

· PRINCIPAL of the YEAR ·

FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2022, 12:00 PM







SPONSORS



Wells Fargo is a leading financial services company that proudly serves one in three U.S. households and more than 10% of small businesses in the U.S., and is the leading middle market banking provider in the U.S. The company provides a diversified set of banking, investment and mortgage products and services, as well as consumer and commercial finance, through more than 230 branches and 34,000 employees across North Carolina. Wells Fargo is honored to sponsor the North Carolina Principal of the Year Program and support educational initiatives in communities across the state. In 2021, Wells Fargo provided more than \$14.9 million to nonprofit organizations and schools in North Carolina. In communities it serves, Wells Fargo focuses on building a sustainable, inclusive future for all by supporting housing affordability, small business growth, financial health, and a low-carbon economy. Visit a Wells Fargo branch today or wellsfargo.com to learn more about the company.



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. To that end, EF is pleased to award the 2022 Principal of the Year a trip to the Global Education Symposium in Boston in 2022 for the POY and a guest or two educators of his/her choosing. This event is hosted at the North American headquarters in Boston, MA where like-minded educators 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.



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.



No Kid Hungry North Carolina is working to break down the barriers that keep kids from accessing healthy food. Our organization was formed in 2011 in partnership with state leaders and the national No Kid Hungry campaign, which is a

program of the nonprofit Share Our Strength. In 2014, No Kid Hungry NC became an initiative of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention.

In North Carolina, almost 900,000 public school students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Many of those students depend on school for their nutrition. That's why No Kid Hungry NC is helping connect our state's children to effective but under-utilized federal nutrition programs such as school breakfast, summer meals, and afterschool meals.

Learn more at NoKidHungryNC.org.



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

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AWARD CEREMONY

— LUNCHEON —

MISTRESS OF CEREMONY

DR. SONJA BROWN • Educator Advancement Lead District & Regional Support, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

WELCOME AND GREETINGS

DR. CYNTHIA MARTIN • Director, District & Regional Support, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

ALAN DUNCAN • Vice Chairman, State Board of Education

VIDEO GREETING

ROY COOPER • Governor of North Carolina

REMARKS

JOHN W. WARD • Executive Vice President, Market Executive - Triangle East Commercial Banking, Wells Fargo

JASON HOGAN • Sales Representative, Jostens

HELEN ROBERTS • Program Manager, No Kid Hungry NC

JAMES "MARTY" BULLARD • Regional Vice President, Equitable Advisors

MICHELE AHOUSE • Director Of Strategic Partnerships – East at EF Education First

REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP

DR. ELENA ASHBURN • 2021 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year

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

- VIDEO PRESENTATION -

RECOGNITION OF REGIONAL FINALISTS

DR. ROBERT TAYLOR • Deputy Superintendent, School & Student Advancement, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2022 WELLS FARGO NORTH CAROLINA PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

MICHAEL L. GOLDEN • Executive Vice President, Triangle Region Bank President, Wells Fargo

CLOSING AND ADJOURNMENT

DR. SONJA BROWN

Photos immediately following ceremony on terrace for finalists and sponsors.

WELLS FARGO NC PRINCIPAL of the YEAR PROGRAM

The Wells Fargo Principal of the Year Award was introduced in 1984 to recognize the role of the principal in establishing an environment conducive to the pursuit and achievement of academic excellence in North Carolina's schools. This Foundation sponsors the award in conjunction with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Since the inception of the program, there have been 42 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principals of the Year, 281 regional award recipients, and 3,549 local Wells Fargo Principals of the Year. The Principal of the Year Program recognizes principals at the local, regional, and statewide levels.

The local process begins with each school system selecting one principal as its local Wells Fargo Principal of the Year. The selection process at the local level is the responsibility of the local superintendent or designee. The person chosen as the local Wells Fargo Principal of the Year represents his or her school system in the regional selection process. The regional selection process includes an evaluation of the candidate through a portfolio review and an interview. After the district and charter school nomination processes are completed, the Charter School Principal of the Year joins the eight Regional Principals of the Year as a finalist for State Principal of the Year. The state selection process continues with each regional finalist being interviewed and his/her portfolio reviewed by a state selection committee.

The Wells Fargo Principal of the Year serves as the North Carolina ambassador for the state's approximately 2,500 principals. The 2022 NC Principal of the Year will serve in an advisory capacity to the State Board of Education for a two-year term and serves on the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Public School Forum.

This selection process is facilitated in each region by Regional Education Facilitators representing the District & Regional Support Division at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.



2022 STATE SELECTION COMMITTEE

The State Selection Committee, chosen based on their dynamic public record in support of education, perform panel interviews and extensive portfolio review in the selection of the North Carolina Principal of the Year. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education take pride in celebrating the most innovative and effective public school leaders in our state.

DR. MARY ANN WOLF • President and Executive Director, Public Schools Forum of North Carolina

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

THE HONORABLE HOWARD N. LEE • Founder and President, Howard N. Lee Institute

DR. RANDY BRIDGES • President, Creative Education Solutions, Inc.

DR. SONJA BROWN, EX OFFICIO MEMBER • Educator Advancement Lead, District & Regional Support, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

NORTHEAST REGION



ALISON COVINGTON

Northeast Region Principal of the Year Finalist

South Greenville Elementary | Pitt County Schools

"As a leader, I believe that you must take three positions when leading your staff. Leaders must stand behind their staff for support, in front of them to lead and provide protection, and beside them to serve. You must lead by example, model expectations, enforce expectations, and be brave."

- 18 years of administrative experience
- Longwood University (BS)
- · East Carolina University (MSA)
- NC Principal Fellow
- Presented at the Pitt County Schools Summer Leadership Conference
- Presented at the State EVAAS Summit: "How to Convince Your Toughest Teacher"
- According to the 2020 NCTWC survey, 95% of the staff believes teachers are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction

ORTHEAST REGION WINNERS

DAPHNE M. WILLIAMS

Colerain Elementary | Bertie County Schools

DENISE LEWIS FALLON

J.P. Knapp Early College | Currituck County Schools

MICHELLE A. NEWSOME

White Oak Elementary | Edenton-Chowan Schools

AMY R. FYFFE

Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Early College | Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools

DR. SHAWN G. WILSON

Gatesville Elementary | Gates County Schools

STEVE A. HUNTER

Northwest Collegiate and Technical Academy | Halifax County Public Schools

LYNDSAY BRITT

Hertford County Early College | Hertford County Public Schools

ALLISON ETHERIDGE

Mattamuskeet Elementary | Hyde County Schools

MELISSA MORLOCK

South Creek High | Martin County Schools

TRACY BRUBAKER GREGORY

Perquimans Central | Perquimans County Schools

SOUTHEAST REGION



DR. PATRICK GREENE

Southeast Region Principal of the Year Finalist

Greene Central High | Greene County Schools

"Appreciating a diverse community of students and promoting their success means constantly refining our practice by listening to our student body and providing them with the opportunities to succeed. This work is never finished but we proudly celebrate every achievement along the way."

- 13 years of administrative experience
- East Carolina University (BS, MSA, Ed.D.)
- · NC Principal Fellow
- NC Teaching Fellow
- Presented at the University of Council for Educational Administration 2021 National Conference
- Served as a Principal Advisor for NCPAPA's Distinguished Leadership in Practice program
- According to the 2020 NCTWC survey, 98% of the staff believes teachers are encouraged to reflect on their own practice



DR. STEVEN SULLIVAN

North Brunswick High | Brunswick County Schools

SARAH WEINHOLD

Broad Creek Middle | Carteret County Public Schools

STACIE FRIEBEL

Havelock High | Craven County Schools

SCOTT BALLARD

East Duplin High | Duplin County Schools

MIRANDA GILLIS

Maysville Elementary | Jones County Public Schools

DR. HEATHER WALSTON

Northwest Elementary | Lenoir County Schools

DR. EDITH SKIPPER

Southeast Area Technical High | New Hanover County Schools

LAURIE STROPE

Richlands Elementary | Onslow County Schools

APRIL PERKINS

Rocky Point Elementary | Pender County Schools

NORTH CENTRAL REGION



KEITH RICHARDSON

North Central Region Principal of the Year Finalist

Knightdale High | Wake County Public School System

"As an instructional leader, it is my duty to help light the fire for educators. I consider myself a lead learner and a lifelong learner."

- 12 years of administrative experience
- Elizabeth City State University (BA)
- · East Carolina University (MSA)
- Presented at the Wake County Schools Admin Internship Institute
- Presented at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Digital Legislative Day
- Participant in Mastering Leadership Dynamics for Educational Leaders
- According to the 2020 NCTWC survey, 97% of the staff believes teachers are encouraged to try new things to improve instruction



CRYSTAL ETHERIDGE-EPPS

Mary Scroggs Elementary | Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools

SARAH CHICCHI ESTES

Virginia Cross Elementary | Chatham County Schools

VICTORIA LUNETTA CREAMER

Creekside Elementary | Durham Public Schools

DR. LAUREN A. LAMPRON

SouthWest Edgecombe High | Edgecombe County Schools

MELISSA THOMAS

Louisburg High | Franklin County Schools

JENNIFER SMITH

Western Harnett Middle | Harnett County Schools

TJ PARRISH

Micro Elementary | Johnston County Public Schools

JAMIE C. COX

East Lee Middle | Lee County Schools

TONY WIDDER

River Park Elementary | Orange County School

SHIRLRONA PHILLIPS JOHNSON

Person Early College for Innovation and Leadership | Person County Schools

DR. JACQUELINE BATCHELOR-CROSSON

Pinkston Street Elementary | Vance County Schools

ANDY ST. CLAIR

Wilson Early College Academy | Wilson County Schools

SANDHILLS REGION



ANTONIO COVINGTON

Sandhills Region Principal of the Year Finalist

East Hoke Middle | Hoke County Schools

"My servant leadership style fosters an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among everyone in the building. I know it is the atmosphere that I create that leads to such a high retention rate."

- 5 years of administrative experience
- Fayetteville State University (BS)
- · Concordia University (M.Ed.)
- Gardner Webb University (Add-on Licensure)
- Member of Sandhills Regional Education Consortium Cohort XIII
- J. V. Educational Leadership Award
- According to the 2020 NCTWC survey, 96% of the staff believes the school leadership facilitates using data to improve student learning



VANESSA RUFFIN

Plain View Primary | Bladen County Schools

GREG DIRKS

Langdon C. Kerr Elementary | Clinton City Schools

RONNA GORE

Old Dock Elementary | Columbus County Schools

JOY WILLIAMS

Luther "Nick" Jeralds Middle | Cumberland County Schools

DR. AMY B. REYNOLDS

Montgomery Learning Academy | Montgomery County Schools

DANTE POOLE

Aberdeen Elementary | Moore County Schools

JAMIE GREENE

East Rockingham Elementary | Richmond County Schools

LATONYA M. MCLEAN

South Johnson Elementary | Scotland County Schools

APRIL CORBETT

Central Middle | Whiteville City Schools

PIEDMONT-TRIAD REGION



KATRINKA BROWN

Piedmont-Triad Region Principal of the Year Finalist

Jackson Middle | Guilford County Schools

"I challenge the staff to look at our school through the eyes of parents and operate with that premise, as we have been honored to do this work. We collectively do what is best for students."

- 13 years of administrative experience
- North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University (BS, MAT, MSA)
- University of North Carolina at Greensboro (Ed.S., Doctoral Candidate)
- NC Principal Fellow
- North Carolina Innovative Partnership Grant recipient for STEM Integration
- Member of the Council for African American Leadership
- According to the 2020 NCTWC survey, 98% of the staff believes the school leadership facilitates using data to improve student learning



CURRY E. BRYAN, IV

Haw River Elementary | Alamance-Burlington School System

NIKKI DOMALLY

Lindley Park Elementary | Asheboro City Schools

STEPHEN EVANS

South Elementary | Caswell County Schools

MARY W. FOSTER

Mocksville Elementary | Davie County Schools

JASON DORSETT

Mount Airy High | Mount Airy City Schools

JAMIE ARMFIELD

Seagrove Elementary | Randolph County School System

RUSSELL VERNON

Rockingham County Early College High | Rockingham County Schools

SAMUEL JONES

West Stokes High | Stokes County Schools

EDWARD WEISS

Mount Tabor High | Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

SOUTHWEST REGION



LARENDA DENIEN

Southwest Region Principal of the Year Finalist

Idlewild Elementary | Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

"I am probably one of the few who desire change, but it is simply because I want to be better every day than I was the day before."

- 12 years of administrative experience
- Fairmont State University (BA)
- Gardner-Webb University (MSA)
- · National Board Certified Teacher
- Presented at the North Carolina Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development state conference
- Unified Champions National Banner School Special Olympics
- Magnet Schools of America: National Certified Magnet School of Excellence/Distinction



CHRIS STINSON

Anson High | Anson County Schools

DR. ADAM AUERBACH

Concord High | Cabarrus County Schools

JEREMY SHIELDS

Crest High | Cleveland County Schools

TYLER WEST

Pinewood Elementary | Gaston County Schools

MARK SHINKARUK

The Brawley School | Iredell-Statesville Schools

MARTHA MOTLEY

Forest Park Elementary | Kannapolis City Schools

KELLY JOLEYN WITHROW

GE Massey Elementary | Lincoln County Schools

MARK COTTONE

South Elementary | Mooresville Graded School District

DEREK DISTEFANO

Morgan Elementary | Rowan-Salisbury Schools

DR. ERIK JOHNSON

Central Elementary | Stanly County Schools

LESTER G. DEMING

Wolfe School | Union County Public Schools

NORTHWEST REGION



DR. HEATHER MELTON FREEMAN

Northwest Region Principal of the Year Finalist

North Wilkes Middle | Wilkes County Schools

"As the instructional leader in my school, I take personal responsibility for empowering students and teachers, together, to create relevant and engaging learning opportunities for ALL students."

- 7 years of administrative experience
- Meredith College (BS)
- · Appalachian State University (MA, Ed.D.)
- · NC Teaching Fellow
- National Board Certified Teacher
- Led North Wilkes Middle to be recognized by Franklin Covey as the first
 6-8 middle school in NC and the southeast to fully implement "Leader in Me" and attain Lighthouse status
- According to the 2020 NCTWC survey, 97% of the staff believes the school leadership consistently supports teachers

ORTHWEST REGION WINNERS

JANEL LINGLE

Taylorsville Elementary | Alexander County Schools

DR. JAMIE JOHNSON

Cranberry Middle | Avery County Schools

KEITH RECKER

East Burke Middle | Burke County Public Schools

LATHAN FOWLER

Sherrills Ford Elementary | Catawba County Schools

DR. CALANDRA DAVIS

Jenkins Elementary | Hickory Public Schools

MELANIE SHAVER

Foothills Community | McDowell County Schools

PATTY BUCKNER

Parkway Elementary | Watauga County Schools

ERIK BUCHANAN

Blue Ridge Elementary | Yancey County Schools

Western Region



DR. MARSHA S. JUSTICE

Western Region Principal of the Year Finalist

Edneyville Elementary | Henderson County Public Schools

"The transparent allocation of resources is a vital part of providing equity within our school community. The best money spent is on highly qualified human beings, not programs. While materials are an important resource, humans have the biggest impact on growing learners."

- 14 years of administrative experience
- · Western Carolina University (BS)
- Appalachian State University (MSA)
- Gardner Webb University (Ed.D.)
- 2021 Community Action Grant Recipient
- Participant in NCPAPA Distinguished Leadership in Practice
- According to the 2020 NCTWC survey, 97% of the staff believes the school leadership facilitates using data to improve student learning.



MARY NICHOLS

Claxton Elementary | Asheville City Schools

BENJAMIN ALEXANDER

Valley Springs Middle | Buncombe County Schools

TIFFANY CLAPSADDLE

Murphy Middle | Cherokee County Schools

CLINT CONNER

Pisgah High | Haywood County Schools

MELANIE JACOBS

Jackson County Early College | Jackson County Public Schools

MARK SUTTON

Macon Early College | Macon County Schools

MARSHAY HUSKINS

Mars Hill Elementary | Madison County Schools

BRANDON HILL

Spindale Elementary | Rutherford County Schools

TIM KURR

Swain County Middle | Swain County Schools

CHARTER SCHOOLS



MARIA MILLS

Charter Schools Principal of the Year Finalist

Carolina Charter Academy | Angier, NC

"Through rigorous and intentional hiring practices I have been able to get the proper people in the proper places to ensure not only consistency among leaders within the school, but more importantly people whose intrinsic motivation is a passion for helping students succeed."

- 15 years of administrative experience
- University of Florida (BA, BS)
- St. John's University (M.Ed.)
- · College of St. Rose (Administration Certificate)
- Growth of leadership cabinet to include: two assistant directors, compliance lead, two instructional coaches, interventionist, 31 classroom teachers for a total of 71 staff members
- 2021 ACCESS Grant Award (1 of 30 schools Cohort 3)
- According to the 2020 NCTWC survey, 95% of the staff believes teachers are encouraged to participate in school leadership roles



DR. CHARLES FULLER

Envision Science Academy

NEALIE WHITT III

Falls Lake Academy

ALICIA RHEEL

Island Montessori School

2021 REGIONAL FINALISTS

2021 WELLS FARGO NORTH CAROLINA

PRINCIPAL of the YEAR



DR. ELENA ASHBURN North Central Region Needham B. Broughton Magnet High Wake County Public School System



MICHELLE WHITE

Northeast Region Principal of the Year
Chowan Middle
Edenton-Chowan Schools



DR. CHRISTOPHER BARNES
Southeast Region Principal of the Year
White Oak High
Onslow County Schools



Sandhills Region Principal of the Year
Cliffdale Elementary
Cumberland County Schools



ERIK NAGLEE

Piedmont-Triad Region Principal of the Year
Page High
Guilford County Schools



Southwest Region Principal of the Year
Rocky River High
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools



Northwest Region Principal of the Year
Old Fort Elementary
McDowell County Schools



KEVIN BRADLEY

Western Region Principal of the Year
Chase High
Rutherford County Schools

PAST WINNERS

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



The true beauty of public school is that we are constitutionally required — as we should be — to educate all students who come through our school doors. As public-school educators, we are called to value students' backgrounds, abilities and talents, and I believe every child has a gift to share.

DR. ELENA ASHBURN

2021 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year

Please share moments from today on social media using #nctoypoy.