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Mount Airy City Schools is pleased to announce that Mount Airy Middle School (MAMS) has been nominated as one of three middle schools in North Carolina to be on the Schools to Watch® list. This award designates MAMS as one of the best middle schools in North Carolina. If selected, MAMS will represent North Carolina on a national level.

Schools to Watch® is an initiative launched by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform in 1999. Through this initiative, the National Forum identifies schools across the country that are well on their way of meeting the Forum's criteria for high performance. Forum members believe that four things are true of high-performing middle-grades schools:

1. **Academic Excellence:** These schools challenge all students to use their minds well.
2. **Developmental Responsiveness:** These schools are sensitive to the unique developmental challenges of early adolescence.
3. **Social Equity:** These schools are democratic and fair, providing every student with high-quality teachers, resources, and supports.
4. **Organizational Structures/Supports:** These schools share a vision and promote a learning community of practice.

Principal, Susan Bunch, states, "I am extremely proud of our faculty, staff and students as they wholeheartedly deserve this prestigious recognition. We are grateful to the selection committee for recognizing the talent, hard work, professionalism and commitment we have provided to ensure the best education possible for every student. We won't stop here, we will continue our efforts in making one of the best middle schools in NC even better."

To achieve this level of performance, high-performing schools establish norms, structures, and organizational arrangements to support and sustain their trajectory toward excellence. They have a sense of purpose that drives every facet of practice and decision-making.

Recognized schools will be featured in state and national publications, and will be visited by educators from around the country looking to see where "things are being done right."

Mount Airy Middle School expects all students to meet high academic standards and to aid with this, teachers use a variety of methods to assess and monitor student progress. The personalized environment found in MAMS supports each student's intellectual, ethical, social, and physical development. Students experience opportunities to explore a variety of topics and interests to identify and learn about their strengths and plans for the future.

Superintendent, Greg Little, affirms the recognition by saying, "Our goal is to become a national leader in education. We expect our students to critically think, innovatively solve problems, and become confident leaders with a passion for learning. We are incredibly honored to be recognized for the outstanding education our teachers provide for our students. Once again Mount Airy City Schools distinguishes itself on a national level for excellence in education."

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