



Writer Constance Curry, foreground, watches as "The Intolerable Burden" is shown at Queens University Tuesday night. The movie, based on Curry's book "Silver Rights," chronicles the struggle by the late Mae Bertha Carter (above) and her family to integrate public schools in Drew, Mississippi in the '60s. Story, Page 4.

Parent concerns

H.E.L.P. reviewing issues raised at weekend meetings to identify what will spark activism

More than 200 parents spent Sunday afternoon huddling over how to improve their public schools.

Helping Empower Local People called the meetings to get a reading of what was on parents' minds. By Wednesday, H.E.L.P. Executive Director Paulette Higgins was sorting the concerns into two piles: issues that H.E.L.P. must push Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to address, and another group of issues that parents could tackle on their own.

Virtually all the initiatives in both groups will require additional money, she said.

On some of the matters raised Sunday, Higgins said, parents may not know what CMS standards are. And CMS may not have communicated some of its initiatives, leaving parental concerns lagging behind reality:

"A lot of parents out there have

no idea about what progress CMS has already made, because they are not in the schools....

"There's a lot of information that goes out from CMS but it is not getting home.

"How do you disseminate information? Can that happen through H.E.L.P.? Through churches? We've got to find a way to make that happen."

All of the H.E.L.P. groups meeting across the city Sunday raised concerns about low parent involvement in the schools and in children's education.

Working on that issue would be her recommendation, Higgins said.

"We know parent involvement is important, but we don't know how to create it," Higgins said.

"It will take some more work to see if parents want to take it seriously.... You've got to find what they're really concerned about to get them engaged."

Higgins says she's hopeful the advocacy group "can build momentum so we could organize parents and teach them about the procedures that are in place" to advocate for change.

But Higgins acknowledges that the Sunday meeting also unearthed "a lot of concern about how [parents] don't feel comfortable at school. They feel they aren't wanted."

A parent said she was told not to visit so often. Others, Higgins said, left school feeling "they aren't wanted," or that "teachers and administrators feel parents

Paying the bill\$\$\$\$\$ in Mecklenburg: U.S. standard won't do it, group says

On safe and familiar ground of a Charlotte meeting room Wednesday, the noontime crowd was pumped to talk about poverty. Presenter Andy Baxter admitted that "I can't even get this conversation going in the public square" because invariably someone deep-sixes the conversation into stereotypes about the "lazy" poor or other gestures like, "Have you been to Haiti? Now that's real

poverty."

In fact, Baxter began with the stereotypes and words associated with poverty, and the group of CMS employees came up with an impressive list: black; children; con artist; deserving; dirty; drug; equity; forgotten; health; help; homeless; hunger; illegal alien; inner city; invisible; irresponsible; jobless; lazy; mental illness; not

'Courage' opens area's history to newcomers

The writer is dean of student life at Queens University. "Courage" is the Levine Museum of the New South exhibit that focuses on the people of Clarendon County, S.C., whose efforts to end segregated public education led to a 1954 U.S. Supreme Court ruling.

I found the "Courage" exhibit to

be very powerful and informative.

As a new person to the Carolinas I have to admit to being surprised by the role of the Carolinas in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision.

From Readers

Develop all students' leadership capacity

The writer is coordinator of the International Baccalaureate program at Myers Park High.

I enjoyed the article "Lost at 9th: Educators want to reach teens, but list of what isn't effective seems very long" (*Educate!*, Feb. 27). Although I work with a different group of students than described in the article, I face a similar problem.

The problem is the four R's – Relevance, Relationships, Rigor, and Results. Relevance and Relationship are particularly important in 9th grade.

I have found a solution for Myers Park in general and IB in particular. I have been working with Duke, UNC, Queens, brain expert Pierce Howard and anyone who will listen to develop a corporate level leadership institute.

The idea is to give any student, not just the chosen few, access to leadership opportunities. The focus will be "change agent" or experiential leadership. It is designed for "any" student who aspires to more significant leadership roles. It will spur meaningful interactions among students and faculty and extend learning beyond the classroom and cam-

pus.

A major benefit will be opportunities for interaction among students from diverse backgrounds outside the classroom. This interaction will enrich participants' experiences and empower them to change the "real" world!

It will be a four-year, developmental program utilizing school, university, and corporate expertise to provide opportunities for students to explore, expand, and experience leadership. I am proposing a paradigm shift!

Ron Thomas

Society as a whole expects instant results without work

The piece about high school students not believing in future preference is detailed in Carroll Quigley's history book, "Tragedy and Hope."

This is not a problem of students but of society in general. We no longer believe in working for the future: saving to buy, education etc. We now believe everything should occur instantly. It is a major problem in our society.

Lewis Guignard

I also am impressed that the Levine Museum of the New South took the extra step of coordinating a discussion of the exhibit.

I have never had an opportunity to "de-brief" following an exhibit and found that opportunity to be particularly cathartic, given the nature of the material I was experiencing.

Thank you to the Levine Museum for going to this trouble, particularly since the team I went with from Queens came in on a holiday when the museum was closed. It demonstrates the commitment of the Levine Museum staff.

John P. Downey

Educate! is a journal on public education focusing on Charlotte-Mecklenburg and N.C. Our aim is to supply information useful to you in your role as student, parent or citizen.

Finances: *Educate!* is made possible by individual, corporate and foundation donors, including a grant from the Knight Foundation. To make a tax-deductible donation, send your check to The Swann Fellowship, 1510 E. 7th St., Charlotte, NC 28204 or, at www.networkforgood.org, use the keyword Swann Fellowship to make a secure donation.

Publisher is The Swann Fellowship, 1510 E. 7th St., Charlotte, NC 28204; 704-342-4330; swannfello@aol.com. The Fellowship, named for missionaries Darius and Vera Swann, was formed in 1997 out of several Charlotte congregations to be a witness to the value of diversity in public education and to educate the public on school issues as they relate to this and allied subjects. The Fellowship is a non-profit organization exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code 56-2106776. Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 1-888-830-4989. The license is not an endorsement by the state.

Editions: The Internet edition is free to e-mail recipients, or may be downloaded at www.educateclt.org. To be removed, message swannfello@aol.com. Subscribe at www.educateclt.org. Call 704-342-4330 for rates on the mailed edition. First published September 2000; 6-week avg. circulation through last issue: 3,018.

People: Fellowship officers and staff: Leonard R. (Deacon) Jones, president; Lucy Bush Carter, vice president; Steve Johnston, executive director and *Educate!* editor; Beth Kinny, outreach director. Assisting with this edition: Stephanie Southworth.

Where to find Equity Report

The full text of the CMS Equity Committee's second annual report, major portions of which were reprinted in Educate! on Feb. 13, may also be downloaded as a PDF file from:

www.cms.k12.nc.us/news/stories/1572.asp

Scroll to Item K's "Click here for the Equity Committee Report."

View from Advent: Education is complex

When students, parents and teachers gathered Sunday afternoon under the basketball hoops at Advent Lutheran Church near UNCC, education was exposed in all its complexity.

– One teacher shared a story with an up side and a down side:

The up side: The student was totally lost in class. The teacher said that if the student would stay after school for three long sessions, and really work, he would be sure the student knew enough to pass the course.

The student objected that he couldn't stay after school because he didn't have a ride home. The teacher promised to work that out.

"I took him home all three days," the teacher said. "When he realized that I was willing and could get involved personally in his life, he had a totally different attitude."

The down side: "I can do that with two or three students out of 120. That's all you can do. I don't know how you do it" for all the other students who need similar attention.

– In another state, the young man explained, he had been sick on test day and, as a result, was incorrectly assigned to low-track classes all through middle school. Teachers couldn't alter the class

assignments, but some recognized his talent and gave him extra work. Instead of forcing him to re-read a book he had read a year or more earlier, one teacher pushed in front of him a computer manual. "I couldn't figure out the first four words of the book, but the cover was so cool I just had to figure out that book. They gave me something that had interested me." By the end of the year, he had mastered the manual, and now works for IBM.

– In an adjacent county, a high school teacher went to bat for a student to be in classes for gifted students. The teacher telling the story said "there's a 90% chance"

earlier teachers did not identify the child because he was black. The wrong was righted.

– Most children really need a boost from home to achieve their best in school. But what about this? a teacher asked. The children's father has died. The mother is "trying to run the whole show. She's 150% occupied. It's too much responsibility for one person." The "direct correlation" between a child's attitude toward making an extra effort and the parental support at home creates a calculus that's to the student's great disadvantage, but not anyone's fault. And where is the help for that family?

H.E.L.P. seeks spark for parent activism

Continued from Page 1

are there spying."

"At least half" of the parents who spoke up reported bad experiences at school, Higgins said.

"There ought to be some organization that builds parents' self-confidence" and helps parents set aside "preconceived notions" of what the principal will be like, she said.

"If we had the opportunity we could make something happen," Higgins said. "But we must be consistent to see that something can work."

Examples of the issues raised over the weekend that, Higgins said, CMS itself would have to address:

– School nurses not being available at all schools. Money sent to the district for nurses can, and is, Higgins said, being spent on other priorities.

– Counselors are pressed into test-proctoring duty, which cuts into time counseling students.

– Whether CMS is delivering on promises of tutorial help for students falling behind on the work that shows up on end-of-grade

tests.

– Student-teacher ratios.
– Instructional quality of after-school programs. Some parents complain that the time is committed to free play or homework, "and they'd like to see more tutorials in place."

– Crowding, violence, gangs.

– The need for more teacher assistants in elementary classrooms.

– Additional resources for at-risk students.

– With the influx of Spanish speakers in Mecklenburg, all schools should be teaching Spanish.

Examples of issues parents might address on their own, Higgins said, are:

– Discipline concerns.

– A perception that the paper-work on special needs children is not quickly delivered to the student's new school.

– "How do we teach parents what they need to know and how to help the schools out?... We can point fingers, but we have to be accountable as parents, too."

H.E.L.P.'s minister group meets Thursday, March 4, for lunch, and lay leaders meet that night. Then on March 30 the entire body will "discuss these things in detail."

The lighter side

Overheard in the Education Center:

To Associate Supt. Frances Haithcock about Assistant Supt. Lloyd Wimberley: "Are you keeping him out of trouble?"

Wimberley: "Yes, she keeps me out of trouble."

Haithcock: "He's full of it, and you can quote me."

Fighting for a good school

Queens students hear, see writer's account of how one family struggled after exercising their 'freedom of choice'

A civil rights movement activist was at Queens University Tuesday night to bring alive for young people a perilous time long before they were born when “freedom” and “choice” were paired in the name of denying both freedom and choice to black people.

Constance Curry, author of “Silver Rights,” taught morning classes and answered questions after an evening showing of “The Intolerable Burden,” a documentary based on her book.

The book recounts the retaliation visited on a black family in Drew, Mississippi, when five of the children enrolled in the Delta town's white schools in 1965.

To forestall integration, the school board had approved a “freedom of choice” plan that allowed parents to enroll their children in any school. Whites were not likely to enroll in the inferior black school. And whites figured that informal intimidation would keep the blacks at the black school.

Whites did not count on Mae Bertha Carter and her family.

The story of Carter, her husband Matthew, and their 13 children captured the students' attention.

But they also were interested in the now-older white woman before them, who grew up in Greensboro and worked for the American Friends Service Committee in 1966.

Curry said “I grew up knowing, in an era of segregation, that there was something wrong. There seemed to be a big difference between what I learned in the Presbyterian church and what I read in the Bill of Rights.”

Blacks' “freedom was my freedom as well,” she said. “We couldn't even eat together. That's an abridgement of my freedom.”

Martin Luther King Jr. was not “a namby pamby guy” who simply wanted white children and black children to hold hands. “I knew him. He was a revolutionary....”

Asked if she could see a day when race would not be an issue, she said, “I don't know. Looking at it from 49 years later, I think we're losing ground.... It's not a high priority in this country to get rid of failing schools.”

A student asked if she didn't get frustrated and want to stop writing. “Not yet,” she replied.

“You're supposed to mellow out as you get older. I get madder and madder.”

Diversity is not just mixing up a lot of people of different backgrounds. “It's acceptance of each others' lives and cultures and beliefs, and wanting to know about them....”

“I encourage you to talk to each other,” Curry exhorted her multi-ethnic audience. “How many times do you talk about race here at Queens? There are bound to be issues, and a lack of communication.”

“Without getting to know each other, how do you think it will end?”

Asked about public education's future, Curry called tracking and lower-level curriculums “code words for educating white people because they won't find many minority kids in the honor classes.”

“I think public education probably is slowly going to be gone. There will be people who work, and there will be people who go to private schools. Maybe I'm feeling particularly dismal tonight.”

What can students do to ensure that public schools have a future? one student asked.

“You all will have to answer that,” Curry said.



Constance Curry

“My mama knew that it wasn't really the color of skin that made white people want to keep us out of their schools – if we went and got the same education then they wouldn't have anybody to pick their cotton – that was the real reason. Mama knew it and I knew it. And we are a big close family and my brothers and sisters helped each other to stay in the school.”

– Naomi Carter, quoted in “Silver Rights” by Constance Curry

Kaye McGarry

New board member offers views on CMS

In the months before and after she was elected to at-large school board seat in November, Kaye McGarry has often been a visitor at the westside Tuesday Morning Breakfast Forum.

But Tuesday she was the speaker, and for more than an hour sparred with a largely African American audience that was welcoming, but skeptical.

McGarry's first-place finish in the at-large voting masked anemic support in minority precincts.

A summary of the questions and answers:

– “We need to reprioritize our capital needs now that the choice plan is here,” McGarry said, to be sure that “the needs are still there where we are putting them.” She promised “community involvement” in making any decisions to move bond money around, and added, “You don’t change something like that without regaining the trust of the community.”



McGarry

– While praising advances in recruitment, McGarry said, “I don’t feel they’ve done well on the retention end.” She mentioned “support from the principals” and “backing and respect so teachers can do what they do best.”

– More work must be done on communication out of CMS. “What you hear in the media, you don’t hear enough good about CMS,” she said. When pressed about CMS’s habit of celebrating overall scores while downplaying huge achievement gaps between racial groups, McGarry said, “There is more that needs to get out to the community.” Parents “just want to be listened to and they want answers. CMS is not quick enough with answers.”

– The board needs “a more uni-

fied vision of what needs to be done.” Supt. Jim Pughsley “can do the job, but he needs a more unified board to get the job done.”

– As chair of the board’s Finance, Capital and Facilities Committee, she will press CMS to distill all their budget material down to a page or two. “How can a board member or a lay person... ask intelligent questions” when facing such a mass of detail, she asked.

– Asked about expanding equity funding, McGarry said “that’s a longterm thing, a longterm process.” But she added that equity didn’t mean that every school should get the same number of dollars. “It depends on the population of the school.”

– Asked about announced proposals that would take equity repair money from schools that have long been promised it, McGarry said one plan is to take money from schools that must wait for CMUD sewers to reach their campuses. By the time the sewers are installed, CMS will have additional bond money released and can proceed. Some monies to design school renovations might be moved to projects that would build seats more quickly elsewhere. In such cases, she said, “we need community involvement to make sure that if we transfer monies that we are all aware of it and are looking at what is best for the entire county.

Later she suggested that “those people who worked in the bond campaigns, who may or may not be affected, need to be asked for input.”

“You’re going to have to prioritize the needs” but “student needs should be first,” she said.

“Realistically, whether we like it or not, we’re going to have to look at the bricks and mortar. I don’t want to play God. That’s not my

Board Room Art

– Ryan Smith, Myers Park High



job. It’s just like with student assignment.”

There is no easy way to prioritize one building benefiting one child over another building benefiting another child, she said. “I promise you I will do my homework.”

– Asked for reassurance “that you are not taking a step back from the efforts to repair past inequities as you attempt to balance the needs of the growing community and the needs of the neglected community,” McGarry said she had been in the community for 35 years. “I cannot imagine why, in the last 30 years, the schools, at least the brick and mortar, have not been equalized....

“There are people in this community who have no clue. They have no clue that inequities ever existed.

“I’m going to find out why” conditions were not equalized, “and see if we can make a difference. It’s not going to happen

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in my backyard; not my problem; panhandling; projects; sad; smelly; their fault; trailer parks; transportation; uneducated; unemployed; unworthy; welfare; welfare mom.

"We heard all the stuff that's on the surface," said Baxter, executive director of Mecklenburg Ministries. What was never mentioned, he noted, was shame, or blame, or racism.

And about black: "Urban black people who are poor represent only 12% of those who are poor," he said.

Poverty, he said, "is one of those topics that is completely loaded, with people with entrenched positions before you ever start."

Depending on the group, he said, the conversation can focus on personal responsibility, but "not on systemic issues like racism and manufacturing job loss." Other groups focus on addictions. It's difficult, he mused, to have a "healthy conversation about all aspects," and "people who just emphasize one theme or the other are attacked."

Baxter instead led his audience of 20 through a litany of poverty standards. According to the Census, a single adult in 2003 making \$9,574 doesn't show up in the federal poverty statistics. Nor does the single adult with one child making \$12,683, or the same adult with two children who makes \$14,825.

The minimum wage, set separately by Congress, is \$5.15, or \$10,712 a year. So a minimum-wage jobholder without children has escaped poverty. Add one or more children, however, and the family is poor.

To Baxter's audience, the federal numbers didn't add up to what it took to survive in Charlotte.

"In terms of purchasing power," Baxter said, "you can do less on the minimum wage than when

Doing God's work in the schoolhouse

"Hand in Hand" is a United Methodist Church initiative to link communities of faith to individual schools. A conference next Thursday, March 11 and open to all faith communities will take place at Myers Park United Methodist Church, 1501 Queens Road, from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Keynote speaker is Sandra Honeycutt, director of the Hand in Hand Project. After lunch, one workshop for congregation members will feature a panel of educators and faith community members who will describe their efforts; a second workshop will give educators hints on how to set up links with faith communities.

Sponsors include CMS, The Hand in Hand Project, Mayor's Mentoring Alliance and the Mayor's Corporate Council.

Details: Parking free; event costs \$10, payable at door. By Tuesday noon, e-mail your name, organization, address and phone to Betty Jackson at bjackson@ci.charlotte.nc.us



they first introduced it."

Baxter said Habitat for Humanity uses charts showing that in the early 1970s the median home-sale price and the median household income were nearly equal. No more: Today's house prices rise from \$150,000, the median income for whites is around \$59,000, while for blacks it is around \$34,000. About the race gap in income, Baxter said, "how often do you hear that?"

Baxter said the most realistic numbers he's seen that try to calculate what it really costs for, say, one parent and one child to live in urban North Carolina are from the N.C. Justice and Community Development Center, a Raleigh think tank and advocacy group.

That group's answer, after calculating for housing, child care, food, health care, transportation, taxes, and a small miscellaneous budget: \$2,278 a month or \$27,336 a year, which is an hourly rate of \$13.14 – 224% of the federally set poverty level, and 255% of the minimum wage.

Even then, the N.C. Justice Center did not leave anything in the budget for clothes, for debt payments, back-to-school expenses or entertainment.

"Conversely," said Baxter, "there is no room for savings. How are

these people going to get ahead?"

"How many times in your life when you're working on your budget do you think, ooh, that's an exceptional month. My wife and I joke that every month feels like an exceptional month."

"The point is, it takes a lot of money just to kind of get by."

Using the N.C. Justice standard, he said, the number of Mecklenburg households who are poor rises from the federally recognized 9% to 33%.

One educator in the audience, taking all this in, recalled that at the beginning of each school year, many children are sent home with requests for \$20 or more to support classroom activities. "We need to recognize what we need to do to make sure we don't hurt families that are in these categories."

We are in denial, another educator said. Why? asked Baxter.

"We probably get self-centered on what is happening that we can have the most control over from when we get up until we put our heads down," said one.

"Why," asked Baxter, "would you have to go to Haiti to think you have too much, when we have [poverty] right here? You're shopping beside these people at the

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Above-poverty wage not enough in city?

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grocery store – but maybe you’re not.”

“Sometimes,” said one educator, “it’s just easier to ignore when you know it’s not going away and it’s so painful to deal with”

We can keep emotional distance, Baxter agreed, and we can keep physical distance.

“I can choose to live in a place where I never see poor people, even though with these numbers, 33% of the people in my county don’t have enough to make ends meet.

“Charlotte is not unique” in isolating the poor, he noted. And one key assumption of economics is the theory of scarcity.

“There is an assumption that there is not enough to go around,” Baxter said, “and I’ve got to get mine. And the playing field’s

level.”

“That’s an illusion,” muttered one educator.

Baxter cited David Shipler’s new book, “The Working Poor: Invisible in America,” which makes the case that poverty is complicated. “There are very few people who are poor who don’t have other stuff going on,” some of which is not endearing and some of which makes it appear that “they sabotage their own success.”

Baxter says he’s found that, in most cases, poor people are suffering from a combination of systemic problems over which they have no control (gender, color, disability, etc.), plus other life routines over which they should have control.

But be careful to factor in backgrounds: “There are children who have grown up and never seen their parent work. That’s not the child’s fault, but what does that do to you?”

“As you see the public debate,”

U.S. poverty

Group	Number from group in poverty	Pct. of group in poverty
All	11,733,000	16.3%
Whites	7,527,000	13.4%
Afr. Am.	3,492,000	30.2%
Hispanic	3,570,000	28.0%
Asian	369,000	11.5%
Nat. Am.	260,403	38.8%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Baxter concluded, “and as you participate in conversations at home and in the workplace or at your house of worship... watch to see if the conversations capture the complexity” discussed during the lunch hour Wednesday.

“And if not, speak up and don’t let people off the hook.

“There is a connection between the feeling of being helpless to do anything about it and the denial.”

Calendar

MARCH

- 4** Education Budget Advisory Committee, 7:30 a.m., Government Center, 11th floor conference room.
- 4** School board legislative committee, 1 p.m., Room 414 Education Center.
- 4** Finance, Capital & Facilities Committee, 3:30 p.m., Greg Clemmer’s office, Education Center.
- 5** Equity Committee, 8 a.m., Board Room, Education Center.
- 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.urban-leaguecc.org.
- 8** Policy committee, 3:30 p.m., Room 414, Education Center.
- 9** School board meets, 6 p.m.,

- Board Room, Education Center.
- 11** School board budget session, 11 a.m., Board Room, Education Center.
- 13** 5th Annual Social Justice Conference, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte, 234 N. Sharon Amity Road, recommended fee \$10.
- 13** 3rd Annual Parents Conference, noon-4 p.m., Cone Center, UNCC, free. Sponsor: Parents On The Move. Info: 704-890-4101.
- 16** Bond Oversight Committee, 7:30 a.m., Building Services, 3301 Stafford Dr. off Wilkinson Blvd.
- 16** School board budget work session, 6 p.m., Board Room, Education Center.
- 17** Marian Wright Edelman, “Coming of Age in the Segregated South,” followed by a conversation with fellow Bennettsville, S.C. native Hugh McColl; 7:30 p.m., Spirit Square. Tickets \$15 at Blumenthal Performing Arts Center box office, 704-372-1000.
- 23** School board Curriculum Committee, 3 p.m., Board

- Conference Room, Education Center.
- 23** School board meets, holds public hearing on superintendent’s ’04-’05 proposed budget, 6 p.m., Board Room, Education Center.
- 24** School board budget workshop, 6 p.m., Board Room, Education Center.
- 25** School board Personnel Committee, 2 p.m., Board Conference Room, Education Center.
- 26-28** AAUW N.C. Convention, “Making an Impact: Education Equity for Women and Girls,” Marriott Executive Park. Registration due March 15. Information: www.aauwnc.org or 704-661-6568.
- 27** Gospel Extravaganza, at which Dr. Reginald A. Hawkins and the late Kelly M. Alexander Sr. will be honored for their civil rights work, 6 p.m., United House of Prayer for All People, 2321 Beatties Ford Rd. (Rescheduled due to snow.)

To help the child, ensure the mental health of child's primary caregiver

From "Toward the ABCs: Building a Healthy Social and Emotional Foundation for Learning and Living:

"Social and emotional development in the first few years of life is strongly correlated with the quality of the relationship between a child and her primary caregiver, most often the mother. Not surprisingly, the mother's own emotional stability may compromise her ability to nurture the child.

"An estimated 1 in 10 mothers with young children suffers from depression, with prevalence rates often reaching two times this level among mothers living in poverty.

"While some mothers who experience depression are able to provide consistent and sensitive care, many struggle to be emotionally responsive to their children and may have difficulty helping them learn how to behave appropriately.

"A National Institute of Child Health and Human Development study found that, at thirty-six months of age, children of depressed mothers:

"(1) performed more poorly on measures of school readiness, verbal comprehension, and expressive language skills, and

"(2) were reported to be less cooperative and to exhibit more problem behavior when compared to children of mothers who had never reported depression.

"While a positive relationship with a father or other loving caregiver can help counter the negative impact that maternal depression may have on a child's development, early identification and access to treatment for maternal depression are critical for the mother and child."

— Published by the Ounce of Prevention Fund, Chicago, with a "call to action" with recommendations for state agencies and advocates. Downloadable PDF file at www.ounceofprevention.org/index.php?section=publications

McGarry answers questions on CMS

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overnight."

— Asked about resegregation since the choice plan was instituted, McGarry said, "I would hope that would not be what will happen." When pressed that many schools had already resegregated, McGarry replied, "But there are a lot of schools that are very very integrated." Segregation "won't be across the board."

"However the school is populated, if that's where parents choose to send their kids, then it's important that the teachers and principals sent to those schools be competent.

"Parents and guardians... have a choice of where they are sending their children. I mean they're supposed to."

— Defending her vote to appoint north Mecklenburg advocate Rhonda Lennon to the Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee, McGarry said, "She has the knowledge on the budget figures that's real helpful. And

she has a wider vision. It's not just north Mecklenburg. If I felt it was just north Mecklenburg it wouldn't have happened."

— On teacher quality disparities, McGarry volunteered that a first-year teacher she knows at Vance High has a "difficult classroom" but CMS "doesn't give her the extra training to deal with some of this."

— Asked about the absence of African cultural history in the curriculum, McGarry termed the curriculum "a whole bag of worms.... There are parts of the curriculum that I don't agree with." She did not elaborate.

— Asked if resegregation along economic and racial lines is as important as neighborhood assignments, McGarry said, "I do think that is a concern.

"Part of it is the perception... when people think it's all segregated and yet some schools are beautifully diverse.

"How do you get more of them to have that makeup? I don't have an answer for you. It is a concern to me.

"If we could get qualified teachers and principals and the joy of learning in there, the people may

not be as adamant to say we don't have a diverse population."

— Asked what she meant when she says CMS is at a crossroads, McGarry said, "The crossroads is that once that choice plan went into effect, if that's what we have then let's go and make it work. And it will take the entire community to make it work."

— Asked if CMS could deliver the constitutionally mandated "sound, basic education" in schools where 80% or more of the students are poor, McGarry said yes. "It's not the ideal," but if the children have different needs, "then send in a team to see how they best can learn." Try longer school days, Saturday classes or a year-round calendar. At KIPP academies, "teachers work round the clock" for their students. She said she would pay teachers for keeping such hours.

— Asked what her campaign supporters wanted her to do while in office, McGarry said "they were sending someone sincere, honest, that has integrity and is willing to make intelligent decisions... without a personal agenda.... They definitely know I wanted to educate every child."