

# School Leaders Give EMU High Marks



*Don Ford*

**SUPERINTENDENT  
HARRISONBURG CITY SCHOOLS**

I would give a “5” (out of 5) to the graduates of EMU that we have hired in Harrisonburg. The faculty is talented and in touch with what the students need to both know and do to be successful teachers. Further, having graduated from a small college, I know that there are distinct advantages in being educated in a school like EMU that offers small class sizes, high expectations, and a family-like atmosphere.



*Vermell Belton Grant*

**ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT  
WAYNESBORO CITY SCHOOLS**

I majored in elementary education at EMU, graduating in 1973. I felt well-equipped when I first entered the classroom and solidly prepared for graduate school later. As I meet other education graduates from EMU, I’ve become assured that EMU continues to provide exceptional preparation, with a well-refined mix of pedagogy, course content, and field-based practice. The first cohort of Waynesboro City teachers will graduate from EMU this spring after earning an MA in education, with an emphasis in reading. The results of this partnership experience will strengthen our K-12 instructional program in many aspects for years to come.



*Sarah Armstrong*

**ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT  
STAUNTON CITY SCHOOLS**

In conversations with principals who interview candidates for prospective teaching positions, EMU graduates rank as a “5” (out of 5) in preparation and attitude. The EMU program is distinctive in its emphasis on teaching students, rather than covering content. We have used EMU instructors because they encourage teachers and prospective teachers to look through lenses that consider the whole child and ask questions such as “What does the child know now? What are barriers to this child’s success? How can we develop learning experiences that help this student be successful?” These powerful questions ask teachers to put the learner first – not the test.



*Bill Sprinkel*

**GENERAL SUPERVISOR OF INSTRUCTION  
ROCKINGHAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

EMU’s education program is particularly effective for a couple of reasons: The culture that pervades the education department instills in its students that teaching is more than a job. It becomes a “mission of serving” in a teacher’s life. Secondly, the program is set up so that students who do not acquire beginning level teaching skills or professional attributes do not make it through the program and are counseled toward another avenue of life’s calling. During my 35 years as a teacher and school administrator, I have found teachers from EMU’s program to be among the best prepared and most dedicated.