

# ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

NEWS AND ISSUES IN ALABAMA PUBLIC EDUCATION, K-12

MARCH 2005

## WHAT'S INSIDE ...

- Alabama Reading Initiative
- Board Briefs
- Good News
- Arts Education Month
- Highly Qualified Teachers

## Reading Is Fundamental



By the 2005-2006 school year there will be 724 ARI schools in Alabama, encompassing all but approximately 150 K-3 grade schools statewide!



Often it is said that reading is fundamental. With this in mind, recent reports show Alabama's public school children are laying a solid foundation upon which to build their educational future. The latest Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) evaluations indicate public schools in Alabama are showing dramatic increases in reading proficiency.

In fact, since the implementation of ARI in various Alabama schools, reading scores have soared and schools practicing ARI have consistently outperformed non-ARI schools every year. Ultimately, the goal of ARI is to significantly improve reading instruction and achieve 100 percent literacy among all public school students; that goal is coming closer to fruition every year.

**STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOSEPH B. MORTON** believes reading is the cornerstone of all education. He said the implementation and continued funding of ARI is sending a crystal clear message about Alabama's commitment to its children – to its future. "Alabama is making a statewide, national, and even international declaration that we are serious and fully committed to expecting and to helping every student perform, at a minimum, on grade level," Morton said.

The success of ARI and the Alabama Reading First Initiative (ARFI), a similar but federally funded program started in the 2003-04 school year, is evidence of the programs' ability to circumvent socio-economic barriers and reach each student, regardless of their circumstances. Morton said the results being yielded by ARI schools are extremely persuasive evidence of the effectiveness and necessity of the ARI. "During my entire career, I have not seen another education program that is this effective," Morton said. "I believe every elementary school should be involved in the ARI."

An important aspect of the ARI program is not only the increased reading proficiency, but the consistency of the reading ability in students as they move to higher grades. Since the

implementation of the program in 1998-1999, the first 16 schools have continued to show greater gain on all measures than do non-ARI schools over the same period of time, again reflecting the stability of the early reading foundations laid by ARI. Schools all across Alabama have seen quantum leaps in reading performance.

At the ARI's core is the commitment to equip teachers to apply proven and effective methods of teaching all students to read well. In non-ARI schools, the percentage of struggling readers has remained consistent, while schools implementing ARI practices have shown a significant decrease in struggling readers. Considerable reductions in discipline and special education referrals have been reported in ARI schools as well – 67 and 28 percent respectively, over a two-year period. The effectiveness of the initiative is clear. As Alabama moves towards its objective of having safe and disciplined schools, quality teachers, challenging curricula, and effective school leaders, initiatives like ARI and ARFI help break through one of the most basic barriers at the earliest stages of a student's academic development.

Morton believes the ARI works. He is expecting every school, even those that have had legitimate reasons in the past, to come into the fold of the ARI. "There's no child who doesn't deserve for his/her school leaders to step up and take on the intensive training necessary to qualify as a Reading Initiative school," Morton stated. "To not step up suggests their students don't need to read. We're not going to accept that." Morton explained that the ARI began on a volunteer basis; however, it will become mandatory for every school to fall in line. "They're all coming in," Morton said. 🍏

[CLICK HERE  
to view  
DIBELS data.](#)

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### STATE PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS FINALISTS HONORED

Six Alabama teachers were honored by the Alabama Board of Education as 2004 state finalists for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching during the Board's monthly K-12 board meeting in Montgomery on Feb. 10.

#### **MATHEMATICS FINALISTS ARE (L TO R):**

**Brenda Hancock, Clay Elementary School, Jefferson County Schools**  
**Rhonda McCary, Louis Pizitz Middle School, Vestavia Hills City Schools**  
**Kathy Snyder, Riverchase Elementary School, Hoover City Schools**



#### **SCIENCE FINALISTS ARE (L TO R):**

**Sandy J. Ledwell, Collins Elementary School, Scottsboro City Schools**  
**Linda K. Jones, Fairhope Elementary School, Baldwin County Schools**  
**Shirley Farrell, Clay Elementary School, Jefferson County Schools**



"These awards are among the nation's highest honors for K-12 math and science teachers and it gives me great pleasure to know these six outstanding teachers are in our classrooms preparing students for future endeavors," said **STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOSEPH B. MORTON**. "More needs to be accomplished. Increased funding is needed for statewide implementation of the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) to further allow all Alabama students the opportunities of gaining knowledge in these subject areas."

One mathematics teacher and one science teacher will be selected from each of the fifty states for the Presidential Awardee distinction. The White House will announce the nation's Presidential Awardees in March. [CLICK HERE](#) for more details.

### READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY

## ALABAMA CELEBRATES DR. SEUSS'S 101ST BIRTHDAY

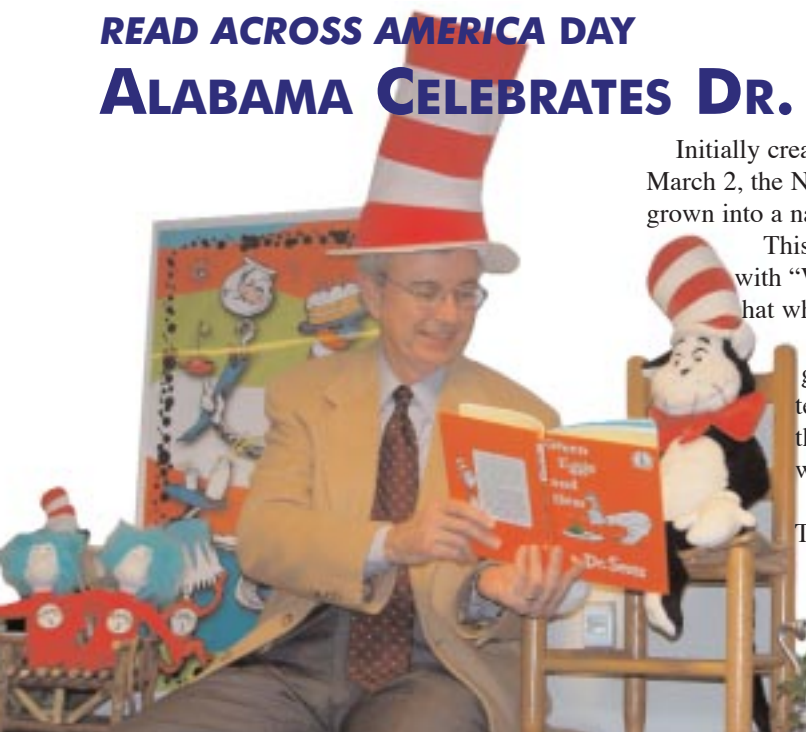
Initially created as a one-day event to celebrate reading on Dr. Seuss's birthday, March 2, the National Education Association's *Read Across America* event, has grown into a nationwide initiative that promotes reading every day.

This year students and teachers across Alabama and the nation celebrated with "Where it's Hat," donning that famous red and white striped reading hat while having fun with Dr. Seuss books.

Even Alabama's Superintendent of Education **DR. JOE MORTON** got into the "Hat" act and read aloud to 80 first graders and teachers from Montgomery's Morningview Elementary School in the Rotunda of the Gordon Persons Building in Montgomery, where state education offices are located.

Morton read, "I do so like green eggs and ham! Thank you! Thank you, Sam-I-Am!"

To view *Read Across America* photos, visit our online edition. 🍎





# BOARD BRIEFS

## FEBRUARY AGENDA ITEMS:

- ✍ *Allen v. Board of Education* Case Update
- ✍ Passed Resolution Commending Robert L. Morton for Dedicated Service to Public Education in the State of Alabama
- ✍ Passed Resolution Supporting U.S. Space and Rocket Center Space Camp and Aviation Challenge Programs
- ✍ Passed Resolution in Recognition of the Department of Special Education for Huntsville City Schools and the Huntsville Center for Technology
- ✍ Passed Resolutions Commending Kathy Snyder, Brenda Hancock, and Rhonda McCary as 2004 Mathematics Presidential Award Finalists
- ✍ Passed Resolutions Commending Linda K. Jones, Sandy J. Ledwell, and Shirley Jean Farrell as 2004 Science Presidential Award Finalists
- ✍ Passed Resolution in Recognition of the 2005 Annual State Superintendent's Visual Arts Exhibit
- ✍ Passed Resolution in Recognition of March 2005 as "Arts Education Month" in Alabama Schools
- ✍ Passed Resolution in Recognition of Jefferson County International Baccalaureate School as a World Leader in Advanced Placement Achievement
- ✍ Passed Resolution for Adoption of Science State Course of Study
- ✍ Approved Appointment, 2005-06 State Textbook Committee – Science
- ✍ Announced Intent to Repeal and Adopt New *Alabama Administrative Code* Chapter Pertaining to Teacher Education
- ✍ Accepted Statewide Committee to Review the State of Health of America's Youth with Particular Emphasis on Alabama's Youth Report and Approved Development of Implementation Guidelines
- ✍ Authorized Review of a Teacher Education Program, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa
- ✍ Approved Appointment of Craig Pouncey to Assistant Superintendent of Education for Administration and Finance

## STATE BIDS FAREWELL TO DEDICATED FRIEND OF EDUCATION

### Former Crenshaw Co. Superintendent Takes On Role

**H**aving worn many hats in his lifetime, Robert L. Morton will now wear the most well-deserved hat, a hat of retirement. Mr. Morton was appointed Alabama Department of Education Assistant State Superintendent for Administrative and Financial Services in November of 1999, following stints as a teacher, coach, principal, assistant superintendent, and local superintendent.



Robert Morton and wife Martha look on as State Superintendent Dr. Joseph B. Morton prepares to present the State Board of Education resolution.

A State Board of Education resolution presented to Mr. Morton on Feb. 10 reads, "during his tenure with the Alabama Department of Education, Robert L. Morton was most effective in reestablishing financial stability and sound accountability standards in local school systems under state financial intervention, as well as providing needed services to numerous local school systems in order to prevent financial intervention. Robert L. Morton has provided untiring financial leadership to Alabama's public schools through some of the state's most fiscally difficult times, including proration."



Craig Pouncey  
Assistant State Superintendent  
for Administrative and Financial Services

In addition to his career in education, Mr. Morton served his country valiantly as a First Lieutenant in the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam and is the recipient of two bronze stars for Valor in Combat and a Combat Infantryman's Badge.

Following Mr. Morton's retirement, the Alabama Board of Education unanimously appointed **CRAIG POUNCEY** as Assistant State Superintendent for Administrative and Financial Services during its regular K-12 meeting on Feb. 10. In recommending Pouncey's appointment, **STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOSEPH B. MORTON** said, "Craig has all the right experience and brings all the right ingredients to the table. His experience at the local school, system, and state level is invaluable. I highly recommend his appointment, and I know he will do an honorable job for this board,

the department, and our state."

Pouncey filled the position on an interim basis in December, already providing leadership and direction for many programs in the division as well as assisting with matters related to legislation.

Before coming to the Alabama Department of Education in 2003 as Director of Administrative and Financial Services, Pouncey served as superintendent of the Crenshaw County School system for nine years.

As Assistant State Superintendent for Administrative and Financial Services, Pouncey's responsibilities include funding and accountability, information systems, child nutrition, purchasing, transportation, school facilities, technology, and consolidated monitoring. 🍏

## AWARD WINNERS

### DIVISION 7-8 CATEGORY I

Fallon Crowe – Jefferson County Schools  
Lin Phillips, teacher  
Jennifer Lewis – Shelby County Schools  
Diane Epperson, teacher  
Ann Catherine Carter, Mt. Brook City School  
Judith Nelson, teacher

### HONORABLE MENTION

Anel Vergara – Auburn City Schools  
Betsy Logan, teacher  
Tevin Drake – Opelika City Schools  
Stuart Daniel, teacher

### CATEGORY II

Katelin Gray – Guntersville City Schools  
Val Jones, teacher

### DIVISION 9-10 CATEGORY I

Ian Whitley – Alabama School of Fine Arts  
Dan McCurdy, teacher  
Jasmine Higbee – Alabama School of Fine Arts  
Cumbie Tyndal, teacher  
Kathryn Beck – Montgomery County Schools (MPS)  
Sally Chambliss, teacher

### HONORABLE MENTION

Michael Bridges – Alabama School of Fine Arts  
Randy Gachet, teacher  
Will Piskorz – Scottsboro City Schools  
Angel Chaney, teacher

### CATEGORY II

Zac Henderson – Auburn City Schools  
Betsy Logan, teacher  
Wesley Brown – Guntersville City Schools  
Val Jones, teacher  
Austin Monceret – Hoover City Schools  
Erik Myers, teacher

### HONORABLE MENTION

Tyler Crenshaw – Madison County Schools  
Erik Mittman, teacher  
Leesha Cassidy – Montgomery County Schools (MPS)  
Andy Meadows, teacher

### DIVISION 11-12 CATEGORY I

Alison Fain – Madison City Schools  
Melissa Hughey, teacher  
Andrew Holiday – Opelika City Schools  
Jeff Conway, teacher  
Sam Porter – Shelby County Schools  
Max Newton, teacher

### HONORABLE MENTION

Drew Botts – Madison City Schools  
Melissa Hughey, teacher  
Morgan Pier – Florence City Schools  
Jerry Foster, teacher

### CATEGORY II

Tess Henshaw – Hoover City Schools  
Ben Riggsby, teacher  
Tamar Valentine – Scottsboro City Schools  
Angel Chaney, teacher  
Jennifer Hoots – Montgomery County Schools (MPS)  
Andy Meadows, teacher

### HONORABLE MENTION

Dallas Holmes – Jefferson County Schools  
Rick Moncrief, teacher



What better month to begin revising the Alabama Arts Course of Study than Arts Education Month? Members of the Arts Education Course of Study Committee have been meeting to revise the document currently used by the state's 492 public school art teachers. The committee consists of classroom teachers, counselors, arts educators, artists, administrators, and community arts advocates, and provides a solid foundation for local boards of education to build comprehensive, sequential, and developmentally appropriate arts programs. The committee's new document will be introduced to the state Board of Education in its 2006 January work session with hopes for adoption in February.

An art education program is an essential component of a student's education. The addition of content standards in Dance and Theatre to those of Music and Visual Arts broadens the base from which educators can develop arts-literate students and, therefore, enhance the quality of life for Alabama's citizens. Incorporating the national arts education standards, the *Alabama Course of Study: Arts Education* provides rigorous standards for students in Grades K-12. Research related to effective schools indicates an important element in improving education is having clearly defined standards that make it possible to develop rigorous local curricula and valid, reliable assessments. (1998, *Alabama Course of Study: Arts Education*)

### AWARD-WINNING YOUNG ALABAMA ARTISTS

The Best of Show winner in the 2005 State Superintendent's Visual Arts Exhibit was recognized along with other award winners during the Arts Awards luncheon at the Capital City Club in Montgomery on Feb. 10. **ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ARTS SPECIALIST SARA WRIGHT**, who heads the annual event, presented **AMBRICE MILLER**, a senior at the Alabama School of Fine Arts, her award describing the winning entry as "A mixed media drawing that is untitled, based on a series of paintings for her senior thesis."



Winner Ambrice Miller is pictured with her instructor Darius Hill, Visual Arts Department Chair.

Wright thanked and acknowledged other winners and arts lovers for their participation and support.

Artwork entries were received from over 470 K-12 students from across the state in this year's event, now in its 27th year. Each school system was encouraged to submit student artwork in each of the two categories for each grade division.





# Education Month

**N**aomi Wolf, a senior at the Alabama School of Fine Arts, has been named one of 50 young artists eligible to be selected as a Presidential Scholar in the Arts as part of the 2005 Presidential Scholars Program. Fifty arts candidates were selected for their exceptional performance in the disciplines of dance, film/video, instrumental music, jazz, voice, photography, theater, visual arts, and creative writing. Naomi was selected for her submission of original poetry in the creative writing category.

Candidates were nominated from



**NAOMI WOLF**



over 6,500 participants in the annual Arts Recognition and Talent Search conducted by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts. The Commission on Presidential Scholars, a group of 32 eminent citizens appointed by the President, will select the finalists, and the U.S. Department of Education will announce the scholars in May. Scholars will be invited to Washington D.C., for several days in June to receive the Presidential Scholars medallion at a recognition ceremony

*STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER:  
Dr. Ethel H. Hall, District 4  
ALABAMA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS  
SUPERINTENDENT: John Northrop*

**T**he taste of victory was sweet for members of the Baldwin County High School Choir after they grabbed top honors at the Presidential Inaugural Heritage Musical Festival held at the University of Maryland on Jan 14. Fifty choirs from across the nation competed in the contest, which was open by invitation only. Students from the



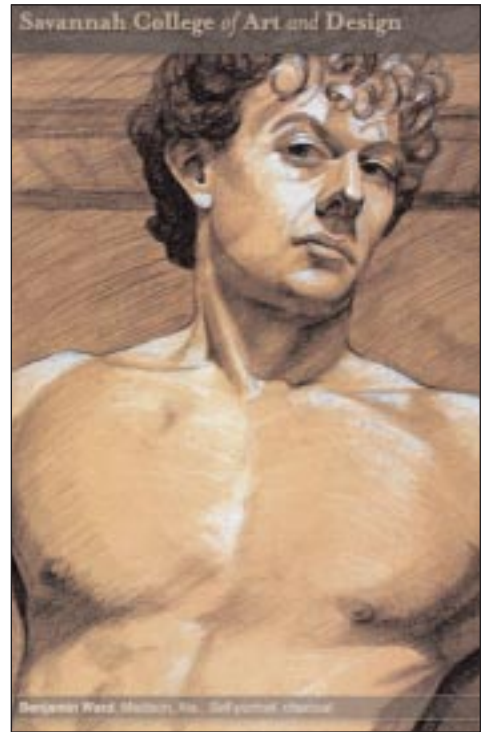
ensemble and concert choir groups won six awards according to school choir director **SANDRA BROCK**. The 10th-through 12th-graders in the ensemble group received a gold award and recognition as the most outstanding choral group of the festival. The concert group, consisting of ninth- through 12th-graders, received a silver award. Additionally, the school was recognized with a sweepstakes award for its command of several categories.

*STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER:  
Randy McKinney, District 1  
BALDWIN COUNTY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT:  
Dr. Faron Hollinger  
BALDWIN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL:  
Eddie Mitchell*

## THE IMPACT OF THE ARTS IN SCHOOLS

**T**here really is no question exposure to the arts enhances learning and helps prepare young people for future endeavors. Three former Bob Jones High School students are living proof their involvement in arts programs while in school helped spur their careers in the adult world.

Ben Ward, Siram Bhat, and Michael Porten were all best friends while at Bob Jones, serving as encouragers and



The illustration on the left by Porten won first place in the Savannah Music Festival poster competition. On right, Savannah College of Art and Design Magazine cover by Benjamin Ward, Madison, Ala., *Self Portrait*, charcoal

competitors for each other. Art was and is their life. According to Bob Jones art teacher **MELISSA HUGHEY**, they are truly examples of the impact an art program can have on the lives of students. "These three have not only found success in their lives but also serve as role models for my current students. The guys always come back to school when they are home, show their current work, and talk to students about college," said Hughey.

Ward and Bhat, both 2001 Bob Jones graduates, are currently seniors at the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD). Ward studied at the Florence Academy of Art in Florence, Italy, last summer. Bhat and Porten are the concept artists and illustrators on a short animated film, which is being considered to run before one of the next big animation movies.

Porten, a 2000 Bob Jones graduate who graduated from SCAD last year, is currently a free-lance illustrator in Savannah. Additionally, his award-winning portfolio has been requested by the *New Yorker* magazine.

(Continued on next page.)

(Continued from Page 5.)

**T**eaching at-risk students through the arts helps children develop important skills and traits such as coordination, concentration, self-control, and self-esteem. A program in Montgomery, designed to provide personal development and involve parental participation, using the art of dance is becoming very popular.

About 58 students from T.S. Morris and E.D. Nixon Elementary Schools attend ballet classes every Wednesday at Loveless Academic Magnet Program through the Academy of Performing Arts. The program, sponsored by Strategies to Elevate People (STEP), is partly funded from a Safe and Drug-Free Schools grant from the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs because the girls are also taught an anti-drug curriculum focusing on good health and hygiene habits.

The young ballerinas, instructed by **HOLLE SMITH** and **JENNIFER JONES** of the Montgomery Ballet, perform in



recitals and programs at other schools, giving family members opportunities to watch and assist in dance productions. Additionally, a grant from the Working

Woman's Home Association in Montgomery allowed 15 girls the unique opportunity of rehearsing with the Montgomery Ballet. 🍏

## Reading Is Fundamental

(Continued from Page 1.)

### THE FOLLOWING ARE A FEW STELLAR EXAMPLES OF ALABAMA READING INITIATIVE SCHOOLS:

At **SOUTHSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE DALLAS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**, 97 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals (an indicator of poverty), yet it **RANKS THIRD IN THE STATE (GRADES K-2 TESTED) IN READING PROFICIENCY** and **HAS 91 PERCENT OF ALL STUDENTS READING AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL.**

At **CALCEDEAVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN THE MOBILE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**, 90 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals, yet it **RANKS 16TH IN THE STATE IN READING PROFICIENCY**, with **100 PERCENT OF THE FIRST- AND SECOND-GRADE STUDENTS READING AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL.**

At **BREWTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN THE BREWTON CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM**, 44 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals, yet it **RANKS SIXTH IN THE STATE IN READING PROFICIENCY** and has **91 PERCENT OF ITS K-3 GRADE STUDENTS READING AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL.**

At **G.W. WATTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN THE WILCOX COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**, 98.94 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals, yet it **RANKS 13TH IN THE STATE IN READING PROFICIENCY** and has **88.3 PERCENT OF ITS K-3 GRADE STUDENTS READING AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL.**



# TEACHER OF THE MONTH FOR MARCH

*Mountain Brook High School, Jefferson County Schools  
State School Board District VI*

A Mountain Brook theater arts teacher, Patricia Yates, has been named Alfa Teacher of the Month for March. Yates will receive \$1,000 from Alfa Insurance Company and her school, Mountain Brook High School, will receive a matching award from the Alabama Farmers Federation.

Yates, a graduate of Florence State University, has been teaching for 32 years. Her students work together to write and produce plays as well as critique the works of others. One of her students' most involved productions was a play examining the Holocaust through the eyes of the Terezin Ghetto children. Students at Mountain Brook and Thompson High Schools - where Yates was formerly employed were responsible for researching and producing the drama.

During 2005, the Alfa Teacher of the Month program will honor one teacher from each of Alabama's eight state school board districts as well as two private school teachers and two principals. 🍏



PATRICIA YATES

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

**The 87th Annual Alabama PTA Convention** will be held Apr. 29-30 in Mobile. For further information, [CLICK HERE](#).

**The 2005 Alabama Educational Technology (AETC) Conference – Classrooms: Then and Now** will be held June 15-17 at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex. For further information, call 850-906-0099 or [CLICK HERE](#).

**The 2005 Mega Conference – Teaching With One Voice** will be held July 19-22 in Mobile. For conference information, contact Hubert Staley at the Alabama Department of Education at 334-242-8114 or visit [CLICK HERE](#).

**Pre-registration Deadline: Apr. 29**

## AWARDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

**The Panasonic Academic Challenge** is a national high school competition which awards scholarships to winning teams. This year's event will be held at Disney World in Orlando, June 18-21. For more information, contact Peggy B. Harrod at 863-968-5168 or [CLICK HERE](#), or to visit the Web site, [CLICK HERE](#).

**The Technology Opportunities Program** promotes the widespread availability and use of advanced telecommunications technologies demonstrating how networks support lifelong learning for all Americans. \$12.4 million is available to schools. For more information, call 202-482-2048 or [CLICK HERE](#). **Deadline: Apr. 27**

**The Computers for Learning (CFL)** program provides schools with free, available computer equipment. Federal agencies and private sector entities transfer unneeded computers and related equipment to schools while giving special consideration to those with the greatest need. To find out how to participate in CFL, [CLICK HERE](#).

**Teachers and Students are SURVIVORS on DIBELS Island**



Perhaps one of the greatest challenges teachers face is getting students to “put their best foot forward” when taking tests. In this case the challenge was to motivate students to do their best on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, an aptitude test referred to as DIBELS.

Frances Nungester Elementary School reading coach **NIKKI HAWKINS** designed a strategy, which she based on the popular television reality show “Survivor,” to get students to put forth their best efforts. Hawkins decided to challenge her students to strive their hardest on DIBELS by using a team-based approach complete with themes, slogans, class banners, costumes, and pep rallies. Hawkins encouraged fellow teachers to give their classes tribe names and have them wear colorful bandanas like some of the contestants on “Survivor.” Hawkins hopes the learning environment created by having a little friendly competition will help improve her school’s reading scores.

For the 2004-2005 school year, 7,113 schools are actively using the DIBELS Data System, across 2,234 districts in 49 states and Canada, totaling over 1.5 million students (K-3).

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER: David Byers, District 6**  
**DECATUR CITY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT: Dr. Sam Houston**  
**FRANCES NUNGESTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL: Cheryl Bowman**

**High School Students HIP-HOP Their Way to Healthcare Issues**



Turn on the tunes, pump up the volume, and get-down with your bad self...Okay, the verbage is a little out of date, but, nevertheless, you get the point, right? It seems Limestone County High School juniors and seniors took a turn on the floor, the hospital floor that is, during the Athens-Limestone Hospital education department’s Healthcare In Progress – Hospital Orientation Program Day or “Hip-Hop Day” on Jan. 12.

Forty-seven students from the Healthcare Science class at the Limestone County Career Technical Education Center in Athens learned about current healthcare issues from hospital staff and toured the hospital in preparation for their clinical rotations which began in February. Healthcare science teacher **JILL ADAMS** felt the trip would help emphasize new standards added to the Alabama Course of Study in Healthcare Science and give students a new “spin” on things by offering hands-on opportunities in an actual working hospital.

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER: Dr. Mary Jane Caylor, District 8**  
**LIMESTONE COUNTY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT: Dr. Barry Carroll**  
**LIMESTONE COUNTY CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER**  
**DIRECTOR: Aubrey Privett**

**Selma Opens First Early College High School in State**



Story submitted by: Lynn Henderson, Public Relations and Attendance Supervisor, Selma City Schools

Selma City Schools hosted a dedication ceremony and reception on Feb. 25 to announce the opening of the Selma Early College High School. The entire day was set aside by the City of Selma to introduce the school to the community, welcome partners, and celebrate the new high school that exists because of a Selma City Schools partnership with SECME, Wallace Community College Selma, Tuskegee University, and Alabama State University.

The Selma Early College High School received \$400,000 from SECME to develop the school with curriculum delivered jointly by the school system, college, and university partners. Ninth-graders enrolled in Selma Early College High School will graduate with a high school diploma and with a two-year college degree. The new school boasts 95 students who receive rigorous and innovative high school/college instruction in small, personalized, and unconventional settings. The curriculum focuses on agriculture, agri-business, agri-science, and ag-engineering utilizing partnerships with the U. S. Department of Agriculture and other industry and government partners to develop a strong curriculum that provides students with the necessary preparation and an unobstructed path to the workforce.

SECME was funded by the Bill Gates Foundation, in partnership with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

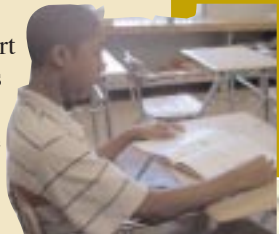
[CLICK HERE](#) for more information. To date, Selma High is the only school in Alabama to have been designated an Early College High School by SECME.

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER: Ella Bell, District 5**  
**SELMA CITY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT: Dr. James Carter**  
**PRINCIPAL: Joe James Paterson, Jr.**



Middle School Principal Feels Latin Helps Students Grasp Other Studies

**B**ack in the dark ages when **CHAPMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL WALKER MCGINNIS** attended high school, he had a hard time understanding English grammar. Frustrated, he decided to take desperate measures and take Latin to help him connect words and cases. Apparently his plan worked. McGinnis went on to major in English, become a teacher, and, as principal, has made Latin a part of the curriculum at his school. “I tell students that they use Latin everyday, such as in letter writing,” said McGinnis “That prompts them to question how and why, opening up a fun learning experience. Our sixth- and seventh-graders take Latin etymology as part of their language arts program, and I feel this introduction may prompt students to go ahead and take the Latin course we offer in the eighth grade.” McGinnis also believes understanding Latin roots, suffixes, and prefixes can help increase students’ vocabulary, which can lead to higher standardized test scores.



Students electing to take Latin in the eighth grade are accepted upon recommendations from teachers and must be approved by the principal, following a parental discussion. McGinnis went on to say the Latin instructor, **SUE FARBMAN**, also visits two other schools in the system daily, but challenges students with fun and exciting methods of learning what many call “the dead language.”  
**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER: Dr. Mary Jane Caylor, District 8**  
**HUNTSVILLE CITY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT: Dr. Ann Roy Moore**  
**CHAPMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL: Walker McGinnis**



Murphy High School is “Doing Things Right”

**M**obile’s Murphy High School is one of only ten high schools in the nation cited as “doing things right” in a landmark study by ACT and The Education Trust. The study – *On Course for Success* – focuses on high-performing, diversely populated schools that provide students with high-level courses, qualified teachers, flexible teaching styles, and extra tutorial support. It defines the specific rigorous academic skills that need to be taught in English, math, and science courses for high school graduates to be ready for college and work.

Murphy High School was selected for this landmark study as one of nine U.S. high schools already meeting high standards, overcoming the odds, and producing a higher than average proportion of graduates who are ready for college based on ACT’s College Readiness Benchmarks. The other eight high schools were located in Illinois, Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wisconsin. The tenth school, located in Ohio, was selected to represent high schools that score at the top of ACT Assessment results regardless of student population.  
**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER: Randy McKinney, District 1**  
**MOBILE COUNTY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT: Dr. Harold Dodge**  
**MURPHY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL: Doug Estle**



Students Step Up to the Plate to Learn Math


**B**atter Up! is a phrase often heard on the baseball diamond, but for students in **YVETTE AKRIDGE’S** algebra class at Carroll High School, it took on a whole new meaning. Thanks to the technology in Carroll High School’s new Distance Learning Lab, students participated in a virtual field trip to the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY, recently. The class explored how common mathematical concepts such as addition, subtraction, fractions, and decimals apply to baseball and the real world. They analyzed baseball statistics with the help of a Hall of Fame representative and interpreted data in terms of fundamental mathematical operations. The students’ first impressions were “Oh, no, not another boring field trip,” but by the end of the hour, the students were begging to stay and play. Several students commented, “The baseball project was a great way to make math fun,” and “It showed how math is important in our daily lives.” All in all it was an amazing experience for everyone involved.

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER: Betty Peters, District 2**  
**OZARK CITY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT: Dr. Dan Payant**  
**CARROLL HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL: Laura McBride**




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

# MARCH



	ARTS EDUCATION MONTH	5
	NAT'L NUTRITION MONTH	
2	Read Across America Day	
6-17	Alabama High School Graduation Exam Administration	
13	English Language Acquisition Test Administration	
7-4/15	Alabama Alternate Assessment Administration	
20	Alabama Board of Education Meeting	
14	Pi Day	
27	Alabama Board of Education Work Session	

# APRIL



	MATH AWARENESS MONTH	2
	CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH	
2	Kick Butts Day – Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids	
3-9	Stanford 10 & Alabama Reading and Math Test Administrations	
10-11	Alabama Board of Education Meeting	
17-24	National Library Week	
22	Earth Day	
28	Alabama Board of Education Work Session (Monroeville)	
24-30	87th Annual Alabama PTA Convention	



## ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

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### Alabama Board of Education Members

Gov. Bob Riley, President

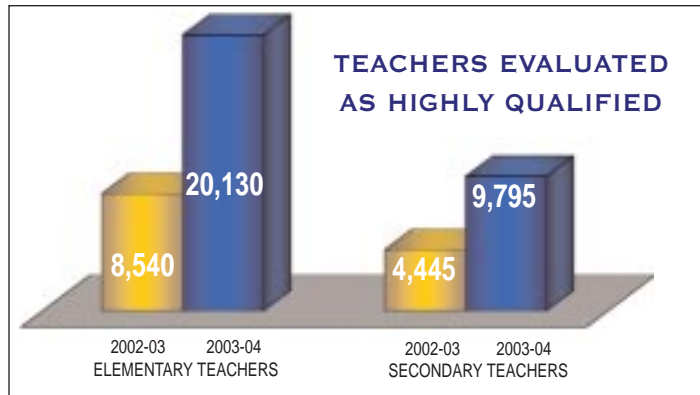
- Dist. 1 - Randy McKinney, Gulf Shores
- Dist. 2 - Betty Peters, Dothan
- Dist. 3 - Stephanie W. Bell, Montgomery
- Dist. 4 - Ethel H. Hall, V.P. Emerita, Fairfield
- Dist. 5 - Ella B. Bell, Montgomery
- Dist. 6 - David F. Byers Jr., Birmingham
- Dist. 7 - Sandra Ray, Pres. Pro Tem, Tuscaloosa
- Dist.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

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

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# HOORAY FOR HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

Alabama Department of Education  
Highly Qualified Teachers-All Schools  
2003-2004  
Final Report  
12/28/2004



Category	TOTAL TEACHERS		Teachers Evaluated as HQT		Teachers Not HQT or Not Evaluated to Date		Current Percent of HQT	
	2002-03	2003-04	2002-03	2003-04	2002-03	2003-04	2002-03	2003-04
Total Elementary Teachers	23,464	25,359	8,540	20,130	14,924	5,229	36.4%	79.4%
Total Secondary Teachers	14,323	14,496	4,445	9,795	9,878	4,701	31.0%	67.6%
<b>TOTAL TEACHERS</b>	<b>37,787</b>	<b>39,855</b>	<b>12,985</b>	<b>29,925</b>	<b>24,802</b>	<b>9,930</b>	<b>34.4%</b>	<b>75.1%</b>

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