

School Board holds busy meeting December 11

Students and school personnel were among those recognized on Tuesday, Dec. 11, 2018, at the Alexander County Board of Education meeting, held at the Central Office.

The meeting was opened with a moment of silence by Chairman David Odom. Then the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag was led by Cooper and Reagan Meadlock, Taylorsville Elementary School students.

New, returning members noted

Newly elected Board of Education member Matt H. Cooksey (District 2, Taylorsville) was recognized, along with re-elected members David Odom and Harry Schram.

Board vacancy addressed

Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Hefner noted that Matthew Reese, who was elected in Nov. 2018, resigned the post because he had moved outside the district he was elected to serve. The school board thus has a vacancy and is accepting letters of interest for residents in School District 4 (Millers, Sharpes, Gwaltney, and Sugar Loaf townships) until February 8, 2019. Letters of interest, with a resumé, should be sent to David Odom, Chairman, Alexander Board of Education, 700 Liledoun Road, Taylorsville, NC 28681.

Holiday art contest winners are recognized

The 2018 Alexander County Schools Christmas Card Art Winners were recognized at the meeting. Their artwork is displayed on the school system holiday cards. The winners are:

Evelyn Barnett is a second-grade student at Ellendale Elementary School and is the daughter of Lee and Rebecca Barnett.

Ashton Curtis is a fifth-grade student at Stony Point Elementary School and is the daughter of Laurin Curtis and June Durham. Ashton has won this contest two other times.

Olivia Perkins is an eighth-grade student at East Alexander Middle School and is the daughter of Donna and LeighAnn Perkins.

Shaere Delgiugice is a ninth-grade student at Alexander Early College and is the daughter of Toby and Marvel Delgiudice.

As a part of the contest award, the winners receive a framed copy of their artwork on the card, 30 cards to send to friends and family, a \$25 gift card, and a goody bag.

Schools recognized for PBIS work

Alexander County Schools has been recognized by the Exceptional Children Division of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction for work with Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) included:

- **Green Ribbon School** - Alexander Central High School - Mr. Gordon Palmer, Principal; Hiddenite Elementary School - Mr. Charles Draper, Principal; Sugar Loaf Elementary School - Mr. Cary Cash, Principal.
- **Model School** - East Alexander Middle School - Dr. Lisa Harrington, Principal; Ellendale Elementary School - Mrs. Crystal Hoke, Principal; Stony Point Elementary School - Mr. Andy Palmer, Principal; Taylorsville Elementary School - Ms. Janel Lingle, Principal; Wittenburg Elementary School - Mrs. Mary Brown, Principal.
- **Exemplar School** - Bethlehem Elementary School - Mrs. Charmion Frizsell, Principal; West Alexander Middle School - Dr. Chad Maynor, Principal.

Recognition is awarded based on each school's level of implementation. Each school met the

requirements for recognition by demonstrating results achieved through working together, using school data to implement research-based practices, and developing supportive systems to teach all students new behaviors.

Keeping students engaged and maintaining a healthy, productive school environment is more important than ever. PBIS is a framework of intervention practices, decision-making tools, and organizational systems used to establish the positive and productive learning environment needed for all students to achieve academic and social success. Schools that fully implement PBIS can expect to manage behavior more efficiently and consistently, decrease unwanted behavior, and witness a positive change in the school's climate.

These ten Alexander County schools were among almost 600 schools across North Carolina that earned one of the three levels of recognition. To receive any level of recognition from the State Department of Public Instruction, these schools completed an application process that included multiple reports based on behavior and academic data. The Alexander County schools that received recognition by North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction did so because the faculty and staff at these schools demonstrated high levels of implementation based on PBIS evaluations.

Alexander County Schools have been a part of this state-wide initiative since 2010 working to improve PBIS implementation through ongoing evaluation. To assure that PBIS schools in Alexander County maintain fidelity of implementation, layers of support are provided by the district and the state in the form of consultation and training.

Barr named EC Educator of Excellence

Ms. Lena Barr, Alexander Central High School / Student Success Center and Taylorsville Elementary School, was named Alexander County Schools 2018 Exceptional Children Educator of Excellence. She was recognized at the Exceptional Children Division's 68th Conference on November 16 in Greensboro.

In Barr's recommendation letter it states, "she is a well-organized teacher who keeps close contact with the students and their families. She becomes a part of their family in order to help each and every child. Lena brings to her role as EC teacher a high degree of vitality and refreshment."

Barr received a plaque, special seating at the morning's plenary session, her name listed on the conference program, paid registration and mileage reimbursement to and from the conference, and special recognition during the conference banquet.

To be eligible for the Teacher of Excellence award, the person selected must hold an appropriate license, have at least five years of school experience, must maintain a student caseload and deliver daily instruction and be a leader within the school.

Rowe recognized for science education

Mr. Ryan Rowe, West Alexander Middle School science teacher, was named North Carolina Science

Teachers Association (NCSTA) District 7 Middle Grades Science Teacher of the Year at the North Carolina Science Teacher Association Convention in Greensboro. The award is presented to individuals in school districts to recognize excellence in science teaching in North Carolina to teachers who exemplify excellent, creative, innovative teaching of science.

Cornwell honored for coaching at NW Conf. level

Mr. Joe Cornwell was recognized as having received NWC 3A/4A Conference Cross Country Coach of the Year. He serves as the head coach of cross country and assistant coach for indoor and outdoor track.

"Coach Cornwell is one of those coaches who truly cares about forming relationships with his athletes. He motivates through those relationships, to bring out the best in the athletes that he coaches. We are fortunate to have him coaching multiple sports here at AC," stated Nathan Robinson, Alexander Central Athletic Director.

Mr. Cornwell is a graduate of Alexander Central and UNC-Pembroke. He has a teaching certificate from Appalachian State University in Art. Mr. Cornwell has been teaching and coaching at Alexander Central since 2007. He was also selected as Northwest Conference Cross Country Coach of the year in 2012.

He has coached 34 runners on the Top 50 Times list at Alexander Central, fifteen of the top 25 boys and 19 of the top 25 girls on the all-time list, and personally he is still ranked 6th all-time best time for the 5K at Alexander Central.

Grants received by Tayl. Elementary educators

Several Taylorsville Elementary teachers were recognized for recent grant awards.

Deby Mitchell received a grant award from Energy United Bright Ideas for Reading Regardless which was used to pay for e-readers to scan text and read aloud to students. The grant award was for \$1,000.

Michelle Robinson received two grants. The first grant award Mrs. Robinson received was four boxes of new coats for students from Lane Bryant Supplies and Coats totaling \$550. The second grant award was through Donors Choose and was for beginning cursive handwriting for third grade. The total was \$120.

Andrea Austin received a grant award through Donors Choose called A Carpet Full of Compassion which will be used to purchase a classroom rug and a set of character education and mindfulness books. The total amount was \$680.

Consent agenda approved

During the meeting, the board gave approval of the consent agenda. This included three field trips for the ACHS Navy Junior ROTC cadets, an additional fundraising request for East Alexander Middle School (Benevolence Fundraiser via sweatshirt sales), and Budget Amendment #1 for \$143,564. The amendment includes a \$124,123 increase in Instructional Services and \$19,441 in Support Services. This amendment adds interest to the Technology Fund, reimbursement for substitutes, additional funds for the School Safety Grant, Test Results Bonus for principals, School Connectivity Funds, and reduces the SPSF allotment for 18 students enrolled in virtual charter schools. Also, the Board declared two Activity Buses as surplus properties, a 1988 Ford 54 passenger bus (good condition) and a 1992 Navistar 70 passenger bus (blown head gasket).



P.B.I.S. ACHIEVEMENTS RECOGNIZED — Ten Alexander County Schools were recognized by the Exceptional Children Division of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction as part of the 68th Conference on Exceptional Children at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro on November 13, 2018. Alexander Central High, Hiddenite Elementary and Sugar Loaf Elementary were recognized as a Green Ribbon School. Model schools in the county recognized included; East Alexander Middle, Ellendale Elementary, Stony Point Elementary, Taylorsville Elementary, and Wittenburg Elementary. Both Bethlehem Elementary and West Alexander Middle were awarded again this year the highest recognition honor of Exemplar School. Pictured above, left to right: front row – Charmion Frizsell, Bethlehem principal, Dr. Lisa Harrington, EAMS principal, Crystal Hoke, Ellendale principal, Mary Brown, Wittenburg principal, Andy Palmer, Stony Point principal; back row – Cary Cash, Sugar Loaf principal, Gordon Palmer, ACHS principal, Joseph Mabry, Hiddenite assistant principal, Janel Lingle, Taylorsville principal, and Dr. Chad Maynor, WAMS principal.

Taylorsville Elementary School update

Ms. Janel Lingle, Principal of Taylorsville Elementary School, gave an update to the board about her school.

Lingle noted the school has 58 staff, included 21.5 Certified staff. The school met its expected growth (B overall) for 2017-18. She praised the students' 90% pass rate in science.

The principal indicated the school's motto this year is "Do What You Can't." This encourages students, teachers, and staff to strive to better themselves.

Lingle offered thanks to First United Methodist Church in Taylorsville and other members of the faith community, who provided school supplies for the entire student body in 2018.

Communities In Schools site coordinator Kelsey Ferrell has helped initiate two clubs for students at Taylorsville School: the Kindness Club and the Character Club, to promote those ideals. Another program coming soon is the "Guys in Ties," which will group positive male role models in the community with fourth and fifth grade boys.

Students have been active in a canned food drive and a sock drive for the less fortunate recently.

Lingle said the Cub Café program lets students of the Month eat lunch with their principal monthly and become better acquainted.

Other community and PTO support tactics include: lunch buddies, Reading Partners, EER staff luncheons, Parent Café, Field Day, and more.

Lingle said it is the school staff's responsibility to create a safe space for all students and that learning can not happen unless kids feel safe and have a sense of trust and love.

Board policies approved

The following school board policy revisions were approved after a second reading.

- Policy No. 1510/4200/7270 - School Safety
- Policy No. 2110 - Board Member Elections
- Policy No. 2121 - Board Member Conflict of Interest Special Provisions
- Policy No. 5015 - School Volunteers

A new policy presented for the second reading, Policy No. 5023/6126/7245 Opioid Antagonist was also approved.

Policy revisions and new policy presented

Central Office Director Sharon Mehaffey presented the following school board policy revisions for the first reading. Policies will be brought back next month for a second reading.

- Policy No. 3200 Selection of Instructional Materials
- Policy No. 3410 Testing and Assessment Program
- Policy No. 3420 Student Promotion and Accountability
- Policy No. 3430 School Improvement Plan
- Policy No. 3460 Graduation Requirements
- Policy No. 3565/8307 Title I Program

Comparability of Services

All Alexander County board policies are available for review by the public at www.alexander.k12.nc.us or the Alexander County Board of Education Office on Liledoun Road, Taylorsville, NC.

The board of education approved the plan presented by Alexander County Schools Accountability and Testing Director Jessica Anderson. Anderson shared information regarding the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's New Course of Study and Content Standards for Math I & Math 3.

Anderson indicated the change means students in these courses will have new summative tests. The necessary standard setting to determine the academic achievement levels for the new mathematics assessments will occur in summer 2019 after the 2018-19 administrations are complete. Individual student results on the new mathematics assessments, implemented initially in the 2018-19 school year, will not be available until August 2019. School districts must determine the students' final grades for the associated course during this initial implementation year for the new mathematics assessments.

"This is a local decision, and as stated in the policy, if local districts or charter schools elect to develop a local policy requiring this, it must be approved by the local Board of Education or charter school board," stated Mrs. Anderson.

She continued to report a raw score for NC Math 1, the total number of items a student answered correctly, will be available. There will not be a state recommendation for a raw score to a 0-100 scale conversion. This will be the determination of the district, and as such, the resulting 0-100 scale should not be expected to directly correlate to the final scale and achievement levels approved by the State Board of Education in August 2019.

The current design for NC Math 3 assessment does not allow the reporting of the number of correct scores at the student level. These forms will have additional analyses for post-equating and validation to guarantee all fairness requirements for student-level scores.

For Alexander County Schools, due to a small sample of Math I students testing in Fall 2018 as compared to Spring 2019, the accountability department must have the total sampling of scores to create a reasonably accurate conversion scale. Math I students testing in the Fall 2018 semester will receive an Incomplete or INC on their report card until after Spring 2019 Math I tests are submitted.

With all scores submitted, the district can convert the raw scores for student report cards; the exam grade is 20 percent of a student's final grade.

Students are required

to take the Math III exam. Math III is henceforth an EOC, and EOC scores are a critical component to a school's accountability requirements. As a new assessment, there will be no reporting of scores at the student level. Once the SBE has approved the scores (achievement levels) in Fall 2019, schools will provide parents with each student's score and Individual Student Report.

Superintendent's report

Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Hefner noted that N.C. State House Representative Jeffrey Elmore would like to meet with Board of Education members one evening in February to obtain information pertinent to issues faced in the Alexander County School System.

During her report, Dr. Hefner took the opportunity to thank school custodians, administrators, and the maintenance and transportation departments for their work removing snow and ice from the parking lots and sidewalks. She also expressed appreciation to Emergency Management Director Russell Greene, local law enforcement and other emergency personnel.

Dr. Hefner reported that she would be submitting the required affidavit of K-3 class size to the Department of Public Instruction on Friday, December 14. This is a requirement of the General Assembly. The affidavit serves as an attestation that Alexander County Schools are complying with class size requirements.

Other news presented by Dr. Hefner included the North Carolina Association of School Administrators 2019-2021 Legislative Agenda which included the following priorities:

- Refine the A-F School Performance Grading System
- Approve a Statewide School Facility Bond Referendum
- Enhance Safety by Increasing Recurring Funding for Security and Student Support Personnel
- Align the Public School Calendar with the Community College Calendar
- Continue to Increase the State's Investment in Improving Educator Pay

Students' and teachers' last day before the break is next Thursday, Dec. 20th with students being dismissed at 12:30 (high school and middle schools) and 12:45 (elementary schools). Schools will resume a normal schedule on Wednesday, January 2, 2019.

Board members will visit the Wittenburg Elementary School on Friday, January 4, 2019, and will meet at the school's office at 11:30 a.m. that day for lunch and a school tour.

The January Board of Education meeting date has been changed to Tuesday, January 15, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. in the system's Central Office on Liledoun Road.



RYAN ROWE