[](https://gazette.com/pikespeakcourier/letters-to-the-editor-june-2-2021/article_2e1e7206-bb3d-11eb-84d5-436571a04308.html)

 **June 2, 2021**

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**MERIT ACADEMY ANSWERS THE CALL**

When community members rallied around the thought of Merit Academy in Teller County, they had no idea how much interest and support it would have.

After years of seeking additional local options for education, many parents have joined the Merit Bears family, just as the Boyingtons have done. “We were thrilled to hear that our son got into Merit Academy. People have called out for this for years, and it’s Merit Academy who answered that call,” said Ashley Boyington, mom of an incoming sixth-grader.

Most of the staff have been selected and are ready to start this new journey. “There is an amazing outreach from subject matter experts joining Merit Academy’s vision and mission,” expressed LTC (Ret) John Dill, one of Merit’s Founders, “we have an incredible, highly qualified team.”

When asked about her decision to become a Merit Bear, Merit’s music and vocal teacher, Tiffany Basnett noted, “I am thrilled to have yet another phenomenal choice of education for our children through Merit Academy! It is an honor and a privilege to be a founding staff member and parent for, what I believe to be, one of the most essential developments in Teller County.”

Merit Academy is a classical, Core Knowledge, public, tuition-free, contract school led by local parents, experts, and community members. Within two weeks of opening enrollment, Merit Academy is near capacity for year one, with approximately 180 students enrolled K-8 at one class per grade. There are a few seats available in grades 3, 7, and 8 and those grades are filling quickly. The remaining grades have waitlists.

Over the next five years, Merit Academy will grow to allow two classes per grade, K-12. The first graduating class will be the class of 2026.

The Homeschool Enrichment program is also filling quickly. Merit has embraced regional homeschoolers from the onset. The academy will provide a 9th/10th learning lab and include the Merit Homeschoolers in Friday’s house program, the Civil Air Patrol, or other various enhancements.

Founding members, staff, students, families and friends are excited to meet one another and celebrate this local educational option. The first meeting will take place in early June, with additional meet-and-greets scheduled over the summer.

For more information, see [https://merit.academy](https://www.merit.academy/).