

## BOARD AGENDA INFORMATIONAL ITEM

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**DEPARTMENT:** Communications/Public  
Information Department

**TOPIC: GOOD NEWS**

**FOR THE MONTH OF:** November 2023

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1. **Gaston County Schools** held its annual Marching Band Fanfare on November 4 at **Stuart W. Cramer High School**. The event featured outstanding performances by our high school bands.
2. The **Gaston County Schools** Career and Technical Education (CTE) Department sponsored the National Technical Honor Society induction ceremony on November 16 at **Stuart W. Cramer High School**. A total of 347 students earned membership in the National Technical Honor Society.
3. The following students were chosen as **Gaston County Schools'** nominees for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Presidential Scholars recognition: **Ranley Clayton, Ashbrook High School; Jaquan Thomas, Bessemer City High School; Chloe Buchanan, Cherryville High School; Eva Watkins, East Gaston High School; Naami Abbey, Forestview High School; Avery Davis, Highland School of Technology; Zebulon Lunsford, Hunter Huss High School; Kristyn Carroll, North Gaston High School; Chandler Brown, Stuart W. Cramer High School; and Colin McAlister, South Point High School.**
4. The following teachers received a Ron L. Ensley grant from the Gaston County Education Foundation to support classroom learning projects: **Amanda Froehlich, W.A. Bess Elementary, *Fine Arts with First Grade*; Julie Shatterly, W.A. Bess Elementary, *Possibilities*; Michelle Hyde, Andrea Miers, Suzanne Cunningham, and Candace Grant, Cramerton Middle School, *Unlocking Timeless Treasures*; Allison Kleinheinz, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy, *Catching Air*; Suzanne Raxter, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy, *Six Bricks*; Melanie Weaver, Highland School of Technology, *Analyze This!*; Lia Smith, Lowell Elementary, *Celebrating Multicultural Literacy*; Alexandra Fitschen, Lowell Elementary, *Secret Stories*; Justin McConnell, Stacie Bell, Abby Birkhimer, and Jennifer Ray, Mount Holly Middle, *Building a Brighter Future*; Jennifer Coy, Quamar Jones, Kara Crowder, Donya Sloop, and Logan Moonie, Sherwood Elementary, *Weird Science*; Jennifer Cory, Sherwood Elementary, *Full STEAM Ahead*; Amy Jefferies, Andrea Little, and Lisa Brooks, Southwest Middle, *Crafting Connections*; and Susan Tobiasson, Stanley Middle School, *Sustaining Life Through Aquaponics*.**
5. The following students were winners in the Heisman High School Scholarship program: **Aissatou Douf, Ashbrook High School; Kenneth Greene, Ashbrook High School; Riley Rouse, Forestview; Kieran Wood, Highland School of Technology; Madeline Frank, South Point High School, and Greyson Kines, South Point High School.**

6. The elementary school student winners in the Keep Gastonia Beautiful recycled art contest for kindergarten through second grade are **Taylor Barnhill**, first place, **W.A. Bess Elementary**; and **Cooper Huffstetler**, second place, **W.A. Bess Elementary**. For third through fifth grades, the winners are **Mia Lopez**, first place, **W.A. Bess Elementary**; **Alayssa Nieves-Crespo**, second place, **Brookside Elementary**; and **Pyper Whitworth**, third place, **W.A. Bess Elementary**.
7. The following middle school students were winners in the Keep Gastonia Beautiful recycled art contest: **Madilyn Gray**, first place, **Belmont Middle**, and **Abbey Smith**, third place, **Belmont Middle**. The following high school students were winners in the Keep Gastonia Beautiful recycled art contest: **Ada Hendrix**, first place, **East Gaston High School**; **Isabella Biddle**, second place, **Hunter Huss High School**; and **Lucy Augustus**, third place, **Hunter Huss High School**.
8. **Ashbrook High School** student **Cameron Birch** received the 2024 Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD) Shriver-Kennedy Student Achievement Award. The honor recognizes students with autism, intellectual disability, or other developmental disabilities who excel in one or more of the following areas: academics, arts, athletics, community service, employment, extracurricular activities, independent activities, technology, and self-advocacy.
9. The **Ashbrook High School** marching band received the following awards at the Porter Ridge High School "Pirate Cove Classic" competition: first place, percussion; second place, drum major; third place general effect; and third place music.
10. **Ashbrook High School** art students designed and painted colorful pieces for display at Harold Rankin Park in Lowell. Students worked together to come up with ideas and agreed that the artwork should show a sense of connection and community. The result is three beautiful art pieces that flow together, making it feel like a viewer is walking through a park.
11. **Ashbrook High School** secured a grant from Dicks Sporting Goods and purchased new benches, dumbbells, and trap bars for the weight room. The additional equipment will benefit student-athletes as well as students in the body wellness and women's wellness classes. The new equipment will enable students to enhance their strength, stamina, and overall fitness.
12. **Ashbrook High School** senior **Camryn Massey** signed a national letter of intent to run track and field at Auburn University.
13. **W.B. Beam Intermediate School** organized a Veterans Day breakfast and program, which included the American Legion Post 100 Ceremonial Guard performing a flag presentation and a gun salute for the students and community.
14. The **Bessemer City High School** marching band received the following awards at the Fred T. Foard High School Band Classic: excellent rating overall; first place general effect; first place color guard; first place drum major; first place percussion, second place marching; second place music; and second place overall in class A.

15. **Bessemer City High School** quarterback **Gavin Chastain** completed 17-of-20 passes for 329 yards and set a new Gaston County single-game record with eight touchdowns.
16. **Carr Elementary** collected 800 pairs of socks during the school's "Socktober" school-wide service project for the Dallas Christian Ministries. In addition, Keep Gastonia Beautiful provided the school with 10 boxes of tennis balls.
17. **Cherryville Elementary School** hosted a Fire Prevention Day program and welcomed representatives from the Cherryville Fire Department, who shared about the importance of fire safety. The students also learned about what it means to be a firefighter, watched firefighter demonstrations, toured the fire department's mobile fire safety house, and enjoyed a visit from the "Sparky the Fire Dog" mascot.
18. **Cherryville Elementary** organized a Veterans Day program. During the event, students walked alongside veterans in a parade through the school while other students cheered them on by lining the hallways.
19. Through a variety of fundraising activities, **Cherryville High School** was able to collect \$5,000 for the Levine Cancer Institute.
20. **Cherryville High School** senior **Brayden Reynolds** signed a national letter of intent to play baseball at Mars Hill University.
21. As **Cherryville High School's** first-seed doubles team in the conference tennis tournament, students **Riley Bryant** and **Payton Cook** finished second in the conference championship and advanced to the 1A regionals. In high school volleyball, **Taylor Digh** and **Emily Allen** were named to the all-conference team.
22. The **Cherryville High School** marching band received the following awards at the Porter Ridge High School "Pirate Cove Classic" competition: second place, percussion; second place, drum major; second place music; third place, guard; and third place overall in Class A.
23. **Cherryville High School** recognized Dr. Vincent Hefner for serving as the public address announcer at football games for the past 18 years. Hefner is retiring from the role.
24. **Cherryville High School** conducted a dedication ceremony on October 22 for the Howard Homesley Outdoor Learning Center. The new outdoor classroom space is named in memory of Dr. Homesley, who was the founding chairman of the Cherryville High School Education Foundation. Since its establishment in 2010, the Foundation has contributed more than \$400,000 to support the school's academic program.
25. Youngsters of all ages enjoyed the Cherryville Chamber of Commerce's "Hocus Pocus Parade" that made its way through the downtown streets on Friday evening, October 13. The front sidewalk and lawn of **Cherryville Elementary School** was a prime viewing location for the parade, and a number of the parade entries participated in a "drive-thru" viewing at Rudisill Stadium during the **Cherryville High School** football game.

26. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** senior **Rich Wills** signed a letter of intent to play golf at Clemson University.
27. The **Stuart W. Cramer High School** Stagestruck Players presented “A Cemetery Walk Through Time” at New Hope Presbyterian Church in Gastonia. Students gave tours through the cemetery and introduced participants to people from the past. The event served as a fundraiser for the school’s theater arts program.
28. The **Stuart W. Cramer High School** marching band was recognized as the grand champion in Classes 1A-2AA division at the Enka Land of the Sky Marching Band Festival and secured the highest score in the morning session, a first in school history. The band also swept top honors in Class 2AA division and received the following awards: first place overall; first place, music; second place, drum major; second place, percussion; and third place, color guard. In addition, the band participated in the **Forestview High School** “Jaguar Classic” competition and received the following awards: first place in Class 3A; first place, color guard; first place, music; first place, marching; and first place, general effect. At the Porter Ridge “Pirate’s Cove Classic” competition, the band was recognized as grand champion in Classes 1A-3A and received the following awards: first place overall in Class 3A; first place, general effect; first place, color guard; second place, music; second place, drum major; third place, percussion; and third place, visual.
29. As part of the Eagle Pride Pet Food Challenge, **Cramerton Middle School** collected more than 300 pounds of pet food for the Bountiful Blessings Food Bank.
30. **Forestview High School** senior **Rennie Liu** was a finalist in the N.C. High School Athletic Association 3A individual state tennis championship.
31. The **Forestview High School** marching band received the following awards at the Porter Ridge High School “Pirate Cove Classic” competition: third place, drum major, first place, color guard; first place, music; and third place overall in Class 2A.
32. **Forestview High School** juniors in the Advanced Placement (AP) Seminar class were recognized for volunteering at Bountiful Blessings at Mt. Zion Restoration Church. The students dedicated their time to help individuals in Gaston County who need support with food and other pantry items.
33. **Gaston Early College High School** teacher **Amber Carpenter** was honored as the Outstanding Secondary Math Teacher for **Gaston County Schools**.
34. **Gaston Virtual Academy** school counselor **Yeva Hall-Williamson** was selected to serve on the Delegate Assembly at this year’s N.C. School Counselor Association’s fall conference.
35. **Marjorie Bone**, **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy** art teacher, and student **Emma Whiteside** painted the spirit rock for a Carolina Panthers contest and won \$500 for new art supplies.

36. **Highland School of Technology** sophomore **Madison Darnell** won the N.C. High School Athletic Association 1A individual state championship in tennis. In addition, the tennis team was the runner-up in the western regional championship.
37. The **Highland School of Technology** volleyball team were runners-up in the western regional championship.
38. **Highland School of Technology** senior **Liam Fulbright** signed a letter of intent to play baseball at King University.
39. **Pinewood Elementary** received a book vending machine and money to purchase books from Coca-Cola Consolidated.
40. The **South Point High School** marching band received the following awards at the Providence High School “Providence Cup” competition: third place overall and second place, music. Also, the band competed in the Porter Ridge “Pirate Cove Classic” competition and received the following awards: second place overall, Class 2A; first place, drum major; second place, general effect; second place, visual; and second place, music. In addition, the band performed at the Newton-Conover band competition and received the following awards: first place 1A; first place, drum major; first place, color guard; first place, music; and second place, percussion. The band performed at the **Forestview High School** band competition and received the following awards: grand champions for Class 1A and 2A; first place, color guard; first place, drum major.
41. **South Point High School** students **John Armstrong** and **Charlie Birtwhistle** were named to the roster for the East-West all-star football game. Head coach **Adam Hodge** was chosen to serve as an assistant coach.
42. The **Stanley Middle School** chorus sang the national anthem at the Charlotte Hornets basketball game on October 30.
43. **Tryon Elementary** fourth-grade students hosted a Veterans Day program to honor and thank local veterans. The event featured patriotic songs and speeches and intended to create a connection between the students and the veterans in their community.
44. **York Chester Middle School** earned the top spot in Prodigy Education’s Coding in Minecraft competition for North Carolina schools during the 2022-23 year. The school was recognized for the most coding credentials per person.