



ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

NEWS AND ISSUES IN ALABAMA PUBLIC EDUCATION, K-12

APRIL 2006

“HELPING SCHOOLS” TAGS REALLY DO HELP SCHOOLS!

ISN'T IT AMAZING THAT ONE LETTER FROM AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASS TO A STATE LAWMAKER STARTED A PROGRAM THAT HAS PROVIDED MORE THAN \$5.1 MILLION TO THE STATE'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

In 1990, the late state **SEN. MICHAEL A. FIGURES** of Mobile initiated the Helping Schools Tags (HST) program after **MRS. SHIRLEY HENDERSON**'s fourth-grade class at Mobile's Leinkauf Elementary School wrote to legislators prompting them to adopt the campaign. Figures was the only elected official to respond to the students' request and thus, the Helping Schools Tags program was started and carried on by his wife, **SEN. VIVIAN DAVIS FIGURES**, who now serves in the state legislature.

In speaking with Sen. Figures recently, she reflected on her husband's legacy and expressed her pride about

the great good the HST program has done for Alabama's public schools. "To keep my late husband's dream alive, I decided to sponsor a public relations campaign to better promote Helping Schools Tags in January 2002, using money donated in my late husband's name," said Figures. "The state education budget was in proration, schools statewide were struggling, and I knew I had to bring awareness to our citizens of what they could do to help with the funding crisis." Tag revenues to local school systems in 2002 jumped to over \$1.2 million from \$455,000 in 2001. Figures continued, "When people put forth the effort to help education, those efforts pay off."

(continued on page 2)



DID YOU KNOW

- A HELPING SCHOOLS TAG ONLY COSTS \$15?
- YOU CAN PERSONALIZE A HELPING SCHOOLS TAG FOR NO EXTRA COST?
- \$11.63 OF THE \$15 TAG FEE GOES TO SCHOOLS?
- YOU CAN SELECT INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS TO DIRECT THAT MONEY TO?
- YOU CAN PURCHASE A HELPING SCHOOLS TAG FOR MOTORCYCLES?
- IF EVERY REGISTERED ALABAMA VEHICLE SPORTED A HELPING SCHOOLS TAG, THE STATE'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS WOULD RECEIVE OVER \$52.8 MILLION ANNUALLY?



THE FIVE-YEAR INCREASE (2000-2005) OF HST

(continued from page 1)

HELPING SCHOOLS TAGS FOUR SUCCESS STORIES



3) **BULLOCK COUNTY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT KEITH STEWART** has purchased Helping Schools Tags throughout his education career, and he feels more folks ought to join in and buy them as well. "We could do so much more if every registered vehicle in Bullock County sported a Helping Schools Tag," said Stewart. "Think of all the money this system could use in continuing our work to achieve great academic and financial success. Please don't get me wrong; we are grateful for current revenue. It helps us 'make ends meet' because we are a very poor system. But, it's just a 'drop in the bucket' from what we could be making."



The Bullock County School System used HST funds to buy supplies and, most recently, purchase new computer chairs for Bullock County High School's new ACCESS (Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educators, & Students Statewide) Distance Learning computer lab.

"This is a positive way to help schools for less than the \$50 fee paid for vanity tags. For just 15 bucks, you can purchase a Helping Schools Tag, have it personalized, and help your schools!"

However, Stewart has a word of warning to other educators in other systems. "Make sure the money your school supporters designate is actually coming to your schools because I have learned from experience, county probate offices may not be aware of the designation rules."



1) In large counties like Mobile, HST sales add quite a bit of extra funding to schools. **LEINKAUF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL CATHERINE ROGERS** has been on the job there three years and she has utilized HST funds to promote the wellness of the school's children by listening to suggestions from the students themselves. "When I first came here, the playground equipment was so dilapidated that we had to tear it down," Rogers said. "We are combining our HST money with other funds to help build a recess area, something the kids want and need very much."



2) Southern Choctaw Elementary School is a very rural school in central Alabama. **PRINCIPAL SUE MOORE** is proud of three projects to which her school dedicates its annual \$1,500 HST money. Moore said they purchased a digital camera so they could take photos of student accomplishments and share them with the media, buy annual rewards for student achievement, and bought Accelerated Reader books for the school's library.

HOW HAVE SCHOOLS BENEFITED FROM THE EXTRA REVE

REVENUES INCREASED 100.7 PERCENT - \$136,745!

4) According to **KATE ASBURY LARKIN**, Opelika City Schools Public Relations Coordinator, promoting HST in publications is an effective way to market such an important commodity. Information about the tag has been featured not only in school and school system publications but in chamber of commerce magazines and local newspapers.

Senator Figures said she is pleased with tag revenue results so far, but believes so much more can be done. "I am launching another campaign

through my new foundation, The Figures Legacy Education Foundation, to bring even more awareness to the public and to encourage more businesses to become school partners by buying the tags for their fleets of vehicles," said Figures. "Children are our future and we must do everything we can to help them become the best they can be."

To find out how many HST have been sold in your county, [CLICK HERE](#).

For more information on Helping Schools Tags, [CLICK HERE](#). 🍏

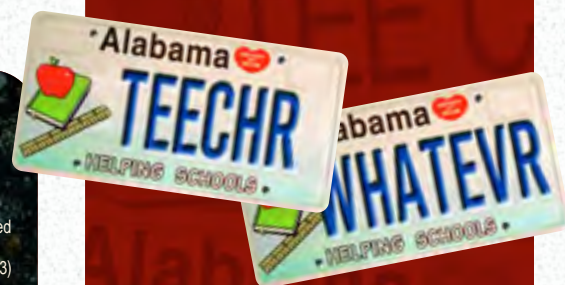
Top 5 School Systems with the Largest Increase in Revenue from Helping Schools Tags Sales from 2000-2005

1. **Mobile County**
\$120,574.80
2. **Baldwin County**
\$69,935.93
3. **Montgomery County**
\$53,513.93
4. **Madison County**
\$32,259.36
5. **Birmingham City**
\$28,504.52

Helping Schools Tags Sales: Four Success Stories

SYSTEM/COUNTY	2000 HST REVENUE	2005 HST REVENUE	CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGED	2005 HST TAGS SOLD WITH REVENUE GOING TO SCHOOL SYSTEM	NUMBER OF 2005 REGISTERED VEHICLES IN COUNTY	POSSIBLE REVENUE (Total Registered Vehicles in County x \$11.63)
1) Mobile County	\$70	\$120,645	\$120,575	172,250%	10,374	351,235	\$4,084,863
2) Choctaw County	\$1,395	\$7,230	\$5,835	418%	621	15,816	\$183,940
3) Bullock County	\$2,911	\$14,470	\$11,559	397%	1,244	8,488	\$98,715
4) Opelika City/Lee	\$2,802	\$12,590	\$9,788	349%	1,082	107,938	\$1,255,319

(*Data is rounded to the nearest dollar amount.)



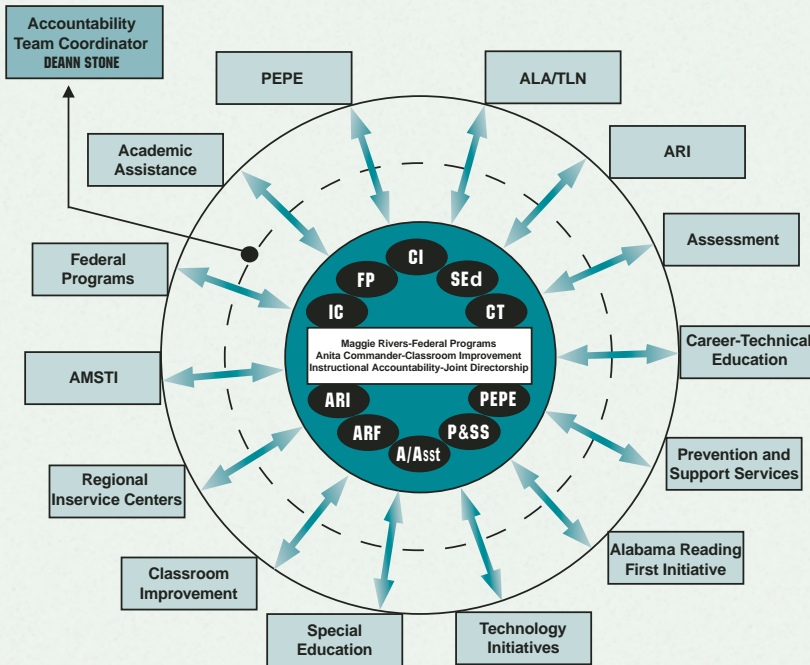
Top 5 School Systems with the Largest Percentage Increase from Helping Schools Tags Sales from 2000-2005

1. **Mobile County**
172,249.71%
2. **Winston County**
2,912.33%
3. **Conecuh County**
798.93%
4. **Tarrant City**
775.15%
5. **Dothan City**
649.75%



... AND WHAT CAN BE DONE TO INCREASE MORE SALES?

ACCOUNTABILITY ROUNDTABLE WILL SERVE STUDENTS



ACCOUNTABILITY ROUNDTABLE VISION:

All students will learn to be prepared for college/work/adulthood in the 21st century.

To date, progress of the Accountability Roundtable includes:

- Having a checklist and collaborative review process for School System Improvement Plans, School Improvement Plans, and Comprehensive Professional Development Plans.
- Reviewing plans for possible consolidation.
- Designing a tiered approach for addressing improvement concerns.
- Providing opportunities for all SDE sections to work collaboratively for the purpose of addressing school system needs.
- Designing a statewide system of support for school systems and schools not making AYP.

Just as King Arthur called upon his Knights of the Roundtable to pledge their support, the State Department of Education (SDE) has formed the Accountability Roundtable to assist local school systems in improving instruction.

The mission of the Accountability Roundtable is to facilitate a *seamless* system of data-driven support and services for the purpose of assisting all schools and school systems in meeting annual measurable objectives.

The SDE Accountability Roundtable, which replaces Teams and Team Leaders, includes staff members representing Classroom Improvement; Student Assessment; Special Education; Federal Programs; Alabama Reading and Reading First Initiatives; Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative; Technology Initiatives; Professional Education Personnel Evaluation (PEPE); Alabama Leadership Academy and Teacher Leader Network; Career Technical Education; Prevention and Support Services; Academic Assistance; and Regional Inservice Center Directors.

The SDE's Accountability Roundtable supports Alabama public schools through state, regional, and district-level plans as well as local school system roundtables. Currently, more than 20 local school systems have chosen to model the state's Accountability Roundtable and implement their own roundtable. Superintendents from three school systems – Autauga County, Macon County, and Tuscaloosa City – with Accountability Roundtables already in place recently shared their experiences at the School Superintendents of Alabama Spring Conference.

"In Macon County, we were already operating in the team concept. Designing our Superintendent's Roundtable based on the state model was just a natural progression," said **MACON COUNTY**

SUPERINTENDENT WILLIE C. THOMAS JR. "Our system uses three School Improvement Coaches, a Teacher Leader Network, and the Parental and Community Training Program (PACT).

"My principals are my leaders. They are held accountable just as I am held accountable. Everyone must buy in for the sake of the children," said **TUSCALOOSA CITY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT DR. JOYCE LEVEY**. Parents, board members, and business and community leaders participate in the Tuscaloosa City Roundtable, which is facilitated by a school improvement administrator.

AUTAUGA COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT LARRY BUTLER took the proactive approach toward School Improvement when implementing a systemwide roundtable. He added a School Improvement Specialist. Butler praised the benefits in his system of after-school tutoring and new teacher mentoring. Other School Improvement Roundtable successes include a math tutoring program at Billingsley High School, same-gender classes and uniforms at Autaugaville School, and gains in special education populations throughout all schools.

State Department of Education or SDE: The Accountability Roundtable demonstrates that the "S" stands for service and state.

Contact **DR. ANITA BUCKLEY COMMANDER** or **DEANN STONE** at 334-242-9743, or **MAGGIE RIVERS** at 334-242-8199. 🍏

OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST VISITS ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROMOTE **MAY** AS NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS MONTH

AT IT'S JULY 12, 2005, MEETING, MEMBERS of the Alabama Board of Education voted to support a recommendation from the statewide Committee on Student Health to address the state's obesity problem by promoting healthy nutrition and exercise. The committee reported poor nutrition and lack of physical activity are the culprits in what has become an obesity epidemic nationwide, but in Alabama more than any other state. Over the past 20 years Alabama has fallen behind, raising a generation of students less fit than any other state in history. In fact, the report states that unless changes are made in lifestyles and behaviors, today's youth may be the first generation in history to not outlive their parents.

The committee composed of nutritionists, doctors, and educators recommended various physical education curriculum guides and monitoring, funding for certified physical education teachers, fitness testing, nutrition and health curriculum, and healthy snack and lunchroom alternatives. But, how do schools implement the guidelines and meet the challenges when there is a lack of funding, not enough physical education instructors, and daily time constraints?

Live It!" is a new health and fitness initiative designed to help students build healthy lifestyles by encouraging physical activity as part of their daily lives and provide nutrition information in schools. **Live It!"** can help schools meet strategic planning needs in the area of student physical fitness by promoting healthy eating and physical activity. Developed in collaboration with The President's Challenge, a program of The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, the School Nutrition Association, and the National Association for Sport & Physical Education, the **Live It!"** campaign features inspirational figures and sports celebrities, including six-time Tour de France cycling champion **LANCE ARMSTRONG**, NBA star **LEBRON JAMES**, NASCAR drivers **BOBBY LABONTE** and **KYLE PETTY**, and Olympic Gold Medalist and Birmingham native **VONETTA FLOWERS**.

Currently, **Live It!"** is being tested as a pilot program geared toward fifth- and sixth-graders in key markets nationwide, including Alabama. A fourth-grade initiative will be launched next school year. Participating schools are provided with posters offering tips on how to incorporate physical activity and healthy eating into everyday life. Additionally, students receive a **Live It!"** fitness kit with activity cards outlining food tips using new Dietary Guidelines and suggesting fun ways to achieve 10,000 steps daily. The kit also includes a stepometer to track daily steps.

DEBRA WEBSTER, Health and Physical Education Specialist for the State Department of Education, said

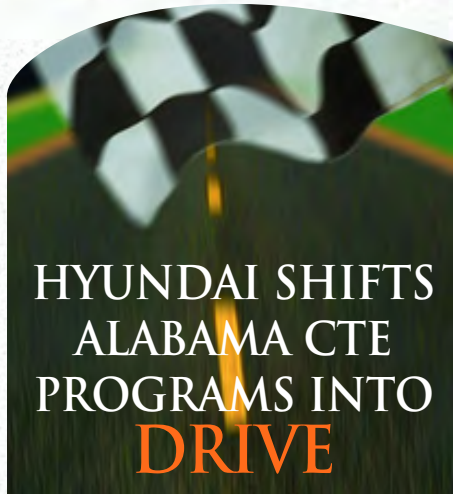
participating in this type of program develops a more positive attitude toward physical activity because it involves choice, fun, and a defined goal. "The ultimate goal of any type of exercise program is to increase the frequency and duration of physical activity," Webster said. "A regular walking or exercise program can help young people maintain a healthy body weight, build lean muscle, improve muscular and cardiovascular endurance, and create overall feelings of well-being and good health."

To kick off the national health and fitness initiative, Montgomery students from the Cleveland Avenue and Bell Road YMCAs; Alabama Board of Education members **VICE PRESIDENT SANDRA RAY**-District 7, **DR. ETHEL HALL**-District 4, **STEPHANIE BELL**-District 3, **ELLA BELL**-District 5; **STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON**; and other distinguished guests joined Vonetta Flowers for an activity-filled event at the Alabama Department of Education in Montgomery on March 23. Flowers told the crowd about the importance of physical activity and how it has strengthened her life. Flowers is the first African-American and first Alabamian to win the "gold" in the Winter Olympics. Flowers, who competes in bobsledding, told students, "Set goals to make your dreams come true, because being healthy and active will help you meet those goals." To date, more than 57,000 Alabama students and 90 percent of targeted schools are participating in **Live It!"** . 🍏



For more information on **Live It!"** and other school programs, [CLICK HERE](#).

GOOD NEWS IN



HYUNDAI SHIFTS ALABAMA CTE PROGRAMS INTO DRIVE

GENTLEMEN (AND LADIES), START YOUR ENGINES!

Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama (HMMA) has donated more than 63 new vehicles to Alabama schools with participating Career/Technical Education (CTE) programs.

The race to help students better learn to assemble and disassemble automobiles began late last year. HMMA donated 17 new 2006 NF Sonatas to secondary and postsecondary schools located within a

50- to 75-mile radius of its first U.S. manufacturing plant in Montgomery. In February, the automaker revved up the speed another notch by turning over the keys to 55 new Sonatas to schools statewide.

“We understand the value and importance of a well-trained workforce and are pleased to present these vehicles to assist in Alabama’s educational programs,” said **GREG KIMBLE**, Director of Human Resources for HMMA. “This donation is a part of our continuing efforts to train Alabama’s future workforce for careers in the automotive industry.”

The donated pre-production vehicles will be used to further develop the skills of career/tech students in automotive programs. These vehicles are for educational purposes only and are not designed for operation on public roads. Schools receiving the donations are instructed on the overall purpose and



final disposition of the vehicles.

Students will serve as pit crews using the vehicles to learn hands-on mechanics and body work. Instructors feel the training will help students reach the “finish line” as winners in the automotive field.

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON said, “I attended the Grand Opening of Hyundai in Alabama and I have toured the plant. It is so obvious Hyundai is committed to building automobiles of the highest quality and helping build the Alabama of tomorrow. The donation of these vehicles proves Hyundai is also committed to public education throughout our state.”

EIGHTH-GRADERS GET HEAD START ON COLLEGE EXAM



TYPICALLY, students begin to take the ACT college entrance exam in the 11th-grade. But, that’s not the case for about 30 Southlawn Middle School eighth-graders who have signed up to take the ACT on April 8.

CURTIS RICE, an eighth-grade math teacher, says the primary advantage for his students taking the test now is exposing students to the material and familiarizing them with the testing format. “They get the opportunity to experience the test firsthand and still have several years to continue preparation and, if needed, retake it to improve their score,” said Rice.

Although the cost of the ACT exam is \$29 per student, Southlawn Middle School students were responsible for paying only \$10. The remainder of the cost was covered by **CAROLYN PICKETT**, a peer assistant for the Alabama Department of Education, along with **BERNARD DIXON** and **IMOGENE BURNS**, both former educators.

SOUTHLAWN MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL TINA MINOTT said the preparation her students are receiving now will be of grave importance in the very near future. “This is just one more way to help our students prepare for success. Additionally, if the students do extremely well, their score will stand and be used for college admittance in the future,” said Ms. Minott. Test results should be available in early May.

State Board of Education Member: Ella Bell, District 5
Montgomery County Schools Superintendent: Dr. Carlinda Purcell
Southlawn Middle School Principal: Tina Minott



THE KREWE OF WILLIAMS AVENUE ELEMENTARY LEARN THROUGH MARDI GRAS

“THROW ME SOMETHING MISTER,” yelled students from Williams Avenue Elementary School as the costumed members of the school’s fourth-grade history classes marched through the halls throwing beads and goodies in celebration of Mardi Gras. Now in its tenth year, the school’s Mardi Gras parade is led by fourth-grade history teacher and Krewe King **CARL BROWN**. “As part of history class, students learn that contrary to popular belief, Mardi Gras in the United States was first celebrated in Mobile, not New Orleans,” says Brown. “This event enables students to reinforce what they have learned about the early French settlement in Alabama.”

However, one parade participant somewhat disagreed. Student **COLE BARNES**, who relocated to Fort Payne from New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, says he misses the “real” Mardi Gras held in his hometown, but enjoyed his new school’s parade. A second student, **JACEY IKERD** of Biloxi, also displaced from Katrina, told fellow students that Mardi Gras parades and celebrations were also held in her hometown.

Students weren’t the only ones making merriment. Teachers also donned costumes and masks while enjoying the day’s festivities. **PRINCIPAL SHANE BYRD** supports the fun way students learn about history, holidays, and traditions of different cultures. “Our Mardi Gras celebration means a lot to our students, and perhaps this year’s festivities had a little bit more of a special meaning, especially for our displaced students,” said Byrd. “But, at the same time, the kids learn so much about our world.”

Following the hurricane, concern for Gulf Coast residents prompted the school to hold a donations drive to help in the affected areas. Students, faculty, and community members filled a tractor-trailer truck with relief items, which was driven to the coast to aid hurricane victims.



Photo by Dusty Plunkett of The (Fort Payne) Times-Journal

*State Board of Education Member: Dr. Mary Jane Caylor, District 8
Fort Payne City Schools Superintendent: James Cunningham, Jr.
Williams Avenue Elementary School Principal: Shane Byrd*

ALABAMA CSI?



IF YOU WATCH primetime network television, you most likely view programs centered on solving crimes through investigative forensic techniques using science, math, and technology. Hit shows like “CSI – Miami” (CSI stands for Crime Scene Investigation), “Law and Order,” and “NCIS” (Naval Criminal Investigative Service) have taken viewers to another level when it comes to using scientific methods to generate crucial evidence in crime solving.

When **U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION MARGARET SPELLINGS** visited Birmingham for a parent

“Just one state – Alabama – requires students to take four years of math and science in high school.” Spellings made her comments at a hearing before the U.S. Senate Health and Education Committee in Washington.

roundtable in February she witnessed how one Alabama teacher incorporated the popular television shows into classroom instruction by having students examine hair strands under a microscope as part of a CSI mock crime scene.

Spellings was impressed that the Ramsay High School science students, instructed by teacher **HILMA ORMAN**, were fully interested in performing the experiment and not watching the clock, waiting for class to end. “Math is becoming essential in fields ranging from advertising to consulting to media to policymaking,” said Spellings.

U.S. SEN. JEFF SESSIONS (R-AL), who is a member of the panel, praised Spellings for singling out Alabama’s efforts to raise math and science standards. “The Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI)

has shown great success, and now I expect the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) to do the same,” he said. “The reason these programs work so well is that they go beyond telling teachers to do better; they actually equip teachers with the skills, knowledge and materials to teach successfully.”

Sessions went on to say that Alabama is stepping ahead with programs in math and science that are gaining national attention. In fact, AMSTI is consistent with President Bush’s new global competitiveness initiative, announced during the State of the Union address. Bush says these programs are needed to ensure all students receive the high-quality education they need to be competitive in today’s world.

*State Board of Education Member: Dr. Ethel Hall, District 4
Birmingham City Schools Superintendent: Dr Wayman Shiver, Jr.
Ramsay High School Principal: Jeanette Watters*

MORE GOOD NEWS

OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL BAND RECEIVES EXCLUSIVE INVITATION

ACCORDING TO A CNN REPORT, the smallest St. Patrick's Day Parade in the United States is held in Enterprise, Alabama. Surprised? Yes, and of course everyone knows the largest St. Patrick's Day Parade in the nation is held in New York City. To receive an invitation to appear in the parade is quite an honor.

More than two million parade spectators from around the world watched the event live as the Oxford High School (OHS) Band marched down Fifth Avenue March 17. The OHS Marching Yellow Jackets, the only Alabama band to ever participate in the parade, was one of 64 bands invited to the 245th Annual New York St. Patrick's Day Parade.

OHS BAND DIRECTOR CHRIS PENNINGTON said the experience was very exciting for his students. "The citizens of New York were awesome," said Pennington. "There was an



enormous crowd that gave us a big response, and the band fed off of it."

Following the parade, an awards ceremony was held where the band received recognition for its performance. Students and chaperones also managed to fit in extra activities in their "business trip" by touring the Big Apple's landmarks, including the Statue of Liberty, and taking in a Broadway performance.

State Board of Education Member: Stephanie Bell, District 3
Oxford City Schools Superintendent: Dr. Jeff Goodwin
Oxford High School Principal: Trey Holladay

STUDENTS LEARN THE ART OF QUILTING USING MATH SKILLS



MATHEMATICAL QUILTING is a unique class offered at the Alabama School of Fine Arts (ASFA) in Birmingham. The math elective class enables students to learn about geometry, while at the same time create a masterful quilt. The class is so popular that students compete for admittance.

State Board of Education Member: Dr. Ethel Hall, District 4
Alabama School of Fine Arts Superintendent: John Northrop

The class is taught by **JUDY CANTWELL**, an ASFA math teacher who believes a hands-on approach to math through quilting allows students to be creative and learn about angles and geometric patterns at the same time. Student **MALCOLM HAMILTON**, who is taking the class for a second time, said, "I use my math skills and my creativity to make comfort for the world. This class is my favorite time of the day – it's a relaxing experience where I still can use my brain."

The Alabama School of Fine Arts is a public, tuition-free school for Alabama students offering instruction for Grades 7-12. Admission is by audition in one of six specialty areas: Creative Writing, Dance, Mathematics & Science, Music, Theatre Arts, and Visual Arts.





WHILE MOST ALABAMA SCHOOLS were preparing to dismiss classes for Spring Break, Gov. Bob Riley was signing two recently passed education-related legislative bills into law.

During a news conference at the Alabama Department of Education on March 16, **STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON; SENATOR BRADLEY BYRNE (R-District 32); REPRESENTATIVES JAMES THOMAS (D-District 69), BETTY CAROL GRAHAM (D-District 81), VICTOR GASTON (R-District 100);** educators; and stakeholders joined the governor to sign two historic bills that add five days to the school year and hold administrators to fiscal accountability.

NEW LEGISLATION PROVIDES FOR FIVE EXTRA SCHOOL DAYS

House Bill (HB) 333 amends the *Code of Alabama* relating to the public education Foundation Program Fund to increase the required school term from a minimum 175 to 180 full instructional days annually. In a *Birmingham News* editorial, Morton wrote, “Alabama literally brings up the rear of the industrialized world in the number of days per year students attend school. If our students had the same school year as students in East Asian countries (an average of 209 days) they would graduate with the equivalent of more than two additional years of learning. Additionally, research shows that students in the United States spend an estimated 1,462 hours focusing on mathematics, science, language, and social studies during high school. Students in Japan, France, and Germany devote twice that many hours (an average of 3,367 hours on core subjects). Is it any surprise that international students outperform U.S. students on international tests? We all recognize that Alabama’s students will be competing with other students from around the world for the jobs of the future. Are we giving them the best

opportunity possible if they attend fewer school days per year than any of their competitors?”

Former Alabama Board of Education Member Senator Bradley Byrne said, “The effectiveness of five extra days will allow more instructional days to make up for days spent on required testing and will enable students to compete on an even playing field with students from other states and countries.”

The amount of additional funding required to add the extra days in fiscal year 2007 is \$96 million, which will go toward the cost associated with paying teachers and support personnel to work five additional days. 🍏



Gov. Riley (seated) is joined by (l to r) Sen. Byrne, Rep. Thomas, Rep. Graham, Rep. Gaston, and State Superintendent of Education Joe Morton.

HOUSE BILL (HB) 94, the *School Fiscal Accountability Act*, also signed by Gov. Riley on March 16, creates a new chapter in Title 16 of the *Code of Alabama* to require local boards of education to adopt certain fiscal management policies. *Act No. 2006-196* applies to system custodians of funds and local superintendents. It also

\$CHOOL SYSTEM FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY IS NOW STATE LAW

amends current law regarding the financial intervention process by replacing the words “*fiscally unsound budget*” with the term “*financial reports*” and allowing the financial intervention process to begin at the time the Alabama Department of Education becomes aware of a financial problem instead of waiting until a “*fiscally unsound budget*” is submitted.

The new Chapter 13A of the legislation affects the duties and responsibilities of the Alabama Department of Education and local school boards requiring the State Superintendent of Education to employ a Chief Education Financial Officer (CFO) to oversee the financial integrity of schools and to conduct internal audits of schools. Additionally, the act requires CFOs to meet certain qualifications and local superintendents to complete the State Superintendent’s financial and legal training program and pass the program’s competency exam.

To view both legislative bills, [CLICK HERE](#).

Awards

BALDWIN COUNTY TEACHER HALL OF FAME NOMINEE NAMED



DAPHNE ELEMENTARY SOUTH TEACHER BLAIR HEALD has been selected as the 2005 Baldwin County Public Schools nominee for the prestigious Jacksonville State University Teacher Hall of Fame. Heald teaches Gifted Education for students in Grades 4 and 5 in the

program designated as Project Jubilee. In addition to serving students identified for the program, she conducts schoolwide contact lessons for all of the students on the campus.

Heald, who has ten years of experience teaching, has served the past six years in her current position. She is a specialist and trainer for Talents Unlimited, a nationally recognized thinking skills model, and serves as the school technology coordinator. As a recipient of the Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program Grant, she has become a specialist on Japan, especially in the ancient Japanese craft of Temari, and is also a member of the Mobile

Ichihara Sister City Association.

Recognitions earned by students under her instruction include Reader's Digest Word Power and National Geography Bee state winners for two years running.

PRINCIPAL DANA HORST describes Heald as a teacher who has a thirst for knowledge and "is consistently searching for new innovative ways to teach her students."

Heald now qualifies for the next level of competition. Officials at Jacksonville State University report that the top five applicants notified in March will participate in an interview process to select the one teacher in Alabama to be honored at the University. 🍏

*State Board of Education Member: Randy McKinney, District 1
Baldwin County Schools Superintendent: Dr. Faron Hollinger*



MADISON CITY SCHOOLS STUDENTS WIN DESIGN CONTESTS



IN CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH MONTH in May, students from the Madison City School System competed in a poster contest sponsored by the Mental Health Association of Madison County.

RACHEL WILLIAMS, seventh-grader at Discovery Middle School, created the winning poster design. Rachel was presented with an award during a special presentation held at the University of Alabama Huntsville.

Additionally, two of Rachel's classmates were this year's Junior Achievement Logo Design winners. **MICHELLE GRAHAM'S** design won 1st place and **NATHAN COLE'S** design won 3rd place. These two students were

honored at the 21st Annual Junior Achievement Bowl-A-Thon Kickoff Luncheon held at the Four Points Sheraton in March.



*State Board of Education Member: Dr. Mary Jane Caylor, District 8
Madison City Schools Superintendent: Dr. Henry Clark*

2006 STATEWIDE FAMILY POSTER CONTEST ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT



THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S Second Annual Statewide Family Poster Contest on Parental Involvement is underway and this year will carry the theme *Children Are the Future — Share the Vision*. [A letter from STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON](#) to all county and city superintendents was sent March 3 outlining contest details and explaining that all Alabama families should be encouraged to participate in this effort.

The statewide winning poster will become the theme poster for parental involvement month in October and will be displayed on billboards around the state. Eleven additional posters will receive special recognition by becoming a part of the *2006-2007 Alabama Parent and Family Involvement Calendar* to be made available online beginning in September.

Also, new to this year's contest are merchant gift cards for the winners (valued from \$100 to \$500). Don't let your school system miss out. Make plans for your local contests today so that your system's poster can be delivered to Judy Bohannon in the Federal Programs Section by the deadline of May 3.

For additional information, [CLICK HERE](#) to visit the Alabama Department of Education's Website or contact Judy Bohannon at 334-242-8199 or [CLICK HERE](#). 🍏

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

THE 88TH ANNUAL ALABAMA PTA CONVENTION will be held at the Holiday Inn Select in Huntsville, April 21-22. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

THE 3RD ALABAMA CONFERENCE ON FATHERHOOD will be held in Birmingham, May 3-5. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

THE 2006 MEGA CONFERENCE will be held in Mobile, July 10-14. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

AWARDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

THE LAW DAY 2006 ESSAY & POSTER CONTEST, sponsored by the Alabama Bar Association, is open to students in Grades K-6 (poster contest) and Grades 7-12 (essay contest). For ideas and information, [CLICK HERE](#). **Deadline: April 21**

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S ALABAMA SAFE SCHOOLS INITIATIVE AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE recognize schools demonstrating outstanding efforts to create a safer learning environment for students and staff through on and off-campus teamwork. For more information, [CLICK HERE](#) or contact Jean Davis, 334-242-7923. **Deadline: April 28**

THE 4TH ANNUAL JENICE RILEY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP, sponsored by the Alabama Humanities Foundation, awards a \$1,000 scholarship to a K-6 Alabama teacher to advance knowledge and teaching skills in the subject areas of history and civics. [CLICK HERE](#) or call 205-558-3980 for more information. **Deadline: April 28**

THE SILVER LINING PROGRAM recognizes and honors young people ages 14-19 affected by catastrophe this year yet were still able to have a positive impact on others. [CLICK HERE](#) for competition guidelines. **Deadline: May 15**

CALENDAR

APRIL | MATH AWARENESS MONTH CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

- 2-8 National Library Week
- 3-14 *Stanford 10/Alabama Reading and Math Test (ARMT)* Administrations
- 5 Kick Butts Day – Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
- 13 Alabama Board of Education Meeting
- 21-22 88th Annual Alabama PTA Convention
- 24 Confederate Memorial Day (STATE HOLIDAY)
- 27 Alabama Board of Education Work Session (Birmingham)

MAY | MENTAL HEALTH MONTH • SAFE KIDS MONTH PHYSICAL FITNESS MONTH

- 8-14 Teacher Appreciation Week
- 9 National Teachers Day
- 11 Alabama Board of Education Meeting
- 25 Alabama Board of Education Work Session
- 29 Memorial Day (STATE HOLIDAY)



MARCH BOARD BRIEFS

ALABAMA BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

- Gov. Bob Riley, President
 Dist. 1 - Randy McKinney, Pres. Pro Tem, Gulf Shores
 Dist. 2 - Betty Peters, Dothan
 Dist. 3 - Stephanie W. Bell, Montgomery
 Dist. 4 - Ethel H. Hall, V.P. Emerita, Fairfield
 Dist. 5 - Ella B. Bell, Montgomery
 Dist. 6 - David F. Byers Jr., Birmingham
 Dist. 7 - Sandra Ray, Vice Pres., Tuscaloosa
 Dist. 8 - Mary Jane Caylor, Huntsville

Joseph B. Morton, State Superintendent of Education and Secretary and Executive Officer of the Alabama Board of Education

- ✔ Approved Resolutions Commending the State Honoree and Distinguished Finalists, 2006 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards
- ✔ Approved Resolution for Adoption of *Arts Education and Languages Other Than English - Foreign Languages State Courses of Study*
- ✔ Approved New Teacher Education Programs, Faulkner University, Montgomery
- ✔ Approved Nominees for the Board of Trustees, Alabama School of Fine Arts
- ✔ Announced Intent to Amend *Alabama Administrative Code Rules Pertaining to Alabama High School Diplomas with Advanced Career/Technical Endorsement and Career/Technical Endorsement*

FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF AGENDA ITEMS, PLEASE VISIT THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S WEB SITE

[HERE](#)

UNDER BOARD OF EDUCATION.

TEACHER OF THE MONTH



JOYCE M. WAID, a mathematics teacher at Locust Fork High School in the Blount County School System, is the Teacher of the Month for March.

"Teaching mathematics is more than just helping students memorize formulas. It is about encouraging active participation in the classroom and helping students use mathematics to construct meaning within the world around them," said Waid.

Students, colleagues, and administrators are proud to recognize Waid's accomplishments. She was selected Blount County's Teacher of the Year in 2003-2004 and 2005-2006. She is also involved in the Alabama Mathematics, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) and works with her school's mentoring program.

As Teacher of the Month for March, Waid will receive \$1,000 from Alfa Insurance, and her school, Locust Fork High School, will receive a matching award from the Alabama Farmers Federation.

This year, Alfa Insurance and Alabama Farmers Federation will recognize one teacher from each state school board district as well as two private school teachers and two principals. For further information, [CLICK HERE](#).



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Copies available in Braille or other forms upon request.