% of whom are considered economically disadvantaged. Sarah Moore Greene began partnering with NIET in fall 2018, and educators receive ongoing support from NIET specialists each month. Now, educators have improved student achievement and growth through implementing a new focus on job-embedded coaching and instructional excellence.

Sarah Moore Greene has embraced a culture of data-driven collaboration, and school leaders have made ongoing investments in professional learning and coaching for teachers. After consecutive years of level 1 growth, Sarah Moore Greene earned level 5 in 2019, the highest rating in the state. By prioritizing teacher and student needs, they have shown that incredible growth is possible when educators are united around a common language and goals.

## Mellichamp Elementary, South Carolina

Mellichamp is among 32 schools in the Orangeburg County School District and has the highest poverty rate, at 91.5%. Since partnering with NIET in 2018-19, Mellichamp has shifted its school culture to intentionally invest in its educators and re-focus on data-driven decisions and high-quality instructional practices. Educators regularly collaborate and have a chance to grow as instructors, and that culture contributed to the school retaining all of its teachers between the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years.



Former Mellichamp Elementary Principal Hayward Jean, now director of student services for Orangeburg County School District, dropped by to celebrate their award.

Further bolstering opportunities for teacher and student success, Mellichamp has developed partnerships with nearby Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Claflin University and South Carolina State University. These shifts in culture and practice, plus community partnerships, have led to improvements in the state measures of Academic Achievement, Preparing for Success, and Student Engagement. From 2018 to 2019, the school also increased its percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on state assessments in English language arts, math, science, and social studies.