

BOARD AGENDA INFORMATIONAL ITEM

DEPARTMENT: Communications/Public
Information Department

TOPIC: GOOD NEWS

FOR THE MONTH OF: October 2022

1. A group of high school students from **Gaston County Schools** attended the Plumbing, Heating and Cooling Contractors Association (PHCC) trade show at the Charlotte Convention Center. The students learned about apprenticeship opportunities and visited with company representatives.
2. As part of the ‘NC Countdown to College’ effort, high school juniors and seniors in **Gaston County Schools** visited with representatives from more than 70 colleges and universities at the Carolinas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (CACRAO) college fair, which was held on September 26-27 at Gaston College.
3. **Gaston County Schools** and its success in the area of Career and Technical Education was the focus of two stories that aired on the WBTV “On Your Side Tonight” program. One story focused on the health sciences program and how it prepares students for careers in the healthcare field, and the other story focused on students receiving internships and job opportunities as a result of their involvement in Career and Technical Education programs.
4. Band students from **Belmont Middle School, Cramerton Middle School, and Mount Holly Middle School** performed with the **Stuart W. Cramer High School** marching band on Friday, September 23. The students played the national anthem on the football field prior to the game and learned some of the high school’s pep tunes to play during the game.
5. During N.C. High School Athletic Association’s Region 6 meeting in Concord, **Gaston County Schools** had three high schools – **Bessemer City, East Gaston, and South Point** – to be honored for their commitment to good sportsmanship. The schools were ejection-free during the 2021-2022 school year.
6. During Fire Prevention Week, the Gastonia Fire Department created and reviewed fire escape plans with students at **Brookside Elementary, Sadler Elementary, and Sherwood Elementary**.
7. On October 11, **Pinewood Elementary** conducted a ceremony to celebrate the opening of the school’s new outdoor classroom. The project was completed as a tribute to Patsy Norwood, who taught at the school for more than 20 years. The Norwood family, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, and Bank of America worked with the school to make the outdoor classroom a reality.

8. WCNC-TV had a story about the 2022 National Blue Ribbon School winners in the Charlotte area. The report featured **W.A. Bess Elementary** and an elementary school in Fort Mill.
9. **Norman ‘Trip’ McGill**, the retired choral director at **Ashbrook High School**, will be honored in November as a member of the North Carolina Music Educators Association (NCMEA) High School Choral Section Hall of Fame.
10. **Ashbrook High School** senior **Isaac Londeree** was selected to participate in the North Carolina Music Educators Association’s (NCMEA) high school honors chorus.
11. The **Ashbrook High School** Green Wave Marching Regiment Band performed at the Mount Pleasant Showcase of Champions, and won second place in the music, percussion, and drum major categories. Overall, the band placed third in the competition. In addition, the band received the following awards at the North Gaston Wildcat Invitational: third place overall; first place, percussion; second place, color guard; and first place, drum major. The band director is **Josh Westbrook**.
12. **Belmont Middle School** student **Daylin Santana** placed third in the Mount Holly Plein Air paint-out event.
13. The **Bessemer City High School** marching band placed second overall in the Class 1A category at the Enka Land of the Sky Competition on September 24. The band director is **Cole Crawford**.
14. **Bessemer City High School** resource officer **Jeff Thompson** was awarded the Gaston County Police Department’s Chief Commendation for 2022.
15. **Brookside Elementary** school principal **Jaime Wallace** was awarded the Gaston County Economic Development Agency’s 2022 Women Who Rock Award. In addition, the school received a donation of school supplies from American & Efird.
16. **Carr Elementary** kindergarten teacher **Katherine “Katie” Byrd** was selected as **Gaston County Schools’** nominee for the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching’s (NCCAT) Beginning Teacher of the Year Award.
17. First United Methodist Church of Dallas donated balls for recess to each classroom at **Carr Elementary**.
18. In partnership with the Dallas Police Department, **Carr Elementary** students participated in Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day.
19. **Catawba Heights Elementary** received seven boxes of books from the UPS store in Belmont. In addition, the school received school supply donations from the Stowe YMCA and Catawba Heights Baptist Church.
20. Hoopaugh Grading Company donated a spirit rock to **Catawba Heights Elementary**.

21. **Cherryville High School** athletic director **Scott Harrill** received the Region 6 Charlie Adams Distinguished Service Award, which is presented by the N.C. High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA). The award, which is named for the long-time former NCHSAA director, is presented to an individual in each region with at least 10 years of experience in education and athletics who goes above and beyond the call of duty to support students and their participation in high school athletics.
22. **East Gaston High School** senior **Mabry Robinson** completed the Certified Nurse Aide I state exam and is one of five students in the school's Health Sciences Academy to pass the CNA exam this school year.
23. **East Gaston High School** senior **Kathryn Meranto** was selected to participate in the North Carolina Music Educators Association's (NCMEA) high school honors chorus.
24. The **East Gaston High School** marching band received the following awards at the North Gaston Wildcat Invitational: second place, musical performance; second place, drum major; first place, general effect; first place in Class 2A; and grand champion in Class 1A/2A.
25. **W.C. Friday Middle School** students programmed remote-controlled cars and drones as part of a two-day presentation by BetaBox Learning.
26. The **Forestview High School** marching band placed first in the color guard, drum major, and percussion categories and took third place overall in its classification at the Tournament of Champions competition. The band also performed at the North Gaston Wildcat Invitational and placed first in visual performance, first in color guard, and first in drum major and took overall third place in the competition.
27. As members of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA)'s Student Advisory Council, **Emma Taylor** of **Forestview High School** and **Ben Kimmel** of **Hunter Huss High School** represented **Gaston County Schools** at the Region 6 meeting.
28. **Gaston Virtual Academy** students **Pandora Childs**, **Adryauna Davis**, and **Jahari White** were accepted into the ExperiMentors program that is offered through the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences (NCMNS). As participants in the program, they meet virtually with peers and scientists from around the state. In addition, they complete hands-on experiments at home, and at the end of the eight-week program, they have the opportunity to go behind the scenes at the NCMNS, meet museum curators, and camp overnight inside the museum.
29. In partnership with Keep Gastonia Beautiful, students from the **Gaston Early College High School** volunteered at the Highland Community Garden. The students removed weeds, made flower bouquets, prepped the planting beds for the fall, and cleaned out a utility shed.

30. In partnership with the Gaston Literacy Council, students from the **Gaston Early College High School** are participating in the Reading Soul Mates program with second grade students at **Carr Elementary**.
31. **Grier Middle School** observed National Hispanic Heritage Month with several celebratory activities. One activity featured English as a Second Language teacher **Melanie DiPietro** selecting students to read, in both English and Spanish, about famous people during the morning announcements.
32. **Highland School of Technology** students **Carlos Pitalua** and **Kent Kido** won art awards at the Cleveland County Fair. Pitalua won ribbons in the following categories: first place, black and white still life; second place, color wildlife; and third place, animal personality. Kido won a second-place ribbon for a color landscape photograph.
33. **Mount Holly Middle School** was recognized as a National Beta Club School of Merit. The prestigious honor is given to schools that display dedication to academic excellence, leadership development, and service involvement.
34. During Start with Hello Week, the **Mount Holly Middle School** cheerleaders greeted students as they arrived at **Pinewood Elementary** and **Rankin Elementary**.
35. **Mount Holly Middle School** beta club students assisted in the cleanup of the Mount Holly community garden.
36. **Page Primary School** sponsored a dance-a-thon and raised more than \$50,000 for new playground equipment.
37. **Rankin Elementary** formally dedicated its outdoor classroom space during the school's 50th anniversary celebration last spring.
38. **Sherwood Elementary** held a family engagement program on September 15. The school's P.T.O. planned the program in collaboration with the Schiele Museum. Educators from the museum presented a live animal program and families participated in a crafting activity.
39. The **South Point High School** marching band received the following awards at the North Gaston Wildcat Invitational: first place, percussion; second place, visual effect; first place, music; and second place in Class 2A. The band director is **Tim Hamilton**.
40. **South Point High School** senior **Henry Eisenhuth** was named a Commended Student in the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program.
41. **South Point High School** senior **Sullivan Absher** was selected for the 2022 Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas. The all-star football game that features the best high school players from North Carolina and South Carolina will be played on December 17 at Spartanburg High School.

42. **South Point High School** sophomore **James Dover** was named to the North Carolina Tennis Coaches Association's all-state boys tennis team for 2022. As a freshman, Dover was named the Big South 3A Conference MVP, finished undefeated in both singles and doubles, and reached the final four at the state tournament.
43. **Stanley Middle School** students **Samantha Franke, Emily Brooks, Lillyan Wall,** and **Katelyn Smith** were selected to participate in the prestigious state honors chorus. More than 600 students from across North Carolina auditioned, and **Stanley Middle School** is the only middle school in Gaston County to have students chosen for the state middle school chorus. In addition, thirteen students performed in the North Carolina Sings program at Duke University on October 8. The chorus teacher is **Nyi Nyi Myin**.
44. **Webb Street School** partnered with the **Gaston County Schools** Communications Department to produce a video that brings attention to the school's aquaponics and greenhouse programs.
45. Tarik Cranke of the Cranke Marketing Agency spoke to the drone club at **York Chester Middle School** about developing skills such as photo editing and content development through social media.
46. The **York Chester Middle School** cafeteria staff received a perfect 100 sanitation grade.