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SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW REWRITTEN TO HELP STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS

Congress recently reauthorized the federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) to give teachers better control over classroom discipline and provide some flexibility for teachers to meet the “highly qualified” definition in the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB). The legislation signed by **PRESIDENT BUSH** on Dec. 3, will increase federal funding for special education, improve teacher standards, and offer increased flexibility in program rules.

IDEA is the nation’s landmark special education law ensuring special-needs children are provided a free and appropriate public education in the “least restrictive environment.” The law, first passed in the 1970s, has created, to some degree, conflicts between educators and parents of special-needs children. Educators feel IDEA is too focused on “red tape” and excessive paperwork while parents contend legalities and the paper trail are necessary for compliance with the law.

The “highly qualified” component of the new legislation is effective immediately. The remainder of the reauthorized IDEA goes into effect July 1, 2005, and is expected to improve classroom discipline, lessen paperwork and lawsuits, increase flexibility and local school system control, and provide more funding. In turn, this will allow systems to establish more uniform policies for all students, including disabled children who may become violent or disruptive in school.

Alabama’s **U.S. SEN. JEFF SESSIONS** was very instrumental in pushing for changes in the law and getting it approved. “Anyone who understands teaching in this modern age understands that maintaining discipline in the classroom is a constant challenge for teachers,” Sessions said during a news conference at the Alabama Department of Education in Montgomery, Dec. 1. Following the news conference at a round table discussion with special education educators and school system administrators, Sessions went on to say, “Providing protected classifications for some children who misbehave

undermines the credibility of the teacher and the moral integrity of the school and classroom rules. Teachers are making heroic efforts to help all children achieve their best. Our rules should help them, not make their job harder.” Sessions’ discipline proposal was inspired by a highly publicized

Alabama case in which a 15-year-old Baldwin County special education student was accused of threatening to kill classmates, attacking his mother, and commandeering a school bus. His mother said he had extreme attention deficit disorder, while a local prosecutor said he was a threat to others. The “emotionally conflicted” student was shielded by IDEA from expulsion despite a history of disruptive behavior. The boy became a poster child for a push to give teachers more power to discipline disruptive special education students. The case was examined by both “60 Minutes” and *Time* magazine in a story headlined as “Is This the Meanest Kid in All of Alabama?”

Currently, educators are required to jump through numerous hoops before disciplining students classified as disabled. The new legislation allows schools to discipline disabled students covered by the federal law more in the same manner as regular students, if the behavior that led to the disciplinary action is not related to the child’s disability. “I support the accommodation of all students, including those who are disabled, but educators should not be restricted by federal regulations when they need to remove a student disrupting the classroom,” continued Sessions.



U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions outlines changes in the reauthorized IDEA law during a news conference in Montgomery, Dec. 1.



(Continued on page 6)



BLACK HISTORY MONTH TEACHING RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Every year, America designates February as the month to pay homage to the contributions, accomplishments, and social reform established by African-Americans in the United States. Alabama has particular historical significance in the advancement of African-Americans here and throughout the world.

Over the years, countless acts of courage have deemed Alabama the birthplace of the civil rights movement. With this in mind, educators in this state have a unique role in teaching students about the sacrifices made by Americans from all walks of life and the importance of those who died encouraging equality and condemning discrimination.

Recently, the Alabama Department of Education, Alabama Power Company, and the Tuskegee Airmen, were awarded the George Washington Honor Medal by the Freedom Foundation at Valley Forge for their collective efforts in producing “Patriots & Pioneers: The Lessons of the Tuskegee Airmen.” The production is an educational video/lesson plan appropriate for studying the Tuskegee Airmen story at any time of the year, including Black History Month. This education packet was sent to more than 3,000 fourth-, sixth-, seventh-, and 11th-grade social studies classrooms across Alabama last year. For more information about the Tuskegee Airmen lesson plan, contact **CARLA ROBERSON**, Education Coordinator for Alabama Power Company at 205-257-3726.

For actual field trips that bring students face-to-face with the rich culture of Alabama, Tuskegee, home to Tuskegee University, is a destination with an abundance of cultural activities and learning opportunities. The National Park Service (NPS) gives tours of the George Washington Carver Museum where more than 800 artifacts from his life and research are displayed. A biographical film on **GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER** is also featured. The NPS also handles tours of The Oaks, **BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**’s home in Tuskegee. While in the Tuskegee area, visit historic Moton Field, where the

Tuskegee Airmen trained, and the temporary National Historic Site for the Tuskegee Airmen. For more information, contact the NPS at 334-727-3200 or [CLICK HERE](#) to visit them online.

Additionally, several field trip options are available in the state capitol of Montgomery. The Alabama Shakespeare Festival (ASF) in the Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park will feature the play, “The Dreams of Sarah Breedlove,” the remarkable story of America’s first female millionaire known by most as **MADAM C. J. WALKER**. **LINDA DEAN**, ASF educational director, said the story of this African-American woman is an inspiration to anyone with interests in history, business, patent law, and entrepreneurship. Special student matinee performances will be held Feb. 1-2, and 9-10 at 10 a.m. Dean said ASF also provides instructional materials for school groups attending plays. For more information about the plays at ASF, contact Dean at 800-841-4273 or 334-271-5345.

While visiting the ASF, students can also take advantage of displays at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, which is also located in the Blount Cultural Park. Works by **JIMMY SUDDUTH**, a self-taught, nationally acclaimed African-American artist and Alabama native, will be on display Jan. 15-Mar. 27. Admission to the museum is free. Call 334-244-5700 for further information or visit [CLICK HERE](#).

The Rosa Parks Library and Museum in downtown Montgomery provides schoolchildren with a fascinating interactive account of one of the most momentous occurrences in civil right history. Students are able to put themselves in the place of the courageous seamstress, **ROSE PARKS** as she recreated street scene and replica city bus transports students to that fateful day in 1955. Contact the museum at 334-241-8615 or [CLICK HERE](#) for tour information. Other attractions in Montgomery include the Civil Rights Memorial and Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church.

Throughout the state, many museums showcase historical

(Continued on page 8)

BLACK HISTORY MONTH WEB RESOURCES

www.teachervision.com – Just type black history month in the search field to bring up printable worksheets, quizzes, tests, crossword puzzles, books, trivia, and timelines concerning Black History Month.

www.pbs.org/teachersource/ – This site provides lesson plans on subjects ranging from the rise and fall of **JIM CROW** to historical African-American figures in the press.

www.galegroup.com/free_resources/bhm – This site also provides free resources for educators about the contributions and historical impact of African-Americans on American culture.

AFTER 23 YEARS ... LANDMARK TEACHER TESTING CASE ENDS

What better way to start the new year than by having the long-running lawsuit banning subject-matter testing of new teachers settled? **STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOSEPH B. MORTON** thinks it's a reason to celebrate because the *Allen v. Alabama State Board of Education* lawsuit has been hovering like a dark cloud over Alabama education for a very long time. "I am confident this major accomplishment will help ensure the state's public school teachers are 'highly qualified' as required by the *No Child Left Behind* law," stated Morton. "This agreement will also help strengthen the state Board's goal to provide every Alabama child with a quality education in our schools and will instill greater confidence in our public education system."

The second amended consent decree from the case was given final approval by **U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE MYRON THOMPSON** in a Fairness Hearing in Montgomery on Dec. 14. More than two decades ago, the *Allen v. Alabama State Board of Education* lawsuit ended teacher testing based on claims that the state's then-used test was discriminatory. In 2000, a consent decree was entered into allowing basic competency testing of new teachers. The following year, Congress passed the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, which in part holds schools accountable for effectively teaching all students, for having all teachers "highly qualified" in core subjects by the 2005-06 school year, and for testing new teachers in their academic major.

"This agreement is a positive step toward improving education in all of our public schools," said **GOV. BOB RILEY** during the state Board of Education meeting Dec. 9 when the Board approved the second-amended consent decree. "We are demanding a higher level of excellence from our students and teachers. This will help them prove that they are highly qualified." The approval of the consent decree will enable the Alabama Department of Education to comply with federal law by using the PRAXIS II series of tests, developed by the Educational Testing Service, to measure subject-matter knowledge

"IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME COMING, AND THE DESIRE OF EVERYONE INVOLVED WITH THE LAWSUIT IS TO GET ON WITH THE BUSINESS OF EDUCATION AND MAKE SURE OUR TEACHERS ARE 'KNOWLEDGE READY' TO TEACH STUDENTS."

**STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION
JOSEPH B. MORTON**

of teacher certification candidates. The first use of the PRAXIS II tests for actual certification of teachers wanting to work in the state's classrooms could occur in early 2006.

Alabama Education News asked **DR. JAYNE A. MEYER**, Alabama Department of Education Teacher Education and Certification Director how and if this consent decree will affect current teachers. "The consent decree indicates current teachers will not be required to pass a subject-matter test to retain or renew their certificates or earn a higher-level certificate in the same teaching field. However, a current teacher who wishes to add another teaching field or an area of instruction support to the teacher's current area(s) of certification will be required to pass the content test appropriate to the new teaching field or area of instructional support. For example, an elementary teacher may continue to renew her/his Class B elementary certificate or earn a Class A certificate in elementary education without having to pass an elementary content test. If that elementary teacher wishes to add certification in secondary mathematics or library media, the teacher would be required to pass a mathematics test or library media test," explained Meyer.

[CLICK HERE](#) to visit the Teacher Education and Certification Section on the state Department's Web site or contact them at 334-242-9977 for more information. 🍏

Baker High School Band Performs In The Macy's Parade



Among the giant helium-filled character balloons, Broadway musical stars, gorgeous floats, and “the Big Guy” himself (Santa Claus), many high school bands hailing from across the United States were chosen to march in one of the nation’s premier holiday events. One band in particular did our great state proud with their stellar performance in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade. Mobile’s 220-member Baker High School Band, under the direction of **BAND DIRECTOR TRIPP MORRIS**, strutted down the streets of New York City during the annual event viewed by hundreds of thousands of spectators lining the streets or on national television. The band’s musicians, flag-twirlers, and dancers wowed audiences, and, in fact, some of the band members had the opportunity to perform on the NBC Today Show. “What a thrilling experience this was for our students,” said **MOBILE COUNTY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT DR. HAROLD DODGE**. “We are so proud of the Baker Band and appreciate the community support they received to make this trip happen.”

*State Board of Education Member – Randy McKinney, District 1
Mobile County Schools Superintendent – Dr. Harold Dodge
Baker High School Principal – Clem Richardson*

Choraleers Record A Christmas CD



The sounds of the season were heard throughout E. D. Nixon Elementary School in the Montgomery County School System thanks to the school’s Choraleers, who have just finished recording a Christmas CD. “The project was sponsored by Regions Bank after the children performed at the bank’s Christmas luncheon last year,” said **E.D. NIXON PRINCIPAL MICHAEL LENHART**. “The students were such a big hit, the bank decided to underwrite the cost of the students to cut the CD to use as Christmas gifts for their employees.”

According to Lenhart, the students spent the entire summer at Treasure House Studios in Montgomery recording. Additionally, under the direction of music teacher **SANDRA WARE**, the 60-plus Choraleers students have been busy with numerous performances throughout Montgomery during the holiday season. “Many of the performance requests have come about as a result of people in the community hearing the CD,” boasted Lenhart.

Proceeds from the CD will go directly to the school to assist in funding the academic and arts programs with some money going toward making another CD. The CD may be purchased for \$15 by contacting the school at 334-269-3012.

*State Board of Education Member – Stephanie Bell, District 3
Montgomery County Schools Superintendent – Dr. Carlinda Purcell
E.D. Nixon Elementary School Principal – Michael Lenhart*

TIP Program Taps Intelligence In 7th-Graders



Six very intelligent seventh-graders from Selma Middle CHAT Academy joined the ranks of Selma High School juniors and seniors who took the ACT college entrance exam Dec. 11. CHAT counselor **MAMIE SOLOMON** says the six qualified to participate in the Duke University Talent Identification Program (TIP) based on their scores on the 2004 administrations of the *Alabama Reading and Math Test* (ARMT) and *Stanford 10*. Qualifying students had to score in the 95th percentile or higher on state-approved criterion-referenced assessments to be selected for TIP. The Selma Middle CHAT Academy students selected are: **JUSTIN BAKER**, **ASHLYN GOODWIN**, **BRANDON MONTGOMERY**, **NATHAN PHILLIPS**, **SIERRA STRONG**, and **JASMINE YORK**. “It is indeed a special privilege to work with such talented students and their parents,” said Solomon. “I have the utmost confidence they will achieve many great things in their lifetime and I am glad to have had a small hand in that.”

The TIP program is dedicated to identifying academically talented students and providing innovative programs to support the development of their optimal educational potential. The Talent Search Results Summary prepared by Duke TIP compares test score results with other seventh-graders who participated. The Results Summary is mailed to each participating student in late May with a Certificate of Merit. Students scoring at the highest levels on the exams are invited to attend the Grand Recognition Ceremony at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

*State Board of Education Member – Ella Bell, District 5
Selma City Schools Superintendent – James Carter
Selma Middle CHAT Academy Principal – Charlotte Griffeth*

**Hartselle High School
Key Club Compete
In Giving**



Many less fortunate families did not go hungry during the holiday season thanks in part to the dynamic efforts of the Hartselle High School Key Club. Over 21,200 cans of food were collected by the 172-member civic club and distributed to needy families in the Hartselle community.

“The goal was to collect 11,000 canned items,” explained **PRINCIPAL JERRY REEVES**. “But when a couple of our teachers began a friendly competition between students in their two classes for extra credit, it became evident the kids were going to exceed their goal.” Students canvassed neighborhoods and solicited area grocery stores for donations then loaded trucks and delivered the items to local shelters. This year, the club more than doubled their collection of canned goods from last year.

State Board of Education Member – David Byers, District 6
Hartselle City Schools Superintendent – Dr. Lee Hartsell
Hartselle High School Principal – Jerry Reeves

**West Jasper
Elementary School –
1 of 5
Schools Nationwide
To Receive
The Education Trust
“Dispelling the
Myth” Award**

Educators are constantly striving to ensure all students meet standards, but sometimes that task can be quite difficult. Quite often the background of a student affects their abilities to achieve and many believe those students who come from high-poverty situations can’t quite “cut the mustard.” Not true, says **WEST JASPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL ERIC SMITH** of his school, which has gained national recognition for closing the achievement gap.

West Jasper Elementary School is one of only five schools in the nation to receive The Education Trust “Dispelling the Myth” award, which goes to schools showing steady improvement on standardized test scores.

Smith touts his school’s strong pre-kindergarten program and participation in the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) as success factors in achieving high standards.

“Changes began to occur in our school when we implemented the ARI six years ago,” said Smith. “The huge emphasis we placed on reading has helped our students tremendously.”

Eighty-six percent of the school’s students come from low-income families, yet West Jasper Elementary fourth-graders scored above the state average on the 2004 *Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test*.

State Board of Education Member – Sandra Ray, District 7
Jasper City Schools Superintendent – Phillip Woods
West Jasper Elementary School Principal – Eric Smith



**What Would You
Like To Be
When You Grow Up?**

Most every child at some point in their young life is asked by a grownup, “What would you like to be when you grow up?” In some instances, children may know exactly what profession they would like to go into when they become adults, but will most likely change their minds several times. To help guide young minds by familiarizing students with different careers, Liberty Middle School holds a Career Day each year in which about 50 local professionals talk to students about their jobs.

The school’s counselors, **PATRICIA PIRO** and **PAM HENDRIX**, organized this year’s event in hopes students would gain knowledge and assistance in choosing their high school courses, exploring career options, and thinking ahead to college. A vast array of professionals volunteered their time to explain job specifics and what it takes – education wise – to accomplish their goals. Career Day participants included a florist, an Alabama state trooper, a youth minister, a Boeing Co. engineer, an Air Force pilot, a Web page designer, video producer, lawyer, caterer, and funeral director, to name a few. Over 800 students attended the one-day event held at the school in November.

State Board of Education Member – Dr. Mary Jane Caylor, District 8
Madison City Schools Superintendent – Dr. Henry J. Clark
Liberty Middle School Principal – Sally Bruer



ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS WANTS YOUR SCHOOL'S GOOD NEWS STORIES. SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:
REBECCA LEIGH WHITE, ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – COMMUNICATION, GORDON PERSONS BUILDING,
50 N. RIPLEY ST., ROOM 5307, MONTGOMERY, AL 36104 OR [CLICK HERE](#).

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According to Sen. Sessions, the new legislation clarifies the requirements special education teachers must meet to be identified as “highly qualified,” providing some flexibility in the process and a timeline for states and local school systems, including:



Round table discussion participants listen intently to Alabama Department of Education Special Education Director Dr. Mabrey Whetstone (second from right) explain different components of the new legislation.

- New or veteran general special education teachers are “highly qualified” (HQ) if they are certified in special education by the state, and meet NCLB content knowledge standards. Consultative teachers are HQ if they are certified in special education by the state.
- New or veteran special education teachers teaching the 1 percent of children taking alternate assessments are HQ if they meet the applicable NCLB standard - test, major/degree, or High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) option - or meet the NCLB requirements for new elementary teachers by passing a test.
- New or veteran special education teachers teaching multiple core subjects can be deemed HQ through HOUSSE or by meeting educational requirements for each subject under NCLB (test or degree). The HOUSSE is developed by the state and can be a HOUSSE applying to all teachers or an adaptation of a HOUSSE accommodating special education teachers, including a HOUSSE covering multiple subjects.

- New or veteran special education teachers teaching one core subject must be HQ under NCLB just like other teachers.
- New teachers who teach multiple core subjects have two years to achieve HQ status; however, all other teachers must be HQ by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

“There was a perception out there that there was a different standard for disciplining students with disabilities that was unfair,” said **DR. MABREY WHETSTONE**, Director of Special Education for the Alabama Department of Education.

“Regardless of what happens with the discipline of a student, we must ensure students with disabilities continue to receive educational services.” 🍏

Paperwork Reduction	Funding	Frivolous Lawsuit Reduction	State and Local Eligibility
The legislation establishes a new 15-state demonstration project of reducing paperwork caused by compliance with IDEA.	The bill includes funding goals under Part B designed to meet the federal government's commitment to fund 40 percent of the total cost by 2011.	Every parent of an IDEA child will be given a copy of the procedural safeguards at least once a year informing them of their rights under IDEA.	Each state is required to submit a plan to the U.S. Secretary of Education to receive funds under IDEA.
Short-term objective and goals in individual education programs (IEPs) are eliminated for all special education children except those with severe disabilities who take alternative assessments.	There is a slight increase in the amount used for state administration to help states comply with the changes made under the new legislation.	Parents and school systems will be encouraged to enter into mediation and utilize the opportunity to resolve prior differences before going to court.	The plan must include the state's performance goals and indicators, as well as other items related to how the state ensures Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) is provided to every child and children are given services in the least restrictive environment.
Changes can be made to the IEP by amendment rather than rewriting the entire IEP every time it is altered.	States also have the option to set aside a larger portion of their funds for state-level activities, including monitoring and enforcement, paperwork reduction, transition programs for children aging out of IDEA, technical assistance to local school systems, and the establishment of a state mediation system.	The legislation also requires if parents do file a complaint, the complaint outlines all issues to be discussed during the due process procedure.	School systems can use IDEA funds to provide direct educational and related services to eligible children. They are allowed to use funds to provide professional development for personnel and educational and behavioral evaluations for children.
The conference report also creates a 15-state demonstration program that will allow states to develop and implement 3-year IEPs.	States will also be allowed to reserve 10 percent of their state activities funds to create a new high-cost kids risk pool. These funds will be directed to local school systems serving high-cost children. Systems will still be required to pay for a large portion of the cost of serving the child; however, this money will be used to cover up to 75 percent of the excess costs.	A parent will have a two-year window to file a complaint unless they were provided misinformation or information was withheld.	The legislation requires the U. S. Secretary of Education to monitor states and states to monitor local school systems in three priority areas: the provision of FAPE in the least restrictive environment; general supervisory authority, particularly over the discipline and procedural safeguard sections; and disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education.
		Under the new legislation, attorney's fees can be awarded to either party in a settlement if the judge deems the lawsuit as frivolous.	

ALABAMA CONGRATULATES NEW NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHERS

During the 2004 school year, 151 Alabama teachers achieved the teaching profession's highest standards, creating a record number of teachers in the state with National Board Certification.

The addition of the 2004 class brings the total number of Alabama teachers, who are certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), to 783.

National Board Certification is a voluntary process developed by NBPTS. It is achieved through a rigorous performance-based assessment that takes nearly a year to complete. The assessment process measures a teacher's subject-matter knowledge, provides evidence that teachers are fluent in effectively teaching their subjects to students, and demonstrates a teacher's ability to manage and measure student learning.

[CLICK HERE](#) for a listing of Alabama's 2004 National Board of Certified Teachers. For more information on National Board Certification or the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, [CLICK HERE](#) to go to the NBPTS Web site.



BEING NAMED STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR IS QUITE AN HONOR,

but receiving the honor in two different states within one's education career is really something! **AUBURN CITY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT DR. TERRY JENKINS** has the honor of claiming that distinction. Jenkins recently received Alabama's 2005 Superintendent of the Year award for his tireless dedication and strong leadership abilities. In 1998, he was named Superintendent of the Year in Georgia.

In addition to his local school system duties, Jenkins serves as president-elect of the School Superintendents of Alabama. He will represent Alabama in the National Superintendent of the Year Program, sponsored by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and ARAMARK ServiceMaster Facility Services. The national winner will be announced during the AASA annual conference in Texas in late February.



State Board of Education District 2 Member Betty Peters and State Superintendent of Education Joseph B. Morton look on as Auburn City Schools Superintendent Terry Jenkins accepts the state Board's resolution honoring him as Alabama Superintendent of the Year.

ONLY FIVE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS statewide were recognized this year as All-State School Board Members by the Alabama Association of School Boards (AASB). Those receiving recognition are: **SHELLY JONES** – Tuscaloosa City Board of Education, **MARGARET JOHNSON** – Dothan City Board of Education, **JAMES JUNKIN** – Tuscaloosa County Board of Education, **STEVE MARTIN** – Shelby County Board of Education, and former Colbert County Board of Education member **NEAL HOWARD**.

The All-State School Board Member distinction is the highest honor given by AASB. Candidates are nominated by fellow board members based on their commitment to ethical standards, proven records of activism, rapport with local officials, and leadership in education and community activities.



All-State School Board Members Shelly Jones (seated), James Junkin (left), and Steve Martin (right). Not pictured are Margaret Johnson and Neal Howard.

CONGRATULATIONS TO VESTAVIA HILLS HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR JOANN HUDDLESTON for being named State High School Counselor of the Year by the Alabama Department of Education during the Alabama School Counselor Association conference in Huntsville, Nov. 17-19.

Additionally, five other counselors working in the Vestavia Hills City School System received the Recognition of Accountability, Verification, and Excellence (RAVE) award for their excellent guidance and education programs at Pizitz Middle School and Vestavia Hills Elementary School. The honorees include: **STEPHANIE HOLCOMB**, **PAM HESS**, **CAROL REED**, **NANCY SELLERS**, and **CELESTE NEIL**.



Pizitz Middle School Principal David Miles congratulates counselor awardees (l-r) Stephanie Holcomb, Nancy Sellers, Celeste Neil, and Carol Reed.

January

		SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH		2	3
4	13	5	Alabama Board of Education Meeting		10
11	17	12	Lee/MLK, Jr. Birthdays (STATE HOLIDAY)		17
18	24	19	NAEP Testing Begins		24
25	27	26	Alabama Board of Education Work Session		31

FEBRUARY



1	2	3	BLACK HISTORY MONTH		7
10	Alabama Board of Education Meeting		13	14	
8	13-19	Alabama Career Technical Education Week		13	14
21	Washington/Jefferson Birthdays (STATE HOLIDAY)		21		
15	16	Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing, Grades 5, 7, & 10 Administrations		27	28
21-25	State/System/School Report Cards Released				
22	23	Alabama Board of Education Work Session			
24	29				

(Continued from page 2)

Throughout the state, many museums showcase historical artifacts telling the story of the African-American experience including:

- The National African-American Archives Museum in Mobile
Phone: 251-433-8511
- The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham
Phone: 866-328-9696 or www.bcri.org
- The National Voting Rights Museum in Selma
Phone: 334-418-0800

Of course, these are but a few of the many learning opportunities available across the state during Black History Month and year round. All are encouraged to explore and appreciate the significant role African-Americans played in American history. 🍏

BOARD BRIEFS

DECEMBER AGENDA ITEMS:

- ✍️ Approved *Allen v. Alabama State Board of Education* Second Amended Consent Decree
- ✍️ Passed Resolution Honoring Dr. James Terry Jenkins
- ✍️ Passed Resolution Honoring West Jasper Elementary School
- ✍️ Passed Resolution Appointing Arts Education and Foreign Languages State Courses of Study Committees
- ✍️ Passed Resolutions Recognizing Inn-Inn Chen, Ashrit R. Kamireddi, and Shiva P. Daram as 2004 Advanced Placement State Scholars
- ✍️ Passed Resolution Honoring Mignon Smith
- ✍️ Passed Resolution Honoring Anita Kelly



ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

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Alabama Board of Education Members

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- Dist. 2 - Betty Peters, Dothan
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Copies available in Braille or other forms upon request.

TEACHER OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER

Baldwin County High School, Baldwin County Schools, State Board of Education District 1

Baldwin County science teacher, **JUDY REEVES**, spent 10 years working as a medical technologist before earning a master's degree in education and accepting her first teaching position at Daphne High School in 1992. Reeves feels, keeping students active and involved in the learning process is the key to her teaching success. "We have developed an outdoor learning center on my campus, and we now have a four-acre outdoor classroom and arboretum with trails, ponds, and class-seating areas," she said. "My students have hosted fourth- and fifth-grade students from four schools in our community at all-day environmental science field trips at our state parks. This year, we have begun an aquascience service learning project in which my students will grow Gamusia, mosquito larvae-eating minnows, to distribute to county residents."



BRENDA SULLIVAN

TEACHER OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY

Sparkman High School, Madison County Schools, State Board of Education District 8

BRENDA SULLIVAN, a chemistry teacher at Sparkman High School in the Madison County School System, is the Teacher of the Month for January.

A teacher for 18 years, Sullivan believes that an effective teacher is one that is caring and responsive to the needs of the students and understands the background of their students. "Teachers must be able to monitor their students effectively. By varying instructional methods and assessments, a teacher will be able to develop a complete portfolio of the student."

Sullivan, who is a National Board Certified Teacher, is the recipient of several awards and recognitions and since 2001 has served as the Science Department Chairperson at her school.

Both teachers receive \$1,000 from Alfa Insurance each, and their schools will receive a matching award from the Alabama Farmers Federation.

Note: During 2005, Alfa Insurance and the Alabama Farmers Federation will honor one outstanding teacher from each of Alabama's eight state school board districts as well as two private school teachers and two principals. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.



JUDY REEVES

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

The Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowships are for distinguished elementary and secondary school mathematics and science teachers. Einstein Fellows usually serve for 10 months in professional staff positions in a Congressional Office or federal agency. Contact Todd Clark at (202) 586-7174 or [CLICK HERE](#). **Deadline: Feb. 1**

The Beyond School Hours VIII: The Power of Partnerships Conference will be held in Atlanta, GA Feb. 16-19. The conference will focus on quality after-school programs. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

The No Child Left Behind Toolkit for Teachers includes guidance on the law and how it supports teachers and schools. [CLICK HERE](#) to order a free copy or [CLICK HERE](#) to download a copy.

Teacher-to-Teacher e-Learning links educators to a collection of U.S. Department of Education summer workshop videos. [CLICK HERE](#) to access.

AWARD AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Toyota Tapestry Grants for Teachers are for K-12 science teachers who make science come alive in the classroom. Fifty grants of up to \$10,000 each and a minimum of 20 mini-grants of \$2,500 each will be awarded. [CLICK HERE](#) for registration information. **Deadline: Jan. 19**

The MindOH! Foundation's fourth annual Character's Cool Contest is a national online contest to help middle and high school students reflect on what it means to have good character. To enter, [CLICK HERE](#). **Deadline: Jan. 31**

The Toshiba/National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) Exploravision Awards are open to K-12 students who combine their imaginations with science tools to create and explore a vision of future technology. [CLICK HERE](#) or call 800-EXPLOR-9 for competition information. **Deadline: Feb. 1**

The Roswell Park Cancer Institute 53rd Annual Summer Research Participation Program is for high school juniors who are interested in a career in scientific research. The program will be offered June 27-Aug. 11 in Buffalo, NY. To apply, [CLICK HERE](#). **Deadline: Feb. 15**

TSUNAMIS' DEVASTATION SWALLOWS UP CHILDREN



Island of Sumatra

News reports continue to flood in describing the horrific aftermath and destruction following a 9.0 magnitude underwater earthquake and Indian Ocean tsunamis affecting areas from South and Southeast Asia to East Africa on Dec. 26. Hardest hit are the coastlines of India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand where over 150,000 people are reported dead, more than 90,000 alone in Indonesia, and thousands more missing.

Unfortunately, many of the casualties were children, whose island villages were totally annihilated. Some of the children surviving are without their parents and homes. Roads, bridges, homes, schools, hospitals, and resorts were completely wiped out leaving survivors with nothing. In Sri Lanka, approximately 200 of the island's 9,970 schools were destroyed or seriously damaged and many schools left standing are being

used as relief shelters. Teachers there are holding outdoor classes under shade trees. In Banda Aceh, on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, at least 1,000 teachers are reported missing and over 50 percent of school buildings have been destroyed, leaving 160,000 students without a place to study. Health concerns are immediate as countries from across the globe are offering assistance, including the United States.

How can educators explain this tragedy to their students? Also, how can Alabama schools help victims rebuild their lives and communities?

PRESIDENT BUSH has asked the entire country to "step up" and do whatever can be done to aid those in need in that devastated part of the world.

Listed below are several online resources teachers may find useful in the classroom when talking about the disaster and investigating ways to help. 🍏

Regional Newspapers

www.theacademic.org

www.thejakartapost.com/headlines.asp

www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com

Charitable Organizations

www.christianchildrensfund.org

www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf

www.savethechildren.org/

International Organizations

www.unicef.org

www.youthink.worldbank.org

U.S. Assistance

www.usaid.gov/locations/asia_near_east/tsunami

www.usafreedomcorps.gov

www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/tsunami