

Note to me:
Pick dates to help
with exit exams

MARCH	19	20	21	22	23
	North Meck	North Meck West Clt.	North Meck West Clt.	North Meck West Clt.	
	26	27	28	29	30
	Independence	East Indep.	East Indep.	East Indep.	East Indep.
APRIL	2	3	4	5	6
	Vance	Vance	Vance	Harding Northwest Vance	Harding Northwest
	9	10	11	12	13
	Harding Northwest Olympic West Meck	Harding Northwest Olympic West Meck	Harding Northwest West Meck	Harding West Meck	
MAY	30	1	2	3	4
	Myers Park South Meck	Butler Myers Park South Meck	Butler South Meck	Butler South Meck	
	14	15	16	17	18
		Garinger	Garinger	Garinger	
	21	22			
		Providence			

Making the grade on CMS exit exam

Adults needed to grade presentation; you'll find it a fun, useful experience

BY ARAMINTA S. JOHNSTON

The presentation on hair cutting sticks in my mind most.

Perhaps it's because of the novelty of the topic. Perhaps it's because the young man said that it was the fact that his sister is a hairdresser that got him interested in the subject. Perhaps it was the vehemence with which he made clear that he didn't intend to go into the profession himself.

His presentation wasn't the most impressive that I helped judge that afternoon at Myers Park High School almost a year ago.

"Most Impressive" would have to go to a young man who is deaf who arrived for his presentation in a suit and tie and a wonderful command of spoken English and lip reading. His poise and intelligence were on full display and his presentation was excellent - only I can't remember his topic.

But probably what was best about helping to judge the presentations that are part of the CMS requirement for the senior exit essay was the opportunity to see a diverse group of young people at their best.

They were the experts on their chosen topic, and

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Board to revisit schedule for temporary school relocations

The school board Tuesday will hear proposals to change some dates for schools undergoing major renovation. Some of the renovations will, as discussed over the last year, require temporary relocation. Ashley Park, for example, will move to the old Westerly Hills building for a year. Some schools will continue to operate on-site.

Piedmont's renovation, delayed earlier, still does not have a date or site relocation.

Details of the projects, some already under way:

School	Moves to	Period	School	Moves to	Period
Ashley Park	Old Westerly Hills	8-02 to 8-03	Eastway Mid.	On-site	1-01 to 1-03
Barringer	On-site	4-01 to 6-02	First Ward	On-site	5-01 to 7-02
Billingsville	First Ward	8-02 to 8-03	J.H. Gunn	On-site	4-01 to 6-02
Druid Hills	On-site	6-00 to 7-01	Highland	To be absorbed by Craighead	8-01
Eastover	Old Selwyn	8-02 to 8-03	Lincoln Hts.	Greenville Park	8-01 to 8-02
			Merry Oaks	On-site	4-01 to 6-02
			Myers Park Ele.	Addition	1-01 to 7-02
			Oakhurst	Grier Road	8-01 to 8-02
			Oaklawn	Old Merry Oaks	8-02 to 12-03
			Piedmont Mid.	Not yet scheduled	
			Sedgefield Ele.	On-site	5-01 to 7-02
			Selwyn	On-site	3-01 to 6-02
			Sterling	On-site	5-01 to 7-02
			Thomasboro	On-site	10-00 to 6-02
			Westerly Hills	Addition	11-00 to 8-02

Making the grade: Help with exit exam

Continued from Page 1

here was their chance to tell a group of adults what they had learned. For the most part, they did an excellent job.

The kids were black, white, Asian, Indian. They were tall, short, thin, plump. They were bright and brighter. Some had airbrushed nails and coiffed hair; others wore preppy khakis and white shirts.

Listening to a half a dozen teenagers over a four-hour period may not sound like an exciting way to spend a spare afternoon, especially if you're already in the classroom a good bit of your time, as I am, listening to and trying to motivate the older siblings of some of these high school seniors.

But it was such a fun experience that I'll do it again this year.

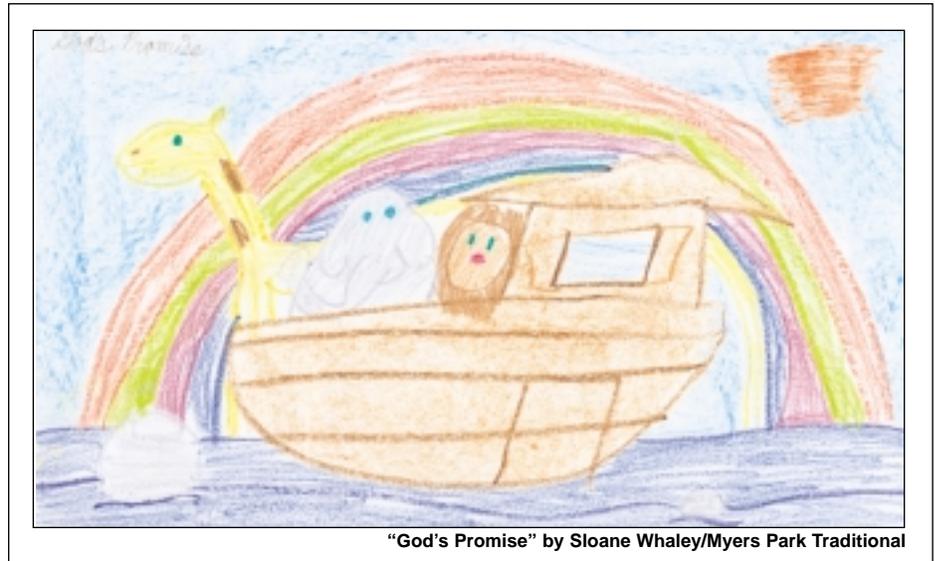
The senior exit essay is a requirement for graduation from CMS. Students' grades on the assignment are part of their English course grade. Each student chooses a topic of interest, researches it, writes a formal paper, and, in addition, makes a short oral presentation and answers questions on the topic.

Helping judge the presentation is where volunteers come in.

Myers Park High School has a strong parent and volunteer support group, so I've already received my invitation to participate again this spring and I've sent them my "yes."

Some schools, however, don't have the resources that Myers Park does. Last year I learned that while Myers Park had plenty of volunteers to help judge senior exit essays (I don't know what their situation is this year), some other high schools don't have enough.

The school system's high schools offer a variety of dates and times. Some offer breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Some ask for a minimum commitment of an hour or two.



"God's Promise" by Sloane Whaley/Myers Park Traditional

Others assume that you'll be there for most of half a day.

You don't need some kind of advanced degree. You don't have to be a rocket scientist. All you need is the ability to listen to sometimes-nervous young people and evaluate their presentations. And the school will provide you with clear guidelines about how to do that.

Give as much time as you can; just give it. It's a great opportunity to see a small sample of our community's young people perform.

Here is the information on dates, who to contact, times and other information for the schools, as compiled by CMS:

Butler: May 1, 2 & 3. Call Jennie Bush 343-6300. New participants 12:30-3:30 p.m. or 2:30-5:30 p.m. Returning participants 1:00-3:30 p.m. or 3:00-5:30 p.m.

East Meck: March 27, 28, 29 & 30. Call Ms. Luck Brown 343-6430 ext. 245. 7:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Volunteers are requested to serve a minimum of 2 hours.

Garinger: May 15, 16 & 17. Call Roberta Sessions 343-6450. 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Harding: April 5-12. Call Mary Dingle 343-6007 ext. 250. 7:30-11:30 a.m. and 11:00-3:00 p.m. Volunteers can serve for half-day or whole-day session.

Independence: March 26, 27, 28, 29 & 30. Call Ginny Freeburn 343-6900.

Myers Park: April 30, May 1. Call Dawn Mitchell 343-5800 ext. 1508. 1:00- 4:30 p.m.

Northwest: April 5, 6, 9, 10 & 11. Call Sandra Browning 343-5500. 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-3:30 p.m. Light breakfast for first session, lunch for second.

North Meck: March 19-22. Call Kelly Soesbee 343-3840. 7:15 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Light breakfast and lunch provided.

Olympic: April 9 & 10. Call Jamie Simmons 343-3800. 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Volunteers are asked to commit to a two-hour block.

Providence: May 22. Call Jane Blair 343-5390. 2:00-8:00 p.m. Volunteers are requested to serve a minimum of one hour.

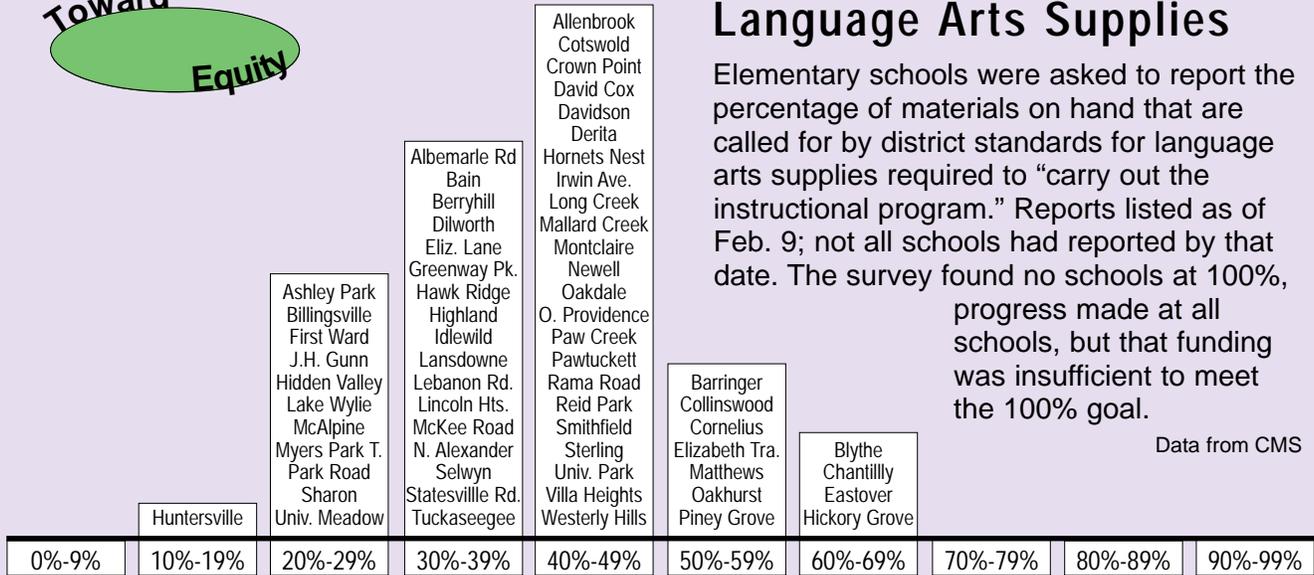
South: April 30, May 1, 2, & 3. Call Judy Russo 343-3600 voice mail #497 or 366-1919. Training 1:00-2:00 p.m. Grading 2:30-7:10 p.m. Dinner is served each day; training is required only one day if volunteering multiple days.

Vance: April 2, 3, 4 & 5. E-mail Steven Davis (343-5284) at sdavis0@vhs.cms.k12.nc.us 4:00-6:30 p.m.

West Charlotte: March 20, 21 & 22. Call Barbara Wilson 343-6060 ext. 248. 7:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and 11:00-2:00 p.m. Volunteers can list areas of interest: literature, history, technology, music, social studies, art, science, popular culture.

West Meck: April 9, 10, 11 & 12. Call Kay Forbes 343-6080. 7:15 a.m.-10:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Light breakfast served for first session, lunch for second.

Toward Equity



Language Arts Supplies

Elementary schools were asked to report the percentage of materials on hand that are called for by district standards for language arts supplies required to “carry out the instructional program.” Reports listed as of Feb. 9; not all schools had reported by that date. The survey found no schools at 100%, progress made at all schools, but that funding was insufficient to meet the 100% goal.

Briefs

“Separate and unequal, again”: A series in The News & Observer in Raleigh, focusing on test score results, asserts that “resegregation is widening the achievement gap between white and minority students, even as state leaders look for ways to narrow it.” Other findings in the continuing series: Achievement by students from all minority groups suffers in largely segregated schools. Resegregation is hurting middle-class black children more than any other group. White students’ scores are not reduced by being in diverse schools. Predominantly black schools throughout the state can’t compete for the best-qualified teachers.

The series, which began Feb. 18, concludes today.
www.newsobserver.com

Teaching through engineering: Massachusetts is pioneering a new curriculum: Mandatory K-12 instruction in engineering. The goal is to inspire a generation of students to love – or at least understand – math and science.

In a middle school in Stow, a three-child team was ready to test their toothpick bridge. In creating its design on a computer and then gluing for three months, they had time to learn about torsion, compression, tension, sheer, bending – all the real-life issues engineers must confront to suspend a roadway across a river. The computer design program had projected that the toothpick bridge would carry 27 pounds. When the Christian Science Monitor showed up in Stow, it was time to test the work, with a bucket of gravel hung off the bridge. The project swayed, buckled and creaked, but didn’t fall until the bucket weighed 43 pounds. “Children spend a lot of time learning how volcanoes work, and little time learning about how a car works,” says Ioannis Miaoulis, a Tufts professor who is spearheading the curriculum. “Yet they spend a much larger part of their time in a car than they do around volcanoes. It’s all about relevance.”

www.monitor.com

More sleep time: Connecticut legislators are considering mandating a later start time for high schools, to bring schoolwork more in line with teens’ circadian rhythms. A University of

Minnesota study in 1997 found that later start times would give teens another hour of sleep, which would improve performance in class, cut mood swings and reduce absences. Opposition to the plan, according to the New York Times, is centered on transportation problems and disruption of after-school athletics. Meriden Mayor Joseph Marinan suggested switching high school and elementary school start times, since younger children adjust better to early rising.

www.nytimes.com

Focus on the classroom: Amid nationwide discussion of vouchers and closing underperforming schools, former Colorado Gov. Roy Romer told a Raleigh audience it would be best to keep efforts focused on teachers and principals. “It’s hard to hold people accountable when they don’t know how to do their job,” The News and Observer reported he told the group. “We need to be accountable, but we also need to do more to give people the skills they need.”

www.newsobserver.com

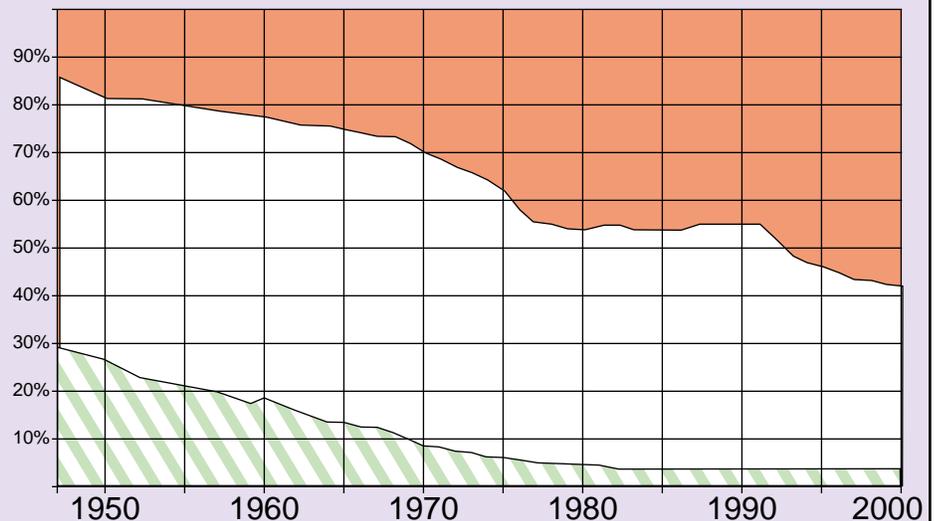
Charter competition: The Boston Globe profiled Robert

The growth in college education

Years of school completed for Americans age 25-34, 1947 to 2000

-  College or more
-  Up to grade 12
-  Up to grade 8

Data from U.S. Census



Briefs

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Martin, a sought-after African-American principal who left for an area charter school. Martin likes being closer to the students, having a more-involved group of parents, the school's commitment to teaching core values (justice, wisdom, courage, compassion, hope, respect, responsibility, integrity), and the freedom to find bargains on school supplies and simply buy them without enduring red tape. What he does NOT like about his charter school experience is having to erect policies on state-mandated issues like special education "one memo at a time," and the loneliness that comes with autonomy. Martin, by the way, received a 60% pay hike in the move, and charter school competition is revolutionizing pay scales.

www.boston.com

Spinal challenge: The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons recommends that a back pack be limited to 15% of a child's weight. The Boston Globe reported on a Simmons College study that found 55% of surveyed children carrying heavier loads. A third reported back pain that led to doctor visits or missed school or curtailed athletic activities.

www.boston.com

Perspective on violence: A group at Penn State University set out to put the violence in American schools in perspective. Using 1994 data from a math and science study, the group found "violence is widespread in schools around the world," said David Baker, education professor. "We're not trying to downplay the seriousness of events like Columbine; yet, overall, American schools are not significantly more violent than schools in other countries of the world. We do tend to be more violent than other industrialized nations, though."

www.psu.edu

Computers for learning: In a study full of words like "metacognition" and "methodology," researchers from RMC Research Corp. evaluated a Web-based project in Vermont that encouraged children to post their art, music, history, English and interdisciplinary studies work on-line and

then correspond with one another about it. The question was, did achievement levels increase? The short answer is yes, but the researchers had a warning for educators, specifically about their research model but perhaps more broadly about use of computers as learning tools: "Teachers must be able to clearly identify the standards they are addressing in their instruction, articulate the specific knowledge and skills that are to be fostered using technology, carefully observe student behavior in creating and refining their work, and create and benchmark rubrics that they intend to use to evaluate student work."

www.thejournal.com

What are we doing?: RAND Corp. researcher David Grissmer warned a Raleigh audience recently that schools should be spending more on research and development. The News and Observer reported that Grissmer said the health-care industry spends \$2 on R&D for every \$100 of total spending; schools spend 20 to 30 cents. "Standards-based accountability will work if it tells us how to better allocate resources," Grissmer said. "Research shows that spending on low-scoring children may do the most to improve overall perform-

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Briefs

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ance.”

www.newsobserver.com



Dodge ball: The age-old playground game of dodge ball is on the list of banned pastimes at a growing number of the nation's schools. The lawyers have a hand in this (liability issues are their concern) but Connecticut PE professor Neil Williams has inducted the game into his “Physical Education Hall of Shame.” Education Week says Williams complains that the game gives little fitness conditioning. But the key fight is over whether children should be used as targets in a school game. It “encourages aggression and the strong picking on the weak,” Williams said. Cecil County, Md. has discouraged the game in PE classes. The Los Angeles district leaves the decision to individual schools. The game's advocates, like California TV produce Robert Petersen, say the game is informal, fun and is an alternative to structured games.

www.edweek.com



Kindergarten lite: Articles in the March issue of the National Association for the Education of Young People say there must be a middle way – between demands that kindergartners learn academic subjects and that they have time to play. Author Gay Gronlund told the Boston Globe: “When kids set the table for snack, they learn there's one napkin and one cup at one chair for

one child. That's the basis for our whole numeric system, right there. Is that academic? Is that learning? Absolutely.”

www.boston.com

Calendar

26 Student Assignment Oversight Committee, Board Room, 7:30 a.m.

27 School board meeting, Board Room, 7 p.m.

28 Magnet school lottery applications due.

March

10 Urban League awards dinner, Convention Center, 6:30 p.m.

12 School board, commissioners lunch, noon.

13 School board meeting, Board Room, 6 p.m.

16 School board budget work session, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

20 School board budget work session, 5 p.m.-8 p.m.

Correction

A reader in New Jersey noticed that Educate!'s Feb. 18 edition inverted two numbers in a report about the equity standard for library holdings. The proposed policy would require library book collections to contain a minimum of 10 books per student.

Sound off! for quality education

Your words in support of a quality, equitable, integrated education can help make the case for community support of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Pick up your pen! Or get your mouse in motion! Here's information on how to submit your letters to area media.

The Charlotte Post: By e-mail: thepost@clt.mindspring.com; by fax: 704-342-2160; by mail: Editor, The Charlotte Post, 1531 Camden Road, Charlotte, NC 28203-4783.

The Charlotte Observer: By e-mail: opinion@charlotteobserver.com; by fax: 704-358-5022; by mail: The Observer Forum, The Charlotte Observer, P.O. Box 30308, Charlotte, NC 28230-0308.

The Charlotte World: By e-mail: warren.smith@thecharlotteworld.com; by fax: 704-503-6691; by mail: 8701 Mallard Creek Road, Charlotte, NC 28262-9705.

The Leader: By e-mail: editor@leadernews.com; by fax: 704-347-0358; by mail: 800 E. Trade St., Charlotte, NC 28202-3014

Creative Loafing: By e-mail: charlotte@creativeloafing.com; by fax: 704-522-8088; by mail: P.O. Box 241988 Charlotte, NC 28224.

Educate!: By e-mail: SwannFello@aol.com; by fax: 704-342-4550; by mail: 1510 E. 7th St. Charlotte, NC 28204-2410.

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The name: The Swann Fellowship was named for Darius and Vera Swann, who on behalf of their son James became the lead plaintiffs in Swann vs. Mecklenburg in the 1960s. Darius Swann was the first African American Presbyterian missionary ever assigned outside of Africa. His experiences in India led him to appreciate the value of an integrated society for human development.

The vision: As people of faith, our vision is that all children in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System will have excellent educational

opportunities which are both equitable and integrated.

The background: Formed in 1997 out of several Charlotte religious congregations, the Fellowship focuses on being a witness to the value of diversity, and educating the public on public school issues as they relate to this and allied subjects. The Swann Fellowship is a non-profit organization exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code 56-2106776. Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 1-888-830-4989. The license is not an endorsement by the state.