Publication ranks Daniel top

BY GREG OLIVER
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CENTRAL — Every school feels it is the best, but Daniel High School students, faculty, staff and supporters have evidence to back up that claim — at least as far as the state is concerned.

According to U.S. News and World Report's rankings released Tuesday, Daniel High is the top traditional public high school in South Carolina and third among schools overall — trailing only the Charleston County School of the Arts and Charleston's Academic Magnet High School — both private schools.

The fourth edition of the Best High Schools includes data on nearly 22,000 public high schools from 49 states and the District of Columbia. U.S. News partnered with the American Institutes for Research, which implemented the methodology for the rankings.

Daniel High Principal Sharon Huff said she is proud of the teachers and students at the school.

"Our teachers maintain high expectations for student learning, and the students challenge themselves by taking rigorous courses," Huff said. "It truly means a lot to our school and community to receive this prestigious recognition. I also think it's important to note that Daniel High is not a magnet or charter school; we are a traditional public high school with a variety of students."

The report stated that Daniel High's 20:1 pupil-teacher ratio is better than the South Carolina average and its college readiness, math and English

SC public school

proficiency are all above the state average.

"Daniel High School has a very long tradition of excellence," Pickens County Superintendent Henry Hunt said. "The U.S. News ranking is another affirmation of the quality education program there. I congratulate Mrs. Huff, the administration, the faculty, staff and students on this accomplishment."

Schools were first analyzed at the state level before the Best High Schools national ranking were determined. They were analyzed in terms of how well students in each school performed on state assessments, taking into account the test scores of disadvantaged that tend to score lower on tests.

High schools that made it through that analysis were then eligible to be ranked nationally in terms of college readiness. U.S. News determined the degree to which schools prepare students for college-level work by analyzing student success in Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate programs, both of which include college-level courses.

More than 4,850 gold, silver and bronze medals were awarded by the magazine to the top-performing schools. In Oconee County, West-Oak High and Tamassee-Salem High received national recognition, though neither was ranked.

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