

THE HEAD of CLASS
PROJECT

*Achieving academic goals,
enhancing student performance.*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Education leaders and Lee County Education Foundation
announce The Head of Class Project**

Incentive award to support Lee County students, rewards entire school

SANFORD, N.C.—Aug. 26, 2010— National leaders in education policy assembled in Sanford today to announce The Lee County Education Foundation’s non-profit initiative supporting incentive-based school achievement. The Lee County Education Foundation announced the creation of The Head of Class Project, its flagship public-private partnership.

A distinguished group of current and former leaders – including Gov. Beverly Perdue, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. June Atkinson, Chairman of the State Board of Education Dr. Bill Harrison, former N.C. governors Jim Hunt and Jim Holshouser as well as former U.S. Education Secretary Richard Riley – attended the event at Deep River Elementary School in Sanford.

The project will award \$50,000 annually to the faculty and staff of the best performing elementary school in Lee County. The unique, incentive-based model is the first of its kind in North Carolina and could be considered as a model program nationwide.

The Lee County Education Foundation has generated a \$1 million endowment supported by non-tax dollars – individual donors and corporations big and small have played a part – to fund The Head of Class Project award. The award, which will be named through a student contest this fall, will reinforce the hard work necessary to improve the academic performance of Lee County students as measured by the annual testing by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. One elementary school will be honored at the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year. Each employee of the winning school – principal, teachers, teacher assistants, librarians, custodians, etc. – will receive a portion of the award.

“This innovative award is an objective program encouraging teamwork and rewarding the extra effort our faculty and staff give our students each day,” said Kirk J. Bradley, chairman of the Lee County Education Foundation. “We’re excited to see the impact it makes in Lee County and look forward to increasing the amount of the award and spreading it to the entire K-12 faculty of Lee County Schools in the future.” The elementary schools were chosen given that the direct teacher/student alignment is closest in K-5.

State and national education leaders voiced their support for The Head of the Class Project at today’s press conference.

“Innovation is at the heart of education improvement and the work of the Lee County leaders reflect this drive to create new incentives and new models for high achievement,” said former North Carolina Gov. James B. Hunt. “North Carolina will be enjoying the rewards of this effort for many years to come.”

“Local leaders will be the drivers of change and improvement in North Carolina schools,” said former North Carolina Gov. James E. Holshouser. “This Lee County effort is a remarkable reflection of the community’s willingness to create excellence in education.”

Click below to download a hi-res JPEG image of The Head of Class Project logo:

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About The Lee County Education Foundation

The Lee County Education Foundation (LCEF), founded in 2003, is a non-profit 501(c)3 entity dedicated to supporting excellence in the Lee County Public Schools. The mission of the Foundation is to mobilize financial resources and fund programs that are highly likely to improve Lee County student achievement. Since its inception the LCEF has funded over \$200,000 of programs at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Lee County public school teachers and students in grades K-12 have benefited from reading, math, social studies, science and career related programs as a direct result of LCEF disbursements. To learn more, please visit www.leecef.com.

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