



February 5, 2021

Surry County Schools earns statewide recognition for outstanding communication

The North Carolina School Public Relations Association (NCSPPRA) has honored Surry County Schools for excellence in communications. Surry County Schools earned a total of eight Blue Ribbon Awards for outstanding and effective communication. NCSPPRA presented the awards during a virtual ceremony on February 5, 2021.

Individual entries earned either a Gold, Silver, or Bronze level award. NCSPPRA also honored the top entry in each category with the *Best of the Best Award*. The eight *Best of the Best* winners received special recognition for having the most outstanding entry in each category.

Surry County Schools received a Gold level award and *Best of the Best Award* for outstanding Image/Graphic Design for the Pathway to Return to Learn Communications Plan. The judges praised the work stating, “This was a clear and well-designed presentation of the plan, and it was very eye-catching.

Surry County Schools also received seven Silver level awards for outstanding

- Digital Media Engagement,
- Electronic Media,
- Image/Graphic Design, and
- Publications (Print & Electronic).

Ken Derksen, NCSPPRA President and Communications & Public Relations Officer for Wayne County Public Schools, said the work of the award winners exemplifies the high standards and qualities members demonstrate in their daily school communications programs. "Blue Ribbon Awards are among the highest and most prestigious honors that a member of our organization can attain," Derksen said. "I congratulate Surry County Schools for achieving this statewide recognition as a Blue Ribbon Award winner and for the superior work being accomplished in the area of school communications and public relations."

NCSPPRA recognizes outstanding communications through its Blue Ribbon Awards program each year. Surry County Schools was one of 41 school districts statewide to receive a Blue Ribbon Award. This year's submission categories included: Marketing, Digital Media Engagement, Electronic Media, Excellence in Writing, Publications, Image/Graphic Design, Photography, and Special Projects and Events. The Georgia School Public Relations Association judged NCSPPRA's 2020 Blue Ribbon entries.

During the Blue Ribbon Awards ceremony, State Superintendent Catherine Truitt paid tribute to award winners and thanked all North Carolina school districts for their efforts to effectively communicate during difficult times. Truitt praised the districts and their communications teams for the powerful way they have responded to help parents, students, and staff during the COVID crisis. "You have conquered the digital landscape in order to meet the ever-changing demands of this pandemic," Truitt shared in her video message. "You have mastered the use of social media channels, video messages, and email sending platforms, and you have remained vigilant in the face of an overwhelming demand for answers. Most importantly you all have been steadfast in your determination to ensure that questions posed by parents and teachers have received the answers they require and deserve." Truitt called the work of the winners "exceptional," and thanked them for their dedication and for helping to shape the communications landscape.

NCSPPRA is a statewide professional organization serving more than 150 members. Its mission is to build support for public education through well-planned and responsible public relations. For more information, please visit the [NCSPPRA Facebook page](#) or www.ncsppra.org.