

Erin Long Sworn In On School Board

Editor , Thomas Lark

LINCOLNTON--The Lincoln County Board of Education has a new member.

That's the word this week from school board spokeswoman Karen Dellinger. As Dellinger informed, Erin Long of Lincolnton was sworn in during ceremonies held Friday at the school system's central office.

Long told *The Herald* more about herself Thursday. A lifelong resident of Lincoln County, she is married and has a stepson who attends Western Carolina University. Mrs. Long is the assistant director of the basic law-enforcement training/criminal justice department at Gaston College.

A member of the class of 1992 at Lincolnton High School, Long is also a graduate of Western Carolina University, where she earned a bachelor of science degree in criminal justice. She spent three decades in law-enforcement, including more than 20 years in Lincoln County and work as a patrol deputy and as a lieutenant for the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office. In 1998, she was recognized as the Lincoln County Officer of the Year. She learned Spanish in order to better serve the local Spanish-speaking community. Long retired in October of 2022.

"As a district lieutenant," she said, "one of my responsibilities was to supervise school resource officers and work with the school system. I was able to work with the school administrators and staff during that time to participate in active drills, as well as co-ordinate safety training and security plans for many of our schools on the eastern side of Lincoln County."

Long also spoke of her goals for her work on the school board.

“It is my hope to bring my leadership experience, along with my existing working relationships with various facets of Lincoln County employees, government and citizens to the table to communicate the needs, goals and importance of those in our school system,” she said. “In looking at the mission statement of the Lincoln County Schools, one important point is ‘to provide a safe, secure and positive learning environment for all students.’ This is a unique quality that I will bring to the board with my training and experience. I am excited at the opportunity to contribute to continued safety for our students and staff in our schools.”

And Long contemplated the coming months.

“In looking to the 2024-25 school year, I intend to work to develop working relationships with teachers, administrators, the superintendent and school board members,” she said. “I will work to obtain information on goals for the district and focus on student achievement.

“I am extremely grateful to have this opportunity,” she added. “I look forward to serving our county school system in this role.”