

## CMS to re-invent high school with 3-year grad option

Want to exit high school with a full diploma a year early? CMS may have a program worth considering.

Officials shared with the school board Tuesday a project fast-tracked through the planning process that would let teens earn all graduation credits by the end of the 11th grade. The price is more intense work, and more hours at school.

While billed as a student-centered effort that has been sought by parents and students, the program might also recast Garinger's image as a low-performing school that failed to attract a full house of students during last year's choice lottery.

Assistant superintendent Lloyd Wimberly cast the program as the result of "thinking outside the box

Continued on Page 4



New CMS chair Wilhelmenia Rembert hit the ground running Tuesday night, asking members during public session to consider various leadership roles and other assignments. Some will be leading committees for the first time.

## Change at helm

### As Griffin steps aside, Rembert takes reins; Woods named vice chair

Arthur Griffin, an outspoken advocate for equity and excellence in education, Tuesday relinquished the chair of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school board to Wilhelmenia Rembert, an outspoken advocate for equity and excellence in education.

Louise Woods, District 4 representative since 1995 and another outspoken advocate for equity and excellence in education, was elected vice chairperson, replacing Rembert.

The election marked a shift of personnel, but not of philosophies. And the members did not rise above their traditional splits to mark the beginning of Rembert's leadership.

The new chair was elected with a bare majority, with all members present. With Pughsley holding the gavel ("This is an opportunity I've long waited for," he deadpanned) Rembert was the only nominee. With her not voting and Pughsley asking for those in favor, Larry Gauvreau, Vilma Leake, George Dunlap, Arthur Griffin and Louise Woods raised their hands.

"It appears that we have a majority," Pughsley said, never calling for the no votes. "So be it. We also have a new chair at this point. Congratulations to you," he said to Rembert as he handed off the gavel.

His opportunity with the gavel

Continued on Page 5

## Survey challenges 'acting white' myth; no racial gap seen in teens' aspirations

In a survey of teens, it was the African Americans who were least fazed by peer pressure not to study.

They, and students in other demographic groups, said few of their friends "make fun of people who do really well in school."

It was black students who said most frequently that "it's annoying when other students talk or joke around in class."

The survey was taken for the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN), a consortium of 15 school districts nationwide. Most of the districts are high-

wealth suburban districts that nevertheless face large racial achievement gaps. On Page 3 are the results reported for Chapel Hill-Carrboro, a district which leads most achievement categories, but also has one of the widest achievement gaps in North Carolina.

Harvard lecturer Ronald Ferguson, who tabulated the data for MSAN, told Education Week that the results boost the theory that minority teens don't oppose academic achievement but are "responding to their friends' air of

Continued on Page 3

# Citizens committee asks school board to implement its multicultural policy

In the first of what promises to be a series of public appearances, the Community Relations Committee Tuesday pressed the school board to observe its own policies that promote a multicultural outlook in what students learn and how they are taught.

Curt Bradley, chair of the CRC's education subcommittee, said the board policy dates from 1993. And regulations have been in place since 1994.

"Our concern is the implementation ... is not being given the attention it deserves," Bradley said. He said CMS staff had said the policies were being "considered:" in curriculum, instruction, staff training and hiring.

But he noted that the CMS Balanced Score Card mentions multiculturalism only in relation to support operations. "That would seem to indicate that the emphasis is primarily on staff training, and there is no direct effort to bring multiculturalism down to the student level."

He said a CRC review of programs at the school level found that "at some no programs exist and at others the programs are very cursory and inconsistent."

Bradley said the CRC would seek to meet with board members and staff "to promote the multicultural policy more vigorously

and more comprehensively" and to strengthen the policy.

In its 1993 policy statement, CMS committed itself to "equitable academic programs and services which respond to the needs of a diverse student population and which prepare all students for a changing workplace and pluralistic society."

The policy defines multicultural education "as that which recognizes, values and affirms diversity in a pluralistic environment.

Education that is multicultural fosters acceptance and appreciation of diversity, development of greater understanding of cultural patterns, respect for people of all cultures, development of positive and productive interaction among people and experiences of diverse cultural groups, and understanding of historical, political and economic bases of current inequities." The policy says CMS "will acknowledge and appreciate the value of diversity throughout the curriculum, instruction, and staff development."

The CRC traces its history back to 1961 when then-mayor Stan Brookshire appointed a citizen committee during a crisis over segregated facilities.

The group continues to work to end discrimination and promote race relations.

## From Readers

### Board certification's value

The National Board process has made me more proactive in dealings with students. I am more aware of their needs, which helps with their overall achievements in learning. I have also learned to appreciate the student-teacher relationships more and more.

Heather Wood

### **Educate!** is a journal on public education in Charlotte-Mecklenburg

Our aim is to supply information useful to you in your role as student, parent or citizen interested in the welfare of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

Educate! is published by The Swann Fellowship, 1510 E. 7th St., Charlotte, NC 28204. Voice and fax: 704-342-4330. E-mail: [sjohnston@educateclt.org](mailto:sjohnston@educateclt.org) Lucy Bush, president; B.B. DeLaine, vice president; Steve Johnston, executive director. Published since September 2000; 6-week average circulation through last issue: 2,503.

The Swann Fellowship, named for Darius and Vera Swann, was formed in 1997 out of several Charlotte religious congregations to be a witness to the value of diversity in public education and to educate the public on school issues as they relate to this and allied subjects. The Swann Fellowship is a nonprofit 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.

To be removed from distribution, message: [imailsrv@educateclt.org](mailto:imailsrv@educateclt.org). In body of the message, type: unsubscribe swann name@domain.etc. To be added to our distribution list, subscribe at [www.educateclt.org](http://www.educateclt.org).

THIS ISSUE OF *EDUCATE!* WAS MADE POSSIBLE IN PART BY DONATIONS FROM:

RUTH & DICK GAULT

HOWARD HAWORTH

# Survey debunks 'acting white' myth

Continued from Page 1

superiority, or to signs that they are distancing themselves from their own racial group.”

Black males had the highest percentage of those who agreed that their friends think it is “very important” to “study hard and get good grades.”

MSAN found little variation in results among districts. Nationwide, few students felt close to their teachers, and few felt that their teachers knew what

they could achieve academically. And the survey pointed up the expected strong differences in family background by ethnic group.

But it also identified a huge racial difference in what motivates students. Whites were about twice as likely as blacks to say they responded to teacher “demands” for hard work. Latinos and blacks were far more likely to be motivated by “encouragement.” Officials said the finding should be considered as teacher training is revised, and as more emphasis is put on teacher-student relationships (see related letter, page 2).

As for closing the achievement

gap, longtime researcher Christopher Jencks told the Washington Post, “One explanation comes along after another. Maybe it’s oppositional culture. Or segregated schools. It seems to me we run through explanations the way women’s fashion run through skirt lengths without getting much closer to solving the problem.”

The results released just before Thanksgiving are based on surveys executed nearly two years ago among 40,000 middle and high school students in the 15 MSAN school systems. Chapel Hill-Carrboro was the only N.C. participant.

## Results for Chapel Hill-Carrboro schools

Results in percent by demographic groups (white, black, Latino, Asian, mixed-race, and total) in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro school system on Minority Student Achievement Network survey. In general, the percent of students who were described by category or agreed with statement. Some statements have been paraphrased for brevity.

	B	W	L	A	M	Tot
<b>Family background</b>						
Live with one parent or neither	52	14	39	16	28	20
At least one parent has four or more years of college	40	89	53	87	74	77
Households that have two or more computers	27	64	25	53	59	54
Households with at least 100 books in the household	39	82	31	63	74	70
<b>Motivation when working hard</b>						
An important reason for working hard is that “the teacher demands it.”	17	34	23	22	29	30
Reason for working hard: “My teachers encourage me to work hard.”	55	34	43	34	40	37
Reason for working hard: “I want to learn the material.”	59	51	48	62	49	52
<b>Comprehension and proficiency</b>						
Understands lesson half the time or less	54	30	44	22	38	34
Understand “very well” half or less of what’s read for school.	57	27	47	25	40	32
<b>Feelings about teachers and school</b>						
“I find my history and science textbooks interesting.”	40	36	53	47	41	39
“I like the books and plays we read for English.”	56	54	57	62	53	55
“I enjoy doing math problems.”	57	43	61	64	43	47
“It’s annoying when other students talk or joke around in class.”	52	35	45	40	41	38
“I don’t feel close to any of my teachers this year.”	42	39	40	38	42	40
“I am happy to be at this school.”	75	83	86	85	73	82
<b>Homework hours and completion rates</b>						
Nightly homework hours, students with no honors or AP courses	2.01	2.04	1.83	2.97	1.79	2.07
Nightly homework hours, at least one honors or AP course	2.67	2.49	1.87	3.07	2.44	2.55
<b>Social conditions and peer relations</b>						
“My friends make fun of people who try to do really well in school.”	19	14	32	17	23	16
“Studying a lot tends to make you less popular.”	15	21	29	25	23	21
“Not spending time to socialize... tends to make you less popular.”	43	74	61	66	67	68
“Self-confident” summarizes those in “in” crowd in middle school.	42	56	34	45	44	50
“Outgoing” summarizes those in “in” crowd in middle school.	40	55	32	52	49	50
“Tough” summarizes those in “in” crowd in middle school.	35	19	19	22	33	22
Friends think it is “very important” or “important” to study hard.	90	92	87	92	89	92
“I could do a lot better in school.”	88	62	81	67	68	66

## CMS to have 3-year graduation option

Continued from Page 1

but in a way that is very doable” and as “a new kind of paradigm that makes sense.”

Students who stick with the program will be very busy, and will go to a six-week summer session. After 11th grade, they will either graduate and leave high school, or remain for tuition-free college courses taught on the Garinger campus.

The program will be available to Garinger area students; to choice applicants within the purple zone; and to those elsewhere who can provide their own transportation. But any student could have a chance at gaining entry with transportation by applying to the school’s countywide communications magnet. If there is great interest in the program, the key limiting factor will be a projected enrollment cap for next year of 200 students.

The question is: Who will be interested?

The program is designed to operate alongside Garinger’s other programs. Students who get into the accelerated schedule and find themselves in over their heads could readily return either to the school’s advanced classes or its traditional program.

The school day would be the same for all students, but those in the accelerated program would stay after normal closing time for electives, and would take more electives during a “third semester” program, which would be June 19-July 31 next summer.

Adding the Accelerated program would not disrupt ESL and exceptional children’s programs already at Garinger, according to the planning document.

Supt. Jim Pughsley said the proposal would cost “in the neighborhood” of \$250,000-\$270,000, but only about \$104,000 would be new money, most of it for staffing. The budget summary says about

10 teachers would be involved.

A teacher with five years experience and a master’s degree who agreed both to teach an elective after school and to run a third-semester course during the summer would see annual salary rise from \$37,991 to \$48,077.

Board chair Wilhelmenia Rembert applauded the program, saying “it hasn’t been a month since I’ve talked to a parent volunteer about the possibility of students doing something different that last year. For many of our students, they are very prepared to go on to doing college-level work.”

But while the focus Tuesday night was on acceleration of learning and either graduation a year early or the taking of college courses during 12th grade, the underlying tone of the written proposal is on remediation, preventing dropouts and meeting high school standards by normal graduation time.

The proposal will extend subsidized lunch to cover summer school. A full-time social worker and a full-time psychologist will be assigned, and officials expect 80 of the 200 students to be in the case management program. Communities in Schools, an outside social services provider, will be involved and medical services will be available.

The summer program for rising ninth-graders will focus on an introduction to math, but also include organizational skills, Cornell note taking and other AVID skills.

“We are looking at the things that teachers and students and principals and parents have

demanded that we do,” said assistant superintendent Lloyd Wimberly.

And Garinger principal Joe Ella Ferrell said the goal was to be “challenging students and encouraging them to move forward rather than always keeping them at the point of remediation....”

As for senior year, Ferrell said “the goal would be to have someone from one of the neighboring universities come on campus and instruct the students there.” Or students could leave with a full high school diploma after three years instead of four.

“Sometimes students say, ‘I’m bored. I know this,’ Ferrell told the board. “This will encourage them, give them more active participation, and get them going and jump-starting on with life.”

Students in the program would be able to take one year-long course per year through a Web-based e-learning program, Wimberly said.

“The part that’s really intriguing to me,” said Ferrell, is that rising ninth-graders expecting to sidestep the accelerated program for traditional classes would still come in during the summer to get a taste of the change from middle school.

The transition from the academic expectations of middle school to those of high school trips up some students. Failure to adjust is often cited as the reason for a huge increase in retentions in ninth grade. Nationwide, teens who are retained at ninth grade face large odds of dropping out of school ahead of graduation.



**OLUNTEER IN YOUR SCHOOLS  
FOR A RESERVATION,  
CALL 704-343-6245**

## Rembert to lead CMS school board

Continued from Page 1

had lasted 95 seconds. And during it he had to be reminded that closing the nominations wasn't enough. "We have to vote," said Dunlap and Leake. "Oh, OK," Pughsley said as the room exploded in laughter.

Rembert immediately set a conciliatory tone, asking colleagues to consider leadership roles on board committees. She told board members she had "watched your involvement in issues .... and I am aware of many of your passions... and hope you could... make up for where I am weak."

She asked Arthur Griffin to be budget liaison to the county commissioners and to the Education Budget Advisory Committee; John Lassiter to chair a personnel committee after it splits off from the policy committee; Woods to be liaison to equity committee; Molly Griffin to chair the legislative liaison committee; Lee Kindberg to chair the policy committee; Dunlap to chair the finance, capital and facilities committee; Leake to chair the curriculum and instruction committee.

She asked Gauvreau to be liaison to the Bond Oversight Committee, then added, "You told me you didn't like this whole notion maybe of the bond oversight committee, but I'd like for you to consider the request and if that is not something you are willing to do, if you will talk to me more about a leadership role you would be willing to assume." Gauvreau nodded assent.

Rembert told the whole board she would "honor your wishes whatever they are."

The olive branch extended by the new chair contrasted with the decisions by Molly Griffin, Kindberg and Lassiter neither to nominate someone else nor to vote for Rembert. Lassiter has said publicly he will not seek re-election in 2003.



John Lassiter and Supt. Jim Pughsley join applause for Arthur Griffin marking the end of Griffin's service as chair of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school board.

## 'You have more than paid your dues'

*Wilhelmenia Rembert left the dias after she was elected chairperson to thank outgoing chair Arthur Griffin for his service.*

*Excerpts:*

"You have been an outstanding advocate for all children.

"Notwithstanding your critics, there is no one in this community who can deny that you have made an outstanding contribution to public education in general and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in particular....

"You have also sacrificed at a level that I'm unaware that any public servant past or present.... All who have served before us, all who serve now have made contributions, very important contributions. But I don't know any who have sacrificed at the level you have.

"I don't have that capacity. I won't pretend to have the capacity to sacrifice at that level. But I certainly wish you God's speed because you have more than paid your dues in this community and we owe you a debt of gratitude.... Thank you for a job extremely well done."

*In the following excerpts from*

*his response, Griffin refers to students of the David Cox Road Elementary fifth-grade chorus who opened the meeting:*

"You usually do this when you leave. I'm not leaving the board. This is just moving my seat over a little bit....

"We wrestle and fight a lot about certain issues that we're passionate about. But that passion is why I've often said we've got the best school board in America... simply because of what we've been able to accomplish....

"Those kids. You can't imagine the joy that all nine of us, although we look different, come from different perspectives, but the joy that all nine of us receive being in the same room with those children.

"That's the passion that all of us bring... to what we do.... I thank you and I thank my colleagues for your work and your consistent passion for what you do. And just stay focused, because it's all about the children, and if we get on other topics it's about student achievement, and nothing else but student achievement, student achievement...."

## Briefs

**Test error:** Senior Jennifer Mueller of Whitman, Mass., found an alternative correct answer for Massachusetts's high-stakes graduation test, the Boston Globe reported. Giving students credit for the question boosted scores enough to clear 95 seniors for graduation. But it was not enough for Mueller, who must take the test again in order to graduate in June.

[www.boston.com](http://www.boston.com)

**AD/HD and girls:** Girls may have attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder as often as boys, but are not diagnosed as often because they draw less attention, the Stamford (Conn.) Advocate reported. Girls' symptoms are more often inattention, rather than the aggressive behavior and hyperactivity seen in boys.

[www.stamford.com](http://www.stamford.com)

**Teacher training:** Seattle school officials say a literacy and writing training course involving 72 hours of instruction for teachers is helping children pass reading and writing tests, the Seattle Times reported. Pass rates doubled among black children who spent two years with teachers who had gone through the program. There was no statistically significant gain among similar Asian and Latino children.

[www.seattletimes.com](http://www.seattletimes.com)

**Courtesy:** Wake County officials said the annual parent and student survey results showed that 96% of parents report courteous attention when they call their school. More parents than in previous years agreed that their child's school promotes understanding among students of different backgrounds.

## New CMS principals appointed

Principal changes announced Tuesday night fill most of the open slots in advance of parents' decisions in January on school assignments for fall.

Named by Supt. Jim Pughsley, by transfer or appointment (schools are elementaries unless specified):

**Devonshire:** Eric Marshall, from Greenglade Elementary in Miami-Dade, Fla.

**Endhaven Lane** opening in August: Ellen Flamer, from principal at Piney Grove.

**Grier Road:** Celia Brandon-Phelan, from principal of Devonshire.

**Mint Hill middle** opening in August: Tracey Harrill, from principal of Northeast Middle.

**Northeast Middle:** Jocelyn Cook, former assistant at Myers Park High.

**Piney Grove:** Halina Robertson, former assistant at Dilworth.

Sandra Fish, formerly with Celgard Inc., was named director of inventory management and audit.

A principal for the new southwest middle opening in August will be named in January.

[www.wcpss.net](http://www.wcpss.net)

**Smarts:** The latest theory is that intelligence is not something you're born with, but something you develop with effort, the Washington Post reported. Schools in Montgomery, Md., are trying to put the theory into practice, propelled by the notion that students are not slow but "not yet." And that teachers' main task is to discern how students learn, and to build their confidence.

[www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

**Lobbying:** The Public Education Network has launched a Web site at [www.givekidsgoodschools.com](http://www.givekidsgoodschools.com) to encourage readers to press governors to put "good teachers" in every classroom, Education Week reported. The site says half of middle school students and a quarter of high school students take core subjects from teachers not certified in those subjects.

[www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org)

**Laptop resources:** A new San Jose, Calif., high school that

opened this fall with ninth- and 10th-graders has purchased laptops for all its students, the Mercury News reported. The first set of machines was purchased with money redirected from the furniture budget. Next fall's purchases for 400 incoming ninth-graders will come from a grant. But the school system has no guaranteed source of money to continue the \$680,000 annual program.

[www.bayarea.com](http://www.bayarea.com)

## Calendar

- 12** Parents on the Move workshop, 7-9 p.m., Sugaw Creek Recreation Center, 943 W. Sugar Creek Rd.
- 17** Bond Oversight Committee, 7:30 a.m., Building Services.
- 17** Joint lunch with city, county, Room 267, Government Center.
- 17** Personnel/Policy Committee, 3 p.m., Board Conference Room.
- 19** Finance, Capital & Facilities Committee 4 p.m., Board Conference Room.