

Lanier Elementary School is an icon in Blount County. There aren't many schools that are still in operation that have celebrated their 100th birthday, and, might I add, are still going strong. Lanier's roots are settled deep in the beautiful Tennessee countryside, and our staff and students' roots run deep here as well. Quite a few of our staff went to school at Lanier during its days as a high school and elementary school. Many of our students are 3rd, 4th, and even 5th generation students. My own mother-in-law was Miss Lanier 1972. As you can see, Lanier is not just a building, but a way of life for many. So come along with me, and let's take a look back at the history of our beloved school.

Lanier was named after Sidney Lanier, a poet, and was built in 1922 as a consolidation of Woods and Williamson

schools. Lanier's original structure was a four room brick school with an auditorium. This early version of Lanier was a two-year high school. In 1928, Lanier became a four-year high school when Carpenters High School closed. In the fall of 1931, the school board decided to consolidate Four Mile School with Lanier. With another school consolidated and Lanier High School continuing to grow, parents and staff began to stress the need for another building for elementary students. During the 1932-1933 school year, another structure, this time white frame, was built for the elementary school. There were now four teachers at Lanier. By the time the fall of 1936 came around, the upper grades moved into a recently finished high-school building. As the years passed, Lanier's physical structure continued to grow and

change as the needs of the population grew.

In the fall of 1979, Lanier High School and two other local high schools consolidated with William Blount, a newly built high school. Lanier had begun its new life as an elementary school. As Lanier transitioned into an elementary school, fifteen classrooms were built, while ten current classrooms, the auditorium, and the gym were renovated.

In September 2022, Lanier Elementary celebrated its 100th birthday. At the time of this writing, our current principal, Dr. Teresa Robinson, will be retiring at the end of December. We have 350 students, 27 teachers (including specials, resource, and an interventionist), 14 instructional assistants, 3 custodians, 5 cafeteria staff, 1 speech pathologist, 1 nurse, 1 secretary, 1

bookkeeper, 1 SRO, 1 school psychologist, and 4 Friends staff (including Mrs. Jill, the director).

Lanier has seen many changes over the last 100 years, from staff and students to music and clothes to politics and world events. However, one thing has remained the same, Lanier is not just a school, but a place for her students and staff to feel welcomed and loved. To sum it all up, Lanier is home.

Mrs. Courtney Bailey