

Cedar Hill Independent School District
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meeting Date: October 18, 2010

Presented by: Mr. Horace Williams, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Star Student/Teacher of the Year/Pledge Leaders

Information Item

BOARD GOAL:

Expect, promote and support a safe and orderly learning environment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Star Student: Croix Amiah Wallace, Highlands Elementary
McKenzie Washington, Beltline Intermediate

Teacher-of-the-Year: Tangie Smith, Highlands Elementary
LaTosha Gordon, Beltline Intermediate

Pledge Leaders: Vanessa Torrijos and Simeon Williams, Highland Elementary
Brailyn Williams and Gabriella Sifuentes, Beltline Intermediate

CONTACT PERSON(S):

Dr. Homer Carter, Chief Academic Officer
Chanda McGhee, Director of Student Support and Community Services

FUNDING SOURCE:

N/A

ENCLOSURE:

See attachments.

Star Student, Highlands Elementary

Croix Amiah Wallace, 4th Grade

Croix Amiah Wallace was born on May 19, 2001 in Witchita, Kansas to the proud parents of Anthony and Carla Wallace. Her younger brother, Avery Wallace, is 5 years old and is a part of the kindergarten dual language program that is offered at Highlands Elementary.

Amiah is presently a fourth grade student at Highlands Elementary. However, Amiah's reading level was assessed and she is reading at the ninth grade level! Her favorite subjects in school are science, art, and physical education.

Amiah enjoys cooking, playing cards, trivia games, and photography with her family. She loves to dance and is a dancer at the Dallas Black Dance Theatre where she is learning ballet and tap. Amiah has a passion for fashion and is currently creating her own petite clothing line for girls with her mother called "Tickled Pink".

Amiah is also a "Going Green" enthusiast. She recently researched how to gain resale rights for private labels and is editing her own kid friendly "Green" book. Amiah has developed a great curiosity about outer space and is intrigued by aliens. She has had the opportunity to tour NASA Langley, which is one of her most treasured memories.

Amiah has dreams, goals, and ambitions of becoming a prima ballerina, pediatrician, and a chemist. Amiah's teachers feel that she is an outstanding student that is, and will continue to be, a very successful young lady.

Amiah's peers feel that she is truly a role model and is someone that they look up to. Amiah certainly deserves the recognition of Star Student as she has already done great things . . . but the best is yet to come!

STAR STUDENT, BELTLINE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

McKenzie Washington, 6TH Grade

Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Foster are the proud parents of McKenzie Washington. She is a 6th grade student at Beltline Intermediate School. Academically McKenzie is at head of her class. She is focused on her education and determined to do her best no matter how rigorous the assignment.

In class, McKenzie serves as a peer tutor. By being responsible and knowledgeable, she is able to assist her peers who might be having difficulty with an assignment. Although her favorite subject is math, she excels in all subjects. With her love of mathematics and her passion for helping people, she aspires to be a nurse or a pharmacist.

Outside the classroom McKenzie is active in extracurricular activities. She is the captain of the 6th grade girls' basketball team, where she demonstrates leadership, positive competitiveness and motivation to her teammates.

With the pillars of character demonstrated throughout her academic, social and home environments there is no doubt that McKenzie Washington is the perfect example of a Star Student for Beltline Intermediate School.

Teacher-of-the-Year, Highland Elementary School

Tangie Smith, 2nd Grade Teacher

Tangie Smith is presently a second grade teacher at Highlands Elementary. She is an Arkansas native. She attended the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. She majored in elementary education and earned a Bachelor of Science degree. She presently resides in Cedar Hill with her husband of 25 years, Willie, and her son, Willie III, who is a senior at Cedar Hill High School. Mrs. Smith and her husband also have three daughters named MarKeisha, Candace, and Vanessa. All three of these ladies are graduates of Cedar Hill High School. Mrs. Smith and her family relocated to Texas in 1990 and settled into the great city of Cedar Hill in 1992.

Mrs. Smith began her professional teaching career with the Dallas Independent School District. She taught there for five years before migrating to the Cedar Hill Independent School District where she has been privileged to inspire young minds for the last 15 years at Highlands Elementary. Mrs. Smith states that in her heart, she knows that teaching is the noblest of all professions. She sincerely believes it is the teaching profession that creates all others. Mrs. Smith says that being recognized by her peers, and chosen as Highlands Elementary Teacher of the year for the 2009-2010 school year, will forever rank as one of the most memorable events in her life.

Mrs. Smith's colleagues and workers admire her positive spirit and strong work ethic. She can always be counted upon to greet you with a smile and to see the best in any situation. She is a true team player and a model team leader. Her passion for teaching and learning is truly an asset to the Highlands faculty and staff. Mrs. Smith's present and former students stated that Mrs. Smith's class is a fun place where they can learn neat things. The things that her students say that they like most about Mrs. Smith is that she believes in each of them and always tells them that they can do anything if they set their minds to it.

Congratulations to Tangie Smith! She without a doubt deserves the title of Highlands Elementary 2009-2010 Teacher of the Year.

Teacher-of-the-Year 2010 -2011, Beltline Intermediate School

LaTosha Gordno, Math Teacher

Our Teacher of the Year at Beltline Intermediate School is a force to be reckoned with when it comes to educating our young mathematicians of today! LaTosha Gordon is a sixth grade math teacher entering her fifth year here at Beltline, her fifth year here in the Cedar Hill ISD, and her fifth year teaching altogether. LaTosha has one daughter named Ebony, two older brothers, two stepbrothers, and a stepsister. Originally from Tyler, Texas, where she graduated with honors from John Tyler High School, she moved to Dallas in 1997 and began working at Southwestern Bell (formerly SBC, now called AT&T). She went back to school to earn her bachelor's degree in business management in 1999. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from Northwood University, here in Cedar Hill. After years of working in corporate America and surviving a couple of company name changes, LaTosha decided it was time for something different – something that was about more than just earning a paycheck. She wanted to change lives in the youth of today and educate them not only academically, but socially as well. That is why she chose to go into teaching math because she thinks it is a great subject, and she knew there was a great need for more math teachers.

LaTosha has always loved math because it is logical and interesting to see how the concepts fit together. Besides that, she thinks it is just plain, old fun. It was her favorite subject when she was in school, and she has noticed that it is still the favorite subject of most of the kids today. She was never a big science lover, but loved chemistry because it involved quite a bit of math. She tries to make class as interesting and fun as possible so that the students will love math even more the day they leave Beltline than when they first entered her classroom. For those who say they don't like math or that "math is too hard," she is constantly working to change their opinion. She feels that all kids can learn math or anything else if they are willing to put in the work to do so. Sometimes they need someone to stand beside them or walk them through that journey into scholastic achievement; and she shows them that she will be there to do just that. Many of her students view her as a mother figure, and some even call her "mama."

LaTosha is very proud of her achievements as a math teacher. She loves knowing that she has something to do with developing the young minds of our society in a positive way. She tries to be the best role model that she can be and teach her students to have integrity and compassion for one another. Although teaching is not an easy job and there are days when she just wants to throw in the towel and walk away, there are always those students who make all the trials and tribulations worthwhile. Just knowing that she touched some child's life or heart and opened them up to accept a new challenge or strive to be the best that they can be makes her want to endure the long, hard road ahead. One of her five year goals as a new teacher was to be teacher of the year on her campus. And with pride and joy she has accomplished that goal!