

Ocracoke School Teacher from Hyde County Schools is selected 2020 Regional Teacher of the Year

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction recently announced the 2020 North Carolina Burroughs Wellcome Fund Regional Teachers of the Year. Hyde County Schools is proud to announce that the 2020 Northeast Regional Teacher of the Year is our very own Mrs. Jeanie Owens, the fifth grade teacher at Ocracoke School. The Northeast Region is made up 19 school districts in 17 counties. "Mrs. Jeanie" will now go on to compete with Regional Teachers of the Year from the seven other regions in North Carolina and one charter school representative.

This recognition is an amazing achievement, not only to Ms. Owens and her outstanding job performance, but also to the entire school district as it is the first time Hyde County Schools house a Regional Teacher of the Year (TOY) in recent history. Although we are ecstatic to have Ms. Owens in our school team and family, this distinction also reminds us that our schools have amazing educators who go above and beyond the call of duty to provide all our students with a high quality educational experience to effectively prepare them for their professional and personal lives.

Ms. Jeanie had already been acknowledged for her exceptional performance last year as she had initially been selected Ocracoke School's TOY, and subsequently named Hyde County Schools Teacher of the Year after a local selection process paired her with the other 2 TOYs from our mainland campus schools. To prepare for the regional –level competition, she had to continue to develop her personal and career portfolio, went through an interview process, and later a school-site visit from the judging panel to see her in action and interview staff and students at school once she made it to the final two in this process. This latter steps in the selection process definitely earned her well-deserved credit as it took place around the time our island and school campus were severely damaged by Hurricane Dorian.

Late December, Ms. Owens was totally taken aback as our Superintendent, Mr. Stephen Basnight, Student Support Services Administrator, Nancy Leach, her school administrator, Leslie Cole and all students in grades 2 through 5 showed up in her classroom along with 2019 NC Teacher of the Year, Mariah Morris, to officially announce her as the 2020 Northeast Region Teacher of the Year. She was humbled by the honor and reassured us that this recognition was more about the school, faculty and students than about her. It proved that she was exactly where she needed to be as she has loved every minute since she started working for Ocracoke School.

Since the recognition, Ms. Owens has recently completed a follow-up interview, and she is scheduled to attend events along with the other Regional TOYs throughout the coming year. We cannot wait to see her contributions on a bigger scale as she promotes Public Education as our Regional Teacher of the Year.

Superintendent Basnight and Principal Cole are certain Owens has a good chance of becoming the state's 2020 Burroughs Wellcome Fund North Carolina Teacher of the Year this April. "Mrs. Jeanie Owens embodies all the qualifications used to define the North Carolina Teacher of the Year and we wish all the best as she continues on this journey," Principal Leslie Cole. All of Hyde County Schools proudly congratulates "Mrs. Jeanie" for this distinction and look forward to supporting her efforts throughout the 2020 North Carolina Teacher of the Year Selection Process.

