



Photos by Todd Luck

Compassionate Winston-Salem's Dean Clifford tells students about the Compassion Corner as Sedge Garden Principal Ramona Warren looks on.

(Left) Sedge Garden students pose with their school's new Compassion Corner.

Elementary school gains place of compassion

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

Students or adults who are sad can sit on a seat to signal for others to come over to try to cheer them up after a dedication earlier this month.

Compassionate Winston-Salem and students at Sedge Garden Elementary School in Kernersville dedicated the latest Compassion Corner on Thursday, March 24.

The Compassion Corner is an L-shaped bench. For the last two school years, Compassionate Winston-Salem has placed benches at Moore, Bolton, Old Town, Petree, Diggs-Latham, Vienna and Ibrahim elementary schools. All benches are built by a volunteer team from Epiphany Lutheran Church. Most were sponsored by individual churches, with the Sedge Garden one paid for by Compassionate Winston-Salem itself.

"Whether you're a kid or an adult, if you're sitting on that bench you're sending a signal, 'Hey folks, I need some good friends today, today is just not my best day,'" Compassionate Winston-Salem's Dean Clifford told young students who had



Principal Ramona Warren talks about the new Compassion Corner at Sedge Garden Elementary School.

gathered outside for the dedication. Compassionate Winston-Salem is a program of Interfaith Winston-Salem that came out of the 2013 signing of the Charter of Compassion that made Winston-Salem the 18th city in the world and the first in North Carolina to become a City of Compassion. As its name suggests,

the group hopes to promote compassion and kindness with the benches.

"We thought one of the ways we could promote that was to be sure that every school eventually has a concrete place on campus that reminds everyone to be kind to each other," said Clifford.

Every school decorates its Compassion

Corner differently. Sedge Garden's white bench has the word "Love" painted on it and is covered in overlapping student handprints in a multitude of colors.

Sedge Garden Principal Ramona Warren said the bench goes well with the school's participation in Rachel's Challenge. The challenge is named after Rachel Scott, the first victim in the 1999 Columbine High School shooting and was founded by her father, Darrell Scott, to encourage kindness and prevent bullying. Sedge Garden is one of more than 1,200 schools and businesses that have used the program.

"When Dean came to us with the bench, it was the perfect complement to what we've been doing," said Warren.

Jake Fedele, a fifth grader who is student government president, was one of the many students who worked on the bench. He was glad to see his school get the bench.

"It's a good idea," he said.

The next planned Compassion Corner, which is funded with a grant from the Adam Foundation, will be dedicated later this spring at Montessori School of Winston-Salem.

FOOTBALL SPRING TOURS & GAME

The WSSU Rams
are coming to you
this spring!

Saturday, April 2 ■ 2-4pm
Wilson, N.C. — Wilson Fike High School,
500 Harrison Dr. N, Wilson, NC 27893

Saturday, April 9 ■ 1pm
for the official Spring Football Game!
Atkins High School, Old Greensboro Rd.,
Winston-Salem

There will be prizes, giveaways and games. Bring 2
canned goods for entry and in support of the Second Harvest
Food Bank and WSSU Student Food Pantry.

FOOTBALL SEASON TICKETS

general admission \$75
parking \$75

ALL-ACCESS CARD: \$150

(admission to home football, basketball,
baseball and the ACE Awards. This card
is not valid for Championship Games or
CIAA Tournament)

ALL-ACCESS CARD WITH THE PURCHASE OF RESERVED SEATS: \$200