

2024

WELLS FARGO NORTH CAROLINA

PRINCIPAL *of the* YEAR

FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2024, 12:00 PM

WELLS  
FARGO



NORTH CAROLINA  
State Board of Education  
Department of Public Instruction

# OUR SPECIAL APPRECIATION IS EXTENDED TO SPONSORS WHO MAKE THE PROGRAM POSSIBLE:



**WELLS  
FARGO**

**Wells Fargo** — Wells Fargo is a leading financial services company that provides a diversified set of banking, investment and mortgage products and services, as well as consumer and commercial finance. In 2023, Wells Fargo provided grants totaling roughly \$12 million across North Carolina in support of housing, small business, financial health, sustainability and more. North Carolina employees volunteered more than 144,000 hours.



**Carolina Hunger Initiative** — Our mission is to increase access to healthy food year-round for North Carolinians. The Carolina Hunger Initiative is a project at the UNC Center for Health

Promotion and Disease Prevention working in collaboration with No Kid Hungry North Carolina, part of Share Our Strength's national No Kid Hungry Campaign. We use programming, applied research, and compelling communications to support policy, systems, and environmental changes. From innovative ways to serve school breakfast and summer meals for kids, to nutrition classes empowering elementary students, we are connecting people with the food they need to thrive. Learn more at [CarolinaHungerInitiative.org](https://CarolinaHungerInitiative.org).



**Education First** — Education First is proud to have a longstanding relationship with the Wells Fargo Principal of the Year Award – it is a relationship built on valuing the fantastic educators and administrators across the state

of North Carolina that bring their schools to life and have dedicated their careers to the next generation of global citizens. EF's mission is to open the world through education. EF is pleased to recognize one of the Principal of the Year Award finalists with a trip to our Global Education Symposium in 2023. This event is hosted at the North American headquarters in Boston, MA where like-minded secondary educators from across the country will gather to explore the Global Competency in a day-long conference designed to inspire and equip educators with valuable tools and resources for preparing students for their futures in an interconnected world. The program provides participants with a unique opportunity to connect with a community of educators and organizations from across the country and the world. The prize includes flights, accommodations, select meals, conference registration, and a chance to experience Boston in the fall.



**Equitable Advisors** — Equitable\*, a principal franchise of Equitable Holdings, Inc. (NYSE: EQH), has been one of America's leading financial services providers since 1859. With the mission to help clients secure their financial well-being, Equitable provides

advice, protection and retirement strategies to individuals, families and small businesses. Equitable has more than 8,000 employees and Equitable Advisors financial professionals serves 2.8 million clients across the country. Please visit [equitable.com](https://equitable.com) for more information.

\*"Equitable" refers exclusively to Equitable Financial Life Insurance Company (NY, NY). Equitable Advisors is the brand name of Equitable Advisors, LLC (Equitable Financial Advisors in MI and TN).



**Jostens** — Minneapolis-based Jostens provides products, programs and services that help people tell their stories, celebrate important traditions and recognize achievements. Jostens is the most trusted

partner in helping customers to celebrate moments that matter. The company's products include school yearbooks and pictures, scholastic products such as class rings, graduation products, letter jackets and products for athletic champions and their fans. Jostens partners with schools across the country and internationally, and helps bring their mission, vision, and values to life through their Branding Initiatives – They strive every day to help Faculty & Students not only express it on the walls but live it in the halls. Jostens is a subsidiary company of Platinum Equity.



**Lenovo** — Lenovo is committed to supporting educators. Focused on a bold vision to deliver smarter technology for all, we are developing

world-changing technologies that create a more inclusive, trustworthy, and sustainable digital society. As a global industry leader in the education market, Lenovo is committed to making a difference in support of teachers, students, classrooms, and education through related initiatives focused on community investments and collaborative partnerships. For nearly 20 years, Lenovo has called North Carolina our home – one of our two global headquarters is located in Morrisville and our U.S. Fulfillment Center is located in Guilford County.



**NC Digital Learning Initiative** —

The NC Digital Learning Initiative focuses on providing digital teaching and learning supports and resources for North Carolina Public School Units.

These supports include: Designing and Implementing the North Carolina Digital Learning Plan, Providing Professional Learning Around Digital Teaching and Learning Pedagogies and Resources. Curating and Developing Resources Related to the Goals Established in the Digital Learning Plan, Conducting Research to Inform the Design of Digital Teaching and Learning Professional Learning and Resources. The work that is completed under the Digital Learning Initiative is done with support from the North Carolina State Legislature.



**Truist Leadership Institute** — Truist Leadership Institute provides programs for public school principals that focus on developing leadership, leading change,

and engaging teachers. Our flagship program, Mastering Leadership Dynamics™, is offered to NC public school principals at no cost. The same program offered to Truist and external client executives, it seeks to produce impact through deeper awareness of the factors that form the individual, and how these guide decision-making, interactions, and leadership approach. Empowering our educational leaders is one important way that we live our Purpose to inspire and build better lives and communities. Interested in learning more? Visit us on the web at [TruistLeadershipInstitute.com](https://TruistLeadershipInstitute.com).

# AWARD CEREMONY

## — LUNCHEON —

### WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**ELIZABETH SANTAMOUR** • Educator Recognition Coordinator,  
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

### GREETINGS

**ALAN DUNCAN** • Vice-Chairman, State Board of Education

### REMARKS

**JUAN AUSTIN** • Community Relations Senior Manager,  
Wells Fargo Philanthropy & Community Impact

### REFLECTIONS

**DONNA BLEDSOE** • 2023 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year

### CELEBRATION OF PRINCIPALS

**ROY COOPER** • Governor of North Carolina

### RECOGNITION OF REGIONAL FINALISTS

**DONNA BLEDSOE** • 2023 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year

### REMARKS

**CATHERINE TRUITT** • State Superintendent, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

### ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2024 WELLS FARGO NORTH CAROLINA PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

**SUZIE KOONCE** • Community Relations Lead Consultant,  
Wells Fargo Philanthropy & Community Impact

### ACCEPTANCE REMARKS

**2024 WELLS FARGO NORTH CAROLINA PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR**

### CLOSING AND DISMISSAL

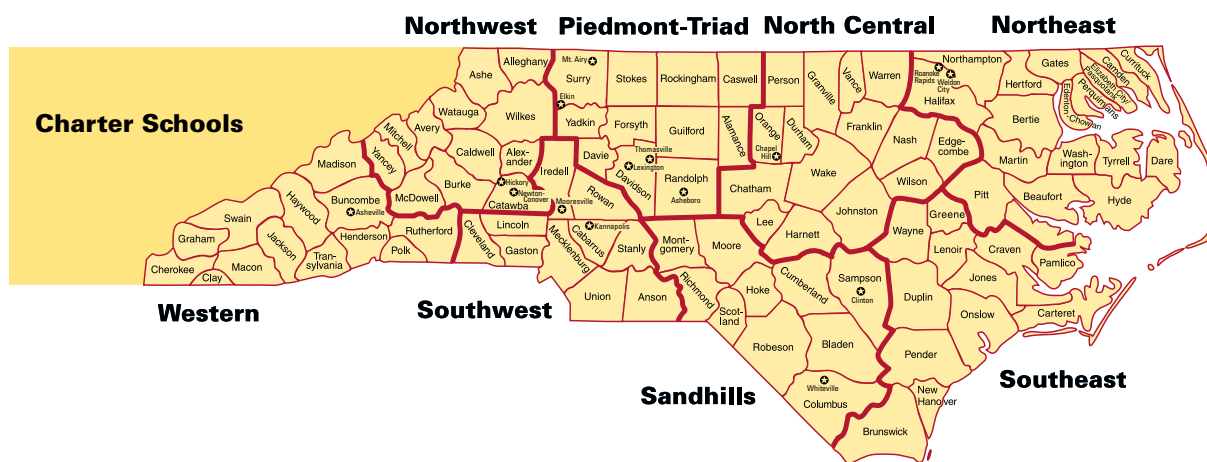
**ELIZABETH SANTAMOUR**

*Photos immediately following ceremony on terrace for finalists and sponsors.*

# WELLS FARGO NC PRINCIPAL *of the* YEAR PROGRAM

Introduced in 1984, the Wells Fargo Principal of the Year Program acknowledges principals for fostering environments conducive to academic excellence in North Carolina's public schools. The award is sponsored by the Wells Fargo Foundation in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Over the program's history, 44 principals have been honored as Wells Fargo North Carolina Principals of the Year. This program seeks to recognize and celebrate outstanding principals who demonstrate exemplary leadership in schools statewide. By highlighting their accomplishments, the program aims to inspire and promote excellence in educational leadership, thereby advancing education throughout North Carolina.

The Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year serves as a liaison between North Carolina's roughly 2,500 principals and other stakeholders. Working alongside the Regional Principals of the Year, they unite to create a vibrant team, actively embracing diverse opportunities to champion and elevate the principalship. This collaborative endeavor not only showcases their individual accomplishments but also cultivates a robust network of mutual support among exemplary educational leaders representing distinct regions.



## 2024 STATE SELECTION COMMITTEE

The State Selection Committee, selected for their exemplary support of education, conducts panel interviews and thorough portfolio reviews to choose the North Carolina Principal of the Year. Both the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education are dedicated to honoring the most innovative and effective public school leaders in the state.

**DR. MARLOW ARTIS** • Principal, Craven Early College and Creator/Host of Tar Heel Teachers

**DR. MARIA PITRE-MARTIN** • Executive Director, UNCG SERVE Center

**DR. SHIRLEY PRINCE** • Executive Director, North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals' Association

**DR. VANESSA WRENN** • Chief Information Officer, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

# SANDHILLS REGION



## **ERICA FENNER-MCADOO**

### **Sandhills Region Principal of the Year**

Howard Hall Elementary  
Cumberland County Schools

*“My success is not the result of a single individual’s work but the return on investment of educational giants who poured their wisdom into my career as an educator. I am blessed to call many of these educational giants both mentors and friends.”*

- 14 Years of Administrative Experience
- North Carolina A&T State University (BS)
- Fayetteville State University (MSA)
- North Carolina Principal Fellow
- Sandhills Regional Education Consortium Principal’s Institute Cohort XIV
- LEAD Aspiring Principal Mentor

## *Sandhills* REGION WINNERS

**STEPHANIE JONES NORRIS**  
Bladenboro Primary School  
Bladen County Schools

**GREG DIRKS**  
L.C. Kerr Elementary School  
Clinton City Schools

**HALEY Y. HALL**  
Don D. Steed Elementary School  
Hoke County Schools

**JANET L. DEATON**  
Star Elementary School  
Montgomery County Schools

**DEBORAH W. WARREN**  
Carthage Elementary School  
Moore County Schools

**DR. ANTHONY BARTON**  
Fairmont High School  
Public Schools of Robeson County

**JOYCE MCRAE**  
Richmond County Ninth Grade Academy  
Richmond County Schools

**EDWARD HOLMES JR.**  
Hargrove Elementary School  
Sampson County Schools

**PAMELA LEWIS**  
Spring Hill Middle School  
Scotland County Schools

# CHARTER SCHOOLS



## **DR. SARENA FULLER**

### **Charter School Principal of the Year**

ArtSpace Charter School  
Swannanoa, NC

*“My leadership philosophy is guided by the doctrine of charity. That is, I believe we all have the best intentions and we are all doing our best to contribute positively to our school. Though this is challenging and requires vulnerability, it has positively impacted our school’s culture, morale, and collaborative relationships.”*

- 10 Years of Administrative Experience
- Eastern Carolina University (BS)
- Appalachian State University (MSA)
- Western Carolina University (Ed.D)
- North Carolina Teaching Fellow
- National Board Certified Teacher
- Member of the North Carolina Association of Public Charter Schools

## *Charter Schools* REGION WINNERS

**ANDREW SWANNER**  
Oxford Preparatory School  
Oxford, NC

**DEANNE ROSEN**  
Tiller School  
Beaufort, NC

**TERESA BARBER**  
Tillery Charter Academy  
Biscoe, NC

**RANDI WOODRUFF**  
Wake Forest Charter Academy  
Wake Forest, NC

# PIEDMONT-TRIAD REGION



## **DR. NANCY MARTINEZ**

### **Piedmont-Triad Region Principal of the Year**

Career Center High School  
Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

*“The foundation of my leadership style resides in clear, coherent and consistent communication under a shared leadership and collaborative framework. Working alongside my School Leadership Team, I have established systems and procedures that ensure all stakeholders’ participation in our school’s decision-making process.”*

- 13 Years of Administrative Experience
- Marquette University (BA, M.Ed)
- North Central University (Ed.D)
- Member of the WSFCS Equity-Centered Principal Pipeline Committee
- Member of the National Association of Bilingual Educators
- Hispanic League of Winston Salem Board Member

## *Piedmont-Triad* REGION WINNERS

### **DR. JULIE HANCOCK**

Turrentine Middle School  
Alamance-Burlington School District

### **ANN EVANS**

Guy B. Teachey Elementary School  
Asheboro City Schools

### **CLARENCE L. GARRETT, JR.**

N.L. Dillard Middle School  
Caswell County Schools

### **MARY W. FOSTER**

Mocksville Elementary School  
Davie County Schools

### **JOHNITA READUS**

Bluford STEM Academy  
Guilford County Schools

### **LEVI GOINS**

Mount Airy Middle School  
Mount Airy City Schools

### **ASHLEY BARR**

Randleman Elementary School  
Randolph County Schools

### **DR. JENNIFER M. HARDIN**

Wentworth Elementary School  
Rockingham County Schools

### **PAUL T. HALL**

Meadowbrook Academy/Southeastern  
Stokes Middle School  
Stokes County Schools

### **PAIGE SMITH BADGETT**

North Surry High School  
Surry County Schools

### **IDA M. WEISNER**

Jonesville Elementary School  
Yadkin County Schools

# SOUTHEAST REGION



## **CHRISTIANNE MAY**

### **Southeast Region Principal of the Year**

Castle Hayne Elementary School  
New Hanover County Schools

*“I listen. I analyze data. I pay attention to the mood of the building. I do many other things over the course of the day, but most of all, I prioritize my people, big and small. All of these actions lead me to be more deliberate and intentional in my focus and alignment to our vision and mission.”*

- 9 Years of Administrative Experience
- York College of Pennsylvania (BA)
- University of North Carolina at Charlotte (M.Ed)
- Appalachian State University (MSA)
- Participant in NCPAPA Distinguished Leadership in Practice
- NHCS Superintendent’s Advisory Council Chairperson
- Principal Mentor

## *Southeast* REGION WINNERS

### **JUSTIN HAYES**

Cedar Grove Middle School  
Brunswick County Schools

### **KAITLYN WATSON**

Grover C. Fields Middle School  
Craven County Schools

### **TONY JONES**

North Duplin Jr.-Sr. High School  
Duplin County Schools

### **TAYLOR MOORE**

Greene Early College High School  
Greene County Schools

### **MICHAEL MOON**

E.B. Frink Middle School  
Lenoir County Public Schools

### **LISA M. MARSHALL**

Northwoods Elementary School  
Onslow County Schools

### **DR. GARY HALES**

Wayne School of Engineering  
Wayne County Schools



# NORTH CENTRAL REGION



## WINSTON PIERCE

### North Central Region Principal of the Year

Farmington Woods Magnet Elementary School  
Wake County Public School System

*“School should be a place where students and their families are valued and welcomed while also being a resource. I am proud of the relationships I build and sustain with students and families. The positive relationships I have with the families of our students also support our school’s success as families trust the school to care for their student and trust their principal to make decisions that are student centered.”*

- 21 Years of Administrative Experience
- University of North Carolina (BA, M.Ed, MSA)
- WCPSS Division of Principals and Assistant Principals Elementary Director
- International Baccalaureate Educator Network Global Consultant
- Magnet Schools of America National Institute for Magnet School Leadership Consultant
- Wake Ed Partnership Board of Directors

## North Central REGION WINNERS

### MINNIE GOINS

Elizabeth Seawell Elementary School  
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools

### DR. BRADFORD WALSTON

Northwood High School  
Chatham County Schools

### MSHINDA MIDDLETON-BROWN

R.N. Harris Elementary School  
Durham Public Schools

### DR. KELLY ANNE MUDD

Martin Millennium Academy  
Edgecombe County Public Schools

### MR. FRANK WIGGINS

Youngsville Elementary School  
Franklin County Schools

### DR. CHARMAIN L. DAY-HEGGIE

Butner-Stem Elementary School  
Granville County Public Schools

### RYAN MCNEILL

Western Harnett High School  
Harnett County Schools

### PAIGE BARNES

West Clayton Elementary School  
Johnston County Public Schools

### ROBERT NEWBY

East Lee Middle School  
Lee County Schools

### DR. HUGH SCOTT II

Southern Nash High School  
Nash County Public Schools

### DR. MEREDITH MAIER

New Hope Elementary School  
Orange County Schools

### SHERITA L. FULLER

Helena Elementary School  
Person County Schools

### DR. MICHAEL W. PUTNEY SR.

Dabney Elementary School  
Vance County Schools

### DR. DANIEL BARNES

Lee Woodard Elementary School  
Wilson County Schools

# NORTHEAST REGION



## SONYA RINEHART

### Northeast Region Principal of the Year

John A. Holmes High School  
Edenton-Chowan Public Schools

*“My leadership style is not limited to only the staff but reflective in my interactions with students. I believe in celebrating together and ensuring our students have a true high school experience. It is my goal that staff and students leave with memories of a family unit they can always rely on and come back to.”*

- 5 Years of Administrative Experience
- North Carolina State University (BA)
- East Carolina University (M.Ed)
- National Board Certified Teacher
- Participant in NCPAPA Early Career Principals Academy
- DIL Esports Grant Recipient
- Global Leaders Secondary Pilot Program in partnership with Participate Learning

## Northeast REGION WINNERS

### EMILY PAKE

Beaufort County Early College  
High School  
Beaufort County Schools

### MICHAEL REAVES

Camden Middle School  
Camden County Schools

### BARBARA TIDD

W.T. Griggs Elementary School  
Currituck County Public Schools

### CURTIS W. PRICE

Manteo Elementary School  
Dare County Schools

### STEPHANIE WOOTEN AMBROSE

P.W. Moore Elementary School  
Elizabeth City-Pasquotank  
Public Schools

### KELLY EURE

Central Middle School  
Gates County Schools

### LINDA ROBERSON COOPER

Enfield Middle STEAM Academy  
Halifax County Schools

### DR. LYNDISAY B. BRITT

Hertford County Early College  
High School  
Hertford County Public Schools

### MICKEY DREW

Perquimans County High School  
Perquimans County Schools

### DR. JENNIFER JAMES

Innovation Early College High School  
Pitt County Schools

### MARY BRIDGERS

Tyrrell Elementary School  
Tyrrell County Schools

# WESTERN REGION



## PHIL ROGERS

### Western Region Principal of the Year

R-S Central High School  
Rutherford County Schools

*“I believe my success as a principal at R-S Central, since 2008, has been rooted in building trust and mutual respect amongst our stakeholders. Creating an environment where people feel they have a say is vitally important. They must feel like their voice is heard. They must feel they are trusted and respected. This is what I have tried to do over the course of the last fifteen years.”*

- 17.5 Years of Administrative Experience
- Gardner Webb University (BA)
- Converse College (MA, EdS)
- Member of the North Carolina Association of School Administrators
- Participant in NCPAPA Distinguished Leadership in Practice
- Rutherford County Schools Education Foundation Board Member

## *Western* REGION WINNERS

### SHANNON THIBODEAUX BAGGETT

Montford North Star Academy  
Asheville City Schools

### CHIP CODY

Clyde A. Erwin High School  
Buncombe County Schools

### PAUL WADE WILSON

Martins Creek School  
Cherokee County Schools

### CASEY KRUK

Canton Middle School  
Haywood County Schools

### JOHN MCDARIS

Rugby Middle School  
Henderson County Schools

### HOLLY WHISNANT

Cullowhee Valley School  
Jackson County Public Schools

### ANDY PYLE

Nantahala School  
Macon County Schools

### SUSAN JACKSON

Brush Creek Elementary School  
Madison County Schools

# NORTHWEST REGION



## BECKIE SPEARS

### Northwest Region Principal of the Year

Wilkes County Schools  
Wilkesboro Elementary School

*“Adults learn best when professional learning is self-directed, relevant to their goals, supported by feedback and encouragement, delivered flexibly and combined with collaboration with peers. My greatest joy from the past five years was seeing our teachers complete LETRS, use their skills to improve outcomes for all kids and celebrate exceeding growth in reading.”*

- 9 Years of Administrative Experience
- Meredith College (BA)
- Appalachian State University (MSA)
- National Board Certified Teacher
- North Carolina Teaching Fellow
- Participant in NCPAPA Distinguished Leadership in Practice
- National ESEA Distinguished Schools Award

## Northwest REGION WINNERS

### CHARLES DRAPER

Bethlehem Elementary School  
Alexander County Schools

### DAVID BLACKBURN

Mountain View Elementary School  
Ashe County Schools

### TAMARA PRESNELL

Newland Elementary School  
Avery County Schools

### DILLON SAIN

Robert L. Patton High School  
Burke County Public Schools

### JEFFREY M. MAYO

Hudson Middle School  
Caldwell County Schools

### HEATHER HARBINSON HOUSER

Mountain View Elementary School  
Catawba County Schools

### ERIN SIGMON

Southwest Primary School  
Hickory Public Schools

### MELORA GIBSON BENNETT

McDowell High School  
McDowell County Schools

### JASON HALL

Greenlee Primary School  
Mitchell County Schools

### LEAH HAYES

North Newton Elementary School  
Newton-Conover City Schools

### DR. BONNIE S. SMITH

Valle Crucis School  
Watauga County Schools

# SOUTHWEST REGION



## DWIGHT THOMPSON

### Southwest Region Principal of the Year

Renaissance West STEAM Academy  
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

*“My leadership style is direct with an emphasis on compassion, high expectations and people development that makes all stakeholders respect me as an instructional leader. I am the type of leader who models, practices and leads by example. This type of leadership allows others, even the naysayers, to want to improve practices that change outcomes for students.”*

- 10 Years of Administrative Experience
- The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (BS)
- Pfeiffer University (MS)
- The University of North Carolina at Charlotte (MSA)
- North Carolina Principal Fellow
- North Carolina Association of Educators Scholar
- Member of Magnet Schools of America

## *Southwest* REGION WINNERS

### BECKY G. FLAKE

Lilesville Elementary School  
Anson County Schools

### CHRISTOPHER MYERS

Northwest Cabarrus High School  
Cabarrus County Schools

### DR. DUSTIN MOREHEAD

Kings Mountain High School  
Cleveland County Schools

### JUSTIN B. BEAM

North Belmont Elementary School  
Gaston County Schools

### KRISTIE ANN SPENCER

Woodland Heights Elementary School  
Iredell-Statesville Schools

### ALLISON RHYNE

Lincolnton Middle School  
Lincoln County Schools

### SAMONE GRAHAM

Mooresville High School  
Mooresville Graded School District

### JENNIFER BROWN

Hurley Elementary School  
Rowan-Salisbury School System

### ANNE MCLENDON

Albemarle Middle School  
Stanly County Schools

### DR. KIM FISENNE

Porter Ridge High School  
Union County Public Schools

# 2023 REGIONAL FINALISTS

2023

WELLS FARGO NORTH CAROLINA

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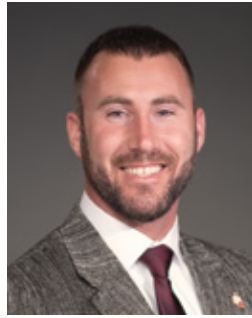


### **DONNA BLEDSOE**

#### **Piedmont-Triad Region Teacher of the Year**

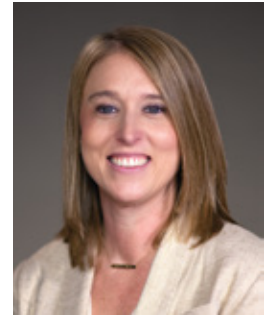
Cedar Ridge Elementary  
Surry County Schools

- 13 Years of Administrative Experience
- Appalachian State University (BS, MA)
- Participant in NCPAPA Distinguished Leadership in Practice
- NC ASCD Lighthouse School Award Recipient
- Member of Surry County Schools Leadership Framework Design Team
- Presenter at NCTIES Conference
- According to the 2022 NCTWC survey, 96% of the staff believes teachers are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction



### **JOHN LASSITER**

**Northeast Region Principal of the Year**  
Hertford Grammar  
Perquimans County Schools



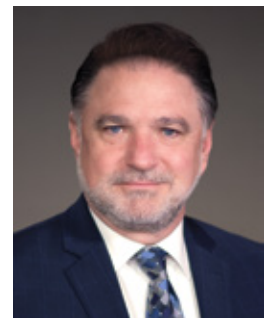
### **ASHLEY FAULKENBERRY**

**Southeast Region Principal of the Year**  
Trent Park Elementary  
Craven County Schools



### **DR. WILLIAM LOGAN**

**North Central Region Principal of the Year**  
Hillside High  
Durham Public Schools



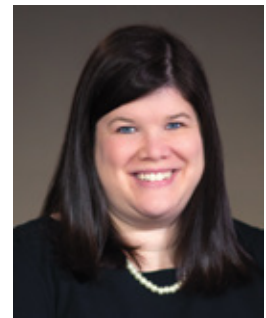
### **JIM BUTLER**

**Sandhills Region Principal of the Year**  
Richmond Senior High  
Richmond County Schools



### **TONYA WILLIAMS**

**Southwest Region Principal of the Year**  
Concord Middle  
Cabarrus County Schools



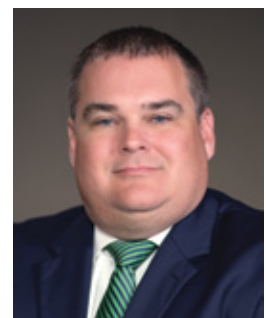
### **JESSIE GRAVEL**

**Northwest Region Principal of the Year**  
Drexel Elementary  
Burke County Public Schools



### **RUAFIKA COBB**

**Western Region Principal of the Year**  
Ira B. Jones Elementary  
Asheville City Schools



### **T.J. WORRELL**

**Charter Schools Principal of the Year**  
Northeast Academy for Aerospace  
and Advanced Technologies  
Elizabeth City, NC

# PAST WINNERS

2022 **Dr. Patrick Greene**, Greene County Schools,  
Greene Central High

2021 **Dr. Elena Ashburn**, Wake County Public School System,  
Needham B. Broughton Magnet High

2020 **Kisha Clemons**, Newton-Conover City Schools,  
Shuford Elementary

2019 **Matthew Bristow-Smith**, Edgecombe County Public  
Schools, Edgecombe Early College High

2018 **Tabari Wallace**, Craven County Schools,  
West Craven High

2017 **Jason Griffin**, Perquimans County Schools,  
Hertford Grammar

2016 **Melody Chalmers**, Cumberland County Schools,  
E.E. Smith High

2015 **Steve Lassiter, Jr.**, Pitt County Schools, Pactolus School

2014 **Dr. Carrie Tulbert**, Mooresville Graded School District,  
Mooresville Middle

2013 **Dale Cole**, Beaufort County Schools, Chocowinity Middle

2012 **Patrice Faison**, Guilford County Schools,  
Oak Hill Elementary

2011 **Dr. Rob Jackson**, Union County Public Schools,  
Cuthbertson High

2010 **Dr. Jan King**, Henderson County Schools,  
Glenn C. Marlow Elementary

2009 **Vann Pennell**, Brunswick County Schools,  
South Brunswick High

2008 **Debra Morris**, Kannapolis City Schools, A.L. Brown High

2007 **Craig Hill**, Lenoir County Schools, Kinston High

2006 **Marian Yates**, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools,  
South Mecklenburg High

2005 **Margaret Hyatt**, Buncombe County Schools,  
Avery's Creek Elementary

2004 **John R. Black**, Hickory City Schools,  
Longview Elementary

2003 **Nina René Corders**, Cumberland County Schools,  
E.E. Smith High

2002 **Lloyd G. Wimberley**, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools,  
Myers Park High

2001 **Peggy Smith**, Johnston County Schools,  
East Clayton Elementary

2000 **Gail T. Edmondson**, Greene County Schools,  
Snow Hill Primary

1999 **Daniel A. Piggott**, Winston-Salem/Forsyth Schools,  
Carver High

1998 **Pandora M. Bell**, Guilford County Schools,  
Jesse Wharton Elementary

1997 **Judith H. Budacz**, Pitt County Schools,  
Wahl-Coates Elementary

1996 **Mary D. McDuffie**, Cumberland County Schools,  
Seventy-First High

1995 **Jo Ann Bowman**, Lee County Schools,  
J. Glenn Edwards Elementary

1994 **David C. Burleson**, Burke County Schools, Freedom High

1993 **Ann B. Clark**, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools,  
Alexander Graham Middle

1992 **Jane B. Burke**, Hertford County Schools,  
Hertford County High

1991 **John M. Schroeder**, High Point City Schools,  
Fairview Elementary

1990 **John R. Griffin**, Cumberland County Schools,  
E.E. Smith High

1989 **Barbara M. Ledford**, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools,  
Northeast Jr. High

1988 **Dan A. Jones**, Guilford County Schools,  
Erwin Open Elementary

1987\* **Karen H. Campbell**, Buncombe County Schools,  
W.W. Estes Elementary  
**Dale J. Metz**, Greensboro City Schools,  
Gateway Education Center

1986\* **Patricia F. Gibson**, Newton-Conover City Schools,  
Newton-Conover Middle  
**Janie E. Manning**, Pitt County Schools, Bethel Elementary

1985\* **Alice H. Hart**, Buncombe County Schools,  
Glen Arden Elementary  
**Beverly S. White**, Hickory City Schools,  
Jenkins Elementary

1984\* **Robert A. Clendenin**, Guilford County Schools,  
Page High  
**Alexander Erwin**, Wilkes County Schools,  
Wilkes Central High

\* Prior to 1988, two statewide winners were named each year. Since then, one statewide winner has been selected.

WELLS FARGO NORTH CAROLINA

# PRINCIPAL *of the* YEAR

*“As a staff, our joy comes from helping our students and one another reach our full potential. We choose and keep choosing daily to walk in our purpose, which is for all students to succeed. This centers us in our joy.”*

**DONNA BLEDSOE**

2023 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year

TODAY'S LIVESTREAM POWERED BY  **EQUITABLE**  
ADVISORS

**Please share moments from today on social media using #nctoytoy.**

The Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year process is facilitated by the Office of the State Superintendent.