AdVance Academy officially graduated 16 seniors during the school's mid-year graduation ceremony held during the evening of January 26, in the auditorium at Henderson Middle School.

An audience of approximately 400 parents, other family members, friends and school staff members looked on as each of the graduates, clad in their green gowns and mortar boards, walked across the stage to receive their high school diplomas.

Principal Stephanie Ayscue led the ceremony and presented each graduate with their diplomas. She was assisted by Superintendent Anthony Jackson, Vance County Board of Education Chairperson Darlynn Oxendine and Gloria J. White, a member of the board of education.


After the graduates marched into the auditorium and down the long aisle, the Northern Vance High School Air Force Junior ROTC presented the colors and everyone in attendance sang the National Anthem. The Northern Vance High School Chorus, under the direction of Korwind Stokes, sang special music for the graduates and audience members.

Michelle Burton, chief Human Resources officer for Vance County Schools, was the featured speaker. She offered all of the graduates words of encouragement for overcoming obstacles and having the determination to complete their high school education.
Northern Vance High receives state approval as a Restart School

The N.C. State Board of Education has granted approval for Northern Vance High School to become a restart school.

State approval of the restart school application for Northern Vance comes after Vance County Schools submitted the application in December.

The Vance County Board of Education at its December 11 meeting gave its approval for Northern Vance High School to move forward in completing plans to apply as a restart school with the state.

The board’s action came after a presentation by Northern Vance Principal Andrew Markoch who provided details about the school’s restart plans. Markoch said the plans include establishing a ninth-grade academy for all freshmen, an arts academy, a career innovations academy and a digital technologies academy. He noted that all incoming freshmen will leave the ninth-grade academy at the end of their first year and go into at least one of the additional academies.

It is possible that a student will be part of more than one academy based on their course selections, Markoch said. Within the academies, students will still have a choice of academic, honors or advanced placement courses. Markoch stressed a focus of the restart plan is to provide students with more choices and more of a voice in their educational opportunities. Another key will be increased flexibility in the school day scheduling and to have the school’s calendar align more closely to the calendar at Vance-Granville Community College, similar to the calendar now followed by the Vance County Early College High School.

He added that the ninth-grade academy will provide students and their parents with more guidance and information as they start high school and should assist students in being more successful academically.

“We want to provide our students with future proof programming to help them be successful beyond high school,” Markoch said.

The restart school plans outlined by Markoch were developed with input from a team of staff members at Northern Vance, as well as parents and students.

The restart application for Northern Vance was submitted by the school system with a detailed plan outlining: the goals to be achieved, including how to provide each student with the opportunity for a sound basic education; a statement as to how operating the school with the same exemptions from statutes and rules as a charter school will facilitate accomplishing these goals; how these exemptions will increase student achievement; and a budget setting out anticipated revenue and expenditures necessary to achieve the goals.

To be eligible to apply as a restart school, a school must be designated as low performing for at least two of the previous three consecutive school years.
WRAL selects Eaton, Stewart as ‘Teachers of the Week’

Cameron Eaton, band director at Henderson Middle School, and Kedecia Stewart, a math teacher at Pinkston Street Elementary School and the Vance County Schools and North Central Region Teacher of the Year, were recognized on January 24, as WRAL “Teachers of the Week.”

Renee Chou, a reporter and news anchor for WRAL-TV in Raleigh, led a news team that visited both outstanding teachers in their classrooms to inform them of their recognitions. The news team visited with each teacher and their students for about an hour to videotape activities in their classrooms and to conduct interviews.

Both of these outstanding educators are scheduled to be featured in “Teacher of the Week” broadcasts on WRAL-TV 5. Eaton will be featured on the broadcast on Wednesday, January 31, and Stewart will be featured in a broadcast on Wednesday, February 14.

The WRAL-TV 5 “Teacher of the Week” broadcasts air on each Wednesday at 5:15 a.m. and 6:15 a.m.

Kedecia Stewart, center background, is being followed by a WRAL cameraman in her classroom for the “Teacher of the Week” feature.
VCS getting important input on proposal for consolidation of middle and high schools

Vance County Schools Administrators and staff members began the process to seek input from local community members on the feasibility of consolidating middle and high schools on January 25.

The process began at the direction of the Vance County Board of Education after board members voted at their January 8, meeting to have Superintendent Anthony Jackson and staff schedule community conversations to receive feedback on a school consolidation proposal.

Six community conversations were scheduled and Jackson also has met or plans to meet

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Dr. Anthony Jackson shares information on the proposal at the start of a session in the Administrative Services Center, at top right, while Dr. Cindy Bennett, standing at far left in the photo at right, responds to a question about school safety with citizens in a discussion group.
Consolidation

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with several local groups including elected officials, church pastors and leaders, business leaders and civic organization leaders and members.

All of the sessions are focusing on the possibility of consolidating Henderson and Eaton-Johnson middle schools and Northern Vance and Southern Vance high schools. The consolidation proposal is the result of several years of declining student enrollment across the district and the need to improve the efficient and financial sustainability of school operations.

Community conversations held on January 25, 30 and 31, have involved mostly positive feedback on the consolidation proposal.

At each of the sessions, local citizens have listened to Jackson present information about the proposal and they have then divided into smaller discussion groups. In the discussions, all groups have provided their input on academic programs, school staffing, student services, athletics, school safety, facility usage, bus transportation and more.

Two more public sessions are planned on February 19, at Southern Vance, and February 26, at Eaton-Johnson.

All input will be collected and included in a final report to the Board of Education at its meeting scheduled for March 12, in the Administrative Services Center.

Darlynn Oxendine, chairperson of the Vance County Board of Education, welcomes the approximately 70 people who attended a community conversation event at Henderson Middle School during the evening of January 25, to discuss the proposal to consolidate the traditional middle and high schools.

Chief Human Resources Officer Michelle Burton, standing, asks citizens in a discussion group for their feedback on school staffing issues as part of the proposal to consolidate middle and high schools.
New Hope gifts

New Hope Elementary School staff and students led a presentation for “School Board Appreciation Month” on January 8, to thank board members for their leadership and dedication to our students and schools.

They presented the board with a large card, featuring colorful thumbprints from all of the students, shown at right. Rachel Bradshaw, New Hope’s music teacher, also played an electric piano and sang a special song she composed for the board.

Seven schools receive deserved state recognitions

Administrators from seven local schools were presented certificates of achievement from the N.C. State Board of Education and N.C. Department of Public Instruction at the January 8, Vance County Board of Education meeting for their academic achievements in the 2016-2017 school year.

Dr. Trixie Brooks, assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, presented the certificates while Darlynn Oxendine, board chairperson, and Dr. Anthony Jackson, superintendent, congratulated the administrators for their schools’ accomplishments.

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Principal Debbie Hite, second from right, holds the two certificates of achievement for Early College and is joined by Vangie Mitchell, college liaison; board Chairperson Darlynn Oxendine and Superintendent Anthony Jackson.
Schools

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Principal Debbie Hite of Early College High accepted certificates for a 100-percent graduation rate and outstanding academic growth. Principal Stephanie Ayscue of AdVance Academy, accepted a certificate for a 96-percent graduation rate. Five schools received certificates for outstanding academic growth. They were accepted by: Assistant Principal Regina Miles of Clarke Elementary; Principal Michael Putney of Dabney Elementary; Principal Marylaura McKoon of E.O. Young Jr. Elementary; Principal Carnetta Thomas of L.B. Yancey Elementary; and Principal Kristian Herring of Zeb Vance Elementary.
Special visit brings lots of joy!

A special visit by students from Aycock Elementary School on December 12, brought lots of smiles and great joy to the residents at the Kerr Lake Nursing Home in Henderson.

The students, who are members of the school’s Kind Club and Drama Club, spent over an hour at the nursing home as they wished all of the residents a happy holiday.

Students in the Drama Club presented plays they had been working on for the residents. First and second graders presented “The King Who Thought He Could Sing.” Those students from the third and fourth grades presented a play entitled, “Be Kind to Books.” Finally, the fifth-grade students presented “The Case of the Favorite Book.”

Aycock Elementary students who are in the Kind Club then gave holiday cards to residents. All of the students and their accompanying teachers had conversations with residents of the center and they shared hugs and smiles during their visit.

Most of their time was spent performing for residents in the dining room areas of the nursing center. However, they wanted to share their holiday spirit with everyone at the center, so they walked through the hallways and sang Christmas carols before they left.