

The Make It Happen Campaign

Educate! readers: Act now in your own interest

The writer, a Charlotte lawyer, served as an appointed member of the Board of Education in 2001.

By **BOB SIMMONS**

Dear *Educate!* readers,

Get off your wallets, and contribute to the continuation of this unique community resource. So far, I've contributed \$1,000 and pledged to

match the next \$1,000 raised, and the rest of you have only come up with a total of \$250 over three weeks. [Fourth-week donations raised that \$250 to \$3,360.] Time and money are running out. If you let *Educate!* fold, where will you turn for your education information?

The suburban secessionists have mouthpieces like the vari-

ous tabloid weeklies of discontent, all beating the drums against the taxes which support our community schools and for the inevitable racial and socioeconomic isolation of neighborhood schools.

Superficial sensationalism has its outlet through the major media sources that chase read-

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Mecklenburg risks getting less than what it wants

This week's budget recommendation to commissioners includes money for just 10 of the 100 additional nurses the county's school-children need.

It provides less than half the money the school board requested for programs to raise achievement and put roofs over more than 4,000 additional students a year.

But it was only last week that an architect of last December's town hall meeting insisted that

citizens have spoken loud and clear that they want government officials to proceed with new initiatives on a range of subjects.

"The recommendations are very clear

what the community has asked for," Lee Institute President Cyndee Patterson told the school board last week. "They're very clear around health, school nurses. They're very clear in safety. And as you think about your budget decisions, there were a

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CMS-TV3
Patterson



Gantt on building community

Clemson's first black student, former Charlotte mayor critiques city's 'polite' ways but sees hope for progress through talk to find common ground

This article was written for the 2004 Knight Foundation annual report, which was distributed this week.

By **HARVEY GANTT**

When it comes to race and race relations, Charlotte has always maintained a public posture of politeness and moderation. It has always been, at the very least, good business to do so.

The city, during the very height of the civil rights movement in the '50s and '60s, almost always flew below the national radar. We never became a hot box of demonstrations, boycotts or riots like Birmingham, Montgomery or Oxford.

We had 15 minutes of fame (or notoriety) with the integration

Continued on Page 4

Q: How did you little guys raise \$3,110 in just a week?

A: The total came from mostly individual donations of \$50 to \$250 – plus leadership gifts from an anonymous donor and Myers Park Baptist Church. You can take a similar leadership position and, if you allow us, we'll let the public know of your support for this work. Either way, your gift will keep the community in this community journal on public education.

To make a tax-deductible donation, send a check to The Swann Fellowship, 1510 E. 7th St., Charlotte, NC 28204. Or sign on to www.networkforgood.org, and use the keyword Swann Fellowship to make a secure donation.

The Swann Fellowship is a nonprofit organization exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code 56-2106776. Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 1-888-830-4989. The license is not an endorsement by the state.

Donations To Date:
\$4,360

Simmons Continued from Page 1

ers, viewers, listeners and revenue by spending their space and time claiming the sky is falling and pointing fingers rather than investing the effort to report the complete information needed for the community dialogue that will produce continued progress through compromise among competing interests.

Only *Educate!* provides complete coverage and balanced analysis of the issues facing public education in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

And you're willing to lose this resource at a time when we face a confluence of crucial community decisions?

Look at the list: the election of six district representatives in the fall, the search for a new superintendent, the review and revision of student assignment, the delivery by the County of its supplemental operating budget, the vote on a bond referendum, the debate over deconsolidation, and decisions on programs, curriculum, standards, achievement, access, discipline, growth and equity.

Do you really want the tabloids and the major media to be the community's only sources of information and forums for public debate on these issues? Even if you think they speak to you or for you, do you really want to hear only your own voice?

Without public support, we won't continue to have successful public schools. Without informed public debate, we won't have public support. Without complete and reliable non-commercial reporting, we won't have informed public debate. So I urge you to send your check today.

I'm not affiliated with the Swann Fellowship, and

we've had our differences. Nobody asked me to write this, but I've never waited to be asked to speak my mind.

Some of you reading this don't have the resources to contribute, and that's OK. Many of you participate in other ways. But many of you can step up to the plate and some of you have a whole lot more money than I do, and I've heard you all claim to care about public education in our community. Here's an opportunity to put your money where your mouth is.

Do it now. If not you, who? If not now, when?

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

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People: Lucy Bush Carter, vice president; Steve Johnston, executive director and *Educate!* editor. Assisting with this edition: Stephanie Southworth.

Bond issue still taking shape, may be \$421 million

Just six days before a likely final vote to define the size and scope of a proposed November school bond referendum, CMS staff were still sorting out the last details of a probable \$421 million package.

The board is expected to approve the package Tuesday, only a day or two before the public sees final details.

The last-minute juggling appeared Wednesday to be aimed at having the November bond issue mirror the district's 10-year capital needs. According to this spring's review, the needs in dollars are split 65% for growth, 25% for renovation and 10% for other matters.

A staff proposal released earlier had 61% of dollars going to growth. A revision unveiled Wednesday dropped the growth category to 58% when a modular middle school was removed from the "growth" column because it will initially be used for renovation swing space.

But board member Louise Woods pointed out that all three percentages did not count the cost of land, which would also be financed with taxpayer dollars. The percentage numbers used in a bond campaign might not reflect land costs, however, because land will be acquired using money from a different bond issue.

The workshop was designed to answer board members' questions about the bond package.

In an effort to respond to board member Larry Gauvreau, who complained May 12 that the bond issue did not have enough money in the "growth bucket," Assistant Supt. Guy Chamberlain presented a list of seven renovation projects worth \$46.5 million from which \$16 million might be redirected to build a new suburban elementary.

Chamberlain said the 16 projects ranked lowest on a staff-gen-

Superintendent search

How public the public's business?

District 1 school board member Larry Gauvreau believes that anybody worth considering for the CMS superintendency ought to be willing to be identified. "This is not a private institution," he says. While he said Monday he would abide by N.C. law, which makes applicant records confidential, he gave his fellow board members every indication that he, not the board, would judge when to identify candidates in the upcoming search.

At least seven members of the board, differing with Gauvreau, appear convinced that any superintendent candidate worth considering will not even apply unless anonymity until the final round is assured. Supt. Jim Pughsley mused that it may even be impossible to hire a search firm unless confidentiality is guaranteed.

At a workshop Monday afternoon, board chair Joe White presented a search process timetable that offers one response to Gauvreau's challenge. The timetable for the search, which could be approved next week, opens at a snail's pace, with open debate about and hiring of search firms, creation of a profile of the ideal candidate and the like. Receipt of applications and all confidential discussions are postponed until after Nov. 8, when Gauvreau must stand for re-election.

erated priority order list. Included were renovations at Davidson IB, Amay James Pre-K, the addition but not the renovation at McClintock Middle, gyms at Myers Park and Independence Highs, and stadium work at Olympic and West Meck Highs. Some of the stadium work must be done to meet safety standards, Chamberlain said.

Board members quizzed staff repeatedly about the list, and there appeared little enthusiasm for any last-minute changes in the planned renovations.

Even Gauvreau, who has often voted against construction even in his own district, said he might "shave the nose off to save the face" and vote Tuesday for the bonds. But he continued to insist that too much is spent on each school building.

Gauvreau asked why elementaries in the bond package are projected to cost \$16 million when the Ranson Road elementary being completed now will come in on budget at \$11 million.

Chamberlain cited three causes: three more classrooms at each school because the board commit-

ted earlier to dedicate space to art, music and a computer lab; higher construction costs; and a rise in fees and other costs associated with each project.

Responded Gauvreau, "There are better ways of doing this and I don't think we have it right yet. I will say we're closer."

More Gates money

Gov. Mike Easley announced Wednesday that \$300,000 of the \$11 million announced earlier from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation would go to seven N.C. districts to replicate the New Technology High School in Napa, Calif.

Olympic High School is involved in CMS. Other districts are Alamance-Burlington, Camden, Cherokee Central, Robeson, Scotland and Wake County.

CMS said it would use the planning grant "to visit other school sites, support staff development and planning materials and obtain a coach to plan for the new program."

The California model has 250 students in grades 11-12 focused on "project-based" learning.

Gantt's prescription

Continued from Page 1

of schools in the late '50s, the bombing of civil rights leaders' homes in the '60s and the first days of crosstown busing in the early '70s. But for the most part, tension between the races has been low-key and polite.

The credit for this moderate climate must go to the white and black leadership of the late '50s and '60s. Charlotte has always been about business and economic growth. It could never be said that the city was ever too caught up in past history or strong allegiance to the antebellum past. It didn't take long for white business, civic and political leaders to figure out that racial strife could ultimately hurt the bottom line, so they moved to head it off.

They were, in large part, received by a strong, cohesive and vocal group of black leaders drawn from local civil rights groups and the black clergy who, while firmly focused on equity and civil rights, did not particularly want to push the envelope of more widespread and disruptive civil disobedience.

This coalition of leaders shepherded Charlotte through periods of racial tension. That said, the public posture of moderation and politeness did not mean that racial discrimination suddenly went away. Racial discrimination in its many forms continued then, as it does today.

This perception of racial moderation and progress was one of the reasons my family chose Charlotte as our home. Yet on our very first night in Charlotte in 1965, we tried to get a room at three motels with vacancies, and we were refused ostensibly because we were black. And the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the law of the land! At our fourth stop, a sympathetic and courageous clerk let us stay for the night.

Compliance with civil rights laws has certainly improved over the intervening years. But chang-

Little pressure on states to raise graduation rates

From "Confronting the Graduation Rate Crisis in the South" by the Harvard Civil Rights Project:

"Unfortunately, neither the states, nor the U.S. Department of Education is doing much to hold schools and districts accountable for such high rates of school failure. Although Congress inserted graduation rate accountability provisions into the No Child Left Behind law, the lax enforcement on this accountability indicator at both the state and federal level has rendered this requirement virtually useless.

"While states must meet stringent requirements to improve test scores or risk serious sanctions under this federal law, they face few consequences for failing to improve graduation rates. For example, in North Carolina all students (including all subgroups) must improve test scores, step by step, until they reach 100% proficiency in reading and math by 2014. If any subgroup misses one step, the district fails to make Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) and faces eventual sanctions such as district takeover.

"In contrast, while the state has set a goal of graduating 90% of its students, only the most minimal improvement is required, and subgroups are never required to show improvement to meet AYP. Specifically, districts that fail to meet the 90% goal will still make AYP if they achieve as little as 1/10 of 1% progress over the prior year. At that rate, Charlotte, starting at a graduation rate of 57.1%, has 329 years to meet the 90% graduation rate goal, yet only nine more years to meet the testing goals!"

— www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu

ing attitudes and interpersonal relationships between the races has been far tougher.

In the '70s and '80s, our moderate policies on race gave us some measure of fame and community pride. The crosstown busing of schoolchildren based on a plan devised by black and white parents received national attention. Significant advances were made in the growth of the black middle class, as they found employment in Charlotte's burgeoning industries of financial services, energy, education and health care. Political equity was realized in the '70s with district representation, which guaranteed a voice for black citizens at all levels of government.

And notwithstanding my first night in Charlotte, 18 years later I was elected mayor in a city where blacks made up only 25% of the population.

So, on balance, the policy of moderation has served us well for

the last four decades. But I feel that it may need to be re-examined in the face of new challenges today.

The problem, as I see it, is that the recent Robert Putnam study identifying the community's weakness in building social capital across racial lines is a manifestation of our satisfaction with being polite and personally comfortable with long-held racial stereotypes.

We don't build meaningful relationships across racial lines because we are comfortable with where we are! The folk in our community who have really stepped outside this box of comfort are our children — largely in the public school system. And even there, as they ascend to the higher grades, they mimic their parents — and begin to establish physical and social distance from those of a different race.

Moderate policies have stymied

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Gantt's prescription

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dialogue – encouraged too much polite correctness and discouraged the honest debate that could lead to more understanding. So we see interesting things happen in our city. We work eight hours side-by-side, but go home to largely segregated communities. We work together, but go to lunch with those of our own race. Our churches are still largely segregated by choice and custom. And we're comfortable in practicing these customs. In fact, those who wish to change them are too often derided as social engineers.

I suppose you could make an argument that a strong economy, plentiful jobs for most folk, and a degree of social mobility among the growing black middle class will eventually – in a generation or two – bring about real racial understanding and, perhaps, ultimately the end of racism.

Indeed, some of my friends argue that efforts at community building or forcing dialogue across racial lines is too artificial, failing to attract those who need these encounters the most. My friends contend that the best way is through the positive relationships that become inevitable between neighbors, black or white.

When you live in integrated neighborhoods, you attend the same neighborhood schools, cheer for the neighborhood soccer team. This pride of building relationships through physical proximity is, in fact, plausible – and may be possible for middle-income mobile blacks. It is not a stretch to see how neighbors of similar education, income and career goals can build mutual understanding and demolish long-held prejudices and stereotypes.

Even so, Charlotte needs to encourage a more meaningful dialogue on our relationships. I'm not convinced that we can wait until all blacks become middle class and all neighborhoods are integrated.

The fact is that much of the

Pamela Grundy has a son who will be a CMS kindergartner in fall 2006.

"My husband and I volunteer at Shamrock Gardens, and we want to say again congratulations to Karen

Voices from the board room

Young who you saw up here [as] teacher of the year. My husband tutors a child in her class and over this past year has been amazed by the magic she has worked with this child. She is a great teacher and deserved that honor very much."



CMS-TV3
Grundy

angst today about race derives from our fear of the poor. And our attitudes and racial prejudices are predicated on stereotypes of black citizens who are poor.

Front and center are the developing policies in our public schools that are disproportionately skewed because 45% of our public schoolchildren are poor and mostly black.

The current school assignment plan is reflective of segregated living patterns – and virtually resegregates black and poor children to inner city schools. My instincts tell me that can't be good for Charlotte.

What made Charlotte the model urban school system in the '80s and '90s and is now being threatened, not by civic and political leaders, but by parents unfamiliar with the peculiar Charlotte history that led to a school assignment plan based on crosstown busing. The new plan, based on choice and neighborhood schools, will guarantee, in short time, a school assignment plan that replicates what we see nationally in large cities – poor inner-city schools surrounded by affluent suburban schools.

These conditions can increasingly isolate children in the inner-city schools – and we know that that leads to social problems that eat like a cancer at the whole community. Racial attitudes hardened on both sides, stereotypes run wild and battle lines are drawn.

I think the current student assignment issues present the community with a real opportuni-

ty to expand the dialogue on race. By getting us to focus first on what it means to educate *well* all the children of this community, it would be a great start to examining relationships that need attention. And we certainly engage everyone's attention when it comes to our children. Perhaps we can use the schools issue to set up more neighborhood and regional forums – to discuss our common and differing perceptions on education, culture, family values, equity and justice. Perhaps it may be possible to enlist facilitators like Charlotte's own Community Building Initiative to help create discussions that make it less threatening to people to speak honestly and air their differences.

In a lot of ways, the race issue is far more serious than it was 50 years ago. Civil rights laws changed behavior; the obstacles today are attitudinal and can change for the better only when we have closer social contact and get to know each other better.

Charlotte has an excellent chance at setting a national example. Our problems are still manageable. Our school system is one of the best of urban systems in the country, and can get much better. Our tradition of moderation motivates us to want to succeed – because we value being well thought of by others.

Finally, given the support we have traditionally given our children, I am comforted in believing we can find the will to reach common ground.

Funding public needs

Continued from Page 1

thousand people that day who broadly represent this community from every walk of life and every district. And I would say I wouldn't ignore these recommendations. They really were what people thought..."

The United Agenda for Children's Dec. 11 town hall at the Merchandise Mart issued the policy recommendations in the box below in three predetermined theme areas: health, safety and education.

Following up on the day's activity, Patterson told school board members last week, staff re-sorted comments by all 1,000 participants looking to see if the themes obscured any concerns raised by the participants.

The result was the list of nine issue areas. Patterson said most of the nine were mentioned by people focusing on two or even three theme areas.

A United Agenda steering committee now being formed will review all of the cross-area themes, Patterson said, because "some of these may have as much impact" as the main recommendations "because they're in three different areas of children's lives."

The cross-area themes and

Patterson's comments:

– **Involving, communicating, educating parents.**

"This emerged in in all three areas, health, safety and education, that we needed to involve and ... educate parents better."

– **Money/funding.**

Resources "are cited as obstacles in all three key areas."

– **Day care/child care/early childhood education.**

– **Paying, supporting, respecting, valuing teachers.**

"There was a real feeling that more support for teachers would mean a better outcome for children."

– **Equitable resources.**

"This was recorded in all three education questions. That equitability was important to the community."

– **Leadership at the school, community and system level.**

"... critically important."

– **Teaching to the test.**

The concern was "that we needed really to make sure we educate for thinking and for living in society, and not just to teach to the test, which I know you've heard other places."

– **Out-of-school time.**

– **Language/culture barriers.**

Old agenda, new base

"Yes, we have come up with

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Town hall attendees

	Goal	Actual
Demographics		
African-American	28%	44%
Asian/Asian Indian	5%	1%
Caucasian	58%	44%
Hispanic/Latino	6%	9%
Native American	<1%	<1%
Multi-Racial	3%	3%
Other	2%	<1%
Geography		
District 1	17%	18%
District 2	17%	12%
District 3	17%	15%
District 4	17%	15%
District 5	17%	23%
District 6	17%	14%
Outside Meck.	0%	3%
Age		
15-21	12%	11%
22-34	28%	16%
35-44	22%	29%
45-59	23%	35%
60 and over	15%	9%
Gender		
Female	51%	66%
Male	49%	34%

– Source: United Agenda for Children

Town hall's key recommendations by category

Health

1. Provide healthcare services where the children are: home, school, daycare.
2. Increase school resources for healthcare services, especially school nurses.
3. Implement universal healthcare.
4. Coordinate services among providers, nonprofit organizations and faith-based organizations.
5. Increase healthy programs in schools.

Safety

1. Prepare parents for parenting and hold them accountable for child safety.
2. Increase afterschool and out-of-school activities.
3. Improve the quality, quantity and accessibility of childcare and daycare options.

4. Employer support for childcare options, school visits and mentoring.

Education

1. Require higher standards and provide better pay for teachers and assistants, including mentoring programs.
2. Expand and improve facilities – smaller classrooms and better student-teacher ratio.
3. Improve communication between parents and teachers.
4. Expand Bright Beginnings – take it into community sites (tie).
5. Add more mentoring programs for students (tie).

– Source: United Agenda for Children

Funding public needs

Continued from Page 6

things that look like this before,” Patterson acknowledged. “And they’ve been [from] people like a lot of us in this room, who tend to be activists, very involved.

“What we tried to do is put the broader community’s voice in the room, so that elected officials and people making spending priority decisions at both the corporate and nonprofit level, would have a larger voice from a broad base of the community saying these are our priorities.

“That is a first. You now have whatever justification you feel you need, hopefully, since the public’s with you, by district, on these issues....”

What’s been happening

Since Dec. 11, United Agenda has had two large meetings. From those meetings emerged a 12-person selection committee to recruit a steering committee “that will carry the implementation process for the next two years.”

Of the 23 seats on the steering committee, seven are “grassroots” people and two are youth. Youth involved in the Dec. 11 event, along with others, have created their own group as well, Patterson said.

Patterson said she projected that the steering committee would form subcommittees around the three core recommendation areas – health, safety and education – “for how implementation is pushed through the community over the next two years.” A steering committee retreat is planned for June.

No new group

“One of the big discussions that’s been had and substantially decided is that we are not creating a new organization. There is no new 501(c)(3)....

“What we’re doing is gonna go after the resources to fund the 24 months of how do we implement this and who owns implementation and create the matrices that

will measure that when the United Agenda sort of goes away.

“Because the hopes are that between government, children’s nonprofits and others, that each recommendation will be owned in some collaboration by those groups going forward. But we do want to measure success and outcomes, so that will be the one piece that we hope, and we’re working with UNCC to house the measurement side at the Social Capital Institute.”

Project under budget

Through March 31, the project is under its projected \$721,000 budget, raised mostly from businesses, governments and foundations. “These are community dollars,” she said. “I certainly have a long history of understanding the obligation....”

Planning, management	\$102,019
America Speaks facilitation	255,543
Communications	75,341
Office supplies, misc.	11,763
Meeting expenses	186,944
Total Phase I	631,610
Initial follow-up	59,500
Total	691,110

“The implementation steps will really heavily involve both the nonprofits that support children and the institutions that support children. You (CMS) are probably one of the largest players on the field,” Patterson told the school board.

When does action begin?

“I’m concerned about when there will be action,” observed District 4 board member Louise Woods.

“Trust the process,” Patterson replied. “In taking the transition from the town hall to a way that all the people that had lots of hands-on in this could agree that the structure should move forward has taken way longer than I would have guessed it would.”

“But on the other side of that, there is real commitment to this new structure, and they’ve designed it themselves.”

Patterson said United Agenda had asked the Charlotte Observer to delay its next update since the Dec. 11 meeting until all members of the Steering Committee have been selected.

Oh D.E.A.R. Day

NASCAR drivers start their engines. Charlotte Reads plans to ask folks to pick up their books and read.

The literacy advocate plans a Drop Everything And Read (D.E.A.R.) Day on Thursday, June 9 at noon at Founders Hall, 100 N. Tryon St.

For supplies for your own D.E.A.R. Day event or information about how to help people who can’t read now to be a part of next D.E.A.R. Day, contact Arden McLaughlin at Charlotte Reads at amclaughlin@charlottereads.org.

11 ways to be sure not to communicate

Angela Pascopella in “Selling Your Schools” in *District Administration*:

“Houston’s press secretary Terry Abbott claims the following should never be uttered or written by school district officials or anyone trying to communicate well:

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Implement | 7. Stakeholders | reviewed multi-disci- |
| 2. Maximize | 8. Text-based instruc- | plinary products |
| 3. Pedagogical | tional device | 11. Enhance in-home |
| 4. Initiate | 9. Hands-on, student- | academic regime” |
| 5. Bifurcated | centered activities | |
| 6. Facilitate | 10. Positively | |

Briefly...

Math all the time: The Georgia state board of education approved a new curriculum that requires teachers to integrate algebra, geometry and other math-related topics into other core subjects, the Atlanta Journal Constitution reported. Teachers will no longer teach separate math courses, but all students will have to complete the equivalent of Algebra II to graduate.
www.ajc.com

Secrecy on rise: The search for new superintendents is increasingly becoming a secret process, the Boston Globe told its readers. Applicants may be given numbers or letters to conceal their identity or, as in Dayton, Ohio, some school boards do not even know who the candidates are. Some districts are afraid that making the identities public will scare prospects away, while others are afraid that applicants will be stolen by other districts.
www.boston.com

Salary note: According to a New York Times study of state data, "one in 12 teachers in Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Rockland and Putnam Counties now earns more than \$100,000" a year.
www.nytimes.com

No Capacity: Marc Tucker, the president of the National Center on Education and the Economy, a research group in Washington, believes state education agencies have the desire to meet No Child Left Behind expectations, but lack the capacity to do so. Education Week reported that state officials are taking on heavier workloads, and get less pay and benefits than they could receive elsewhere. In addition, most employees are not trained to assess student achievement.
www.edweek.org

Know the language: A Dallas school district trustee, Joe May,

Calendar

MAY

- 19 School board's Personnel Committee, 2 p.m., Board Conference Room.
- 19 School board's Finance, Capital & Facilities Committee, 4 p.m., Board Conference Room.
- 20 Equity Committee, 8 a.m., Professional Development Center, Room 209, 428 West Blvd.
- 24 School board's Curriculum Committee, 3 p.m., Room 414, Education Center.
- 24 School board meets, 6 p.m., Government Center Meeting Chamber.
- 31-1 School board members in training with Broad Institute consultants, Leadership Academy.

JUNE

26-July 1 or July 31-Aug. 5 "Anytown Summer Leadership Program for high school students, first week at Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds, Boone; second week at Kanuga, Hendersonville. Register by June 1. Fee of \$350 includes transportation; financial aid available. Information: Alex Wagaman at 704-334-0053 or awagaman@nccj.org

JULY

10-14 "Bring It On: Rising to Meet the Challenge of High School," an NCCJ residential summer program for rising ninth-graders, held at The Summit at Browns Summit, N.C. Register by June 10. Fee of \$300 includes transportation; financial aid available. Information: Alex Wagaman at 704-334-0053 or awagaman@nccj.org

wants principals in schools where 50% or more of students have limited English proficiency, to learn the secondary language, the Dallas News reported. A principal who knows the language of the parents will be better able to help resolve issues the parents may have with their child's education, May said.
www.dallasnews.com

The formula: Armistad Academy, a New Haven, Conn., charter school filled by lottery, has catapulted a nearly all-minority student body to the top of state academic charts, the Washington Post reported. The 275-student middle school combines spectacular teaching, behavior contracts, and quick correction of even minute infractions of the rules. A school slogan: "We sweat the small stuff."
www.washingtonpost.com

Budget constraint: Although

Indiana has seen success in its one-on-one computing programs, which give each child a laptop during school hours, the state may cut the program for budget reasons, eSchoolNews reported. The program may be revised using cheaper desktop computers.
www.eschoolnews.com

Leaving children behind: A majority of states are proposing changes this year in No Child Left Behind standards, the Chicago Tribune reported. Among the most popular requests is to increase the size of a subpopulation. For example: If a school or an entire district has 40 special education students, raising the No Child subpopulation cutoff from 35 to 50 would exempt the school or district from reporting a special ed subpopulation, making it more likely the school would make Adequate Yearly Progress under the No Child legislation.
www.chicagotribune.com