

Matthew W. Stover, Ed.D.
Superintendent



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PRESS RELEASE:

For the Second Consecutive Year, Catawba County Schools Celebrates an All-Time High Graduation Cohort Rate and Extraordinary Student Growth

NEWTON, September 6, 2018 – For the second consecutive year, Catawba County Schools boasts an all-time high Graduation Cohort Rate of 91.9%, exceeding the state average by 5.4 percentage points. According to the results released by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, twenty-three of twenty-seven eligible schools met the growth expectation while thirteen schools exceeded growth. Jacobs Fork Middle School finished 12th in the state for growth among middle schools while Harry M. Arndt Middle School ranked 40th.

“We are excited that the majority of our schools are meeting or exceeding the academic growth expectations as measured by North Carolina’s state accountability model,” stated Dr. Matt Stover, Superintendent of Catawba County Schools. “Our teachers work hard to create engaging lessons and provide classroom experiences that inspire student learning. Our performance data is a result of that commitment. With the administration and staff currently in place, I’m confident we will soon be meeting or exceeding growth in all our schools.”

100 percent of the district’s schools earned a School Performance Grade of C or higher on the state’s A-F School Performance Grading System. Over half of the schools earned a B or higher with Challenger Early College earning an A.

Elementary and middle School Performance Grades are based on end-of-grade test scores in reading and math (grades 3-8), science (grades 5 & 8) Math I EOC (if applicable), and English Language Learner Progress. High school performance grades are based on results from end-of-course exams (Biology, English II, and Math I), Cohort Graduation Rate, the percentage of 11th graders meeting a composite score of 17 on The ACT combined with the percentage of Career and Technical Education concentrators who earn a Silver Certificate or higher on The ACT WorkKeys assessment, the percentage of students passing Math III, and English Language Learner Progress. Performance indicators account for 80% of the model while school-wide growth data contributes 20%.

Catawba County Schools 2017-18 Highlights:

- Historical Graduation Cohort Rate – 91.9%

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- Thirteen schools exceeded growth: Balls Creek Elementary, Catawba Elementary, Clyde Campbell Elementary, Lyle Creek Elementary, Mt. View Elementary, Oxford Elementary, Sherrills Ford Elementary, St. Stephens Elementary, Snow Creek Elementary, Arndt Middle, Jacobs Fork Middle, River Bend Middle, and Challenger Early College
- 100% of schools achieved a School Performance Grade of C or higher
- Math and Reading proficiencies increased by 4.9% in Grades 3-8
- Science proficiency in Grades 5 and 8 increased by 3.6%
- English II proficiency increased by 4.9%
- 10 schools raised their School Performance Grade by one letter grade: Balls Creek Elementary, Blackburn Elementary, Tuttle Elementary, Clyde Campbell Elementary, Oxford Elementary, St. Stephens Elementary, Snow Creek Elementary, Arndt Middle, Fred T. Foard High, and St. Stephens High
- Schools with the largest gains in proficiency composite scores: St. Stephens Elementary, up 8.4 percentage points; Oxford Elementary, up 7.9 percentage points; Catawba Elementary, up 7.8 percentage points; Maiden Middle, up 7.7 percentage points, Jacobs Fork Middle, up 5.4 percentage points; and St. Stephens High up 4.8 percentage points

When asked what facilitated such growth gains this year, Stover explained, “Our staff is dedicated to meeting individual student needs through personalized learning. They use tools such as Google Classroom and Problem-Based Learning to differentiate instruction. Our administrators help create a positive work environment for our teachers. The support of our parents and communities is truly fantastic. To add to all of that, we are very excited to be partnering with our newly founded Catawba County Education Foundation to continue to provide resources for our teachers in Catawba County.”

The newly formed Education Foundation for Catawba County Schools is working to continue student growth and success by providing scholarships and grants for teachers to gain additional advanced professional development opportunities. “Every successful business invests in their people to help them perform their best. Our school systems should be no different,” stated Luke Walling, board member and owner of Newton-based Temprano Techvestors. The money the Foundation raises with their inaugural Swing for Education Charity Golf Tournament on October 29th at the Catawba Country Club will go directly to help teachers learn new, engaging, and research-based strategies to continue to improve student outcomes.