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Recommended Citation

Office of University Communications, "Gardner-Webb School of Education Motivated Alumna to Exceed N.C. Standards" (2017). *Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive*. 575.
<https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive/575>

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webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/gardner-webb-school-of-education-motivated-alumna-to-exceed-n-c-standards/

Office of University
Communications

August 31, 2017

Skylar Elton '17 Ready to Collaborate with Others and Teach Engaging Lessons

Skylar Elton was 12 years old the first time she taught a group of younger children in Sunday school. From that beginning, the

Skylar Elton's classroom

2017 graduate of Gardner-Webb University took advantage of every opportunity she was offered to teach. "I was lucky enough to know from a very early age that a career in education was God's calling for me," Elton reflected. "My love for school and my passion for education only grew as I went through the public school system in Rutherford County, N.C. I love to learn and most importantly, I love to help other people learn. I had teachers who saw my love for education and helping others, and they helped to foster my passion."

Elton was hired to teach third grade at Harris (N.C.) Elementary shortly after receiving her degree from GWU in elementary education with a minor in professional education. Professors in the GWU School of Education not only prepared her to teach the content, but also gave her knowledge about how she would be evaluated as a professional. During new teacher orientation in her school district, the group was shown the teacher evaluation rubric that principals would use to determine effectiveness in the classroom.

"I was not only familiar with the rubric, but I have already been evaluated on the same rubric by the professors at GWU,"

Skylar Elton with her students

Elton shared. "As I watched everyone else in the room and was able to help the others around me understand the rubric, it really hit me how thankful I am for Gardner-Webb and the School of Education. I can step into my first year as a teacher already knowing how I will be evaluated and that I can meet and exceed North Carolina's standards, because that is the standard the School of Education held me to and made sure I met."

Through coursework and clinicals, her GWU professors presented real-world situations that new teachers often face. Two professors offered encouragement throughout her GWU experience and were available to answer her questions. She also knows that she can call them anytime to ask for guidance as a new teacher. "Dr. Jason Parker and Dr. Kelly Clark started with me on my journey and never once gave up on me," Elton stated. "In their classes I learned to collaborate with other professionals and to teach lessons that are engaging and challenging. I also learned how to break down the North Carolina Standard

Course of Study (which is what I am teaching now) in a way that allows me to see what students really need to know and how I can get them there. I am confident that information is helping me every day and helping my students.”