

# WORTH WATCHING

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## Laurel Hill Elementary: 2011 National Title I Distinguished School

*Presented by the NC Department of Public Instruction*

### TRANSCRIPT

Soft music plays as the scene pans over the front hallway at Laurel Hill Elementary School showing a mural of the Laurel Hill Super Stars and the 2011 National Title I Distinguished School banner hanging in the hallway.

Graphic:

Laurel Hill Elementary  
2011 National Title I Distinguished School  
Laurel Hill, NC  
Scotland County Schools

The next scene is of Dr. Cindy Goodman, Laurel Hill principal, seated in an office.

Dr. Goodman: When I came here, I realized that the expectations weren't high enough. So what we've tried to do through the years is just create a culture of high expectations for our students, for our staff, for the leadership.

Scene transitions to Teacher Pam Monroe working at a table with five students in her 1<sup>st</sup> grade class.

Dr. Goodman: One of the things that I think is nice about this school is that there is a culture of working hard. People are proud to be here and proud of the high expectations.

Scene transitions to 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher Susan Smart, seated in an office.

Susan Smart: So I came to Scotland County to visit Laurel Hill School and the principal took me around and we looked at classrooms; we watched the children. And afterwards she said, "What do you think?" And I said, "Everybody's working." And she said, "What do you mean?" And I said, "Everybody's on task. Teachers are working. Students are working. There are no children sitting off to the side, not engaged."

Scene transitions to Exceptional Children's Teacher Towanda Smith, seated in an office.

Towanda Smith: This is my 4<sup>th</sup> year of teaching in the special education program. After three years of being in another county, I was kind of at the point of wanting to be done with the exceptional children's department. I came to Laurel Hill and the first week that I was here I noticed that every child, regardless of being special ed or regular ed, they were expected to meet the same criteria as far as behavior and academics. Every child was expected to do their best regardless of what they were labeled.

Scene transitions to Towanda Smith working with students in her classroom.

Towanda Smith: In looking at some of the classrooms and walking around, I found that a lot of students are always on task, regardless of what their exceptionality is,

Scene transitions to Jordan Reilly's PE class performing various drills.



Towanda Smith: and every teacher is making sure that every child is getting the individualized attention that they need.

Cross dissolve as scene transitions to Kindergarten Teacher Leslie Knauss, seated in an office.

Leslie Knauss: You can go out and collaborate with the EC specialists, the facilitators, the guidance counselors. Everybody's working together to find an answer to meet each child that needs individual help. And it's kind of like every child is getting the best of everybody at this school to help them with their specific needs.

Cross dissolve as scene changes to Guidance Counselor Anne Caudill's lunch bunch meeting with nine students around a table.

Anne Caudill: When you think about something, I want to compare that to how you look at something. Take a look at the red glasses. (She puts on giant red eyeglasses.) All right. If I walk into my EOG, taking my EOG, and I'm walking in with these red glasses on (speaking in a kind of growl tone), how do you think my attitude's going to be?

Student 1: Mad?

Student 2: Mad?

Anne Caudill: Mad. So what kinds of things might I be saying? If I'm mad?

Student 1: I don't like this test?

Anne Caudill: I don't like this test.

Cross dissolve as scene transitions to Assistant Principal Kesha Williams observing Teacher Cathey Collins's 4<sup>th</sup> grade class with Dr. Cindy Goodman's voiceover. (Dr. Goodman had moved to a central office position at the time of this video taping in April 2011.)

Dr. Goodman: Building a culture of collaboration and high expectations for students, parents, staff, and teachers has opened the classroom doors at Laurel Hill. Teachers are accustomed to school leaders in the classroom and candid dialogue about teaching and learning practices that bring success.

The scene transitions to Dr. Goodman seated in an office.

Dr. Goodman: In my mind, it's extremely important that principals make it a priority to visit classrooms on a regular basis. And this school is a fairly large school, about 500 students, but I made it a point to visit every classroom every day.

Cross dissolve to show 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher Kathi Webster walking around a table working with five students who are engaged in an interactive reading lesson.

Dr. Goodman: One of the things that has helped us have some success, especially in reading, is a phonics-based program that we use called Formula 3. What I found initially was that teachers might not be as prepared as they should be. So, as they would be reading with the group, they would ask questions, but I could tell the questions were very lower-level type questions. As a school-wide initiative, we started requiring that teachers pre-write at least three questions for every dialogue group.

The scene transitions to an office where Social Worker Summer Stanley and Nurse Kim Adams are discussing the importance of their work at Laurel Hill Elementary.

Dr. Goodman's voiceover: Laurel Hill's increased student achievement comes not only from changes in the classroom, but from reaching out to students' homes and parents – making as many as 230 home visits a year.

Nurse Kim Adams: Most of the time when people think of the school nurse, they think, "Well, she's the one that takes care of the sick kids and sends them home." But I view my job as being here to keep the kids here.

Social Worker Summer Stanley: The primary reason for making home visits on an on-going basis is to target attendance.

The scene fades and transitions to a close-up shot of the cover of a Laurel Hill student's planner.



Dr. Goodman's voiceover: Student planners that are signed by parents daily ...

The scene transitions to Teacher Shelby Smith discussing the student planner with 5<sup>th</sup> grader Sekret McLaurin.

Dr. Goodman's voiceover: and school emphasis on using every minute of instructional time are other Laurel Hill success strategies.

The scene transitions to Dr. Goodman standing outside Laurel Hill Elementary School's front door with the sign that is placed in the carpool lane each morning reading: ATTENTION PARENTS: The tardy bell has rung. Please report to the office to sign in your child.

Dr. Goodman: The elementary day is short and we have a lot to do and not a whole lot of time to do it.

Scene transitions to teachers Towanda Smith and Kathi Webster singing a song with their students in their 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom.

Dr. Goodman: So that time is very valuable to us because we know that all children can learn, we just know that some take more time than others.

Students raise arms in singing final line of song and scene fades to black.

Graphic:

Laurel Hill Elementary 2011 National Title I Distinguished School
More information on the Title I Distinguished Schools program is on the Web at <a href="http://www.ncpublicschools.org/program-monitoring">www.ncpublicschools.org/program-monitoring</a> .

Graphic: NC Board of Education and NC Department of Public Instruction logo

