



From left, Vann Blake, president of the N.C. Principals' and Assistant Principals' Association, and Fred Bartholomew, after accepting the Trailblazer award.

Bartholomew named NCASA Trailblazer

The North Carolina Association of School Administrators, or NCASA, has recognized Johnston County Board of Education member Fred Bartholomew as an NCASA Trailblazer.

The award was presented at the organization's annual awards program that concluded its Annual Conference held March 12-14 at the Sheraton Four Seasons/Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. The program is held to highlight school leadership and innovation and excellence in education in North Carolina's public schools.

"Our awards program is an annual celebration of the best and brightest in North Carolina's public schools," said Bill McNeal, NCASA's Executive Director. "The awards we presented today are for accomplishments that have not been highlighted previously but are worthy of recognition and celebration."

Bartholomew was nominated by the North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals Association. He retired from the Johnston County Schools as principal of Princeton School, serving the system for more than 30 years. He also served as chairman of the Board of Education for five years.

During his tenure as chairman of the Johnston County Board of Education, he played an instrumental role in ensuring that the district's construction program forged ahead, leading the cause for a successful \$89 million

bond referendum in 2005 and another totaling \$99 million in 2007.

It was during this time that the district earned status as one of only nine fully accredited school districts in North Carolina, one of only 57 in the United States, and one of only 75 in the world.

Holding the gavel for a school district that has more than doubled in size from 14,000 students in 1994 to nearly 31,000 students in 2008, Bartholomew has defended teacher raises, supplements for public education employees and expanded budgets since taking a seat on the board. Supplements for beginning teachers have increased from 6 percent to 6.5 percent during his tenure, and his vote of approval was key to providing signing bonuses for teachers in high demand subjects such as Exceptional Children, math and science.

Keeping in mind the need to retain good teachers, he also championed mentor programs for teachers.

The awards program featured NCASA Trailblazer Awards in three categories: school districts, schools and individuals. Six individual school administrators were honored at the NCASA Awards Program as Individual Trailblazers. The individuals were selected by one of the 12 school administrator organizations affiliated with NCASA, and they represent several of the different facets of school leadership that are a part of the NCASA membership.