

# Teamwork and dedication key to moving forward

By Charles Mattox  
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Superintendent of Nicholas County Schools Greg Reid, who has held that position for the past 11 years, praised the staff members of the Nicholas County High School for their dedication and teamwork on improving all areas of the school.

"They all step up and work very hard while maintaining a high level of professionalism," he said.

Reid said all faculty and staff are focused on raising the Commonwealth's Accountability Tests (CATs) performance and they are working toward the goal of raising CAT scores without complaint, according to Reid. "We have very strong teamwork within our school system," he said.

Reid said one of the greatest challenges the schools face is staying within budget. "We've always had a very strong financial security and we haven't had to have any lay offs. Unfunded state mandates continue to make that more challenging but we have always taken care of the financial strengths of the schools."

Reid said with 21 buses on the road it was necessary to increase the transportation budget this year an additional \$30,000 to offset the increasing costs of diesel.

Reid said he believes the best part of the school system is the "small school concept."

"People can walk into our office and we can have a good conversation about their concerns regardless if they are expressing a good opinion about the school or a bad one."

The future hold facility construction if budget restraints do not get in the way.

"We are looking at building a new gym in the future and that will be a nice improvement."

ment. Plus we have excellent leadership," he said.

One of the key leaders within school system is Shawn Parrish, principal of the Nicholas County Grade School and Middle School.

Parrish has been the principal at the school for the past four years and has been involved in education for the past 22 years. He is dedicated to helping guide the staff to be more productive in order to assist all students.

"It takes all of us to make the building function," he said. "One of the long-range attributes is moving the pre-school program to the grade school. I think that was a very positive move."

Parrish said communication between teachers and staff is constantly being improved to help benefit students that might be struggling with a particular subject.

"Everyone can learn, our challenge can often be how to help them learn," Parrish said he is lucky to have many experienced teachers with tenure at the school and applauded their willingness to work together to implement any needed changes to help the students grow.

"Everyone also has a willingness to be creative in the way they instruct their students."

Parrish said he encourages parents and legal guardians of all students to spend more time with the children and become involved in the educational process at Nicholas County.

"I encourage everyone to call and express any concerns or ask any questions that they might have," he said.

Anne Poe, assistant principal at Nicholas County High School, has been the assistant principal for three years and has been involved in education for 33 years.

She works very closely with Principal Joe Drasen, who

was out of the office taking care of an ill child while his wife is expected to deliver another one any moment.

"It's an honor to work with Mr. Drasen," Poe said. "Joe is a natural leader and, as a young principal, I am very impressed with his knowledge and leadership skills."

Poe said all staff members, just like the students are held accountable.

"We don't assign grades to our students, we only award to what the students have earned," she said. "I think we have a very friendly student population and we have a very positive atmosphere for all of students to learn in."

Poe also discussed the staff. "Our staff and teachers are very friendly and are a very hard-working group focused on improving all aspects of the school."

Food service manager Lisa Sexton, at the high school and food service manager Priscilla Barbee at the grade school discussed the challenges of providing nutritional meals for students and staff each day.

Both agreed they could not do so without a dedicated and talented staff. Family Resource Director Paula Hunter, her assistant Marilyn Bond and social worker Susan Flowers are dedicated to assisting students with many of the basic needs to assist in the educational process.

"The need continues to grow and we appreciate all of the help citizens in the community have provided for our students," she said. There are many worthy programs at the school that can be enhanced by participation of parents and citizens alike. To find out how you can make a lasting positive impact on the life of a student contact the board office today at 289-3770.



## Football Season Wraps up with a Banquet

By Melissa Mitchell  
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The Nicholas County Football players, coaches and parents will be wrapping up their season with a banquet on Sun. Dec. 14 at the high school.

The Bluejackets finished the season 3-7. Coach Robert Hopkins said of the disappointing season there is no blame.

"The kids did what was expected of them during the season. The team played better at the end of the year, but due to injuries the season was not what we were hoping for."

"We lost confidence after Jordan Mynear got hurt. The injuries that were sustained this year during the season really hurt us."

Coch Hopkins said next year the team will be much younger.

"We will be on the young side in the 2009 season, but we will put forward all of our strengths and ability to make the next season a good one."

The 2008 team consisted of 16 seniors; this is the second biggest set of seniors that has played on the team since 1978, which consisted of 22 seniors.

The seniors that will be recognized at the banquet are: Shane Sweet, Andy McCarty, Tyler Hunt, Jordan Mynear, Brandon Pric, Jacob Frederick, Jim Conyers, Brandon Tolson, Justin Little, Seth Haney, Cade Gilliland, John Tobin, David Miles, and Philippe Murphy.

"The senior class was a great bunch of kids to work with. They have played together since middle school. They will definitely be missed," Hopkins said.

All-EKCC team awards went to Tyler Hunt, Andy McCarty, and Jacob Frederick.

Second team was awarded to Cody Barnett, Cade Gilliland, and Justin Little. Honorable mention awards went to Jim Conyers, John Tobin, Shane Sweet, Steven Tolson and David Miles. All District went to Andy McCarty, Tyler Hunt, and Cade Gilliland.

The Jackets opened the season with a win over West Carter at home claiming a 26-20 win. With injuries already costing some players playing time Nicholas County didn't win again until a solid, 41-21 on the road at Pendleton County.

The jackets picked up their third win of the season two weeks later with a 63-13 win at Beckley County.

Coch Hopkins said there will be some changes in next year's schedule as the Jacket coach and school athletic director worked to pick up other conference games.



Megan Couch

## Student Focus

I would like to nominate Megan Couch for the Student Spotlight Showcase based on her hard work and dedication in my English 11 class. Megan not only has one of the highest grades in my class, but she always comes to class with a smile, anxious and ready to learn.

Megan deserves this recognition because of her hard work and determination. This year, I have seen Megan go over and

above all that is expected of her on several occasions. She seems to set the bar even higher than I do and faces each assignment with a determination to succeed. Her creativity and energy can be seen in any of the projects she has completed in my class and these are things I hope she will continue to carry with her throughout life. Her dedication, hard work, and determination will serve her well for the rest of her high school career, into college, and beyond!

Ms. Patricia McKenry

## Confidence Greatly Appreciated

- Elaine Hendricks -

The teacher and/or staff member in Nicholas County High School that I feel has helped me the most and has been a big support to my education is Mrs. Melissa Plank. She has contributed to a tremendous amount of improvement in my math skills and my math grades. My grades in math went from a very low D to a very high B.

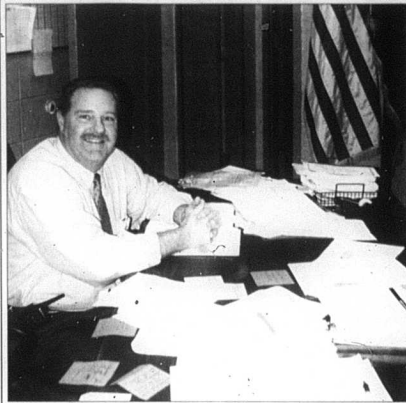
"She has helped me by being patient and taking time for tutoring. She has explained the problems in math that were hard for me and now I understand to a level of full comprehension and understanding. She always has a good attitude and a pleasant smile on her face. She is a great teacher and because of her, I am more confident when taking a math test."

Her greatest strength is making sure each one of her students is involved and able to understand and complete the objective successfully. She does this by calling on students to solve a problem on the board, and by making sure no student is left behind (even those that are not-so-willing to learn). I think Mrs. Plank is one of many great teachers at Nicholas County High School. I think her for being such a big help and support, and encouragement in my education.

When I went to Bourbon County High School, I had to take a Ramp Up math class, a class for mathematically challenged students, but even in that class, math was difficult for me to understand. When I came to Nicholas County High School in November of last year, I feared I would fail math, but thanks to Mrs. Plank, I am passing with a B+.

She always told me that achieving good grades in math would be easy for me, but of course, I didn't believe her. She had the confidence in me when I didn't have any in myself. I think she is very easy to get along with, as well as encouraging. She always has a good attitude and a pleasant smile on her face. She is a great teacher and because of her, I am more confident when taking a math test."

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NCEMS Principal Shawn Parrish



NCEMS Cafeteria Staff

L-R: Mildred "Sissy" Jolly, Javonia Smith, Faye Ring, Priscilla Barbee, Kathy Fisher and Ethel McCall.

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