

## BOARD AGENDA INFORMATIONAL ITEM

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**DEPARTMENT:** Communications/Public  
Information Department

**TOPIC: GOOD NEWS**

**FOR THE MONTH OF:** February 2022

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1. **Gaston County Schools** had more than 100 students participate in the all-county high school band clinic on February 11-12 at **Ashbrook High School**. Students were chosen for the band clinic through an audition process. Barry Howard from Belmont Abbey College conducted the symphonic band, and Dr. Dawn Price from Wingate University conducted the wind ensemble.
2. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** hosted the South Central All-District Band Clinic, which featured more than 300 outstanding student musicians from across the Charlotte region. The following students from **Gaston County Schools** were chosen for the all-district band: **Jerry Bradley, South Point High School; Mattie Grace Branham, Aaron Hollar, and Hayden Dillard, East Gaston High School; Bailey Dugan, Cherryville High School; Josh Lindsay and Hailey Royall, Stuart W. Cramer High School; Matthew Loudon and Ruby Ruiz, W.C. Friday Middle School; and Jackson Smith, Forestview High School**. Additionally, **Belmont Middle School** band director **Carrie Lineberger** served as one of the conductors.
3. The “Do the Right Thing” award winners for February are **Carson Walters, Carr Elementary; Teverean Steele, Gardner Park Elementary; Ariel Pagan, York Chester Middle; and Riley Royer, Bessemer City High School**.
4. Students at **Belmont Central Elementary, Brookside Elementary, Cherryville Elementary, Costner Elementary, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy, Page Primary, Sadler Elementary, and Woodhill Elementary** celebrated the 100th day of school by dressing as centenarians.
5. The **Gaston County Schools** Academic Services Department was nominated for the Modern Curriculum of the Year Award, which was presented during the North Carolina Digital Convergence Conference. In addition, **Dr. Jill Payne**, executive director for student support services, was nominated for the Change Management Principal of the Year honor in recognition of effective leadership to bring the district’s instructional model to life in classrooms.
6. **Gaston County Schools** was honored during the N.C. School Public Relations Association’s Blue Ribbon Awards virtual ceremony on February 11. The district received five awards in the electronic media, excellence in writing, and image/graphic design categories in recognition of some of the Communications Department’s quality work over the past year.

7. The following elementary students earned awards at the Gaston Regional Science and Engineering Fair: **Maddox Jennings, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, Duke Energy Elementary Division Winner; **Xane Chandler, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, Schiele Award of the Earth, **Gracie Coleman, Costner Elementary**, Belmont Abbey Future Scientist Award; **Reagan Lankford, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, third place in environmental science; **Xane Chandler, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, second place in environmental science; **Christian Dean, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, first place in environmental science; **Iris Ritter and Abigail Yost, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**; third place in biological science; **Riley Doran, Belmont Central Elementary**, second place in biological science; **Ella Clanton and Alexandria Otis, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, first place in biological science; **Connor Abernathy and Anderson West, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, third place in chemistry; **Nixon Sipe, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, second place in chemistry; **Sophia Markwith, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, first place in chemistry; **Mason McCarey and Liam Luksa, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, third place in physics; **Kai Gaut, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, second place in physics; and **Gus Barone and Finn McMinn, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, first place in physics.
8. The following middle school students earned awards at the Gaston Regional Science and Engineering Fair: **Samantha Franke, Stanley Middle**, Duke Energy Middle School Division Winner; **Abigail Stephens, Stanley Middle**, Junior Naval Science Award and third place in environmental science; **Samuel Cadle, Stanley Middle**, second place in environmental science; **Jillian Schultheis, Stanley Middle**, first place in environmental science; **Trevor Goff, Belmont Middle**, first place in biological science; **Lizzy-Jane Ross, Stanley Middle**, third place in chemistry; **Adria Radermacher and Akira Biggs, Bessemer City Middle**, second place in chemistry; **Lillyan Wall, Stanley Middle**, first place in chemistry; **Tristy Williams, Stanley Middle**, second place in physics; and **Zuha Shaikh and Wasil Mustafa Shaikh, Stanley Middle**, first place in physics.
9. The following high school students earned awards at the Gaston Regional Science and Engineering Fair: **Sidney Hare, Gaston Early College High School**, Duke Energy High School Division Winner; **Heba Patel, Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences**, Senior Naval Science Award; **James Gunter, Forestview High School**, second place in environmental science; **Tate Smith and Evan Friday, Forestview High School**, first place in environmental science; **Sadie Morton, Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences**, third place in biological science; **Hannah Mullis, East Gaston High School**; second place in biological science; **Andre Gaddy, Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences**, first place in biological science; **Kelly Smith and Zoe Deo, Stuart W. Cramer High School**, first place in chemistry; and **Abrianna Risner, Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences**, first place in physics.
10. The **Gaston County Schools** Communications Department began distribution in January of the 2022 edition of the “Gaston County Schools Storybook.” The publication features “good news” stories about students, teachers, and alumni.
11. **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy, Pleasant Ridge Elementary, and Stanley Middle School** participated in the 2022 Modern Teacher national convention held in Charlotte.

12. **Ashbrook High School** student **Teagan Motes** received honorable mention in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards for his editorial cartoon titled “Record Breaking.”
13. **Ashbrook High School** senior **Labron Dockery** finished third in the 100-yard breaststroke competition at the 3A state swimming championship.
14. The following student-athletes signed a National Letter of Intent to play college sports: **Jake Beaty, South Point High School**, Florence-Darlington Technical College; **Trent Dockery, Highland School of Technology**, Wingate University; **Nakoa Goins, East Gaston High School**, Averett College; **Justin Hill, East Gaston High School**, Emory and Henry College; **Arias Nash, Stuart W. Cramer High School**; Mercer University; **Jaycob Neely, Forestview High School**; Gardner-Webb University; **Jacob Patterson, South Point High School**, Gardner-Webb University; **Chloe Ratliff, South Point High School**, Limestone University; **Camury Reid, Forestview High School**, Western Carolina University; **Matthew Walker, South Point High School**, Limestone University; **Luke Whitted, Highland School of Technology**, Catawba College; **Braley Hamilton, Stuart W. Cramer High School**, Gaston College; and **Dameian Bentley, Stuart W. Cramer High School**, Methodist University.
15. **W.A. Bess Elementary** fifth graders participated in the career awareness program sponsored by the **Gaston County Schools** Career and Technical Education Department. The students were taught how to take temperatures and blood pressure readings, check a pulse, and perform CPR properly.
16. The **W.A. Bess Elementary** student council sponsored a “Hats for Hearts” fundraiser and collected \$270 for Holy Angels.
17. **Belmont Middle School** eighth grader **Brianna Armstrong** and **Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences** sophomore **Emma Burger** were featured in a “Why I Love NC Public Schools” video sponsored by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction with support from the N.C. School Public Relations Association.
18. **Bessemer City High School** students **Riley Royer** and **Lacey Pettry** along with school resource officer **Jeff Thompson** collected blankets and toiletry items for the Salvation Army in Gastonia.
19. **Bessemer City High School** collected 3,074 nonperishable food items for the Bessemer City Crisis Center.
20. **Bessemer City High School** organized an exhibit in the Beam Gallery at Gaston College that featured artwork by the following students: **Emily Hurst, Amarion Knox, Teniyah Little, Elaysia Fleming, Lilly Arrowood, Guadalupe Perez-Velazquez, Kayla Becraft, Ke-Shyne Roary, Jasmine De La Cruz Vargas**, and **Tori Johnson**. **Pamela Underwood** is the school’s art teacher.
21. Officers with the Gaston County Police Department played in a staff versus students basketball game at **Bessemer City Middle School**. The officers helped make the basketball game, which was part of the school’s positive behavior program, a big success.

22. **Bessemer City Primary** held a Title I program on Zoom that gave students an opportunity to learn about new reading games to play at home with their family members.
23. **Carr Elementary** second grader **Carson Walters** collected 150 items for the school's "Toiletries Bags for the Homeless" campaign to support the Dallas-High Shoals Christian Ministry. He donated scarves, gloves, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, socks, hats, and baby wipes. In total, the school was able to provide 70 bags.
24. **Catawba Heights Elementary** teacher **Tyler White** achieved the prestigious National Board Certification.
25. **Chapel Grove Elementary** conducted a "Jump Rope for Heart" fundraiser to benefit the American Heart Association. The school raised a total of \$2,490.93. Kindergarten student **Carson Jenkins** raised \$630.91. Physical education teacher **Ben Harris** coordinated the fundraiser.
26. **John Chavis Middle School** received a \$16,000 donation from Elevation Church to enhance the day-to-day school experience for students.
27. **Cherryville High School** coach **Scott Harrill** earned his 400th career win, making him the winningest basketball coach in Gaston County.
28. The **Cherryville High School** cheerleaders won the North Carolina Cheerleading Coaches Association (NCCCA) small division two championship.
29. The following **Cramerton Middle School** students received awards in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards program: **Justice Rivera**, gold key; **Tiffany McIntire**, silver key; and **Aruzhan Suleimenova**, honorable mention. **Brenda Bradley** is the art teacher.
30. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** junior **Alexis Willis** won the triple jump at the indoor track and field state championship. She also placed third in the long jump.
31. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** senior **Nathan Saysomvang** received his certification as an emergency medical responder through the North Carolina Office of EMS.
32. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** senior **Sean Brabham** and **Forestview High School** senior **Zion Dockery** were selected for an internship with GSM Services.
33. **East Gaston High School** held a blood drive on January 28 and collected 26 units.
34. **East Gaston High School** junior **Jake Simpson** placed fourth in the 100-yard backstroke and seventh in the 200-yard freestyle events at the 1A/2A state swimming championship.
35. **East Gaston High School** sophomore **Zoe Gambino** was chosen to serve as Miss Mount Holly's Outstanding Teen 2022. She will represent the Mount Holly community this June at the Miss North Carolina's Outstanding Teen competition in High Point.

36. **Forestview High School** senior **Samantha Bolton** advanced to the final round of admission interviews at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).
37. **Forestview High School** freshman **Tristan Peyton** placed third in the 100-yard backstroke event at the 3A state swimming championship.
38. **Forestview High School** senior **Maggie Lu** was the state-level winner of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) good citizen essay contest.
39. **Sharidan Costner**, a 2020 graduate of **Forestview High School**, was crowned Miss Gastonia 2022. Currently a student at Winston-Salem State University majoring in exercise science, she will compete for the title of Miss North Carolina in June.
40. **Gardner Park Elementary** held its traditional “Cinderella Ball” for kindergarten students on February 14.
41. Dr. Sravan Panuganti of Carolina Urology Partners presented a personal check in the amount of \$1,500 to support the new **Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences**. He made the presentation to principal **Beverley Bowman** and spent more than 30 minutes talking with the students about the medical field.
42. **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy** second grade teacher **Dara Presnell** and **Stanley Middle School** teacher **Alice Ballard** were finalists for the Personalized Learning Classroom of the Year Award, which was presented at the 2022 North Carolina Digital Convergence Conference. The honor recognizes teachers for implementing personalized learning strategies and creating a learner-centered culture.
43. **Highland School of Technology** senior **Asher Neumann** won the 1A/2A 200-meter freestyle state championship and placed sixth in the 100-yard breaststroke event.
44. **Highland School of Technology** senior **Lauren Tolbert** set a new 1A/2A state indoor track meet record by placing first in the 1000-meter run and winning the state championship.
45. **Hunter Huss High School** senior **Allison Kimmel** placed fourth in the 100-yard breaststroke event at the 3A state championship.
46. **Pinewood Elementary** held a drive-thru “Winter Wonderland Reading Night” for parents to pick up reading resources tailored to their child’s needs.
47. **Pleasant Ridge Elementary** held a virtual ceremony and inducted 29 students into the school’s Junior Beta Club. **Superintendent of Schools W. Jeffrey Booker** shared remarks and congratulated the students during the virtual program.
48. The **Pleasant Ridge Elementary** “ROARing Panther Drumline” performed at the 2022 North Carolina Digital Convergence Conference.

49. **Sherwood Elementary** fifth graders were chosen to be the first to participate in a **Gaston County Schools** Career and Technical Education (CTE) electrical pilot program. Students helped light up a CTE sign by learning how to strip wire and join them together with wire nuts, thus seeing electrical circuits in action.
50. **South Point High School** junior **Davis Adcock** finished fifth in the 200-yard individual medley and second in the 100-yard backstroke at the 3A state swimming championship.
51. **Stanley Middle School** choral teacher **Nyi Nyi Myin** is this year's recipient of the Colleen Kirk Award, which is presented to new and aspiring choral conductors who are members of American Choral Directors Association.
52. The **Webb Street School** food pantry received a \$2,000 donation from the Gaston County Police Department's "No Shave November" and "Don't Shave December" charity fundraisers.
53. **York Chester Middle School** students participated in the Valentine's Day Kindness Project. Students handmade Valentine's cards that were delivered to three nursing homes.
54. The **York Chester Middle School** Student of the Month award winners were **Bruno Mendez-Perez**, **Ny'Sier Dawkins**, **Emmeron Palma-Mayo**, and **Zamarius Gladden**.
55. **York Chester Middle School** hosted the "Lift Every Voice and Sing" program on February 17 in celebration of Black History Month. The event featured an African drumming group and special performances by the York Chester band and chorus.