



700 Liledoun Road
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School Matters

Nov. 12, 2019

Alexander Central High School FFA State Convention Winners

Two Alexander Central High School (ACHS) students and one graduate were recognized for placing in the state FFA convention competition in June at the Raleigh Convention Center.

Austin Sink was recognized for placing first in the State Individual Supervised Agricultural Experience Awards/Tool Identification.

Kyle Sink took third place in State Nursery Operations Placement.

Austin and Kyle are the sons of JD and Deborah Sink.

Sam Sandifer, an ACHS graduate took third place in State Agricultural Mechanics Design and Fabrication Entrepreneurship. Sam is attending Campbell University. He is the son of Mike and Jenny Harrison and Sam Sandifer.

National FFA Organization is a youth organization within agricultural education that prepares students for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success. There are currently over 20,000 FFA members in North Carolina.

NC State Fair Winners

Two ACHS students competed in the Pre-Apprentice contest at the North Carolina State Fair held in Raleigh in October. Holden Ritchie and Will Watts were first-place winners in the carpentry division. The team built an impressive dog house. Holden is the son of Dannie and Adele Ritchie. Will is the son of Andy and Jeana Watts.

Alexander County Public Education Foundation Grant Winners

Seven \$500 grant awards were given to schools through the Public Education Foundation by Brigette Rhyne, Public Education Chairman.

- Mrs. Liz Cronan, Sugar Loaf Elementary School - "Integration of Art into Elementary Science"
- Mrs. Michelle Robinson, Taylorsville Elementary School - "Qballing in 4th Grade"
- Mrs. Erin Lewis, Ellendale Elementary School - "Picture Perfect Stem at Ellendale School"
- Ms. Angie Hickerson, ACHS - "Improving Student Performance on English II End-of-Course Tests"
- Mrs. Becky Dupuis, ACHS - "Using Models and Inquiry to Improve Stem Skills in Science Classes at ACHS"
- Mr. Matthew Mitchell, ACHS - "Stem Teaching for Implementing Essential Standards in the Math Classes at ACHS"



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- Mr. Dayne Chester, ACHS - "Working Collaboratively in Science to Vertically Align the 9-12 Science Courses to the NC Essential Standards"

Energy United Bright Ideas Education Grant Winners - Foothills Region

Each year Energy United awards Bright Idea grants to fund innovative classroom projects. The group of Bright Ideas winners in Energy United's Foothills Region includes teachers from Iredell-Statesville Schools, Catawba County Schools and Alexander County Schools. The grant recipients were recognized at a special luncheon in Statesville in early November.

Erin Lewis, Ellendale Elementary School was awarded \$1,000 for "Breaking News! Students Find Their Voice."

Kim Lowman and Jackie Worley, West Alexander Middle School were awarded \$1,299.99 for "WHACK (We Have Amazing Coding Kids) with BOLTS."

Alexander County Schools Named National Board Accomplished District

Alexander County Schools is one of the 81 districts nationwide to be named a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards accomplished district. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards recognized school districts in which 20 percent or more of its teachers have achieved National Board Certification.

The 81 Accomplished Districts come from 10 states including Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Washington.

In Alexander County Schools, 75 certified staff members have received National Board Certified status.

Hefner Receives Taylorsville Rotary Club Award

Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Hefner was presented the Paul Harris Fellow Recognition Award by the Taylorsville Rotary Club. School board members Cindy Sellers and Matt Cooksey are also Rotary Club members and presented the award.

The Paul Harris Fellow recognition acknowledges individuals who contribute, or who have contributions made in their name, of \$1,000 to The Rotary Foundation.

Stony Point Elementary School Update

Stony Point Elementary School Principal Andy Palmer began the presentation by outlining the use of Title I funding at the school. Two interventionists are employed with the funding. Kailin Sweet is a part-time interventionist and Carsyn Lackey is a full-time teacher assistant interventionist.

Other area funded by Title I money include STEM supplies, a one-day Discovery event at the school, two weeks of an artist in residence, the development of an outdoor classroom, and updates to the media center.

Public Information/Communications Office

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Palmer expressed gratitude to the Head Start Program and staff for the impact they have on the school.

The fall can food drive was a great success for the school. They exceeded their goal for the first time in recent years by collecting 5,113 can goods.

Another successful event at the school includes a Title I family night where 121 students attended with at least one family member. Other events happening at the school include red ribbon week and a collect campaign for care packages to be sent to a military member.

Palmer praised the ACHS Care Squad which comes to the school and works with students on Fridays. He indicated students look forward to the visits.

A Year in Review

School Board Chairman David Odom presented A Year in Review highlighting events and accomplishments of students, staff, and the school system.

One major accomplishment includes the development and implementation of the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan for the school district. All other accomplishments build on the goals and strategies outlined in the plan.

- Alexander County School District is a National Board Accomplished District. The system placed among 81 top districts nationwide having the highest percentage of National Board Certified Teachers.
- The School Nutrition Program finished the year financially stable (not requiring funding from the school district).
- Ten of 11 schools met or exceeded state growth expectations.
- Alexander County Schools currently rank third in the state for average daily attendance.
- In the Class of 2019, 66 students received early acceptance, and, in the Class of 2020, 59 students received early acceptance into college.
- Alexander Central held signing events for Apprentice Catawba, Construction Academy, and Electrical Lineman.
- Alexander County conducted the first STEM tours for 8th graders at local businesses.
- Head Start extended day services for 63 Head Start children, purchased 6 new minibuses, and hired the first Behavior Therapist.
- West Alexander Middle school placed second in the regional Middle School Battle of the Books.
- The 2019 graduating class was 316 students.



Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Hefner received a formal letter and plaque honoring Alexander County Schools as one of the 81 districts in the nation with 20 percent or greater nationally board-certified staff. She presented the plaque to Chairman Odom during the honors and recognition portion of the board meeting.

Dr. Hefner announced Melissa Canter, Wittenburg Elementary teacher and Alexander County Schools' Beginning teacher of the Year 2019 is one of 27 finalists in the running for 2019 NC Beginning Teacher of the Year at NCCAT Cullowhee Campus. The award will be presented December 5.

In other good news, Dr. Hefner reported outstanding results in the Beta Club Northwest District competition. Twelve students attended from ACHS and these are the results.

- Campaign Skit – first place (this included the entire Beta Club)
- Performing Arts – second place (Nolan Heath and Luke Kiziah)
- Visual Arts – second place (Skylar Godfrey)

Academic Testing:

- Agriculture – second place (Anna Beth Harris)
- Language Arts – first place (Emma Garwood)
- Math - first place (Felipe Kimura)
- Social Studies – third place (Jackson Reid)

Graduation dates announced. Alexander Early College will graduate its inaugural class Saturday, May 23, at 10 a.m. at the Alexander Central Auditorium. Alexander Central will graduate the class of 2020 Friday, June 12, at 7 p.m. at the Glenn G. Wilson Field at Cougar Stadium.

School Board Policy Revisions Approved

The school board members approved the two policies below.

- Policy No. 2230 - Board Committees
- Policy No. 2320 - Compliance with Open Meetings Law

One policy will be presented for a third reading next month.

- Policy No. 3420 - Student Promotion and Accountability

Five new policies were presented for a first reading and will be presented again in December.

- Policy No. 2300 - Board Meetings
- Policy No. 3225/4312/7320 - Technology Responsible Use
- Policy No. 3460 - Graduation Requirements
- Policy No. 6230 - School Meal and Competitive Food Standards
- Policy No. 8340 – Insurance



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All Alexander County Board Policies are available for review by the public at www.alexander.k12.nc.us or the Alexander County Board of Education Office on Liledoun Road, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

Non-Federal Share Waiver Approved

The board voted to approve the non-federal share waiver request presented by Alexander County Head Start Director Macy Jones. The request comes as a result of the programs inability to count all the NC Pre-K funds in the share match. This is only the second time in the history of the program that the waiver has been requested.

Board Approves Request of Board of Education Per Diem Change

Board members voted unanimously to support a letter to the county commissioners requesting a change in the compensation for the Alexander County Board of Education.

North Carolina State Statute indicated the board of commissioners for counties may fix the compensation for boards of education. Elected school board members receive \$120 per month and \$20 per meeting (the board chairman receives \$240 per month) which equals \$1,440 per year in comparison to the county commissioners at a rate of \$19,00 per year with health insurance benefits and the town council stipend of \$9,060 with health insurance benefits.

For the full presentation watch the meeting on our YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ch_kfe7bUDE. Chairman Odom's wish for the school board is the introduction of the per diem change request and begins at 58 minutes in the school board meeting.

School District Facilities Recommendations Approved

School board members approved just under \$1.9 million in repairs, remodel, and additions to school district facilities. The projects will be completed using half-cent sales tax money and lottery money.

School districts have allocations of money that are only available for capital projects and cannot be used for general operating expenses. The \$1.9 million approved will be paid for with the fund balance from the half-cent sales tax and lottery money which is \$7 million.