



Rutherford County Schools

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PRESS RELEASE

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Release: Immediate

Agency Contacts: Dr. Janet H. Mason, Superintendent
Mrs. Angel King, Principal
Mr. Steven Helton, Director of Elementary Education

On Thursday, August 7, 2014, the North Carolina State Board of Education announced its approval of Spindale Elementary School's application for competitive grant funds to establish a 21st Century Community Learning Center program. The grant provides \$250,000 during the project's first year and an additional \$850,000 over the project's remaining years.

Spindale Elementary School Principal Angel King said, "We are ecstatic that our proposed 21st Century Community Learning Center grant has been approved by the State Board of Education!" Steven Helton, Director of Elementary Education for Rutherford County Schools, added, "I am so happy for the students, parents, staff and administration of Spindale Elementary School. 21st Century Community Learning Center funding will enable Mrs. King and her staff to provide many exciting, innovative learning opportunities focused on increasing student engagement and achievement."

King explained that the purposes of the program – called "Future Leaders" – are to improve students' academic performance in reading and math; foster the development of leadership and social skills that support the foundations for learning; expand learning opportunities for students in the areas of arts, health and wellness, technology, and character education; increase students' understanding of science, technology, and engineering concepts; and, empower parents to be more hands-on in their children's learning.

The Future Leaders program will provide 12 hours of direct services each week to 100 students, as well as supplemental support to the families of participating students. The school will fully develop a leadership program reflecting the principles of *The Leader in Me* and *7 Habits of Happy Kids* in order to guide and support students in attaining skills essential to their future success. Participating students will also have the opportunity to attend a six-week summer science camp – the "Future Leaders Academy of Science and Technology" – each summer from 2015 through 2017.

Rutherford County Schools Vision: All Rutherford County students will graduate prepared for college and career success.

In compliance with federal law, Rutherford County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, or military service in its policies, programs, activities, admissions, or employment.

“Through our 21st Century Community Learning Center program, we anticipate measurable student academic gains resulting from constructive learning opportunities, additional time on task, low student-teacher ratios, and greater parent engagement,” said King.

“Those of us who were involved in writing and submitting the grant proposal are extremely pleased that our Future Leaders initiative will now come to fruition,” King added. “Now we are anxious and excited to join forces with our community partners and realize the benefits this initiative will provide to our students and their families.”

Spindale Elementary School’s 21st Century Community Learning Center project will be the second such program within Rutherford County Schools. Forest City-Dunbar Elementary School launched a project made possible by another 21st Century Community Learning Center grant during the 2013-14 school year.

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