


## High school students at or above grade level

Course	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	Goal 2005
English I	68%	67%	68%			90%
ELPS*	61%	63%	60%		90%	
U.S. History	48%	53%	52%		90%	
Algebra I	53%	55%	64%		90%	
Geometry	53%	52%	50%		90%	
Algebra II	61%	65%	65%		90%	
Biology	59%	58%	65%		90%	
Chemistry	53%	54%	54%		90%	
Physics	68%	70%	80%		90%	

\*Economic, Legal & Political Systems

*Leaving no child behind is little more than a catch phrase. In fact, we're leaving thousands behind: Half of CMS's geometry students failed last spring's end-of-course test. Likewise for U.S. history students. Inside, you'll see that individual high school results are even more bleak. It's time for parents, citizens and educators alike to ask ...*

# What will it take to reach Goal 2005?

## 'Acting white': Chapel Hill's not representative on issue

I was a little confused on the purpose of your reporting a minimally coherent survey where the questions were biased for this result and the population was biased for this result ("Survey challenges 'acting white' myth," Dec. 12)

If Chapel Hill-Carrboro is typical of the respondents, then the "acting white" myth is not even addressed. What you have here is a population that because of the atmosphere of the community, and the success of being "educated" has brought them and their parents, they are taking school more seriously than an inner city, low socioeconomic population where the "acting white" myth lives and breathes big time.

Mike Grant

### Teach student teachers

*The writer is director of the UNCC College of Education's office of field experiences.*

We invite applications for a full-time lecturer/clinical assistant professor position. This 12-month nontenure-eligible position will begin July 1 and will supervise

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## From Readers

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interns and student teachers in the preservice teacher education program.

Responsibilities are to travel to schools to supervise elementary education interns and student teachers; conduct seminars for students and their cooperating teachers; assist with orientation and professional development sessions for students and cooperating teachers; review applications and assign students for internships and other clinical experiences; communicate with teachers and principals; and assist with other projects sponsored by the Office of Field Experiences. The supervisory assignment for this position is approximately 18 students each semester. In addition, the supervisor will hold an appointment in the elementary education program and will occasionally teach courses within the program, with an appropriate reduction in supervision responsibilities.

Applicants should hold a mas-

ter's degree or doctoral degree in elementary education, be licensed and have at least three years of successful teaching experience at the elementary school level. A full list of qualifications and application details is posted at <http://education.uncc.edu/searches>

Review of application materials will begin January 27, 2003 and continue until position is filled.

Vicki Jaus

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## **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: 2,505.

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.

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**RUTH M. COBB**

# What will it take to reach Goal 2005?

Charts below and on pages that follow lay out in grim detail “where we are” as a community in our goal of having 90% or more of high school students working on grade level.

In the first set of charts, bars show the percentage of students who tested at or above grade level, last spring and in 2001, on several end-of-course tests. Data for all of CMS was used for the charts on this page. Charts beginning on page 4 show results for a smaller number of EOC tests, by high school. In all cases, data is presented for blacks, Hispanics and whites. The gaps in achievement are both large

and widespread.

Beginning on page 12, another set of charts looks at four components of Goal 2005 for each high school. Again, the picture that emerges is grim.

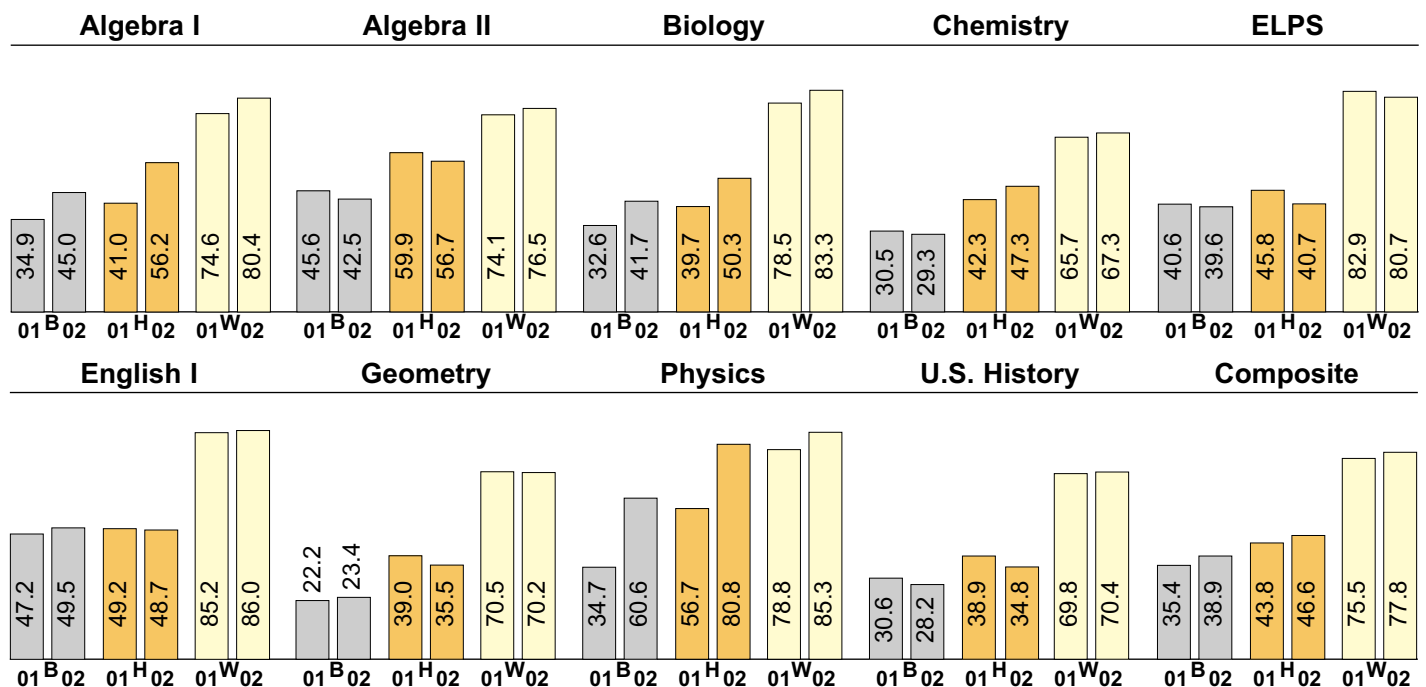
What’s to be done?

We asked readers for their thoughts. Excerpts from what they wrote begin on page 4.

We also looked back over what we have published this year. Many communities are struggling with the same issues facing Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Notes about their achievements and miscues – and some of ours – begin on page 9.

## CMS end-of-course test results, '01 vs. '02

Percent of students deemed at or above grade level, 2001 vs. 2002, by demographic group



# Readers comment on what it will take

*If CMS student achievement continues to improve a few points a year as it has been lately, the system's 2005 goals won't be reached. More important, thousands of children will graduate or drop out without the skills to meet the world.*

*On Monday, Educate! invited readers to comment. Below are their solutions.*

## Concentrate our resources on reading

Here is pie-in-the-sky what gets us there by 2005:

- The TV in every Charlotte home disappears.
- Every kid gets three good meals and a good night's sleep and a hug from their parents every day.

Probably nothing gets us there by 2005, but here is what gets us there in the long run that is in the control of the schools:

1. An even better focus on getting kids reading by the end of first grade. This will take lots of resources in kindergarten and first grade, and resources for preschool – and it will take parents reading to/with their kids every night and making learning fun for the kids. (Parental involvement can be influenced by strong school leadership!)

2. At higher grades as well, focusing on literacy skills. You can't test at grade level in biology unless you have strong reading comprehension and writing

skills.

Rich Boss

## Meeting goal requires culture change in CMS

*The writer, director of the N.C. Education Alliance, is a former CMS school board member.*

It will take No Excuses and a laser focus on academic achievement.

It will take building the academic foundation and capacity for high school courses – no social promotion.

It will take data-driven policy decisions from those who do not chase rabbit trails of political correctness.

Unless there is a culture change within the system you will not have dramatic results.

Lindalyn Kakadelis

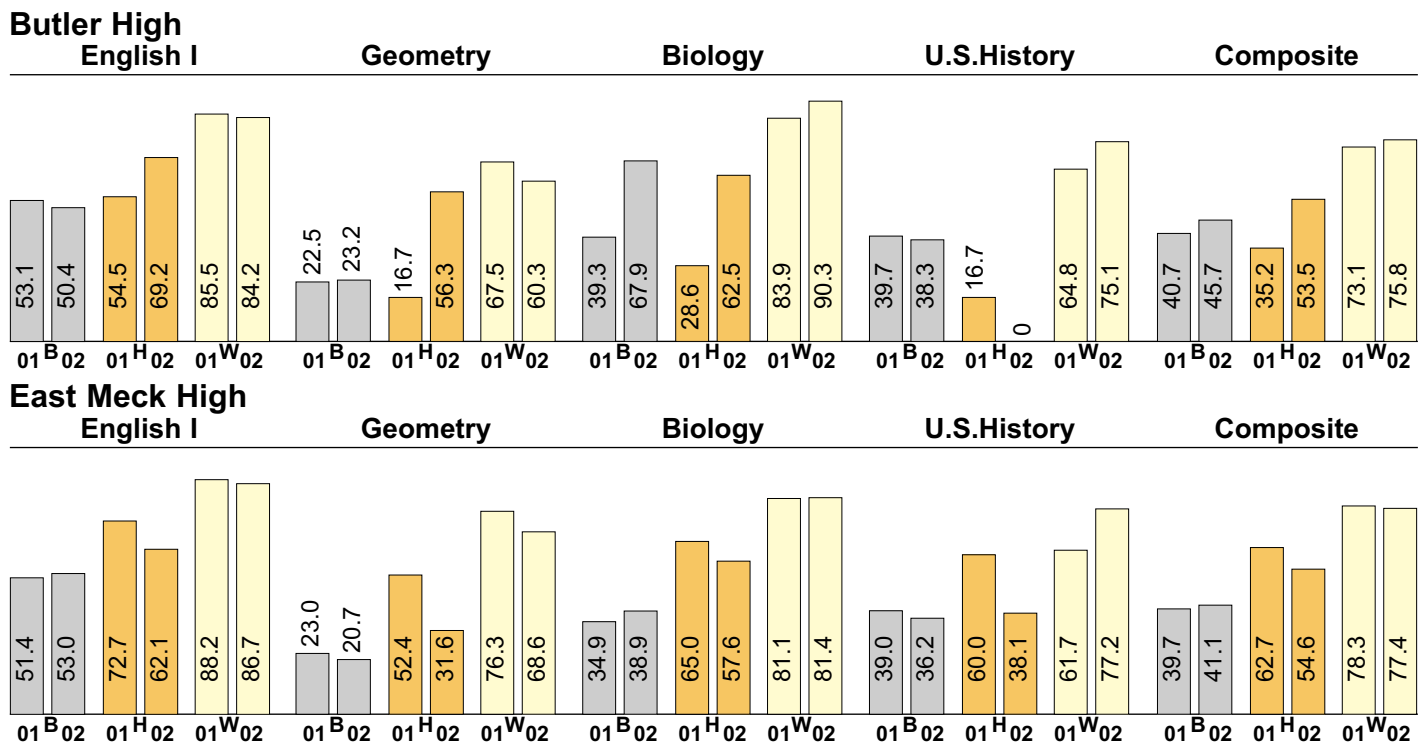
## Teach core subjects every day

I think it is better for the entire school system to have “core” subjects taught every day of the week, and not on that “A”/“B” day routine. I believe kids will learn better and more efficiently. This will also help them to be more in tune with their subjects and teachers.

Also, weekly (and/or daily) quizzes will help build

# End-of-course results, by CMS high school

Percent of students deemed at or above grade level, 2001 vs. 2002, by demographic group



study habits and critical thinking. Weekly (and/or daily) quizzes will show students weaknesses, learning capabilities/deficiencies, and even prepare kids more for EOG testings, exams, etc.

When I was in school core subjects (English, math, science, etc.) were taught daily. The “A”/“B” Day routine causes laxity in our students and teachers.

D. Tindall

**Tutoring, other solutions will cost money**

It will take more individualized attention : tutors. That means many more volunteers, and more paid tutors.

Many middle and upper class parents routinely hire tutors (at \$25-40 an hour) to help their children make better grades. What about the parents who can't afford it?

Afterschool tutoring offered by teachers should be paid. How many other jobs would expect people to give extra time for no pay? Then there's the problem of transportation for students staying for tutoring.

Summer school should be required for students making less than C, to relearn things not learned or barely learned. This, again, will cost money.

Nancy Mosley

**True solutions will address race problem**

*The writer is founder of the Kushite Institute of Wholistic Development in Charlotte.*

We cannot solve our so-called education problem within CMS in the absence of a wholistic solution, healing our perennial race problem in the larger society through, among other measures, a redistribution of stolen resources, i.e., reparations and by changing educational strategies to embrace the

uniqueness of the Black experience in America.

This means, among other factors, that we must:

1. Radically modify the existing Eurocentric curriculum (and textbooks) to embrace education as wholistic development – spirit, mind and body.
- 2). Promote professional education for teachers-administrators on African heritage and other minority cultures.
3. Assign the best teachers to lower-performing schools where student needs are greatest.
4. Create supplementary Afrocentric programs, on evenings and weekends, for “disadvantaged” parents and students.
5. Recruit and provide special incentives for hiring more Black and male teachers.
6. Radically modify student tracking models, such as “gifted” programs – for all of God’s children are gifted – and promote nutrition education in lieu of the continuing misuse of drugs, such as Ritalin, on students.
7. Embrace public-private policies that genuinely promote “liberty and justice for all,” including “contingency restitution” for the African American community, to elevate its socioeconomic status to compete on a level playing field in this society.

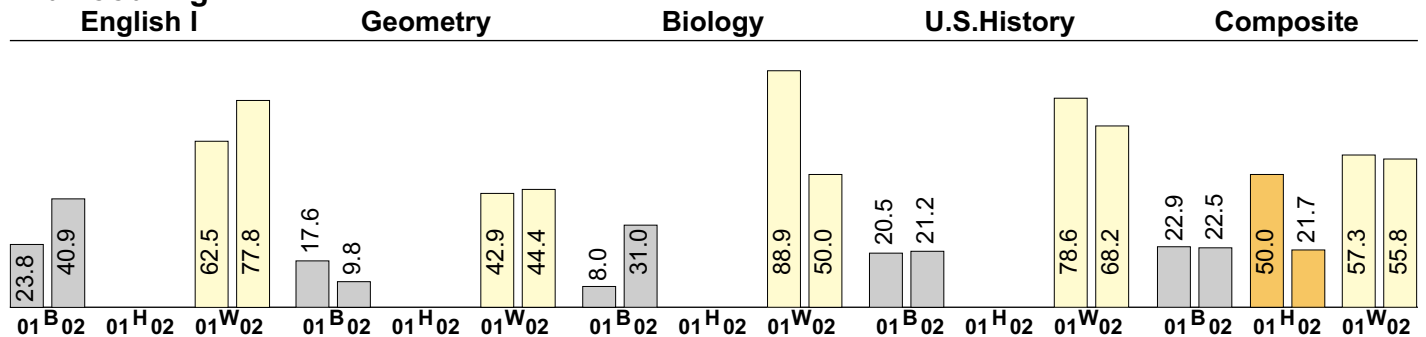
The real obstructing, anti-communal, unpatriotic issue is that perennial, perhaps uniquely American social schizophrenia or political hypocrisy – the failure to do the right thing that would heal this land from those cumulative, underestimated damages inflicted by protracted, ugly racism.

Gyasi Foluke

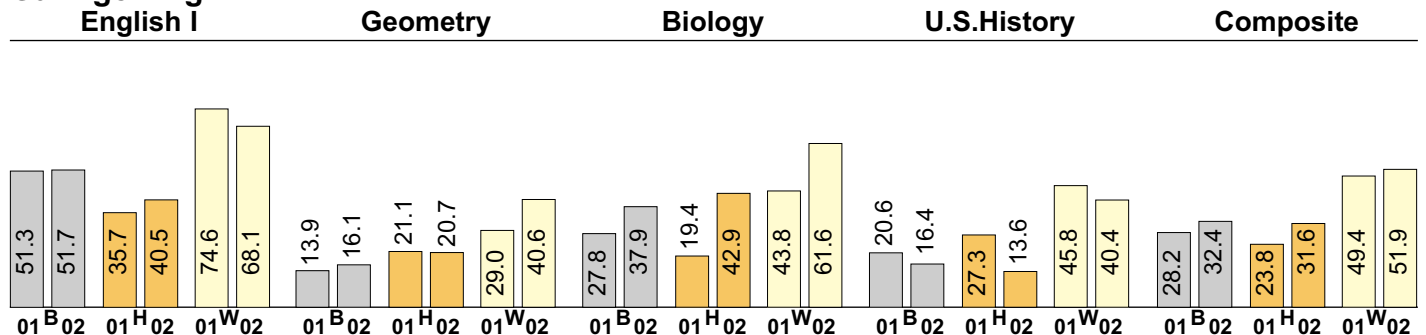
**Partnerships, appropriate funding are factors**

*The writer is education vice president for the*

**Midwood High**



**Garinger High**



*Charlotte Chamber.*

It will take a variety of things: a commitment to appropriate funding, to developing partnerships and mentoring relationships to help kids, to using curriculum that works, to establishing high standards and communicating them to both students and parents, to be willing to go beyond the standard school day to get the job done. The list could go on for quite a while.

Kit Cramer

**Cut class size; reassign nonteaching duties**

Two things will get us there:

1. Classes small enough so that teachers and students may be in genuine relationship as they work together.
2. Relief from non-teaching responsibilities through the efficient use of para-professionals in support of teachers.

Edith Johnson

**Afterschool care is a proven strategy**

*The writer is director of Partners in Out-of-School Time.*

One proven strategy for increasing educational attainment is for students to have high-quality, accessible, afterschool opportunities. Where these programs exist students have significant increases in daily attendance, homework completion, and academic aspirations. In addition they have the opportunity to develop socially, emotionally, and physically by participation in a broad range of activities.

Other cities and states have invested millions of dollars in their youth. Imagine the direct educational results of youth spending two afternoons a

week, three hours per afternoon, for nine months, supported by a well-trained adult, engaged in mapping the resources of the community by surveying, interviewing, and photographing. Then imagine these “low-achieving kids” presenting their findings to the school board, county commission, and city council.

Youth investment must be a priority for us. These 5-18 year olds are only 25% of our population, but they are 100% of our future.

Claire K. Tate

**Success depends on united community effort**

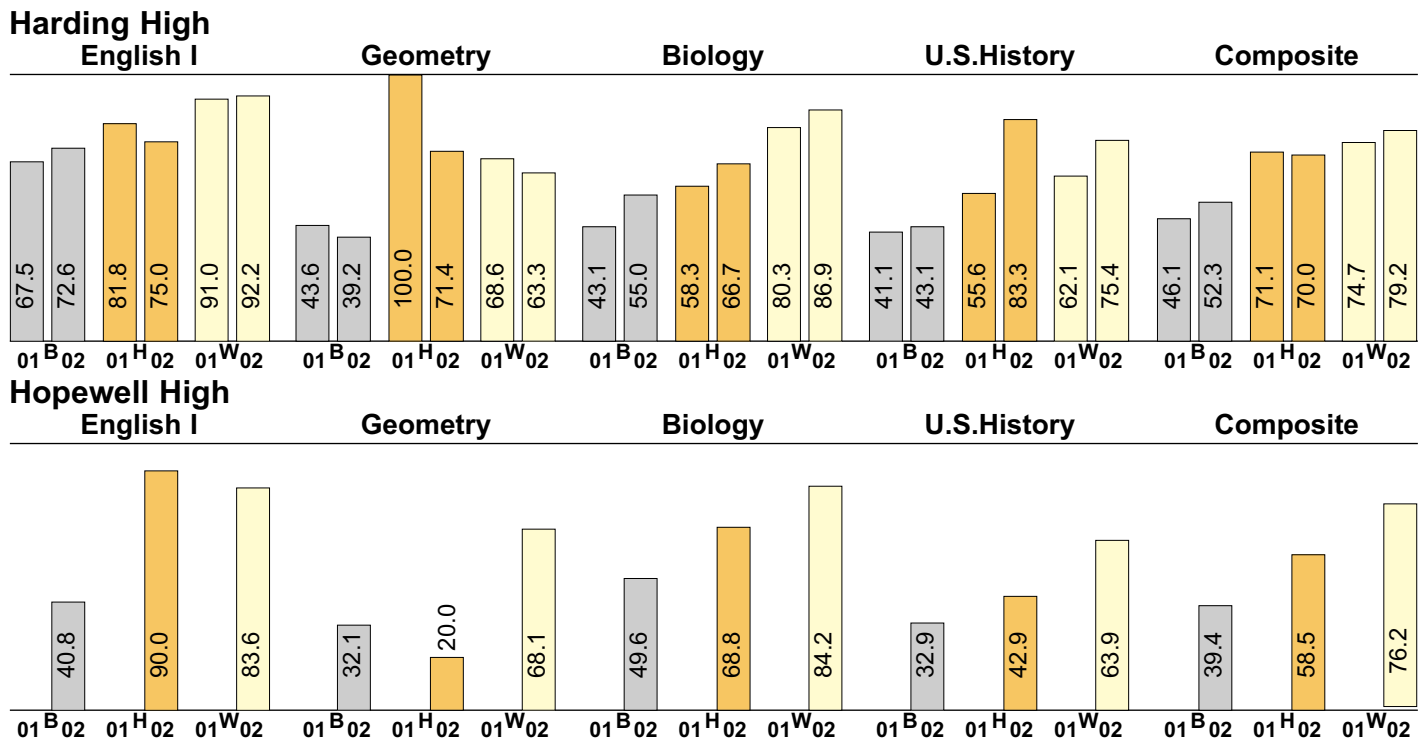
*The writer, former CMS pupil assignment director, is vice president of The Swann Fellowship, which publishes this journal.*

This is a problem that will require total community involvement – students, parents, schools, power brokers, business, state and on down the line. It will have to come top to bottom, bottom to top, inside out, outside in and any other way that this can be turned.

Students will have to be convinced that there is a greater advantage to achieve than not to achieve and that when they achieve there is a greater likelihood that they will benefit than not. As it is now, too many cannot see that they will gain from their efforts to achieve or do not have the confidence to believe that they can achieve what the system wants them to achieve.

The entire educational structure, social structure and economic structure will have to approach this problem in unison.

If you say that that won't happen or can't happen,





you have to say the same about achieving the goal as set forth. If that can happen, then you have a beginning.

B.B. DeLaine

**We need a miracle, but in the meantime...**

*The writer is associate pastor of Advent Lutheran Church.*

We need a miracle. Yet there is no miracle cure for helping students to catch up when they are already in high school. It will take a lot of money (to be translated into staff time and resources) to work with students, and by the time a child is in 10th or 11th grade, motivation of the student is difficult without significant intervention by the teachers and parents.

1. Set realistic goals so that both students and teachers don't give up in frustration.
2. Give education a higher priority. Our county and our state must continue to realize that it is critical to fund our schools at appropriate levels and at the same time be prudent and careful in how and where we spend these funds.
3. Recognize that we are a large system and "one size doesn't fit all." Don't ask all teachers to attend workshops and training designed for those who are underperforming.
4. Help principals assess the effectiveness of each teacher and the courage to deal with each teacher honestly and professionally to provide what that teacher needs to become a master teacher. Support for teachers is critical to keep good teachers and to help all teachers to grow in their skills and effectiveness.
5. Use principals more effectively. Provide support

and training for principals to be instructional leaders and effective managers of people. Give principals the tools they need to identify, hire, and keep good instructional leaders in the classrooms.

6. Use a more "collegial" rather a "hierarchical" approach in management. Teachers must have ownership in the goals if the goals are ever to be achieved. A process of open communication without reprisal must exist between the teachers, principals, area superintendents and superintendent.

7. Finally, we must move beyond the divisions that the end of busing and the "choice" plan have exacerbated, and work together as a community.

Rev. Richard C. Little

**An educator dissects issues, course at a time**

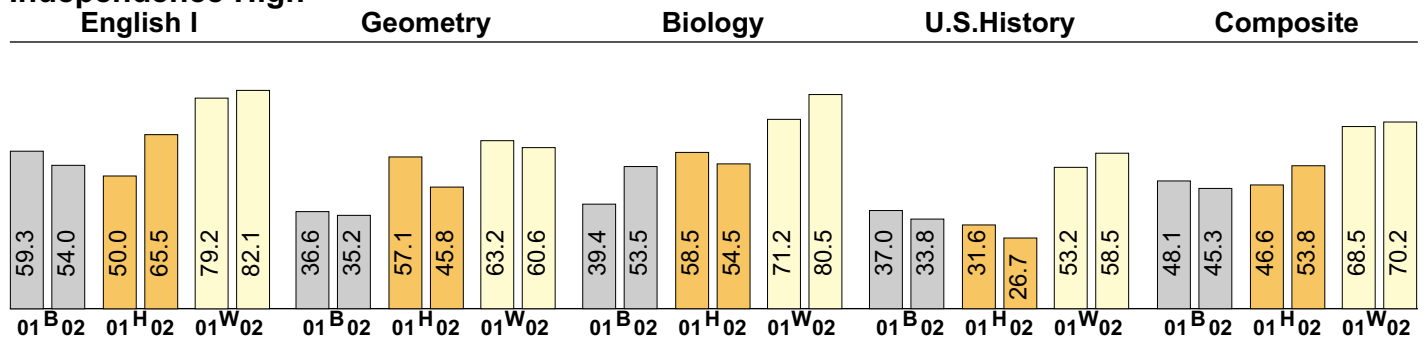
*The writer, a former CMS teacher and administrator, is director of curriculum and instruction for the Denver, Colo. Public Schools.*

The data provided could be more reflective of the pockets of learning and successful strategies employed if grouped as below, and listed with these caveats:

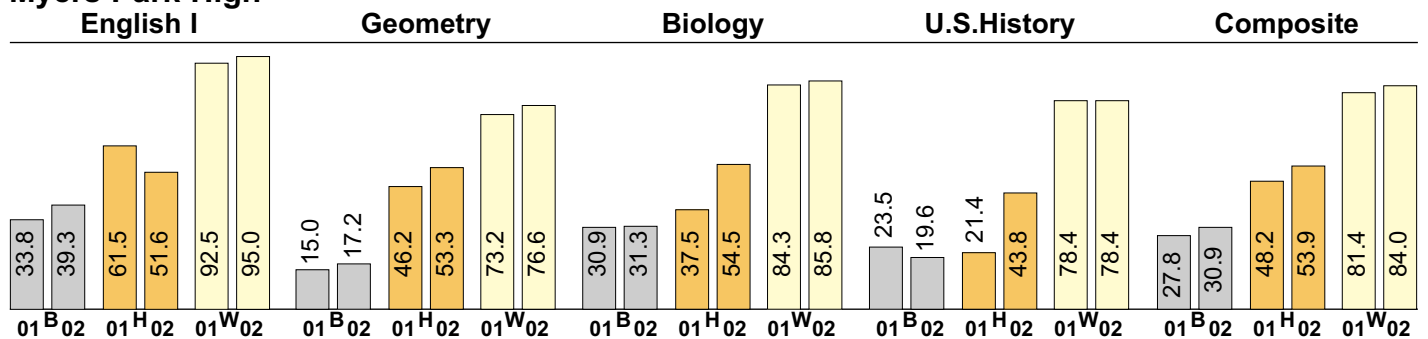
	'00	'01	'02
<b>English I (ninth grade)</b>	68%	67%	68%

English I has been double blocked, re-looped and paired with study skills-type other offerings to raise achievement levels. The higher scores should be attributed, in part, to the type and focus of teacher the ninth grade English teacher is – usually middle grades experienced and armed with strategies to effect positive outcomes in this age group. Improved scores past 2002 could be effected by increased focus on inquiry-based learning and critical-thinking skills, "training the thinker" in all students.

**Independence High**



**Myers Park High**



	'00	'01	'02
<b>ELP (ninth grade)</b>	61%	63%	60%

The EOC actually sees better scores when the students know informed test-taking strategies. Many items in the past have been those for which good judgment combined with basic knowledge are the simple keys to success.

	'00	'01	'02
<b>Biology I (ninth grade)</b>	59%	58%	65%

Until the last few years, Biology was not the de facto science course for ninth-graders. Even now, Active Physics and a few other variations change the testing population for this EOC. Rearrangement of course offerings in science in the middle schools and encouragement toward Biology has raised the science “bar”... and challenging instruction (i.e. immersion programs, inquiry, problem-based learning) will, I think, see these scores rise.

	'00	'01	'02
<b>Algebra I (ninth grade)</b>	53%	55%	64%

As there is a mixture of “on-grade-level” Algebra I students and those who are taking it in their later high school years, the scores are also a mixed picture. Intense attention to elementary mathematics and having a goal of 90% of the fifth-grade students on grade level in math will see this percentage also steadily rise.

	'00	'01	'02
<b>Geometry (10th grade)</b>	53%	52%	50%

Ah, geometry, a unique animal. Constructivist-based instruction, combined with technological manipulatives, could help those students who just can't “see it.” I agonizingly remember myself as just one of those students.

	'00	'01	'02
<b>Chemistry (10th grade)</b>	53%	54%	54%

Not all students take chemistry during their high school career. But, even having a more focused population doesn't appear to boost the scores in chemistry. Double blocking, giving time for in-depth chemistry labs, could enhance student understanding. AP Chemistry recommends that very strategy – another “gifted” strategy that holds vital importance for the success of all students.

	'00	'01	'02
<b>Algebra II (11th grade)</b>	61%	65%	65%

Combinations of Algebra II and Trigonometry – and flexible instructional venues across the mathematics classrooms – reflect solid results. Perhaps those innovative teachers and schedulers currently doing this should spread the word.

	'00	'01	'02
<b>U.S. History (11th grade)</b>	48%	53%	52%

Too much content, presented in a harsh, linear perspective to students – who lack skills in combining interpreting and collating concepts and facts – gives mediocre results. Team teaching, and student rotations to teachers with inspired expertise in different area of content, would assist the students in “absorbing it all”.

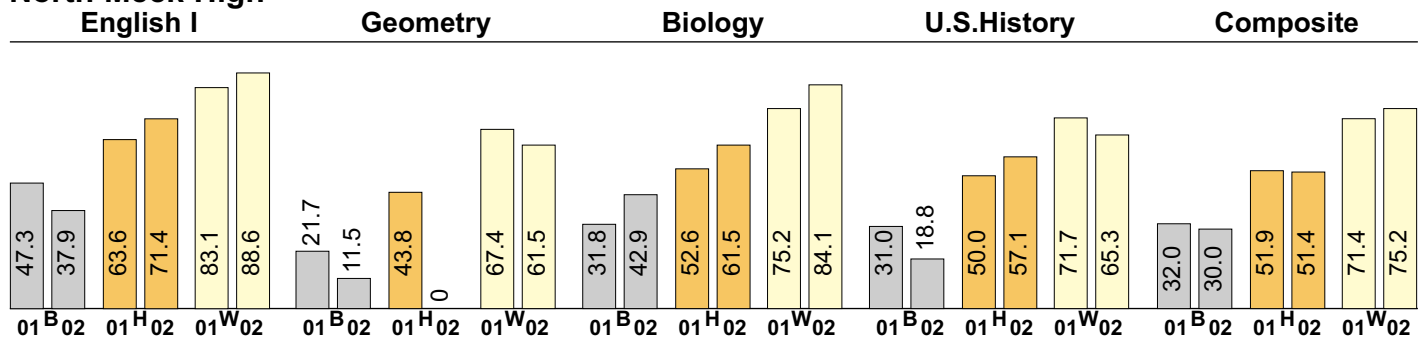
	'00	'01	'02
<b>Physics (11th or 12th grade)</b>	68%	70%	80%

A selective group of presumably more focused students: There is no reason, save stagnation, that this subject area will not make it to 90%.

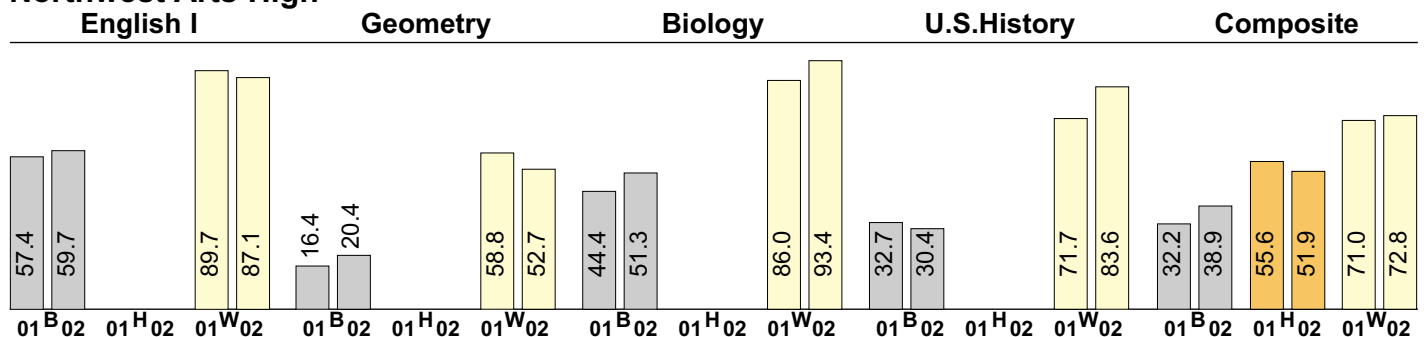
That's my opinion, and I'm stickin' to it (smile).

JoAnne Hilton

**North Meck High**



**Northwest Arts High**





# Year-In-Review: Reform ideas from near and far

Across the nation, school systems are also working to improve student achievement, struggling with some of the same issues that face the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. In the following pages, we republish a selection of news items and comments from Educate! on issues related to meeting Goals 2005. Each item carries the date of original publication in Educate!

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## The Achievement Gap

YEARINREVIEW – YEARINREVIEW – YEARINREVIEW – YEARINREVIEW – YEARINREVIEW – YEARINREVIEW

### Components of the gap

Jan. 6

“Achievement gaps occur for numerous and complex reasons,” says the final report from an achievement gap task force group, a part of a Department of Education Visionary Panel.

“Clearly, factors outside school control, such as parent’s level of income and education, are strongly connected with academic success of students. Although poverty is a factor, it can’t explain the entire achievement gap. Grade and test-score disparities are present in middle-class and wealthy families and communities, as well.

“Inadequate housing, high mobility, higher health risks, and unsafe communities are all factors in the achievement gap.

“But many factors well within school control also affect student achievement. In fact, research find-

ings indicate that all too often, schools may be contributing to the low performance of many students.

“School factors that lead to disparities in achievement for minority and low-income students include: lower expectations, watered-down curriculum and low-level instruction, inadequate or poor quality resources, language barriers, low numbers of experienced teachers, and cultural and social learning differences.”

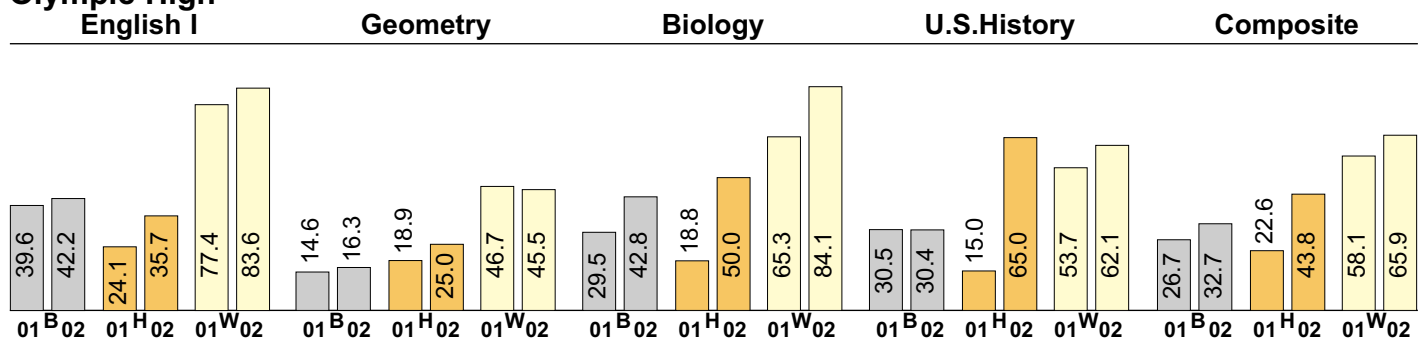
“There is a growing body of research showing the positive influences of teachers of color on the academic achievement and personal development of minority students,” Leslie T. Fenwick writes in the report, “Patterns of Excellence: Policy Perspectives on Diversity in Teaching and School Leadership.”

“Indeed, in schools where there are large numbers of African-American teachers, African-American students are less likely to be placed in special education classes; less likely to receive corporal punishment; less likely to be suspended or expelled; more likely to be placed in gifted and talented programs; and more likely to graduate from high school.”

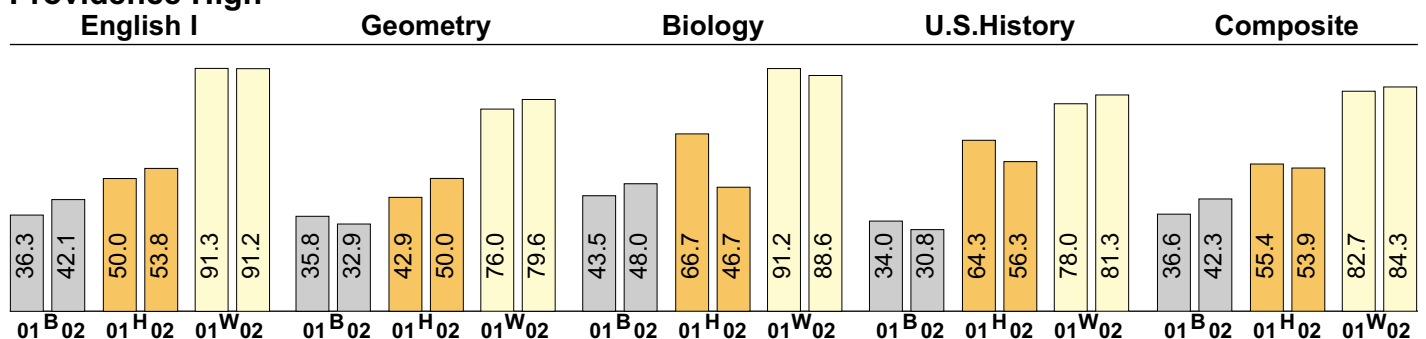
The report cites a 1999 study that “found that African-American teachers were more likely than their white peers to describe African-American male students as “intellectually capable” and to report that these students “engaged in positive school behaviors such as completing homework, attending school regularly, and acting as leaders in group situations.”

Many of the findings hold for Latino teachers, the

### Olympic High



### Providence High



report says.

Minority teachers are also needed as role models, the report argues.

“Teachers do more than just teach content. They stand as models for what it is like to be an educated person.... If students are to believe that they may one day be educated people who can make positive contributions to society, then they need to see diverse examples.”

**Over the breakfast table**

Aug. 22

When staff members discussed the achievement gap at Charlotte’s Tuesday Morning Breakfast Forum, members of the audience made these observations about education issues:

- Use of subsidized lunch numbers creates a stereotype of children on the program. And some children are on it only temporarily as their families hit bumps in the road.
- The CMS curriculum is Eurocentric and teaches black children to hate themselves. Professional development programs do not prepare teachers to cover African American history.
- Feedback from state testing is insufficient to help parents and tutors identify and reteach the skills the children were missing.
- Housing patterns and availability of low-income housing must be addressed.
- Teacher turnover is OK if the teachers leaving didn’t like their job or weren’t very good at it.
- Discussions about education never seem to address “the 22-ton elephant in the room” – a reference to racism.

**Vocabulary focus**

Aug. 22

At an American Educational Research Association conference, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development official G. Reid Lyon defended the federal focus on reading by poor children, according to the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development. “A 3-year-old child in an affluent family has a larger working vocabulary than the mother of a 3-year-old from a welfare family,” Lyon said. [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org)

**Tracking influences aspirations**

Sept. 5

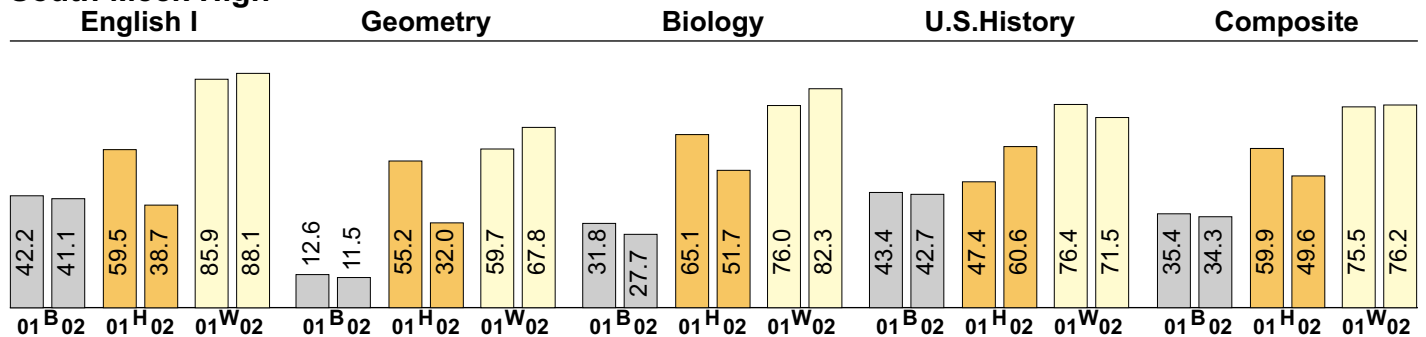
“Very few black students experience anything that approaches a genuinely desegregated environment,” UNCC sociology Roslyn Mickelson told the conference. The reason, she said, is that blacks get “tracked” into lower-level classes, and those classes become overwhelmingly minority. “Tracking is pervasive” and the impact shows up not only in grades and test scores but in academic and occupational aspirations. “These effects accumulate over time.”

“Within-school segregation by race is not simply a matter of black kids scoring lower and therefore they are in the lower tracks.” Among all highest-performing students, whites are three times more likely than blacks to be in top classes, she said.

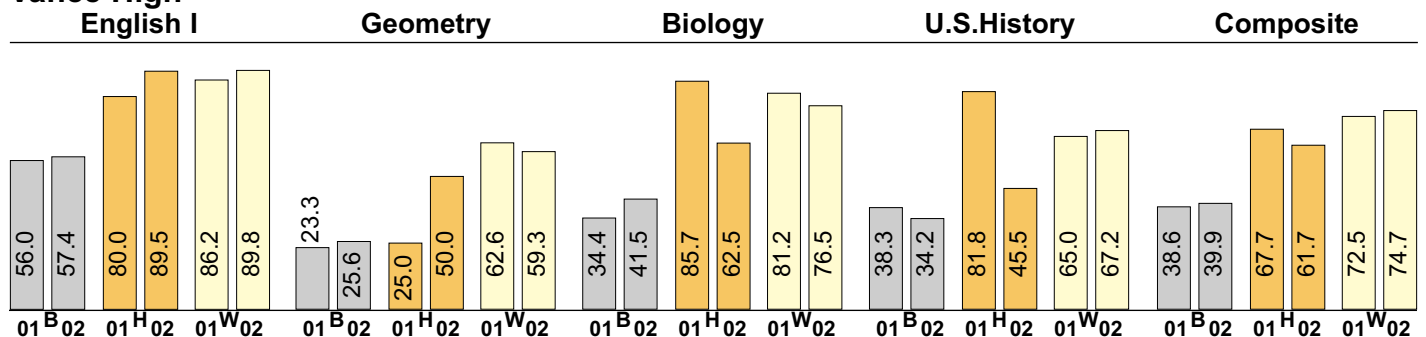
Her research data, she said, “indicates that tracking is not simply a matter of putting kids in classes based on their prior performance.... Race has something to do with the tracks where students learn.

“Even in an ostensibly desegregated school system, we still find whites have privileged access to

**South Meck High**



**Vance High**



**Year-In-Review: Reform Ideas from Near and Far**

higher tracks,” Mickelson said.  
 “I don’t believe that we can conclude that desegregation didn’t work. The policy was never fully implemented.”

“Citizens need to look more carefully” inside classrooms, Mickelson said.

**Much to do, but burnout is a risk**

Sept. 12

A report from the Council on Great City Schools says school staff face burnout. Former CMS Supt. Smith was described as “relentless” in pressuring staff to improve. Teachers and principals, the report says, found that the pressure “took a toll on their emotions and threatened to take the joy out of being educators and working with children.” Many district-sponsored events to celebrate success appear aimed at addressing morale. And in this regard, voters’ decision in November on CMS bonds may play a key role. Improving working conditions is a slow process and affects few sites at a time. But all teachers are aware when continual progress toward the goal is being made.

Still ahead are two big, and related, challenges. One is achievement at middle and high schools, an issue that will require far broader programs than pushing a few more students into International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement classes.

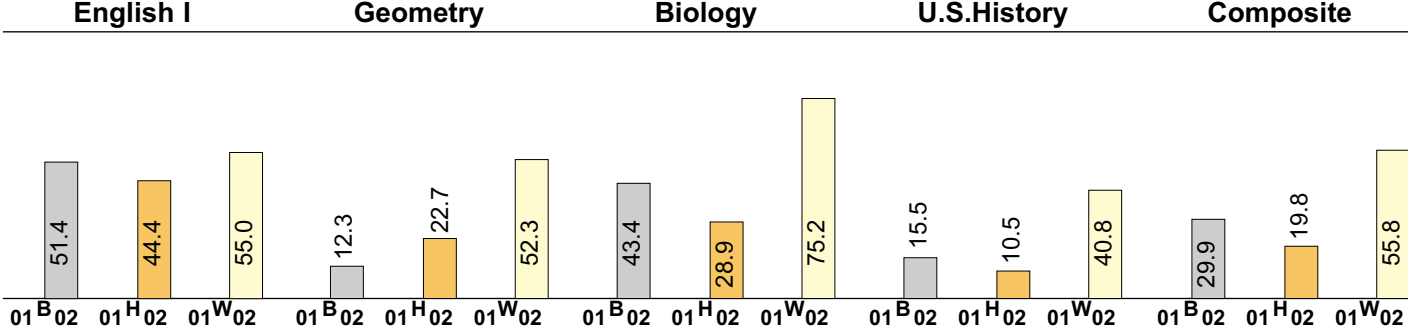
The other, and it is one apparently faced by all three districts studied, is how to move from success with low-achieving students to success with all others. The report says “...leaders of the case study districts readily admit that while their reforms addressed basic academic achievement, they did not yet create reforms that would be necessary to move to higher levels of academic performance on a systemwide basis.”

Last week, Supt. Jim Pughsley of CMS released a statement saying, “We must remain focused on our core business – teaching for learning – and we have to keep our expectations high for all students.”

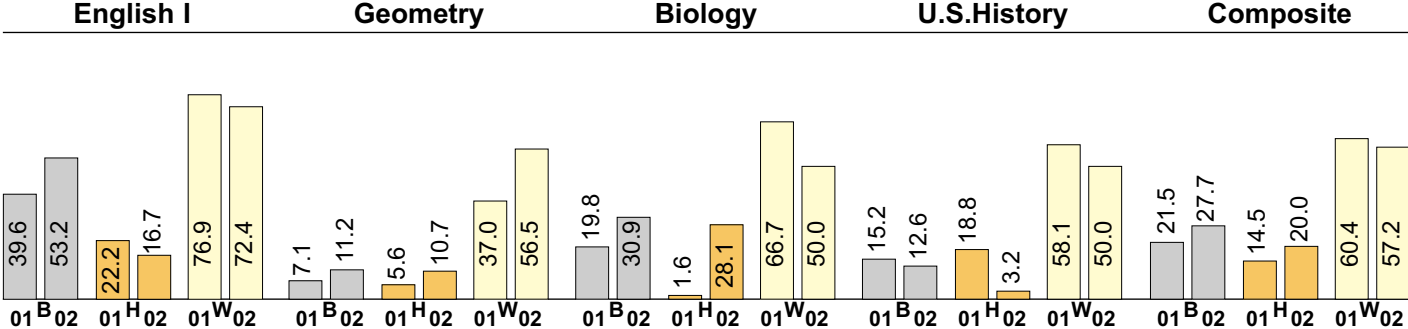
Tuesday night, in mentioning the council report to the school board, he said, “Certainly we expect to continue the march toward excellence.”

While Pughsley appeared to be admonishing his own staff, the entire community may need to take

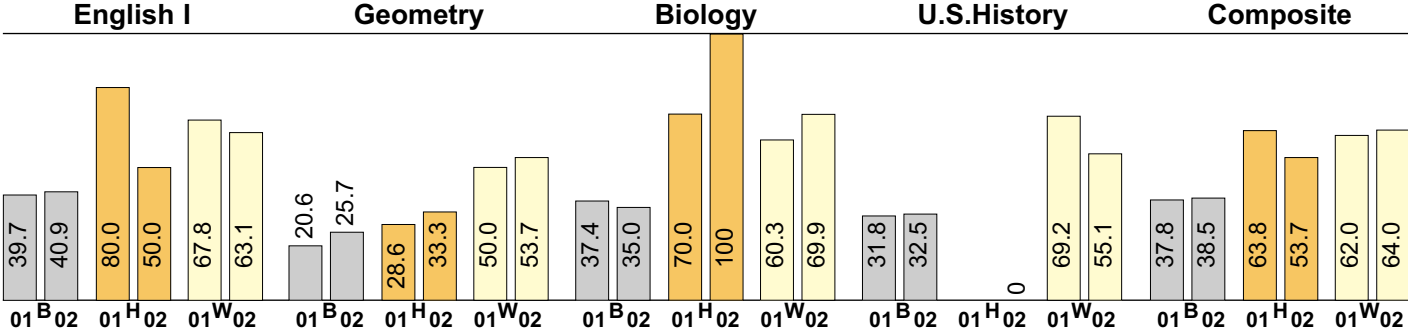
**E.E. Waddell High**



**West Charlotte High**



**West Meck High**



Source: N.C. DPI www.ncpublicschools.org

the message to heart.

### Black parents' choice leaves kids behind

Oct. 3

“Preyer Distinguished Professor at the UNC-CH School of Social Work Oscar Barbarin... found that regardless of family income, black parents placed less importance than other ethnic groups on the ability of their children to master letters and numbers in preschool. Such skills are important, the parents said, but it mattered more to them that their children find the classroom friendly and accepting.

“There appears to be more of a belief among black parents that once their child acclimates to the classroom, they can catch up quickly if they are behind,” Barbarin said.

“The children in the study did catch up on the simplest of skills such as recognizing numbers or sounding out letters one at a time. But by the end of kindergarten, a clear gap emerged along lines of race when the children were asked to add, subtract or identify the sound of a letter at the end of a word – skills that mark a child’s readiness to tackle first-

grade challenges.

“The research doesn’t tell us if those differences were the result of something the parents did, something the teachers did or a bit of both,” Barbarin said. ‘But you can see the children arrived with a small deficit that grew noticeably larger by the end of the year.’”  
www.newsobserver.com

### Retention not the answer to reading woes

Oct. 3

A study by the Southern Regional Education Board in 2001 said, “Repeating a grade is particularly ineffective for students who struggle with reading.” It notes that social promotion also leaves students behind their peers. The report suggests that the best answer is the time-tested but expensive solution: one-on-one attention.

Reducing retentions at 9th grade – not by calling them another name but by assuring that ninth-graders are on grade level in all coursework – is a vital public policy goal because of the high probability that this year’s ninth-grade retentions will be next year’s dropouts. And next year’s dropouts tend to be tomorrow’s inmates.

# Goals 2005: How high schools are doing

Listed under each goal are the relevant 2001-2002 test results for each high school. Data from CMS.

**Goal 1: 90% of students will be at or above grade level on each EOC test.**

**Goal 2: 50% of students will be at level 4 on each EOC test.**

**Goal 3: Black-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.**

**Goal 4: Hispanic-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.**

## Butler

Subject	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
Algebra I	54.4	7.8	14.5	7.6
Algebra II	78.7	34.1	18.8	12.2
Biology	81.3	32.0	22.2	28.0
Chemistry	43.1	10.4	29.1	18.6
ELPS	58.1	22.2	37.5	40.1
English I	69.3	31.8	32.2	12.7
Geometry	44.3	7.6	38.7	1.4
US History	60.4	18.3	14.5	7.6
Physics	72.1	37.7	16.7	75.1

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 973, 47 points to goal

## East Meck

Subject	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
Algebra I	55.4	8.1	14.8	0.3
Algebra II	69.5	36.6	33.2	17.1
Biology	66.3	23.2	43.1	24.1
Chemistry	54.3	20.9	39.1	23.6
ELPS	67.9	35.2	36.5	21.3
English I	72.3	34.7	33.1	25.2
Geometry	49.1	13.2	46.3	37.5
US History	60.4	19.2	14.8	0.3
Physics	87.0	40.6	28.5	9.0

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 1025, 5 points above goal

## Mothers, talk to your babies

Oct. 10

In “Inequality at the Starting Gate” published by the Economic Policy Institute, University of Michigan writers Valerie Lee and David Burkam reviewed recent studies and found that they “demonstrate quite conclusively that mothers’ speech (its frequency, elaboration, and verbal interchanges with children) is closely linked to young children’s vocabulary development. Moreover, early vocabulary development is strongly associated with later school performance.

“One study, in which researchers observed mother-child interactions every month for the first two years of children’s lives, concluded that the elaboration of mothers’ language interactions with their young children was strongly differentiated by social class (Hart and Risley 1995).

“Moreover, socially linked language development observed in very young children was found to be quite stable throughout elementary school (i.e., schooling did not ameliorate these socially based language differences developed in infancy).”

## The kids passed over during reform

Oct. 31

A former CMS official says there’s one more factor to consider. The youth now repeating ninth grade were in fourth grade when former Supt. Eric Smith arrived. Smith’s focus was on improving academic

rigor of lower grades, and adding pre-kindergarten. These ninth-graders are the last not touched by those reforms.

The good news, the ex-official says, is that future ninth-graders will be better prepared. The bad news is that the kids just held back have been set up to drop out.

## Catching up, with help from peers

Oct. 31

A Connecticut study has found that 4-year-olds from low-income families who are in preschool with children from more affluent families learn vocabulary six times faster than low-income peers in classrooms without that economic diversity, the Hartford Courant reported. Connecticut officials said the St. Joseph College study suggested the value of cross-class education. Research suggests that larger vocabularies lead to more success with reading, and that children without those large vocabularies by the age of 3 or 4 find it difficult to catch up when they enter kindergarten. [www.ctnow.com](http://www.ctnow.com)

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## Buildings

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## Facilities need to support curriculum

March 17

*CMS Building Services Director Guy Chamberlain,*

## Goals 2005

**Goal 1: 90% of students will be at or above grade level on each EOC test.**

**Goal 2: 50% of students will be at level 4 on each EOC test.**

**Goal 3: Black-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.**

**Goal 4: Hispanic-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.**

### Garinger

Algebra I	39.9		5.2		30.8		26.0	
Algebra II	25.7		3.2		12.4		11.8	
Biology	42.6		4.8		24.4		19.1	
Chemistry	21.3		3.7		10.6		21.9	
ELPS	42.8		7.3		23.6		26.5	
English I	53.2		11.2		15.9		29.2	
Geometry	23.0		1.5		25.6		18.2	
US History	20.8		3.4		30.8		26.0	
Physics	26.7		0		20.0		100.0	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 843, 177 points to goal

### Harding

Algebra I	49.6		5.1		20.4		27.5	
Algebra II	72.1		38.6		23.8		10.1	
Biology	65.6		21.8		31.4		20.9	
Chemistry	54.0		22.8		21.2		14.8	
ELPS	65.4		28.3		30.5		19.3	
English I	79.3		35.4		20.6		21.4	
Geometry	47.4		9.5		26.2		4.4	
US History	59.5		25.1		20.4		27.5	
Physics	68.9		26.1		39.8		35.7	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 984, 36 points to goal



**Year-In-Review: Reform Ideas from Near and Far**

*explaining to school board a capital improvements plan and outline for a \$215 million bond issue approved in November:*

“The average age of our schools is about 30 years. In 1972 we didn’t have any ESL programs. We didn’t have any federally mandated EC programs. We didn’t have pre-K – in fact, we didn’t have kindergarten. We didn’t have computers, and we clearly didn’t have the same graduation requirements that we have today.

“We have a lot of schools that, from a space standpoint, cannot deliver the elementary, middle and high school curriculum. Therefore, we have called for a lot of improvements that we call baseline standards.

“By the end of the currently funded program, 57 of 157 of our schools will meet the baseline standards. We still have 100 schools which will not.

“There’s a variation amongst those. Clearly the ones that are worst are those that we have recommended in this plan. Some that are towards the bottom need only minor renovation. And in 10 years we will get to all of them.”

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**Discipline**

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May 12

As the number of out-of-school suspensions of chil-

dren 5 to 8 years old rises in Minnesota, educators are questioning the practice, the Pioneer Press reported. The focus on discipline comes in the wake of Minneapolis schools intervening at Banneker Community School, which suspended 42% of its students last school year. [www.twincities.com](http://www.twincities.com)

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**Finance**

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**Pay to play sports**

Aug. 15

In the Baltimore area, Carroll County Maryland schools decided to charge \$60 per athletic season per player. Fees will be waived for students in financial hardship or on the reduced-price lunch program. The fees should raise \$250,000 at a time the schools cannot fully underwrite athletic program costs, the Sun reported. [www.sunspot.com](http://www.sunspot.com)

**Federal promises to pay were broken**

Sept. 12

Vermont Sen. Jim Jeffords, writing in The Hill newspaper, recalled that in 1967 the Congress agreed to pay 40% of the additional costs of providing special education to mentally and physically handicapped children. The \$7.4 billion the U.S. will spend this year will cover only 17% of the bill. “Our

**Goals 2005**

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**Goal 2: 50% of students will be at level 4 on each EOC test.**

**Goal 3: Black-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.**

**Goal 4: Hispanic-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.**

**Hopewell**

Algebra I	48.6		10.1		37.8		39.2	
Algebra II	78.0		31.4		17.5		6.5	
Biology	75.4		18.6		34.5		15.3	
Chemistry	68.4		26.2		23.9		10.3	
ELPS	64.4		26.9		41.9		24.9	
English I	70.7		29.3		42.7		6.5	
Geometry	58.3		10.9		36.0		48.1	
US History	55.5		16.3		37.8		39.2	
Physics	94.7		36.8		6.7		6.7	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: None (new school)

**Independence**

Algebra I	46.8		5.4		26.3		1.0	
Algebra II	66.3		23.0		13.5		10.5	
Biology	67.7		16.6		26.0		26.0	
Chemistry	54.4		17.3		24.7		6.4	
ELPS	60.9		26.7		27.0		32.6	
English I	68.8		30.7		27.1		16.8	
Geometry	48.5		11.2		26.5		13.3	
US History	47.3		14.7		26.3		1.0	
Physics	84.0		34.6		3.6		18.8	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 1000, 20 points to goal



states, our towns and our local taxpayers are left to foot the bill for the federal government's failure to keep its promise," Jeffords wrote. [www.hillnews.com](http://www.hillnews.com)

one grateful alumnus.

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

**CMS budget: Big stresses ahead**

Oct. 10

Business execs meeting as the Education Budget Advisory Committee believe CMS must make its budget documents both easier to understand and more detailed if it is to win county support for future budget increases.

But they also have explored in some detail "the trip not yet taken" – what it will cost to bring all children to grade level. One estimate: A budget that Pughsley says is at about \$7,200 per student has a rising number of kids whose education costs \$10,000.

**Madison to endow individual schools**

Dec. 5

In Madison, Wisconsin, citizens are raising \$10,000 at each of the city's schools to begin an endowment for each school, the Wisconsin State Journal reported. While critics say endowments will only multiply the disparities between schools in rich and poor neighborhoods, advocates say they can't wait for tax support to provide supplements to strapped operating budgets. And one school serving a high-poverty neighborhood was among the first three schools to open endowments, thanks largely to

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**Heroes & Sage Advice**  
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**A thirst for knowledge**

Jan. 27

And now let us celebrate a milestone for Cecil Smith of Thousand Oaks, Calif. The San Francisco Chronicle reported that Smith has been awarded his GED. Smith had to leave school after both his parents died. But after many years working as an upholsterer, he went back and didn't let poor vision, hearing problems or even an artificial hip deter him. Smith, new GED graduate, is 94.

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

**Where kids are, there will your treasure be**

Feb. 17

*Social reformer and suffragist Susan B. Anthony, quoted by Public Education Network:*

"If all the rich and all of the church people should send their children to the public schools, they would feel bound to concentrate their money on improving these schools until they met the highest ideals."

<b>Goals 2005</b>	<b>Goal 1: 90% of students will be at or above grade level on each EOC test.</b>	<b>Goal 2: 50% of students will be at level 4 on each EOC test.</b>	<b>Goal 3: Black-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.</b>	<b>Goal 4: Hispanic-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.</b>
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**Myers Park**

Algebra I	41.7		5.8		36.1		7.6	
Algebra II	80.2		52.0		39.2		14.1	
Biology	70.1		27.6		54.8		29.6	
Chemistry	68.6		30.4		44.9		24.7	
ELPS	77.7		49.7		51.1		46.2	
English I	75.7		47.0		53.8		43.3	
Geometry	58.2		20.3		61.9		24.4	
US History	61.1		25.5		36.1		7.6	
Physics	91.7		51.9		22.7		8.0	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 1113, 93 points above goal

**North Meck**

Algebra I	45.8		6.8		35.5		0.8	
Algebra II	64.3		21.2		35.6		8.9	
Biology	75.3		27.4		42.1		22.4	
Chemistry	64.5		33.9		33.5		25.4	
ELPS	72.0		36.5		50.6		41.9	
English I	74.9		40.8		50.0		17.7	
Geometry	47.6		14.6		51.7		62.1	
US History	56.1		17.9		35.5		0.8	
Physics	85.5		43.6		1.0		15.3	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 1035, 15 points above goal

**Problems are as deep as American society**

Nov. 21

The No Child Left Behind law's standard is that a school must have students in all demographic groups making progress. A Chicago Tribune study of last year's Illinois test scores showed that at least 40% of the state's schools, including many highly-touted suburban schools, would have failed the No Child standard. While 82% of white students passed reading and math tests, 35% of black students did. Harvard expert Gary Orfield told the Tribune, "Our society is stratified and segregated, and that affects schoolkids' opportunities.... To really solve the problem would require that we have a much more equal society. You'd have to look at social policy, housing patterns, all kinds of things.... People who think it's only a school problem are deluding themselves."

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

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**Kids and How They Learn**

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**What kids do and don't care about**

Jan. 6

Writer Elinor Burkett, 55, about attending high school for a writing project, in an interview with Sage Stossel for *Atlantic Unbound*:

"The truth is, most kids do not feel bad if other

kids are considered smarter than they are. Their parents feel bad – their parents can't stand it – but I have yet to find a regular public high school where being the smartest kid is better than being the prettiest girl...."

**Can we imagine what kids dream of being?**

Feb. 10

Mary Ellen Dakin, *Harvard Educational Review*: "We do not fail when our children become something other than what we dream for them; we fail when our words, our attitudes, and our actions impoverish their dreams. And the very young, I suspect, dream big."

<http://gseweb.harvard.edu/~hepg/dakin.htm>

**Cooperative learning knows no season**

March 24

It's 1971, and the Austin, Texas schools had just been desegregated. Distrust among students was running high. Elliot Aronson, a professor, and some of his graduate students were looking for a way to turn competition into cooperation.

Aronson now has his solution on a Web site – and in use at what he estimates to be 20% of America's schools. He called his solution the Jigsaw Classroom. The theory is this:

Divide students into small groups. Divide a learning challenge into small parts. Give each student responsibility for learning one part, and the oppor-

**Goals 2005**

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**Goal 4: Hispanic-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.**

**Northwest**

Algebra I	48.1		8.2		24.6		35.7	
Algebra II	51.6		14.5		36.8		11.2	
Biology	73.6		23.0		42.7		43.4	
Chemistry	60.3		22.7		38.3		34.5	
ELPS	57.3		17.1		36.7		50.0	
English I	73.8		33.3		31.0		14.0	
Geometry	41.1		7.9		33.0		12.8	
US History	65.7		22.3		24.6		35.7	
Physics	86.5		40.5		18.2		10.4	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 990, 30 points to goal

**Olympic**

Algebra I	36.2		2.6		14.4		11.4	
Algebra II	50.8		8.9		20.8		13.1	
Biology	62.7		14.5		37.7		31.1	
Chemistry	31.1		7.4		27.9		26.1	
ELPS	52.2		18.4		40.1		35.2	
English I	60.4		19.4		37.6		49.0	
Geometry	29.7		3.4		29.1		21.9	
US History	48.4		11.6		14.4		11.4	
Physics	53.6		17.9		11.0		16.6	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 879, 141 points to goal

**Year-In-Review: Reform Ideas from Near and Far**

tunity to teach the others that part. When the work is done, every student is ready for the test. Aronson reflects on the benefits on his Web site:

“It is a remarkably efficient way to learn the material. But even more important, the jigsaw process encourages listening, engagement and empathy by giving each member of the group an essential part to play in the academic activity.”

www.jigsaw.org

**Brain research helps set classroom agenda**

March 24

An article for the Detroit Free Press reviewed area efforts to put into the classroom the lessons learned from recent brain research on how people learn.

Examples: Kindergartners chant the alphabet while on a trampoline. Drawing is encouraged as a part of other lessons. Multi-age classrooms let children stay with a teacher for more than a year. Classes use daily themes. And, shades of Socrates, when teachers are asked questions, they ask their students questions back, to put “the responsibility for learning on them.” www.detroitfreepress.com

**Music is one key way children learn**

March 27

Carolyn Hart, president of the Mecklenburg County Medical Society speaking for 1,400 physicians, urged the CMS school board to continue music programs “for the health and mental develop-

ment of the children of this community.”

“Music is not the thing to cut. It improves test scores... language scores... reading ... teamwork and it improves the sense of self-confidence. This has all been well-proven for music. It has not been proven for sports.”

Hart recalled some exceptional children who did well in music. “Sometimes music is the only thing they have, the only thing they can excel in, the reason they go to school.”

**Reaching kids with alternate learning styles**

March 27

The Denver Post profiled a Core Academic REengagement program for at-risk 7th- and 8th-graders where subjects are covered, but through projects, not subject classes. The 63-student program focuses on alternative learning styles, and allows students who get low grades on projects to learn more and re-do work for a better grade.

www.denverpost.com

**Kids learn brand consciousness early**

Apr 7

Infants begin to understand brand names and logos, the Christian Science Monitor reported. By age 2, they begin asking for them by name. By age 3, they’re comparing them. By age 6, they know 200 brands. To be one of those 200, more companies are actively targeting children 0-3 with branded prod-

<b>Goals 2005</b>	<b>Goal 1: 90% of students will be at or above grade level on each EOC test.</b>	<b>Goal 2: 50% of students will be at level 4 on each EOC test.</b>	<b>Goal 3: Black-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.</b>	<b>Goal 4: Hispanic-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.</b>
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**Providence**

Algebra I	57.1	9.8	31.4	14.8
Algebra II	88.2	53.5	26.5	6.4
Biology	82.4	34.5	40.7	41.9
Chemistry	74.0	37.0	24.4	13.2
ELPS	78.6	46.0	42.4	44.3
English I	81.7	47.4	46.1	37.4
Geometry	73.3	29.0	46.8	30.1
US History	73.5	32.2	31.4	14.8
Physics	80.5	51.4	7.2	20.3

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 1,093, 73 points above goal

**South Meck**

Algebra I	61.5	15.2	31.6	12.6
Algebra II	65.5	38.3	33.5	22.5
Biology	68.3	24.5	53.7	31.0
Chemistry	63.9	27.2	31.5	9.0
ELPS	67.4	31.3	54.5	43.7
English I	72.4	35.6	46.1	49.1
Geometry	54.0	15.3	54.3	34.8
US History	65.3	27.0	31.6	12.6
Physics	87.1	51.4	7.7	12.3

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 998, 22 points to goal

ucts.

www.csmonitor.com

### Parents in the class promotes learning

April 7

The English Academy in a Los Angeles elementary school welcomes non-English-speaking parents to their children's classrooms, where everyone learns English together, the Los Angeles Times reported. Attendance by parents and even toddlers, once thought to be distracting, has instead created a family environment that encourages shy children and helps adults learn a new language and culture. The pilot program may be expanded. www.latimes.com

### What middle schoolers should be reading

May 5

Maryland author Margaret Meacham told a group of middle schoolers that being read to as a second-grader helped her decide to be a writer, the Baltimore Sun reported. Part of her advice to the students: "Read what you like and don't like...." www.sunspot.com

### Economic integration promotes learning

Aug. 15

Economic integration: In a Denver Post essay, Piton Foundation program officer Alan Gottlieb argues that test scores from Denver and elsewhere show two things: that low-income children in high-poverty schools do less well academically than their

low-income peers attending schools where fewer than 50% of the students are low-income; and that the education of better-off children does not suffer when low-income children are present. Gottlieb writes: "If we can establish that low-income children learn best in environments where few of their peers are poor, why do we persist in a system of neighborhood schools, most of which are segregated by socioeconomic status?" www.detroitpost.com

### Kids can develop long attention spans

Aug. 29

Teachers Magazine found jazz trumpeter Wynton Marsalis in Harlem teaching kids about the late saxophonist John Coltrane. During the show, many kids were restless, but Marsalis didn't blame kids: "If we expected them to do it, they would do it. Kids are unbelievable. Can a kid have a 20-minute attention span? Yeah, definitely, if they're expected to have that." www.teachermagazine.org

### New tools put kids in control of learning pace

Sept. 12

In a review of how a technology lab changed outcomes for at-risk learners, Scott Day noted that students vastly preferred videotaped or computer-stored instructor lessons to seeing the same material live. Slower learners could simply rewind to review material they didn't catch the first time, reducing their stress levels. www.principals.org

## Goals 2005

**Goal 1: 90% of students will be at or above grade level on each EOC test.**

**Goal 2: 50% of students will be at level 4 on each EOC test.**

**Goal 3: Black-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.**

**Goal 4: Hispanic-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.**

### Vance

Subject	Score	Goal 1 Progress	Goal 2 Progress	Goal 3 Progress	Goal 4 Progress			
Algebra I	33.7		3.3		29.6		21.2	
Algebra II	58.0		23.3		35.1		8.8	
Biology	57.1		11.1		35.5		13.7	
Chemistry	63.5		21.7		35.0		28.3	
ELPS	61.2		25.4		34.7		3.6	
English I	73.0		34.7		31.7		1.1	
Geometry	41.0		8.2		32.5		9.5	
US History	50.3		15.5		29.6		21.2	
Physics	82.2		37.6		16.7		13.3	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 974, 46 points to goal

### E.E. Waddell

Subject	Score	Goal 1 Progress	Goal 2 Progress	Goal 3 Progress	Goal 4 Progress			
Algebra I	29.9		2.6		16.3		11.9	
Algebra II	32.8		3.1		17.4		31.5	
Biology	54.9		4.5		31.9		46.4	
Chemistry	29.8		4.3		26.0		16.5	
ELPS	41.9		8.0		25.6		46.1	
English I	50.1		17.3		23.7		57.7	
Geometry	29.7		0.9		40.1		29.7	
US History	24.8		3.3		16.3		11.9	
Physics	33.3		8.3		57.2		57.2	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: None (new school)

**Book signals to peers that you're a dummy**

Oct. 31

A CMS teacher says his Level 2 kids get a different book from Level 3 kids, and the book stays in their locker or at home. That's because to be seen with the book is to be identified as a "2," as a dummy.

**Schools must know their children**

Oct. 31

Education researcher Anne Wheelock tells of a middle school that sends representatives each spring to the elementaries from which it draws and tells the fifth-graders to be ready to say in what ways they're smart in each area of the curriculum. Then each fifth-grader, during a visit to the middle school, is interviewed and the students get to explain the ways in which they're smart. Wheelock says teachers end up knowing more about their incoming sixth-graders than they know about their departing eighth-graders. And the information helps shape how the children can be most effectively taught.

**Kids learn when exercises make it real**

Nov. 7

Teacher educator Brenda Townsend made her presentation to a teacher conference with the help of a classroom full of black children, the Miami Herald

reported. Teachers saw first-hand how to substitute traditional African values celebrated at Kwanzaa for regular classroom "rules," and how to take, for example, cornrows as an illustration of geometry. "What we're saying is they don't have to check their culture at the door," Townsend told the Herald. Added her assistant, "we're talking about what we need to do to fix ourselves as educators. The children don't need to be fixed." [www.miami.com](http://www.miami.com)

**Veni vidi dormivi**

Nov. 14

The Power Nap Club ("I came, I saw, I slept") is 4 years old and members are still nodding off at Greenwich High in Greenwich, Conn., the Chicago Tribune reported. The high-achieving students learn relaxation techniques or just fall asleep at 20-minute meetings Monday afternoons.

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

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**Mentoring**

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**Full-timers get the job done better**

Feb. 17

Vontrese Fedrick is a second-year math teacher at Waddell High. She had a part-time mentor last year, but got little support because the mentor had his own classes to tend.

**Goals 2005**

**Goal 1: 90% of students will be at or above grade level on each EOC test.**

**Goal 2: 50% of students will be at level 4 on each EOC test.**

**Goal 3: Black-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.**

**Goal 4: Hispanic-white EOC gap will be no more than 10 points.**

**West Charlotte**

Algebra I	32.1		3.3		19.9		25.3	
Algebra II	31.7		2.6		29.0		18.9	
Biology	32.9		1.4		19.1		21.9	
Chemistry	19.0		1.6		42.6		34.0	
ELPS	33.5		5.3		31.1		38.7	
English I	53.9		13.7		18.6		55.7	
Geometry	15.1		0.5		45.3		45.8	
US History	16.1		2.9		19.9		25.3	
Physics	58.8		20.6		22.6		75.0	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 834, 186 points to goal

**West Meck**

Algebra I	47.7		7.3		15.7		24.3	
Algebra II	79.8		32.8		16.9		9.3	
Biology	47.2		7.1		34.2		29.3	
Chemistry	50.0		15.3		20.9		38.0	
ELPS	44.6		13.5		25.8		8.5	
English I	47.8		14.4		22.9		14.6	
Geometry	35.3		5.0		27.7		20.4	
US History	38.3		11.4		15.7		24.3	
Physics	83.3		16.7		0		100.0	

SAT goal: Meet National average (currently 1020); 2002 score: 901, 119 points to goal

## Year-In-Review: Reform Ideas from Near and Far

This year, working with a full-time mentor, the relationship has bloomed, and helped her “reflect on what went well” in the classroom and how to improve. “Many days, some of us would have quit” without the support of an experienced mentor, she told the CMS school board.

## Greatest need is at Equity Plus II schools

April 21

*Charlotte Chamber group vice president for education Kit Cramer:*

“We know that right now the Equity Plus II schools have a greater share of teachers who have less experience. Those folks need to be mentored in order to build their skills in working with all kids, as well as to retain them in the profession.

“There’s a 32% teacher turnover rate for first-through third-year teachers in our district. If we can really get to the issue of improving our teachers’ working conditions, including providing them with a mentor in the early years, we can make a significant impact on the situation. This issue is critically important to our Equity Plus schools and students.”

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## Parents

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## Blame game can be poison

April 7

While teachers believe parents are mostly to blame for children’s misbehavior, parents often think their children are acting out in protest of teachers’ playing favorites, “picking” on students or being rude, the BBC reported. And the clashing views poison home-school communication. Parental attitudes were measured in a Nottingham University study by psychologists.

[www.news.bbc.co.uk](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk)

## Personal contact beats the telephone

Aug. 15

The National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, in a list of suggestions for nurturing school ties with families, mentioned brochures and signs and such, then added, “Personal contact, whether by telephone or in person, is the best way to promote two-way communication.” [www.ncpie.org](http://www.ncpie.org)

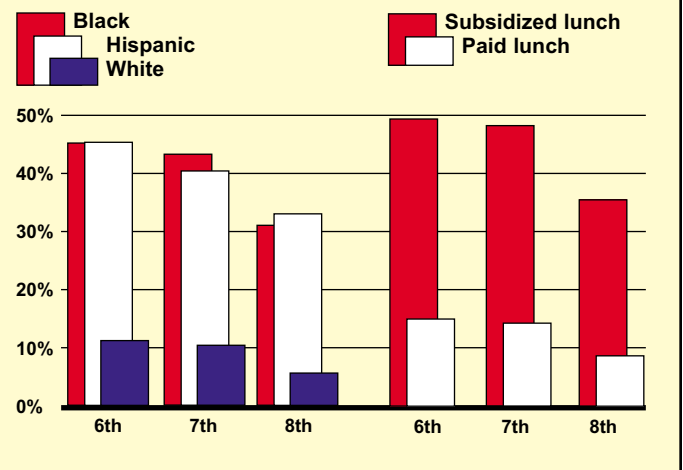
## To improve attendance, send parents to jail?

Feb. 3

As a last resort, Florida’s school systems take parents before a judge when students have excessive absences, the St. Petersburg Times reported. Cases cited involved a 9-year-old’s more than 300 missed days; a 15-year-old’s 560 absences since kindergarten. The report cited a Minneapolis education study that found attendance to be a better predictor of test scores than poverty. [www.sptimes.com](http://www.sptimes.com)

## Below-grade, middle school

Percentage of CMS middle school students reading below grade level as tested last spring on state end-of-grade tests, by group:



## Posting data online eliminates arguments

Oct. 24

Minneapolis area schools are putting attendance, grading data and even homework assignments online for parents to check at home, the Star Tribune reported. The result: No more arguments about what homework’s to be done, and lots of warning if assignments aren’t getting turned in. Educators said skipping class is more in control, and work is getting done on time. They see the system as a supplement, but acknowledge it is deepening the digital divide between parents who do and do not have Internet access. [www.startribune.com](http://www.startribune.com)

## Trust is the key to success

Oct. 24

Two researchers believe trust is what leads to school improvement, Education Week reported. Anthony Bryk and Barbara Schneider, in a study measuring trust among staff and between schools and parents in Chicago’s schools, found that schools with high levels of trust in 1994 were three times more likely to report subsequent test-score gains. And schools with low levels of trust in both 1994 and 1997 had “virtually no chance of showing improvement in either reading or mathematics,” the researchers said. [www.edweek.com](http://www.edweek.com)

## Upside and downside to parent volunteers

Nov. 7

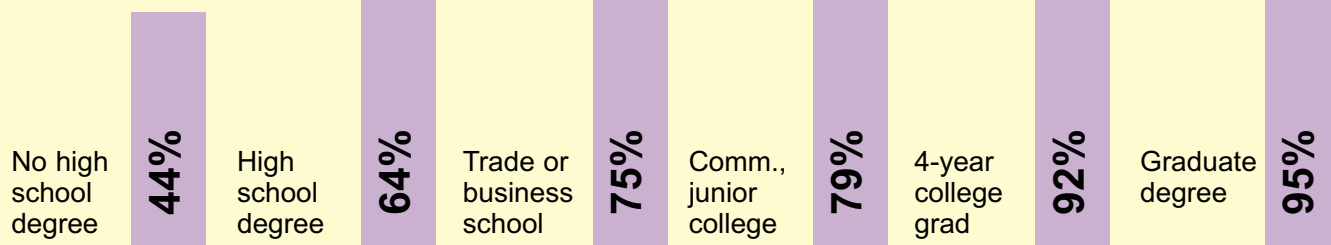
Parent involvement has been taken to an unusual level at two Spokane, Wash., elementaries, Education Week reported. Parents willing to volunteer 90 hours per year see their kids exposed to additional field trips and a lot more adult attention



## The parent education effect

Does every child have an equal chance? Here are the percentages of CMS students on or above grade level in reading, by level of parent education, based on spring 2002 composite grade 3-8 scores on N.C. end-of-grade tests.

**Source:** N.C. Dept. of Public Instruction



in class – in one class, three adult volunteers in the morning, three more in the afternoon. Critics say that the programs enroll few minorities and few poor children. [www.edweek.com](http://www.edweek.com)

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## Teachers

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### Costs of teacher turnover are ‘astronomical’

Feb. 17

CMS Supt. Eric Smith told the committee that “the cost of recruitment, hiring and training is astronomical,” but an even higher cost is paid by students. Teacher turnover in the 22% range annually “forces the system to change what it is teaching and how it is teaching it. Everything becomes more structured, more textbook-oriented.... We can’t do higher-order things because you don’t have time to get to the higher order.”

### Judge ‘knows’ that schools can teach all

Feb. 24

“I know now,” Judge Howard Manning said Friday, that teachers “know how to teach” at-risk children – and yet many don’t.

“Superintendents and principals who know what they’re doing don’t have problems” getting at-risk children on grade level. “Human resources,” he said, “are the No. 1 preventative in fighting against this disease”....

He also suggested that it is not all children labeled by the state as at-risk of failure who are not getting an education. He asserted, in fact, that it was chiefly African-American children who the schools were leaving behind.

“It just scares me to death that a teacher needs to be retrained if they see 10 black kids in a classroom

– they have to be retrained to look at those children as children who can succeed.”

### \$10,000 bonus at low-performing school

March 10

A Missouri task force suggests the state pay \$10,000 annual bonuses to top teachers working in low-performing schools, the Post Dispatch reported.

[www.post-dispatch.com](http://www.post-dispatch.com)

### Colleges take on teacher training role

March 10

The Chronicle of Higher Education reported that a number of states are giving community colleges a direct role in training teachers. Students at those institutions are more racially diverse and could fill up to a quarter of the need for teachers over the next decade.

<http://chronicle.com>

### Private school turnover higher

April 21

Teachers are leaving private schools at even higher rates than at public schools, Education Week quoted University of Pennsylvania researcher Richard Ingersoll as saying. Ingersoll’s work, based on responses to a ’94-’95 federal survey, showed overall public teacher turnover of 12.4% a year. It was 15.2% among teachers at schools with a large number of poor students; 18.9% at private schools; 22.8% at small private schools. [www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org)

### \$10,000 toward a home purchase

May 12

For teachers willing to buy a house in a struggling neighborhood and stay at the area school for five years, Chattanooga will advance \$10,000 toward the purchase price, the Chattanooga Times & Free Press reported. The program is financed by local foundations, and at least for the first 60 recipients,

**Year-In-Review: Reform Ideas from Near and Far**

will cut a \$100,000 mortgage from \$847 a monthly to \$695. [www.timesfreepress.com](http://www.timesfreepress.com)

**Teacher attitudes impact behavior, kids say**

May 19

A two-year-old alternative program for in-school suspension in St. Paul, Minn., has surveyed its former students and found a direct correlation between students' unacceptable behavior and the students' perception of how much their teachers care about them, the Pioneer Press reported.

[www.twincities.com](http://www.twincities.com)**Teacher quality is most important ingredient**

Aug. 22

The Public Policy Institute of California, studying the state's six-year-old initiative to cut class size, said the initiative has not delivered better education because teacher quality has deteriorated, USA Today reported. Lower quality teaching "negated nearly all the benefits from cutting class size," the paper said in an editorial. "States still pouring millions into the effort need to study the lessons from California: Teacher quality trumps class size every time."

[www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com)**A teacher's true calling**

Aug. 29

Writing in the New York Times, University of Virginia English teacher Mark Edmundson says the "consumer-oriented, test-obsessed state of American learning" is ruining education. "Socrates, the philosopher Alexander Nehamas has observed, looked into the minds and hearts of his students and let them know, kindly, generously, that he did not much like what he saw. Then he began to help them to change."

[www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)**Lessons learn by first-year teacher**

Sept. 12

During the first days of a year teaching, San Francisco Chronicle journalist Larry Slonaker recalled, a student wrote, "Its a plauser to meat you Mr. Slonaker."

"For several moments I stared at this – particularly at the words 'its' and 'meat.' I began to picture my body passing through a hamburger grinder, with the student hospitably turning the crank." Slonaker described his year as "heartbreaking... fun... surprising, irritating, elevating, frustrating.... But mostly, I learned that teaching is hard." [www.bayarea.com](http://www.bayarea.com)

**Still no way to measure great teaching directly**

Sept. 19

The only way at this point to identify a great teacher is to look at the students' achievement, the Washington Post reported. Education Trust director Kati Haycock said, "We don't yet know a lot about the characteristics of the teachers who are so much more effective than their peers."

[www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)**Single teacher shouldn't act in isolation**

Nov. 21

Teacher quality expert Barnett Berry told the Charlotte Chamber there was no simple answer to providing the qualified teachers all districts need.

But one necessary change is to sweep away the idea of a single classroom teacher dealing with a set number of children. "We've got to turn that idea on its side."

Berry suggested a school of "small pods" of about 100 children each. The three or more teachers assigned to the pod would each bring different skills to the work. One might know a lot about how children develop, while another might have deep roots in a subject field. The suggestion, Berry said, is not well received.

"It's very difficult to engage the powers-that-be to think differently about organization."

Tomorrow's best teachers, he said, would spend most of their time as

students on case studies of how students learn.

"They will become experts in children. These are not easy things to do. Most of these program elements are anathema to the university culture for a whole host of reasons."

To reform teaching, he said, communities and groups must "build our own collective knowledge and galvanize the political will to make these changes."

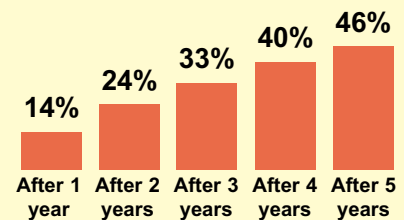
**Teacher training pays off, Seattle finds**

Dec. 12

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)

Percent of new U.S. teachers who have left the profession, by year:



Source: Southeast Center for Teacher Quality, based on data from Teacher Follow-Up Survey for 1988-2000 period, cited in Richard Ingersoll, "The Teacher Shortage: A Case of Wrong Diagnosis and Wrong Prescription" at [www.principals.org/news/bltn\\_teachshort0602.html](http://www.principals.org/news/bltn_teachshort0602.html)

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## Teaching Techniques

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### 'Re-looping' presents unlearned material anew

Jan. 27

Ron Thompson, principal at CMS's East Mecklenburg High, told school board members that students in difficulty after a semester of, say, algebra enter an "academic re-looping program," taking algebra five days a week for longer periods.

"As we all know, some students need extra time," he said. The time is found by delaying elective classes to afterschool hours.

Re-looping, Thompson said, will be used in all classes subject to end-of-course testing.

"I am convinced that that's the reason why we have a reduction in the achievement gap," he said.

"Also, it has restored hope for a lot of students, and that's the most important thing."

### Large classes make some things impossible

Feb. 24

Patricia Wasley in *"Small Classes, Small Schools: The Time is Now"* in *Educational Leadership*:

"It takes time to get to know one's students and to individualize the learning experience, and doing so requires concentration. In a classroom with a large number of students, such attention simply isn't an option."

### Skateboarding creates a teachable moment

March 3

Vicky Smith's math classes at St. Anthony School in Tigard, Ore., regularly work out problems on acceleration based on students riding their skateboards in the halls, the Oregonian reported. Learning that's surrounded by laughter and physical activity sticks longer in a teen's brain, Smith asserts. After two decades of teaching, she's still looking for new ways to teach concepts to teens. The Oregonian said Smith "usually gets her best ideas just before she falls asleep." [www.oregonian.com](http://www.oregonian.com)

### Remediation never works

March 10

In February's teacher.net Gazette, teacher mentor Bill Page says that remediation never works.

"When a remedial teacher is successful with a given student, as they frequently are, it is not the remedial procedure," Page asserts. "It is because the teacher as a person has been able to change the student's attitude. Only then can he or she become successful in learning the material."

Page says kids learn their attitude from teachers: "They know whether I value the use of class time. They know whether I care about every student, or just about the 'good' ones. They know whether I mean what I say. They know whether I care about real learning, or just answers on the test." By impli-

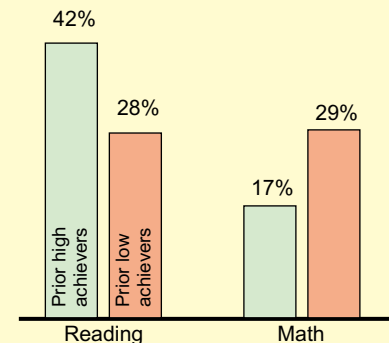
## Challenge boosts learning for all

In a study by the Consortium on Chicago School Research, researchers collected examples of work actually assigned to students. They hired and trained Chicago teachers to judge whether the assignments were of low or high intellectual challenge, then tracked achievement of students given the two kinds of assignments. Among the findings:

As graphed here, students who the previous year had had low achievement scores, who were given challenging assignments learned 28% more in reading and

29% more in math than low-achievers given less-challenging work. Among students with high scores the previous year, scores were

42% better with challenging reading assignments, only 17% better with challenging math assignments.



cation, Page indicts some teachers of contributing to bad student attitudes. So his first prescription is for teachers to "make sure we have our own heads on straight."

Page's other advice is that students change their attitude when they see learning in a new light. "If a student saw that a particular unit of learning were going to affect his or her life this year, next year and throughout his schooling, he or she would keep me after school and make me teach him or her." Break tough material into parts, Page advises. Turn slow learners into tutors of younger children. Give those who misbehave in the halls some training, then turn them into hall monitors.

### What's lesson of Mayfield-Covenant

March 24

The Mayfield-Covenant alternative programs for struggling middle-schoolers are in jeopardy because, according to one view of the test scores, the kids aren't learning enough. Perhaps we'd all be more comfortable with this test-score "proof" if school officials provided comparisons of Mayfield-Covenant children's scores with the scores of children who applied to those programs but didn't get in.

If that comparison shows the programs don't work, then we really have a problem: Mayfield and Covenant seem to focus on small class size, heavy investment in staff help, mentoring by volunteers,

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access to technology, a changed culture for learning - all the tools that educators claim will raise achievement levels. If these strategies don't work in classrooms of 10 students, will they work better in classrooms of 19?

**Afterschool programs pay dividends**

March 27

A California study of the state's afterschool program suggests that 8% of the funds committed to the program, or a full 11% of the state's contribution, is "saved" by the reduced number of children who do not have to repeat grades. Education World reported that the three-year-old program serves K-9 students, and that those who were in the program at least 7.5 months last school year showed math score gains 2.5 times as large as all students statewide.

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

**Many ways to provide sound basic education**

April 7

*Judge Howard Manning's ruling in Leandro suit over providing all N.C. kids a basic education:*

"The State of North Carolina admits that the evidence presented during the September and October hearings 'clearly demonstrates that there are a wide variety of successful educational programs and strategies that can be implemented with the current resources available to North Carolina public schools.'

"The State of North Carolina admits that 'all the evidence shows that the keys to improving student performance are: Lesson plans aligned with the Standard Course of Study; Effective delivery of individualized instruction on those lessons to students; Continual assessment of the students' understanding of the lesson; and Individualized remediation for those students who do not demonstrate mastery of the lesson. These principals demonstrated that within a well disciplined school, these objectives can be accomplished by a variety of means.'

"The clear, convincing and credible evidence presented in this case... demonstrates that the State of North Carolina knows full well what needs to be done to effectively provide each child with an equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education."

**Is clerical work worth academic credit?**

May 12

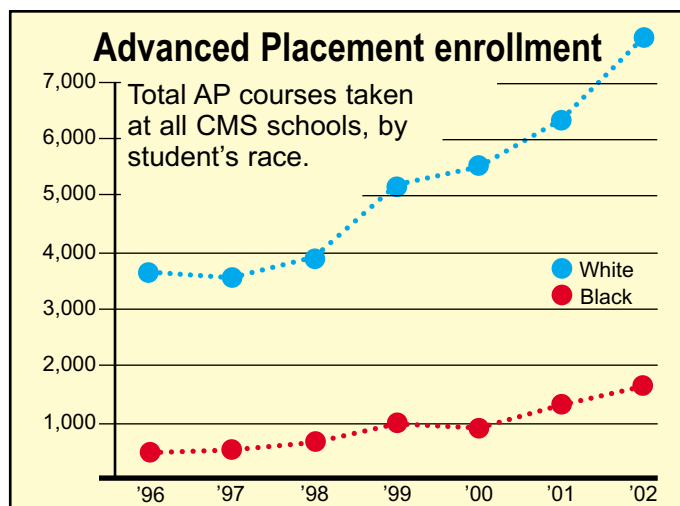
While big-city school systems in Tampa, Philadelphia, New York, Los Angeles and Seattle offer teens academic credit for performing clerical duties, some educators are asking if that's a good use of the school day, the Los Angeles Times reported.

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

**Teachers working together boosts learning**

Aug. 15

Consultant Mike Schmoker, writing for the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, says test scores invariably rise when three things



happen at schools: When teachers agree that assessments really test key learning skills; when they align their teaching with the learning skills tested, and put to use the guidebooks that fully explain the skills; and when they start working together to perfect daily lessons designed to bolster children's weaknesses. "The evidence is overwhelming that chaos reigns in an enormous number of our classrooms," Schmoker writes. "Larry Lezotte has been saying for some time that children generally learn what we teach them, but 'there is a huge gap between what is taught and what is tested.'"

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

**CMS has reversed teaching philosophies**

Aug. 22

Associate Supt. for education services told a Charlotte Chamber committee that, in reference to children who were slow to read, "CMS was grounded in a philosophy of 'don't directly teach those kids. You'll mess them up for life. They're just not ready.'

"Now our philosophy is, 'If you DON'T teach those kids you'll ruin them for life.'"



**Passing mark set to prevent huge failure rate**

Feb. 10

With all student achievement tests, the question is, how is achievement defined? Maryland professors have questioned that state's algebra standards, saying they don't test for algebra but for fifth- or sixth-grade arithmetic, the Baltimore Sun reported. Students entering ninth grade in 2003 will have to pass the test to graduate; "a huge failure rate won't fly," the Sun reported.

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

**Value of annual test reports questioned**

Feb. 17

Maryland, which can't explain swings in its annual test results, has some people reassessing the



value of annual reports, the Washington Post reported. "Ask any teacher if this is a useful exercise and she will say no. Each class is different. Some have more dreamers, more rascals, more frightened newcomers than others. One recent study suggests that 70 percent of annual score changes have little to do with what happens in the classroom," Jay Mathews wrote.

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

**Test scores may not validate a change in school procedure**

Oct. 31

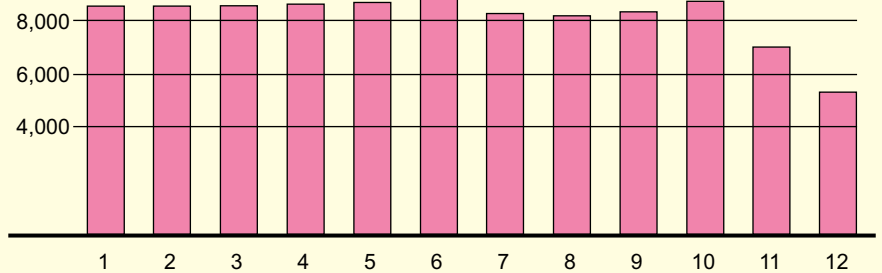
*Thomas Kane and Douglas Staiger in "Improving School Accountability Measures":*

"When the 1998-99 MCAS test scores were released in Massachusetts in November of 1999, the Provincetown district showed the greatest improvement over the previous year. The Boston Globe published an extensive story describing the various ways in which Provincetown had changed educational strategies between 1998 and 1999, interviewing the high school principal and several teachers.

"As it turned out, they had changed a few policies at the school – decisions that seemed to be validated by the improvement in performance. One had to dig a bit deeper to note that the Provincetown high school had only 26 students taking the test in 10th

**Where have all the dropouts gone?**

*The total number of students involved in the January lottery for school choice is the latest reminder of how a major portion of students are still dropping out before completing their 12th grade at CMS.*



grade.

"Given the wide distribution of test scores among students in Massachusetts, any grouping of 26 students is likely to yield dramatic swings in test scores from year to year, that is large relative to the distribution of between-school differences.

"In other words, if school-level test scores are the gauge, the Boston Globe and similar newspapers around the country will eventually write similar stories praising virtually every variant of educational practice. It is no wonder that the public and policy-makers are only more confused about the way to proceed."

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

**The next issue of *Educate!* will be published Jan. 9, 2003.**



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