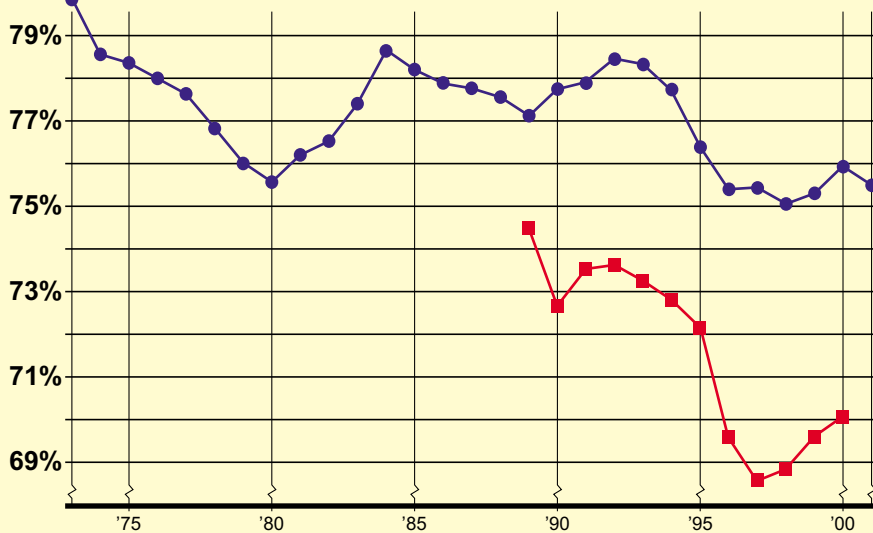


## Real graduation rate? Track 8th-graders

In last week's Boston College study that showed how high-stakes testing and tougher "gateways" have over the past three decades tripled the number of ninth-graders held back, researchers said the way to track real graduation rates is to compare graduates each year to the number of eight-graders four years earlier. The lines below track the national percentage (●) and the North Carolina percentage (■) using that method.



— "The Education Pipeline in the United States, 1970-2000," Center for the Study of Testing, Evaluation and Educational Policy, Boston College. [www.bc.edu/research/nbnetpp](http://www.bc.edu/research/nbnetpp)

## Backsliding on the road to equity

### Storm delays report, but summary shows both gains, challenges

The storm that canceled school for three days also pushed back into February the release of CMS's annual look at its equity initiatives. Details of the progress made since last January may not surface until Feb. 10.

But a summary was available, and the information for all Equity Plus II schools, by category, is reprinted on Page 5.

In a summary of the results, CMS officials expressed concern about two areas: instructional supplies for exceptional children, and the percentage of teachers who hold master's degrees.

In a year's time, the percentage of schools meeting the standard for EC materials dropped from 34% to 11%. On Wednesday, Supt. Jim Pughsley ruled out theft, but acknowledged that supplies seem to move as teachers do, leaving some schools without supplies they had when last surveyed.

CMS said it had made progress increasing the number of teachers with master's degrees. "However, we are still not meeting standard." Indeed, the number of schools failing the full batch of faculty standards is way down, from 81% to 29%.

"Both of these areas have performance management systems in place that will allow the district to closely monitor our operational plan to ensure greater success in

## School-county budget talks open on respectful note; staff to work up plan

Mostly succeeding in muzzling their long-winded politician colleagues, Tom Cox and Joe White Wednesday afternoon launched the annual school budget process with, for now, the professional staffs taking the lead.

At a joint meeting of county and school boards, Cox, the lame-duck chair of the Board of County Commissioners, asked Supt. Jim Pughsley and County Manager Harry Jones to return within three weeks with a plan on how to proceed with school funding.

The politicians were told to lobby their respective managers outside of meetings.

Wednesday's strategy kept the acrimony in public to a minimum, but glossed over substantial conceptual differences. School officials are under pressure to raise achievement and house new students. County officials are the ones who must answer to voters for the tax rate. Those differing perspectives have led to monumental discord during previous budget cycles.

Commissioner Ruth Samuelson noted that both bodies are under the same pressures. As school costs rise to educate underprepared students, county costs for

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**Calendar**


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**FEBRUARY**

- 5** Education Budget Advisory Committee, 7:30 a.m., 11th floor conference room, Government Center. County commissioners to attend, discuss budget issues.
- 5** Documentary film premiere: "Negros With Guns: Rob Williams and Black Power," produced and directed by Churchill Roberts, Afro-American Cultural Center, 6 p.m., free but for reservations, 704-374-1565. Panelists: Tim Tyson, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Glenda Gilmore, Yale; Gerald Horne, UNC-Chapel Hill; Gregory Dixon, UNCC; Dr. Reginald Hawkins; Mabel Williams, widow of Robert Williams.
- 7** UNC Law Conference on Race, Class, Gender, and Ethnicity. Held at Chapel Hill law school. Registration and information: [www.unc.edu/crcge](http://www.unc.edu/crcge). Students free; nonstudents \$20; CLE Credit \$75. Lunch included. For information, e-mail Allison Blixt at [ablixt@email.unc.edu](mailto:ablixt@email.unc.edu).
- 19** Tony Habit, head of N.C. High School Project funded by Gates Foundation, 8 a.m., Charlotte Chamber.
- 26** Public School Forum of N.C. President and Executive Director John Dornan on impact of No Child Left Behind, 7 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 200 W. Trade St. Sponsor: League of Women Voters.
- 29** H.E.L.P. (Helping Empower Local People) will hold concurrent meetings at five churches to hear parents' education concerns. Times and places to be announced.

**MARCH**

- 5** Urban League Annual Whitney M. Young Jr. Award Dinner, 6 p.m., Adam's Mark Hotel, \$125 for league members, \$150 for non-members. Call Robin Brown at 704-373-2256 ext. 203 for tickets or order online at [www.urbanleaguecc.org](http://www.urbanleaguecc.org).

**Letters From Readers****Lee has rebuilt ties to legislature**

*The writer, a Republican, represents Cabarrus' District 74 in the N.C. General Assembly.*

I have truly enjoyed *Educate!* Thanks so much for offering me this service. I wanted to comment on "Headache" (*Educate!*, Jan. 23).

As a co-chair of the House Education Appropriation Committee and a sponsor of HB 805, I have worked closely with Chairman Howard Lee this session. He has been above board and open to the legislature. This has made the process move much

faster as he is experienced in the legislative process and is aware that communication between the State Board of Education and the legislature has been a problem for many years. I think he is the right person at the right time. I believe we are seeing solutions instead of problems and results should soon follow.

FYI there is a House study committee that is meeting during our recess to address Long Term Suspension. Rep. Jean Preston is chairing this committee.

Linda Johnson

**Let's celebrate when assignments don't isolate us**

As the coach of the CMS team, Dr. James Pughsley has every reason to celebrate recent NAEP test scores. For if the team is successful, every member of the team gets the identical award.

But as superintendent, Dr. Pughsley must realize that only those students who pass get a diploma and a chance at a decent living. The others get a certificate and increased odds that the next state-supported institution they belong to may be jail.

On the 2003 NAEP test:

- For every 100 black 4th-graders, only 14 were proficient in reading and 20 proficient in math.
- For every 100 black 8th-

graders, 14 were proficient in reading, 11 in math.

We still have the option of honoring the Brown decision, but not if we continue to ignore the wisdom of every educational institution and/or expert when they tell us that if we choose a student assignment plan that isolates people of color and the poor, you are choosing the most difficult and most expensive way of educating children. Our superintendent must not be a coach. We will celebrate when our schools and our classrooms reflect the diversity of our population rather than the segregation of our neighborhoods.

Richard A. McElrath, Sr.

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**Educate!** is a journal on public education, with a focus on Charlotte-Mecklenburg and North Carolina. Our aim is to supply information useful to you in your role as student, parent or citizen.

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# Goal for CMS is to move from 'good' to 'great'

*After the last school board election, Educate! invited all members of the school board to write about their plans for CMS and how they would pursue them. The writer was elected for the first time in November as an at-large member.*

**By KAYE MCGARRY**

We need to make education the No. 1 priority in our community; in so doing, we will have a better community. The strategic direction for CMS should focus on learners and learning.

As one of your newest members of the Board of Education At-Large, I welcome the opportunity to continue to be a servant leader and a keeper of the public trust. I want to make a difference in our community. During the past several months, I have listened to hundreds of parents throughout Mecklenburg County. I summarize what all these parents had in common. They cited the following four things that they wanted for their children in our public schools: stability; qualified teachers; safe environment; and a school close to home.

In addition to helping make that happen consistently throughout CMS, what are other things I want to focus on as a CMS board member in year 2004-2005?

– **Student achievement.** Help bring our schools from “good” to “great.”

Principals are the key in any school. The principal sets the tone, establishes rapport with his/her teachers, staff, and students. Teachers have to feel respected and supported by their principals and administration. Parents or guardians need to take the responsibility to help bring their children to the school house door motivated and ready to learn. In this way, the teachers can then do what they do best – teach.

– **Reprioritize capital needs.**

This would include reviewing base-line standards for existing and new facilities and prioritizing construction projects. CMS needs to be accountable and willing to articulate the capital needs to the Board of County Commissioners and the citizens of Mecklenburg County.

– **Operating budget.** Studies on operational efficiencies that have been conducted in the recent past need to be reviewed to see where CMS can maximize our dollars spent. We then need to implement changes.

– **Teacher recruitment and retention.** Provide additional resources for the retention and development of teachers and staff. Continue to improve teacher morale.

– **Year-round schools.** I would like to see this option, among others, explored. There are many children in our system who would benefit from year-round schools. Studies show many advantages both in cost savings and in opportunities for increased student achievement. I believe the timing is good for CMS.

– **Choice plan.** When implemented, my understanding of the choice plan, the student assignment plan, was that we had a window of opportunity to make it work, perhaps 3-5 years. We are at a crossroads for public education. I understood that we would learn from year one. In those cases where there were unintended consequences from boundaries, etc., we would make minor changes to the Choice Plan in year two. Year three is coming up and I would like to see this Board re-examine the Choice Plan and make any changes, but only if needed. We do need to maintain as much stability as possible for our families, but I feel an obligation to our community to continue to reassess this plan each year.

– **Communication.** A communications audit was completed in December 1998. I would like to review these recommendations and

see whether there are any suggestions that would make our internal and external communications more effective at this point in time. There is so much good happening within our schools; however, I feel many times, the good is not what the public hears in the media.

Serving as Chairperson of the Finance, Capital and Facilities Committee, my focus will be on funding issues, budget issues, and spending issues. Balancing growth and equity will be a challenge that we must address for the betterment of all of our citizens in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Overall, this Board of Education needs to increase the public confidence in our leadership ability. Our Board of Education must regain the trust of our community. Trust is real important; it all starts with trust.

We have the resources in this community to bring our schools from “good” to “great.” There are many dedicated teachers, teacher assistants, administrators, principals, parents and students.

I believe if the citizens of Charlotte-Mecklenburg can all pull together to put Education as the No. 1 priority in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, great things will begin to happen.



McGarry

**V**OLUNTEER IN  
YOUR  
SCHOOLS

FOR A  
RESERVATION,  
CALL  
980-343-6245

## Equity status: Some backsliding

Continued from Page 1

moving toward meeting the standard,” the introduction says. More teachers will also be graduating from tuition-paid programs.

The full report should provide parents more details on how CMS is doing in reaching its commitments to provide the system’s 52 high-poverty schools with additional resources.

The equity standards cover a broad range of services and materials, from the adequacy of buildings to computers to classroom supplies to teacher-student ratios.

One apparent area of turmoil is in media center resources. The category includes mandated equipment, number of books, the age of the books, and the appropriateness of the collection to the children using the building.

The number of schools listed as “not meeting expectations” has dropped from 13 to five. But since last year, all 15 schools that were listed as meeting expectations,

### Equity: Real-life view

*N.C. Justice Center lawyer (and former teacher aide) Sheria Reid, speaking last weekend to UNC-Chapel Hill Teaching Fellows:*

In terms of salaries, aides “can do just as well or better at Wal-Mart. But there should never be one adult in a classroom with 30 5-year-olds. If it happens, the teacher doesn’t ever go to the bathroom.

“You cannot say to a classroom of 5-year-olds, ‘Now you just talk amongst yourselves; I’ll be back in a minute.’

“And children must be supervised during bathroom breaks. Or someone WILL put someone else’s head in the toilet.

“And back in the classroom, someone WILL drink the blue paint – because someone else dared them to.”

including all the Equity Plus high schools, have lost that designation. More than 90% of the schools are listed as “improving

but needs continued focus.”

Asked Wednesday if conditions in the Equity Plus media centers suggest that budget constraints have made it impossible for CMS to deliver on its equity promises, Pughsley said he would have to study the details more.

As he cut the budget in early summer and again in fall last year, Pughsley said he would not cut funds from the equity program.

As used by CMS, equity refers to a commitment to have a specified list of materials and personnel resources available at all Equity Plus II schools. Perhaps the most important deal with faculty, and are based on a range of indicators of training and experience. The target is an average similar to the average found in the late ’90s at a group of non-Equity schools that had won state honors for academic achievement.

According to the summary, every Equity Plus school in 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 met the standards for teacher-student ratio. But the head count is taken early in the year, missing classrooms that fill with new arrivals.

## Budget discussion begins on new tone

Continued from Page 1

Medicaid and other social services rise. “They are the same people,” Samuelson said.

“We’re making a real effort here, guys, to go forward with a new attitude, a new mindset toward one another,” Cox said.

After the meeting, school board chairman White said, “We won’t get everything we want, but we’re working at it.” Later, he acknowledged the era of good feeling over the budget might be short. “The sabers will come out once we stick a number on it,” he said.

Last year, at the urging of a business-dominated Education Budget Advisory Committee, Pughsley penned a three-year financial projection that called for

a \$96 million increase from the county for the coming fiscal year.

On the table now are two issues: How much debt will the county authorize to build schools? And how much will the county contribute to the district’s annual operating budget?

Debt costs rise with new construction and renovations. One suggestion has been for the county to earmark a set amount, perhaps 47% of its budget, to cover both debt service and operations.

Using that 47% figure, Pughsley and staff projected an 11% to 13% drop in per-pupil operating funds within five years. Per-pupil county funding for operations would drop from \$2,348 to either \$2,085 or \$2,038, depending on the pace of school construction.

Pughsley suggested adding triggers to the formula that would keep the operating-to-debt-service ratio at 80%; and add money to

cover additional special-needs students or state salary increases.

Asked later if he wasn’t inserting in the formula issues commissioners traditionally dealt with without any formula, Pughsley said “That’s right. Absolutely.”

Samuelson offered her view of setting the percentage.

“The framework is not meant to deny the issues you are facing,” she told school board members. But during annual budget cycles, “without a framework it feels like we’re being asked to take money from county services to fund CMS, when you’re facing the same pressures we are.

“Asking us to rob our services to pay these [school] services is counterproductive.” But, she added, “this is not an attempt to deny you what you need.”

One official was optimistic, saying Samuelson “left the door open” to funding increases.

# CMS equity status

Color key: Green ■: Meets expectations; Yellow ■: Improving but needs continued focus; Red ■: Not meeting expectations; ND: No data as of 11-03

Story, Page 1

Source: CMS

	Facilities		Instruct. materials		EC materials		Technology		AV eqpt.		Media ctr. resources		Course offerings		Co-curr. activities		Textbooks		Faculty at standard		Teach/stu. ratios	
	'03	'04	'03	'04	'03	'04	'03	'04	'03	'04	'03	'04	'03	'04	'03	'04	'03	'04	'03	'04	'03	'04
Albemarle Road	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Allenbrook	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Ashley Park	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green
Berryhill	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Briarwood	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
Chantilly/Billingsville	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	ND	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Collinswood	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Devonshire	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Druid Hills	Green	Green	Green	Green	ND	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
First Ward	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	ND	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green
Hidden Valley	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Highland Renaissance	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Idlewild	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Irwin Avenue	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Lincoln Heights	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	ND	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Merry Oaks	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green
Montclair	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green
Nations Ford	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Oakdale	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Oaklawn/Bruns Ave.	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
Pawtucket	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
Pinewood	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Reid Park/Amay James	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	ND	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Sedgefield	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green
Shamrock Gardens	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green
Statesville Road	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
Sterling	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green
Thomasboro	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green
Walter G. Byers	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Westerly Hills	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Windsor Park	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
Winterfield	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Albemarle Road Middle	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Cochrane	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Coulwood	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Eastway	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
J.T. Williams	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	ND	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
James Martin	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Marie G. Davis	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	ND	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
Northridge	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Piedmont	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	ND	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green
Randolph	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Ranson	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Sedgefield	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Spaugh	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	ND	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
Wilson	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
E.E. Waddell High	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Garinger	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green
Olympic	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
Philip O. Berry	Green	Green	Green	Green	ND	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
West Charlotte	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green
West Mecklenburg	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green

# 'Plessy again, or reaffirmation of *Brown*?'

## Harvard center traces resegregation, offers agenda to reverse trend

In *"Brown at 50: King's Dream or Plessy's Nightmare?"* for the Harvard Civil Rights Project, Gary Orfield and Chungmei Lee recount the resegregation of the nation's public schools since 1991.

Urban areas are most segregated, and Latinos are more segregated at schools nationwide than blacks, the study says. Orfield says schools are not as segregated as in 1954 when *Brown v Board* was decided, but have fallen back to conditions in 1968, the year Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated.

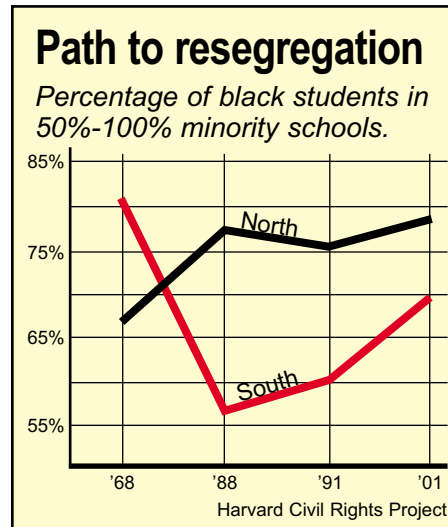
But "school segregation is not inevitable," the report says, and it closes with the summary below of "policies that could reverse these trends:"

"Two of the clearest lessons of *Brown* and the entire civil rights experience are that segregation does not work and achieving desegregation requires explicit and enduring commitment.

"Many of the complaints about the limited and sometimes unfair remedies provided by the courts are correct and no one who has seriously studied the record of the last half-century would argue that even maximum levels of integration would be any kind of panacea for the ills of a society that is divided and polarized on many levels.

"The best evidence, however, shows that segregation is worse and that there are much better possibilities, not only for minority but also for white students, in desegregated schools.

"The immediate question is about the possibility of progress in a society with huge minority populations, massive segregation, a court system that has dismantled critically important policy tools, and a public that supports desegregation but has no consensus about how to get it.



"These are a formidable set of obstacles. But they pale in comparison with those faced and defeated by the leaders of the civil rights organizations and their supporters who challenged and defeated an entrenched system of absolute racial separation and subordination in the South in the 1940s, the 1950s and the 1960s.

"They had few resources of any kind, there was very little public support, even theoretically, when they began, they faced totally mobilized and virtually monolithic state and local official opposition and had to work through a legal system that had supported apartheid for two-thirds of a century. They were told it was impossible, but they did not stop. Eventually they won in fundamental ways.

"What would the President who is sworn in next January do if he wished to revive the promise of *Brown* in its second half-century, if he wished to make Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision come alive again in our changing society? The following steps would make a very large difference:

"1) Appoint judges and civil rights enforcement officials who understand that the Supreme Court was right in *Brown* and

that the job is far from over.

"2) Appoint a presidential commission to summarize the lessons of the last half-century and inform the country about the steps needed to build metropolitan communities that are less polarized in housing and schools and that are more successfully multiracial.

"3) Revive the federal aid program of the Nixon and Carter administrations that helped multiracial schools deal positively with issues of race relations, multicultural curricula and more effective classroom operation.

"4) Actively recruit young people of color into the education profession and assure that they receive full and fair employment opportunities from all school districts, not just minority schools.

"5) Use housing subsidy programs more effectively to provide low-income families access to middle-class schools.

"6) Explain to Americans that white children gain substantially from integrated experiences in terms of their readiness to live and work effectively in multiracial schools and communities and that integrated schools offer better preparation for diverse colleges and work experiences.

"7) Use educational choice programs – magnet and charter schools and vouchers if they are enacted in an explicitly pro-integration mode, forbidding transfers that increase segregation and rewarding those that diminish it.

"8) Provide substantial financial incentives and positive recognition to white and Asian suburbs that accept significant numbers of segregated minority students from schools designated as failing in segregated locations.

"9) Implement plans that reward communities and metro areas that work to provide subsi-

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# Study offers ways to avoid new Plessy era

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dized and affordable housing in suburbs and gentrifying areas and market it to minorities as well as whites.

"We do not face the problems the Court faced at the time of *Brown*. There are proven models of what works. There are communities and entire metropolitan areas that have had great success for several decades. There are millions of students who have actually had desegregated educations.

"We have some institutions like the U.S. Army and some colleges and universities that have had great success with a long-term and deep commitment to real integration. The public is favorable toward the goal if not committed to any means. The political power of the excluded communities is rising substantially and, eventually, racial polarization may become a very costly strategy.

"Whites are becoming minorities in some major parts of the country and may be increasingly willing to admit that they need what can only be learned in desegregated institutions – how to function very effectively in a society where they must understand and work with those of other racial and ethnic backgrounds.

"A great deal about race relations in America is about how the issues are framed and how the possibilities are presented. The President sworn in next January will face a society that has been leaderless too long on this issue, with many signs of backward movement.

"Most recent Presidents have chosen to say nothing, to ignore the issue or even to inflame fears of racial change. If the words and the reality of King's dream could come to life again on Capitol Hill, there is much that could be done."

## *Brown v Board*: A calendar of commemorations

*The following events are among those scheduled to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1954 Brown ruling ending school segregation. Listings compiled by UNCC College of Education. Details will be added as they become available.*

### JANUARY

- 31** Opening of "Courage: The Carolina Story that Changed America," Levine Museum of the New South. Through Aug. 15.

### FEBRUARY

- 1** Exhibit, "Impact of School Desegregation on the Charlotte Area," Atkins Library, UNCC. Through May.
- 11** Book discussion, "Jim Crow's Children: The Broken Promise of the Brown Decision" by Peter Irons, led by Louise Allen, 5 p.m., UNCC Library Room 124.
- 13** Professional development conference for CMS teachers, "Teaching about Brown v Board and Issues Related to School Desegregation," 8:30-3:30, Myers Park High.
- 23-27** UNCC Africa and Its Diaspora Week.
- 23** Lecture, "Issues Facing African Diaspora and Education," Harvard's Prudence Carter, Myers Park High.
- 26** Lecture by Mary Dillard, Sarah Lawrence College, "Issues Facing African Diaspora and Education," UNCC.
- 27** Lecture by Anani Dzidzienyo, Brown University, "Issues Facing African Diaspora and Education," UNCC.

### MARCH

- 2** Film, "The Intolerable Burden" about school desegregation in Drew, Miss., presented by filmmaker Constance Curry, Queens University.
- 3** Panel discussion, "Why Celebrate the Decision?" 7 p.m., Moore Hall, UNCC.
- 18** Book discussion, "Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary" by Juan Williams, led by UNCC's Ann McColl, noon-2 p.m., Cone Center Room 101, UNCC.
- 25** Book discussion, "Brown v Board

of Education: A Civil Rights Milestone and Its Troubled Legacy" by James T. Patterson, led by UNCC's James Lyons, 5-7 p.m., UNCC library.

- 31** Lecture and reception for the Brown sisters, Linda Brown Thompson and Cheryl Brown Henderson, 7 p.m., UNCC Cone Center.

### APRIL

- 9-11, 17-18** "Pass the Peas," a play based on the story of Clarendon County, S.C., performed by the Afro-American Children's Theater, time and place TBA.
- 14** Book discussion, "Mixed Emotions: As Racial Barriers Fell, a University President Remembers" by former UNCC Chancellor Dean Colvard, led by UNCC's Cynthia Jackson-Hammond, 4-6 p.m., UNCC Library.
- 20** Panel of photojournalists James Peeler, Bruce Roberts, Don Sturkey and Cecil Williams explaining their work in "Focus on Justice: Carolina Photographers and the Civil Rights Movement," Levine Museum.

### MAY

- 13** Film, "With All Deliberate Speed: The Legacy of Brown v Board of Education," 6 p.m., Levine Museum.
- 16** Drama, dance, music and art related to "Courage" exhibit, by Northwest School of the Arts students, Levine Museum.
- 17** Anniversary of Brown decision. Levine Museum open.

### JUNE

- 10** Conference, "Through the Eyes of the Law": Lawyers and historians examine case's impact on education and civil rights, all day, Levine Museum.

## Reconciliation time?

*Education Week has been profiling towns touched by Brown vs Board in 1954. In Summerton, S.C., whites still spurn Scott's Branch High for private Clarendon Hall, set up as desegregation took hold. A reporter saw some reconciliation:*

"Local signs of progress include the Fishers of Men, an interracial Christian men's group that meets monthly in Summerton churches

for cookouts, prayers, and fellowship. On a Saturday morning last summer, a dozen or more men, black and white, joined hands in prayer at each school in Summerton.

"But even in the prayer group, there were signs of separation. At Clarendon Hall, a white man thanked God for the 'men and women who had the vision' to start the school, and 'for the virtues and the morals of these kids here.'

At Scott's Branch High, there

were prayers among some of the white men to 'change the culture' of the school, for students to save their 'virtues' until marriage, and for the students to respect their elders.

"Asked if the men's group means that the barriers that have separated white and black here for so long may be finally lifting, organizer Val Elliott... says he isn't so sure. 'It's going to take some more time,' he says.

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

## Briefly

### ... in the Carolinas

**More buses:** The Wake County school board agreed to spend \$1.575 million on 25 school buses and to add 25 new drivers. Administrators said a decade of cost-cutting, during which 40 buses were being acquired when growth required 160, had created an "untenable situation" and increased ride times for students. Wake's relatively smaller bus fleet has been cited by Mecklenburg critics of CMS efficiency.

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

**Online lunch payments:** Cabarrus County schools now offer online lunch school payments, the Charlotte Observer reported. The benefit is convenience. The drawback is a \$1.50 transaction fee.

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

### ... in the nation

**Fewer dropouts:** A concerted drive by state officials has led to the lowest Oregon dropout rates in 12 years, the Oregonian reported. Schools are given incentives for keeping their enrollment up and many actively pursue potential dropouts to keep them. "We have a number of people who are committed to actually going after

kids and treating them as individuals as opposed to statistics," a part-time counselor said.

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

**High retention:** The Troops to Teachers program has seen 75% of its recruits stay in schools after five years, either as teachers or administrators, the Washington Post reported. Troops to Teachers gives former military personnel financial incentives to get their teaching certificates and work in low-income areas.

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

**Unintended:** The use of substitute teachers will increase if principals cannot find enough teachers that meet the No Child requirements, the Orlando Sentinel reported. Most subs studied lack college degrees and almost 60% score poorly on evaluations by principals.

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

**Reducing the gap, I:** A study found that decreasing pressures associated with negative stereotypes of girls and minorities increases their test scores. The New York Times reported that minority and low-income students who receive positive messages about their ability to learn are less likely to conform to negative stereotypes. The study states that when academic problems are attributed to the situation rather

than the ability or the child's shortcomings, there can be an increase in achievement.

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

**Feeling supported:** A new study shows that achievement levels of poor and minority students are higher when the children feel academically as well as socially supported in their school, reported the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

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

**Reducing the gap, II:** Georgia's Dekalb County is addressing the black-white achievement gap by pairing each high school with a post-secondary institution, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported. The paired schools will develop mentoring and tutoring programs, launch teacher training initiatives and conduct research. Although created to decrease the gap, the program is aimed at benefiting all students.

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

**Preparing teachers:** An Ohio group is conducting a five-year study to determine how teacher preparation affects student performance, the Plain Dealer reported. The study will use student test score gains as indicators of teacher effectiveness.

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