

## Sharing the Stage: Mills and Smith Make Co-Teaching Look Easy at Philo

Elease Mills and Heather Smith promise that they can't read the other's mind.

But it certainly *appears* that they can.

Mills and Smith share a classroom at Philo Magnet Academy, where they teach eighth-grade English/language arts. Their teamwork in their class seems smooth and effortless.

"I think it appears that we are able to read one another's thoughts because of the extensive planning we do," Smith said. "We are always planning."

Sometimes they are planning when they should be sleeping.

"There have been several occasions when Heather or I have come up with innovative ideas in the middle of the night and texted our entire lesson plans to one another," Mills said.

Mills is a regular classroom teacher. Smith is an Exceptional Children's (EC) teacher, which means she specializes in working with children who have disabilities. They are one of several pairs of "co-teachers" at Philo.

In the classroom that Mills and Smith share, it's hard to distinguish the students who have disabilities from those who don't. Both teachers work with all students during the school day.

The lack of "labels" inside their classroom is good for the students who have disabilities, said Jenny Gray, the EC case manager at Philo. In a more traditional teaching model, EC students leave their regular classrooms for specialized instruction, usually in math or reading. That means they miss out on lessons in their regular classrooms.



Heather Smith and Elease Mills

And, "They often feel singled out or embarrassed for needing extra help," Gray said.

Mills and Smith feel that having two teachers in one classroom is beneficial for all their students. Working together allows them to use several teaching techniques and to play to each other's strengths. It also creates a student-to-teacher ratio of about 14 to 1.

As the women take turns leading the class, the transitions happen smoothly. The team says the planning they do before, during and after school makes a big difference.

"If Heather is leading a discussion and I want to interject, we both can stay on topic, which is why we are good tag-team teachers," Mills said.

It's an arrangement that is becoming a model at Philo and other schools. Smith and Mills say their relationship works because they are both focused on their students' needs.

"The transition into co-teaching is much easier if both teachers are willing to share the power – and the responsibility – to benefit all the students who are served," Mills said.

### Ask The Teacher

**Elease Mills' favorite book or poem:** *The Road Not Taken*, by Robert Frost. "I love encouraging my students to find their own way."

**Heather Smith's favorite book or poem:** *The Velveteen Rabbit*, by Margery Williams

## MAGNET SCHOOLS:

**Ashley IB Elementary Magnet School**  
*International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme*  
336.727.2343

**Atkins Academic and Technology High School**  
*Schools of Biotechnology, Pre-Engineering and Computer Technology*  
336.703.6754

**Diggs Elementary School**  
*Magnet for Visual and Performing Arts*  
336.727.2424

**Downtown Elementary School**  
*Community School*  
336.727.2914

**Hanes Magnet School**  
*Project Lead The Way/Math, Science and Pre-Engineering*  
336.727.2252

**Hill Middle School**  
*Magnet for Visual and Performing Arts*  
336.771.4515

**Mineral Springs Elementary School**  
*Renzulli Academy of Arts and Technology*  
336.703.6788

**Mineral Springs Middle School**  
*Magnet for Arts and Leadership*  
336.703.6733

**Moore Magnet Elementary School**  
*Multiple Intelligences*  
336.727.2860

**Paisley Magnet School**  
*Grades 6-10, International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme*  
336.727.2775

**Parkland Magnet High School**  
*International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme and Center for the Cultural Arts*  
336.771.4700

**Philo Magnet Academy**  
*Mandarin Chinese Language Immersion, International Business and World Cultures, and Global Technology*  
336.771.4570

**Reynolds High School**  
*Magnet School for the Visual and Performing Arts*  
336.727.2061

**Winston-Salem Preparatory Academy**  
*An Academic Academy for Grades 6-12*  
336.703.6732



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MAGNET SCHOOLS OF WINSTON-SALEM/FORSYTH COUNTY

## contents

- Test Scores Continue to Show Positive Trend
- Update on Construction Projects at Magnets
- Magnet School Scoop
- Learn about Co-Teachers Mills and Smith at Philo
- The Fair Is Coming!

LOOK INSIDE FOR DETAILS >>>

## Magnet School Results Show Continued Positive Trend

Magnet schools are showing continued, sustained progress in student performance, according to recent local, state and federal statistics.

"We are excited about the academic progress that many of our schools are making and how well our programs are developing," said Kim Morrison, the program manager for Winston-Salem/Forsyth County (WSFC) magnet schools. "Partnering exciting magnet themes with strong academic performance has resulted in successful magnet schools."

Many people focus on yearly test scores, Morrison said, but a better measure of school success is improvement over time.

Ashley Elementary School, Diggs Elementary School, Hill Middle School and Paisley IB Magnet School are great examples of such progress. Those schools became magnets in 2001, after the WSFC school district was awarded a federal grant. All four reached 100% of their targets for student achievement during the 2008-09 school year under No Child Left Behind, a federal school improvement program.

The longer a magnet program has been at a school, the better the school performs on state and local measures, according to statistics from the district. For example, Parkland Magnet High School has made significant improvement since adding its International Baccalaureate and cultural arts program in 2005.

The success of WSFC magnet schools has brought the school district recognition from the U.S. Department of Education (DOE). The district was one of only a handful included in an online "toolkit" that describes the steps school districts should take to create successful magnet programs. The DOE also has featured local magnet programs at its technical assistance conferences as examples of strong magnet implementation and school improvement programs.

"The success of our magnet programs is due to the hard work of the schools and their ability to build great relationships with students," Morrison said.

"Our magnet schools have proven that they can deliver instruction in innovative and creative ways while maintaining high levels of rigor," she said.

*For the 2008-09 school year, Parkland made high growth in student achievement under the state's school accountability program.*

Other noteworthy examples of magnet school success include:

- Ashley Elementary, which met all of its federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets for the 2008-09 school year.
- Hill Middle, which made high growth and met all of its AYP targets for 2008-09.
- Mineral Springs Elementary School, which made high growth and met all of its AYP targets for 2008-09.
- Paisley IB Magnet, which made expected growth and met all of its AYP targets for 2008-09.
- Philo Magnet Academy, which made expected growth for 2008-09 and increased the number of AYP targets met by 78 percent.
- Hanes Magnet School, which made expected growth for 2008-09 and increased the number of AYP targets met by almost 69 percent.

## Construction Projects Will Bring Big Changes at Magnets

Spending approved by voters three years ago is paying for exciting new classroom and support spaces at four WSFC magnet schools.

A new Moore Elementary Magnet School is scheduled to open next summer on the campus of the current building, which was built in 1951. The new Moore will cover 77,000 square feet and is being built to hold 600 students. The cost of the project is estimated at more than \$9 million.

A 17,000-square-foot addition is being built at the Downtown School, which is an elementary school. The addition will allow the school to add sixth, seventh and eighth grades. It is scheduled to open

in July 2010 and will cost an estimated \$3.4 million. The school also recently dedicated a new playground.

With the merger of Diggs and Latham elementary schools, a new Diggs-Latham is being built to accommodate 450 students. The building is scheduled to open in July 2010 at an estimated cost of almost \$7.2 million. (For more information, see *Diggs and Latham Create Single Vision*, inside.)

At Parkland Magnet High School, work is under way on a 25,000-square-foot addition to open in early 2010. The cost of the project is estimated at almost \$3 million.



Construction is well under way at Moore Magnet.

## COME TO THE FAIR!

DOWNTOWN SCHOOL • MOORE MAGNET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL • WINSTON-SALEM PREPARATORY ACADEMY

January 9, 2010 • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. • South Main Hall, Benton Convention Center

The magnet school fair is a great place to learn about all 15 WSFCS magnets at a single location. Meet staff and teachers from each of the magnets and watch student performances that highlight the schools' outstanding programs.



# MAGNET SCHOOL SCOOP

## ASHLEY

### Students Explore IB Traits in Multiple Ways

In September, Robert Ash was named principal at Ashley. He had been an assistant principal at the school for five years and taught at schools in Winston-Salem, Greensboro and Maryland before becoming an administrator.

In October, Ashley participated in a fundraiser for the local Muscular Dystrophy Association. Friends and coworkers contributed money to the association to free Ash and others from Ashley from temporary detention. Money raised will support research into the causes of neuromuscular diseases, and to provide programs and medical care for people with those diseases.

Ashley's staff and students have a long history of supporting efforts that help people in need. The International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme, which is offered at Ashley, encourages students to develop a personal commitment to help others.

The school recently finished filming for a video to promote its IB magnet program.

## ATKINS

### Schools Offer Career Exploration Opportunities

This fall, the **School of Biotechnology** at Atkins again offered the BioFocus Career Exploration Program for seventh- and eighth-graders. The three four-week courses are focused on forensics, biotechnology careers, and healthcare careers. The healthcare careers program begins in November; the forensics and biotechnology programs were held earlier this semester.

This summer, four students from the **School of Biotechnology** took part in internships to gain experience in real-world career fields. One intern analyzed MRI scans of monkey brains for the department of physiology and pharmacology at Wake Forest University School of Medicine. Two other students worked at Forsyth Medical Supply where they aided clients and took inventory, and a fourth student worked at multiple sites, including a dental office, Primecare and Novant Health.

Students from the schools of **Computer Technology** and **Biotechnology** are working with Wake Forest University to produce a three-minute animated video about molecular motors in cells. The project is funded by a \$50,000 grant from the N.C. Biotechnology Center.

Tevin Withers, a senior in the **School of Computer Technology**, spent part of his summer as an intern with Animusing Production, one of the business partners for the project with WFU.

The school also hosted a Bridge Academy in the summer, which provided opportunities for seventh- and eighth-graders to learn about the school and take part in challenging activities.

Rodney Bass joined the School of Computer Technology as its principal. He was previously a principal in Rowan County and a teacher and assistant principal for WSFCS.

A team from the **School of Pre-Engineering** will be entering the FIRST Tech Challenge for the second year in a row. Ten students will design, build and program a robot to compete head-to-head against other teams. Success in the competition requires using sound engineering principles.

The Winston-Salem Engineers Club provided money for the team to purchase infrared robotics equipment, and other people in the community have agreed to serve as mentors.

## DIGGS

### Diggs and Latham Create Single Vision

At the start of the 2010-2011 school year, the students and staff at Diggs and Latham elementary schools will share a campus, as well as a vision. The combined school will be named Diggs-Latham Elementary Magnet School for Arts and Global Studies.

Diggs-Latham will be located at 986 Hutton Street. A new building that includes a state-of-the-art auditorium will be constructed on the current Latham campus.

Over the past year, the staffs at both schools have worked together to unify the schools' current themes of Visual and Performing Arts, and Global Studies. Through the process, teachers have discussed how to make the themes of global learning and arts integration a vital part of every classroom.

Experiences such as music technology, theatre arts, dance, band, orchestra and art education will be integrated with the core curriculum at Diggs-Latham. Each grade level will study a specific country and highlight its contributions to the world during a Multicultural Fair held in June.

## HANES

### Fall Brings Focus on Math, Science

Hanes is offering two new clubs this school year: Scrabble and Junior Engineers. Earlier this semester, Project Lead the Way classes designed and raced air sliders, and eighth-grade English students took part in a school poetry slam.

In seventh-grade science, students will be studying the circulatory system, with help from

Dr. David Miller of Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center. Miller will visit Hanes with examples of human organs. In sixth-grade science, students are working with microscopes. Michele Poe came and talked with them about the importance of DNA and how it has changed the criminal justice system.

In October, Dr. Thomas Marshburn, a NASA astronaut, spoke with sixth-graders about his trip this summer to the International Space Station. As part of his visit, 40 students participated in a distance learning lesson on microgravity with the Johnson Space Center.

## HILL

### Arts and Culture Abound at Hill

Visual arts students from Hill were well represented at the recent Dixie Classic Fair. Work submitted for competition at the fair included glass pieces, silk scarves and several two-dimensional pieces. Janis Henderson is the visual arts teacher at Hill.

The school hosted a Hispanic Heritage Celebration in early October in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month. The day's events included guest speakers as well as Latin dance, music, art, singing, drama and food. The celebration coincided with studies in social studies and art about Latin culture.

Ingrid Medlock joined Hill as the school's new principal. She returns to Forsyth County from Durham, where she was the principal of an all-male middle school. Medlock was previously a principal and assistant principal for Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools and has worked as a theatre arts teacher.

## MINERAL SPRINGS ELEMENTARY

### After-School Clubs Make Learning Extra Fun

In the afternoons, Mineral Springs Elementary offers several fun and enriching opportunities for students to continue learning.

The school's Chess Club has more than 30 students and regularly participates in Winston-Salem Scholastic Chess Association (WSSCA) tournaments. One Mineral Springs student is nationally ranked in the United States Chess Federation. With the growing popularity of chess at the school, Mineral Springs hopes to host a WSSCA tournament in May.

This fall, Mineral Springs plans to start a new enrichment group called Quest Atlantis Enrichment Cluster. Quest Atlantis, an international learning and teaching project, uses a virtual environment to interest children in

research-based "quests" that require work both online and offline. More than 25,000 children on five continents have participated in quests that involve science, language arts and social studies.

The school's Synergy Theatre Ensemble is preparing for a winter performance of *The Secret Garden*. The ensemble is made up of students in grades 3, 4 and 5.

## MINERAL SPRINGS MIDDLE

### Fall Brings Good News, Collaborations

Mineral Springs Middle was recognized in October for making the third-highest increase in proficiency composites among all schools in the district.

The school is collaborating with Diggs and Reynolds on two projects that connect the arts across grade levels. Amanda Cook, the dance teacher at Mineral Springs Middle, is working with teacher Ashley Dashputre at Diggs



Visual arts class

to share lessons, schedule visits and coordinate a performance showcasing all arts offerings at both schools. The performance is scheduled for 10:45 a.m. on Nov. 20 in the Mineral Springs Middle School auditorium. The public is invited.

Students are also working on a film project with teenagers from Reynolds. Mineral Springs students are conducting video interviews with young alumni of the school who are now in the arts magnet program at Reynolds.

Kristen Klutz has joined the faculty as the school's visual arts teacher.

## PAISLEY

### International Festival Set for November 19

Paisley will host its sixth annual International Festival from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Nov. 19 in the school's gym.

This event will provide a great opportunity for students and parents to see the concept of international mindedness and intercultural awareness expressed in displays about different countries, presentations, and group and individual performances. A sampling of international foods will be offered.

This summer, Paisley students Hank Holzworth, Greg Peeler and Will Hackley worked together on a food drive to benefit Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina. The weeklong drive targeted one neighborhood in the city.

By the end of the week, the students and other volunteers had collected 4,000 pounds of food and \$1,100 in cash donations. The effort represented just one of the ways that Paisley students respond to the International Baccalaureate goal of helping young adults become global thinkers.

## PARKLAND

### Diploma Recipients Make Parkland Proud

Members of Parkland's class of 2009 who received International Baccalaureate diplomas are now in their first year of college, and the list of schools they are attending is impressive.

Those colleges and universities include Princeton University, Virginia Tech, UNC-Chapel Hill, N.C. State University, Wake Forest University, Georgia Tech, North Carolina School of the Arts, Philadelphia University and Appalachian State University. Two of the students were awarded Navy ROTC scholarships.

Students in the class of 2009 were the third group of Parkland seniors to take exams for the IB diploma. Of that group, 58 percent of students who took required IB exams earned IB diplomas.

The IB program dates to the League of Nations and was developed as a way of educating children from many different countries. It includes international literature, world languages and an understanding of international relations.

## PHILO

### Technology Is Building Cultural Bridges

Students and teachers at Philo are learning how technology builds connections between nations and cultures to make the world seem a bit smaller. Philo's magnet focus includes a Mandarin Chinese language immersion program, global technology, and international business and world cultures.

In the school's third year as a magnet, Philo teachers are continuing to find innovative ways to integrate technology into the curriculum using interactive whiteboards, computer carts with laptops, and computerized handheld "slates."

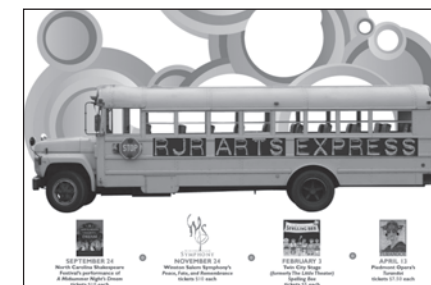
The school is highlighting a different global theme each month, and tying them to community service projects that make the world and our community better places to live.

The school will hold "Faces of Philo," a multicultural celebration, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 19. The public is invited to attend to learn more about Philo and the many cultures represented among the school's students and staff.

## REYNOLDS

### Students Bring on the Bard

In September, more than 60 "Arts for Academics" students boarded buses and headed to High Point for the first of four off-campus field trips made possible through collaborations with arts groups.



The Arts Express program at Reynolds will allow students to attend performances for reduced prices at the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival (NCSF), Winston-Salem Symphony, Twin City Stage, and Piedmont Opera during the 2009-10 school year.

At the Shakespeare Festival in High Point, students enjoyed a professional performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Students will have the opportunity to work with the NCSF in the spring during a weeklong residency at Reynolds. Teachers and students will have workshops with the actors and participate in performances in the school's Black Box Theatre.

## WINSTON-SALEM PREPARATORY ACADEMY

### Rites of Passage Planned for Sixth-Graders

In November, WSPA will begin a "rites of passage" program to teach sixth-graders some of the essential skills they will need for success in high school and college.

The program will begin with a class assembly featuring a speaker from the local bar association and a speech by WSPA's senior class president. Sixth-graders will recite a commitment pledge, and 12th-graders at the school will pass a torch to the younger students as they prepare for a successful future at WSPA. Parents and the public are invited to the ceremony.

During the school year, each sixth-grader will participate in a "Training for Transition" group that will include lessons about social skills, self respect, responsibility, self determination and the dangers of bullying and negative peer pressure. The groups are divided by gender.

WSPA plans for its "rites of passage" program to become an annual effort.