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## GRANT

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and good nutrition among our children. This program helps us to do that."

A total of 106 schools across North Carolina were selected to participate in the program that provides funds to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables for students. At various times throughout the school day, students will have fresh fruits and vegetables available — whether in the classroom or on the playground — to snack on before they get ready to leave for home.

"This is our second year receiving the grant and it was a terrific success last year," said Mary Jane Akerman, TCS wellness coordinator. "I don't know if we are better or worse in North Carolina, but we certainly see it among our population that we do have quite a number of children who are overweight or in danger of being overweight. This program is a great way to educate both children and parents."

A unique aspect of the program is the introduction of fruits and vegetables that children may not have heard of, such as pomegranates and star fruit. In some cases, children have never tried a particular fruit and find out that they love it. In other cases, the selection is not quite as popular.

"One of the neat things has been the reaction

from kids," Akerman said. "I heard a story about one of the kids who was so excited about the pomegranates that the next time he was at the store with his mother he told her to buy some and he would show her how to eat it. We also found out that the kids do not like asparagus. It's a real cool way to get that information out to families and it works."

For the 2009-10 school year, TCS received \$50,000 from the program to be divided up between TPS and LDE. Akerman said this year, the school system got a sizable amount more, enabling TCS to expand the program to every day instead of the three days a week like last year. Part of the program also includes educational material that is sent home to parents every weekend in both English and Spanish about the benefits of eating healthy, nutritious foods.

"This grant is an important thing for our community and our children," said Tobin. "Many times, a child doesn't even know they like a particular fruit or vegetable until they eat it. If you expose it to them now, they know how good it can be and they may continue eating it for the rest of their lives. We try to establish good habits for them all the way around."

Studies show that eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables every day improves overall health and can help prevent the risk of cancer.

## TIES

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lems together," said Rowe. "In the past, we've gone in and enforced the law, but we want citizens to be involved too, such as creating a community watch or adopt-a-street program. We want people to help take back their neighborhood and get everything cleaned up. A lot of people don't understand the resources we have and what we're trying to do. We want people to come, especially in that area because if we don't know there's a problem, we can't fix it."

While police can make arrests and enforce the law, Rowe said citizen involvement plays a vital role in identifying specific areas of concern, and a collaborative relationship between the two is key to moving forward in a positive direction. TPD also plans on being more involved in city schools and helping create awareness on various issues like texting while driving.

"It all comes down to accountability," Rowe said. "We want to be held accountable for what we do, but we also want a neighborhood to be accountable for where they live. I wouldn't want drug dealing in my neighborhood and I would want to be involved. We're looking beyond just putting a Band-Aid on a situation. We have an open-door policy and we want the public to know we're not the bad guys all the time. We want people to know what we're doing and we

want to know what's going on in the neighborhoods."

Lt. Raymond Widener, commander of District 1, which covers the western and southern parts of Thomasville, already has conducted three such community meetings, and said in some cases people just wanted to know where they could go for help paying their bills or finding a job. Widener said that while police can't directly assist families with every particular concern or problem, they can direct them to a person or organization who can.

"We go and everybody puts their concerns on the table," said Widener.

"We listen to their concerns and try to develop strategies and tactics to meet those needs. Often times, law enforcement thinks speeding may be a concern of a particular neighborhood when actually it's littering. What we try to do is get a real-world feel about what's going on. It's pretty simple really."

During one such meeting, Widener said citizens were concerned about recent car break-ins around Dillon Street. TPD responded with an increase in police presence and more traffic checks in the area. In another meeting, citizens were given basic information on how law enforcement works and

ways police can assist people other than simply enforcing the law.

"We're a clearing house for government and services," Widener said. "We can connect people with agencies like Social Services, Senior Services, Job Link and things like that. We do a lot of community stuff and there's a whole lot going on that people don't know about."

For more information on the three city districts, visit the TPD website at [www.ci.thomasville.nc.us](http://www.ci.thomasville.nc.us).

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## Lexington man sought on murder charges

TIMES STAFF REPORT

Lexington Police Department is looking for a man wanted for murder.

According to a LPD press release, Phillip Scott Baker, 31, of 1204 Regents Center in Lexington, allegedly shot Chadric Lee Newsome, 26, of 204 Reich St. in Lexington, to death Saturday afternoon. Officers responded to 117 Dacotah St. at 3:49 p.m. Saturday in reference to shots being fired and a possible breaking and entering. As officers arrived at the scene, a call from Lexington Memorial Hospital came in that a gunshot victim with wounds to the chest had driven himself to the hospital. The victim, identified as Newsome, was involved in an altercation at the scene, and had to be transported to North Carolina Baptist Medical Center, where he later died.

During the investigation, police identified Baker as the suspect and he is wanted for Newsome's murder. LPD is working with the District Attorney's Office and the State Bureau of Investigation, and asks anyone with information on the case or Baker's whereabouts to call police at 243-3302 or Crime Stoppers at 243-2400.

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