‘Principal for a Day’

Education reporter takes the helm at Braxton Craven

A WELCOME SIGN — Braxton Craven welcomes The Courier-Tribune reporter, Terrence Jeffries, with a message on the entrance sign on Nov. 13.

By Terrence Jeffries

TRINITY — On Tuesday, Nov. 13, I had the pleasure of serving as ‘Principal for a Day’ at Braxton Craven Middle School (BCMS). I shadowed Braxton Craven’s principal, Dr. David Cross, who was very professional, courteous and polite. I can also say the same for the staff at the school.

For the moment I drove into the entrance, I felt welcomed. In big letters on the school sign out front were the words, ‘Principal for a Day, Terrence Jeffries,’ which I greatly appreciated. I felt that same warmth from the moment I stepped through the door.

Unlike ordinary middle schools which generally serve sixth through eighth grades, Braxton Craven serves only the sixth grade. Students come from the Archdale-Trinity area, through five feeder schools — Archdale, Hopewell, John Lawrence, Trindale and Trinity elementary schools. When students leave BCMS, they complete their middle school years at Archdale-Trinity Middle School.

Since I was to be a Principal For A Day (PFAD), I sat down with Cross to go over the in’s and out’s of being a principal, essentially, and his day-to-day duties. I got here between 7:15-7:25, walk in, check in with teachers, make sure my presence is known.

On the campus before the school day gets going,” he explained, about his typical morning schedule: ’At 7:55, I do the announcements, do the pledge of allegiance, get them hyped up, and try to get them to be energetic as much as I can. At 8:03, the school day typically begins.’

What makes a good principal? Being “extremely flexible and ‘able to balance their calendars’ are good skills to have.”

From my brief interview with Cross and from his interactions with students and staff, he definitely enjoys his position. “I get paid to have a great time all the time. Days do get stressful, but I have a very rewarding job,” he said. “Here, we have a great school and great teachers who have great students.”

In addition to spending time with Cross, I also sat in on a few classes.

Chris Ferguson, band director at Braxton Craven, insisted I assist his Band Class by playing the triangle, not once, but twice. I observed Kerry Loewen’s Art Class shade and draw a sphere, and I was able to see the various paper mache projects students have created.

What is Principal for a Day?

The Principal for a Day (PFAD) program is an initiative of the Asheboro-Randolph Chamber of Commerce’s Business and Education Committee. It began in 2014.

According to a press release sent by Tim Moody, Public Information Officer of the Randolph County School System (RCSS), “The PFAD program is designed to increase awareness and understanding in the business community of the strengths and challenges of our schools, as well as form ongoing partnerships and collaboration between schools and local businesses.”

Both RCSS and Asheboro City Schools (ACS) have hosted PFAD guests over the past five years. Between both school systems, 15-20 schools host a PFAD guest each year.

This year, RCSS welcomed PFAD participants from Nov. 13-16 and had 11 guests listed as participants with the RCSS program. ACS is expected to hold its version sometime after Thanksgiving.

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Principal

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Jennifer Watson, who is in her fourth year as a math teacher at BCMS, shared her teaching experience and why she enjoys being a teacher. She previously worked as a first grade teacher at Randleman Elementary for 10 years and at Guilford Elementary for two years.

Her favorite part of teaching: “When you see a kid struggle, and they finally get that ‘aha!’ moment, and you see a light bulb go off.”

Throughout the day, I received waves and hellos from different students and many “nice to meet you’s” from staff.

All in all, I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Braxton Craven Middle School, and I thank everyone at BCMS for providing me with such a warm welcome.