

MEMORANDUM

TO: Randolph County Board of Education
Dr. Stephen Gainey, Superintendent

PRESENTED BY: Tim Moody, Public Information Officer

PREPARED BY: Dr. Lynette Graves, Director of Elementary Education and Title I

DATE: December 14, 2015

RE: 2015-2016 Lighthouse School Nomination

Over the past three years, Hopewell Elementary School has continued to demonstrate substantial academic increases in both proficiency and growth as measured by the North Carolina READY Accountability Model. The school has exceeded the expected proficiency for both the district and the state. In 2012-2013, reading proficiency was 53%, math proficiency was 72.2%, and science proficiency was 74.8%. In 2014-2015, reading proficiency increased to 68.1%, math proficiency increased to 80.7%, and science proficiency increased to 86.9%. In addition, Hopewell Elementary School has exceeded expected growth for the past three years.

The staff at Hopewell Elementary School is keenly aware of the role that they play in ensuring that students are college and career ready. Teachers consistently incorporate instructional practices that enable students to be personally responsible for their own learning, with the teacher serving as the facilitator. This includes various approaches, such as incorporating problem-based learning by having students work in collaborative groups to select landforms, create a three-dimensional landform, and then report about the landform to other students. Through the use of science kits, students complete inquiry-based activities that are aligned to the North Carolina Essential Standards for Science. Students use journals to create a hypothesis that is discussed with peers, tested through experimentation, and reviewed to determine accuracy.

Technology is used to support individualized learning in a variety of ways. Students use various multimedia programs, such as Glogster and Animoto, to complete projects in literacy, science, and social studies. Students utilize technology to access, analyze, and evaluate information when researching topics. Student then create multimedia presentations, such as brochures, videos, and podcasts, and then share their finished product with their peers in an effort to strengthen speaking and listening skills.

The use of student data notebooks and student-led conferences are other innovative practices at Hopewell Elementary School. Student data notebooks were started in 2011 as a result of striving for excellence as a pilot school for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). All student notebooks focus on goal setting, gathering data, and reflecting on individual learning. Student notebooks are shared at biannual "Way to Grow" celebrations. During the celebrations, every student in the school

conducts a student-led conference utilizing their data notebook as a reference. The staff at Hopewell Elementary School has provided professional development to other schools in the Randolph County School System as well as to schools in other North Carolina school districts on how to incorporate student data notebooks and/or student-led conferences into the school setting.

Woven throughout the curriculum is a focus on global awareness. Each grade level selects a continent, and then each classroom on the grade level selects a country on that continent as the primary global focus for integration into the curriculum. This includes research about the country, developing relationships with pen pals, and authentic experiences with individuals from those countries. As a culminating event, Hopewell Elementary School hosts a school-wide International Night, where students display projects about their country and students lead presentations about each country. Hopewell Elementary School students who attend the International Night have personalized passports as learning tools to answer questions about each country and to stamp verifying their visit to the country. After completing the world tour, visitors are invited into the school cafeteria to taste foods that are native to the showcased countries.

In addition to globalized instruction in all classes, Hopewell Elementary School offers a Spanish Dual Language Immersion Program. Students in the Immersion Program receive instruction in all of the Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards. However, the instruction is delivered in Spanish. The Immersion teachers are native speakers and come from a variety of Latin countries. In addition, the Immersion teachers provide students with exposure to their culture, lifestyle, and beliefs so that the students and the teachers build a greater understanding and respect for diverse cultures.

Hopewell Elementary School serves as a professional development school with the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). Over a two year period, the school provides an internship and student teaching experience for students seeking a degree in education. This is a mutually beneficial relationship as the school provides students with the opportunity to work alongside quality teachers, and UNCG, in turn, provides professional development for the Hopewell Elementary School staff.

Communities in Schools (CIS) provides Hopewell Elementary School with mentors who work one-on-one with at-risk students who may have academic needs or the need for a positive relationship with a trusted adult. CIS arranges a partnership with the feeder high school's male athletes, who are paired with classes to serve as positive role models for our male population.

Hopewell Elementary School has a partnership with a local church that was awarded a three-year grant from Duke University to offer weekly afterschool tutoring to a select group of academically at-risk students. Continuous two-way communication occurs between the classroom teachers and the tutors so that the needs of the students are being met.

The Hopewell Elementary School PTA provides approximately 50 volunteers a week who work with students in small groups or one-on-one. Parents are informed of instructional practices through literacy nights, math nights, and technology nights. At the end of the first quarter, parents attend conferences to discuss academic progress. The PTA also hosts quarterly meetings as well as community events throughout the school year.

Hopewell Elementary School has received recognition from the State as well as outside agencies over the last few years including: 2009 Piedmont Triad Education Consortium (PTEC) Signature School, 2011 National Finalist for Academic Excellence for Immersion Programs, and 2015 National Designation as an Exemplar School for the P21 (Partnership for 21st Century Learning) Organization.