

## SCHOOL NURSE SECURES LIFESAVING DEVICE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLS

HICKORY, NC – Two Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) were presented to Grandview Middle School and Northview Middle School at a basketball game between the two rivals on January 24.

The AEDs were made possible through efforts of Catawba County Public Health school nurse Virginia Beisler, MS, RN. Beisler worked with Frye Regional Medical Center and each school's booster and PTA clubs to raise the \$3,200 necessary to purchase the AEDs.

"Only twenty-seven percent of schools in Catawba County have AEDs," said Beisler.

"My goal is to raise awareness about the importance of having AEDs at schools and to encourage other PTAs to consider raising funds for these lifesaving devices in their schools."

According to the American Heart Association, sudden cardiac arrest is a leading cause of death in the United States and accounts for more than 295,000 deaths each year. The Association also states that a victim's chance of survival decreases by 7 to 10 percent for every minute that passes without defibrillation. Having an AED nearby can mean the difference between life and death.

Although sudden cardiac arrest is more likely to occur in adults, children are also at risk, especially if they participate in sports. In addition, schools are often a community gathering place for individuals of all ages who may also benefit from an on-site AED.

To ensure the successful use of the new devices, Beisler has trained each school's Medical Emergency Response Team on CPR and how to use an AED. She also provided AED training to students from each school's Beta Club and Student Council.

Located off Fairgrove Church Road behind Catawba Valley Medical Center in Hickory, N.C., Catawba County Public Health provides health and education services to eligible men, women, and children in the community. For more information, please call (828) 695-5800 or visit [www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth](http://www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth).



**(L-R): Dr. Denise Patterson, chief academic officer, Hickory Public Schools; Stephanie Dischiavi, principal, Northview Middle School; Dr. Vanessa Howerton, principal, Grandview Middle School; Virginia Beisler, MS, RN, school nurse, Catawba County Public Health; Gar Atchison, director of business development, Frye Regional Medical Center; and Kristin Arditti, physician liaison, Frye Regional Medical Center.**

*"Leading the Way to a Healthier Community"*