

## Terrific Kids at Mabel Elementary

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When you're honoring Terrific Kids at Mabel Elementary School, you end up with a lot to celebrate, and the school did just that on Tuesday as it honored students for good character, strong academic performance, and perfect attendance. With an enrollment of 185 students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, Mabel is one of the smaller schools in Watauga County, but the number of students recognized Tuesday could have represented a much larger school. The honorees included 28 students chosen as Terrific Kids by their teachers, 11 students who managed perfect attendance in the first semester despite the major round of flu that struck Watauga County, and 46 students named to academic honor rolls by virtue of making all A's and B's on their report cards. The academic high achievers included 11 "straight A" students, the highest number in at least five years.

"We are extremely proud of the accomplishments of our students," said Mabel Principal Mark Hagaman, "and we're very grateful for the support they receive from their parents and the rest of the Mabel community. Our teachers, parents, and everyone connected to the school are committed to working together to give our kids the best possible start in life. This event really celebrates both our students and the results of that teamwork."

Parents joined students and teachers in the school gym for the ceremonies as students were presented with certificates and small gifts honoring their achievements. Teachers and Hagaman shared the honors of handing out the certificates and congratulating each winner with a handshake.

The award announcements for students chosen as Terrific Kids cited some of the best qualities of each student as they received their certificate and gift. The words of their teachers included comments praising students for being hard workers, helping others, always doing their best, good citizenship, following the rules, being friendly to everyone, and showing spectacular manners.

Terrific Kids at Mabel is based on the Kiwanis Club program of the same name. Though the formal affiliation with Kiwanis is no longer part of Mabel's Terrific Kids, School Counselor Christy Welch has kept the program going as an annual celebration at the school. Welch, who was named the Watauga County Schools Counselor of the Year for 2011-12, organizes the event and announces the awards.

"I think it's a great way to recognize students for their success and to help strengthen the positive school climate at Mabel," said Welch. "We have terrific kids at our school and we enjoy celebrating their achievements every chance we get."

Pix--Timothy Cook, Adena Bango, and Madison Welch were among the students honored at Mabel.

Kindergarten student Alyssa Graham receives an award from kindergarten teacher Mrs. Stacey Smith.