When you shape minds, you shape the future

The work you’re doing today will make a difference for years to come — to your students, and to the world they live in.

Wells Fargo is proud to acknowledge the 2020 North Carolina Principal of the Year.

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Wells Fargo is a nationwide, diversified, community-based financial services company that has 266 stores and more than 36,500 team members in North Carolina. Wells Fargo’s vision is to satisfy all of its customers’ financial needs and to help them succeed financially through its banking, commercial real estate lending, insurance, investments, mortgage, and consumer and commercial finance products and services.

Wells Fargo is honored to sponsor the North Carolina Principal of the Year Program and to support educational initiatives in communities across the state. This past year in North Carolina, Wells Fargo provided more than $24.6 million to nonprofits and schools. These contributions were channeled into areas such as neighborhood revitalization, education, mortgage counseling, small business development, human services and financial literacy. Team members volunteered more than 230,550 hours. Visit a Wells Fargo branch today or wellsfargo.com to learn more about the company.

Wells Fargo and you — together we’ll go far.

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 2020 Principal of the Year a trip to the Global Education Symposium in Boston in 2021 for the POY and a guest or two teachers of his/her choosing. This event is hosted at the North American headquarters in Boston, MA where like-minded educators will gather to explore topics like STEM, sustainability and others through a global lens and will feature educators from around the world as well as EF partners contributing to the field. The prize includes flights, accommodations, meals, conference registration, and a chance to experience Boston.

The Hampton Inn & Suites Chapel Hill-Carrboro/ Downtown is a proud sponsor of the Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year program. The hotel is set in the heart of Chapel Hill/Carrboro within walking distance to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and dining and leisure options in downtown Chapel Hill. This Chapel Hill/Carrboro hotel provides flexible meeting spaces, conference facilities, and banquet services for up to 200 people.

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.

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.
AWARD CEREMONY

MISTRESS OF CEREMONY
DR. SONJA BROWN • Recognition & 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 MESSAGES
ROY COOPER • Governor of North Carolina
DAN FOREST • Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina

INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE
CAROLYNN MITCHELL • Principal, Pittman Elementary, Halifax County Schools
Tribute to Mr. Teicher Patterson, District Principal of the Year, Enfield Middle, Halifax County Schools

LUNCHEON
SPONSORS REMARKS
JOHN W. WARD • Region Head, Carolinas Division Middle Market Banking, Wells Fargo
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REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP
MATTHEW BRISTOW-SMITH • 2019 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year
MARK JOHNSON • State Superintendent, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
DR. BEVERLY EMORY • Deputy State Superintendent of District Support, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

VIDEO PRESENTATION OF 2020 REGIONAL FINALISTS
RECOGNITION OF REGIONAL CANDIDATES
DR. CYNTHIA MARTIN • Director, District & Regional Support, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2020 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
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 40 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principals of the Year, 264 regional award recipients, and 3,364 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. Eight regional finalists participate in the state selection process. 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 2020 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.

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.

2020 STATE SELECTION COMMITTEE

PATRICIA FOUST
Retired Assistant Superintendent
Randolph County Schools

DR. REBECCA GARLAND
Retired Deputy State Superintendent
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

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

DR. JEFF COX
President
Wilkes Community College

DR. SONJA BROWN
Recognition & Advancement Lead
District & Regional Support
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
SHEILA P. EVANS

NORNEAST REGION PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR
White Oak Elementary | Edenton Chowan Schools
“I model excellence through my work ethic and pursuit of continuous improvement.”

• 20 Years of administrative experience
• East Carolina University (Supervision Certificate, Administration Certificate)
• University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (BA, MA)
• Participant in Distinguished Leaders Program
• National Board Certification
• Principal of the Year - Edenton-Chowan Schools 2005, 2011, 2013
• MTSS Green Ribbon School
• According to 2020 NCTWC survey, 100% of staff feels the school leadership consistently supports teachers

NORNEAST DISTRICT WINNERS

Chena Cayton
Ayden-Grifton High
Pitt County Schools

Monica Edmonds
Northampton County Early College High
Northampton County Schools

Adrian L. Fonville
River Road Middle
Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools

Nancy Purvis Greene
Williamston Primary
Martin County Schools

Beth Rooks
Cape Hatteras Secondary School of Coastal Studies
Dare County Schools

Terrell Jones
Belmont Elementary
Roanoke Rapids County Schools

Keith Mitchell
John Cotten Tayloe Elementary
Beaufort County Schools

LeVar Mizelle
Camden Middle
Camden County Schools

Laura Moreland
Perquimans County Middle
Perquimans County Schools

Greta Nelson
Shawboro Elementary
Currituck County Schools

William Ziegler
Columbia High
Tyrrell County Schools
SOUTHEAST REGION PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

Jacksonville Commons Elementary | Onslow County Schools

“I operate from the platform of “everybody knows what everybody knows”. As such, I ensure staff are a part of decision making and are well-informed of how/why decisions are made.”

- 9 Years of administrative experience
- East Carolina University (EdS, MSA)
- Campbell University (MBA)
- Albany State University (BS)
- University of North Carolina at Wilmington National Board Support Provider
- WE are LEADing Award nominee (2019)
- National Board Certification
- According to 2020 NCTWC Survey, 100% of teachers are encouraged to participate in school leadership roles

SOUTHEAST DISTRICT WINNERS

Claudia E. Casey
Tucker Creek Middle
Craven County Schools

Avery P. Ellington
Malpass Corner Elementary
Pender County Schools

Glen Locklear
J.C. Roe Center
New Hanover County Schools

Stacy Cauley
Moss Hill Elementary
Lenoir County Public Schools

Lori D. Goodman
Spring Creek Elementary
Wayne County Public Schools

Jody Nelson McClenny
Newport Elementary
Carteret County Schools

Yuvonka Batts Davis
Greene County Pre-K Center
Greene County Schools

Michael K. Hodges
South Brunswick High
Brunswick County Schools

Selina Riley-Gurganus
Duplin Early College High
Duplin County Schools

Stella Miller Downs
Comfort Elementary
Jones County Public Schools
NORTH CENTRAL REGION PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

Olive Chapel Elementary | Wake County Public Schools

“We need to create a culture where students feel safe to learn from failures, where they take command of their learning, and create lessons that honor their approach to learning.”

- 24 Years of administrative experience
- East Carolina University (Ed.D)
- NC Central (M.Ed)
- Meredith College (BS)
- Presented at North Carolina Educational Leadership Academy Summer Conference 2019 - Learning to Lead with Purpose
- Principal of the Year Finalist - Wake County Public Schools - 2018
- East Carolina University Mack & Margaret Coble Doctoral Fellowship
- According to 2020 NCTWC Survey, 100% of new teachers feel the support received has been an important factor in continuing teaching at this school

NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT WINNERS

**Sheila Atkins**
Wilton Elementary
Granville County Public Schools

**Rey Horner**
Vance County High
Vance County Schools

**Lora Street**
Benhaven Elementary
Harnett County Schools

**Robert Bales**
McDougle Middle
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools

**Dr. Lauren A. Lampron**
W. A. Pattillo Middle
Edgecombe County Public Schools

**Dr. L. Jackie Tobias**
City of Medicine Academy
Durham Public Schools

**Stefanie Clarke**
BT Bullock Elementary
Lee County Schools

**Erica Shoulders-Royster**
Franklin County Early College
Franklin County Schools

**Joseph Warren**
Woodland Elementary
Person County Schools

**Tripp Crayton**
Jordan-Matthews High
Chatham County Schools

**Marquis Spell**
Springfield Middle
Wilson County Schools

**Leigh White**
Riverwood Elementary
Johnston County Public Schools

**Minnie Goins**
Efland-Cheeks Global Elementary
Orange County Schools
SANDHILLS REGION PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

Upchurch Elementary | Hoke County Schools

“I firmly believe that students are not defined by their zip code. All students can learn if we create meaningful learning opportunities.”

• 9 Years of administrative experience
• Fayetteville State University (MSA)
• Francis Marion University (BS)
• Assistant Principal of the Year - Hoke County Schools - 2015
• Presented at SREB 2016 - Incorporation of Computer Science & Coding
• North Carolina Schools Purple Star Award
• Increased School Performance Growth by 23 points over 4 years
• According to 2020 NCTWC survey, 100% of staff feels school leadership holds teachers to high professional standards for delivering instruction

SANDHILLS DISTRICT WINNERS

Karen S. Allen
Hamlet Middle
Richmond County Schools

Laura Bailey
Laurel Hill Elementary
Scotland County Schools

D. JaMese Morris Black
East Montgomery High
Montgomery County Schools

Vanessa Brown
Sunset Ave Elementary
Clinton City Schools

Dr. Christina DiGaudio
Ireland Drive Middle
Cumberland County Schools

Kevin Hunter
Midway Middle
Sampson County Schools

Shaun Krencicki
West End Elementary
Moore County Schools

Stephanie Jones Norris
Clarkton School of Discovery
Bladen County Schools

Ronald Prater
Fairmont High
Public Schools of Robeson County

Georgia Etta Spaulding
Evergreen Elementary
Columbus County Schools
PIEDMONT-TRIAD REGION PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

Southwood Elementary | Davidson County Schools

“Relationships are the first piece of making any school successful. Our goal is for these relationships to be long term and life changing for the students.”

• 13 Years of administrative experience
• Gardner-Webb University (MSA)
• University of North Carolina at Wilmington (BA)
• National Board Certification
• Southwood Elementary Signature School Recognition (2017)
• Led the school to develop the Southwood Community Outreach Project
• Led the implementation of the first Spanish Immersion Program in Davidson County Schools
• According to 2020 NCTWC survey, 100% of staff feels the school leadership consistently supports teachers

PIEDMONT-TRIAD DISTRICT WINNERS

Ashley Craven Lemley
Ramseur Elementary
Randolph County School System

Tammie Abernathy
Elkin Middle
Elkin City Schools

Amanda H. Burton
South Asheboro Middle
Asheboro City Schools

Ron Dixon
White Plains Elementary
Surry County Schools

Josh Eanes
Bethany Elementary
Rockingham County Schools

Debra R Gladstone
Southwood Elementary/Mineral Springs Middle
Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

Nicole Hazelwood
Southeastern Stokes Middle
Stokes County Schools

Carla Murray
North Elementary
Caswell County Schools

Robert “Boomer” Kennedy
Forbush High
Yadkin County Schools

Cindy Stone
Cooleemee Elementary
Davie County Schools

William Luciano
Jones Elementary
Guilford County Schools

Olivia Sikes
Mount Airy Middle
Mount Airy City Schools
Dr. Jennifer Brinson

SOUTHWEST REGION PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

Wolf Meadow Elementary | Cabarrus County Schools

“I know when people feel valued and heard, not only are trust and respect fostered, vital energy within my organization is generated.”

- 6 Years of administrative experience
- Western Carolina University (Ed.D)
- Western Governors University (MS)
- University of North Carolina at Charlotte (BS)
- National Board Certification
- Cabarrus County Schools National Board Teacher Advocate and Trainer
- Presented at Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate 2019 - To Inspire and Cultivate Revolutionary Practice
- According to 2020 NCTWC survey, 100% of staff feels school leadership holds teachers to high professional standards for delivery instruction

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT WINNERS

Brian Clary
West Lincoln High
Lincoln County Schools

Andy Mehall
Cloverleaf Elementary
Iredell-Statesville Schools

Dr. Emily Miles
Sterling Elementary
Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools

Travis Steagall
Peachland-Polkton Elementary
Anson County Schools

Laura Calhoun Dixon
W.A. Bess Elementary
Gaston County Schools

Dr. Emily Miles
Sterling Elementary
Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools

Ayana Robinson
Mooresville Middle
Mooresville Graded School District

Dr. Sharyn G. VonCannon
Unionville Elementary
Union County Public Schools

Deana Lewis
Jackson Park Elementary
Kannapolis City Schools

Emily Shaw
Albemarle High
Stanly County Schools

Jacob Wilson
Union Elementary
Cleveland County Schools
NORTHWEST REGION PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR
Shuford Elementary | Newton-Conover City Schools
“I seek opportunities for individuals to lead in their areas of strength, and cultivate an environment where individuals are excited to lead.”

- 10 Years of administrative experience
- University of North Carolina at Greensboro (Doctoral Candidate)
- Appalachian State University (BS, MSA)
- National Title I Distinguished Schools
- Participant in Distinguished Leaders Program
- North Carolina Principal Fellow
- Led school to have highest proficiency in Reading and Science in the school’s history
- According to 2020 NCTWC survey, 100% of staff feels the school leadership facilitates using data to improve student learning

NORTHWEST DISTRICT WINNERS

Dr. Monet Samuelson
Newland Elementary
Avery County Schools

Scott Carter
Alleghany High
Alleghany County Schools

Nichole Ijames
Mill Creek Middle
Catawba County Schools

Andrea Allen
Blue Ridge Elementary
Yancey County Schools

Charmion S. Frizsell
Bethlehem Elementary
Alexander County Schools

Sara LeCroy
Robert L. Patton High
Burke County Public Schools

Brandon Birchfield
Deyton Elementary
Mitchell County Schools

Travis Gillespie
West Lenoir Elementary
Caldwell County Schools

Edwin H. Spivey III
McDowell High
McDowell County Schools

Chris Blanton
Watauga High
Watauga County Schools

Jeff Hodakowski
Viewmont Elementary
Hickory Public Schools
WESTERN REGION PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

Haywood Early College | Haywood County Schools

“I feel I have provided staff with a level of support and autonomy that is without equal and trust them to take chances, and we feel that is one of the key drivers of our high levels of student achievement.”

- 8 Years of administrative experience
- Western Carolina University (BS, MSA)
- Apple Certified Teacher (2018)
- Led school in 1:1 initiative with Apple Products
- Representative for Haywood County Schools Policy and School Calendar Committees (2018)
- President Elect Haywood County Principal & Assistant Principal Association (2020-2021)
- National Blue Ribbon Exemplary Performance Award 2018
- According to 2020 NCTWC survey, 100% of staff feels there is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect in the school

WESTERN DISTRICT WINNERS

**LORI FOX**

**Tammie Ash**
Forrest W. Hunt Elementary
Rutherford County Schools

**Sonya Blankenship**
Swain County High
Swain County Schools

**Diane Cotton**
Union Academy
Macon County Schools

**Kristin Dillon**
Brush Creek Elementary
Madison County Schools

**Lauren Evans**
Asheville Primary
Asheville City Schools

**Tracie Metz**
Blue Ridge Early College
Jackson County Public Schools

**Carrie Norris**
Brevard Elementary
Transylvania County Schools

**Tonya Robinson**
Enka High
Buncombe County Schools

**John Shepard**
North Henderson High
Henderson County Public Schools

**Paul Wilson**
Martins Creek
Cherokee County Schools
2019 WELLS FARGO NORTH CAROLINA REGIONAL PRINCIPALS OF THE YEAR

MELISSA FIELDS
Northeast Region
Perquimans County Schools

ELIZABETH P. PIERCE
Southeast Region
Lenoir County Public Schools

JAMES “BO” MULLINS
Sandhills Region
Sampson County Schools

SEAN GAILLARD
Piedmont-Triad Region
Lexington City Schools

DR. TIMISHA BARNES-JONES
Southwest Region
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

MICHELLE BAKER
Northwest Region
McDowell County Schools

BRANDON SUTTON
Western Region
Swain County Schools

Matthew Bristow-Smith

2019 WELLS FARGO NORTH CAROLINA PRINCIPAL of the YEAR

NORTH CENTRAL REGION
EDGECOMBE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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


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

1987* Karen H. Campbell, Buncombe County Schools, W.W. Estes Elementary

1986* Patricia F. Gibson, Newton-Conover City Schools, Newton-Conover Middle

1985* Alice H. Hart, Buncombe County Schools, Glen Arden Elementary

1984* Robert A. Clendenin, Guilford County Schools, Paige High

* Prior to 1988, two statewide winners were named each year. Since then, one statewide winner has been selected.
“I am hungry. Hungry to improve the learning experience of every scholar at our school. Hungry to enhance the joy of teaching for every educator on our campus. Hungry to build a better future where what is possible becomes probable due to the impact of the school experience upon our graduates. The hunger never goes away. I am never satisfied. Even when celebrating our achievements — 100% graduation rate, “A” School Performance Grade, “Exceeds Growth” status for the third year in a row — I am still hungry. We are getting there, but we are not there...yet.”

Matthew Bristow-Smith

2019 Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year

Please share moments from today on social media using #nctoypoy

The Wells Fargo North Carolina Principal of the Year process is facilitated by the District & Regional Support Division.