

Kim Stefansson  
Escambia County School District  
Public Relations Coordinator  
[kstefansson@ecsdfi.us](mailto:kstefansson@ecsdfi.us)  
850-393-0539 (Cell)

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **ECSD (FL) January School Board Meeting News**

During the Jan. 19, 2021, Regular Meeting of the Escambia County School Board, the Stellar Employee of the Month for January was honored and the Board adopted three resolutions.

The announcements and acceptance comments can be seen here:

<http://escambiacountysdfi.swagit.com/play/01192021-1262>

**January 2021 Stellar Employee of the Month:** The Stellar Employee for the Month of January is Cathy Finch, the administrative clerk at Bellview Elementary School for three (3) years and the face of Bellview Elementary School. After serving as a teacher's assistant where each day she went above and beyond for the students and teachers she worked with, she was promoted to the position of admin clerk in the front office. Finch has been described as a humble, patient and dedicated employee who makes it her daily duty to make every person's day just a little bit better. She actively listens to make sure she understands, seeks solutions to problems, and stops at nothing to give "Stellar" customer service to parents, students, teachers and community members. In an extremely busy office with telephones ringing, families registering students, and the general hustle and bustle of an elementary school front office, Finch is never too busy to make others know she cares for them and they are important to her. It is not uncommon to see her taking down copious notes when she is on the phone or interacting with a parent, demonstrating her desire to meet every person's needs thoroughly and accurately. Mrs. Finch pays attention to detail and has implemented systems to ensure Bellview Elementary's front office operates smoothly and remains organized. Students often stop by and visit and drop off sweet pictures they drew especially for her. It is not uncommon to find her engaging with students one-on-one, and she loves to walk students to class – making them feel special and putting parents at ease knowing their student will arrive safely and promptly to class. Finch is also a thoughtful co-worker, often writing encouraging notes to staff members as recognizing special days and events. Mrs. Finch demonstrates by action that her excellent customer service and perhaps even a little southern hospitality still exist today. Bellview Elementary is proud to call Cathy Finch a Bellview Eagle and their very own Stellar Employee. She is stellar because of her excellent work ethic and dedication to the staff and students throughout the Escambia County School

District. She exemplifies the pillars of “people” and “service” and it is for these reasons, and so many others, that she has been selected as ECSD’s Stellar Employee of the Month of January 2021. She received a plaque, a pin, and a check for \$100 from Members First Credit Union.

**National FFA Week 2021 Resolution:** The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, recognized and commended Escambia County FFA Organization members, their advisors, school administrators, parents, and all who support, promote, and encourage these students of agricultural education as they celebrate the observance of National FFA Week, February 20-27, 2021. The National FFA Organization, formerly known as the Future Farmers of America, is an organization of more than seven hundred thousand students studying agriculture. They are dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of young people by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education at the local, state, and national level. Nationally more than seventy-five percent of FFA members enroll in a two-year or four-year program of higher education following graduation from high school in preparation for one of the more than three hundred career opportunities in agriculture, which include more than eight thousand job titles. Florida agriculture represents a two hundred twenty-billion-dollar industry within the State of Florida and serves as an economic engine for the state economy, while nationally, agriculture employs over eleven percent of the national workforce. The FFA motto, “Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, and Living to Serve” epitomizes those high standards and qualities of leadership possessed by FFA members. The Escambia County FFA and the agriscience education programs in the Escambia County School District are tremendously successful and extremely valuable in improving the quality of life for Escambia County citizens.

**Career and Technical Education Month Resolution:** The School Board of Escambia County, Florida does hereby observe the month of February, 2021, as Career and Technical Education Month. Profound economic and technological changes require workers who are trained in skilled professions. Career and technical education ensures that competitive and skilled workers are ready, willing, and capable of performing in high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand career fields. The efforts of career and technical educators, businesses, and industry stimulate the growth and vitality of our local, state, and national economies by preparing graduates for careers that are forecast to experience the largest and fastest growth in the next decade. Career and technical education provides students with a school-to-career connection, helping students experience practical and meaningful applications of a variety of skills. Sixty-six percent of Escambia County School District middle school students and sixty-six percent of high school students are enrolled in a career academy; and six hundred eighty-nine students are enrolled in George Stone Technical College for adult education and career certificate programs.

Steve Harrell, Director, ECSD Workforce Education accepted both the National FFA Week 2021 Resolution and the Career and Technical Education Month Resolution.

**Celebrate Literacy Week Proclamation names first Escambia Literacy**

**Ambassador:** Mr. Sandy Sansing has been a dedicated advocate for student achievement and success through his myriad sponsorship efforts; and his deep commitment to the entire educational community is evidenced by his extensive service and participation in numerous endeavors, including Cram the Van, the Golden Apple Awards, and Take Stock in Children Scholarships; and Sansing has sponsored the Sandy Sansing Spelling Bee for more than four decades, awarding thousands of dollars in prizes to deserving students and championing classroom literacy. He has provided on-going support of public education which has helped the Escambia County School District succeed in its mission to provide an environment that creates opportunities for all students to achieve their highest potential while building a foundation for continuous learning. Escambia County School District will observe Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida, during the week of January 25-29, 2021. Because spelling knowledge facilitates reading and writing, the Escambia County School District designates January 27, 2021 as “Words that Wow Wednesday.” Escambia County schools will host spelling bees this year at their schools, commemorating Sandy Sansing’s 45th year of continued support and commitment to literacy. The School Board publicly recognized, thanked, and commended Mr. Sandy Sansing for his long-standing initiatives aligned to strengthen student literacy in Escambia County and the surrounding areas and declared him the first “Escambia Literacy Ambassador.” He will formally receive a copy of the proclamation at next month’s School Board meeting. An additional copy was presented this month to Lisa Marsh, English Language Arts Specialist and Jessica Rowell, English Language Arts Specialist. (The proclamation was included this month to align with the timing of Literacy Week, Jan. 25-29.)

Photos from the Board meeting will be posted on Facebook on the page – Escambia Schools Public Relations. Video of the presentations and acceptance comments can be watched along with the rest of the meeting can be watched on the Board Meeting Information page, <http://escambiacountysdfl.swagit.com/play/01192021-1262>; the ECSD YouTube page, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TumhfataZTc>; or on Facebook on the page, Escambia County School District or Escambia Schools Public Relations.

Media queries about Escambia County School District topics should be directed to Kim Stefansson, at 850-469-6219, [kstefansson@ecsdfi.us](mailto:kstefansson@ecsdfi.us)

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Visit ECSD’s web page at [www.escambiaschools.org](http://www.escambiaschools.org)

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