

BOARD AGENDA INFORMATIONAL ITEM

DEPARTMENT: Communications/Public
Information Department

TOPIC: GOOD NEWS

FOR THE MONTH OF: January 2025

1. **Gaston County Schools** launched the “Nickels for Neighbors” campaign to raise money for seniors in the Class of 2025 in Mitchell County Schools. The Principals Leadership Team coordinated the fundraising effort with help from the Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council and set a goal of collecting \$25,000 to help students affected by Hurricane Helene.
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: **Miles Funderburk, Ashbrook High School; Paella Nsimundele, Belmont Middle School; Cassidy Allen, Bessemer City Middle School; Molly Dillon, Stuart W. Cramer High School; Copeland Smith, Stuart W. Cramer High School; Danika Risner, Cramerton Middle School; Cyrus Baltimore, East Gaston High School; Mackenzie Hart, East Gaston High School; Zeke Tucker, East Gaston High School; Abram Comer, Forestview High School; Annabelle Radford, Forestview High School; Caiden McDaniel, Forestview High School; Ethan Snell, Forestview High School; Ford Poag, Forestview High School; Camila Vargas-Parra, W.C. Friday Middle School; Erick Rodriguez-Hernandez, W.C. Friday Middle School; Ishaq Murphy, W.C. Friday Middle School; Iyanna Brienne Fores, W.C. Friday Middle School; Akeyla Taylor, Highland School of Technology; Alex Cornwell, Highland School of Technology; Ayden Kisby-Jones, Highland School of Technology; Ruby Ruiz-Vargas, North Gaston High School; and Anakin Booth, South Point High School.**
3. **Andrew Jones of Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences, John Ramos of Forestview High School, and Erin Stokes of South Point High School** were among the 457 Impact Educators recognized by outstanding high school senior semifinalists for the UNC Morehead-Cain Scholarship. The educators from 40 states and 22 countries have played a significant role in shaping the lives and leadership learning of their students.
4. **Belmont Central Elementary teacher Kim Parrish** was named one of the Top 10 FSI Teacher All-Stars for December. This award recognizes her hard work, dedication to her students, and excellence in teaching. Outside the classroom, Mrs. Parrish also leads the school’s robotics team. As part of this honor, she received a special set of classroom supplies.

5. The **Bessemer City High School** Impact Club donated supplies to the Gaston County Animal Care and Control officer. School Resource Officer Jeff Thompson organized the drive.
6. Under the leadership of Officer Hord, the Gaston County Police organized a Christmas drive to provide gifts for 40 students at **Chapel Grove Elementary** this holiday season.
7. **Jason Pelusio**, a graduate of **East Gaston High School**, is the company manager for the Angelica National Tour of “Hamilton,” which is playing at the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center in Charlotte.
8. The **Gaston Early College High School** "Rocket League" team competed in the North Carolina Varsity Esports and STEM League state championship and earned a fourth-place finish. This marks the third year the school has participated in esports.
9. **Anna Claire Whitesides** of **North Gaston High School** has been awarded the N.C. Teaching Fellows Scholarship and will attend Appalachian State University next year to major in elementary education.