



Hickory Public Schools

Week in Review

April, part 2/ 2017

“A snapshot of HPS good news”



HCAM wins Distracted Driving Video Contest!

Under the direction of their teacher Mrs. Stiles, the HCAM team of talented students won the 1st place award during the recent red-carpet event to highlight the dangers of distracted driving.

Joining the students from L-R: Faculty—Alice Averitt-Sanzone and Natasha Stiles; students— Jordan Ledford, Eboni Foreman, Mackenzie Duraski, Ashley Vega-Villegas.

Congrats to all!



Grandview Wins the spring Kids Cook!

The 21 Cabbage Team from Grandview Middle won back the trophy during the spring—after Northview Middle won last fall. Thank you to Mike Johnson’s Hickory Toyota for hosting this exciting event—and to the American Heart Association!

(L-R):

1st row - Ben Sullivan, Chef at Old Hickory Station, Cylen Genwright (6th grade), Aaron Joplin, principal; 2nd row - Jamiaya Johnson-Ramseur (6th grade), Hailey Strickland (6th grade), Bailey Osburn (6th grade), Jauhliya Steele (6th grade), Hayden Crunkleton (6th grade), Tamarrion Jones (6th grade), and Keora Turner (7th grade).



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MIDDLE OF THE PACK



PHOTOS BY ROBERT C. REED / HICKORY DAILY RECORD

Madison Yount, Hickory High English teacher and Teacher Fellows graduate, teaches her students about writing a thesis during her AP Language and Composition class.

US reports average students' scores while Japan, Finland, Ireland soar ahead

BY JOHN BAILEY
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The quality of education, whether good or bad, is a constant debate in every community in the United States.

The 2015 Programme for International Student Assessment showed the United States as scoring average in science, reading and mathematics. There's been little change going back to 2000 in the tests.

The U.S. scores are middle of the pack, not terrible but not the greatest, while countries like Japan and Finland have continued to post some of the highest.

While consistency in their performances is one thing all three nations have in common, obviously Japan and Finland are doing something to set themselves apart.

One commonality between the two of them, and other top-performing countries in education, is some form of national standard they follow — one guiding educational philosophy.

Japan and Finland take different paths in the classroom, but the end result for both is a focus on producing lifelong learners, students capable of working their way through a problem with criticalthinking skills, according to



Madison Yount (right), Hickory High English teacher and Teacher Fellows graduate confers with student Olivia Belcher about her thesis during AP Language and Composition class.



Teacher Fellows graduate Madison Yount works with her students during composition class at Hickory High School.

Students win in art festivals

HICKORY — It's been a busy few weeks for local art students. After participating in the Hickory Junior Women's Club Art Festival, the students' artwork went to North Wilkesboro in February for the District Arts Festival and then to Campbell University in Buies Creek for the State Arts Festival.

There were 88 entries in the district arts festival.

There are nine districts including 31 clubs that brought student art to compete at the state level. The Hickory Junior Women's Club and the Hickory Women's Club brought the most student art with 39 entries.

Local students won a total of 16 first-place ribbons, six second-place ribbons and seven third-place ribbons for a total of 29.

High school first-place winners were awarded checks. Middle school winners received certificates.

Sally Osborne is the Hickory Junior Women's Club arts chair.

Middle Schools

Grandview

» First place-Jacob Elliott, steampunk hat

» Third place-Ella Montgomery, basic and creative stitchery, book page

Concordia

» First place-John Colton, paper craft, "Bookman"

Northview

» First place-Ann Carson Joyner, dye craft, pink/blue bands of color, face

» First place-Ai-Ling Kue, watercolor, "Profile of Woman"

» First place-Ai-Ling Kue, graphics, branding-gold, black, white

» First place-Alex Cruz-Torres, computer graphics, man sitting on rock in white

» First place-Addie Barrier, digitally enhanced photography, "Girl, woods, black and green"

» Third place-Caroline Taylor, decorative painting, black, gold and white triangles on wood

» Third place-Lorna Seddon, wood, nails, yarn, rocks

Middle

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a 2009 Common Core report.

Grandview Middle AIG teacher Erin Roberts saw this firsthand when she took a trip overseas to England during her senior year in the N.C. Teaching Fellows Program — defunct since 2011 but possibly returning by the General Assembly. It paid for a college degree in education in exchange for service in a North Carolina public school.

During her trip, Roberts was in the English version of a kindergarten class.

"Even there you can tell the expectations are different. Students, 4- to 5-year-olds, are fairly independent," Roberts said. "They would go to lunch. They would go to recess. There would be a person on the playground, but the teacher did not follow them. They were expected to be independent."

Foreign countries also tend to hold educators in higher esteem.

In Finland, teachers in basic and general upper secondary education are required to hold a Master's degree, according to a report by the Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) in 2013.

In Japan, teachers are still, by law, among the highest paid of Japan's civil servants, according to a 2010 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report. When they start their service, they are paid as well as novice engineers.

North Carolina's Teaching Fellows program provided a taste of this level of respect for students like Roberts and fellow Grandview Middle teacher Christina Lancaster.



Grandview Middle math teacher Christina Lancaster got a taste of the high level of respect educators in other countries get when she worked through North Carolina's Teaching Fellows program. The intensity and selectiveness of the program made students feel they were part of an elite group.

A math teacher, Lancaster finished the program in 2012 and remembers the intensity of the interviews just to be considered and saw it as the standard the Fellows were expected to meet.

"One interview was in a courtroom, and there was a board of people and they were all educators," Lancaster said. "They were really looking for high quality answers, awareness of your local community and the global community, and I could tell from the kind of questions they were asking that they were weeding out people who they felt didn't reach a standard or didn't have a passion for teaching."

Hickory High English/literature teacher Madison Yount finished the Fellows program in 2014 and also remembers being expected to know current educational issues and global events during her interviews.

"I was specifically asked what piece of legislation I would change if I had an option, and I was asked that

as a senior in high school during the interview," Yount said. "I remember being impressed with that because they really wanted top-notch students to get the scholarship."

They also were completing projects as freshman and sophomores other education students weren't required to do until their final two years of college.

To test or not to test

Another similar characteristic among high performing countries is their approach to evaluating students.

Japan's only tests are the entrance exams for high school and university, according to the OECD, and in Finland, there are no national tests for pupils in basic education, according to the FNBE.

The results — Finland scored a 526 in the 2015 PISA assessment for reading, 511 in math and 531 in science, and Japan scored 516 in reading, 532 in math, and 538 in science. All scores were 20 or more

points above the average scores.

The United States — North Carolina was one of two states who participated in the 2015 PISA — scored 497 in reading, 470 in math and 496 in science, just above average in reading and below average by 20 points in math.

The 2015 PISA results reflect science, reading and mathematics literacy for 15-year-olds in 73 education systems worldwide. PISA — launched by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development — is a system of international assessments that allows countries to compare outcomes of learning as students near the end of compulsory schooling.

The assessments are given to a sample of participating nations and states every three years. The United States has participated in every cycle of PISA since it began in 2000.

Yount spent part of her senior year in the Fellows program on a trip to Ireland to observe schools and saw

a similar difference in the focus of education there.

"The main thing I saw, and it was across the board, the schools were not test driven. It was all problem-based learning," Yount said. "Let's get these kids into the classroom. Let's challenge them, and let's grow them and not test them."

She also learned Irish students have a more global perspective.

"Here we have a major focus on American and British studies. We do study world history, but typically we have a year-long American History class and American literature," Yount said. "Over there they did a really good job of creating a global awareness. They taught Irish history, but they made sure the kids were very much globally and culturally minded of everyone around them."

In comparison, Yount doesn't think students in North Carolina are as globally aware.

Justin Lunsford teaches math at Hickory Career and Arts Magnet High School and is another Fellows Teaching graduate who got a firsthand look at another country's approach to education.

In Ireland, Lunsford saw what it looked like when a community made education the top priority.

"The biggest thing was where the responsibility belonged. It wasn't with the teachers as much," he said. "Stateside right now, everything is teacher accountability and make sure you work to the standards. In Ireland, it was more on the student and the parent. All the responsibility fell on that kid and the home life of that student."

The trip also helped him realize how much a student's home life in any community impacts their education, for the good

and bad, before they ever step into a classroom.

"If you don't have parents who care about your education, you're not going to care about your education," Lunsford said.

He also liked the cohesiveness of education in Ireland. In high school, rather than having so many smaller tests, students took one test at the beginning of the year and then one their senior year. The results determine what they would quality to do in college.

"Over there, every single college and university has the same scale, so if you want to be a doctor, you have to get a certain score on that final exam," Lunsford said. "I think that's a huge deal because we don't make education equal here."

"When a kid transfers from Texas, they may be in a completely different spot in the pacing guide. They may have different standards they were covering."

Ireland's 2015 PISA scores: 503 in science, 521 in reading and 504 in math — all above the PISA averages and a 13-point, three-year trend in reading.

While the U.S. as a whole doesn't have as cohesive an educational strategy as countries like Japan, Finland and Ireland, there are national trends individual school districts and states are adopting to help close the gap.

The N.C. Teaching Fellows Program proved successful in producing knowledgeable and passionate teachers for the state.

In Catawba County, schools have adopted programs like Leader in Me, Blended Learning, STEM (Science, technology, engineering, mathematics), IB (International Baccalaureate) and project-based teaching.

Public Service Reminder!



Children have died from heatstroke in cars on days where the outside temp. was only 60 degrees!

LOOK BEFORE YOU LOCK
#heatstrokekills #lookbeforeyoulock

HHS students, Marcus Phillips and Destre Tashjian, perform songs from Hairspray for Rotary.



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<https://hps2017.itemorder.com/>



JOURNEY OF LIFE

"You don't let your external circumstances dictate your internal self-worth, and I think it's a huge issue in society today. People use it for their jobs, for the material positions they have, even how their family is doing."

Adam Constantine, social media manager at Elon University



PHOTOS BY JOHN BAILEY / HICKORY DAILY RECORD

Adam Constantine talked to students at Northview Middle about not letting their external circumstances dictate your internal self-worth during the school's "Life" and career day. Constantine is a former professional basketball player and currently is the social media manager at Elon University.

Northview Middle invites community to share life stories for a nontraditional career day

BY JOHN BAILEY
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HICKORY

When is a career day at a middle school not a career day? When it's held at Northview Middle.

The school recently broke the traditional mold of having professionals come in and describe their jobs, and instead, it invited local members of its community to share stories about their lives.

The day was organized by the school's media coordinator Lindee Parsons and school counselor Miriam Starnes.

"Life isn't just your job. Life often entails where that journey takes you, and we wanted the kids to not only get pieces of



JD Keller gets some thanks from Northview Middle students after he shared his message of everyone matters during the school's "Life" day event.

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HHS students prepare old Chevy for R.A.T. Rod Challenge!

R.A.T. (Radically Alternative Thinking) Rod Roundup Event, was held at Moe's Original Barbeque in Matthews, NC. Craig Lankki, President of Operations for Rat Rod Magazine, attended the event and met with Tim Felton, our very own CTE automotive instructor at Hickory High.—and his talented students.

The Sunday R.A.T. Rod Challenge Event was held on the campus of UNC Charlotte as a part of the NC Science Festival. According to Karen Boyles, HPS CTE coordinator, the Automotive Service students have been working all year during class and after class to build this R.A.T. Rod. "Mr. Felton plans to continue the improvements and modifications next year.," she said.

The event challenge was sponsored by Charlotte STEAM and Harper Corporation of America. For more information about the challenge, click the link: <http://charlottesteam.org/2017-festival-challenges-competitions/school-programs/>.



Journey

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careers, which we have on our roster, but we also have people talking about their life experiences," Parsons said. "They're talking about the bumps in the road, the happy times, the sad times."

The program called, Life, brought in more than 40 guest speakers from a wide variety of backgrounds.

There were local business owners, business professionals, artists, scientists, a furniture designer and college athletes.

For the "Life" side of the event, students heard about being an artist, travelling in Israel, hammock camping and why it's important to let others know they matter.

"It was much more interactive than I thought it would be," Charlotte, a Northview Middle eighth-grader said. "We learned life values and morals that we can use in our everyday life. It was informational but also inspirational."

It was JD Keller who talked about why everyone matters. He runs student leadership programs and shared a story of a student whose life had turned around when she was at a low point by a family who let her know how much she mattered to them.

Chris Gerken works in the IT field but talked to students about the joy he finds in hammock camping, sharing a part of his life that equally defines

who he is as much as his job working with computers.

"It's giving them a wider range of the things they're already doing while showing them how much bigger the spectrum can be for something the students might be interested in," Starnes said.

Students got to see six different speakers as they went through their daily schedule, moving from class to class. The hope was to encourage the students to dream big, Northview Middle Principal Stephanie Dischiavi said.

"We're educating them. We're giving them the tools, but you've got to have dreams," Dischiavi said. "You've got to have goals and you've got to want the best for yourself as opposed to just wanting to get by, making the most in life."

While students expected to hear about different career fields like they have in previous career days, many found the day even more engaging because of how many personal stories they heard from the speakers.

"From the artist that I saw, I learned he really wanted to be an artist when he grew up, but he didn't get paid a lot for it so it was tough," eighth-grader Jonathan Hoang said. "However, he did manage to find a way in life through commissions to create his art."

"It shows even though you can be very passionate about something, some-

times you might have to find another way if it can't keep you alive."

It was a hard lesson to hear from Hoang, but he also realized the artist didn't completely turn his back on what he loved to do, he just found a way to make it work in his life.

Fellow eighth-grader Gabe Adkins was already thinking about being a civil engineer before the Life day at the school.

"Now I'm starting to reconsider it because since I've learned what you do isn't always about the money especially if you're willing to do it the rest of your life," Adkins said.

The day wrapped up with Adam Constantine who got to live his dream of playing basketball as a professional. He shared his story of living that dream but then seeing it end because of an injury which in turn led him to find a new dream. Constantine is now the social media manager for his Alma matter, Elon University in North Carolina.

His message went well with the overall theme of the day.

"You don't let your external circumstances dictate your internal self-worth, and I think it's a huge issue in society today," Constantine said. "People use it for their jobs, for the material positions they have, even how their family is doing."

He shared with students how his mentality shifted throughout the highs and lows in his own life, and how he found inspiration to keep moving forward.



Oakwood's Fifth Grade Field trip to Charleston

(Submitted by Dena Nigrelli, Oakwood Counselor and Communications Liaison)—as told through the eyes of a student!

When the fifth grade went to Charleston we had a blast! We got to Oakwood super duper early! We got on a charter bus and began our journey! We got to the U.S.S. Yorktown and unpacked our stuff. The sleeping quarters on the bus were not exactly comfy. We toured the battle ship (USS Yorktown) the rest of the day with our groups. We had lunch and dinner on the boat. When we woke up the next day we toured Fort Moultrie and Fort Sumter and learned a lot! We also stayed on the beach for about an hour! We finally got back on the charter bus and arrived back at Oakwood around 11pm. We all had a blast and learned a lot!

Mebane White, Fifth Grade, Ms. Reese's class.

