

BOARD AGENDA INFORMATIONAL ITEM

DEPARTMENT: Communications/Public
Information Department

TOPIC: GOOD NEWS

FOR THE MONTH OF: November 2024

1. **Gaston County Schools** had a group of 13 school counselors and social workers go to Buncombe County Schools in Asheville to provide support as students returned to school following the devastating effects of Hurricane Helene.
2. **Gaston County Schools** held its annual Marching Band Fanfare on Saturday, November 2 at **Stuart W. Cramer High School**. The event featured performances by all 10 high school marching bands. For the first time, the **Highland School of Technology** band presented a field show performance.
3. Students from **Gaston County Schools** participated in the annual Gaston County Veterans Day parade, which was held this year in Dallas. The high school JROTC groups marched in the parade along with the county marching band that included students from all high schools.
4. The following teachers received Ron L. Ensley grants from the Gaston County Education Foundation: **Heather Griffin, McAdenville Elementary; Austin Ferguson, Anne Rymer, and Courtney Lawing, Brookside Elementary; Shelbie Setzer, W.C. Friday Middle; Melissa Chapple, Gaston Virtual Academy; Amanda Froehlich, W.A. Bess Elementary; Kristi McClellan, W.A. Bess Elementary;**

9. **Kim Lynch** and **Amber Spargo** secondary curriculum facilitators for **Gaston County Schools**, presented at the national conference of the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE). Their session was titled “E.N.G.A.G.E. Your Class! Everybody Needs Games and Great Experiences in Class.”
10. **Gaston County Schools** had a group of more than 30 high school students attend the Aspiring Educators Summit at UNCharlotte. The program was intended for students who are interested in the education profession.
11. **Gaston County Schools’** international teachers hosted a “Cultural Extravaganza 2024” at Holbrook Middle School. The event featured performances, food, and festivities highlighting the 14 countries that are represented by the school district’s international teaching faculty.
12. The **Ashbrook High School** marching band earned several awards at the Providence Cup: first place in percussion, second place in visuals, first place in overall effect, second place in music, and first place in Class 2A.
13. **Ashbrook High School’s Jeremiah Pagan** and **JJ Gordon** were selected to play in the third annual Queen City Bowl football game on December 21.
14. **Ashbrook High School** cheerleader **Andi Ballard** was selected by Varsity Spirit to perform at Walt Disney World Resort during the Spring Break Performance.
15. The following **Belmont Middle School** students were selected for the North Carolina Music Educators Association’s middle school chorus: **Liam Blinnac Bansen**, **Charles Marks**, **Bentley McGugan**, **Easton Messick**, and **Roman Olivares**.
16. **Bessemer City Central Elementary** partnered with **Bessemer City Primary**, **Bessemer City Middle**, and **Bessemer City High School** for a “Bee Kind Drive” and collected items for families and students in western North Carolina.
17. **Bessemer City Central Elementary** and **Bessemer City Primary** sponsored a Fall Festival and Bingo Night. Families from both schools enjoyed playing educational games and sharing a meal together.
18. **Bessemer City Primary** hosted the school’s annual Storybook Character Parade. Students dressed up as characters from their favorite books and had guest readers read books to them.
19. The **Cherryville High School** cheerleading team won first place in the small varsity division at the Davidson College Spirit Invitation. The team also took first place in both the small varsity traditional and small varsity gameday categories at the Universal Cheerleaders Association competition in Raleigh.
20. The following **Cramerton Middle School** students were selected for the North Carolina Music Educators Association’s middle school chorus: **Joseph BeWorth Helms**, and **Abby Yost**.

21. **Weston McGinnis of Stuart W. Cramer High School** was the October Young Exceptional Perspectives (YEP) North Carolina's Got Talent winner. He was selected by the Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC) youth advisory team for his impressive card tricks.

31. **Andrew Taylor** of **Forestview High School** was selected as the overall winner at the local level in the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Good Citizen contest. His essay, along with other supporting materials, will advance to the district competition with the goal of progressing to the state and national levels.
32. The **Gaston Early College High School** held a “Grade A Eighth Peat” celebration to highlight the school’s achievement of earning an A school performance grade for the eighth consecutive year.
33. **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**, which was named a 2024 North Carolina STEM School of Distinction, enjoyed a visit by the current North Carolina Teacher of the Year Heather Smith, an eighth grade math teacher in Haywood County Schools. Smith, who strongly believes in connecting what is taught to real applications, was able to see how Hawks Nest focuses on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) education through engaging lessons and activities and learn how teachers bring STEAM to life for students.
34. **Hunter Huss High School** band director **Heaven Watson Weary** was featured in a segment on WBTW about overcoming breast cancer and receiving support from her students and colleagues while undergoing treatment.
35. **Kiser Elementary** received a \$2,500 donation from Blum, Inc. to build a makerspace in the media center.
36. **Kiser Elementary** students collected more than 2,000 items for the Webb Street School “One Can Make A Difference” food pantry.
37. Volunteers from First ARP Church and Clean Rite Pressure Washing planted flowers, cleaned, and pressure washed at **Lingerfeldt Elementary** help beautify the school campus.
38. **Julia Conger**, a fifth-grade teacher at **New Hope Elementary** was featured in a “Newsweek” article about using gymnastics to reward good behavior in class.
39. The **North Gaston High School** marching band took home multiple awards at the Fred T. Ford competition: second place in music, second in marching, first in general effect, second in percussion, first in color guard, first in drum major, and second in band. At the East Burke competition, the band won first place in drum major, second in percussion, second in color guard, second in music, second in general effect, and second in band along with a superior rating.
40. **North Gaston High School** students **Ruby Ruiz Vargas** (clarinet), **Ronald Tovilla-Pablo** (alto saxophone), and **Laylah Lindsay** (trumpet) were selected for the Winthrop University Invitational Band Clinic.
41. **North Gaston High School’s Nysir Thomas** was selected to play in the third annual Queen City Bowl football game on December 21.

