

Watauga Teachers of the Year

Written by Submitted

Thursday, 27 February 2014 08:19

The 2014-15 Teachers of the Year in the Watauga County Schools have been chosen and the list of those selected for the honor includes Melissa Miller of Bethel, Janet Orr of Blowing Rock, Cynthia Townsend of Cove Creek, Kirbi Bell of Green Valley, Erin Selle of Hardin Park, Lauren Dotson of Mabel, Susan Suddreth of Parkway, Leslie Howser of Valle Crucis, and Mary Kent Whitaker of Watauga High School.

Teachers of the Year are chosen at each school by their professional colleagues. Teachers in all grade levels and subjects are eligible for the award and the nine Teachers of the Year are selected from a pool of close to 400 teachers in the WCS system.

“Because we have so many excellent educators in this school system, it is truly an honor to be selected as a Teacher of the Year in the Watauga County Schools,” said Superintendent Dr. David Fonseca. “I join the Board of Education, our principals, our parents and students, and all of our school personnel in congratulating these nine outstanding professionals on their recognition as our Teachers of the Year for 2014-15.”

The exceptional quality of teachers in the Watauga County Schools (WCS) is evident in both their credentials and in student performance on state-required tests. A significantly higher proportion of WCS teachers have graduate degrees than teachers across the state and the proportion of WCS teachers who have achieved National Board Certification has consistently ranked near the top among the 115 school districts in North Carolina. In the results of state-required testing, students in WCS outperform state averages in all tested areas in elementary and middle school grades. Students at Watauga High School achieve a graduation rate above the state average and their SAT scores exceed both the state and national averages.

Fonseca noted that the strong professional qualifications and student test results for WCS teachers are impressive, but added that their value is also apparent in less measurable ways. “Our teachers are remarkable people who demonstrate excellence not just through their credentials and student test results, but by the caring and commitment they bring to their work every day. We are truly grateful for all that they do, and we respect them both for what they achieve and for who they are.”

Each school’s Teacher of the Year will receive an award of \$350 from the school system and is automatically a candidate for Watauga County Schools Teacher of the Year. The person chosen as the WCS Teacher of the Year will receive an additional \$350 from the school system. Local businesses will also be given an opportunity to donate gift certificates or other prizes to help recognize Teachers of the Year. For more information about making a donation, please contact Human Resources Director Dr. Stephen Martin at 828 264-7190.

The WCS Teacher of the Year for 2014-15 will be announced in May after a selection process that includes interviews, unannounced teacher observations in classrooms, and a review of a written statement of teaching philosophy prepared by each candidate. The committee making the selection includes teachers, school administrators, and Watauga Board of Education member Barbara Kinsey.

The current WCS Teacher of the Year is Gina Holste, a third grade teacher at Valle Crucis. The other Teachers of the Year for 2013-14 include Lindsey Wilson of Bethel, Susan Trew of Blowing Rock, Tiffany Reece of Cove Creek, Donna Greene of Green Valley, Jenny McCourry of Hardin Park, Meghan Mixon of Mabel, Jamie Dale of Parkway, and Klay Anderson of Watauga High School.

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