



NEWS RELEASE

Contact:

Lindsay Whitley, Ed.D.
Associate Superintendent
Communications & Community Engagement
Cumberland County Schools
Email: lindsaywhitley@ccs.k12.nc.us

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Cumberland County Schools Indian Education Honors Class of 2022 Graduates

CCS students receive significant cultural recognition of achievement

Fayetteville, N.C. – On Thursday, May 5, 2022, at 6:00 p.m., Cumberland County Schools (CCS) and the Office of Indian Education (OIE) hosted an Eagle Feather Ceremony at Gray’s Creek High School for 78 bright and hard-working American Indian high school seniors who will be graduating within the next month.

“Eagle feathers are a prominent symbol of the culture and history of Native Americans,” said CCS OIE Coordinator Rodney Jackson. “Today, eagle feathers mark modern-day milestones, and the award of an eagle feather is of great significance.”

This Eagle Feather Ceremony is the first of its kind by any public school in the state of North Carolina. CCS is proud of the district’s unique and diverse community. The 78 seniors who were honored at the ceremony represent the following distinct tribes:

- Blackfoot Tribe
- Cherokee Tribe
- Coharie Tribe
- Colorado River
- Hopi Tribe
- Lumbee Tribe
- Navajo Tribe
- Osage Tribe
- Tlingit Tribe of Alaska

“We are so proud of these students for honoring their cultural heritage and earning their Eagle Feathers, an important symbol of achievement,” said CCS Superintendent Dr. Marvin Connelly, Jr.

Family members were able to attend the event in-person and the ceremony

was live-streamed for the public on the district's YouTube channel. War Paint, drum circle musicians from the Lumbee Tribe, performed throughout the ceremony.

After the presentation of the feathers, Timothy Sampson, the director of Financial Aid and Scholarships at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP), presented \$1000 scholarships to eight students on behalf of UNCP Chancellor Dr. Robin Cummings. These scholarships will cover one year of in-state tuition at UNCP, an 'NC Promise' school.

To view a full album of high-resolution images from the event, click [here](#).

To watch the recorded video of the live-streamed event, click [here](#).

To learn more about the CCS Office of Indian Education and how the district is committed to providing equitable access to engaging learning for every student, visit the district's [main website](#) and [OIE website](#).



The American Indian Seniors of the Class of 2022 pose for a photograph before the Eagle Feather Ceremony at Gray's Creek High School on Thursday, May 5, 2022.



The CCS Office of Indian Education team poses for a photograph after the conclusion of the Eagle Feather Ceremony.



Our Commitment: Every Student
Collaborative * Competitive * Successful

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