

PAGE ONE

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MAGAZINE

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GEORGIA EDUCATORS

A photograph of a woman with brown hair, wearing a purple floral dress, smiling and gesturing with her hands as if speaking to a group of students. She is in a classroom setting with bookshelves filled with books in the background. Some of the books have titles like 'SAT I', 'SAT II', and 'SAT III'. There are also posters on the wall, including one that says 'United States Navy' and another that says 'RAISED'.

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The articles published in each issue of *PAGE ONE Magazine* represent the views of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of PAGE, except where clearly stated.

You are invited to submit articles dealing with current education issues. The editor reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of articles for publication. Articles may be edited to meet space requirements. Georgia educators are encouraged to submit photographs for use as the cover for *PAGE ONE Magazine* and other photographs to illustrate story subjects. Send manuscripts and photographs to: Tim Callahan, Editor, *PAGE ONE Magazine*; PAGE; P.O. Box 942270; Atlanta, GA 31141-2270.

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FROM THE

PRESIDENT

Why Do You Teach?

BY PRESTON HOWARD

Have you ever noticed when a group of people get together that the topic of conversation inevitably turns to what you do for a living? What we do for a living is so important that nearly every initial meeting with another person is spent finding out the other person's occupation.

Certain occupations seem to be more prestigious than others. Doctors seem to have more prestige than most professionals. As a result of 9/11 police and firefighters are held in higher esteem. They are doing what they have always done; we just understand more clearly now how courageous those men and women are.

I began wondering where teachers rank on the prestige scale. According to a Harris Poll conducted in 2000, doctors have the greatest prestige of 16 rated professions, followed by scientists at number two and teachers at number three. That same poll concluded that teachers had the greatest gain in prestige of the other rated professions, 53 percent in 2000 versus 27 percent in 1977.

So how do people respond when you tell them you are a teacher? Do you get that look that says, "Oh, you poor thing"? Do people say to you, "I really admire your dedication" while the look in their eyes says, "You've got to be crazy"? What do people actually think about teachers and teaching as a career? Does it matter what people think of teachers as professionals? I think that prestige does matter.

Prestige matters when the next generation of students begins to make their decisions about their future careers. Just as teaching as a career is dependent on students walking through the schoolhouse doors, so is the concept of the teaching professional dependent upon prospective candidates choosing teaching as a career instead of entering other professions.

This is important because teaching is a profession that requires not only academic competence but also exceptional human relations skills and a commitment to teach every child regardless of background. If we are going to get excellent people to enter the profession and remain for a career, the value of a teacher and the importance of education to the continued strength and prosperity of our nation must be recognized.

I think that on some levels we do recognize the importance of the teaching profession. However, that message is sometimes drowned out by controversy. Teaching, more than most other professions, has seen its share of controversy regarding methods and outcomes. Some of it has been self-inflicted as we articulated our favorite methodologies and promoted our content areas. However, in many instances, these legitimate professional differences have been sensationalized by the media and used by some politicians and special interest groups as indicators that we don't have an answer to the question, "Why can't Johnny read?"

You know, we do have an answer for that question. It is usually written in our school handbooks and on the posters and blackboards of most of the classrooms in this state. The answer is very simple—send your child to school every day, on time; teach your child to be respectful of others and to obey the school rules; make sure your child brings a pencil or pen, paper, and his/her books to class every day; homework should be done when assigned; and finally, when your child is disciplined at school, support your school staff. When I was a kid, I did not have a problem with any teacher. I thought I did but my parents told me I didn't.

Many elementary school teachers lament the lack of preparation of children when they first enter school. Too many of our children are antisocial and lack in manners and respect for authority. Reform efforts that penalize teachers for low-performing students with high absentee rates, excessive disciplinary problems, and who willfully refuse to complete even minimal tasks are shortsighted and ultimately doomed to fail.

So, if we have these problems, why do we teach? What is there about this profession that makes a teacher return to the classroom day after day, year after year? Could it be the money? In the past decade we have seen teacher salaries rise in Georgia at an unprecedented rate. During the last four years of his administration, Governor Zell Miller recommended and our state legislature approved 6 percent raises for teachers. I was a fairly new teacher at the time, and I can tell you that the old paycheck surely was looking good each time one of those raises kicked in.

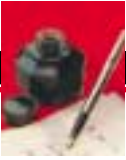
According to one study cited in the March 2000 issue of *Education Week*, the average salary in Georgia for a teacher with a bachelor's degree was \$31,011, the third highest in the South-

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PRESTON HOWARD, PRESIDENT





FROM THE

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

New Directions

BY BARBARA CHRISTMAS

When I wrote in this space last spring, it was to tell you about my intention to take a leave of absence to seek the position of state school superintendent. Although I was successful in capturing the nomination of my party, I was defeated in the general election by Kathy Cox, who took office as our new state school superintendent on Jan. 13. I join all PAGE members in wishing her success.

While no one likes to lose an election—particularly after spending hundreds of hours raising money and traveling tens of thousands of miles across the largest state east of the Mississippi River—I believe the overall experience was positive. In spite of the challenges, participating in this campaign gave me the opportunity to renew many friendships and make hundreds of new friends in all parts of the state.

I heard from dozens of former students who are now successful adults. In fact, I even discovered several cousins whom I had not previously met!

Although the PAGE Board of Directors has very graciously offered me the option of returning to my

job as executive vice president, I have decided that the time has come to leave this wonderful organization and seek other challenges. Tom Wommack, director of legal and legislative services, and Tim Callahan, director of membership and publications, will continue to manage the daily operations of PAGE. Whatever I choose to do, however, I will always look upon my nine years at PAGE as one of the most rewarding periods in my professional career.

During these past nine years, I have seen the membership of PAGE double, from 27,000 to 54,000, making it by far the largest teacher organization in Georgia. Because of our growth and reputation for accuracy and positive professionalism, PAGE has also become the organization that members of the General Assembly and the media call upon most regularly for information about edu-

cation issues. Legislators and reporters alike know that for PAGE, kids truly “are our business.” Our mission is the same today as it was when those few pioneer educators formed PAGE more than 27 years ago. We strive to make Georgia’s public schools better places for teachers to teach and for students to learn.

Leaving PAGE will be particularly difficult because it has been such a great place to work. We have been blessed over the years with outstanding leaders, educators who have proved themselves in the classroom and in positions of school and system leadership even before they were elected to our board. Our current board, led by PAGE President Preston Howard, is a strong one, and no executive could ever ask for better support.

Over the past several years, we have attracted a top-notch staff—one of the best I’ve ever seen. As a member of PAGE, you can be confident that this organization will continue to grow and remain the state’s premier education organization.

Let me also assure you that our state’s newly elected officials—governor, school superintendent and members of the General Assembly—will find PAGE to be a willing partner in any efforts consistent with our mission of helping teachers teach and students learn. This organization has always worked in a cooperative and professional manner with all elected officials, regardless of party affiliation, to improve public education in Georgia. That will not change.

Thank you for your support during these rewarding years at PAGE. As difficult as it is to leave the best job in education in Georgia, I am looking forward to new challenges. I hope our paths will cross along the way. ■

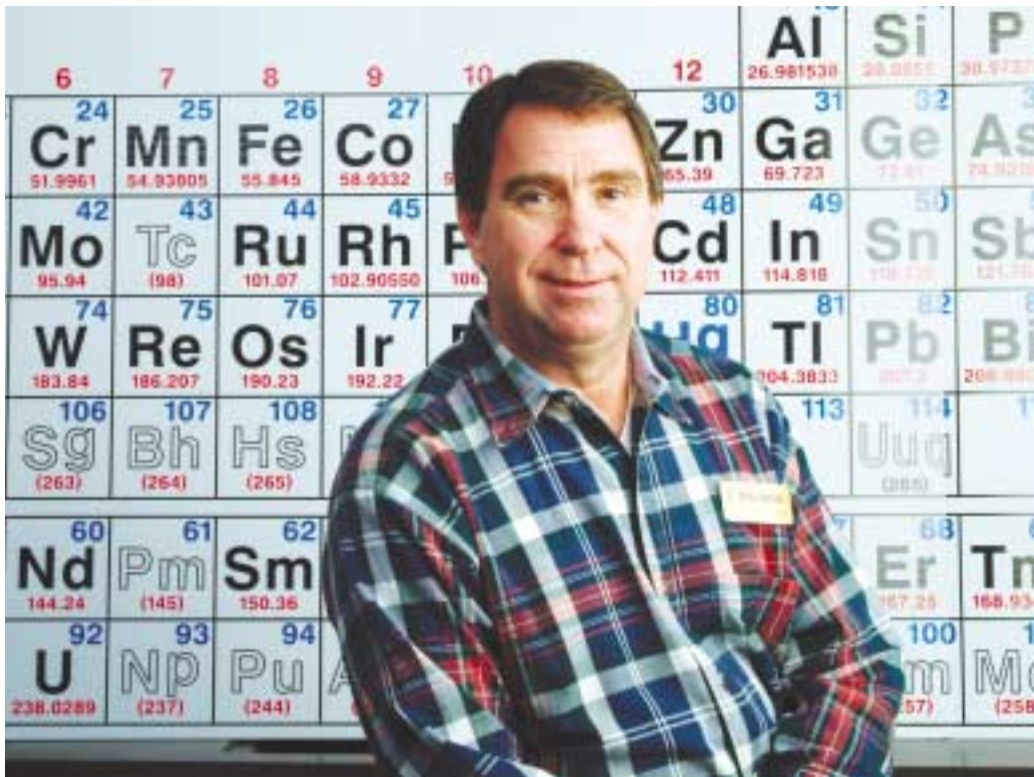


BARBARA CHRISTMAS
EXECUTIVE
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In spite of the challenges, participating in this campaign gave me the opportunity to renew many friendships and make hundreds of new friends in all parts of the state.

PAGE website: www.pageinc.org





Classroom Superstars

BY LEE RAUDONIS, PHOTOS BY ROD REILLY

Stars and superstars—Americans are fascinated with them. Whether movie stars, singing sensations or sports heroes, we love to watch them, listen to them and even learn secret details about their private lives. We call them stars, because, like the brilliant lights in the night sky, these extraordinary people stand out vividly on the earth below. In almost every field of endeavor, we select the best and the brightest and reward them with attention, adulation and even large sums of money.

When it comes to education, however, we seem reluctant to single out individual educators for recognition. Even parents who know that their children have exceptional teachers rarely think of them as “stars” or “superstars.” Such descriptions seem somehow out of place for a classroom teacher.

Society’s reluctance to single out individual teachers is probably due to several factors, including the natural modesty of members of the profession. It might also be due to the fact that there are many exceptional teachers in our classrooms. One could

justifiably argue that most schools have a large constellation of stars. Different teachers inspire and motivate certain students in unique ways. One teacher might be a star to the special education child who finally learns to read. Another could be a star to the student who drifted through school until this special teacher helped him/her discover an unknown talent in art or music. And still another could be a star to a child who never previously had any adult make him/her feel special.

There are some teachers, however, whom we do recognize as stars. Each year the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, the Georgia Department of Education and PAGE sponsor the Student Teacher Achievement Recognition (STAR) program,

which honors the student in each Georgia high school who earns the highest score on the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT). The program also honors the teacher chosen by each STAR student as having the greatest influence on the student during his or her academic career.

Given the large number of teachers each student encounters from elementary school through high school, it is quite an honor for any teacher to be named a STAR teacher even once. And yet, there are many teachers who have won this recognition multiple times. Are these repeat STARs the best and the brightest in their profession, or are they simply teachers who are fortunate enough to teach the brightest students? Ask students, colleagues and administrators who work with these exceptional educators—or observe them in action—and you will have little doubt that they truly are superstars.

One such star is Mercedes Paxton, a social studies teacher at Lakeside High School since 1974. She has been selected Lakeside’s STAR teacher 10 times, which she modestly attributes to the fact that she teaches Advance Placement U.S. History and a directed studies class for the gifted.

“The reason I have been selected 10 times is partly the function of what I teach,” she says. “This is particularly true with the students in my directed studies course, because I work with them so closely.”

The fact that Paxton teaches gifted students clearly plays a role in her multiple STAR selections, but it is certainly not the only reason, according to her colleague Noreen Price, who has taught social studies at Lakeside since 1997.

“Of course she would say that, because she is so



humble,” says Price, “but the fact is she is an excellent teacher and the students love her. She is very, very bright and bright students relate to that. She is also extremely fair, has a strong work ethic and is involved in everything from the Model U.N., to History Day, to the (PAGE Foundation-sponsored) Georgia Academic Decathlon. And somehow, she still finds time to help students with unofficial college counseling.”

David Black, Lakeside’s 2002 STAR student, gives his perspective. “I selected Ms. Paxton as my STAR teacher for one simple reason: she does absolutely everything she can for her students. In the classroom, she conveys the feeling that we are learning for learning’s sake, and not just to do well on a test. She doesn’t assign busywork, but rather thought-provoking essays.

“Outside the classroom, she is in charge of an incredible number of extracurricular activities, and she encourages students to participate in them, even though they take up a good deal of her time. She persuaded me to join the Academic Decathlon team and participate in National History Day—things that I, as a math whiz, normally wouldn’t have done. I can’t thank her enough for that.

“She is also very approachable, and many students come to her for advice or even for a shoulder to cry on. Some days after class there is literally a line of people who want to talk to her. Ms. Paxton epitomizes the idea that excellent teachers are valuable in the classroom but can be even more valuable outside.”

Randy Lee, Lakeside’s principal, is another of Paxton’s fans.

“Ms. Paxton brings her subjects to life,” he explains. “When she talks about the Civil War, she brings in artifacts and speakers. She always encourages her students to explore beyond the textbook. And her influence is felt far beyond the classroom. She is a very caring person and a very involved teacher. She coaches the Academic Decathlon team, which takes a lot of time, and also helps students with their college resumés and applications. She probably helps as many students whom she doesn’t teach in a year as those she does. All of Lakeside’s students are her students. For example, she has her students volunteer time in the self-contained special education classes. She is truly an amazing teacher who is never absent and has no discipline problems in class. She has high expectations and her students meet them.”

It is perhaps no coincidence that Debbie Sheppard, principal of Hephzibah Middle School, uses some of the same words to describe Elsie Davis, a six-time STAR teacher at Hephzibah Comprehensive High School in Richmond County.

“I worked with Ms. Davis at the high school and she is truly an outstanding teacher, because she really cares about her students and goes the extra mile for them,” Sheppard explains. “She is the mother that some of the students don’t have, and she attempts to meet their social and emotional needs as well as their academic needs. She sets very high academic standards and takes no excuses for not meeting them. However, she does everything



STAR teacher Elsie Davis shows off her latest award with two of her colleagues (above center), while 10-time honoree Mercedes Paxton (left) attributes her success to her close relationship with gifted students. Science teacher and 20-time winner Billy Jones (opposite) is described as a “Renaissance Man” for his teaching versatility.



in her power along the way to get students where they need to be. She has taught more than 25 years at the high school level and has the reputation of having high expectations and of pushing students to meet them.”

Susan Pyatt, Hephzibah’s 2002 STAR student, who is now at Georgia Tech studying chemistry, has this to say about her former teacher: “As my A.P. English teacher, Ms. Davis always attempted to make learning fun without crossing the line that could have interfered with learning. For example, when appropriate, she would let us watch films based on books we had read so that we could compare the two. Overall, she was very demanding and a real perfectionist. The first essay I wrote for her looked as if it had been dripped in blood when she returned it to me. But my writing skills improved dramatically during that year.”

Pyatt makes it clear, however, that Davis influenced her students beyond the academic challenges.

“Ms. Davis is an outstanding teacher who also has an outstanding personality. She teaches so much more than just what is in books. She teaches students how to live and how to be strong people.

“She has had a lot of medical problems that obviously cause her a lot of pain, but she puts a smile on her face all of the time and never lets you know she feels the pain. If I can be just half the person she is, I believe I can conquer anything. I still keep in touch with her on a regular basis, and she is a tremendous inspiration to me. She is a wonderful individual and a perfect friend.”

Harris Mynatt, PAGE coordinator of the STAR program for the past nine years, has found a pattern in the STAR students’ descriptions of their STAR teachers.

“One of the common threads among the comments of almost all of the STAR students about their teachers is the balance of what they did for them academically and the impact they have personally. Most of the students invariably talk about the fact that their STAR teachers really care about their students. They also talk about the fact that their STAR teachers set high academic standards and expect the students to meet those standards. Often the STAR teachers are the first teachers to really





Middle school STAR teacher Rena Hamby instills a lasting love of mathematics in her students.

challenge the students and require excellence from them.”

Being the first teacher to really challenge bright students might explain why Rena Hamby, a Colquitt County junior high school and middle school math teacher, has been selected a STAR teacher seven times during her 42-year career.

As Scott Michie, principal at W.J. Williams Middle School, explains, “Ms. Hamby is the first teacher of advanced mathematics (Algebra I) that our students have. She helps them develop good study habits and a love of math. Ms. Hamby’s students work very hard

but find their future math courses much easier because they have been in her class.

“She has a very traditional teaching style, including assigning homework every night. She leaves no stone unturned to help her students learn and sets very high standards. It is quite an honor for a middle school teacher to be a STAR Teacher.”

Josh Sutherland, Colquitt County’s 2002 STAR student, who is now taking Calculus II and studying mechanical engineering at Georgia Tech, explains why he reached back to his middle school years for his STAR teacher.

“I had Ms. Hamby for math in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades. She is a great teacher and a very loving person. My interest in math skyrocketed because of her. I was able to work at my own pace and advance beyond the rest of the class. By the eighth grade, I had completed Algebra II and began geometry in the ninth grade. Ms. Hamby explained why things worked, not just how. She also taught us how to learn, so we were free to learn on our own.”

Another teacher who challenges her students and does whatever it takes to help them achieve is Sherry Lamb of Claxton High School, a four-time STAR teacher.

“Ms. Lamb’s class was my favorite,” says Brian Renault, Claxton’s 2002 STAR student, and now a freshman at Georgia Southern studying computer engineering. “What makes her so exceptional is that she makes sure that everyone in the class understands every concept. Students really enjoy her class despite the heavy workload. She was also involved in extracurricular activities such as coaching the math team.”

Lamb’s principal, Charles Duvall, also sings her praises. “Ms. Lamb teaches advanced algebra, trigonometry, concepts of algebra and concepts of problem solving, and she does whatever it takes to make sure that every student achieves,” he says. “She works with students individually before, during and after school and makes math interesting for them. Her teaching methods are fairly traditional, and she has high expectations of all of her

students. She expects her students to succeed and they do. Her students simply don’t fail.”

High expectations, a mastery of subject matter and a total commitment to students in and out of class: these are trademarks of our superstar teachers, and none lives up to the billing more than Billy Jones, selected as a STAR teacher 20 times during his Gwinnett County career.

It is not yet 7:30 on a Monday morning, but Jones already has given his Grayson High School Advanced Placement chemistry class instructions for performing a lab experiment to determine the amount of magnesium in a compound. The 11 students divide into four teams of two and one of three and begin promptly setting up their equipment to complete the experiment two or three times before the period ends.

The atmosphere is relaxed but business-like as Jones moves quickly and purposefully from table to table to answer questions and check on his students’ progress. When one team successfully completes the experiment for the first time, Jones retrieves a digital camera to record the team’s accomplishment and the various stages of completion of the other teams.

The students work quietly and judiciously, obviously feeling comfortable in the laboratory environment. As the period winds down, Jones notifies the students at regular intervals how much time is left, encouraging them to bring the experiment to a conclusion before time expires. By the time the chimes sound ending the class, all of the teams have successfully completed the experiment once or twice, and the workstations have been cleaned up and the equipment put away.

Observing this one class helps explain why Jones is considered such an outstanding teacher. He is highly organized, knows his subject matter and relates well to his students. To fully appreciate all of the talents that this man brings to his work, however, you need to understand that he does much more than teach A.P. chemistry. He also teaches German and Latin and is involved with many, many other activities to help his students.

“The number-one thing that strikes me about Billy Jones is that he is extremely versatile,” says Michael Moody, principal of Grayson. “He can—and will—teach anything. He is a science teacher by training, but he will meet any need that is out there for any child or any other teacher. Whatever is going on in the school, he is the first to ask how he can help. Although he is very unassuming and quiet, he really challenges his students with high-level work. This is one reason he has been chosen so many times as STAR teacher, because the kids selected as STAR students are the types of students who don’t choose teachers who don’t challenge them. Billy is the 2002-2003 Teacher of the Year at Grayson and a real Renaissance man.”

Jones, himself, doesn’t take a lot of credit for being selected a STAR teacher 20 times. “In some ways, I have just been at the right place at the right time,” he explains. “I like to get involved beyond the classroom with the math team, the science team, the social studies team, the (PAGE) Academic Bowl and helping kids get scholarships to good schools.”

Jones seems to be particularly proud of his work in helping students get scholarships and has pinned banners of his former students’ colleges on the ceiling of his classroom. The pennants of Stanford, Clemson, Yale, Harvard, MIT, Princeton, Emory, Duke, his own alma mater of Georgia Tech and many others are colorful reminders of former stu-

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The PAGE Foundation Gratefully Acknowledges 2002 Donors

The year 2002 marked a major milestone for PAGE and the PAGE Foundation as membership grew to more than 54,000 members. PAGE continues to be the largest association of education professionals and support personnel in Georgia. For those of us who were here at the inception of the organization, those numbers give reason for both excitement and reflection.

We feel a major reason people join PAGE is the organization's commitment to "keeping kids first." Through the PAGE Foundation, we sponsor programs of academic excellence for students and programs that support teachers in their quest to become better educators.

Members of PAGE remain the largest single contributor to the PAGE Foundation, joined by corporations, foundations and a host of individuals who, through their financial commitment, acknowledge their support of the PAGE Foundation goals. Thanks to your generosity, the donations to the PAGE Foundation Endowment campaign now exceed \$832,000.



I want to take this opportunity to focus on one of the many outstanding Foundation programs that I find especially exciting, our partnership with Phi Delta Kappa International through Future Educators of America in Georgia (FGE/FEA in GA). The establishment of FEA in GA chapters in middle and high schools will allow PAGE and Phi Delta Kappa members to attract capable young people to the teaching profession and nurture their career aspirations through secondary school. Working with school boards, school superintendents and local personnel directors, we can "grow our own" teachers within the state,

an exciting concept that you will be hearing more about in the coming months.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the PAGE Foundation and its programs. We are humbled and energized by your support.

Tom Wommack
PAGE Foundation President

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 PAGE Staff
 Joe Ryan
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 Guy Sims
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Jack Acree
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 Dr. & Mrs. Sam P. Jones
 Ola McCurry Payne
 Eugenia Rodgers
 Kenneth W. Russell
 Sandy Williams

If your name does not appear on this list of donors for 2002-2003, please notify us immediately and we will correct our records. Send your corrections to Linda Griffin via e-mail at lgriffin@pagefoundation.org.

SunTrust Foundation Grant Supports PAGE Foundation and National Board Certification

The SunTrust Bank, Atlanta Foundation, has donated \$5,000 to the PAGE Foundation to assist metro-Atlanta candidates for National Board Certification.

"The SunTrust gift will allow us to schedule a second series of weekend National Board Certification workshops in Atlanta," said PAGE Foundation President Tom Wommack. "These workshops allow candidates to work closely with mentors who successfully earned this prestigious award in the past. Mentors work over a period of about seven months with candidates to help them complete the rigorous requirements of the certification process." Wommack added that many teachers in Georgia credit these workshops with their successful pursuit of National Board Certification.

The SunTrust Foundation gift was announced publicly by Raymond King, manager of community and governmental affairs at SunTrust.

"Our foundation chose to provide this grant because we believe there is a direct link between student achievement and good



Raymond King (pictured left), manager of community and governmental affairs at SunTrust, presented a \$5,000 donation to Curley Dossman Jr., chair of the PAGE Foundation and president of the Georgia-Pacific Foundation. The donation will be used to support PAGE Foundation-sponsored National Board Certification workshops in metro Atlanta.

teachers," said King. "National Board Certification is a rigorous process of professional development that challenges teachers to reach the pinnacle of their profession. SunTrust wants to do its part to ensure that children throughout metro Atlanta benefit from extraordinary teachers."

National Board Certification is a creation of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). Veteran teachers who earn such certification invest between 200 and 400 hours, most of which are outside the classroom, in a challenging year-long process that critically examines what teachers know and how they teach. Nationwide, two out of every three candidates for National Board Certification fail to achieve the award on their first attempt. For the past several years, the PAGE Foundation, with support from corporations, foundations and individuals, has provided mentoring workshops to help candidates understand the certification process and fulfill its arduous requirements. ■

and individuals, has provided mentoring workshops to help candidates understand the certification process and fulfill its arduous requirements. ■



PAGE Members Well Represented Among Georgia's 2002 National Board Certification Award Recipients

PAGE members awarded National Board Certification (NBC) in 2002 exceeded the previous record high of 156, established in 2001, according to PAGE Foundation President Tom Wommack. "Of the state's 380 award recipients this year, 166 are PAGE members," said Wommack. "We have witnessed a tremendous response from our members who see NBC as the pinnacle of teaching professionalism. It is very gratifying to see teachers, who already work very hard, invest an additional 200 to 400 hours of personal time to achieve this prestigious award. Even more heartening is to observe the perseverance of candidates who do not earn this award on their first attempt and who set aside their disappointment to try again."

Wommack noted that across the country two out of every three candidates for National Board Certification do not earn the award on the first attempt. To support undaunted PAGE members who choose to "bank" their National Board Certification scores and retake requirements that were not done successfully before, the PAGE Foundation now offers one-time \$300 grants to candidates on a competitive basis, according to Wommack. "We have seen extraordinary teachers fall short of their NBC goals in the past, and we want to find some way to thank them for their perseverance and assist them financially with the costs associated with retakes. We are also considering the creation of a 'bankers' network or support group to provide new avenues for NBC teachers to help their colleagues in the pursuit of NBC." Wommack added that the rules governing the application process for banking grants were determined

in December so "bankers" could meet the January deadline for paying fees to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Compliments for candidates in the NBC process have come from national and state leaders. "I commend Georgia's professional educators who have chosen to pursue National Board Certification," said U.S. Representative Johnny Isakson. "By advancing their training and reaching to be the best that they can be, they are making a tremendous investment in our children."

Dr. Gail Sherer of the Professional Standards Commission, which has a lead role in National Board Certification in Georgia, said, "We are very pleased at Georgia's success in increasing the number of National Board Certification Teachers (NBCT) to 805 statewide. We now have NBCTs in 118 school systems. With the initiation of the new procedures for prepayment of fees that requires a 20-hour course, 'The Knowledgeable Teacher,' prior to candidacy, we anticipate growth in both numbers of NBCTs and percentage of first-time successes with the certification process."

The PAGE Foundation, with support from corporations and foundations such as The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, Wachovia Foundation, Georgia Power Foundation, Georgia-Pacific Foundation, VALIC, SunTrust Foundation and members of PAGE, offers Saturday workshops in seven different cities for NBC candidates. For more information on how to apply for National Board Certification or to obtain information on support offered NBC candidates, visit the PAGE Foundation website, www.pagefoundation.org. ■

2002 National Board Certification Recipients

ART

Early & Middle Childhood/Art
Sara Keith, Troup
Kelley Adams, Walton

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Career & Technical Education
Gail Sims, Columbia
Sally Laws Gray, Richmond
Joyce Miller, Richmond

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Early Adolescence/English Language Arts
Fay Tyus, Bleckley
Teresa Phillips, Bulloch
Valery Perdue Dinkins, Columbia
Ginger Sutton, Columbia
Gwendolyn Cianciola, Forsyth
Barbara Ann Adams, Fulton
Isabella Litchka, Glynn

Rebecca Custar, Gwinnett
Kathryn Poling Anderson, Morgan
Kathryn Ward, Newton
Mary Ann Ricketson, Rockdale
Natalie Callier, Taylor
Jennifer Eubanks, Taylor
Carol Cain, Troup
Vicki Pheil, Troup
Wrynn Carson, Walton

Adolescence and Young Adulthood/ English Language Arts

Christa Miller, Butts
Diane Dyer, Cobb
Terri Campbell Washer, Columbia
Sherry Browning, Dawson
Sherrie Crow, DeKalb
Rebecca Calder, DeKalb
Elisabeth Thompson, Emanuel
Cynthia Snider, Fayette
Leslie White, Fayette

Carolyn Becker, Gwinnett
Kaysheila Mitchell, Gwinnett
Joanne Lewis Ridgway, Hart
Melinda Kay, Paulding
Audrey Smith, Richmond
Gloria Brogdon, Walton

EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS SPECIALIST

Early Childhood & Young Adulthood/Exceptional Needs Specialist
Wanda Zvanut, Clayton
Lynn Allen, DeKalb
Vickie Stephens, DeKalb
Stephanie Taylor, DeKalb
Barbara Pozen, Fulton
Sharon Mabery, Gwinnett
Barbara Spurlock, Johnson
Karen Reynolds-Chen, Liberty
Jennifer Bell, Troup
Cheryl Anne Rice, Valdosta City



GENERALIST

Early Childhood/Generalist
 Rhonda Maria Hollis, Appling
 Tammy Pendarvis, Appling
 Corlis Robertson, Atlanta City
 Tonja Healey, Brooks
 Jennifer Matthews Hiers, Brooks
 Christie Gibson Page, Bulloch
 Dennie Lenier, Candler
 Cheryl Collins, Clayton
 Christina Pearce, Clayton
 Elizabeth Scarboro, Clayton
 Leslie Singleton, Clayton
 Laurie Van Patten, Clayton
 Mary Claxton, Cobb
 Deborah Kramb, Cobb
 Jean Doriot, Columbia
 Linda Watson, Douglas
 Robin Estavan, Fulton
 Jan House, Fulton
 Wanda White, Fulton
 Kay Law, Gainesville City
 Tammy Lomis, Glynn
 Janet Duncan Lewis, Gwinnett
 Jacqueline Duke McCroskey, Hall
 Susan Bowlin, Henry
 Helen Lee Ray, Henry
 Amanda Swint Boutelle, Henry
 Tonia McDermott, Houston
 Tracy Kinard, Laurens
 Lisa Burkhalter, Liberty
 Elizabeth Wisenbaker, Lowndes
 Wendy Hamm, Monroe
 Perri Walden, Newton
 Merrabeth Benton, Rabun
 Billie Ann Page, Valdosta City

Middle Childhood/Generalist
 Patricia Dunaway, Bibb
 Christine Hiers, Brooks
 Ann Jacobs, Bulloch
 Verona Canaday Shumway, Camden
 Debra Muse, Carrollton City
 Deborah Fay Lane, Chatham
 Susan Stolz Miller, Clayton
 Jennifer Brownlee, Cobb
 Susan Feathers, Cobb
 Connie Jacobs, Columbia
 Kelli Spearman, Columbia
 Elizabeth Trotter, Columbia
 Marjorie Cooper, DeKalb
 Catherine Young Carr, DeKalb
 Kelly Rahn, Effingham
 Catherine Hogan Falzone, Fayette
 Cheryl Garner, Floyd
 Deborah Gilreath, Floyd
 Sheila Ann Shealy, Floyd
 Nancy Fowler Rivers, Glynn
 Janice Stutts Taylor, Glynn
 Sherri Dawn Santos, Henry
 Vallye Jean Blanton, Lowndes
 Elise Hanna, Lowndes
 Faye Wells, Marion
 Pamela Akin, Newton
 Linda Sue Pickering, Oconee
 Leslie Barrett Jones, Oglethorpe
 Theda Millican Byrd, Rome City
 Phyllis Carson, Stephens
 Amy Jones, Taylor
 Dawn Elliott, Turner

Early Adolescence/Generalist
 Bonnie Kendrick Angel, Fannin
 Vanessa Ross Weaver, Fannin

LIBRARY MEDIA

Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/Library Media
 Jacqueline James, Atlanta City
 Julie Stephens, Calhoun City
 Rebecca Peace, Fulton
 Judy Olsen Teston, Glynn
 Rita Thomas, Putnam
 Tabitha Smith, Tattnall
 Dianne Dees, Valdosta City

MATHEMATICS

Early Adolescence/Math
 Rebecca Abrams, Cherokee
 Kimberly White-Fredette, Henry
 Elaine Crowell, Gwinnett
 Jami Fewell, Gwinnett

Adolescence & Young Adulthood/Math

Charlotte Gruber, Bacon
 Diane Upp Foxx, Forsyth
 Suzanne Beth Doll, Fulton
 Lela Harrison Whelchel, Hall
 Brenda Hilton, Laurens

MUSIC

Early & Middle Childhood/Music
 Lisa Kay Lovingood, Columbia
 Margaret Wiggins, Columbia
 David Hedges, Fulton

Early Adolescence & Young Adulthood/Music
 Peggy Jan Hyatt, Muscogee

SCIENCE

Early Adolescence/Science
 Cynthia Folendore, Bibb
 Linda Moncrief, Bibb
 Susan McGlamery, Bulloch
 Jan Rice, Cherokee
 Edna Laura Hayes, Forsyth
 Jimmie Allen, Gwinnett
 Patricia Gehring, Marietta City
 Jane Yonts, Walker

Adolescence & Young Adulthood/Science

Cynthia Wolfe, DeKalb
 Terry Kennedy, Dublin City
 Donna Cates, Fayette
 Kirk Douglas Elliott, Fulton
 Suzanne Owensby Hudson, Greene
 Linda Wood, Lanier
 Janice Moon Hudson, Muscogee
 Cynthia Pousman, Richmond
 Michael Tolmich, Rockdale
 Barbara Martin, Troup

SOCIAL STUDIES-HISTORY

Early Adolescence/Social Studies – History
 Jose Fernandes, Chatham
 Anna McClannahan, Cobb
 Carolyn Blake, Fayette
 Lynn Gargis Rogers, Forsyth
 Robin Sweat, Forsyth

Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Social Studies – History
 Alice Holland, Forsyth
 Allison Doolittle, Washington

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Early & Middle Childhood/Physical Education
 David Skeen Jr., Clayton

Meredith Morgan Curry, Glynn
 Georgi Banks, Lowndes

Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Physical Education
 Karen Edith Ruff, Cartersville City
 Melvin Roy Edwards, Catoosa
 Reginald Kimball, Henry

WORLD LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH

Early & Middle Childhood/World Languages Other than English
 Vicki Welch Alvis, Fulton

Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/World Languages Other than English
 Claire Stracke, Richmond



Georgia Academic Decathlon Competition Coordinators Hold Planning Session

Much behind the scenes planning occurs each year in preparation for hosting a successful PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon (GAD) State Championship. A large part of that responsibility is shouldered by GAD competition coordinators, a group comprised of PAGE staff and consultants who coordinate various aspects of the two-day event. GAD State Director Dr. Ruth Cowan recently hosted the first of several planning sessions in her north Georgia home. Setting the groundwork for this year's event were: (left to right, front row) Chris Ness, scoring coordinator; Jolinda Collins, essay coordinator; Novella Richard, volunteer coordinator; Ruth Cowan, GAD state director; Karen Adams, hospitality coordinator; and (back row, left to right) Michelle Crawford, scoring coordinator; and Patrick Webb, interview coordinator.



ATTENTION SPAGE MEMBERS!

JOIN US FOR PAGE DAY ON CAPITOL HILL 2003

Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2003

Governor Perdue Invited to Address Participants

This year SPAGE Day on Capitol Hill will be combined with PAGE Day on Capitol Hill on Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2003. It is never too early for pre-teachers to become familiar with and get involved in the legislative processes that determine policy for our classrooms.

Don't know how to start? Start by attending Day on Capitol Hill and meet with your legislative delegation and other political leaders. There is no fee to attend, and registration information is below.

Questions? Contact Mary Ruth Oliver at 1-888-413-1078 or at maryruth@pagefoundation.org.

2003 PAGE (& SPAGE) DAY ON CAPITOL HILL

Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2003

8:30-11 a.m. — Registration & Refreshments

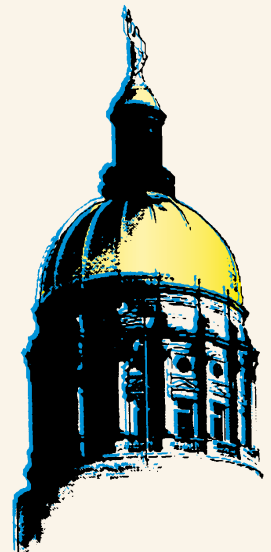
Room 450, State Capitol

Visit Your Legislators at the State Capitol During the Day and

Join PAGE at The Depot

(Located behind the Coca-Cola Pavilion—two blocks west of the Capitol)

5 to 7 p.m. for a Reception With Legislators



Not sure who your legislators are since reapportionment?

Find out at
www.sos.state.ga.us/elections/locator.htm

Need to know how to contact your legislators?

Log on to the General Assembly's website at
www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/index.htm

Need driving directions and parking information?

Visit www.georgiacapitol tours.org

There is no fee to attend, but please let us know you are coming!

Register with the PAGE office by Feb. 5, 2003:

Via telephone at 770-216-8555 or 1-800-334-6861

Via internet at www.pageinc.org



My Favorite Teacher

BY LORRAINE JOHNSON

I remember the smell of the newly waxed hardwood floors and the scent of freshly cut grass as I opened the classroom windows that morning. This was what I had worked so hard to attain—my very own classroom and with it the responsibility of 26 young minds. The morning bell rang, and students scampered in to find their seats. Eyes wide with anticipation, my first class of seventh graders waited for me to call roll. Suddenly, a small voice in the doorway handed me a tardy slip and said, “Excuse me. Am I in the right room? Are you my teacher?” “Teacher,” I thought. It was 1984. As I heard those words, I began to feel a sense of pride I couldn’t explain. Not only was I a teacher, I was their teacher, and they would not only look to me as their teacher, but as their counselor, their role model and their inspiration. What an enormous, yet powerful, responsibility awaited me!

As I reflect on what led me to that moment, I know it was the culmination of wonderful experiences with two particular teachers who changed the direction of my life. I gained a sense of self-worth and confidence that had been lacking most of my early school years from Mrs. Laurel Link, my sixth-grade teacher. My father’s change in jobs from Virginia to North Carolina, along with bus rezoning, resulted in my attending five different schools in grades one through six. I became dreadfully shy and was resentful of having to start over each year. Every September was the same—different classmates, new teachers, unfamiliar surroundings. The first day of school came, and inevitably I would scrunch down in the front seat of our family car secretly wishing for one last week of summer vacation. As my mother and I approached my new classroom at the end of the hall, I could only imagine the dreaded scenario that lay ahead.

Little did I know that my sixth-grade year would be a defining moment in my life. Mrs. Link emerged quickly from the doorway grinning from ear to ear as if she had been waiting just for me. She greeted me warmly as she shook my hand and squeezed it. “I know you’re new this year. You know, this is my first year at Johnson Street Elementary also. Maybe we can help each other.” For the first time I didn’t feel like an outsider or someone filling an empty desk. Instead, I felt as if I mattered—as if I belonged—because



Lorraine Johnson, Georgia’s 2003 Teacher of the Year, has been a middle school teacher in the Coweta County school system for 18 years where she most recently taught seventh-grade English and literature at Arnall Middle School in Newnan, Ga. She received her bachelor’s (1984), master’s (1998) and specialist (2000) degrees in education from the State University of West Georgia. She was a featured speaker at the PAGE Fall Retreat in November.

Not only was I a teacher, I was their teacher, and they would not only look to me as their teacher, but as their counselor, their role model and their inspiration.

Mrs. Link had a talent for creating a welcoming, nurturing environment in her classroom; she cared about each of us, valued what we had to say and I felt safe. She expected the best of all of us and set high standards. She believed in me and encouraged me to try new things. This was a critical turning point for me, and throughout the next year a metamorphosis took place. I ran for student government president and won, entered the science fair competition and won honorable mention, and won the sixth grade geography bee. I had never felt so validated. Mrs. Link had given me a gift: the power of success and self-confidence.

Don Arnold, my high school French teacher, was also a tremendous influence and is the reason I am a teacher today. After taking French I at my junior high school, I had to take French II as a high school sophomore as part of the required credit necessary for college-

bound students. When entering French II in Mr. Arnold’s class the first day, I was horrified. “Bonjour! Entrez la salle de classe. Je m’appelle Monsieur Arnold . . . Maintenant, prenez une feuille de papier et un crayon et repondez aux questions s’il vous plait. . .”

I glanced around at the other captive hostages in the room. Was he actually speaking French and expecting us to respond on the first day of class? Surely not. Someone should set him straight. He needs to know we were not prepared at our junior high for this level of conversation. After all, we were mere amateurs and shouldn’t be expected to converse in anything other than our native language the first day of school. It didn’t take long to understand Mr. Arnold’s philosophy—to learn the language we must be immersed in it. More emphasis was placed on a relaxed acquisition of correct expression rather than mere-

ly completing grammar exercises and repetitive drills. That meant speaking in French at all times even if we spoke in painfully awkward fragments. English was off limits in his class.

After the first several weeks of torture in French II, something amazing transpired. Mr. Arnold actually asked me a question in French, and without hesitating, I responded in perfect form. I learned more in nine months of French II than I ever thought possible. Every day was so much fun that we rarely noticed we were actually learning new information. We read French novels, cooked French dishes, put together a French café including musical entertainment for faculty guests, went Christmas caroling (in French, of course), studied French architecture, listened to native presenters and speakers, discussed our daily horoscope in French, and read about the adventures of Gigi and Georges, Mr. Arnold's infamous soap characters. Whether acting out television ads in French or participating in regular "conversation nights,"

I still feel that same adrenaline rush the first day of each new school year—never forgetting that what I say and do will impact young lives for years to come.

Mr. Arnold exuded enthusiasm and confidence that transferred to his students. We were intrinsically motivated to learn and to reflect on our successes and failures.

Perhaps the most important quality Mr. Arnold possessed was his easy going sense of humor and his ability to maintain trust and respect, even in the most difficult situations. He taught us about life and about ourselves and challenged

us as we had never been challenged before. I went on to take French III and French IV even though they weren't required. I made the decision to be a teacher after graduating from high school because of Mr. Arnold's influence.

The year is now 2002, and the smell of the waxed hardwood floors and freshly cut grass have been replaced with the humming of air conditioners, but I still feel that same adrenaline rush the first day of each new school year—never forgetting that what I say and do will impact young lives for years to come. I owe a debt of gratitude to Mrs. Link and Mr. Arnold. They believed in me, motivated me, encouraged me and inspired me. William Butler Yeats said, "Education is not filling a bucket, but lighting a fire." We can each reflect on how greatly blessed and enriched our lives are today because of those special teachers who helped develop and shape our young minds by lighting that spark. Let us never forget the power of teaching! ■

PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon Advisory Board Holds Annual Meeting



Present at this year's annual meeting were GAD Advisory Board members (left to right, front row) State Director Ruth Cowan; Dr. Milton Stombler, director, Georgia Science Olympiad; Deborah White, superintendent, Banks County Schools; Bette-Lou Brown, retired educator, Bibb County Schools; Tom Wommack, president, PAGE Foundation; (left to right, back row) John Varner, president, Hearthstone Educational Services; Preston Howard, president, PAGE; Gerald Nelms, educator and GAD Coordinator, Westlake High School; and Sarita Hollomon, GAD alumni and educator, Taylor High School.

Members of the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon (GAD) Advisory Board met on Nov. 15 at the Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place to discuss the annual academic competition. Each year, GAD State Director Dr. Ruth Cowan convenes the board to update members on Decathlon activities and invite their input on improving the program. It was reported to the board that this year 64 high schools, representing 23 school districts from across the state, will participate in the Decathlon.

Items of special interest this year included a report from board member and Berkmar High School Principal Jim

Markham on the extensive completed expansion of Berkmar High School, host site of the Decathlon. "The newly expanded facility will provide a perfect space for us, and we are deeply indebted to Mr. Markham and Berkmar High School for their continued generosity in hosting the Georgia Academic Decathlon state competition," Cowan said.

Another change in this year's Decathlon is in the interview portion of the competition. Previously, participating students were interviewed regarding their extracurricular activities. This year, students will compile a resumé and share that with the interview judges. "This change in format should allow our young participants an opportunity to hone their interview skills, an asset for future college and job interviews," said Cowan.

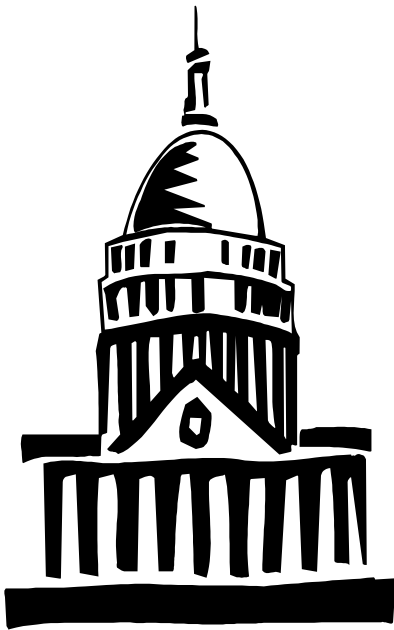
Finally, a subcommittee of board members will create a code of conduct for GAD coaches and submit that document for board discussion and adoption. ■

Announcing . . .
FGE/FEA Day on Capitol Hill 2003
to
**Celebrate the Union of
Future Georgia Educators & Future Educators of America**

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Georgia Railroad Freight Depot
(Next to Underground Atlanta)



- € Visit the Capitol and the State Legislature
- € Luncheon keynote address from Phil Jacobs, President-GA Operations, BellSouth
- € Information about teacher preparation programs from colleges across the state
- € Door prizes
- € More surprises
- € Only \$7/student covers your lunch and all events

Registration Deadline: Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2003

How do I register my chapter? Download a registration form from www.pagefoundation.org. Then mail with payment postmarked no later than Feb. 19, 2003.

BellSouth serves as a proud sponsor of FGE/FEA in GA, a program of teacher recruitment and development sponsored by the PAGE Foundation in partnership with Phi Delta Kappa International.

Sponsored by



FOUNDATION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

PAGE Foundation programs that promote academic excellence among Georgia students and teachers include the PAGE Student Teacher Achievement Recognition (STAR) program, the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon (GAD), the PAGE Academic Bowl for Middle Grades, and PAGE Scholarships for current and future teachers. These programs would not be possible without the assistance of many dedicated volunteers. Currently we are seeking volunteers for the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon.

PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon

Volunteers are needed to serve as judges for speech, interview and essay competitions and as proctors for testing and essay during the Georgia Academic Decathlon to be held Feb. 21-22, 2003, in Atlanta. Judges serve in groups of three for either speech or interview presentations. Essay judges individually evaluate each student essay. Testing proctors work with a student assistant in a testing homeroom of 19 or more students; Super Quiz proctors assist with the Super Quiz Oral Relay event. A training session is conducted prior to the competition. Volunteers can choose Friday, Saturday or both days. Friday's session lasts from 4 to 9:30 p.m. Saturday's session begins at 7:45 a.m. and continues until 1 p.m. (Super Quiz proctors are on site from noon until 3 p.m.)

If you can volunteer, please visit our website at www.pagefoundation.org to download the PAGE volunteer form or to register online.



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The Board of Regents for the state university system recently announced a plan called “Destination Teaching – Customized Pathways to Get You There.” The initiative is designed to help meet the increasing need for teachers by reaching out to those who want to change careers and enter the teaching field. PAGE member **Joan Leonard**, who is currently teaching in Columbia County, was featured in a brochure published by the Regents. The following is her excerpt from the brochure.

“My interests in earning a third degree and embarking on a second career in education were many. As a hospital administrator for more than a dozen years, I longed for a change both professionally and personally. Teaching middle schoolers seemed just the antidote. Having earned a B.A. and Master’s in business already, I was able to complete the teacher development program in a shortened period of time at Augusta State University. I was offered the



Pictured left to right: Jeannie Hogan, ESOL teacher; Tom Wommack, PAGE director of legal and legislative services; Brenda Lee, assistant principal of Rumble Middle; Maria Loera, ESOL paraprofessional; Mike Jackson, Houston County PAGE president and teacher at Warner Robins High; and ESOL students.

opportunity to be the ‘pilot student’ of the program called Impact on Student Learning (ISL). Its goal is to take the focus off the teacher and to turn the spotlight on the learning of the student. The project called for me to ‘follow’ four students closely during my lab experience and profile each as a learner. My teaching methods were repositioned from developing the perfect lesson for content, to one that would meet the needs of my particular learners.

It put the emphasis of teaching back in the right place—on the student. And it tied my success to student success very directly. It was the ‘Eureka!’ in teaching that I was looking for and that rang a bell when I reflected back on my own learning. It’s not about the teacher teaching; it’s about the kids learning—as it should be!”

The Macon Telegraph featured **Maria Loera**, an ESOL paraprofessional at Bert Rumble Middle School in Houston County, in an article noting how she began working for the schools as a custodian when she and her family first came to the area from Mexico. The story noted how she had been encouraged to become an ESOL paraprofessional and would continue her efforts to become certified as a teacher. She earned education degrees and taught both elementary and high school in her native country.

PAGE presented Loera with a complimentary membership for her outstanding accomplishments. ■

February 2003

- 10 Academic Bowl State Championship
- 11 PAGE Day on Capitol Hill, The Depot
- 11 SPAGE Day on Capitol Hill, The Depot
- 14-16 FEA National Conference, Jacksonville, Fla.
- 21-22 GAD State Competition, Berkmar High School, Lilburn

March 2003

- 5 FEA Day on Capitol Hill, The Depot

April 2003

- 23-26 USAD National Finals
- 30 State STAR Banquet, Sheraton Buckhead Hotel, Atlanta

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Certification Issues

BY MARGARET C. ELLIOTT, STAFF ATTORNEY

PAGE has received a number of inquiries from educators concerning graduate degrees and upgrading certification. The most frequently asked question is regarding whose responsibility it is to get the documentation of the said degree to the Professional Standards Commission (PSC). This scenario could also arise for a teacher getting his/her certificate for the first time who then needs to get proof of the undergraduate degree/course work to the PSC.

The responsibility to get this documentation to the PSC falls upon the educator. If the educator is currently employed by a school system, he/she will have to accomplish this through the personnel/human resources department of that school system.

The problem that most educators encounter is that if the PSC receives the documentation of advanced degrees after July 1, the pay increase will not go into effect until the following school year. Documentation received by the PSC prior to July 1 ensures that the salary upgrade would be valid on the date the university awarded the degree (PSC rule 505-2-.11). Therefore, it is critical that the individual educator monitor this process carefully to make certain that the paperwork proceeds as it should.

Here are some recommendations to expedite the processing of your documents at the PSC:

1. When an educator graduates with an advanced degree, an application for upgrade in salary should be completed as soon as possible. The application can be found on the PSC's website at www.gapsc.com under "Certification." Once an educator clicks on the certification tab, then he/she will see the application for certification. The educator should click on the application and print it. The application should be completed and then submitted to the school system's personnel/human resources department. (Keep a copy for your own records.) The educator



The most frequently asked question is regarding whose responsibility it is to get the documentation of the said degree to the Professional Standards Commission.

must check the section that states "Upgrade to a Higher Certificate Level." Part of the application requires the educator to attach an official transcript from the college/university. There may also be a fee involved. For an explanation of the fees required for certification, click on the certification web page.

2. A college/university official should complete a form called "Program Recommendation Form." This form is also found on the PSC's website under

certification. The applicant must request that the college/university official complete the form. The application can be downloaded and submitted directly to the PSC. It is the responsibility of the applicant to secure the verification form from the author-

ized college certification official designated to complete this form. The educator should call the college to make certain the Program Recommendation Form has been completed and submitted to the PSC.

3. After a week, the educator should follow up with the personnel department of the school system to be sure that the application has been submitted to the PSC.

4. The educator can check the status of the application for certification or upgrade to a higher certification level via the PSC's website, www.gapsc.com. Click on certification and follow the directions in the

first sentence after the description of the certification section. The applicant is required to enter his/her social security number without dashes. This number then becomes the official certificate number. If there are questions about status, educators can send an e-mail to Kelli.Young@gapsc.com.

It is the educator's responsibility to be familiar with the PSC rules and to get the completed application to the PSC in a timely manner. All of the PSC rules can be found on the PSC website at www.gapsc.com by selecting "Rules." Contact the PAGE legal department at (770) 455-3105 or toll free at (866) 254-0178 if you have questions or concerns. ■

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Teacher Quality and Educational Reform

BY DR. EDIE BELDEN, DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

“In a completely rational society, the best of us would be teachers and the rest of us would have to settle for something else.” —Lee Iacocca

Most Americans agree that teaching is a very important profession, and many believe that teaching benefits society more than any other profession. There is also considerable consensus that the quality of teaching bears improvement. Some have identified teaching quality as the most important domestic issue facing our nation.



to determine the value added by each teacher to a student's learning and to track a student's academic progress over several years. The data collected in this manner identify teacher quality as the most important variable in determining a student's success in school. A growing body of research corroborates

that a knowledgeable and capable teacher in the classroom affects learning more than any other factor. A noted researcher on teacher quality, Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond (“Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of State Policy Evidence,” 2000), states, “[T]his research indicates that effects of well-prepared teachers on student achievement can be stronger than the influences of student background factors such as

It was not long ago that the quality of teaching was judged by a teacher's ability to impart knowledge to students and maintain classroom control. However, today's teachers are expected to do more and to do it with greater skill. Today's teachers are expected to know childhood developmental stages, learning styles, classroom management techniques, federal and state law requirements, the Quality Core Curriculum, the nuances of cultural and ethnic diversity and reading techniques to assist the reluctant reader. Additionally, the teacher must report to parents regularly on their child's progress, post their assignments on the school's website or record it on the school's answering service and adjust their teaching style to reflect the latest research and staff development emphasis. Teaching is a complex and multifaceted craft.

Teacher Quality: Centerpiece of Educational Reform

With the rapid advancement of technology in both capability and availability, the collection of huge amounts of data has become possible and new research techniques have emerged. New research techniques make it statistically possible

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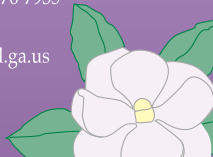
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Today's teachers are expected to know childhood developmental stages, learning styles, classroom management techniques, federal and state law requirements, the Quality Core Curriculum, the nuances of cultural and ethnic diversity and reading techniques to assist the reluctant reader.

poverty, language background and minority status. And while smaller class sizes appear to contribute to student learning, particularly in fields like elementary reading, the gains occasioned by smaller classes are more likely to be realized...when they are accompanied by well-qualified teachers."

Using this and other supporting data, civic leaders, business and corporate executives, parents and educators are targeting the improvement of teacher quality as the centerpiece of educational reform.

The Highly Qualified Teacher

No Child Left Behind requires that a highly qualified teacher be in every classroom by 2005-2006. According to the law, a highly qualified teacher is fully certified (including alternative certification) or has passed a state licensing exam and is licensed to teach in the state. To those concerned with educational reform and to many educators, the definition of highly qualified is too vague and too broad to be of significant value in improving the quality of teaching.

Highly qualified teachers help students learn and do so with a repertoire of technical and professional expertise. They are teachers who possess content knowledge and learning theory which enables them to organize their lessons into meaningful units of learning. They know why and

how students learn. Highly qualified teachers have thousands of blank stares, smiles and moments of awe and desperation filed in their memories, intuitively telling them that a student is learning or not learning. The highly qualified teacher recognizes and seizes the teachable moment, applies different methodologies for students at various developmental levels and provides the student and parents with reliable information on progress. It takes a novice teacher five to eight years to become a highly qualified teacher (David Berliner, "Educational Leadership" 58(8)2001).

New Approaches

The Carnegie Corporation's latest report, "Teaching as a Clinical Profession: A New Challenge for Education" (2002), recommends that teacher training look more like medical training and urges a two-year residency requirement. Four colleges of education—California State Northridge, Michigan State University, the University of Virginia and Bank Street College—will each receive \$1 million per year for five years to revamp their teacher preparation programs and to track alumni performance in the classroom. The changes in the teacher education programs are intended to restructure the teaching profession into a researched-based profession capable of giving every student a quality education.

The University System of Georgia's newly

Teacher Behaviors of Quality Teaching

- **Attracts students' attention and interest in learning through creative and varied learning activities**
- **Provides direct instruction for specific skills and knowledge**
- **Provides ongoing and varied formative and summative learning assessments**
- **Aligns the taught and the tested curriculum**
- **Uses student assessment data to diagnostically plan instruction for individual students and whole class activities**
- **Provides feedback to students so they can promptly use it for increased learning**

Source: Leslie S. Kaplan and William A. Owings, "NASSP Bulletin," 85 (628) November 2001



redesigned program of teacher preparation has new performance criteria and places greater emphasis on content knowledge and school-based preparation. Students enrolled in teacher preparation programs must take courses in both the college of education and the college of arts and sciences. They must also complete 900 hours of field experiences in schools. Early childhood majors must complete 12-15 semester hours in reading and in mathematics; middle school majors must complete 12-15 semester hours in two areas of concentration, choosing from English, mathematics, science and social studies; and high school majors must complete a major in the content area to be certified. The university system also guarantees its graduates. It guarantees to re-train, at no cost to the teacher or school system, any teacher teaching in-field who does not perform satisfactorily within the first two years.

All educators must share the collective responsibility for improving the quality of the teaching.

For teachers already employed in school systems, teacher quality is being tied to salary schedules. For example, Cincinnati, Ohio, rewards teachers for excellence in four domains: (1) planning and preparing for student learning, (2) creating an environment for learning, (3) teaching for learning and (4) professionalism. A teacher in the Cincinnati system is able

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to move through the five levels of apprentice teacher, novice teacher, career teacher, advanced teacher and accomplished teacher by demonstrating skills and knowledge through a combination of teacher test results, evaluations and/or classroom observations. Teacher quality is rewarded with salary increments.

Conclusions

Improving teacher quality will not be an easy task as both colleges of education

and school administrators struggle with the need for quantity as well as quality. It is clear, however, that teachers must take more responsibility for their professional development. Teachers must direct staff development opportunities and formal educational study to areas that result in increased student achievement. All educators must share the collective responsibility for improving the quality of teaching because we do not live in a completely rational world. ■

PAGE VOICE



Thank You

I just wanted to thank you once again for having [a PAGE attorney] present a session on legal issues at our conference. Once again you held the group's attention so well that we went over our session time. You really lived up to your "back by popular demand" booking. I have enclosed a conference program so you can review your program description. It is highly deserved.

Again, I thank you for presenting the

session and I am honored to have had the opportunity to work with you for the past two years.

Anna Lush
Georgia Association of Health,
Physical Education, Recreation and
Dance (GAHPERD)
Jefferson County



Legislative Rallies, Member Ballots Help Create PAGE Legislative Priorities



Representative Hinson Mosley, House District 129, Post 1, at the Okfenokee legislative rally

A series of well-attended legislative rallies held across the state during the fall, coupled with the receipt of several hundred ballots completed by members, helped to create the legislative priorities that PAGE lobbyists took to the Capitol on Jan. 13, opening day of the General Assembly.

Meetings in Thomson, Blackshear, Cleveland, Calhoun, Moultrie and Macon provided PAGE members with the opportunity to hear from candidates for local and statewide offices, both incumbents and challengers. Members also had the opportunity to question the candidates on a variety of issues. Ballots were distributed at each meeting, allowing PAGE members to vote on their legislative priorities. The ballots were also on the PAGE website, permitting quick and easy electronic voting.

Additionally, many ballots that had been included in the May/June issue of *PAGE ONE* were filled out and mailed in to the state office, thus providing members another way to make their voice heard as the organization developed its legislative agenda for 2003.

The process of finalizing the PAGE legislative agenda began early last spring when the legislative task force met in Macon to review the results of the 2002 session of the General Assembly and to begin shaping the tentative agenda for 2003. The work of the group formed the basis of the ballots which were provided to the membership via the magazine, the website and the regional meetings.

Tom Wommack, who leads the PAGE lobbying team, said that the combination of methods ensures a true grassroots aspect to the agenda. "While I am gratified that so many members took the time to attend one or more of our legislative rallies, I am equally pleased that so many of our members mailed, faxed or used the website to get their ballots to us. It gives the legislative team a confidence that we are representing the wishes of our members as we work through the 40-day legislative session." ■



Jeri Michi, (in blue shirt) Okapilco Elementary School principal, attended the Southwest Georgia legislative rally held at Colquitt County High School.

Teacher Recruitment Day

Mind Shapers Wanted

Date: Saturday, Feb. 8, 2003

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Westside High School, Macon

The school systems represented (Bibb, Crawford, Jones, Monroe, Peach and Twiggs Counties) annually employ 300 to 500 new certified teachers in a wide range of fields. All interested and qualified persons are invited to attend and meet with representatives from individual schools and central office personnel. Please bring copies of your resumé.

For more information, please contact Middle Georgia RESA at (478) 825-3132.

Directions: From I-475, take Exit 5. Go west on Highway 74 to stop light at Food Lion Shopping Center. Take left onto Heath Road. Westside High School is approximately one mile on the right.

PAGE ONE Magazine

**Professional Association of Georgia Educators
Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation**

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Call for Nomination of PAGE Officers and Directors

PAGE is a democratically run association, and members are urged to participate in the election process. Officers and directors are elected by majority vote at the annual delegate assembly in June.

The offices of president-elect, secretary and treasurer are elected for one-year terms. Directors serve for a three-year term (on a staggered basis). The current secretary, treasurer and directors from districts 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 are eligible for nomination for re-election.

President-Elect

Deena Hoch
Bibb County

District 7

Kenneth Russell
Dalton City

Secretary

Donna Powers
Gwinnett County

District 8

Kathy Corwin
Camden County

Treasurer

Hosie Waters
Macon County

District 9

Carol Brown
Cherokee County

The following directors' terms will expire June 30, 2003:

District 6

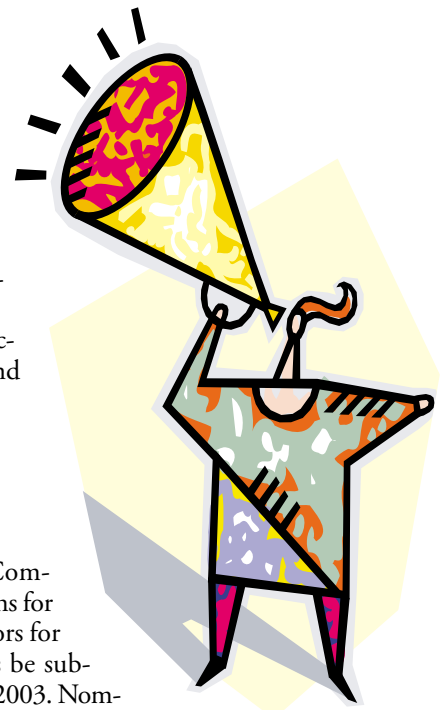
Joanna Wheelus
Henry County

District 10

Judy Teasley
Columbia County

The PAGE Nominating Committee requests that nominations for 2003-2004 officers and directors for the above offices and districts be submitted no later than March 15, 2003. Nominations should be submitted in writing, signed by the PAGE member, with a brief outline of the nominee's qualifications, and sent to Tim Callahan at the PAGE office (P.O. Box 942270, Atlanta, GA 31141-2270).

The Nominating Committee consists of Preston Howard, Lamar Scott, Deena Hoch, Renae Miller, Susan Lanier, Dr. Diane Ray, Richard Thomas and Luann Avery. ■



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CLASSROOM SUPERSTARS

Continued from page 6

dents who have gone on to bigger and better opportunities.

"I really enjoy helping students find scholarships that work for them," Jones says. "We have come a long way in the 27 years I have been in Gwinnett County. Our students are now getting into the top schools in the country."

Brian Heeke, Grayson's 2002 STAR student, is one of the many students grateful for Jones' assistance with his education choices. "The main reason I chose Mr. Jones as STAR teacher is his specific interest in my education, curriculum and endeavors," Heeke explains. "Throughout my senior year, Mr. Jones frequently presented me with scholarship opportunities and challenged me to join and participate in academic competitions. He was genuinely interested in how all of my classes were going as well as my baseball season. Every minute I spent with Mr. Jones, I felt as though I was receiving his 100 percent attention and royal treatment, although I am sure that many other students felt exactly the same way. Now that I am in college, Mr. Jones still e-mails me to check not only on how classes are going but how I am doing as well."

Other high praise comes from Jones' colleague, Deborah White.

"Billy is my mentor teacher and he is the most amazing teacher I have ever worked with," she says enthusiastically. "He is energetic and compassionate, and he always has time for everyone, whether students or teachers."

And then she adds yet another reason why Jones shines as a teacher.

"He is always working. On occasions when I came back to the school for something long after school closed, Billy would still be there. If he is put in charge of a project, you can be sure it will be done and done correctly."

Our society doesn't reward its education stars with the lucrative contracts or public adulation it bestows on stars of other fields. But that doesn't mean that the light they shine is any less bright. It could be argued, in fact, that the light of the five STARS mentioned above—and many others like them—will last much longer and brighten the lives of more people than the passing glow of shooting stars in more glamorous fields. A star singer may brighten one's day. A STAR teacher can brighten many lifetimes. ■

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WHY DO YOU TEACH?

Continued from page 2

east and 13th in the nation. I chose to use this figure because according to that same study, the average college graduate in Georgia with a bachelor's degree, who did not choose teaching as a career, earned \$44,422. Did you become a teacher for the pay?

Perhaps you became a teacher for the days off. According to *Teacher Magazine*, the average teacher works 12 additional hours after school, nights and on weekends each week during the school year. I'm sure you enjoy all that extra time you have on your hands.

This question vexed me, so in keeping with the recent No Child Left Behind Act, I decided to look for a reform-oriented answer. With so much emphasis placed on research, I looked to see what the researchers say about the reason people become teachers. According to research, some people become teachers because they want to have a positive influence on kids every day, some want a secure, low-risk career, others think that teaching is honorable work, and still others just have a love of the subject matter. Some are concerned that society is falling apart, and still others are motivated to perform a significant social service. Mostly, teachers want to have a positive influence on kids.

Teaching is honorable and prestigious work. Every child that graduates and becomes a responsible citizen confirms the need for teachers and the prestige of the profession.

When I think of the thousands of competent, caring and committed PAGE members, I am overwhelmed by the impact they are having on the future of this state and the impact their careers have on the prestige of the teaching profession. ■

A Good Answer

The dinner guests were sitting around the table discussing life. One man decided to explain the problem with education. He argued, "What's a kid going to learn from someone who decided his best option in life was to become a teacher?"

He reminded the other dinner guests that it's true what they say about teachers: "Those who can, do. Those who can't, teach."

To corroborate, he said to another guest: "You're a teacher, Susan," he said. "Be honest. What do you make?"

Susan, who had a reputation for honesty and frankness, replied, "You want to know what I make? I make kids work harder than they ever thought they could. I can make a C+ feel like a Congressional Medal of Honor and an A- feel like a slap in the face. I can make kids sit through 40 minutes of study hall in absolute silence."

"You want to know what I make?," she continued.

"I make kids wonder. I make them question. I make them criticize. I make them apologize and mean it. I make them write. I make them read, read, read."

"I make them spell 'definitely beautiful,' 'definitely beautiful' and 'definitely beautiful' over and over and over again, until they will never misspell either one of those words again."

"I elevate them to experience music and art and the joy in performance, so their lives are rich, full of kindness and culture, and so they take pride in themselves and their accomplishments."

"I make them understand that if you have the brains, then follow your heart, and if someone ever tries to judge you by what you make, you pay them no attention."

"You want to know what I make? I make a difference."

"What about you?"

—Anonymous

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New Employees

Erica Driver joined PAGE on Oct. 1 as publications manager. She is now transitioning to take over for Peggy Shelnutt as associate editor of *PAGE ONE*. Erica received her B.S. in commerce from Rider University in New Jersey and comes to PAGE with 12 years of business-to-business marketing communications experience.

Ruth Greenway joined our staff as a full-time employee on Nov. 1. She came to us from Spalding Temp Agency last fall and is committed to her role as payroll deduction clerk in the Membership Department.

PAGE Staffer Peggy Shelnutt Retires After 22 Years With PAGE

The PAGE staff holiday luncheon was a bittersweet occasion this past December. While the staff was understandably elated at the conclusion of a successful year which saw membership climb past the 54,000 mark, and enjoyed the



seasonal opportunity for fellowship and good cheer, we also had to say goodbye to a much loved member of the staff, **Peggy Shelnutt**.

Peggy joined the PAGE staff in 1980, at a time when the staff was a fraction of its current size and the membership was approximately 1,600. Over the years she has contributed significantly in a number of ways, particularly in the editing and proofreading of all PAGE printed materials, including newsletters, brochures and *PAGE ONE* Magazine.

At the luncheon, Peggy was honored by staff members who presented her with numerous tributes and gifts. PAGE also presented her with a gift certificate. Previously retired staff members also attended the luncheon to honor their colleague.

The highlight of the event was the surprise "publication" of a magazine called "PEGGY ONE" which contained tributes to Peggy from her colleagues and included many current and archival photographs of her years with PAGE. ■

PAGE 2003 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Each year PAGE's legislative priorities are developed over a period of months, beginning in the spring when the Legislative Task Force meets to draft a list of tentative priorities. Through the summer and fall we gather member input based on mailed-in responses to ballots included in *PAGE ONE* and on our website, www.pageinc.org. We also get substantial member input during the series of legislative meetings held across the state. The final priorities listed below represent a compilation of that input and response. They were reviewed by the Legislative Committee at the fall retreat held Nov. 8-10 in Savannah and recommended to the board of directors, which approved them at the conclusion of that meeting.

INSTRUCTION

1. Provide funding for teachers and permanent facilities to fully implement the lower pupil-teacher ratio as recommended in the "A+ Education Reform Act of 2000."
2. Provide funding and flexibility for districts to employ paraprofessionals (1-5) for the purpose of enhancing the academic program, permitting teachers to focus on instruction.
3. Provide funding for art, music and physical education teachers (K-8) at the rate of one of each per 345 students (phase in over a four-year period).
4. Preserve the middle school program by allowing for a curriculum that includes the core subjects but also provides for music, the arts, physical education and connections.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SAFETY

1. Fund school counselors at a rate of 1:400 (K-8).
2. Fund an alternative education program for grades K-5.
3. Fund school social workers and school psychologists at a rate of 1:1200.

PERSONNEL

1. Increase the state base salary scale by 6 percent to ensure that Georgia teacher salaries reach and remain above the national average and lead the Southeast.
2. Add steps to the state teacher salary scale to extend salary steps

through 30 years.

3. Provide full funding for the National Board Teacher Certification program.
4. Provide increased funding for the Mentor Teacher Program.

RETIREMENT

1. Provide for optional retirement with full benefits after completing 25 years of creditable service in the Georgia Teachers Retirement System (phase in over a five-year period).
2. Allow persons retiring after Dec. 31, 2001, under TRS with full benefits to return to teaching or student support services full time with no penalty.
3. Fund improved salaries and retirement benefits of educational support personnel in the Public School Employees Retirement System.

POSITIONS

PAGE SUPPORTS . . .

- Transfer of full experience from one school system to another for all personnel.
- Maintaining a state salary scale for certified personnel.
- Increased funding for staff development for classroom teachers.
- Fair dismissal for all educational personnel.
- Full funding for the Pay for Performance Program.
- Improved health benefits under the State Health Benefit Plan.
- The option of a neutral third-party evaluator in cases of contested evaluations.

PAGE OPPOSES . . .

- Using Georgia lottery proceeds to supplant existing resources for educational purposes and programs.
- Collective bargaining, legalized meet and confer, legalized permissive professional negotiations, binding arbitration, strikes, sick-outs, school closings and other militant tactics.
- Diverting K-12 public school tax dollars to private schools.
- Merging the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia with the Employees Retirement System of Georgia.
- Investing Teachers Retirement System funds in risky Venture Capital Investments. ■



SchoolTalk24: Combining Old and New Technologies to Connect Schools and Communities

Your first-grade son comes home after school and sits down at the dining room table to drink a glass of milk, eat a cookie and do his homework. After 15 minutes, he closes his books and asks if he can go outside to play with his best friend who lives next door.

"Have you completed all of your homework?" you ask him.

"I'm not sure, but I think so," he replies. "I can't find the piece of paper that I wrote it down on. I think I may have used it to wrap up my gum before I got on the bus."

Unfazed by this revelation, you pick up the phone and call the SchoolTalk hotline number for Ms. Prescott, your son's teacher. After listening to a short greeting by the president of the local bank that helps sponsor the hotline, you enter a four-digit number that connects you to the following message: "Ms. Prescott's homeroom for Wednesday, December 4. Ms. Prescott's homeroom needs to study their vocabulary words and spelling words for a test on Friday. They need to read part three of 'Izzy' on pages 77-80 of their *Opening Door Books* and do the comprehension sheet."

You ask your son if he has read the "Izzy" assignment, and he nods affirmatively as he begins to recite the story for you.

"Have you done the comprehension sheet, too?" you inquire.

He pulls the sheet from his notebook and holds it up for you to see.

Satisfied that your sometimes forgetful son has indeed completed his assignment, you tell him, "Okay, then you can go out. We'll check the spelling and vocabulary words later."

One simple phone call puts your mind at ease and frees your son to play without worrying about what was on the piece of paper now wrapped around a piece of gum in a trash can at the school. The SchoolTalk Information System comes through once again.

Although this story is partly fictional, the homework assignment was one actually given by Ms. Prescott, a teacher at Wrens Elementary School for Dec. 4, 2002. Any parent or student who needed to know the assignment could have simply called the school's hotline and entered the four-digit code for Ms. Prescott.

"The system works really well," says Sharon Dye, the principal at Wrens Elementary School, who is also the parent of a first-grade student. "As a parent, I call it every night to make sure my son has all of his assignments. Children this age don't always write things down correctly. They leave off page numbers and make other errors."

Dye says that the system has been in use for several years and is gaining popularity.

"I monitor the system to make sure that all our teachers are

changing their messages daily. And we send parents a weekly newsletter with the hotline numbers for each teacher," she explains. "If a teacher's message doesn't change, we usually hear from the parents."

Checking homework assignments is not the only use for this simple-to-use system that combines the latest computer technology with the good "old-fashioned" telephone.

"One of our elementary schools has a riddle line with vocabulary words," explains Suzanne Brandt, the Education Information System (EIS) coordinator at *The Post-Searchlight* newspaper in Bainbridge, Georgia. *The Post-Searchlight* publishes an EIS directory for the Decatur County school system, listing hotline numbers for teachers in all of the system's schools.

"There are also numbers to call to keep track of upcoming events and school lunch menus for the week," Brandt says. "And some elementary school students like to call their teacher's hotline number just to make sure that she is okay."

Even the county's top educator uses the system, as he explained in a recent interview with *The Post-Searchlight*.

"Once a week or so, I try to update my message to parents or anyone who wants to call and get an overview of system news and basic information," said Ralph Jones, the new superintendent of Decatur County Schools. "There is not enough time to be specific about details, but I tell them to call my office if they have any questions."

There are almost no limits as to how EIS can be utilized by a school or school system—and the modest cost is covered by local merchants who sponsor the unique communication tool as a community service. A single monthly fee covers all hardware and software maintenance and all software licenses and upgrades. All the school needs is a little imagination and creativity, and all that users of the system need is a telephone.

"Not everyone has access to a computer, but almost everyone has ready access to a telephone," says Brandt, "This is a very user-friendly system."

In addition to the Bainbridge *Post-Searchlight* and the Jefferson *Reporter/News Farmer*, other Georgia papers providing community and school information via EIS are the *Herald-Leader* in Fitzgerald, the *Early County News* in Blakely, the *Star & Examiner* in Elberton and *The Times-Herald* in Newnan. For further information about this simple-to-use system designed to bring parents, students, teachers, schools and communities together, call Phoenix Marketing Group at (704) 892-3860 or visit www.schooltalk24.com. ■



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