

Weakley County Schools celebrate Valedictorians and Salutatorians

By Karen Campbell
Special to The Press

For the first time since the pandemic limited gatherings in 2020, schools celebrated valedictorians and salutatorians at a luncheon held at the Weakley County Schools Board of Education, May 19. Welcomed by county school administrators Donald Ray High, Randy Frazier and Betsi Foster, the top scholars were joined by their choice for their most influential teacher, the school counselor, school principal, school board members and various administrative staff members.

Representing Dresden High School was valedictorian Paige Mallon and salutatorian Parker Ferrell. From Gleason were Cameron Thompson, valedictorian, and Gracie Long, salutatorian. Greenfield was



Graduates of the Dresden High School Class of 2022 toss their caps in the air in celebration. Photo by Savannah Smiles Photography

represented by Edie Darby, valedictorian, and Destiny Griffin, salutatorian. Amy Kang, valedictorian, and Sophia Shaw, salutatorian, represented Westview.

After the catered luncheon, returning to a tradition of asking the exiting students for input, Assistant Director Betsi Foster asked the two representa-

tives to share responses to two queries: What do we have to celebrate about our schools? What do we need to change?

Both Kang and Shaw

praised Westview Assistant Principal Brian Allen's emphasis on increasing collaboration and inclusiveness this year. Darby and Griffin agreed that Greenfield School was strong on offering a family-like atmosphere where, as Darby put it, "You always have someone to lean on." Gleason and Dresden were also praised for the friendly environment and family atmosphere.

While Thompson said he wouldn't change a thing at Gleason, others took Foster's encouragement and offered several suggestions including providing more AP and dual enrollment and options for focus of study as well as increasing emphasis on extracurricular activities outside of sports. Mallon received affirmation from all present when she suggested what she acknowledged was not a real option

— take away state testing. "Students are more than a score," she emphasized.

After thanking the students for the input, Foster underscored, "I would encourage you all in life when you see things you want to change, get yourself in the right room. You're in the right room today to voice those concerns, what you like, and what you would change. These are the people who can help make that happen."

Instructional Supervisor High then called attention to the other special guests in the room and offered the "vals and sals" to speak to why the teachers had been so influential.

Kang, who brought Westview Band Director Mike Tucker with her, said their seven-year journey as band

**See CELEBRATE
Page 17**

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GRADUATES!**
You've Graduated.

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candidate

Congrats
TO THE CLASS OF
2022!

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