



“Still Life” by Sloane Whaley, Northwest School of the Arts.

## Freedom School

### Reading-based camp for young teens may be lost after nonprofit funding cuts

It was summer, but one eighth-grader was not a happy camper.

The middle-schooler was reading at a second-grade level. And a reading-heavy summer program was bombarding him with opportunities to read – or, as he may have seen it, opportunities to fail. To cover his disability, the child was acting up.

A counselor ordered the child to his side, ending the disruption. Then, as the rest of the class read, the counselor pointed to the words as the boy looked on.

Next day, when reading began, no disruptions: The boy sidled up to the counselor and watched the words fly by.

Welcome not to Reading 101 but

to Freedom School, a summer program with the time to reach out to kids who generate the heart-breaking educational statistics.

At a briefing Tuesday, two men involved in the program this summer talked about changed lives.

And about a program that, for lack of \$42,000, may well not be repeated next summer.

Freedom School 2003 served 60 children from the Brookhill/Southside neighborhood off South Tryon Street. When construction tied up space at Marie G. Davis, the neighborhood school, the program found space at Smithfield Elementary off Park Road.

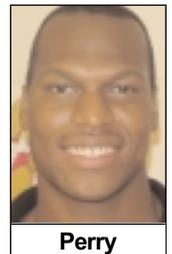
Six CMS graduates enrolled at N.C. colleges and universities served as counselors. One was Justin Perry, who spoke Tuesday at the Tuesday Morning Breakfast Forum.

Counselors were trained in Tennessee by the Children's Defense Fund, which coordinates the program. The local administrator was United Family Services.

More than 60 Freedom Schools operated this summer, but very few are in North Carolina, said UFS official Eric Law. Earlier summer programs in Charlotte were operated by the Johnston YMCA and the Bethlehem Center.

“We need to spread the word so other people can launch the concept in neighborhoods where it is desperately needed,” Law said.

The concept is inspired by the



Perry

## Business, school leaders begin to sort education reform ideas by priority

So what's the agenda for improving local public education?

Thirty members of CMS Partners for School Reform sat down for more than two hours Wednesday morning to sort out their priorities.

The Charlotte Chamber-sponsored group, which is heavy with CMS administrators, talked about fixing high schools, equalizing facilities, lobbying the state to maintain or expand its commitment to prekindergarten and much, much more.

If there was a theme that dominated the details, it was that somebody needs to sell the public on supporting the reform plans already written and the educa-

tional strategies already being piloted in Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools.

For it was as if there were a huge shadow in the room that nobody wanted to talk about: The programs under discussion would add millions and millions to a school budget that saw no additional local dollars this year from county sources. Despite the projected addition of about 3,000 students.

“When will we be finished?” Partners chair Ernie Dehnert said people ask.

“We will never be finished. Twenty years from now, different people will gather in a different

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# No Child: The disaggregated results

The federal No Child Left Behind law judges schools by their success with individual groups of students. A school that does not deliver with every group of students faces sanctions. The goal is to have every student learning.

Below are results of CMS's effort last year to meet standards for disaggregated groups of students.

Note first that no CMS school had to meet the standards with Native Americans as a group, or with multiracial kids, because there were not enough at any school to create a group. Those students' scores, however, are figured in the "all students" standard not listed here.

"None for group" means those schools had none of the category children. The "% meeting goal"

line tracks the percentage of goals met that actually had to be met.

The percentages help isolate some key data: White students as a group met last year's goals at every CMS school. Blacks and Hispanics trail, and only 20% of high schools met the goals with poor youth.

What were the goals? For grades 3-8, it was to have 68.9% of children reading on or above grade level, and 74.6% in math. The goals will rise for the 2004-05 school year.

This journal has only **9**

more issues to publish, based on the funds on hand at the beginning of this month. We offer our thanks to the

**7%**

of people now regularly receiving *Educate!* who have ever helped defray the cost of its publication.

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Kathleen McClain assisted with this edition.

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## Free/reduced lunch

Category	Elem.	Mid.	High
None for group			
Too few for group	6	1	2
School has group	79	27	15
School met goal	55	14	3
<b>% meeting goal</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>20</b>

## Whites

Category	Elem.	Mid.	High
None for group	1		
Too few for group	25	3	1
School has group	59	25	16
School met goal	59	25	16
<b>% meeting goal</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

## Blacks

Category	Elem.	Mid.	High
None for group			
Too few for group	7	1	1
School has group	78	27	16
School met goal	58	19	6
<b>% meeting goal</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>38</b>

## Hispanics

Category	Elem.	Mid.	High
None for group	2		
Too few for group	56	10	15
School has group	27	18	2
School met goal	13	8	1
<b>% meeting goal</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>50</b>

## Asians

Category	Elem.	Mid.	High
None for group	5		
Too few for group	87	13	17
School has group	3	15	0
School met goal	3	13	
<b>% meeting goal</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>87</b>	

## Multiracial

Category	Elem.	Mid.	High
None for group	2	1	4
Too few for group	82	27	13
School has group	0	0	0
School met goal			
<b>% meeting goal</b>			

## Native American

Category	Elem.	Mid.	High
None for group	20	3	5
Too few for group	65	25	12
School has group	0	0	0
School met goal			
<b>% meeting goal</b>			

## Limited English

Category	Elem.	Mid.	High
None for group	5	1	
Too few for group	65	14	12
School has group	15	13	5
School met goal	8	3	1
<b>% meeting goal</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>

## Exceptional children

Category	Elem.	Mid.	High
None for group			
Too few for group	37	2	12
School has group	48	26	5
School met goal	23	6	0
<b>% meeting goal</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>

# Meet candidates Bumgarner, Thompson

*Text of introductions presented at an Aug. 14 forum by Larry Bumgarner and Queen Thompson, two of the 11 candidates in the November election for three at-large seats on the school board.*

I'm Larry Bumgarner. I'm a native Charlottean, rare to find, but probably not so in this room, because a lot of us know what Charlotte is and where we're going on it.

I went to West Charlotte, graduated in the Class of '73, first class that had to be bused in. Love it. Loved the school. We're planning a reunion in January. I graduated from UNC Charlotte here. I did have a company that did IT and network security, and I sold that to my employees, and now that's why I'm getting involved in a lot of community affairs.

We don't have any children, so when you vote for me you're voting for someone who is going to get in there and look at from the point of view of: Is the budget working? Is this program working? That kind of thing. Because that's what I used to do.

I used to go into companies, just larger than the school board, and would look at their IT programs and see how it related to their overall business program. I would actually write up a business plan to show if it is actually working.

And that's what we're going to try to do here. Because we see a lot of good policies... and some people want to have changed or some people might want to look at being changed. Let's just see if there is any possibility.

## 2003 school board election

I'm Larry Bumgarner, and thanks for having me.

I'm Queen Thompson, I'm a native Charlottean, and today is my birthday. 39 again.

I'm a graduate of J.H. Gunn High School. My husband graduated from the same high school, and both our daughters are graduates of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. My daughter Jodi is a former teacher with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, was an English/Latin teacher, and now is a doctoral candidate at Virginia

Tech working on her Ph.D. on higher education.

My daughter Kelly, a Garinger graduate, is now an attorney in Greensboro. She is a District Attorney. So all of us are Charlotteans. My mother, her family, all of us are native Charlotteans.

I'm running for school board, something I never entertained that I would do, because I'm running, running for my life. I'm running for my home. I'm running for my community. I'm running for this city, for us to restore a quality education program for all students.

## Contact information for at-large candidates

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# Pughsley offers his goals for 'the beyond'

*From a statement to the community this week by Supt. Jim Pughsley. Full statement is at [www.cms.k12.nc.us](http://www.cms.k12.nc.us):*

"My continued vision for the beyond is for CMS to be a superior urban school district, which does not behave as a typical or expected urban district.

"– Having a school district free of underachieving students by the end of fifth grade. That means that all students would be performing on grade level (Level III or IV). Currently, 92% of our fifth-graders are performing on grade level in math and 87% are on grade level in reading.

"– Having a district which has slammed the door on the achievement gap.

"– Having a school district with high achieving secondary students (75% at or above grade level). That means that 25% of our students would be performing at Level III on the End-of-Course tests and 50% performing at Level IV. In addition, this would mean 60% of our graduating stu-

dents participating in at least one Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate course. Currently, more than 50% of our seniors have enrolled in at least one AP or IB course. We also want these students to be successful with 50% of students scoring a 3 or better on the AP/IB tests.



**Pughsley**

"– Developing a school district which not only provides for a safe and secure school environment, but one that provides for character development as well. Our district will pride itself on our core values of respect, trust, responsibility and honesty. Our character education program in CMS will not be an 'add on' program but will be integrated into all that our students learn and do within the classroom. However, families and CMS staff must model those values first. The examples we set as parents, teachers and CMS employees have a lasting impres-

sion on our children.

"– Creating a school district where making a choice isn't based on the school with the best facilities or instructional resources or staff or leadership – because all schools will be quality schools with equitable resources and high student achievement.

"To achieve the goals and reach beyond current expectations, it will take all of us working together – teachers, administrators, parents, students and community members.

"In CMS, I want to create a culture of achievement, fairness and hope. I am extremely proud to be a part of this district and I look forward to partnering with your family to make this a great school year. I hope you will take time to visit your child's school throughout the year, get involved in your school's PTA and get to know your child's teachers. Your involvement is critically important for academic success."

## Fewer kids projected in vast areas of county

CMS may be proud to be growing by 3,000 or so kids a year. They project another 43,000 over the next 10 years.

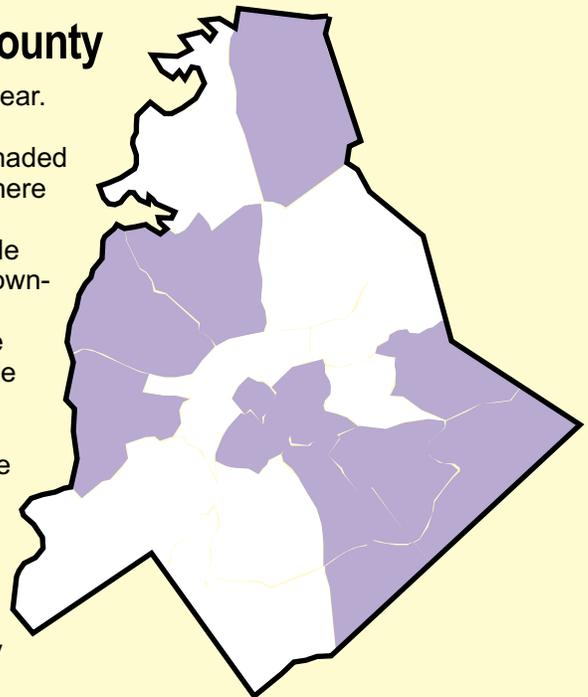
But in 11 of the county's 19 planning areas – the areas shaded on the map – there will be fewer children in 2012-13 than there are today.

The areas to be affected by such "negative growth" include parts of the north, the northwest and a broad swath from downtown southeast.

The statistics, driven by housing patterns, could of course be overtaken by events ... a regular series of Northeast-style electrical power outages leading to a surge in births, for example.

The Long Range School Facilities Master Plan Task Force has been hosting a series of sessions on the plan this summer. The last one is tonight, Aug. 21, at 6:30 p.m. at Waddell High School, 7030 Nations Ford Road. The document helps direct the construction of new schools and the renovation and repair of existings ones.

A draft of the long-range school facilities master plan may be downloaded in pieces at [www.cms.k12.nc.us](http://www.cms.k12.nc.us)



# CMS teacher turnover rate falls to 16.7%

The horrendous turnover rate that has been eating away at CMS teaching quality for several years dropped nearly 3 percentage points last school year.

Supt. Jim Pughsley announced on July 14 that the rate for the school year that ended in June was 16.7%. Last year, it was 19.2%, and it peaked at 22% in 2001-2002.

The statewide average last year was 12.49%. Pughsley said he would push toward reducing the CMS average to the state average. If CMS didn't reach it in the school year now beginning, "we'll make an awful good attempt at doing so," he said.

CMS has had among the highest teacher turnover rates in the

state. Rates range from more than 30% in rural counties in Eastern North Carolina to less than 3% in some of the mountain counties that have the fewest jobs that might attract teachers from the classroom.

The turnover rate was announced in a school board meeting called to approve another round of reorganization by Pughsley, who was named superintendent a year ago.

While changes announced in July would save \$150,000, it appeared that the focus was not as much on savings as in making the administrative hierarchy of the state's largest school system work more as a team.

Administrators are already get-

ting out of what Pughsley calls their "silos" to find unified solutions when schools have problems.

Pughsley also named longtime administrator Greg Clemmer to a deputy superintendent position. He said the creation of a day-to-day executive officer would allow him more time to be in schools and to work with principals. Clemmer has line responsibility for non-academic functions, but will as deputy take on liaison roles with top educational administrators. Pughsley served as deputy before being named superintendent, but left the position vacant last year.

## Freedom Schools teach reading, more

Continued from Page 1

summer schools held as part of 1964's Freedom Summer during the civil rights movement.

Charlotte counselor Justin Perry Tuesday told 20 people at the Tuesday Forum another episode from the summer program.

As punishment for an earlier infraction, 12 males were told to stand against the wall during reading time. The guest reader arrived, read his assignment, and asked questions of those gathered around him. Then he turned to the youth on the wall.

Why are you there? he asked. The answers were shrugs and mumbles.

You remind me of people I see in prisons, the reader said. Standing against the wall, lost without any kind of guide. Is that what you want?

The challenge set up a heart-to-heart between counselor and students about what it means to be a

man, and how it's OK to express emotion over, say, the hurt at not having a father in your life.

In these young people, Perry said, "you get to see a lot of the things most people just read about but can't fathom. These are the children who have seen their brothers shot, or their sisters.



Some have parents who abuse them or don't care for them.... Many didn't know where their fathers were."

One of the students standing against the wall volunteered that he had done well in school until he was challenged about getting good grades by his friends. The grades soon were straight Ds.

"What you have to realize," Perry said he told the students, "is you've got to forget them. You can try to bring them up but you can't let them pull you down."

"Then I saw something I never expected," Perry recounted to his adult audience. "I noticed a couple of guys tear up." Before long, the entire group of "tough" young

men were weeping. One student talked through his tears about how his father hadn't written for Christmas, or his birthday either.

— — —

At Freedom School, a supportive environment was created in which some of the community's most challenged young people could explore their lives, and build their reading skills, without fear of hurt or exploitation. Regular school has now begun, and no doubt the shields are up once again.

"Where teachers could look into their eyes, I could look through their eyes," said Perry, a UNC Chapel Hill student who graduated from West Charlotte High.

"A lot of the kids have no idea why they are in school except to keep them out of trouble.... It's vital for these young black children to have people who can connect to them. Just give them a little love. They're not getting it at home."

United Family Services will sponsor Freedom Schools next summer only if new financial support can be found. If you can help, contact UFS at 704-332-9034.

## What's on table for education reform?

Continued from Page 1

room to discuss different issues.” The constant, he said, will be that reform efforts will be to improve education for children.

From one of three tables of executives came a suggestion that the county- and school board-appointed Education Budget Advisory Committee, which is dominated by business executives, should be doing a better job of communicating its views to the public.

“We need to be getting more leverage for the whole idea of having our voices heard,” said bank executive Dee Merrill, who does not sit on EBAC.

Another idea: Track home sales both before and after CMS renovates a school. Agents reportedly believe home prices rise. Rising home prices create additional property tax dollars.

“The city should really be the ones out selling our bond issues,” quipped school board vice chair Louise Woods.

Among the education objectives on the table during the Partners discussion:

### Calendar

**21** Finance, Capital & Facilities Committee, 4 p.m., Board conference room.

**21** Long Range School Facilities Master Plan Task Force community meeting, 6:30 p.m., Waddell High School.

**26** Curriculum Committee, 3 p.m., Board conference room.

**26** School board meets, 6 p.m., Board Room, Education Center, 701 E. 2nd St. in downtown Charlotte.

#### SEPTEMBER

**16** Joint lunch forum of Mecklenburg elected leaders, noon, Government Center, room 267.

#### OCTOBER

**25** “Do Children/Youth Need Our Time?” sponsored by Parents on the Move, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., UNCC Cone Center. Information, Blanche Penn, 704-890-4101.

#### NOVEMBER

**8** Education Fair, exhibits by area nonpublic, charter and public schools, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Merchandise Mart.

– Maintain local funding for prekindergarten while private operators continue to fill unclaimed seats.

– Lobby for Supt. Jim Pughsley’s three-year plan to meet educational needs.

The first \$15 million increase just went down in flames this spring. Next year’s installment is well over \$90 million.

– Reshape lobbying with N.C. legislators to boost effectiveness.  
– Support Pughsley’s focus on

character education.

– Push efficiency recommendations of an earlier study of school operations.

– Build on last year’s efforts to gather discounts and other incentives for use in recruiting new teachers.

– Help high schools find business partners.

– Expand so-called “e-learning,” which tends to produce the computer-based skills many businesses now seek.

## Underwrite an edition of *Educate!*

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## Briefs

*So much has piled up since our last issue on June 19. Abandoning our traditional brief format, we do micro-briefs:*

### Nationally...

Supreme Court justices surprised observers on all sides of the ideological divide in June with a decision that supported the use of affirmative action in law school admissions. Both law schools and public schools must limit enrollment at specific facilities. Writing for the court tussling over whether there was a constitutionally valid interest in a diverse learning environment, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor stated, "Although all governmental uses of race are subject to strict scrutiny, not all are invalidated by it."

NAEP scores arrived. North Carolina said its fourth- and 8th-graders scored above the Southeast and national averages. The rest of the story: 68% of fourth-graders were reading without proficiency. Ditto for 8th-graders.

A federal judge upheld a 1988 race-based assignment plan in Lynn, Mass. Opponents vowed to appeal.

The National Staff Development Council began looking for 12 schools willing to try meeting No Child's proficiency goals in less than the 12 years the act allows.

Chicago's ACORN studied area schools, after the system reported a 22.9% teacher turnover rate (CMS was nearly there in 2001, now at 16% or so). ACORN's solutions: "grow-your-own" teacher training, lead teacher and learning community/co-teacher programs, teacher home visits and other neighborhood involvement efforts, extended-day opportunities for teachers to share problem-

## DidYaHear?

*Reports from Educate! readers:*

- Staff and parents spent last week were wiping mold off library books at Northwest Arts. The suspect air-conditioning system is in custody.

- The neighborhood may be rich, but the teacher explained that she had been allocated 65 dollars to buy supplies for her children. And the supplies had better last the whole year, 'cause that's all the money there is for supplies at that school for the year.

- More teachers this year are eligible to "shop" at Classroom Central. That's the "store" where a teacher can fill a grocery cart with supplies for her classroom, then come back once more during the year, and it's all free. And get this: Ineligible teachers now can use the facility as well – if they or some of their kids' parents donate some hours restocking the shelves or doing other volunteer work. Classroom Central is at 2116 Wilkinson Blvd.

– *Send intelligence to [swannfello@aol.com](mailto:swannfello@aol.com)*

solving strategies, and increasing teacher pay and benefits."

A July issues brief from Colorado-based Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning said focus groups found parents' concerns about schools were primarily academic. "By focusing educators on the technical aspects or issues related to education and diverting their attention away from the public's deeper concerns about its schools, it's possible that standards-based reform efforts could further exacerbate what appears to be a growing rift between the public and its schools."

In Philadelphia, Supt. Paul Vallas installed the first cadre of local management officers to manage noninstructional issues at the schoolhouse.

### Statewide...

The state will phase out the use of "field tests" by 2007-08, the state Board of Education was told

in August. The field tests add to the testing burden, and since they don't count, may not be taken seriously. They validate the difficulty level of the questions that will be used on later tests.

The State Board also signed off on Associate Supt. Zoe Locklear's June decision to halt teacher training classes at Sandhills and Central Piedmont Community Colleges (*Educate!*, June 19). The board decision allows credit towards certification for the hundreds of staffers who took the courses. Locklear halted the courses because she said the courses had not been properly approved.

Examining responses from 40,000 schoolhouse surveys, the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality noted that principals were much more likely than teachers to agree with the statements "teachers have time to col-

## Briefs *continued*

laborate with colleagues,” “teachers have funds to purchase supplies,” and “teachers are centrally involved in decision-making.”

### ‘Study’ hall...

“The ‘drill and kill’ mentality of testing is the opposite of what the public desires for education, and it undermines what makes American education strong, i.e., the ability to teach creativity and critical thinking.”

– Meg Bostrom in “Public Knowledge: Fulfilling the Promise of No Child Left Behind,” [www.douglasgould.com/resources/NoChildLeftBehindMetaAnalysis.pdf](http://www.douglasgould.com/resources/NoChildLeftBehindMetaAnalysis.pdf)

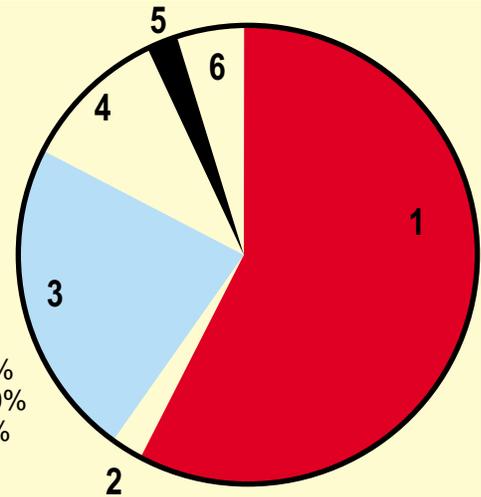
–  
Lambasting the charter school movement, People for the American Way quoted Boston University professor Philip Tate as saying that many of the attributes of public schooling, including rigid class schedules and reliance on test scores and other traits of public schools, were picked up from business models, “were instituted in the name of efficiency” and created a “factory model” of schooling. [www.pfaw.org](http://www.pfaw.org)

–  
The Center for Community Change, examining partnerships between teacher unions and communities, found one city’s union leaders walking out on a Chamber of Commerce and community-based organization because both groups “expect us to have the same culture and values they have. But we have our own,” said the union president. “They’ve been judgmental and conditional. We can’t work with groups that

## N.C. budget pie

*Clockwise from 12 o’clock:*

1. Education 58%  
K-12 40.8%; \$6 billion  
Comm. colleges 4.5%  
\$660.9 million  
UNC 12.1% \$1.8 billion
2. General government 2%
3. Health, human services 23%
4. Justice and public safety 10%
5. Natural, econ. resources 2%
6. Reserves, debt, other 5%



Last-minute cuts to balance the state budget cost 396 school positions, the N.C. Forum reported. But the General Assembly added 571 second-grade teaching positions. Chart data: Friday Report, July 2.

assume we’re no good if we don’t do things their way.... The conversation has to be a dialogue, not a ‘pitch.’”

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“Zero tolerance school disciplinary policies send a strong message that children are not really wanted in school.”

– Christine Sturgis, in “Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline,” a paper in “Shaping the Future of American Youth” by the American Youth Policy Forum.

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Wrote Barbara Neufield and Dana Roper in “Coaching: A Strategy for Developing Institutional Capacity:” “Despite the urgency of improving teaching and learning, the truth is that it will take several years for teachers to master what are fundamentally new and different instructional strategies even when teachers are eager to implement what they are learning.

“Needless to say, the process will take more time with teachers

who are not willing to change their practice or with teachers who need help with other aspects of their work, such as classroom management.

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“It is important for district leaders to keep in mind the challenge of changing instructional practices so as not to become convinced that the reforms are not working or put impossible expectations and demands on teachers and principals.”

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In “New Relationships with Schools,” the Collaborative Communications Group says a Delray Beach, Fla., group named MAD DADS began a grassroots effort to support public education, saying “our kids are dying in high numbers.” Results: Crime is down and “more than half the parents of children in the school (now grades K-4) participate in the PTA. Student achievement is slowly improving.”