Harrison Elementary’s Sara Bailey honored as County Teacher of the Year

Harrison Elementary teacher Sara Bailey has been named the Prince George County Teacher of the Year for 2019. While Bailey’s career in elementary education began as a kindergarten teacher, she has worked with students as a reading specialist at Harrison for the last nine years.

Bailey started teaching in Hopewell at Dupont Elementary, the same elementary school she attended as a child. After just a few short years, she knew that her passion was rooted in helping students become stronger readers.

“Being a part of a child’s path to reading is just amazing,” Bailey said. “I’ve tried to get the students to pull from their personal experiences in life to get them to be readers and writers of nonfiction.”

Bailey comes from a family of teachers who have instilled a love of learning. Her father taught for over 30 years in Hopewell and her sister has also been an educator in Prince George for many years. Bailey remembers one teacher who directed her toward the educational path back in 2nd grade.

“Ms. Faith Furbush was my teacher when I was very shy in elementary school. She was the first one who didn’t let me be shy. She would use very authentic events as teachable moments. Just outside our classroom window they were building a new school. She had us document the progress each day with journal writing and predict what would happen the next day,” Bailey said.

Bailey has developed her own list of qualities she feels are important as an educator.

“One of the most important things is establishing the rapport with your students. I believe that every student is capable and I want them to achieve excellence. Just remember every child is unique and they need you to let them know you believe in them.”
FOCUS ON THE COUNTY

Superintendent Renee Williams wishes the Graduating Class of 2019 great success in the future.

Congratulations to the Prince George High School Class of 2019! Graduation is the day we all have been anticipating. Commencement will be held on Saturday, June 15, 2019, at 9:00 a.m. at the Athletic Complex located behind N.B. Clements Junior High School. Post-secondary plans for our seniors include commitments to the U.S. Armed Forces, enrollment into fifty-four colleges and universities, and the pursuit of career and employment opportunities.

Families and friends attending graduation may park in the parking lot at Prince George High School and walk to the athletic field or park at the Courthouse Complex (parking between Courts Building and County Government Building or School Board Office), or at J.E.J. Moore Middle School with bus shuttle service provided to/from the Athletic Complex. Shuttle service will begin at 7:30 a.m. and conclude one and one-half hours after graduation is complete. Regular and specialized shuttle service will be provided by school buses.

On April 15, 2019, the Prince George County School Board recognized the following 2019 Teachers of the Year recipients by school:

- Jan Buetow – Prince George High School
- Melody Milleker – N.B. Clements Jr. High School
- Sharon Sule – J.E.J. Moore Middle School
- Angela Seaborn – PG Education Center
- Cindy Collins – L.L. Beazley Elementary School
- Sara Bailey – David A. Harrison Elementary School
- Brandon Scheivert – North Elementary School
- Megan Lauranzon – South Elementary School
- Aiden O’Hare – William A. Walton Elementary School
- Susan Reynolds – School Board Office

Sara Bailey, a reading specialist at Harrison Elementary, was named the Prince George County Public Schools 2019 Teacher of the Year.

During the May 13, 2019, School Board meeting, Support Employees of the Year by schools were recognized:

- Debra Artus – L.L. Beazley Elementary School
- Karen Pannill – David A. Harrison Elementary School
- Stephanie Greene – North Elementary School
- Frank Lanier – South Elementary School
- Raymond Martinez – William A. Walton Elementary School
- Nataniel Feliciano – J.E.J. Moore Middle School
- Martha King – N.B. Clements Jr. High School
- Susan Kitchens – Prince George High School
- Chris Reynolds – School Board Office
- Sandra McLaughlin, Crater Juv. Detention Home

Clarence Thweatt - Transportation
Debra Artus was named the Prince George County Schools 2019 Support Employee of the Year.

As I reflected on this year, I thought about the challenges we faced and the successes we had that reminded us of our purpose. We faced teacher shortages, bus accidents, mold and lead issues, and the loss of two students, Trevor Scott Aldridge and Dallas Matthew Townsend.

Some of our successes include:

1. Increase in school security with the assistance of the Prince George Police Department;
2. North Elementary School’s breakfast kiosk and Prince George High School’s “Smart Mouth” program recognition by the Virginia School Board Association’s Showcase for Success Directory;
3. Javonte Harding won another state title in the 5A 100 meter dash;
4. Increase in bus drivers;
5. Students completed the Prince George Career and Technical Education Warehousing and Distribution Workforce Development program. This program is in partnership with Standard Motor Products and John Tyler Community College Workforce Alliance; and
6. Implementation of the Olweus Bullying Program in all secondary schools.

We were able to overcome the challenges and celebrate successes because of our outstanding teachers, administrators, support staff, parents, students and the Prince George County School Board.

The Prince George County School division continues to be committed to its most important work... educating the only future the human race has, our children.

- Renee P. Williams, Superintendent

Beazley Elementary students learn about animals from Scaly Adventures

The students and staff of L. L. Beazley Elementary School were thrilled to welcome Scaly Adventures and their reptilian friends back again this year.

The family behind Scaly Adventures, Pierce, Tanya and Rick Curren, taught the students about their animals and connected their stories with real-world lessons. Spike the iguana, dapper in his specially made tuxedo shorts and bowtie, served as an example of how showing kindness can change a life. Peaches, the very friendly snake, taught students to not judge a book by its cover. The staff of Beazley Elementary can’t wait until their next visit.
Read Across America Week celebrated with Dr. Seuss activities at South Elementary

South Elementary School students and their families created a cake based on a Dr. Seuss book as one of the many activities during Read Across America Week.

Read Across America Week was celebrated at North Elementary School during the week of March 4 through March 8. Students, teachers, parents, and the Parent Teacher Advisory Committee all helped celebrate Dr. Seuss.

The students participated in spirit week and celebrated *The Cat in the Hat* by wearing their favorite hat. The book *Fox in Socks* was celebrated by students wearing silly socks. Students wore tie dye shirts to honor the book *Oh the Places You’ll Go*.

In order to celebrate Wacky Wednesday, students dressed like they were wacky. In honor of *Green Eggs and Ham*, students wore green. Students were also allowed to bring in a stuffed animal to go along with the story *What Pet Should I Get*?

The teachers were able to indulge in a special breakfast to honor Read Across America Week that was presented by the PTAC committee. The teachers loved all of the special treats. Parents were also allowed to volunteer in classrooms by reading books written by Dr. Seuss. North Elementary had a blast during Read Across America Week.
FOCUS ON SECONDARY

Prince George High School staff and students host Meet In The Middle

The annual Little Feet Meet, now called Meet In The Middle, was held on Wednesday, April 10th, at the football field. It was hosted by the Special Olympics and Champions Together and it included elementary schools from all over the county. This year, kids from all over Prince George County could participate in the event.

“Last year it was just elementary schools. It was called Little Feet… this year it is called Meet in the Middle and involves all of the schools here in Prince George County and it has turned out to be a wonderful event,” event sponsor Sherri Jones said.

While the ambassadors guided the children, other volunteers were in charge of helping the children at the stations.

“It is such a great event because the goal is to bring our special-needs students together with our non-special-ed students and general ed students to form friendships, tear down barriers that might have been there due to their disability,” organizer Matt Hall said.

J.E.J. Moore Middle School raises awareness and money for water for South Sudan

Water is the Force of Life was the 6th grade Penguin Team mantra in preparation for the 2019 PBL. Inspiration for this project came from the book A Long Water to Water, a true story of Salva Dut, Lost Boy of South Sudan, who after his immigration to the U.S., went back to Sudan to build wells for his people who were dying from lack of and/or unclean water. Through this project, the core teachers were able to integrate each of their curriculums to enhance the students’ learning experience.

The book began as a novel study read with the English teacher during the daily enrichment period. In order to fully understand the breadth and scope of the book, A Long Walk to Water, Second Sudanese War, The Lost Boys of South Sudan, the lack of water and/or clean water in Sudan, and Salva’s motivation to create the organization Water for South Sudan, the students collaborated and researched in groups, and created power point presentations to define the purpose of the project.

Students were immediately moved to want to raise money to help Salva’s team build wells for the people of South Sudan. In math, the students set a fundraising goal of $1400.00. For two weeks they tracked their progress, and the excitement continued to build.

The students surpassed the goal and collected donations totaling $2655.00 for the Water for South Sudan organization. To gain perspective on the journey to find and carry clean water, the students carried gallon jugs of water for an hour around the track at school. Discussions were held about how thankful they are to live in the United States and be able to have clean running water at their disposal.

In social studies classes, students investigated and examined specific bodies of water and waterways. Maps were designed to see economic, industrial, and social patterns that emerged because of water’s location.

In science, students conducted lab experiments to prove how water is mandatory for sustainable life.

The BIG EVENT for the PBL was a visit from John Dau, one of the Lost Boys of South Sudan, who was able to share with us his inspirational story.
Physical education teacher, Mrs. Shawn Holt along with English teacher, Mrs. Diane O’Hare and other 8th grade English teachers planned an Inclusion Revolution Field Day for Wednesday, April 17th during 7th block. The purpose of this activity was to promote positivity for the students, as well as show that, “Life is better when we ‘Choose to Include’.”

In a true cross-curricular collaboration, the students read stories about respecting people of all abilities with a unifying theme, “We are the same but different.” Finally, during their English class, each student wrote a reflective analysis, linking the field day activities with the literature they read.

Approximately 180 students chose to take part in the first ever Inclusion Revolution. For Phoenix Walker, who has felt excluded in the past he said, “This is a chance for everyone to feel included.”

Phoenix, along with other participants, donated $2.00 to receive an armband that permitted them entrance into the football stadium where the event began. After a brief explanation of the purpose of the event and a few basic instructions, students proceeded in groups of ten or less to the PE stations.

Mrs. Holt mapped out 22 adaptive physical education stations that the students moved through during the field day event. These stations, designed to cover a wide range of gross and fine motor skills, were monitored by faculty members as well as volunteers from the Clements PTO and Fort Lee. “Some of the activities are easy, but others are hard for me,” said Marissa Green. According to Mrs. Holt’s instructions to the students, this is where they need to use understanding, compassion and creative thinking to help someone who may be struggling with a certain activity.

All proceeds from this event were donated to the Champions Together Club fund to support the VA Special Olympics.

The Class of 2019 will begin its senior day activities by visiting elementary schools.

Senior Day brings new tradition to PGHS

Prince George High School seniors will experience a new event as they prepare for graduation this year.

“Senior Day is taking the place of the Convocation ceremony we have held for many years,” member of the graduation coordination team Beth Andersen said. “We wanted to try something new that more of the senior class could enjoy as a way of gearing up and getting excited for graduation.”

On June 5th, seniors will be called from third block to board buses to the elementary schools. Seniors will wear the caps and gowns to process through the elementary school, where the students will line the halls to celebrate the graduates.

“We hope this will give seniors the opportunity to reflect on their own experiences as they return to where their educational journey began,” Andersen said. “We also think this will be inspiring to the younger students as they think about their future.”

Following the visit, an assembly will occur back at PGHS. Seniors will take the cap and gown photo also. Following all of these activities the Senior Bash will be from 1-5 PM.
North Elementary students participate in Boosterthon

North Elementary had their first Boosterthon Fun Run this year. The Fun Run is a fundraiser used to raise money for the school. The team sent to North from Boosterthon was phenomenal and pumped up the students and teachers to raise money. They came to the school for six days leading up to the Fun Run.

Each grade level came up with rewards for the class based on the amount pledged per lap. At each goal that was reached, students received that reward right away. The Boosterthon Team also met with the students every day and gave a challenge, encouraging them to get more pledges for their laps. The class who won the nightly challenge would receive a reward from the Boosterthon team. Teachers were also given a message to send to parents each day.

The Fun Run was well organized and got many students and families involved through detailed planning and the enthusiastic Boosterthon team. All students participated in the Fun Run, even if they did not have any money pledged for their laps.

Due to the success of the Fun Run, North Elementary has signed a contract for next year’s Fun Run.

Walton Elementary participates in Pillowcase Project

Fourth grade students at Walton Elementary, had the opportunity this spring to participate in the Pillowcase Project. The Pillowcase Project is an hour long education course put on by the American Red Cross. The project was first created and implemented in 2005 in New Orleans schools following Hurricane Katrina. New Orleans CEO Kay Wilkins had learned that Loyola University students carried their belongings in pillow cases when there were evacuated for Katrina.

This inspired Wilkins to create a program around decorating pillowcases for the children living in makeshift communities. This project aims to create a generation of children who understand the science of hazards, and are empowered to take action. Walton was excited to participate in this program.
Mrs. Brockwell’s second grade class took part in a “Giving Hearts” service project this February. In honor of the month of love, these boys and girls showed love for those in need within the community. Students brought in peanut butter, jelly and instant oatmeal and donated it to the Carson Community Food Pantry. These items were delivered to the food pantry and handed out at the monthly food distribution. This was a great way for students to give back to their own community.

In honor of Tommie the Dog, members of the Harrison Kind Kid Squad focused their kind acts on animals during the month of March.

For two weeks, representatives in the third and fourth grade traveled to various classrooms each morning after announcements to collect donations for the Prince George County Animal Shelter. From pet food to treats to towels, the students collected roughly ten boxes filled with donations.

On the last day of the donation drive, Kind Kid Squad members had a chance to meet with Officer Santilli, along with Sansa and Coal, two therapy dogs from the Prince George Police Department. Officer Santilli spoke with the students about the importance of their act of kindness, and how the donations they worked so hard to collect will benefit the local animals. Thanks to the efforts of these awesome young students, the back of Officer Santilli’s truck was filled with lots of goodies to send back to the animal shelter.

South Elementary students show off the donated food items for the “Giving Hearts” service project. Donations were taken to the Carson Community Food Pantry.
March is designated as Youth Art Month, and things are looking bright at N.B. Clements Jr. High thanks to some incredible new art designs. One of the most notable contributions around the school are the large murals that flood the white walls with color created by the IBMYP students in Ms. Melody Milleker’s art class. Early in the school year, Ms. Milleker received administrative approval for the murals. Then it was just a matter of working through the design process for the students before the painting could begin.

According to Ms. Milleker, “My goal was for the students to experience this project like a real artist.” As part of the process, the students had to present their ideas to a Ms. Milleker and a panel of other teachers. The presentation needed to include an explanation of the mural along with the concept behind the art to receive approval for the project. One of the students, Makayla Hamlin, said that her mural design was created after she developed the initial theme. The title for her mural is “Make Your Mark On The World.”

Working alongside her classmates, Cameron Boyd, Donald Embrose and Brock Nay, Makayla estimated that it will take approximately a week and a half of class days to complete the mural on the wall in the gym lobby. For Makayla, the best part of this project has been seeing her vision come to life. “It is so cool to see my idea go from a piece of paper to a huge wall.”

While none of these students admit they would like to be a career artist, they all agree that art would most likely continue to be a hobby. Additionally, they express that this experience taught them valuable lessons that will be useful in whatever career they choose. Skills such as how to effectively critique the work of others without being rude and the importance of teamwork.

Ancient warriors made of clay by Emperor Qin in 210 BC, known as the Terracotta Army, have been buried in the Earth for over 2000 years. Each soldier was crafted by hand to have unique characteristics and represent his military rank from stable attendant to armored general.

The warriors were constructed over a 40-year period and were mass produced much like the printmaking process used by South Elementary 3rd graders. Students selected and drew their warriors, transferred their images to styrofoam plates and, using ink and brayers, pulled multiple prints from their printing plate.

Students had the option to write a description of the Terracotta Army or the Printmaking process with their classroom teachers. They recorded themselves reading their paragraphs with the help of Ms. Sammler who generated QR codes to be attached to their art work.

Classes throughout the whole school were invited to use iPads to scan the QR codes and listen to the descriptions their schoolmates had recorded. Their completed projects reflected a wonderful collaboration among art, history, writing and technology.
The library media center at J.E.J. Moore Middle School is now home to a state-of-the-art Innovation Center (INC), funded by a grant from the Cameron Foundation. This multifunctional space was designed with 21st Century learning and emerging technology in mind. INC technology includes five 55”/65” interactive flat panels, two types of Virtual Reality (VR) goggles, a class set of new laptops, and a production studio with green screen, 360° camera, and AV mixing equipment.

Moore librarians, Kristina Chilian and Veida Evans, are collaborating with teachers across the curriculum to design instruction that utilizes INC’s technology to enhance student learning. Because the space is flexible and allows for different modes of learning, it is being used in a variety of creative ways by teachers.

Seventh grade science teachers brought their station rotation lesson on plant and animal cells into the library. One station allowed students to access Thinglink.com on an interactive flat panel in order to test their knowledge of cell parts, and Mrs. Chilian incorporated a 3D virtual tour of plant and animal cells using the VR goggles. Students agreed unanimously that it was easier to picture and understand cell structure by viewing it in 3D. They were also highly engaged as they moved around the stations.

The INC can be used for diverse purposes, including small group learning, whole class instruction, independent study, and remediation. For example, Ms. Evans works with LLI teachers in the INC to remediate students using the Lightsail reading program on iPads and laptops. The INC has also been used for professional development and teacher training over the summer and on teacher work days.

The INC’s production studio will host morning announcements, project-based learning, and student enrichment. Students in the new club, Tech Squad, help to maintain and troubleshoot the INC’s equipment, providing members with valuable job skills and opportunities to collaborate to solve real-world problems. With the help of the Tech Squad, Mrs. Chilian and Ms. Evans are also designing a Makerspace area within the INC, which will include hands-on STEM activities such as coding, robotics, circuitry, and 3D printing.

With a focus on collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking, the Innovation Center at J.E.J. Moore Middle School will continue to grow and evolve to meet the diverse learning needs of its students through creative, technology-based instruction.

High school teacher retires after 53 years with Prince George

At the end of this school year longtime government teacher Louise Thornton will retire from teaching after 53 years in Prince George County.

“I came to the high school in 1967 and was teaching history and government. Then I went into just government which I like better than teaching both. In the fall of 1967 I came to the high school and my first graduating class was 1968,” Thornton said.

She has always wanted to be a teacher.

“My mother was a teacher. She taught at the elementary level and she always loved it. My mother, by being a teacher, was home when we were home and I think that is very important,” Thornton said.

To stay in one county for so long is truly remarkable.

“I stayed in PG because the people at the high school, the adults, we really are a family. I just couldn’t imagine leaving them. The hard part of retiring is that my friends are here. The administrators have been very supportive of teachers and that support has made me want to stay,” Thornton said.

“My advice is that you really have to love being around young people. You have got to really want to make a difference. Cherish the moments when you do reach a student. Teaching is extremely important.”

N.B. Clements Jr. High student’s quick response turns into life-saving act

Parent Amber Staton brings student Samantha Newsome a dozen roses to thank her for her act of bravery which helped potentially save a boy’s life. Newsome volunteers with Champions Together.

A parent, Amber Staton, came to N. B. Clements Junior High School and brought Samantha Newsome a dozen roses. As part of the Champions Together Club – Samantha is very involved in Prince George’s Special Olympics after school activities that are coordinated for the special needs students.

One night, during the Special Olympics swim team practice, held at the Hopewell Community Center, Samantha was assisting special needs students as they were taking laps in the pool. One of the young boys started to have a seizure while in the water. Samantha noticed his head go under water and quickly grabbed him while she called for help.

Because of her attentiveness and quick responsiveness the adults were able to get him out of the pool. The young boy was able to finish his seizure on the side of the pool and there were no serious implications to his health.

The mother, Amber Staton stated, “I am truly thankful for the amazing volunteers.”
Calendar of Events
Feel free to call for additional details
(804) 733-2700

June 13
Last Day of School
June 15
Graduation
June 17 - August 15
Summer Work Hours
Mon.-Thurs. 7 AM - 5 PM
June 19
Report Cards Sent Out
September 3
First Day of School for 2019-2020

FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

David A. Harrison Elementary School has participated in the Pennies for Patients program sponsored by the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society since 2008. Since starting the program, they have collected $26,260.77. Harrison is part of the Millionaire’s Club for raising over ONE MILLION pennies for a cure. Students and staff met and exceeded this year’s goal of $3,250 by raising $3,280.44. The students earned both individual and classroom incentives set to help meet the school goal.

Individual incentives included hero squad tattoos, power rings, hero bands, key chains, and t-shirts. Classroom goals included a slushy to each grade level winner and an Olive Garden lunch to the classroom that collected the most in the school. Mrs. Brown’s second grade classroom was the winner of the Olive Garden lunch with a total of $360.30 donated.

Students also participated in different spirit days to add some excitement to the campaign—Lime Green Day (to show awareness for Lymphoma), Orange Day (to show awareness for Leukemia), Marvelous Super Hero Monday, Top of Your Head Tuesday, Wacky Wednesday, Twin Thursday, and Fancy Friday.

A big “Thank You” goes out to Ft. Lee Federal Credit Union for helping count all the coins students brought in. Because the school met the goal of $3,250, Harrison’s principal Mr. Scruggs will be dancing “The Floss” on the roof while students cheer him on in the courtyard.

Harrison collects 328,044 pennies for a cure

It seems as if every year, the same fundraiser packets come home with elementary students. Parents and families can buy wrapping paper, candy bars, etc to help support their students school.

This year, Walton participated in a new fundraiser effort, in partnership with Boosterthon, called Fun Run. The students have been super excited for this active, fitness based activity to help raise money for Walton.

Students met the Fun Run team in April and fell in love with their leader, H2Olivia. H2Olivia and her team is comprised of three young adults who travel to schools to encourage student engagement and excitement with the Fun Run.

Students are invited to a pep rally each day, for a week, where the Fun Run team discusses the benefits of health and fitness and talks about sportsmanship principles.

At the end of the week spent with the Fun Run team, students run laps for monetary donations. The class with the most donations has the opportunity to win some engaging prizes and rewards and the school itself uses the funds raised to provide unique, engaging learning opportunities to students, support field trips, making classroom and playground improvements, and for purchasing innovative technology equipment. Everyone ends up winning at the end of this fundraiser.

Walton Elementary fundraises with the Fun Run team