

Labeling

By CHESLEY OXENDINE

Of all the crimes that society has pursued over the years, there is one that causes dissent, hatred, and prejudice even now.

It's called "labeling."

It's telling someone who they are based on one trait of their personality – putting a puzzle together in the dark. There's only a small chance that when you turn on the light, everything you assumed will be correct.

It's the feeling you might get, like you're "weirded out," when you see someone doing something that you wouldn't do, or if you see someone doing something that you don't expect. (Example: Listening to [rapper] 50 Cent, then turning around and listening to [Irish "Queen of Sweet Melancholy"] Enya.)

People are labeled in hundreds of ways – it's kind of ironic (there's so many individual ways to group together). Religion, music, clothes, hobbies, friends, the place you live, etc. All the way down to your political position. You're not a person anymore, you're not an individual, your name is now Punk, Thug, Wimp, Nerd, Geek, Jock, or Liberal.

Is that how you want people to recognize you? As a brand? A statistic? A number? I know I'd rather be referred to as someONE rather than someTHING.

What about you?

Demand your individuality, tell people who you are instead of letting them tell you. Don't lose your name among the constant flood of demands society places upon you to placidly do so. Don't stand there and let them break down your existence into a label, make it easy for them to know everything about you. It's like they box you up and hold you there, nice and compact, and labeled.

You are an individual, and nobody deserves to hate you for that.

The writer is a ninth-grade student at Hopewell High School.

Forward or back?

SAT, AP scores rise; pre-K works; Supt. praised, contract extended; county may put building plan at risk

What are you laughing about, Jim Pughsley asked as he himself started chuckling late Tuesday. I can think of a number of reasons, he observed. But which one?

Perhaps he was thinking with satisfaction about the contract that the school board would birth later on that night. The Supe got a one-year extension, to June 2005, and a small raise. And those who, a year ago, insisted on preparing to look for a replacement about now must be satisfied: All reference to a search process was dropped.

But for Pughsley and the community this week, there was a flurry of education markers. Some of them represented good news. Others marked severe challenges. In some cases the only reason to laugh was to stop crying for the future of this community and its children.



Pughsley

SAT scores broke through the 1,000 mark last year. But the percentage of seniors taking the test fell (coverage, Pages 6-9).

Advanced Placement scores were up as well. Participation in the tougher courses rose. Programs at Providence and Myers Park continue to be powerhouses, and Northwest School of the Arts is a rising star. But the percentage of students passing their AP tests ranges as low as 5% at West Charlotte High. And 70% of the schools – the newer, smaller programs – have pass rates below the districtwide pass rate of 42%. And the 42% rate masks an African-American rate of 17% (coverage, Page 10).

The exhaustively studied Bright Beginnings students have turned in a better performance (coverage, Page 5).

The school board began a discussion of student assignment. Pughsley sought board suggestions on cutting transportation time; stabilizing feeder patterns; overhauling choice priorities; addressing overcapacity and underutilization; axing or reviving weak magnets; and boosting diversity. Board members were to have their ideas turned in by tonight. There was no indication that anyone was contemplating radical revisions.

The week's darkest clouds sprang from the Government Center, where commissioners are on course to cap bond sales (coverage, Page 4). The decision, if taken, will turn a 10-year plan for building schools into an 18-year plan. Promises made to voters and parents will be broken.

And while adults haggle, the children will suffer.

Schools need new approach to meet blacks' special needs

Upon review of several related articles in the Aug. 21 *Educate!*, I was deeply saddened over the continuing tragedy for many Black students and families in this "community." And I place the word "community" in quotation marks purposely, for if there were genuine community, from a Black-White ethnic perspective, in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, the ongoing tragedy about which I have written-speak repeatedly would no longer be operative, at least to its present degree.

The headline article was a report on a "Freedom School," a low-level summer program involving about 60 "disadvantaged" youth in southwest Charlotte, a highly successful project from an African-centered perspective, that could no longer be continued in the absence of adequate funding.

Indeed, a series of "Freedom Schools" were operated during the 1960s and beyond, as critically needed, African-centered supplementary education programs for our youth. And the same major problem that we have today – inadequate or no funding – we also experienced during the 1960s. "The more things change, the more they remain the same."

In a second article, we were provided with disaggregated results of various groups under the new federal program, "No Child Left Behind." And, as usual, this statistical data revealed that poor and Black "children" in CMS were left FAR behind their White counterparts. Surprise, surprise – another indicator of a lack of genuine "community" in this area!

But even more tragic, both federal and state-CMS test results are VERY narrowly focused on reading and math scores – what I

choose to call "training." Simultaneously, the "system" ignores MUCH uglier test results in multiple subjects that reveal stagnating or widening ethnic gaps in subjects like science, history, social studies and those very important SAT scores, that better measure, potentially, the genuine education of students.

In essence, the public schools, through its prevailing, irrational "testing mania," has been ignoring or minimizing critical needs of all students for genuine education.

More germane, CMS has ignored special needs of Black students for an African-centered

Continued on Page 11

From Readers

Are growth statistics ignoring immigration?

Section 19 (northernmost Mecklenburg east of I-77) is scheduled to have negative growth... In a planning meeting unrelated to schools, I asked where I could get the figures for the number of children age 0-18 for any given area. I was told such data doesn't exist. Planners use the figures based on birthrate. With over 5,000 NEW homes in section 19 and with the majority of these homes filled with people from out of town, is it possible to get an accurate predictor of growth?

On my small street, only six of the 32 children were born in Mecklenburg County. And this is one of the more established neighborhoods.

Methinks the figures are not right and will be used to deny funding for much-needed schools.

Kim Holley

This journal has only
8

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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Meet candidates Kasper and Marsh

Text of introductions presented at an Aug. 14 forum by Mike Kasper and Fred Marsh, two of the 11 candidates in the November election for three at-large seats on the school board.

I'm Mike Kasper. I live in Huntersville. I have a bachelor's degree with emphasis in accounting. I've been an accountant all my life. I have 20 years of accounting and financial background.

I've taken companies public on the New York exchange. I've worked for large global companies. I'm controller right now for a concrete construction company out of Davidson.

I have a family. I have two boys entering into the CMS system today, 7 and 9, both attend Blythe Elementary.

I'm running for school board because I want to restore credibility and trust. I think we have a lot of issues at hand that are not being addressed properly and I think we can get some financial accountability with the right people on the board.

We need to focus in on neighborhood schools. We need to revamp the end-of-grade testing program. The program lacks decent accountability.

We need to focus in on teacher recruitment. But not so much attention should be given to recruitment so where we don't focus in on retaining those quality teachers. These professionals are not paid a professional wage. They're not treated like professionals.

There's a lot of good things happening in the classroom. When I moved here my kid entered into the system, I saw that. Unfortunately, there's not a lot of good things happening downtown, and that's why I'm jumping into this race. I need your support.

My name is Fred Marsh. I'm not a native, but I've lived here for 30

2003 school board election

years. And rather than tell you about me, I'd like to tell you why I'm running.

Basically, I'd like to find a way to educate all children at a cost the taxpayer can afford. In case you think I'm pandering to this audience, I've been making this speech for about five years and there will be people around who can verify that.

I objected to the choice plan for two reasons, primarily. One is it gives much better choices to people in the suburbs than it does to people in the inner city. What we are finding is that large numbers of people in the inner city are not getting any of their choices and instead are assigned to their neighborhood schools because there is no room for them anywhere else. I think that's unjust, I think it's immoral, and I don't think it's educationally sound.

The other reason I objected to the choice plan was that it simply

costs too much. It was passed basically at a time when we were flowing in money. And I have a business degree also and know that we have not canceled the business cycle. Bad times were coming and they are here now. It is unlikely that we will be able to pass bond issues at the rate we have in the future, and we certainly do not have the county and state support that we've had.

The second reason I am running is that we have been totally misled by the leadership of this community for many years about the quality of the schools. Recently the national reading exam scores came out for the year 2000, and I'm sure nobody knows this: North Carolina was 14th out of the states in one grade level and 19th out of the other. The white children in this state, who are basically the ones doing all the complaining, were 4th at fourth-grade level and 6th at the other grade level. You'll never hear this stuff. All you hear is how bad the schools are, and that is simply untrue.

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County bond policy jeopardizes CMS pledge to meet building needs

If schools don't get built on time in the next few years, citizens may cuss the school board – when they might better be buttonholing county leaders.

At Tuesday night's meeting, school board members received the picture explored at right:

With parents screaming for new or improved schools, CMS has developed a capacity to deliver about \$160 million a year in new facilities. The commissioners appear ready to limit the money to \$90 million.

Being diplomatic was the order of the night, and board members vowed to go across Third Street to make their case to commissioners. A county decision may be taken as early as next week.

School board members have a planning document under public scrutiny this month that may turn from a 10-year plan into an 18-year plan overnight. Projects long promised to the communities at right may be delayed up to four years.

Needed schools that aren't even in the pipeline could be delayed even longer.

Delay means possibly losing access to historically low interest rates.

But it also means more mobile classrooms.

The board may be stuck buying 700 to 800 mobile units at a cost of \$35 million, according to Assistant Supt. Guy Chamberlain.

There was inquiries Tuesday night about whether the school board had the option to

put its existing facilities commitments to a vote of the people. Members would like to avoid being blamed when bond sales, which the county controls, make it impossible for them to keep their promises.

There was no discussion Tuesday night of going to the N.C. General Assembly to place taxing authority for school needs in the hands of the school board.

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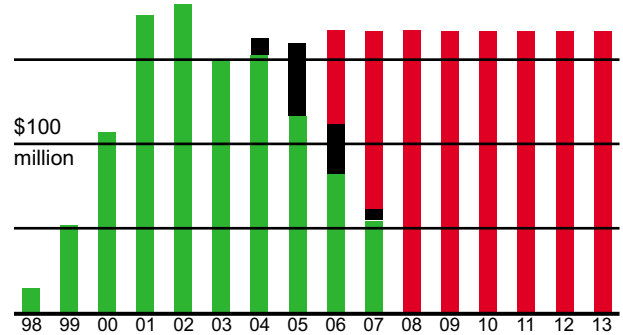
There was no discussion Tuesday night of ...

Completion dates promised during during bond campaigns, with projected delays, for design and construction work at various schools, which are elementaries unless marked:

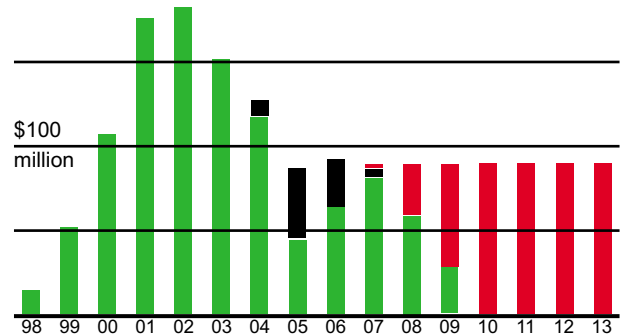
	From	To
Albemarle Road	5-06	9-09
Alexander Middle	12-04	9-08
Berryhill	8-06	9-09
Clear Creek	7-07	8-09
Cotswold	8-06	8-08
M.G. Davis	8-06	9-09
Dilworth	8-06	9-08
Garinger High	1-06	6-07
Hickory Grove	8-05	9-09
Hunt. Farms	1-07	8-08
New North Middle	5-07	8-08
Oakdale	1-07	8-08
Quail Hollow Middle	1-08	11-09
Randolph Middle	8-07	1-10
Reedy Creek	8-07	10-09
Sharon	1-07	9-08
Tuckaseegee	1-07	9-08
Winterfield	1-07	8-08

Funding stream at stake

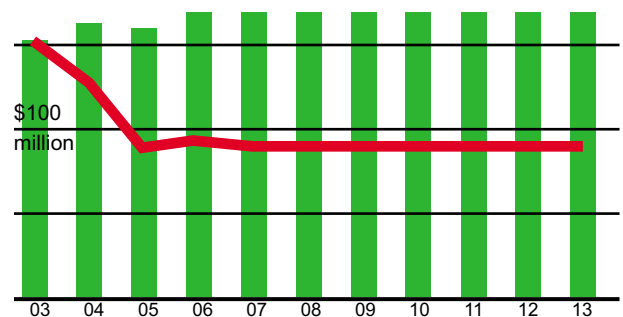
CMS has made commitments to build new schools and renovate older ones. The money was to come from bonds already approved by voters ■, certificates of participation the county has agreed to issue ■, and, beginning in 2006, from future bond issues ■.



A majority on the county commissioners wants to protect the county's bond rating, but not to raise taxes. That propels them toward a decision early next month that will cap the school board's bond revenue at \$90 million.



The cap creates a gap between CMS building plans ■ and its bond financing stream ■. Tuesday night, CMS Assistant Supt. Guy Chamberlain identified the projects at left that would be delayed, many of them long after target dates promised to voters who approved the bonds whose sales may be delayed.



Source: CMS

Kindberg: 'There's a huge story here'

There was more evidence Tuesday night that the considerable investment in Bright Beginnings, the prekindergarten program CMS pioneered in 1997, is having a payoff for at-risk children.

The second group of children through the program are, as third-graders, doing even better than those who came before them.

Test scores for the Bright Beginnings children have been watched carefully. The question: Will any benefits from early intervention give kids a permanent boost out of the at-risk cellar?

Board member Larry Gauvreau wants to narrow the program to "the neediest of the needy" to cut costs. He said Tuesday night:

"You could argue that one subgroup, African American students, have gained some measurable benefits. But even if – it is only 6 percentage points, 7 percentage points. That to me is not significant enough for \$16.5 million, when we know that there may be better ways to achieve a better objective, or a different objective I should say."

Member Lee Kindberg took an entirely different message from Tuesday's presentation.

"We are underselling the progress we see here," she said. "The difference in kindergarten between the Bright Beginnings kids and the eligible nonparticipants is not a couple of percentage points. It's two and a half times. It's 250%."

"You've got a 4% retention rate for Bright Beginnings kindergartners and a 10% retention rate for the eligible nonparticipants, and the Bright Beginnings kids who were identified as being at risk are equivalent to the rest of CMS...."

"There's a huge story here, and

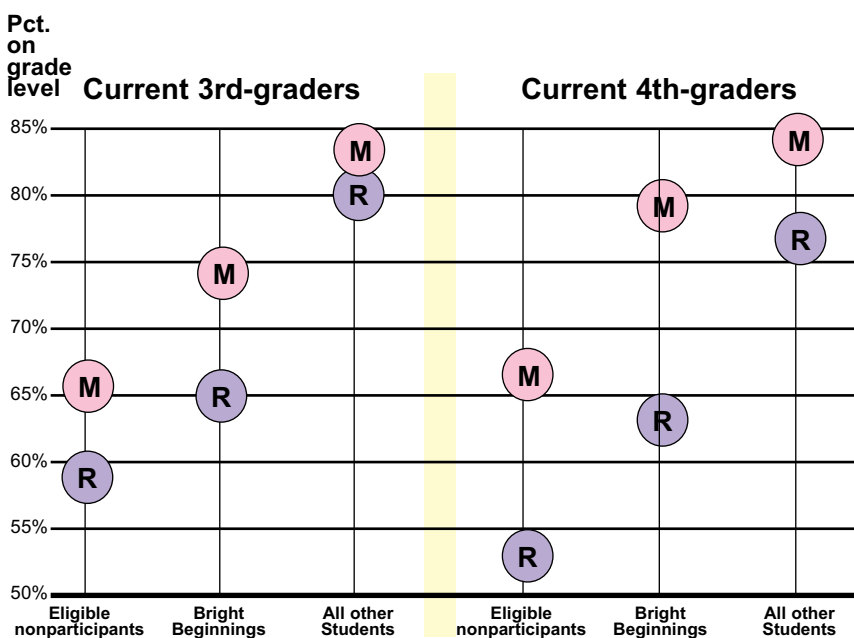
Pushing up through the pack

Average math and reading scores for current third-graders are below on the left side of the chart. Those third-graders who were in Bright Beginnings show scores on both tests that are ahead of their peers who were eligible for the program but were not enrolled.

Current fourth-graders were the first Bright Beginnings students. CMS officials say their math scores are nearly even with other fourth-graders, and both math and reading scores are much higher than those of children who were eligible but did not participate.

Bright Beginnings students were far more likely than nonparticipants to be promoted. The percentages in the chart below count the retained students as being below grade level.

Data source: CMS



if not having to re-educate those kids for a 13th or 14th year... that's a couple million dollars saved, if you just want put it in dollars and cents, just in terms of paying teachers and things.

"But we can't put it in just dollars and cents because... we're also talking about kids who, once they've been retained, have a much higher probability of dropping out, a much higher probability of having other problems...."

"I want to be sure we don't underestimate this...."

One intriguing fact rises out of the research: Bright Beginnings children, on average, stay put. The percentages of them who are still in CMS outstrip both their at-risk peers who did not enroll in

Bright Beginnings, and the population at large. The issue is important because educators have long known that frequent school changes impair learning.

Does the parent education component of Bright Beginnings create bonds between parent and school that lead to more stability? Do parents so value the program that they are less inclined to uproot their family?

Or is something less abstruse going on? Perhaps parents who don't have it together don't manage to enroll their kids. Those who do enroll and participate already have in their lives the stability that shows up in the Bright Beginnings statistics.

N.C.'s 30-year drive toward the U.S. SAT average

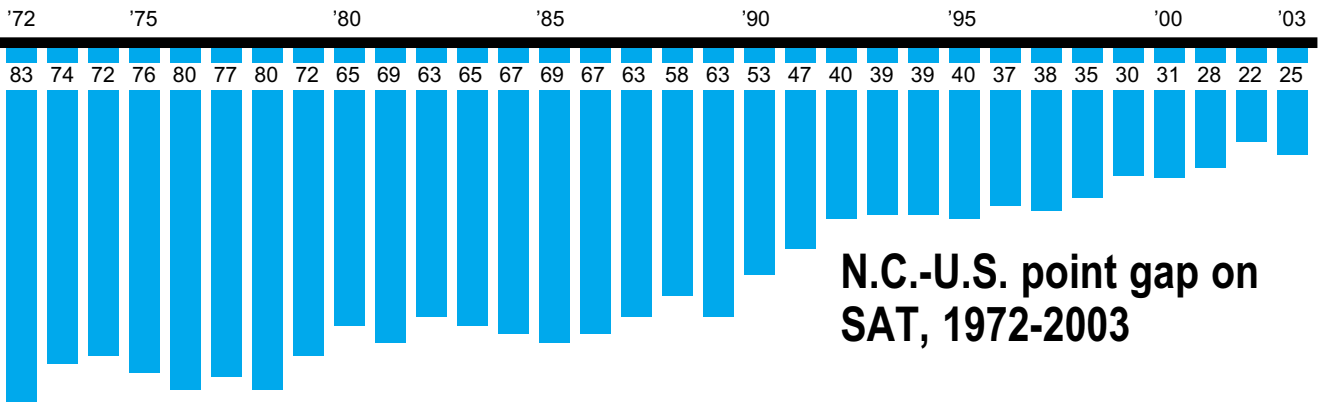
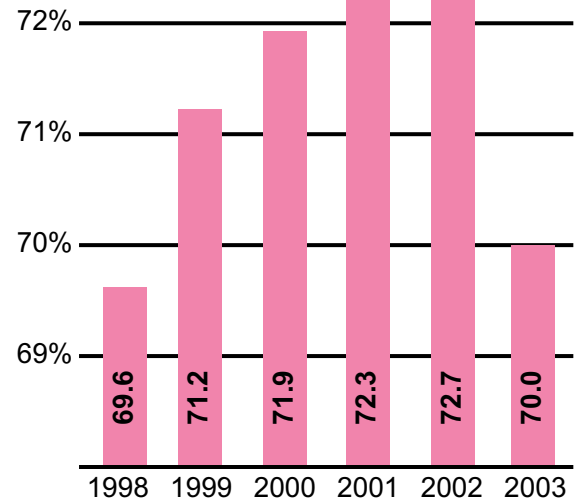
The slow drive to improve student achievement continues across North Carolina. SAT scores rose 3 points. Verbal scores are 12 away from the national average. Math scores are 13 points away. The chart below depicts the bumpy ride.

CMS pointed to its top 10%, which outperformed the state and the nation. Combined CMS scores rose to 1004. The nation is at 1029, the state at 1001.

The drop in the "take rate," at right, was troubling, though the statistic may be a good sign: Low-achievers unlikely to take the SAT swell the class size when they stay in school instead of dropping out. Their welcome presence at graduation might explain the decline in the take rate.

Fewer blacks took the SAT – or is that too a bum statistic? There was a possibly related 58% increase in the number of students not identifying themselves by race.

CMS percent tested



N.C.-U.S. point gap on SAT, 1972-2003

Where districts rank

Average score for combined SAT tests, by N.C. districts, charters.

- 1330 N.C. School of Science & Math
- 1190 Raleigh Charter HS Charter, Woods Charter
- 1180 Chapel Hill-Carrboro City
- 1140 Thomas Jefferson Charter
- 1130 N.C. School of the Arts
- 1090 Transylvania
- 1080 Buncombe, Elkin City, Watauga
- 1070 Polk, Wake
- 1060 Hickory City
- 1050 Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Moore, Shelby City
- 1040 Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Cherokee, Davie, Madison, New Hanover, Swain, Yancey
- 1030 Mount Airy City, Roanoke Rapids City
- 1026 United States**

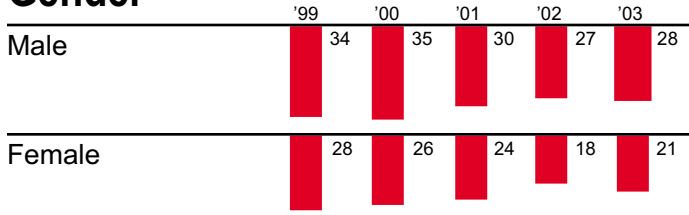
- 1020 Asheville City, Carteret, Catawba, Granville, Johnston, McDowell, Surry
- 1010 **Charlotte-Mecklenburg**, Clay, Dare, Hyde, Macon, Newton, Conover City, Orange, Union, Wilkes, Winston-Salem/Forsyth
- 1001 North Carolina**
- 1000 Asheboro City, Avery, Brunswick, Chatham, Craven, Davidson, Durham, Guilford, Iredell-Statesville, Camp Lejeune, Mitchell, Mooresville City, Onslow, Pitt, Yadkin
- 990 Ashe, Beaufort, Currituck, Graham, Kings Mountain City, Lee, Lincoln, New Century School Charter, Rowan-Salisbury
- 980 Alamance-Burlington, Alexander, Alleghany, Camden, Cleveland, Edenton/Chowan, Gaston, Harnett, Wilson
- 970 Kannapolis City, Pamlico, Pender, Randolph, Stokes

- 960 Franklin, Lenoir, Person, Rockingham, Stanly, Wayne
- 950 Clinton City, Cumberland, River Mill Charter, Rutherford
- 940 Richmond, Sampson
- 930 Pasquotank, Greene, Lexington City, Martin, Nash-Rocky Mount, Perquimans
- 920 Duplin, Montgomery, Thomasville City
- 910 Scotland, Tyrrell
- 900 Edgecombe, Hoke
- 890 Anson, Bladen, Columbus, Gates, Whiteville City
- 880 Vance
- 870 Caswell, Robeson, Warren
- 850 Cherokee Central
- 830 Greensboro Area Math/Sci., Jones
- 820 Washington
- 800 Hertford
- 790 Bertie, Halifax, Northampton
- 780 Weldon City
- 750 Laurinburg Charter

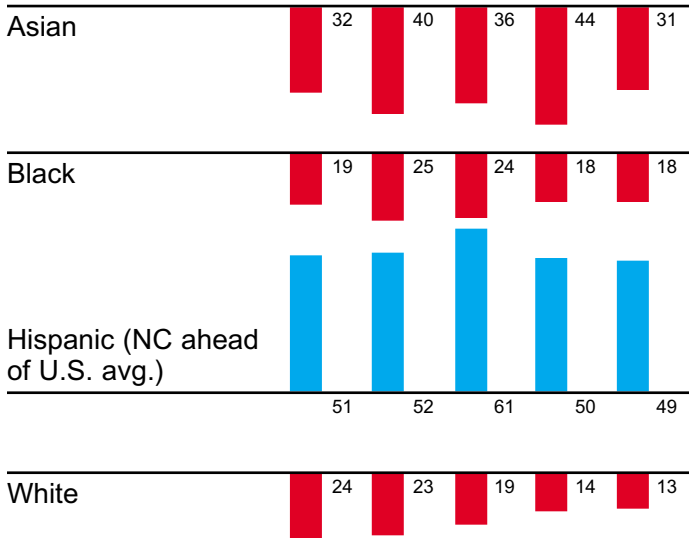
Source: N.C. Dept. of Public Instruction

N.C., U.S. SAT score gaps by groups

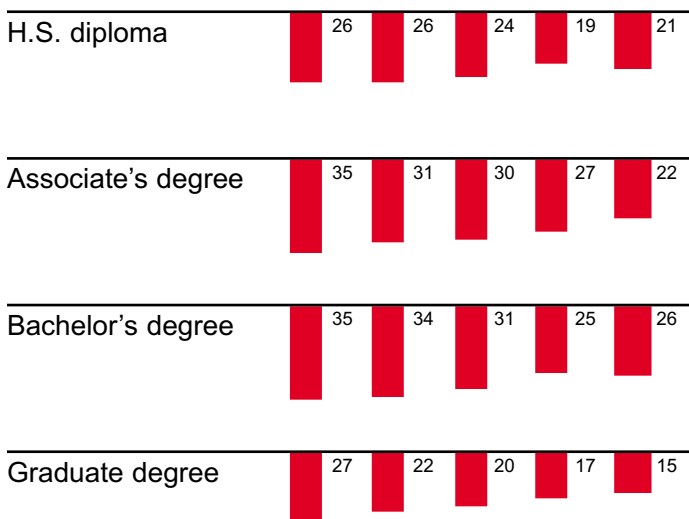
Gender



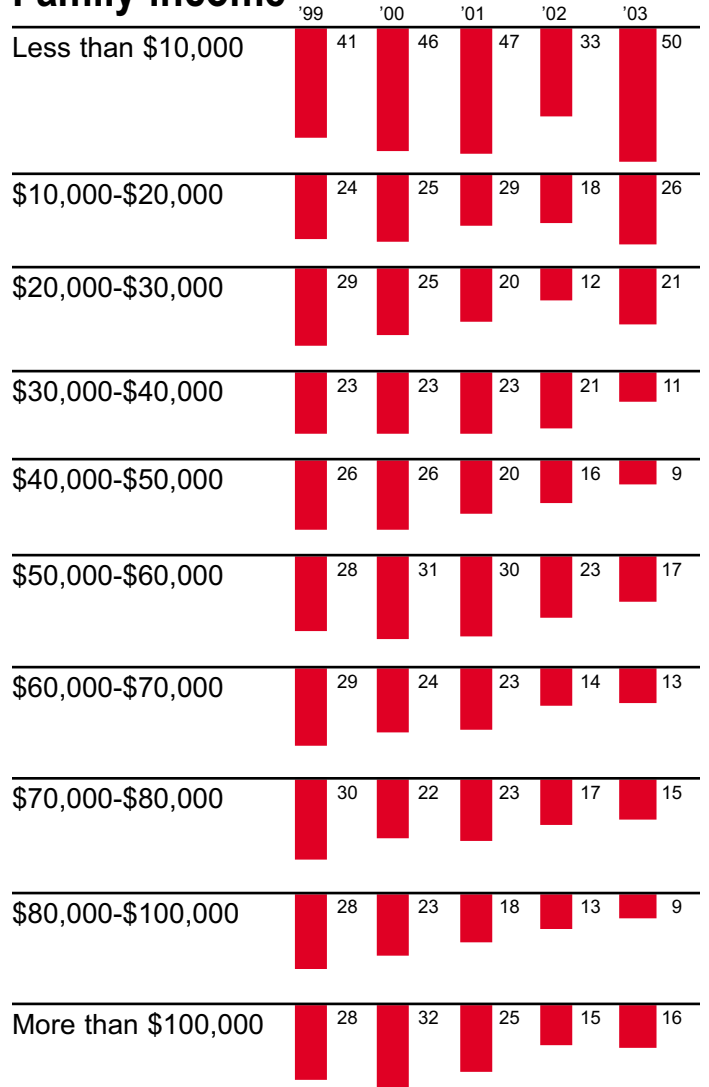
Race/Ethnicity



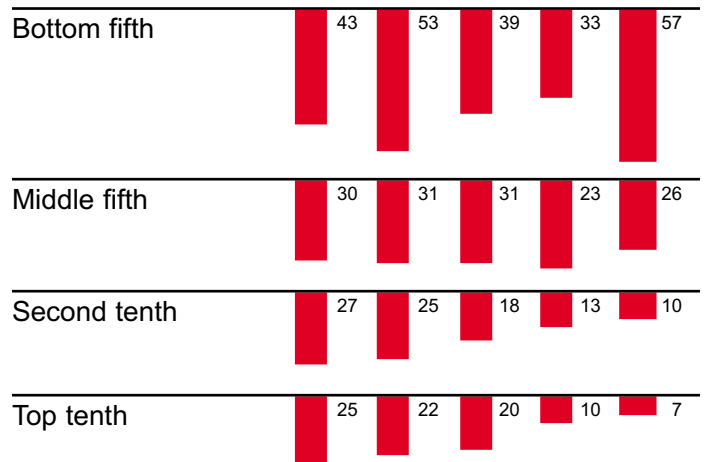
Parent education

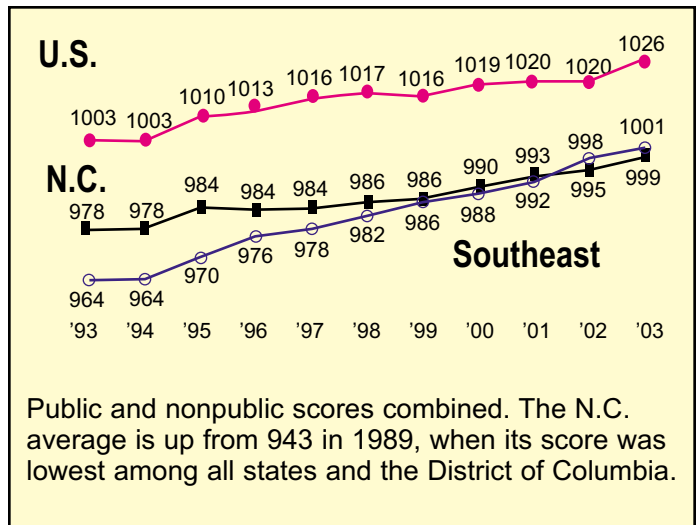
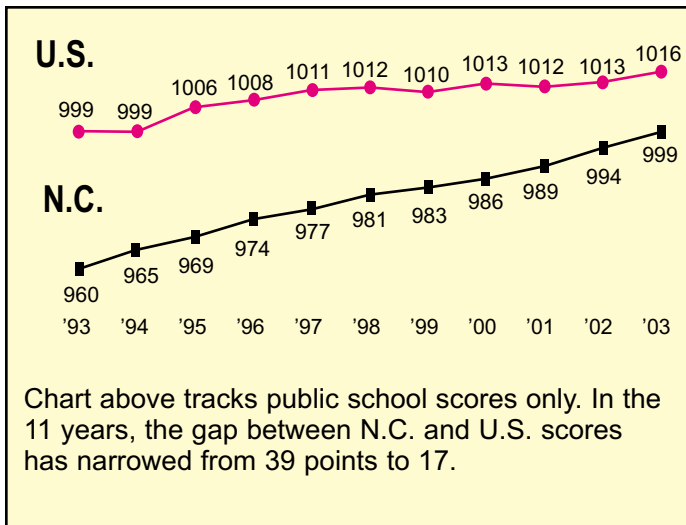


Family income



Class rank





2003 U.S., N.C. scores compared, by group

Gender

	U.S. score	Pct.	Tested in N.C.	Score	Pct.	US-NC Gap
All Students	1026	100	48,893	1001	100	-25
Male	1049	46	22,252	1021	46	-28
Female	1006	54	26,641	985	54	-21

Race/ethnicity

	U.S. score	Pct.	Tested in N.C.	Score	Pct.	US-NC Gap
American Indian	962	1	521	923	1	-39
Asian American	1083	10	1,229	1052	3	-31
Black	857	12	8,986	839	23	-18
Hispanic	912	10	863	961	2	49
White	1063	64	27,528	1050	69	-13
Other	1014	4	791	995	2	-19

Parent education level

	U.S. score	Pct.	Tested in N.C.	Score	Pct.	US-NC Gap
No H.S. diploma	856	5	767	849	2	-7
HS diploma	945	33	13,466	924	36	-21
Associate's degree	978	9	4,652	956	12	-22
Bachelor's degree	1059	28	11,192	1033	30	-26
Graduate degree	1128	26	7,640	1113	20	-15

Family Income (in U.S. dollars)

	U.S. score	Pct.	Tested in N.C.	Score	Pct.	US-NC Gap
Less than 10,000	864	5	1,271	814	4	-50
\$10,000-\$20,000	889	8	2,717	863	9	-26
\$20,000-\$30,000	927	10	3,406	906	11	-21
\$30,000-\$40,000	964	11	3,793	953	13	-11
\$40,000-\$50,000	993	9	3,156	984	10	-9
\$50,000-\$60,000	1012	10	3,069	995	10	-17
\$60,000-\$70,000	1025	8	2,712	1012	9	-13
\$70,000-\$80,000	1041	8	2,559	1026	8	-15
\$80,000-\$100,000	1065	11	3,074	1056	10	-9
\$100,000-plus	1123	19	4,403	1107	15	-16

Total credits in 6 academic subjects

	U.S. score	Pct.	Tested in N.C.	Score	Pct.	US-NC Gap
20 or more	1097	50	14,416	1076	44	-21
19 to 19.5	1007	11	3,712	995	11	-12
18 to 18.5	977	10	3,592	965	11	-12
17 to 17.5	949	8	2,987	943	9	-6
16 to 16.5	940	6	2,464	931	7	-9
15 to 15.5	934	5	1,886	930	6	-4
Fewer than 15	914	8	3,984	920	12	6

High school Grade Point Average

	U.S. score	Pct.	Tested in N.C.	Score	Pct.	US-NC Gap
A+ (97-100)	1232	7	3,757	1205	9	-27
A (93-96)	1149	18	7,963	1113	20	-36
A- (90-92)	1090	17	6,544	1047	16	-43
B (80-89)	965	47	17,437	935	43	-30
C (70-79)	849	11	4,452	820	11	-29
D or below (<70)	846	0	138	760	0	-86

High school Class Rank

	U.S. score	Pct.	Tested in N.C.	Score	Pct.	US-NC Gap
Top Tenth	1192	28	7,456	1185	25	-7
Second Tenth	1061	23	6,599	1051	22	-10
Second Fifth	980	23	7,356	958	24	-22
Third Fifth	898	21	7,083	872	24	-26
Fourth Fifth	837	4	1,330	808	4	-29
Fifth Fifth	820	1	263	763	1	-57

CMS results, 2001-03, by high school

School	2003 Pct. tested	VERBAL SCORE			MATH SCORE			TOTAL SAT			01-03 change
		2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003	
U.S.	48.0	506	504	507	514	516	519	1020	1020	1026	+6
N.C.	68.0	493	493	495	499	505	506	992	998	1001	+9
CMS	70.0	497	494	497	500	502	504	997	997	1004	+4
Butler	71.5	478	480	488	500	502	504	967	973	980	+13
East Meck	70.6	511	509	515	520	516	527	1031	1025	1042	+11
Midwood	26.0	499	403	457	480	397	400	979	800	857	-122
Garinger	47.2	438	424	400	423	418	402	861	842	802	-59
Harding	87.3	495	480	513	502	504	535	997	984	1048	+51
Hopewell	78.7			480			488			968	
Independence	61.8	495	496	486	505	504	495	1000	1000	981	-19
Myers Park	81.2	557	553	546	554	560	551	1111	1113	1097	-14
North Meck	74.3	504	512	517	508	523	522	1012	1035	1039	+27
Northwest Arts	66.2	506	524	546	479	466	519	985	990	1065	+80
Olympic	53.2	424	436	440	429	443	450	853	879	890	+37
Providence	93.7	533	539	540	540	554	558	1073	1093	1098	+21
South Meck	81.1	513	497	515	513	500	512	1019	997	1027	+8
Vance	73.9	488	483	480	485	491	496	973	974	976	+3
Waddell	47.2			430			424			854	
West Charlotte	69.7	420	412	401	423	423	392	843	835	793	-50
West Meck	42.6	443	444	434	454	457	439	897	901	873	-24

Data source: CMS

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District opens door to all; pass rate low, but kids still benefit

CMS has all-school access to Advanced Placement courses. And kids are taking on the challenge: Enrollment was up 6% last year, with black enrollment up 13% and Hispanic enrollment up 54%

While the districtwide rate of receiving 3 or better on the AP test rose a percentage point, to 42%, the pass rates at some small or new AP programs are very, very low, as noted below.

And the 42% overall rate masks a 17% pass rate among blacks, with whites passing 48% of their exams. Established programs, as at Providence and Myers Park, do well. And there may be a few success stories, as at Northwest.

CMS Assistant Supt. Lloyd

“Sometimes I have felt like we had done something wrong by being recognized by Newsweek, when in fact we should all be taking pride in the fact that Newsweek recognized us for affording a curriculum of this sort.

“Understood that it is based on AP participation and IB participation. But we shouldn’t be so resistant to the success that we have experienced in the district.

“And I just get that feeling from time to time that when we’re successful we turn our backs on it. We need to step up to it and be proud of it.”

– Supt. Jim Pughsley

Wimberly said three schools are team-teaching some AP courses via distance learning to give students what they need to succeed as new teachers gain experience.

In the much smaller International Baccalaureate program, diploma candidates rose 10%, to 233. But the diploma rate fell from 82% to 73%.

Growth in student participation

	'01	'03	Chg.
Hispanic/Latino	78	175	124%
African-American	538	916	70%
Other	148	221	49%
White	2416	3319	37%
Asian	250	335	34%
CMS	3,430	4,966	45%
Male	1414	2155	52%
Female	2016	2811	39%

AP exam results, 2001-2003, sorted by success on AP exam

School	Total test-takers			Exams taken			Pct. with 3, 4, or 5		
	'01	'02	'03	'01	'02	'03	'01	'02	'03
Providence	387	601	594	951	1391	1405	72.9	67.2	72
Myers Park	440	511	554	937	1187	1205	54.3	59.3	54
Northwest Arts	95	136	144	230	241	282	37	38.6	54
Butler	266	247	338	506	458	647	29.8	50.4	48
South Mecklenburg	371	407	441	911	960	1033	34.6	45.1	46
East Mecklenburg	279	383	383	684	915	884	41.2	39.3	41
Vance	298	337	356	617	752	800	37	39	41
Harding	201	303	313	530	728	868	27.7	37.6	40
Independence	187	319	302	429	684	599	32.9	34.9	35
Hopewell	--	126	343	--	241	693	--	23.2	33
North Mecklenburg	285	362	342	718	917	789	35.2	33.6	32
West Mecklenburg	124	141	157	257	287	331	21.8	17.4	21
Midwood	10	21	15	10	25	17	20	8	18
Olympic	146	186	195	331	383	439	11.5	18.8	17
E.E. Waddell	--	37	96	--	79	148	--	19	15
Garinger	201	223	195	418	434	417	4.5	6.7	8
West Charlotte	140	194	198	389	492	394	14.1	15.7	5

Source: CMS

CMS needs model to address 'race issue'

Continued from Page 2

education, as I have narrated-documented in my recent book, "The Crisis and Challenge of Black Mis-education in America: Confronting the Destruction of African People Through Euro-centric Public Schools" (2001).

And finally, a third article, captioned "Business, School leaders begin to sort reform ideas by priority," was perhaps the saddest of all of these reports in *Educate!* For it revealed that, irrespective of massive, documented, stagnating-aggravating, continuing problems of Black students within CMS, the leaders in this "community" have little or no "vision" to address The Crisis and Challenge of Black Mis-education in this area.

The report said, "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 educational strategies already being piloted in CMS."

But "the devil is in the details," and in this case the key detail is the absence of a new, more viable educational strategy to address the "race issue" that this "community" has apparently chosen to ignore and/or to minimize, as part of what's been called "dysfunctional civility" by Commissioner Bill James, who, clearly, is "not one of my favorite people" – a gross understatement.

And this "race issue" may be described, contextually and briefly, as the "Polyglot Factor" – the uniqueness of the Black experience in America, including chattel slavery, segregation, discrimination, dehumanization, etc., ad nauseam. Indeed, if we are serious, beyond empty rhetoric, about promoting "liberty and justice for all," we would pursue a number of "different remedies" (Bouza, 1993) to promote genuine education and racial justice in

America.

And one of these remedies would entail a new strategy by CMS to provide African-centered supplementary education to Black students, somewhat analogous to a model in Memphis, Tennessee, as modified for Charlotte-Mecklenburg by this author and Mr. Kenneth Simmons, the latter an outstanding-persecuted principal within CMS. And we proposed this model at least five years ago to former Superintendent, Dr.



Foluke

Eric Smith – all to no avail, even though Smith admitted, publicly, that he did not know how to address the scholarly documented reality of decreased or

stagnating low self-esteem among Black students since court-mandated desegregation began in 1954.

And now we have a series of new, also very commendable "goals" for "the beyond" as proclaimed recently by Dr. James Pughsley. However, I have not observed, nor do I discern, a more viable official strategy to achieve these goals under "the educational strategies already being piloted in CMS." Tragic!

Moreover, CMS also has failed sufficiently to change its curriculum and to provide professional education on African-American history-culture for its teachers. Indeed, teachers cannot teach what they do not know; but all students and especially Black students, about 43% of CMS students, have a critical need for information on their heritage and culture.

Finally, I conclude this article with two quotations that impact this issue, both statements having been printed in recent editions of *Educate!*:

"There is a growing body of research showing the positive influences on teachers of color on the academic achievement and personal development of minority students. 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." Moreover, "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.'"

– Leslie T. Fenwick, "Patterns of Excellence: Policy Perspectives on Diversity in Teaching and School Leadership."

"Our society is stratified and segregated, and that affects school kids' 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."

– Dr. Gary Orfield, Harvard University.

Let us say again: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." For clearly, many Blacks are "perishing," traceable to multiple factors, including a public school system of mis-education that FAILS, abysmally, to provide our students with a more positive sense of their spiritual and ethnic identity. Indeed, these students, too often, are "transferred" from failing schools to fill our prison system, about 81 percent Black in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

"If you keep doing what you've been doing, you keep getting what you got." And what we "got" within CMS and in the larger society is a marginalized-"sedimentized" Black population that has not been reconciled with "one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Briefs

Proving quality: Tennessee will allow its teachers to meet No Child requirements by showing their stuff on a test, through a variety of activities, and now through their kids' performance: Teachers whose students have achievement scores at or above the state's average will be declared a highly competent teacher, meeting the No Child rules for continued teaching, the Tennessean reported. The teacher data will remain confidential, the teachers association said.
<http://tennessean.com>

Raising standards: Louisiana raised test expectations for fourth- and eighth-graders this spring and the failure rate may double, the Times Picayune reported. As test difficulty remains constant, students will have to get 55% of questions correct in either math or reading, while reaching the current 40% standard in the other test section. Pushing both standards to 55% was dropped because last year's results suggested that half the students in each class would be held back. The action moves Louisiana's passing expectations from 30th percentile on national tests to 44th. North Carolina has never raised its expectations on its ABCs testing program.
www.nola.com

Couch potatoes: Among children aged 9 to 13, three out of five don't do any coached physical activity outside of school, the Arizona Republic reported. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report said about 25% of the kids reported taking no exercise of any kind during the previous week.
www.azcentral.com

Missed opportunity: Schoolkids get less time to eat lunch than prisoners do, accord-

Lifetime earnings

Using Census data, the Washington Times reported on lifetime earnings by educational attainment. All dollar amounts in millions:

Medical, law degrees	\$4.4
Ph.D.s	\$3.4
Master's degree	\$2.1
Bachelor's degree	\$2.1
High school diploma	\$1.2
High school dropout	\$1.0

— www.washtimes.com

ing to a Lehigh University professor's study. "Children in American public schools haven't learned a thing about sitting and eating and talking," said Karen Evans Stout.

www.ascribe.org

Captive audience: The Miami school board approved a feasibility study of putting advertising on school buses, the Miami Herald reported. The schools' cut of ad revenue would be 25% and the board would have veto over products advertised. Some board members fear any vetoes will bring lawsuits over First Amendment rights. Ads are already allowed in yearbooks, newspapers and on vending machines.

www.miami.com

Waiting on kindergarten: Parents are holding their October babies out of kindergarten in hopes they'll be better prepared for school, the News and Observer reported. One effect, experts say, is that the breadth of development is widening inside kindergarten classrooms, making it difficult for teachers to serve all children.

www.newsobserver.com

Wake bounds ahead: The Wake County schools enrolled 108,030 students on the seventh day of school this fall, up 4,400

from a year earlier. CMS was expecting about 3,000 additional students.

www.wcpss.net

Gender-separate: Atlanta's Martin Luther King Middle has separated boys from girls all day except during lunch and one elective, the Journal-Constitution reported. The school's principal acted after no amount of changing books or programs raised the school out of the achievement cellar. King is one of only 32 public schools nationwide with single-sex classes, according to the National Organization for Single Sex Public Education.

www.ajc.com

Top performers: The 21 Philadelphia schools reconstituted by the school board outperformed the schools being run by private management firms, the Inquirer reported. At the 21, officials doubled the time spent on math and reading, added teacher mentors and instituted afterschool programs. CMS double-blocks reading and math, and this year expands afterschool programs to all middle schools, but has had budget difficulties expanding mentoring programs.

www.philly.com

Rating teachers: For a recent story on how majority-minority schools have the least-qualified teachers, the Dallas Morning News used data from the Texas State Board for Educator Certification. The data covered more than 7,000 Texas schools. The ratings, from 1 to 10, were based on experience level and certification of each school's teachers.

www.dallasnews.com

Unprepared for college: The makers of the ACT college-entrance exam created benchmarks this year designed to predict if students would manage at least a C in college courses. The results among this spring's test-takers: two-thirds ready for

Continued on Page 13

Briefs *continued*

English, but 40% ready for algebra and 26% for biology. Among black test-takers: 10% ready for algebra, 5% for biology. ACT says a quarter of freshmen don't become sophomores, and only half of entering freshmen graduate within five years. ACT is as common in the Midwest as the SAT is in other parts of the country.

www.nytimes.com

Bored first: The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse says kids 12-17 who are frequently bored are 50 percent more likely to smoke, drink, get drunk or use illegal drugs. Having \$25 or more to spend a week doubles the likelihood of tobacco, alcohol and drug use, the Chicago Tribune reported. High risk for substance abuse rises with the size of school. First use of alcohol comes at age 12, cigarettes at 12.5, and marijuana at 14, according to the center's survey.

www.chicagotribune.com

Learning resource: A Bank of America grant of \$250,000 has opened to every middle and high school a highly acclaimed Internet learning library. Teachers across the state will have free access to SASinSchool, a Web site repository of material on 200 topics on English, Spanish, math, science and social studies. The lesson plans are used in 350 school systems in 25 states.

www.newsobserver.com

Scared off or recruited?: A new Illinois law forces Chicago schools to pilot a program that will have at-risk students tour state prisons, the Tribune reported. Gov. Rod Blagojevich defended the law, saying it was good to have 11- to 13-year-olds see "what they will face if they don't clean up their acts..." Critics say such "scared straight" programs proved

Police hearings, complaints and appeals

Under the Police Complaint Review Process, the Community Relations committee assists the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department in receiving complaints of police misconduct. CRC also monitors the complaints filed through its office to insure that rights of the citizen complainant and the police employee are not compromised.

CRC staff continues to actively participate in the Chain of Command (administrative) Hearings on the most serious allegations of employee misconduct. Members of the Police Review Citizens Subcommittee review the case file, attend and monitor those hearings that could be reviewed by the Citizen Review Board. A numerical breakdown of CRC participation by subcommittee members and staff is as follows:

	CRC staff participation by fiscal year					
	98	99	00	01	02	03
Chain of command hearings	60	63	100	106	84	73
Charges of misconduct	110	86	135	146	*153	*105
Charges sustained	85	53	103	127	109	79
Shooting Review Boards	11	9	12	17	20	14
Justified weapon discharges						12
Officers cited for termination	9	5	11	8	7	7
Hearings audited by CRC mbrs.	1	4	10	14	18	9
Hours by CRC members						51

	Complaints and appeals filed with CRC					
	98	99	00	01	02	03
Complaints	3	3	7	27	5	14
Appeals	8	8	4	9	6	0

* Includes shooting review boards

— Source: Community Relations Committee

ineffective in the '70s and '80s, and that what works is individually tailored intervention with at-risk youth. One controversial and unresolved issue, the Tribune said, was how children would be identified as at-risk.

www.chicagotribune.com

Every class on tape: Biloxi, Mississippi's 6,500-student school district may be the first to videotape activity in every classroom, the Arizona Republic reported. A limited number of officials may view tapes from the \$2 million Webcam system. Parents would have to sue to get recordings. Officials say everybody feels safer. Some Boloxians wonder if the loss of privacy is worth the price.

www.washtimes.com

Reading by third: Houston's

schools are finding that retaining children at second grade gives slow readers the help they need to achieve in the gateway third-grade year, the Chronicle reported. It quoted University of Texas developmental pediatrics professor Jack Fletcher as saying, "Now we're realizing that if children are not reading by grade level in third grade, they remain behind even in high school."

www.chron.com

Personal finance: Utah, which leads the nation in personal bankruptcy rates, will pilot a semester course in personal finance covering money management, spending, savings and investing, credit and debt and insurance. By 2008 all Utah students will have to pass the course to graduate.

www.sltrib.com

Briefs *continued*

Links to parents: A growing number of Denver-area middle and high schools are giving parents access to attendance, grading and other information on their children, the Post reported. The initial cost is \$6,000-\$8,000 per school, with an additional annual maintenance fee of several thousand dollars. Parents must show a photo ID at school, then get a password that allows them access to their own children's information. "In the suburban districts, where parents have computers, it works," said Denver Public Schools technology officer Tom Stevens.
www.denverpost.com

Thanks to charters: Kansas City's was one of the few desegregation orders which required schools to show progress in closing the racial achievement gap, the Star reported. A judge closed the case earlier this month, ruling that the 13% of the gap that had been declared the vestige of segregation had now been eliminated. One factor in closing the gap, the Star said, was identified at a May hearing: Some low-performing black students, and some high-performing white students, had left the district for charter schools.
www.kansascity.com

Transparency: Atlantic City High in New Jersey, labeled "persistently dangerous" under No Child rules, has forced students to use transparent bookbags and to run magnetic-strip ID cards through security equipment when entering school, the Press reported. School board members paid for the initiatives out of their board discretionary account.
www.pressofatlanticcity.com

Ground rules for success working together

NCCJ, the National Conference for Community and Justice, has a Youth Council that draws students annually from CMS high schools. At Monday's organizational meeting, the students compiled a list of "ground rules for working together" in 7 minutes. The list:

- Respect others' opinions.
- No cell phones.
- Listen to each other.
- Be open-minded and courteous.
- "Step up, step back," meaning encourage those who have not spoken to have a say.
- Stay focused.
- No derogatory comments.
- Say "ouch," meaning speak up immediately when something offends you; don't stew.
- Let people finish their comment.
- Respect confidentiality if something said needs to stay within the group.
- Don't gossip. Refrain from side conversations.
- No horseplay.
- Respect the meeting facility.

"Who is responsible for holding us accountable for keeping these rules," asked NCCJ's Alex Wagaman.
"WE ARE," the students shouted in reply.

Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- 4** Education Budget Advisory Committee, 7:30 a.m., 11th floor conference room, Government Center.
- 6** District 6 parent leaders meeting, 9 a.m., Community Room, Matthews Presbyterian Hospital.
- 9** School board meets, 6 p.m., Board Room, Education Center, 701 E. 2nd St.
- 12** Equity Committee, 8 a.m., Board Room.
- 15** School board work session on student assignment, 5 p.m., Board Room. Not televised.
- 16** Bond Oversight Committee, 7:30 a.m., Building Services, 3301 Stafford Drive.
- 16** Joint lunch forum of Mecklenburg elected leaders, Noon, Government Center, room 267.
- 16** Board Policy Committee, 3:15

p.m., Room 414, Education Center.

- 17** Education Budget Advisory Committee, 7:30 a.m., 11th floor conference room, Government Center.
- 18** Finance, Capital & Facilities Committee, 4 p.m., Board Conference Room.
- 23** Board Curriculum Committee, 3 p.m., Board Conference Room.
- 23** School board meets, 6 p.m., Board Room.

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.