

A compassionate, servant leader with a great sense of humor, Michael Pressley is remembered as an “accessible” and “selfless” administrator who served Henderson County Public Schools for 35 years.

Mr. Pressley rose to school administration after teaching Mathematics at Rugby Junior High for 12 years, beginning in 1973. His principal, James Case, and former superintendent, Glenn C. Marlow encouraged Mr. Pressley to take on the leadership role of Assistant Principal at Rugby Junior High, where he served for three years before becoming Principal at Fletcher Elementary School in 1988. After leaving Fletcher Elementary in the fall of 1990 to serve in Active Duty in support of Desert Storm for six months, he returned to lead Balfour Elementary School. In 2002, Balfour Elementary School transitioned to Clear Creek Elementary under Mr. Pressley’s guidance and he served as Principal until his retirement in 2009.

As an administrator, Mr. Pressley was often found sweeping, driving a bus, dressing up as Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny, driving students to his apple orchard, and performing many tasks behind the scenes to improve his schools.

Anne Whitmire, retired HCPS teacher and Hall of Fame member explained it this way, “The learning climate of his schools radiated joy, teamwork, cohesiveness and praises of good behavior. Figuratively speaking, the doors of his school never closed.”

“Mr. Pressley is a man of integrity who is always concerned about the well being of others,” writes Retired HCPS Superintendent David L. Jones. Mr. Pressley built extraordinary relationships with everyone in the school building, and connected with parents.

The communities he fostered and his dedication to his schools earned Mr. Pressley the Henderson County Principal of the Year award twice in his career – first in 1992 and again in 1995. Mr. Case writes, “He was truly an inspiration to all of our students, teachers, staff and parents. He was a daily inspiration to me and made me a better person”.