

## BOARD AGENDA INFORMATIONAL ITEM

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**DEPARTMENT:** Communications/Public  
Information Department

**TOPIC: GOOD NEWS**

**FOR THE MONTH OF:** April 2023

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1. The following students were chosen as the “Do the Right Thing” award winners for April: **Hayden Martin, Chapel Grove Elementary; Jaxon Rhinehart, Springfield Elementary; Sanaa’ya Ratchford, Bessemer City Middle; and Andrew Ferrell, Forestview High School.**
2. Approximately 200 outstanding middle school musicians participated in the all-county band concert on April 1 at **Holbrook Middle School**. The event featured performances by two middle school groups. Students were chosen for the all-county band clinic through an audition process. **Cramerton Middle School** band teacher **Lisa Ratchford** and Stephanie Tomberlin of Union County Public Schools were the guest conductors for the band clinic.
3. **Forestview High School** teacher **Jerry Smalls** and **W.C. Friday Middle School** teacher **Cindy Owens** were named the **Gaston County Schools** Band Directors of the Year.
4. The following high schools received a superior rating at the North Carolina Music Performance Adjudication (MPA) Festival at Mooresville High School: **Bessemer City High School** wind ensemble; **Stuart W. Cramer High School** wind ensemble; **Stuart W. Cramer High School** freshman band; **East Gaston High School** symphonic band; **Forestview High School** symphonic band; **North Gaston High School** symphonic band; and **South Point High School** symphonic band.
5. **Hannah Lineberger** of **Belmont Middle School** and **Cooper Queen** of **W.C. Friday Middle School** received the Kelly Robb Music Scholarship to attend summer music camp. Kelly Robb was a beloved music educator at **Stanley Middle School**. The scholarship honors her love and dedication to music and her students.
6. The five finalists for **Gaston County Schools** Assistant Principal of the Year 2023-2024 are **Josh Bromley, Forestview High School; Michael Dermott, Mount Holly Middle; Douglas Doorley, Lowell Elementary; NaKishia Glenn, North Gaston High School;** and **Janet Ramsey, Robinson Elementary**. The winner will be announced in May during the Evening of Excellence ceremony.
7. The five finalists for **Gaston County Schools** Central Office Administrator of the Year 2023-2024 are **Shannon Hullett, Academic Services; Curtis Poplin, Technology; Celeste Sadler, Academic Services; Robin Setzer, Academic Services; and Alan Sprout, Technology**. The winner will be announced in May during the Evening of Excellence ceremony.

8. Sixteen students from **Gaston County Schools** were selected to attend the 2023 session of the prestigious North Carolina Governor's School. Students attending Governor's School East at Meredith College are **John Gouch III, South Point High School; Ella Hamilton, East Gaston High School; Logan Watkins, Stuart W. Cramer High School;** and **Bowie Werran, Stuart W. Cramer High School.** Students attending Governor's School West at Winston-Salem State University are **Lauren Arthurs, South Point High School; Aissatou Diouf, Ashbrook High School; Skyler Hernandez, Hunter Huss High School; Benjamin Kimmel, Hunter Huss High School; Ian McGinnis, South Point High School; Samantha Narciso, South Point High School; Pressley Rankin, East Gaston High School; Emma Thweatt, Forestview High School; Ainsley VanderMeer, Stuart W. Cramer High School; Alexander Villarreal, South Point High School;** and **Jacey Williams, Forestview High School.**
9. **Gaston County Schools** held a ceremony on March 29 to celebrate **Cramerton Middle School** being one of six North Carolina schools to earn the Paideia Seminar Nationally Certified School recognition.
10. **Cramerton Middle School** captured first place in the Math Elite competition. **Belmont Middle** placed second and **Southwest Middle** took third place.
11. The East Division winners in the Math Masters competition were **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, first place; **Rankin Elementary**, second place; **Pleasant Ridge Elementary**, third place; and **New Hope Elementary**, fourth place. The West Division winners were **Gardner Park Elementary**, first place; **W.B. Beam Intermediate**, second place; **Catawba Heights Elementary**, third place; and **Woodhill Elementary**, fourth place.
12. **McAdenville Elementary** was named the grand champion of the Elementary Battle of the Books competition and will represent **Gaston County Schools** in the regional competition.
13. The East Division winners in the Battle of the Books competition were **Belmont Central Elementary**, first place; **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, second place; **Rankin Elementary**, third place; and **New Hope Elementary**, fourth place. The West Division winners were **McAdenville Elementary**, first place; **Bessemer City Central Elementary**, second place; **Chapel Grove Elementary**, third place; and **Catawba Heights Elementary**, fourth place.
14. **Gaston County Schools** had several school groups and PTO organizations to participate in the annual Community Foundation Run in downtown Gastonia. Sponsored by the Community Foundation of Gaston County, the event featured a 5K run, 2K fun walk, and other activities to help non-profit organizations raise money. **Lisa Nussbaumer**, an instructional technology facilitator for **Gaston County Schools**, was the first-place female winner with a time of 18:26 and received a \$1,000 prize for the Gaston County Education Foundation.
15. The **Bessemer City High School** Impact Club provided Easter buckets filled with candy and toys for all kindergarten students at **Bessemer City Primary**.

16. The North Carolina Farm Bureau donated 32 copies of "I Love Strawberries" by Shannon Anderson to **Gaston County Schools**. **Lowell Elementary** principal **Kristin Kiser**, the current Gaston County Principal of the Year, accepted the book donation on behalf of the school system.
17. **Ashbrook High School** held its All-Star Pageant on March 18. **Zo'Rion Tate** was crowned Mr. Ashbrook and **Zemariah Webb** was crowned Miss Ashbrook. In addition, the pageant raised \$6,292.25 for Cancer Services of Gaston County and \$361.16 for Special Olympics of Gaston County.
18. The **W.B. Beam Intermediate** Falcon Radio Club (N2FRC) placed first nationwide at the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) School Club Roundup. During the contest, the school scored 41,307 points with 281 contacts from all over the world. There were a total of 33 states, seven countries, and three Canadian provinces represented in the competition. School counselor **Mark Reep** is the Falcon Radio Club adviser.
19. **Belmont Middle School** teacher **Tamara Houchard** won the Center for Safer Schools' 10th anniversary local contest. Participants were asked to create a video, flyer, poster, or any other creative representation to describe their interpretation of school safety.
20. **Bessemer City Primary** hosted First Responder Day on March 31. Gaston County Communications, Gaston County Police, K-9 Officers, Bessemer City Police, Bessemer City Fire, GEMS, and Animal Control all joined in for demonstrations and stations with each class.
21. **Bessemer City High School** seniors **Ian Alexander** and **Josiah Coleman** were recognized by the National Wrestling Coaches Association as honorees of its High School All-American Awards program, which is sponsored by the United States Marine Corps.
22. **Cherryville High School** senior **Raleigh Kiser** presented a check for \$1,000 to June Laubinger of the Atrium Health Foundation. The donation is from the boys volleyball tournament that she organized in November to benefit Levine Children's Hospital.
23. **Cherryville High School** senior **Jackson Tedder** signed a letter of intent to play golf at Montreat College.
24. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** sophomore **Aiden Vargosko** shot a nine-hole N.C. High School Athletic Association record by scoring a 27 and an 18-hole NCHSAA record by shooting a 61 in a Big South Conference match-up on April 4 at Cramer Mountain Country Club. In addition, he had a hole-in-one on hole number 12. The team of **Aiden Vargosko**, **Rich Wills**, **Harrison Rowland**, and **Luke Mingus** broke an NCHSAA team record by shooting 268, which broke the record previously set by **Forestview High School** in 2013.

25. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** senior **Alexis Willis** and **Ashbrook High School** junior **Camryn Massey** were named to the HighSchoolOT.com indoor track and field all-state team.
26. The **Forestview High School** prom closet provided new prom attire for more than 100 students.
27. The **Forestview High School** choir received superior ratings at the music performance adjudication festival. In addition, the concert choir received a silver rating at the Worldstrides Heritage National Choral Festival.
28. **W.C. Friday Middle School** teacher **Jennifer Bumgarner** has been selected as one of only 28 teachers in the United States, Canada, and the Bahamas to receive a full scholarship to attend the Bimini Shark Lab's Educator Course in South Bimini, Bahamas, this summer.
29. **Gaston Early College High School** students **Emma Thrower**, **Riley Rhyne**, and **Helanea Killian** presented the idea to the **Gaston County Schools** nurses of supplying feminine hygiene products in student restrooms.
30. **Isaiah Williams** of **Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences** was selected for the 2023 Boys' State program based on a speech presentation on the topic "What Freedom Means to Me" and a personal interview.
31. The **Highland School of Technology** TSA club attended the 44th state technology conference in Greensboro on March 26-28. Students **Josie Houchard**, **Kent Kido**, and **Ian Latham** placed first in animatronics, and **Gordon Dubisky** placed first in flight endurance. In addition, the team of **Ben Clements**, **Luke Falls**, **Lawson Houser**, **Mike Jones**, and **Addy McCraw** placed second in animatronics. Students who placed first have qualified to compete at the national technology conference in Louisville this summer. Teacher **Darryl Thompson** is the club adviser.
32. **Highland School of Technology** students involved in the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) earned 27 medals at the state conference with 35 students qualifying to compete at the national level. The school also was awarded the FBLA Gold Seal Chapter of Merit for the 11th year. Students who placed in the top tier have qualified to compete at the national conference in Atlanta this summer. Teacher **Rachel Martin** is the club adviser.
33. Seventy-two **Highland School of Technology** students have their artwork on display at Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden's "Opening Doors to Spring" exhibit. Students created artwork inspired by spring on wooden doors that greet members and guests as they stroll through the garden. Additional doors that reflect Historic Belmont are on display at Stowe Park through a partnership with the Downtown Belmont Development Association.
34. **Lingerfeldt Elementary** teacher **Taylon Singleton** was nominated for First Tee National Teacher of the Year by the First Tee of Greater Charlotte chapter.

35. The **Pleasant Ridge Elementary** “Roaring Panthers” band had the opportunity to perform at a Charlotte Checkers game.
36. Four **South Point High School** students were selected for the American Legion Boys’ State summer program: **Dhruv A. Patel, Lennon Miller, Ethan Dellinger, and Jacob Echevarria.**
37. The **South Point High School** Battle of the Books team finished second at the Region 6 Battle of the Books competition in Statesville.
38. **Samantha Franke** of **Stanley Middle School** placed third in the engineering category at the North Carolina Student Academy of Science state competition. She was one of eight students to compete in the competition, which was held at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics.
39. **Stanley Middle School** eighth grader **Samantha Franke** placed second with her project “Rain, Rain, Come Our Way” in the engineering category at the North Carolina State Science and Engineering Fair. In addition, she was nominated for the Thermos Fisher Scientific Junior Innovators award.
40. **Stanley Middle School** had eight Envirothon teams compete at the regional competition with two teams advancing to the state competition on April 28. The students who qualified for the state contest are **James Hatley, Samantha Franke, Madalyn Gehrig, Rylee Cates, Payton Baker, Jillian Schultheis, Chloe Roberts, Abigail Price, Amelia Burr, and Ramon De La Oz.**
41. **Stanley Middle School** held a Roller Coaster Engineering Fair in March. The top three roller coaster teams will compete at Carowinds during Engineering Day on April 28. Students competing are **Evan Murphy, Jack Scholz, Dillon Castro, Payton Lennox, Diksha Sharma, Lillyan Wall, and Martha Arana.**