

# PAGE ONE MAGAZINE

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2003

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GEORGIA EDUCATORS

A photograph of three people standing outdoors in front of a building and trees. On the left is a man with glasses and a mustache, wearing a dark suit and a patterned tie. In the center is a woman with short brown hair, wearing a bright red blazer over a white top. On the right is a woman with short brown hair, wearing a dark blazer over a blue turtleneck sweater. They are all smiling at the camera.

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# PAGE ONE

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On the cover: State School Superintendent Kathy Cox (center) with Deputy State Superintendent of Schools Stuart Bennett (left) and External Affairs Specialist Danae Roberts (right).

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**

# All Things Considered, "It Was a Very Good Year"

BY PRESTON HOWARD

It seems like only yesterday that I took my oath of office and assumed the role of president of the largest professional educator association in Georgia. It was an awesome responsibility, but also a joyful experience. I am a Frank Sinatra fan and like the words in one of his ballads say, "It was a very good year."

That is not to say that everything was perfect. There were some disappointing events during the year that I felt heartsick over, and our lives will be changed forever as a result. Obviously, the war in Iraq was the most significant of these events, and war, under any circumstances, is a tragedy for all mankind. We can only pray that the war and the lessons of war will lead to a free and more peaceful environment for all of us and our children.

There were other events as well that had a tremendous impact on education. Do you remember when the phrase, "It's the economy, stupid," was a political mantra back in the early 1990s to signify that all other events paled in comparison to the U.S. economy? We are now well into our second year of economic recession, and there have been and will continue to be partisan debates about how to solve our economic dilemma. Education funding has been cut, and some people are predicting more severe cuts are forthcoming. Many of us can personally attest to the severity of the crisis as we have seen friends and colleagues lose their jobs, and all of us share the disappointment of not receiving a raise for the upcoming fiscal year. We are in pretty tough economic times.

Against the tragic backdrop of war, its aftermath and the economic recession, the mandates of No Child Left Behind are still to be implemented according to the established timeline. While we may see some delays in certain aspects of Georgia's reform legislation, few believe that these reforms are going to be rescinded and that it will be back to business as usual.

So, what does the future hold? And, if we can figure that out, how do we respond? The answer is simple. The response is extremely complicated. The simple answer is that we will continue to strive to educate every child to the highest level possible. As educators we recognize our responsibility for each and every child that comes into the schools and classrooms. We know that we must ensure that all students are valued, nurtured and held to the highest expectations. This will not be easy because many students will enter their educational experience unprepared for such a rigorous journey. They will need special care, and their progress will be slow and arduous. Nevertheless, we will support and lead them along their educational paths. We embrace the responsibility to go the extra mile for any and all of our students in order for them to receive the best education possible.

I have been reading with great interest the problem the medical profession is having with antibiotic resistant strains of bacteria. It seems that people are not taking antibiotics in the manner prescribed or they are requesting antibiotics for every illness, thereby diminishing the effectiveness of these wonder drugs over time. I see a similar pattern in education. We are teaching more content for more hours but the effectiveness of that instruction is diminishing or being called into question. According to my calculations, the average school day is seven hours long. I was always taught,

and I taught my children that they had to allow at least one-half hour per subject for study time in the evening and they had to study before they could watch television. Yet I read in many sources that the average child watches approximately 20 hours of television per week. According to some studies, the very children who need to study the most watch more than 40 hours of television per week. Hence, for these students study time is not being administered in the proper dose.

Another factor that makes the medication work is that it is taken regularly according to a prescribed schedule until the entire dosage is administered. Obviously, if you take it sporadically or not at all, one does not get the healing benefits of the medication. Yet, in many districts we continue to ignore the need to have an enforceable attendance policy for our students. I am perfectly willing to accept responsibility for educating the child, but I find it very hard to reconcile any policy that penalizes teachers and/or schools for a parent's failure to ensure that his or her child comes to school every day and that he/she is physically and mentally prepared.

Finally, some patients refuse to abide by the doctor's instructions. They put the pill in their mouth and spit it out when the physician turns his or her back. Some refuse the very treatment that can make them well again. Are the doctors penalized because the patient refused to take the medication? I am sure doctors try alternative ways to treat their patients, but ultimately the responsibility is put back onto the patient's shoulders. They are told point blank, "This is what you need to do to get better." Will there ever be a time when educators can tell parents, "This is what you are going to have to do for your child to achieve in school?"

Some people would say that I am comparing apples and oranges. I don't think so. Just as a medical malady can adversely and permanently affect a child's life, so can a substandard education. But just as a doctor's treatment is dependent on a strict regimen of care, so is a student's education dependent on a strict regimen of study. In both cases, if the expert's advice and instruction are not followed, the outcome will not be improvement.

I want all PAGE members to know that I believe education is the key to our future. The 54,000-plus members of PAGE are involved in the most important endeavor that mankind can undertake, the education of our children. I also believe that every member of society is responsible for the educational outcome of our children, and we cannot meet the standards set forth in legislation unless every member of society is involved. PAGE is a great association because its members have always put kids first and foremost on their agenda. We will continue to put kids first as we progress into the 21st century, and we will make a difference in kids' lives every day. Thank you for allowing me to be your president, and God bless you all. ■

PRESTON HOWARD,  
PRESIDENT



FROM THE

## EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

# 2003 General Assembly— A “Perfect Storm” of a Bad Economy and Partisan Politics

*Bright spots for education were few and far between*

BY TOM WOMMACK

The 40 legislative days of the 2003 session of the Georgia General Assembly took almost four months, exasperated nearly everyone and ultimately yielded very little for educators. The continuing decline in state revenues meant that legislators had to struggle mightily with the basics of budget mathematics—either raise revenues (taxes) or reduce spending. Since education takes up the bulk of our state budget (and we believe it should), it was in line for a disproportionate amount of budget reduction.

The second ingredient in the “storm” was the increased level of partisan politics, which was not unexpected, since for the first time in 130 years a Republican governor presented his budget and delivered the State of the State address. The Senate was controlled by the Republicans, while the House was in Democratic hands. This partisan divide created considerable gridlock dooming a number of education bills, including most of the education package submitted by Governor Perdue.

The final ingredient was a lack of leadership. Perhaps the novelty of different political parties having control of the governor’s office and the Senate and the House contributed to the problems. In the past, political partisanship and the occasional posturing did relatively little harm to the legislative process. This year the stakes were much higher, magnifying these excesses dramatically and contributing to the overall low marks most observers gave to the session and the quality of leadership exercised by all concerned, regardless of office or political affiliation.

Nevertheless, some good was found. Our longstanding goal of reduced class size, particularly in the lower grades, was met. While the legislature gave Perdue a victory in delaying the reductions in grades 4-12 for one year, they held firm on reduction of class sizes in K-3. PAGE members have long believed that these are the critical years. If students have mastered reading,



TOM WOMMACK,  
INTERIM EXECUTIVE  
VICE PRESIDENT

writing and computational skills by the third grade, then their chances of academic success are much greater.

After much debate, fair dismissal was restored to teachers hired after July 1, 2000. While there were multiple plans and procedures presented, PAGE worked in support of a single system for all teachers. And even though the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) was unsuccessful in adding administrators to this bill, we continue to support fair dismissal for all educators.

- PAGE also supported bills which passed that:
- Will require systems to put salary amounts on contracts offered to staff,
  - Reinstate sick leave for educators who return to teaching (after two years), and
  - Eventually provide salary increases for school social workers and counselors who undertake career development similar to National Board Certification.

As stated earlier, the budget was a major source of difficulty for legislators and while there were many cuts, we were able to preserve a few important items:

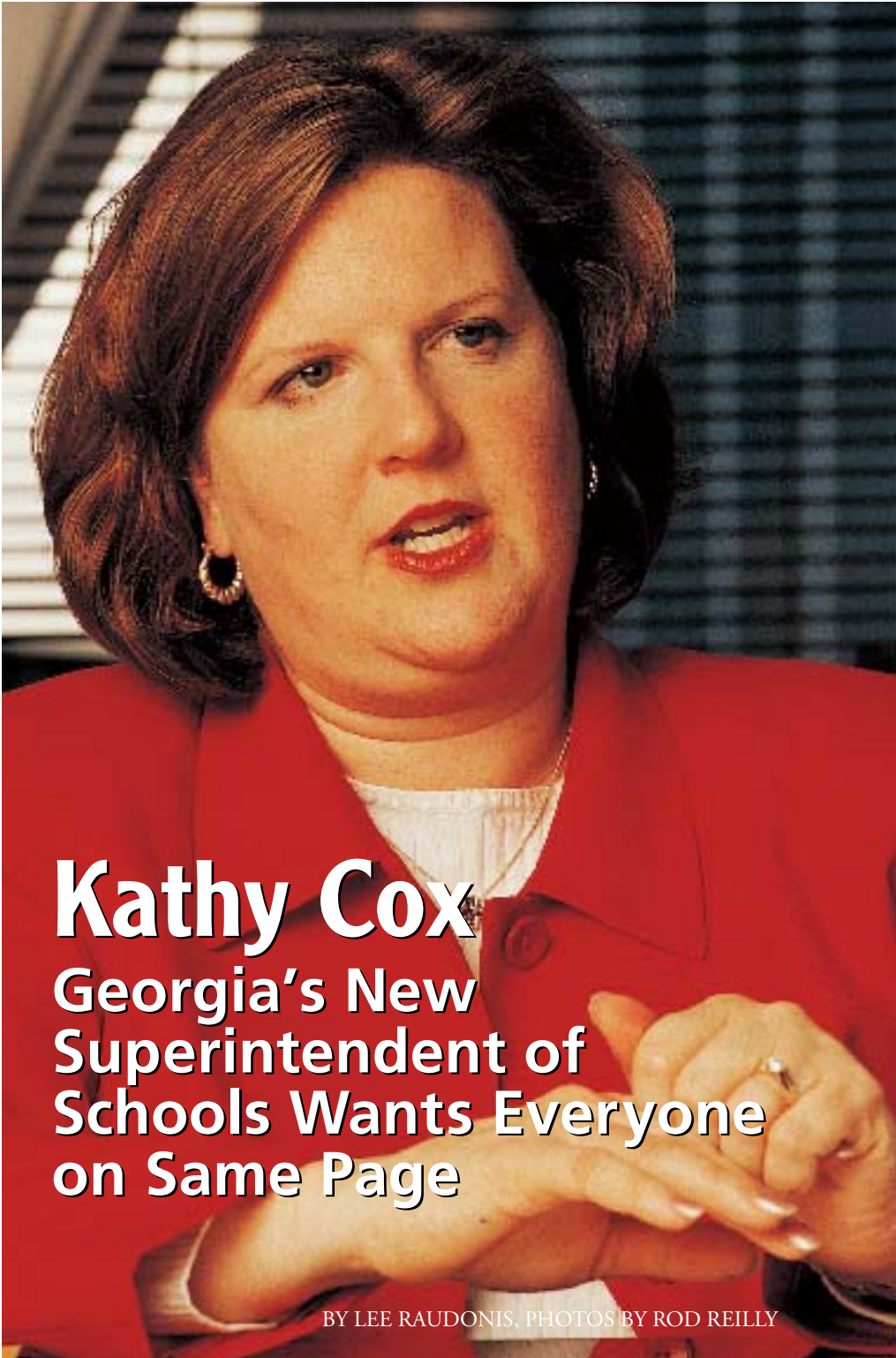
- \$9 million for school improvement teams
- \$30 million for the school nurse program
- Employee Retirement System (ERS) benefit increase from \$12.50 to \$13 per month for each year of service
- Funds for extended day vocational education and vocational agriculture programs

The one-year delay granted to school systems regarding class sizes in grades 4-12 should help many districts absorb some of the budget cuts, but overall, the next year or two will be difficult ones for education. Unless the state and national economies improve dramatically and quickly, next year’s budget situation may be a distressing “déjà vu.”

A complete review of this year’s legislative session can be found on page 32. ■

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# Kathy Cox Georgia's New Superintendent of Schools Wants Everyone on Same Page

BY LEE RAUDONIS, PHOTOS BY ROD REILLY

**T**here is a new state superintendent of schools in Georgia, and, like a good classroom teacher trying to focus her students' attention on an important lesson, she is determined to get everyone on the same page. After eight years—during which it often seemed that the state's education leaders were not only on different pages, but reading from entirely different books—this would clearly be a welcome change.

State School Superintendent Kathy Cox sees her new job as an opportunity to do tremendous things for the teachers and students of Georgia. Above all, she wants Georgia teachers to be proud of their schools and their pro-

fession and to look forward to going to work each day. She also wants parents and the general public to trust teachers and treat them as the professionals they are.

Cox comes to the position of state school superintendent directly from the classroom and the chambers of the Georgia General Assembly. She was a high school history teacher in Fayette County from 1987 through 2002 and served in the House of Representatives from 1998 through 2002.

Born in New Jersey to Atlanta natives, Cox's family moved to Doylestown, Penn., when she was six years old. It was in Doylestown that she encountered a history teacher named Gary Fuller who lit her academic fires and her interest in teaching. (See "My Favorite Teacher.")

After graduating from high school, Cox received her master's and bachelor of arts degrees in political science from Emory University, where she graduated with high honors and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. While at Emory, she also took education courses for teacher certification. She is married to John Hamilton Cox Jr. and they have two sons, John and Alex, who attend public schools in Fayette County.

The new superintendent assumed her position at a time of tremendous challenges. Conflicts between the former governor and Cox's predecessor left the state Department of Education in disarray, and a two-year economic



downturn has left the state's coffers nearly empty. Still, Cox is optimistic about the future of public education in Georgia. Here is what Georgia's state school superintendent had to say during an interview in early April about her new job and some of the challenges she faces.

**Q: How would you like what is taking place in Georgia's classrooms to be different four years from now than it is today?**

**A:** Four years from now at this same point in the school year (April), I would hope that teachers would still be excited about what they were doing. I would hope that they would be proud of being teachers and have that reflected in day-to-day contact with their students. I hope we can restore some of the excitement about learning and get teachers excited about school improvement and taking Georgia to a new level. I think that will reflect, hopefully, on how a teacher feels about going to work every day.

For students, I would like to continue to see a real push for technology and see that students are actively engaged in learning through technology. I hope there is a lot less passive learning and a lot more active learning on the part of students. And I hope that in four years, students have confidence in what they are doing and a better understanding of why they are engaged in something, why they are learning it and how it fits into a bigger picture. I hope we have fewer kids learning in isolation from each other. I want students to be proud that they are getting an education in Georgia.

**Q: What do you see as the primary role of the Department of Education in reaching these goals?**

**A:** Service, service, service. We need to serve local school systems to help them do their important job of educating kids. We are not in direct contact with kids here. With few exceptions, such as the Governor's Honors Program, there are very few programs in which the DOE has direct contact with students. Our role is a supportive one to make sure that local school systems have what they need, particularly as we implement No Child Left Behind. It is particularly important for the department to have a vision and set the standards so that schools and teachers know what is expected of them. Then we get out of the way and let them reach these goals and expectations.

I hope we are in a much more supportive role for innovation and improvement so we can give our teachers the tools they need to get the job done for our students. At the state level, having all of the key players on the same page—the superintendent, the governor and the state board—is very important for our school systems. If you want to get something done, there must be clear expectations of what needs to be done. Right now, we don't have that clarity.

**Q: Overall, do you believe local systems will be cooperative in implementing No Child Left Behind?**

**A:** Absolutely. I recently told some folks in the federal government that, in my opinion, the debate in Georgia about accountability is over. Everybody is readily accepting of accountability, but what people want with that accountability is a clear mapping of what is expected. I recently had a conversation with a classroom teacher who told me, "Look, talking teacher to teacher, I don't care if my students are tested. Bring it on. It will help me to know how they are doing. But just tell me what it is you want me to teach before you test them."

I believe there is a huge disconnect between our curriculum, our textbooks, our day-to-day operation of what teachers are doing and then what we are expecting of them on test results. It is DOE's role to make sure that all of those things are in sync with one another. If we can accomplish this for our teachers and students, they will feel a lot better about what they are doing.

**Q: One of your campaign issues was local control. What do you mean by this and what impact will it have on classroom teachers?**

**A:** Clearly, the role of the DOE is to set standards and expectations and to keep the scoreboard of how well people are meeting our expectations. Over the years, we have passed a lot of state laws for improvement that are well intentioned, but that really should have been matters for local decision-makers. What I would like to do is restore a lot of the flexibility schools once had. We have been attempting to do that across the street (General Assembly), and, quite frankly, it is a hard sell. One reason is that there is a legitimate philosophical argument as to what is the best way to go about getting people to change. When I talk about local control, it is also going to manifest itself in how I go about solving problems. My answer to an educational issue is not going to be to run across the street with a piece of legislation.

**Q: Another issue you addressed frequently in the campaign was your desire to bring about a quick improvement of SAT scores. Given the state's current financial crisis, how do you propose to accomplish this?**

**A:** There are two things that are very exciting on this front. One is that we have hired a new "test czar," Charlotte Robinson, as the state's first AP, PSAT and SAT coordinator, with a goal of getting Georgia out of the scoring cellar on the SATs. Part of what Charlotte is doing is helping to get the word out about how to use the results from the PSAT to improve SAT results. The other really exciting development is that the College Board is ready to start an initiative in Georgia to help identify areas of weakness and to get more kids enrolled in Advanced Placement classes. I also had a meeting with the folks at the Woodruff Foundation who said they would be interested in hearing more about this initiative, so it could be we might be able to use some private foundation money to jump-start a pro-



**"If you want to get something done, there must be clear expectations of what needs to be done."**



**“I think all of this data we collect... we can use to paint a much broader picture of how our schools are doing.”**

**A:** I believe that safety is the number-one issue. Students should feel safe and secure in school. And there is a broader school climate issue as well. How a building looks is very important. Having a bright, invigorating classroom does make a difference. Another key is how qualified the teachers and administrators are. What is the vision of the principal? What is he/she doing to move the school forward? As a parent, I would rather be part of a school that has a principal with vision and is moving the school forward than abandoning that school for one that may have already arrived. Also, how is a school tied to the community? This is hard to measure, but clearly community response and feelings toward that institution are important aspects of the school’s quality. And that is why a comprehensive report card for our schools is so important. I have never thought that it is fair to grade our schools just on test scores. Hopefully, I’ll have an opportunity to make an imprint on what our report card does look like.

**Q:** That brings up the question of how you envision the grading of schools being done in a manner that most people will consider fair.

**A:** Well, I think we have to use all of the data that we collect, not just a test score that is really a snapshot of how a school is doing on a given day. I think all of this data we collect, such as incidents of violence and other issues, we can use to paint a much broader picture of how our schools are doing. Ultimately, of course, student achievement must be at the heart of what we are doing. You can’t discount the bottom line that parents want their children to be in academically challenging circumstances and to know that they will come out of their school prepared. I certainly don’t want anything I have said to give the impression that we are backing away from any kind of accountability that recognizes that student achievement is at the heart of what we are doing.

I also believe that on the report card there might be an element of how well the school system is using its resources. For example, you might have a school system that is spending \$15,000 per student per year, but getting no better results than a system with similar students that is spending only \$7,000 per student per year. Clearly, the system that is being cost-effective should get some extra points for that. There has to be an element of financial responsibility in terms of grading our schools. I think that parents and taxpayers are very interested in that. I am firmly convinced that we have the resources we need in Georgia. We led the nation in the increase in education spending over the last decade. People are saying, now that we have the resources in place, let’s see what you can do with them.

**Q:** For years there has been a lot of discussion about the paperwork burden on teachers. What paperwork do you believe might be eliminated or reduced?

*Continued on page 35*

gram in Georgia. The keys are better use of the PSAT and teacher training so that more teachers can teach A.P. classes.

**Q:** The media has focused almost exclusively on SAT scores as the key indicator of the performance of Georgia’s public schools. If you could design a report card to give a broader evaluation of Georgia schools, what criteria would it include?





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## PAGE Foundation Receives \$50,000 Grant from UPS Foundation



The UPS Foundation, charitable arm of UPS, has donated \$50,000 to the PAGE Foundation in support of several programs including the National Board Certification (NBC) initiative, Future Educators of America in Georgia (FEA in GA) and the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon (GAD).

“UPS has a long-standing reputation of commitment to the communities they serve. Their generous donation will be used to support three of our programs dealing with important issues in education today: enhancing the skills of good teachers, creating a new generation of qualified teachers for Georgia classrooms and providing students with a depth of knowledge through enhanced curriculum programs like the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon,” said Curley M. Dossman Jr., chair of the PAGE Foundation Board of Trustees. “We are most appreciative of this generous donation,” Dossman added.

The NBC initiative offers scholarships to teachers pursuing National Board Certification, a rigorous program involving more than 200 hours of work outside the classroom. The mission of the FEA in GA program is to provide middle and high school students with a meaningful and substantive means for the exploration of teaching as a viable career option. The program promotes the ideal of professionalism in education and works to offset

anticipated teacher shortages in Georgia and in other states. Recently, the PAGE Foundation partnered with Phi Delta Kappa International, BellSouth Corporation and The UPS Foundation in an effort to strengthen the state’s 63 existing FEA in GA chapters and ultimately create new chapters in every high school in the state. The PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon is a competition during which high school students are tested in ten different academic areas.

In 2002, The UPS Foundation distributed more than \$38.4 million worldwide. Of that, more than \$19.3 million was awarded through the Corporate Grant Program, \$3.0 million was distributed through the Region/District Grant Program, \$2.5 million was awarded through the Community Investment Grant Program, and \$9.3 million was donated to United Way.

“UPS and its employees have always been committed to serving the communities where we live and work. In fact, community service is a key part of our company charter,” said Evern Cooper, president of The UPS Foundation and vice president of UPS corporate relations. “Along with the PAGE Foundation, we have a shared interest in addressing educational needs in a united effort to improve the communities in Georgia,” Cooper added. ■

## PAGE Foundation Director Named

The PAGE Foundation has named John E. Varner III to the newly created position of director, effective May 1, according to Foundation President Tom Wommack. Varner, currently the president of Hearthstone Educational Services, served as a consultant to the Foundation for seven years prior to this appointment.



“We are very pleased that John accepted our invitation to lead the PAGE Foundation staff,” said Wommack. “During the past several years, he has assisted almost every Foundation program, cultivating a deep understanding of the opportunities and challenges confronting the organization. John is also a longstanding supporter of the Foundation dating back to his years at Georgia Power where he championed funding for the PAGE Foundation. He and Hearthstone Educational Services have been significant donors to the Foundation.”

Wommack said creation of the director’s position coincides with the reorganization of the Foundation, which will now include Foundation development, Future Educators of America in Georgia, the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon, the PAGE Academic Bowl for Middle Grades, Student Teacher Achievement Recognition (STAR), Foundation public relations, and coordination of the PAGE Foundation’s National Board Certification program.

Prior to Hearthstone’s creation, Varner served as the assistant to the vice president for educational affairs at Georgia Power Company. In that capacity, he directed the utility’s efforts to improve public education. Varner has been active in organizations promoting higher student achievement. In 1991 Varner and then-Car-

rollton School Superintendent Tom Upchurch launched the Next Generation School Project, a \$30 million systemic school improvement effort endorsed by then-Governor Zell Miller, former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, state legislators and leaders in higher education. In 1993 Varner was appointed chairman of the Georgia Council on Vocational Education by Governor Miller. In 1995 he was named chairman of the advisory council for the Governor’s pre-school program. Also in 1995 Varner was elected chairman of Communities in Schools of Atlanta, which works successfully to keep Atlanta public school students in school and headed toward graduation.

Varner was the first business person elected to serve on the board of directors for the Georgia School Superintendents Association. For three years he served as chairman of the Georgia Business Forum, a nonprofit organization created to build the next generation of Georgia business leaders among today’s gifted and talented students. John served on the Business Roundtable Education Working Group supporting the country’s top 200 chief executive officers and is a former trustee of the Atlanta International School, one of only four schools of its type in the country. He is the immediate past chair of the board of directors for the Center for the Advancement and Study of International Education. And he also served on the board of directors of the United States Academic Decathlon and The Howard School.

Varner is a Georgia native, a graduate of the University of Georgia and a former television reporter. He and his wife, Lynn, have two children and live in Sandy Springs. ■

# Honor Your Favorite Teacher

BY KATHY COX, STATE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

**M**y favorite teacher was Gary Fuller, who taught me history in the seventh and eighth grades at Lenape Junior High School in Doylestown, Penn. He made learning exciting and fun, and he had incredibly high standards.

It is important to understand that we did not receive letter grades from kindergarten to the sixth grade, just comments (this was in the 1970s). When I reached seventh grade, we began to get real grades, and I was anxious to live up to the standards of my three siblings, especially the brother closest to me, who had always made honor roll. Well, the first grade I received from Mr. Fuller was a “B-,” and the comment he wrote on my report card was “performing at ability.”

To this day I remember seeing that comment and thinking to myself, “Well, if he thinks this is my ability, I’m going to show him.” At the time, of course, I didn’t realize what I now know as a teacher, that he probably didn’t put a lot of thought into that comment. It was probably a stock one that he used over and over. I was convinced, however, that Mr. Fuller thought that I was a “B-” student, and I had so much respect for him that I was determined to show him that I was an “A” student.

I worked harder in his course than I had ever worked. We studied world history in the seventh grade and American History in the eighth grade. Whenever I had the chance, I wrote papers on Stonewall Jackson and other southern topics. Mr.



Fuller used to love to tease me about the South, because he knew that my parents were southern and Atlanta was my second home. I was so proud of my southern roots that my nickname became “The Georgia Peach.”

Mr. Fuller was a great role model and made learning exciting for his students. We were always challenged to think outside the box. Although we were in a junior high school, it was set up like the middle school model with teams of teachers. Mr. Fuller and our team of teachers took us on the Appalachian Trail for a three-day hike. That was just one example of the many field trips he planned for us to make learning exciting, and being in Pennsylvania in the center of so much history, he really made it come alive for us.

He also had a great sense of humor. I remember laughing a lot in his class, and I remember that he was very effective at putting pre-teenagers in their place when they got a little smart.

Mr. Gary Fuller was my favorite teacher and one of the reasons I became a teacher. ■

## National Board Certification Scholarship Deadline

**T**he PAGE Foundation will award a limited number of \$1,000 scholarships on a competitive basis to PAGE members pursuing National Board Certification (NBC) in June and again in September. The NBC scholarship application is currently available on the PAGE Foundation website, [www.pagefoundation.org](http://www.pagefoundation.org).

Candidates who are required to pay their NBC fees in September and wish to apply for a PAGE Foundation scholarship should submit a complete application by Aug. 15.

For more information on National Board Certification, contact John Varner at [jvarner@mindspring.com](mailto:jvarner@mindspring.com) or (404) 531-0891. ■

## PAGE Foundation Receives Donation from Equifax



PAGE Foundation Chair Curley M. Dossman Jr. of Georgia-Pacific (right) accepts a \$1,000 donation from Equifax Vice President Kirby Thompson (left), who also serves as a PAGE Foundation trustee. Dossman and Thompson are leaders in the Foundation’s \$1 million endowment campaign and ongoing efforts to raise money supporting the expansion of Foundation programs.

# PAGE Foundation Names Georgia's 2003 PAGE STAR Student and Teacher



2003 State PAGE STAR Student Evan Sussenbach (front row, left) poses for a photo with his STAR Teacher, Young Won, after receiving scholarships from: (back row, left to right) Nancy Chastain, market executive, Bank of America; Phil Jacobs, president, and Carolyn Lovett, senior director of external affairs, BellSouth Telecommunications.

and chair of the PAGE Foundation; Dr. Jeannie Weathersby, deputy state school superintendent; and Representative Bob Holms, chairman of the House Education Committee, as the finalists and their teachers were each honored with hand-blown glass star awards from Lillie Glassblowers.

The students competing for the honor included 17 who scored 1600 on a single administration of the SAT examination. Now in its 45th year, the STAR (Student Teacher Achievement Recognition) program has honored more than 18,500 students and their teachers for academic excellence.

This year's State PAGE STAR Student received a \$5,000 scholarship from BellSouth and a \$3,000 scholarship from Bank of America, while the State PAGE STAR Teacher received an award of \$2,500 from the Frances Wood Wilson Foundation. The Coca-Cola Company, which sponsored the reception and co-sponsored the banquet with the PAGE Foundation, presented all 24 finalists with a \$100 award.

**E**van Sussenbach, a senior at Columbus High School in Muscogee County, is Georgia's PAGE STAR student for 2003. He named Young Won, his Advanced Placement Calculus teacher, as his STAR teacher. Ashwin Rajendra, a senior at Augusta Preparatory Day School in Columbia County, was named first runner-up in the academic competition. He named Tim Shafer, his Advanced Placement Calculus teacher, as his STAR teacher.

The four were named April 30 at the State PAGE STAR Banquet held in Atlanta. Twenty-four of the state's top students were finalists in the event, which began earlier this year with the naming of more than 468 STAR students in the state's participating public and private high schools.

PAGE Foundation Director John Varner joined Governor Sonny Perdue; George Israel, president of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce; Curley M. Dossman Jr. of Georgia Pacific



Evan Sussenbach (left) and his teacher Mr. Young Won (right) await the announcement of the 2003 State PAGE STAR winner.

of \$500. PAGE President Preston Howard, a Marietta City educator, presented the First Runner-Up State PAGE STAR Student with a \$1,000 scholarship from The Coca-Cola Company and a \$1,000 scholarship from the PAGE Foundation.

At their district celebration, each of the 24 STAR finalists received a \$500 cash award from the Cecil B. Day Foundation. ■



Phil Jacobs (left), BellSouth president of Georgia operations and Carolyn Lovett (center), also of BellSouth, congratulate State PAGE STAR Student Evan Sussenbach.



First Runner-Up State PAGE STAR Student Ashwin Rajendra, from Columbia County, poses for a photo with Governor Sonny Perdue.



Governor Sonny Perdue addresses the STAR students, teachers, parents and sponsors attending the 2003 State PAGE STAR Banquet. Seated at the head table from left to right are: Representative Bob Holmes, chair of the House Education Committee; Wanda Barrs, chair of the State Board of Education; John Varner, director of the PAGE Foundation; Curley Dossman, chair of the PAGE Foundation; Mary Perdue, Georgia's First Lady; Elizabeth Brock, president of Pallets, Inc.; Blich Ann Bird, executive vice president of the Frances Wood Wilson Foundation; Bill Covington, key account manager, The Coca-Cola Company; and Nancy Chastain, market executive, Bank of America.





Chair of the PAGE Foundation Board of Trustees and President of the Georgia-Pacific Foundation Curley M. Dossman Jr. congratulates the students and teachers present as PAGE President Preston Howard, Marietta City Schools, looks on.



Mozelle Christian (left), first director of the STAR program, congratulates First Runner-Up Ashwin Rajendra.



2003 First Runner-Up State PAGE STAR Student, Ashwin Rajendra (left) with his STAR Teacher Tim Shafer (right).



Genny Tauxe, District 3A STAR Student from Druid Hills High School in DeKalb County, was one of 24 state finalists WSB-TV newscaster Jeff Doré interviewed at the state banquet.

# 2003 STAR Teachers—System Winners

## STAR DISTRICT 1:

System/High School	Teacher
Bartow County Woodland High School	Connie Smith
Bremen City Bremen High School	Carla Pollard
Calhoun City Calhoun High School	Sherry Blackwell
Carroll County Oak Mountain Academy	Wanda Johnson
Carrollton City Carrollton High School	*Jan Watts
Cartersville City Cartersville High School	Patrick Magee
Catoosa County Ringgold High School	Loraine Young
Chattooga County Chattooga High School	Eric Tucker
Chickamauga City Gordon Lee High School	Sharon Hoven
Chickamauga City Gordon Lee High School	Mary Ann O’Kelley
Dade County Dade County High School	James Gladson
Dalton City Dalton High School	Ava Wyatt
Floyd County Armuchee High School	Merrill Davies
Floyd County Armuchee High School	Nathan Davis
Floyd County Model High School	Alicia King
Gordon County Gordon Central High School	James England
Haralson County Haralson County High School	Charles Calhoun
Heard County Heard County High School	Paul Mixon
Murray County Murray County High School	Charles Longmire
Paulding County East Paulding High School	Veronica Cook
Polk County Cedartown High School	Christopher Reaves
Rome City Darlington School	R.Craig Schmidt
Trion City Trion High School	Susan McCain
Walker County Ridgeland High School	Krista Seckinger
Whitfield County Southeast Whitfield High School	Deborah Barto

## STAR DISTRICT 2:

System/High School	Teacher
Dawson County Dawson County High School	Sherry Browning

Fannin County Fannin County High School	Pamela Bruce
Gainesville City Gainesville High School	*Martha Thompson
Gilmer County Gilmer High School	Lynn Becker
Habersham County Habersham Central High School	Kathy Ausburn
Hall County North Hall High School	Jeff Chandler
Lumpkin County Lumpkin County High School	Lloyd Cupp
Pickens County Pickens High School	Kaye Chastain
Rabun County Rabun County High School	Sara Bartmes
Stephens County Stephens County High School	Scott Wilcher
Towns County Towns County Comprehensive School	Daren King
Union County Union County High School	Cathy Magrin
White County White County High School	Sherry Mayo
White County White County High School	Tina Wood

## STAR DISTRICT 3A:

System/High School	Teacher
Buford City Buford High School	Christian Hunnicutt
Cherokee County Etowah High School	Charlene Hunsucker
Cobb County Walton Comprehensive High School	*Robert Overstreet
Decatur City Decatur High School	Joseph Winterscheidt
Decatur City Decatur High School	Olivia Roller
DeKalb County Druid Hills High School	*Michael Nance
DeKalb County Lakeside High School	*David Coles
DeKalb County Marist High School	*Tom Longfield
Forsyth County South Forsyth High School	Kathryn Kupinski
Gwinnett County Duluth High School	*Carole Hunter
Gwinnett County Norcross High School	*Lynn Freeland
Gwinnett County Parkview High School	*Marsha Jackson
Marietta City Marietta High School	Marie Bidegain
Marietta City Marietta High School	Julie Tanner

## STAR DISTRICT 3B:

System/High School	Teacher
Atlanta City Pace Academy	*Timothy Horner
Atlanta City Pace Academy	*Jon Asborsen
Atlanta City The Westminster Schools	*Juan Egues
Atlanta City The Westminster Schools	*Jessica Bagby
Clayton County Jonesboro High School	Katrina Miller
Douglas County Alexander High School	Sara Leikin
Fayette County McIntosh High School	Douglas Austin
Fulton County Roswell High School	*Amy Price
Henry County Eagle’s Landing High School	Stephen Bain
Rockdale County Heritage High School	Jeanne Lee
Spalding County Spalding High School	Linda Browning

## STAR DISTRICT 4:

System/High School	Teacher
Banks County Banks County High School	John McGarity
Barrow County Winder-Barrow High School	Jeanette Phillips
Clarke County Cedar Shoals High School	*Anita Mitcheltree
Clarke County Clarke Central High School	*John Jameson
Commerce City Commerce High School	Johnnie Blair
Elbert County Elbert County Comprehensive High School	Nan Teasley
Franklin County Franklin County High School	Robert Lumpkin
Greene County Nathanael Green Academy	Gregory Keck
Hart County Hart County High School	Joanne Ridgway
Jackson County Jackson County Comprehensive High School	Miles Adams
Jefferson City Jefferson High School	Janet Schwartz
Madison County Madison County High School	Latana Coile
Morgan County Morgan County High School	Genia Bennett
Newton County Eastside High School	Julia Boyum
Newton County Eastside High School	Karen Booth





Newton County Newton High School	Sandra Manson
Oconee County Oconee County High School	Betty Jo Wallace
Oglethorpe County Oglethorpe County High School	Joy Sapp
Social Circle City Social Circle High School	Robert Dinwiddie
Walton County Monroe Area Comprehensive High School	Mindy Dess

### STAR DISTRICT 5:

System/High School	Teacher
Coweta County Northgate High School	Jeffrey Gordon
Harris County Harris County High School	Robin Gonye
Marion County Tri-County High School	Rachael Speegle
Meriwether County Flint River Academy	Kay Barnes
Muscogee County Columbus High School	** Young Won
Pike County Pike County High School	Cheryl Hammond
Schley County Schley County High School	David Bond
Taylor County Taylor County High School	Jack McGlaun
Thomaston-Upson County Upson-Lee High School	James Argroves
Troup County LaGrange High School	Earl Marsh

### STAR DISTRICT 6:

System/High School	Teacher
Baldwin County John Milledge Academy	Cissy Lane
Bibb County Central High School	Stanford Brown
Bleckley County Bleckley County High School	Charlie Porter
Butts County Jackson High School	Christa Miller
Crawford County Crawford County High School	R. Jeff Ikner
Crisp County Crisp County High School	Susan McKinney
Dodge County Dodge County High School	Charles Hernandez
Dooly County Dooly County High School	Deborah Heckwolf
Dublin City Dublin High School	Terry Kennedy
Houston County Warner Robins High School	*Pamela Stanesco
Jasper County Piedmont Academy	Johnny Smith

Jones County Jones County High School	Linda Bowden
Lamar County Lamar County High School	Scott Turner
Laurens County Trinity Christian School	Susan Frost
Macon County Macon County High School	Earlene Blue
Monroe County Mary Persons High School	Helen Anderson
Peach County Peach County High School	James Miles
Pulaski County Hawkinsville High School	Elliott Evans
Putnam County Putnam County High School	Tracy Davis
Twiggs County Twiggs County Middle-High School	Jimmy Williams
Wilcox County Wilcox County High School	John McCall
Wilkinson County Wilkinson County High School	Eleanor Angles

### STAR DISTRICT 7:

System/High School	Teacher
Burke County Burke County High School	Karen Reeves
Columbia County Augusta Preparatory Day School	*** Tim Shafer
Glascocock County Glascocock County Consolidated School	Tonya DePourcq
Hancock County John Hancock Academy	Susan Pound
Jefferson County Jefferson County High School	Patricia Easterlin
Jenkins County Jenkins County High School	Jean Gay
Johnson County Johnson County High School	Elaine Moorman
Lincoln County Lincoln County High School	Lena Robinson
McDuffie County Thomson High School	Anita Cummings
Richmond County Westminster Schools of Augusta	Laura Harris
Warren County Briarwood Academy	Rebecca Reese
Washington County Brentwood School	Michele Strickland
Washington County Washington County High School	Denise Pharis
Wilkes County Washington-Wilkes Comprehensive High School	Marsha Willis

### STAR DISTRICT 8:

System/High School	Teacher
Bryan County Richmond Hill High School	Elizabeth Ertle

Bulloch County Statesboro High School	Lynda Webb
Candler County Metter High School	Brad Owens
Chatham County Savannah Arts Academy	Terry Finlay
Effingham County South Effingham High School	*Terri Powers
Emanuel County Swainsboro High School	Dabney Edenfield
Evans County Pinewood Christian Academy	Tom Sollosi
Liberty County Liberty County High School	Kathryn Walden
Long County Long County High School	Cynthia Wells
Montgomery County Montgomery County High School	Jeanette Goff
Screven County Screven County High School	Tommie Evans
Tattnall County Tattnall County High School	Jan Oliver
Toombs County Robert Toombs Christian Academy	Ann Smith
Treutlen County Treutlen High School	Kregg Ricks
Vidalia City Vidalia High School	Charlotte Bowen
Wheeler County Wheeler County High School	Catherine Barker

### STAR DISTRICT 9:

System/High School	Teacher
Calhoun County Calhoun County High School	Deborah Goodson
Colquitt County Colquitt County High School	Jana Wear
Decatur County Grace Christian Academy	Michelle Kendrick
Dougherty County Deerfield-Windsor School	*Robert Trout
Early County Early County High School	Shirley Alexander
Grady County Cairo High School	Demetrius Harrison
Lee County Lee County High School	Sheila Smith
Miller County Miller County High School	Leigh Ann Walton
Mitchell County Westwood School	Betsy Caldwell
Pelham City Pelham City Schools	Chris Shaffer
Randolph County Randolph Southern School	Carrie Pierce
Seminole County Seminole County High School	Samuel Beachem





Stewart County Stewart-Quitman High School	David Davis
Sumter County Americus High School	Judith Cunningham
Terrell County Terrell Academy	Tina Ivey
Thomas County Brookwood School	Phil Danner
Thomasville City Thomasville High School	Lynn Stowers
Worth County Worth County High School	Karen Hancock

**STAR DISTRICT 10:**

System/High School	Teacher
Ben Hill County Fitzgerald High School	Alvin Strom Sr.
Berrien County Berrien High School	Michael Luke
Brooks County Brooks County High School	Roberta Magnasco
Clinch County Clinch County High School	Jerry Baldree
Coffee County Coffee County High School	Denise Steptoe

Cook County Cook County High School	Judy Green
Echols County Echols County High School	Lori Bennett
Irwin County Irwin County High School	Linda Kay Roberts
Lanier County Lanier County High School	Linda Wood
Lowndes County Valwood School	Cindy Pistelli
Telfair County Telfair County High School	Sara Morrison
Tift County Tift County High School	Mary Jane Tipper
Turner County Turner County High School	Vicki Sherling
Valdosta City Valdosta High School	*Gnann Moser

**STAR DISTRICT 11:**

Appling County Appling County High School	Mary Ann Ellis
Bacon County Bacon County High School	John Callinan

Brantley County Brantley County High School	Bonita Bullard
Camden County Camden County High School	Linda Williams
Charlton County Charlton County High School	Vivian Dickerson
Glynn County Glynn Academy Public High School	Heath Horton
Jeff Davis County Jeff Davis High School	Martha Hurley
McIntosh County McIntosh County Academy	Anna Gregory
Pierce County Pierce County High School	*Anna Lewis
Ware County Ware County Magnet School	Lizzy Sutton
Wayne County Wayne County High School	Betty Benner

- \* 2003 District Winner
- \*\* 2003 State PAGE STAR Teacher
- \*\*\* 2003 First Runner-Up State PAGE STAR Teacher

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# PAGE Foundation, Phi Delta Kappa and BellSouth Join Forces to Address Teacher Shortages

Two nationally known education associations and a Fortune 100 communication services corporation with a long history of support for public education have joined forces in an effort to ensure that Georgia classrooms will be staffed by adequate numbers of highly qualified, well-prepared teachers now and in the future. Phi Delta Kappa International, the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE) Foundation and BellSouth Corporation will work together with local school boards and school administrators to establish Future Educators of America in Georgia (FEA in GA) chapters in middle and high schools throughout the state.

On March 5, in conjunction with the FEA in GA “Day on Capitol Hill,” the PAGE Foundation, Phi Delta Kappa International and BellSouth Corporation launched a campaign to strengthen the state’s 63 existing FEA in GA chapters and ultimately create new chapters in every high school in the state. Governor Sonny Perdue, BellSouth President of Georgia Operations Phil Jacobs, PAGE Foundation Chair Curley M. Dossman Jr., Phi Delta Kappa International Director and District VII Representative Christian Chéreau and other dignitaries



During his remarks, Governor Sonny Perdue encouraged the young people gathered for FEA in GA Day on Capitol Hill to pursue a career in the field of education and talked about the important role teachers play in our lives.



North Gwinnett High School’s FEA in GA chapter, led by Advisor Jennifer Evans Garcia, was awarded a \$1,000 grant from the PAGE Foundation through a donation by BellSouth. (Front row, left to right) PAGE Foundation President Tom Wommack, PAGE Foundation Chair Curley M. Dossman Jr., Governor Sonny Perdue, FEA in GA advisor Jennifer Evans Garcia, BellSouth President of Georgia Operations Phil Jacobs, Gwinnett County Schools Superintendent J. Alvin Wilbanks, BellSouth Business Systems Sales Manager Reva Walker, and Phi Delta Kappa International Director and District VII Representative Christian Chéreau are joined by chapter members (second row, left to right) Denise Bruce, Keri McKee, Emily Oliver, Sara Waddle, Kristin Usher, Lauren Wilson, Keegan Soncha and (third row, left to right) Matt Anderson, Emily Davis, Samantha Abdo, Megan Grabiak, Erica Centurioni, Elise Tanner, Kate Thompson and Lacey Ngyuen following the presentation.

participated in ceremonies to launch FEA in GA and presented grants to existing FEA chapters committed to growth in services to aspiring teachers. Perdue, Jacobs and Chéreau addressed the audience of more than 200 high school students, encouraging them to pursue careers in education.

FEA in GA chapters statewide were encouraged to submit applications describing how they would utilize the grants to increase membership and improve the quality of teacher preparation programs. North Gwinnett High School, led by advisor Jennifer Evans Garcia, was named the grand prize winner with a \$1,000 grant. Jonesboro High School, led by advisor Cindy Hall, and Griffin High School, led by advisors Hugh Canterbury and Wanda Stuckey, each won \$500 grants. Jeff Davis High School, led by advisor Deidra Tanner; Lowndes County High School, led by advisor Anglia Webb-Crosby; Bacon County High School, led by advisors Dr. Gail Williams and Gwen Tyre; and Burke County High

School, led by advisor David Brown, were each the recipients of a \$250 grant.

The mission of FEA is to provide mid-



Students peruse some of the scrapbook entries in the FEA in GA Annual Scrapbook Contest. This year Lowndes County High School’s FEA in GA chapter, advised by Anglia Webb-Crosby, was named as Best Overall Presentation winner and Booker T. Washington High School’s FEA in GA chapter, advised by Juanita Suttle, won in the Most Creative category.

dle and high school students with a meaningful and substantive means for the exploration of teaching as a viable career option. The program promotes the ideal of professionalism in education and works to offset anticipated teacher shortages in Georgia and in other states. Continued increases in the Georgia school population through births and migration, class size reduction mandates and attrition of teachers through retirement and career change will increase the demand for teachers within the state, and FEA in GA is seen by its promoters as a means by which school systems can identify and develop capable future teachers from among local students.

The day's activities also included a panel



Teacher and Phi Delta Kappa representative Gloria Davis-McArthur (second from left) fields a question from a student during the panel discussion. Joining Davis-McArthur to discuss issues and careers in the field of education were Blue Ribbon Panel participants Joni Newman (far left), a teacher and Phi Delta Kappa representative; Bobbi Ford (second from right), former Georgia Teacher of the Year and a National Board Certified teacher; and Kaysheila Mitchell (far right), National Board Certified teacher. Dr. Rosemary DePaolo (not pictured), president of Georgia College and State University and PAGE Foundation trustee, served as moderator.



During the day, students were able to visit with several recruiters from various colleges to learn more about careers in education. Here, North Georgia College representative Rebecca Schacht (far left) answers students' questions.



**PAGE Foundation Chair Curley M. Dossman Jr. (left) accepts a Senate resolution acknowledging FEA in GA Day on Capitol Hill from Senator Jack Hill (right) of Reidsville.**



**BellSouth President of Georgia Operations Phil Jacobs drew from personal experience as he described to students the positive and profound influence several of his teachers had on his life.**

discussion during which noted educators shared insights and advice regarding careers in education. Students were given the opportunity to discuss their educational interests with panel participants Dr. Rosemary DePaolo, president of Georgia College and State University and PAGE Foundation trustee; Gloria Davis-McArthur,

teacher and Phi Delta Kappa representative; Bobbi Ford, former Georgia Teacher of the Year and a National Board Certified teacher; Kaysheila Mitchell, National Board Certified teacher; and Joni Newman, a teacher and Phi Delta Kappa representative. ■

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# Gwinnett County's Berkmar High School Is 2003 PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon State Champion

This year's PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon State Champion and Division I (large school) winner is Gwinnett County's Berkmar High School, coached by IV Bray. Chatham County's Savannah Arts Academy, coached by Marilyn Tuten, is the Division II (small school) champion. The announcement came at the GAD Awards Banquet, the culminating event of the two-day academic competition held Feb. 21 and 22 at Berkmar High School in Gwinnett County. Berkmar High School's team scored the highest points overall in Divisions I and II and represented Georgia at the United States Aca-

ademic Decathlon National Finals in Erie, Penn., in April. DeKalb County's Lakeside High School, coached by Mercedes Paxton was first runner-up in Division I, and Muscogee County's Columbus High School, coached by Lina Yates, Jan Carter and Tracy Spencer, was second runner-up in Division I. In Division II, Richmond County's A.R. Johnson, coached by Sherry Fleming, was first runner-up, with Carroll County's Villa Rica High School, coached by Cynthia Cox and Sarah Triplett, as second runner-up.

More than 200 high school students, representing 20 school districts, competed in the academic event. During the competition, students were tested in six content areas: economics, art, language and literature, mathematics, social science and music. In addition, students earned points individually in three communication events: public speaking, a personal interview and a written essay. The program is unique because each nine-member team is made up of three "A" students, three "B" students and three "C" students. Each year the program features a different overall curriculum topic. The topic this year was "Understanding the Natural World."

On Saturday afternoon, students participated in the exciting Super Quiz Oral Relay, sponsored by Apple Computer Inc. During the relay, team members competed in a quiz bowl format, keying in answers to questions regarding this year's topic, "The Blue Planet—Beneath the Surface." Cook County High, coached by Pat James and Becky Futch, was named this year's Apple Computer Super Quiz Oral Relay Champion; Gwinnett County's Berkmar High School, coached by IV Bray, was first runner-up; and Polk County's Cedartown High School, coached by Dale Tuck and Vicki Mayes; and Muscogee County's Columbus High School, coached by Lina Yates and Jan Carter, tied for second runner-up.

The decathlon ended with the PAGE GAD Awards Banquet, during which the highest-scoring students were awarded both team and individual medals in the various categories, and the state champion was announced. This year Howard Stroud, founding state director of the Georgia Academic Decathlon, was honored during a special presentation at the banquet. In honor of his pioneering efforts on behalf of the Decathlon, the trophy awarded to the state championship team was officially named the Howard Stroud Award.

The PAGE Foundation, Apple Computer Inc., the Georgia Power Foundation, the Georgia Department of Education, the Coca-Cola Company and the Motorola Foundation sponsored the 17th annual PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon. Gwinnett County Schools served as host. ■

## Berkmar High School Captures Division I Rookie Team of the Year at National Finals

This year's USAD National Championship competitions, held on April 23-26 in Erie, Penn., were filled with challenge and excitement for Berkmar High School. Of the 37 teams that participated, Berkmar clinched the spot as Division I Rookie Team of the Year. Coached by IV Bray, the team had an admirable overall showing as well as individual accomplishments including Patrick Bailey's bronze medal in math and the team's high scorer, Patrick Harazin, who won a \$500 scholarship.



(Left to right) IV Bray, Stephen Israel, Jon Dees, Lively Lie, Patrick Bailey, Catharine Luo, Patrick Harazin, Kevin Tan, Neerak Verma and Ashiq Lakhani.



Gwinnett County's Berkmar High School decathletes celebrate their victory as the 2003 PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon State Champions. Team participants include (back row, left to right) (coach) IV Bray, Kevin Tan, Neeraj Verma, Patrick Bailey, Stephen Israel, Ashiq Lakani, Jon Dees and (front row, left to right) Catharine Luo, Patrick Harazin and Lively Lie.

PAGE Foundation President Tom Wommack (right) offers his congratulations to Georgia Academic Decathlon Founding State Director Howard Stroud (left) following the announcement that the trophy awarded to the state championship team has been designated the Howard Stroud Award.



The audience at the GAD Banquet heard prepared speech presentations by Central High School's Jayanthi Narain (above) in the honors division, Cedartown High School's Brandon Crowley (upper right) in the scholastic division and Columbus High School's Jeff Nelson (lower right) in the varsity division. Narain also received an award for highest overall individual score in the honors division; Jeff Nelson was also honored as having the highest overall individual score in the varsity division.



## 2003 PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon continued



Chatham County's Savannah Arts Academy was named the Division II (small school) Decathlon Champion. Team members include (back row, left to right) Kathryn Bernard, Mason Lai, Monika Warchol, Philip Freeman, Hayden Barnes, Evan Painter and (front row, left to right) Marilyn Tuten (coach) and Robbi Main (not pictured, Amber Montgomery).

Presenters Tamara Coleman Nash, senior manager, community programs, Georgia-Pacific Corporation (far left) and (far right) Tom Wommack, PAGE Foundation president, are joined by DeKalb County's Lakeside High School, first runner-up in Division I (large schools). Team members are (back row, left to right) William Flanders, Kerry Hart and (front row, left to right) Mercedes Paxton (coach), Melissa Waitsman, Cathryn Testerman, Marci Halberg, Dan Kasriel, Michael Frisbie and David Chapman.



First runner-up in Division II (small schools) was Richmond County's A.R. Johnson High School. Team members include (back row, left to right) Kristoffer Thompson, Drew Petry, Robert Greene, Richard Wirth and Sherry Fleming (coach) and (front row, left to right) Perry Zheng, Jenelle Walker, Natascha Dailey, Amanda Khidirow and Ashley Dunn. Khidirow was also recognized as having the highest overall individual score in the scholastic division.

Cook County High decathletes, coached by Pat James and Becky Futch, accepted their award as this year's Apple Computer Super Quiz Oral Relay Champion. Pictured left to right are (back row) Becky Futch (coach), Pat James (coach), Ian Rowsell, Shane Martin, Melissa Murdoch, Rebecca Fussell, Jeff Sowell, Justin Stedham and Josh Cowart, and (front row) Christa Carroll, Brandon Ratts, Christine Newman, Apple Computer Senior Engineer Tommy Hann (presenter), Ceasar Lopez and Nicole Futch (mascot).



# UGA SPAGE Hosts Interview Clinic

Students learn interview tips and strategies from local school personnel



Valdon Daniel, Principal of Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School in Clarke County



UGA students listen as panelists answer their questions about interviewing strategies.



Dr. Gayle Rogers, personnel director for Clarke County Schools, offering advice to the students

On Feb. 19, the University of Georgia Student PAGE (SPAGE) chapter hosted an interview clinic for students preparing to find that perfect teaching job. After being treated to a complimentary pizza dinner, the standing-room-only crowd was given a brief overview of SPAGE and its benefits by PAGE Director of Student Groups Mary Ruth Oliver. Oliver was followed by Ken Hansing, student affairs counselor for UGA's Career Center, who briefed the students on the résumé services offered by his department.

Students listened to interview tips from a panel of local school personnel. The panelists included Dr. George Dougherty, principal of Oglethorpe County Elementary School; Dr. Peggy Dagley, principal of Danielsville Elementary School in Madison County; Valdon Daniel, principal of Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School in Clarke County; and Dr. Gayle Rogers, personnel director for Clarke County Schools. The panel was moderated by Jimmy Jordan, PAGE membership services representative for District 10. Panelists provided advice on topics ranging from interview attire to possible interview questions. In addition to offering their comments, panelists fielded questions from the audience. The students were pleased with the insight and information provided in the session.

Serving as hostesses for the evening were UGA SPAGE officers Mandy Gunter and Ellen Marett and UGA SPAGE advisor Ansley Greene, who teaches at Cleveland Road Elementary School in Clarke County. ■

## PAGE Foundation FEA in GA to Hold First Annual Summer Institute for Prospective Teachers

Future Educators of America in Georgia (FEA in GA) will hold its first annual Summer Institute for Prospective Teachers at Georgia College and State University (GC&SU) in Milledgeville on June 9-11, 2003. Modeled after Phi Delta Kappa International's (PDK) National Summer Institute, the three-day event will offer high school students the opportunity to explore teaching as a career. In addition, the Institute will provide sessions to both students and FEA advisors that will focus on methods to build and strengthen FEA in GA chapters.

The Summer Institute, sponsored by the PAGE Foundation, BellSouth, The UPS Foundation, Phi Delta Kappa International

and Georgia College and State University, will feature keynote speakers such as Lorraine Johnson, 2003 Georgia Teacher of the Year and National Teacher of the Year finalist, Chauncey Veatch, 2002 National Teacher of the Year, Dr. Rosemary DePaolo, president of GC&SU and a PAGE Foundation trustee, Phil Jacobs, BellSouth President of Georgia Operations and others.

Invitations are being mailed to all FEA in GA chapters. If you feel your FEA chapter is not on our mailing list and would like to know more about the Institute, please contact state FEA Director Mary Ruth Oliver at [maryruth@pagefoundation.org](mailto:maryruth@pagefoundation.org) or (888) 413-1078. ■

## West Georgia SPAGE Chapter Gives Books to Local Children

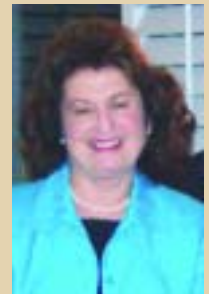
As part of its ongoing Holiday Book Give-Away, the State University of West Georgia (SUWG) chapter of SPAGE hosted two groups of local students on campus in Carrollton last December. Each of the 18 youngsters who attended received \$25 worth of self-selected books to read and enjoy. One group of 13 came from New Hope Children's Village and the other group, shown below, was from the Carrollton Housing Authority AEP (Abstinence Education Program). In addition, Toys for Tots in Carrollton received children's books valued at \$80.

Pictured right with their new books are (left to right): Brien Thomas, Antonio North, Rickey Long, LaQuarn North and Casey Mitchell. The two faculty advisors for SPAGE are Dr. Jill Mizell and Dr. Ron Reigner, both from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the College of Education at SUWG.



## PAGE Foundation Honors Meriwether County Educator with Special STAR Award

Flint River Academy educator Kay Barnes, of Woodbury, was presented with a special award at the recently held PAGE STAR (Student Teacher Achievement Recognition) District 5 Banquet in Columbus, Ga. PAGE STAR students are chosen on the basis of their SAT scores and class ranking. The student then chooses the teacher who has had the most impact on his/her academic career. Barnes has, once again, been honored as a STAR teacher by one of her students, thus marking the 20th such recognition during her teaching career. Barnes was presented with a clock commemorating her outstanding achievement. The recognition event was coordinated by District Chair Sue Nolan of EXIDE Technologies, located in Columbus, Ga. Now in its 45th year, the STAR program has honored more than 18,500 students and their teachers for academic excellence.



**Kay Barnes**



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Pictured above is Patsy Bryan, a veteran teacher who served as system representative in White County for 10 years. Patsy continues to be a PAGE member on the retired roster.

## Attention PAGE Members

Watch your mailboxes for your 2003-2004 membership renewal forms. You can use this form to make any changes to your personal information (name, address, phone number, school, email address, payment type, etc.) so your records remain up-to-date and accurate.

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McDuffie County, Thomson  
5-8 p.m.

**Thursday, Oct. 2**  
Southeast Georgia  
Sybil's Restaurant, Jesup  
5-8 p.m.

**Thursday, Oct. 9**  
North Georgia  
Sugar Hill Elementary School,  
Hall County, Gainesville  
5-8 p.m.

**Tuesday, Oct. 21**  
Southwest Georgia  
Colquitt County High School,  
Moultrie  
5-8 p.m.

**Saturday, Oct. 25**  
Central Georgia  
Bonaire Middle School,  
Houston County, Bonaire  
9 a.m.-2 p.m.

9-10 a.m.  
Registration/Entertainment

10 a.m.-12 p.m.  
State School Superintendent  
Kathy Cox and Staff (Invited)

12-2 p.m.,  
Lunch  
Governor Sonny Perdue (Invited)

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## Looping: A Different View of Classroom Organization

BY DR. EDIE BELDEN

Looping, the practice of advancing a teacher or team of teachers from one grade level to the next with a class, has become popular in Europe, Japan and Australia over the past several decades. The teacher(s) and the class move as a unit to the next grade level. This type of classroom organization was described in 1913 by the U.S. Department of Education and has subsequently been named teacher rotation, two-cycle teaching, student-teacher progression and multi-year instruction. At the end of the pre-determined cycle, the teacher or team goes back to the beginning grade level in the loop cycle and starts with a new class. The loop cycle can be any length, but the most common in the United States is two years. In Europe, particularly Italy and Germany, a teacher will stay with a class for four to eight years. Three- and four-year loops are usually practiced in Japan.

With many children coming to school lacking stable family relationships and few opportunities to develop a lasting and trusting relationship with an adult, the concept of looping has value both as a way to improve learning and to strengthen social and psychological bonds with students.

### Advantages of Looping

Teachers involved in this type of classroom organization cite many benefits. One of the greatest advantages is the extra time it gives teacher(s) and students to know each other. In looping, proponents argue that teachers can better know the weakness and strengths of students and more easily assess the best learning style for each student. It is also thought that teachers can also more easily determine whether each student's learning of skills and concepts is emerging, in progress or mastered. Students can also better understand their teachers. They become familiar with classroom rules, routines, grading procedures, instructional strategies and

the personality of their teacher. Teachers estimate that they gain approximately one month to six weeks of instructional time in the second year because there is no new teacher/student adjustment period.

Knowing his/her students greatly improves a teacher's ability to plan and teach lessons and provides more academic continuity for students. Curriculum can be tailored to fit individual needs, and instructional strategies like thematic units, cooperative learning and learning centers can be used. Teachers have more flexibility in determining when a concept should be introduced and can better estimate the classroom time needed for instruction. If a student does not acquire a concept or skill when it is first taught, there is time for a second teaching of the skill or concept. Looping requires a teacher to become familiar with content and skills beyond the grade level he/she is teaching because the range of student academic achievement broadens over the looping cycle.

Teachers also report that social interactions, discipline, classroom participation and feelings of trust among the students and with the teacher are improved. Students feel safer because they know their classmates and they know their teacher. Students are more likely to ask questions when they don't understand the material because of their comfort level with and acceptance of each other. Teachers often report that students confide in them about family matters, sibling problems and their successes and disappointments. Discipline generally improves because students understand the limits of behavior and the consequences of misbehavior. Because students are with the same teacher the next year, the value of correcting one's behavior soon becomes evident to even the youngest of learners.

The concept of staying with the same classmates for two years has benefits for



students beyond curriculum and instruction. The support some students receive from their classmates and teacher(s) is often the most stabilizing influence in their lives. The classroom is where they can build self-confidence, reduce their personal anxiety and build camaraderie because of the shared experiences.

Lastly, looping focuses on the individual classroom instead of the entire school so implementation is easy. It is not necessary for an entire grade or an entire school to participate. All that is necessary for a looping class to be established is two teachers or a team of teachers that agree to teach the same students for a pre-determined number of years. No special rooms, curricula, equipment or supplies are needed.

www.ascd.org/readingroom/edupdate/1998/1mar.html; www.postgazette.com/regionstate/2001003loop3.asp; www.education-world.com/a\_admin120.shtml; academics.uww.edu/cni/Looping.html; K. Rasmussen, Looping: Discovering the Benefits of Multiyear Teaching, *Education Update*, 40, March, 1998.

**Disadvantages of Looping**

Looping, like other instructional practices, also has its disadvantages and limitations. The primary concern parents have is that there will be a mismatch between the teacher and the student. Mismatches occur when: (1) either the student or teacher or both have strong personality traits, (2) the instructional style of the teacher does not complement the student's learning style and (3) the teacher's breadth of expertise does not encompass the wide range of learning experiences needed by a classroom of students over multiple years. The greatest concern of teachers is that they will have a difficult student and/or parent(s) that



must be dealt with for multiple years. Inexperienced teachers have concerns about the breadth of content knowledge, the repertoire of teaching and classroom skills and the pacing of instruction for optimum learning.

Students also have concerns. Newcomers often find it difficult to become part of the group. Class experiences like class jokes, favorite class stories or books and playground interactions create an esprit de corps among classmates that impedes acceptance of new students into the group. A student coming into a class after a year or more of looping may have difficulty in forming relationships with other students because of cliques and friendship circles. Students also report that they were not allowed the opportunity to get to know other students in their same grade because they were always with the classmates within their loop. Students in upper elementary and middle school felt looping did not facilitate the making of friends during school hours and school activities. They did not have friends outside their class to talk with during lunch or in the media center.

Students also report feeling abandoned when a teacher is moved to another school, takes another position or leaves for personal reasons before the looping cycle is complete. Some express concern about adjusting to a larger environment, e.g. middle school or a new grade that does not have looping. Both teachers and students express feelings of difficulty in separating at the end of the looping cycle.

[www.post-gazette.com/region-state/20001003loop3.asp](http://www.post-gazette.com/region-state/20001003loop3.asp); [www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed414098.html](http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed414098.html); Joan Gaustad, "Implementing Looping," *Eric Digest*, December 1998, EDO-EA-98-7; C. Forsten, J. Grant, and I. Richardson, Multiage and Looping; Borrowing from the Past, *NAESP Principal Magazine*, March 1999.

#### Review of the Research

There is limited research on looping and a dearth of quantitative research at the statistically significant .05 level supporting cognitive or affective growth in children who have been part of a looping program. Most of the research on looping has been included in research on multiage grouping, continuous progress programs and developmentally appropriate curricula; therefore, the pluses and minuses of looping cannot be specifically identified. Most of the research supporting looping

is the product of teachers' perceptions who have been involved in this type of classroom organization. Teachers consistently report that stronger bonds are made with students and their families which improves students' attitudes towards learning, attendance and retention in school. Teachers perceive they do a better job of individualizing instruction and in meeting psychological and emotional needs because they know personal information about each student that may impact his/her life and readiness to learn.

#### Beginning Looping in a School

Looping in a school should be presented as an option and not a requirement for students, teachers and parents. Alternatives should be established before the class begins for any student wishing to transfer out of the class. If there is a demand for looping, a waiting list of students and procedures for joining the looping class should be established.

Teachers should be interviewed and expectations of the teacher to commit to the full cycle of looping explained. They may need to be involved in staff development that acquaints them with the stages of child development or the next grade level's curriculum. Principals

must be committed to the idea of looping and work with the community, especially the parents of the students in the looping class, in understanding that grade levels are not the measuring sticks of learning.

Looping must reflect the diversity of the school and community. Looping classrooms should not be targeted toward the gifted, remedial or problematic students. Because of the instructional challenges associated with grade-specific curriculum, standards and assessment, most looping classrooms in the United States are a two-year cycle.

#### Looping and Educational Reform

Educators today are trying to meet the needs of the most diverse student population in history. Looping is not the consummate answer to educational reform, but it does provide an instructional design that is useful in meeting some students' needs. There is no one answer to providing an education for all students. Different instructional designs, such as looping, must be tried and researched. Hopefully, as the body of research grows, educators will be able to determine which practices work best in a given set of circumstances. ■

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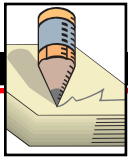
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# Recruiting Quality Teachers and Administrators in Georgia

## A Professorial Look at Georgia's Teacher Shortage

BY DR. MICHAEL D. RICHARDSON & DR. T. C. CHAN

Studies indicate a serious nationwide shortage of quality teachers and school administrators. Georgia is no exception and is experiencing the same problem. Teachers are in great demand in areas of mathematics, science and special education. Both teachers and administrators at the high school level are more difficult to recruit than K-8 personnel.

An investigation of how Georgia school districts are addressing the problem of teacher and administrator shortages and what recruitment techniques are being used to attract educators is the focus of this study.

This research study was conducted during the 2000-2001 school year, with 66 of the 180 school districts in Georgia participating. The school districts' enrollments ranged from 291 to 116,670. Even though only one-third of the school districts responded, they represent an ade-

quate distribution of the school districts by size and growth.

Participating school districts responded to a researcher-designed survey about basic facts and figures of school district employment practices.

### Difficulties in Recruitment

School district staffs were asked to respond to the extent of difficulty in recruiting teachers and administrators at different school levels. The data indicate recruitment of teachers and administrators at the high school level is more difficult than at the middle and elementary levels, and it is more difficult to recruit teachers than administrators at all levels.

The teaching areas identified by district level staff as being the most difficult areas in which to recruit teachers are special education, science, mathematics, foreign language and language arts (Chart 1). These

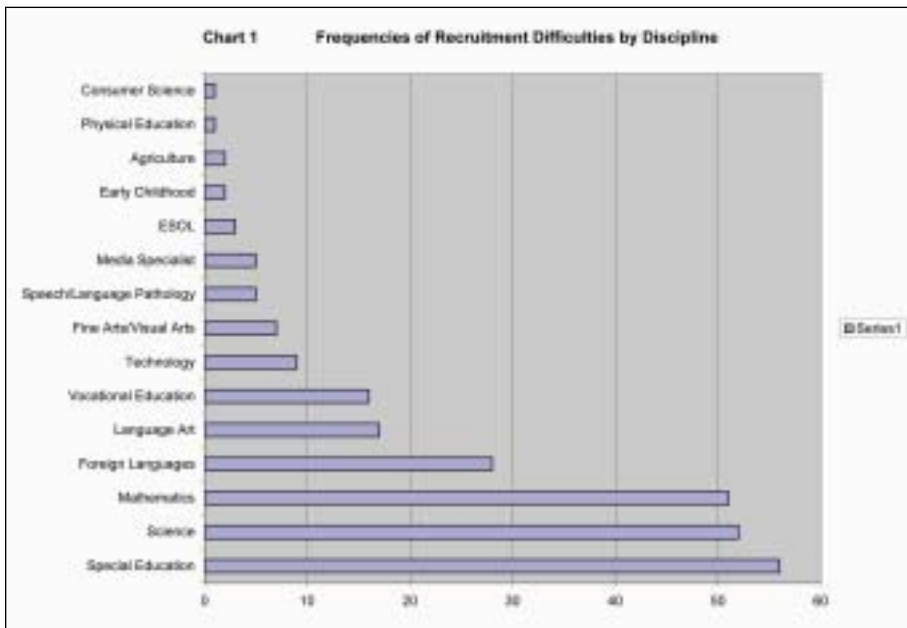
findings are in agreement with national surveys conducted in the last two years.

### Recruiting Practices of School Districts

A review of the professional literature identified eight techniques most frequently used by school districts in recruiting teachers and administrators. The recruitment techniques are newspaper/magazine job advertisement, online job advertisements, searching online resumés, professional associations, job fairs, school district websites, in-house job announcements and recruitment at universities. Data from this study indicate that the three most frequently used recruitment techniques by Georgia school districts are online job advertisements (93.9 percent), recruitment at universities (83.3 percent) and in-house job announcements (80.3 percent). As shown by the data, Georgia recruitment practices mirror national practices, including a high utilization of technology (Chart 2).

### Incentives Offered by School Districts

To attract quality teachers and school administrators, school districts offer incentives to potential candidates in addition to basic salaries as a significant part of their recruitment plan. Some of these incentives include medical insurance, dental insurance, professional liability coverage, retirement plan, local salary supplement, professional travel fund, vacation leave, sick leave, sabbatical leave, personal leave, merit pay, moving expenses, housing allowance, bonus pay, school district vehicles and professional development opportunities. For purposes of this research study, Georgia school district staffs were asked to identify all the incentives used as part of their recruitment effort. The



most frequently identified incentives were local salary supplement (90.9 percent), sick leave (90.9 percent), personal leave (83.3 percent), retirement plan (81.8 percent), medical insurance (80.3 percent), and professional development opportunities (80.3 percent) (Chart 3).

### Strategies to Address Teacher and Administrator Shortages

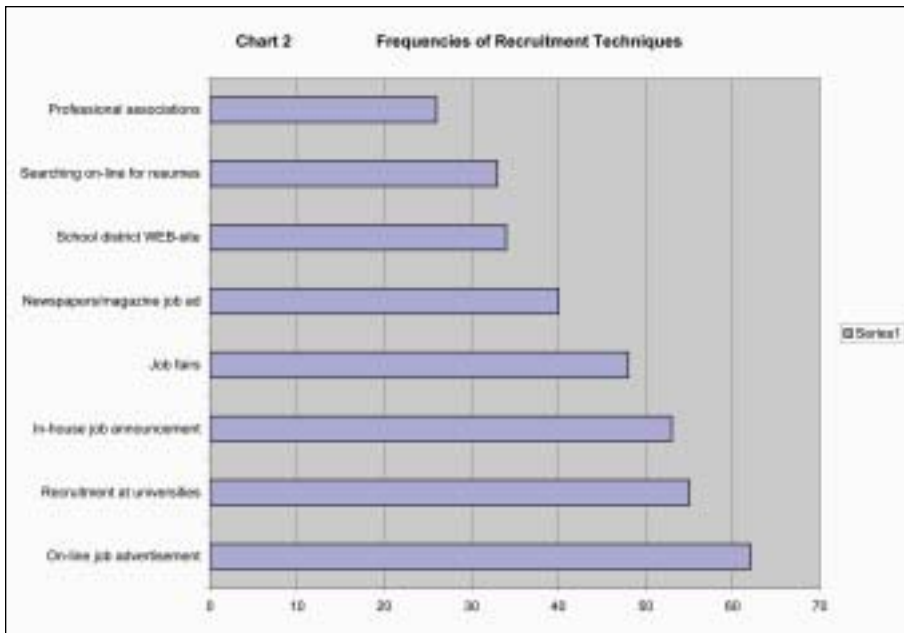
Some school districts are using additional recruitment strategies to address the problem of teacher and administrator shortages. The most frequently reported strategy reported by school districts is the “grow-our-own plan,” which is being used or is under consideration for use by 63.6 percent of the school districts participating in the study. School district officials reported that this strategy offered more reliable results. Other strategies used to attract professional personnel are salary increases (25.8 percent), enhancement of benefits (19.7 percent), lowering the selection criteria (4.5 percent) and use of headhunters (1.5 percent). As evidenced by the data, most school districts seem unwilling to lower their selection criteria in recruiting qualified teachers and administrators and would rather manage their own recruitment rather than assign it to an external headhunter.

Other ways of addressing the shortage problem include hiring teachers and administrators through alternative and probationary certification, creating a positive working environment to support teaching, administration and scheduling recruiting activities early in the school year.

### Recruiting Trends in Georgia Public Schools

Trends for recruiting teachers and administrators are noticeable when the data from the participating school districts are analyzed. The school districts are more likely to recruit graduates of Georgia universities. Even though the tendency is not strong (54.7 percent recruited teachers and 52.2 percent recruited administrators), the findings indicate that Georgia graduates with education majors stand a better chance of employment than those educated outside of the state.

The number of teachers being hired each year is increasing. The new teachers are hired to replace retired and resigned personnel, as well as to meet the needs of growth and class-size mandates. In contrast, school districts recruited fewer school administrators last year. In the 2000-2001



school year, a total of 198 administrators retired (118) and resigned (80), but only 158 new administrators were hired as replacements. This reduction in force is due to budgetary constraints, difficulty in identifying qualified candidates for school administrative positions and public pressure to downsize the administrative structure. To manage this shortage of administrative assistance, central office

administrators are often assigned to assume administrative duties at the school level.

### Summary

School districts find it more difficult to recruit teachers than school administrators, especially teachers in critical areas. Difficulty in recruiting increases as the school level goes up. Common practices employed by school districts in recruit-

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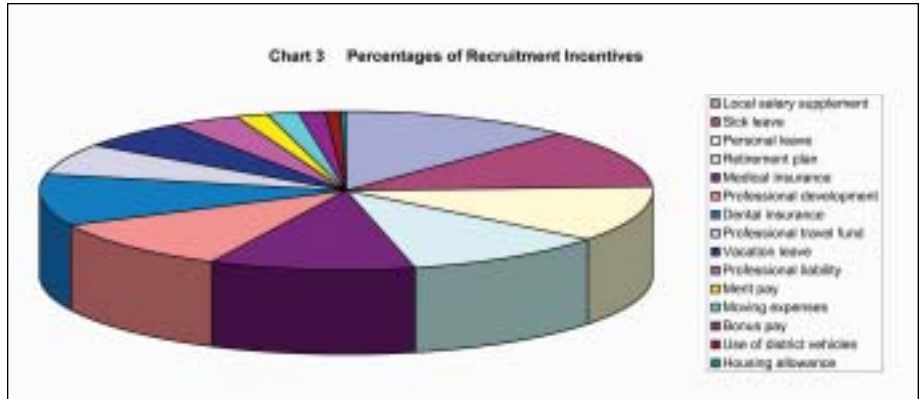
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ing teachers and administrators are online job advertisement, in-house job announcement and recruitment at universities. Recruitment incentives offered by school districts seem to focus on increasing local salary supplements and benefits. Despite these efforts, most of the school districts agree that the best strategy for recruiting qualified teachers and administrators is to grow their own. While school districts in Georgia plan to hire more teachers, the tendency to hire fewer administrators is likely in the immediate future. Hiring fewer administrators is the result of institutional reorganization, but with continued enrollment growth in Georgia, more school administrators will be needed. Trends and practices displayed by school districts in Georgia to recruit quality teachers and administrators are clear indications that Georgia school districts have found their own unique ways to address the problem of teacher and administrator shortages.

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This research study was conducted by Drs. Michael D. Richardson and T.C. Chan. They are solely responsible for the research design, collection of data and reported findings. Any questions or comments about the study should be emailed directly to them at the following addresses: [mdrich@gasou.edu](mailto:mdrich@gasou.edu) and/or [tchan@kennesaw.edu](mailto:tchan@kennesaw.edu).

### Introducing the Researchers

*Dr. Michael D. Richardson, professor of educational leadership and coordinator of doctoral program, Georgia Southern University, was a classroom teacher, high school principal and curriculum director of public school systems in Tennessee. He is interested in research on the principalship, and administrative and leadership theories.*

*Dr. T. C. Chan, professor of educational leadership and coordinator of doctoral program, Kennesaw State University, was a classroom teacher, an assistant school principal, a school principal and a central office administrator. His research interests include educational planning, facility planning, school business administration, school finance and international education.* ■

See the next issue of  
**PAGE ONE** for more information  
on teacher retention.

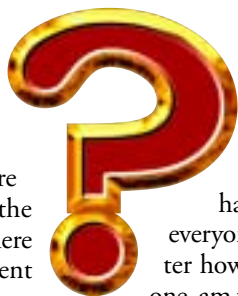




# Why Did You Become a Teacher?

BY MICHELLE GUNNIN

I have a question for you. Why did you become a teacher? Think about it for a moment. If you had to answer that question, what would your answer be?



The answer would vary from person to person. There probably wouldn't be many who say that it was for the money or the prestige. Some may answer job security; there will always be a need for teachers. That is a true statement and a valid answer. But I think the most common answer for those of us who teach would be: "To make a difference in the lives of children." It may be that you have forgotten that part of the job over the years, but if you try to brush the cobwebs off and remember your younger, more idealistic days, you can still feel the desire to change the world.

However, over time reality sets in and we lose sight of why we started this job in the first place. Burnout comes along, and we realize we are tired. We are overworked and underpaid. We are expected to work miracles with students who aren't motivated to learn without the help or support of parents. We are lost in paperwork and test scores. Our society seems to be leading our students away from the principles we are trying to teach. Then the politicians step in and try to "fix" the educational system—without even consulting those of us who work in it day in and day out. According to them, it seems maybe we teachers are part of, or maybe even all of, the problem. It's enough to make you pull your hair out if you have any left. With all of this, it is easy to lose sight of the big picture—teaching and training children to be successful and productive adults who contribute to society. As teachers we need to let our students know that learning can be fun and that education has a greater purpose than just increasing test scores.

Those who make the policies and laws have limited our vision. We have been put into a box. We have a choice as to how we can handle being in this box. We can sit here and complain about the box to each other. Of course, we're all in the box together and none of us seem to be trying to get out, but somehow it just feels better to share the misery. Or we can sit down in the box and refuse to follow the rules of the box. We most likely will be kicked out of the box if we make this choice. Another choice we have is to quietly go about making adjustments to fit into the box and go on with our teaching even if it is limited. Or, my personal favorite, we can yell and scream at the people who put us in this box. But don't forget they are so busy that they rarely hear screaming. Somehow though, it just feels better to blame someone else. Another choice is to wait for one of them to remove the box or at least change it a little to make it a better box. That could take forever and the changes they make never last very long anyway. Last but not least, we could choose to get ourselves out of the box. We could work together with a plan that would get rid of the box altogether. It would benefit not only those of us who teach in the box but also those who learn in the box. It would open the box up so both teachers and students could move

freely to be a part of the world around them. You never know, some people in the world might even embrace students and join us in learning how to change our world.

I know it sounds good, but in reality it will never happen, right? I don't know about you, but I am sick of everyone talking about how to "fix" us. Who would know better how to fix public education than public educators? I, for one, am tired of waiting for someone else to come up with another plan of improvement for my school and me. Let's take matters into our own hands and change the way we educate students. Let's teach them how to be productive members of society.

I admit it. I've been to a conference on democratic learning. I know what you're thinking because we've all been to workshops, become pumped up and then had to come back to reality. How long will this last, you ask? How long before we go back to the status quo? I can relate to those negative, hopeless questions. However, at this conference I somehow got a glimpse of the bigger picture. I was able to see past Quality Core Curriculum for a moment and think outside the box. And I have to admit it felt good—a little unfamiliar but good nonetheless. I saw with clarity for a short moment. To be honest I don't know if democratic learning is the solution, but I do know that if we quit trying new things, our students and ultimately our country will suffer terrible consequences.

OK, think about the students you have right now leading our country someday. See what I mean? Scary, isn't it? If we don't try to teach students to think for themselves instead of relying on us to tell them what to do and what to think, then we are sunk. As parents, that's what we want for our own children. We want them to learn to be independent. That's why we let them make their own peanut butter sandwiches. Yes, we could do it quicker, and with much less trouble and mess, but then they will never learn—and the more they practice the less mess they make. Besides, they will be proud when they can say, "I did it myself." I can still see the smile on my son's peanut butter-covered face.

I believe democratic learning teaches independent thinking, which fuels higher thinking skills. I believe democratic learning is a start to moving education in the right direction. Better yet, it is developed, researched and proven by educators, not politicians. It is probably being used in your own classroom already. It doesn't mean that you will necessarily have to change everything you do, only the way you look at things. This might be a way out of the box. And if we can get ourselves out of the box, our students will be out of the box too. Think about it and don't close it out right away; give it a chance. Remember what it felt like to want to make a difference? All I ask is that you read this article with an open mind. Highlight three sentences, quotes or phrases that stand out to you. Maybe we can get out of this box after all. ■

*Michelle Gunnin is a fourth-grade teacher at White Intermediate School in White County.*





# PAGE MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

## Two PAGE Members Selected for DEF's 2003 Foundation Teacher Award

PAGE members **Marla Pridgen** and **Ken Russell** were two of three Dalton public school teachers named as 2003 Foundation Teachers by the Dalton Education Foundation at a recognition ceremony Feb. 18 at City Park School. As Foundation Teachers, Pridgen and Russell each received a \$1,500 grant and a plaque from the local public education foundation.

Pridgen, who has taught in Dalton Public Schools for eight years, following brief stints in Gray, Ga., and Lowell, N.C., was cited for her seamless transition from Brookwood School to Roan Street School. Currently a third-grade teacher at Roan, she has taught both third and fourth grades at Brookwood, where she was voted "Teacher of the Year" by her peers.

According to her principal who nominated her for the award, "Marla is just one of those teachers you would like to have 20 of." She has used her positive attitude and collegial approach to encourage and support three new teachers at her grade level. For the past four years, Pridgen has been chosen to teach in the Foundation's Summer Scholars' Camp. She serves on the In-School Cadre Team for reading instruction at Roan and is a certified teacher support specialist. The award winner serves in other positions as well, including Roan School's Art Team and Parent/Community Team.

In 2001 Pridgen was among 20 educators selected to participate in the Dalton Education Foundation's Robert D. Cox Leadership and Vision Institute, an 18-month leadership development experience for Dalton teachers and administrators.

For the past 10 years, Ken Russell has served on the faculty of Dalton High School as a social studies teacher. His assistant principal says of him, "He has a way of getting the best from his students and exposing them to the best. He sets high standards for his students and himself, which is obvious by his being one of our National Board Certified teachers." Russell has developed numerous "Service Learning Projects,"

including one that received national honors. He has been active in the League of Professional Schools and is a member of the Dalton school district's "Working on the Work" Team, a group of teacher leaders whose focus is school reform. Prior to joining the staff at DHS, Russell taught in Gordon County.



Ken Russell



Marla Pridgen

## Beaverbrook Elementary Awarded National Certification of Reading Renaissance Master School for Third Year

On Jan. 30 the staff and students of Beaverbrook Elementary School were awarded the national certification of Reading Renaissance Master School for the third year in a row from Renaissance Learning in Madison, Wis. Of the more than 55,000 schools across the nation that participated in the Accelerated Reader/Reading Renaissance program, Beaverbrook

ranked first in Georgia and 13th in the nation.

**Louise Warren**, PAGE member and media specialist with 32 years of experience, said, "I've never seen students read so much. It's the most exciting thing I've ever seen. Reading Renaissance has made a HUGE difference in our reading program. One of the major things I love about Reading Renaissance is that it's for all students! We have 100 percent participation. We have used Accelerated Reader for seven years and expanded it to Reading Renaissance for the past three years."

Last year the CRCT reading test scores at Beaverbrook showed that 96 percent of first-graders, 93 percent of second-graders, 83 percent of third-graders, 86 percent of fourth-graders and 89 percent of fifth-graders met or exceeded expectations.

An additional benefit of the Reading Renaissance program is that the school's library circulation has skyrocketed. Circulation went from 55,000 in 1999 to 92,685 in 2002. The 620 students check

out an average of 650 books a day. In one day 1,025 books were checked out. At Beaverbrook there is a "reading frenzy" nearly every day.

The members of the 2002-2003 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools review team found Beaverbrook Elementary School to be an excellent school with a dedicated faculty and staff, who hold the educational welfare of all their students as the top priority in their improvement efforts. Today, Beaverbrook has 28 model classrooms, and 24 master classrooms and the overall community and parent involvement is reflective of a community that cares about the quality of the school and takes pride in its achievement. It is apparent that Beaverbrook Elementary embraces the Griffin-Spalding school system's motto "Children first—always."

## Georgia Middle School Association Region Two Team of the Year

The Georgia Middle School Association (GMSA) selected the seventh-grade academic team from Richards Middle School, Muscogee County, as its Region Two Team of the Year.

The team, consisting of **Cindy Cordero**, **Lori Wimmer**, **Mitzi Moorhead** and **Timothy Mullen**, was selected from many other nominees due to the quality and variety of instruction. The letter from GMSA stated, "You are a wonderful example of what middle level education can be when

teachers approach their work with enthusiasm, commitment and a high level of energy and creativity." They attended the GMSA Conference in Savannah, Ga., on Feb. 21, where they received their award.

Mullen is currently a National Board Certified teacher. Cordero, Moorhead and Wimmer are presently seeking National Board Certification.



The Richards Middle School seventh-grade teaching team (pictured left to right) **Cindy Cordero**, **Lori Wimmer**, **Mitzi Moorhead** and **Timothy Mullen**.

## PAGE Member Jennie Lopez Named DEF's Tom Jones "Educator of the Year"

She's not "Jenny from the Block." This **Jennie Lopez** is "Jennie from the Classroom" and for her exemplary efforts as fifth-grade Language Academy teacher at





Dalton's City Park School, this PAGE member has been named the Dalton Education Foundation's 2003 Tom Jones Educator of the Year. The announcement was made on Feb. 18 during faculty and staff appreciation activities sponsored by the foundation and held at the City Park School auditorium.

Lopez, a six-year veteran of the Dalton public school system, is credited with creating a safe and nurturing environment where students new to this country and culture can learn academics at the same time they are learning English. "My students come from different backgrounds, but all have some things in common," says Lopez, who taught previously in California and in her native Puerto Rico. "They all speak Spanish very well. They have a great desire to learn English. And they all want to be successful."

"Research indicates it takes five to seven years to learn a language; I have only 10 months to do this," she says. "Since most of my parents do not speak English, they are not able to help with this part of learning." To deal with the special challenges she faces as a teacher of English to speakers of other languages, Lopez has had to craft creative solutions, such as communicating to parents through a column in the Dalton Spanish newspaper, *La Voz*.

Lopez, who established the Language Academy at City Park, said it was important to her to create a "stress free" environment so that instruction could take place and learning could happen. "I allow my students to discuss topics together in their language because this can actually facilitate learning. As soon as they are able to speak in English, then they can transfer their thoughts to the second language with my help." And she allows her students to make mistakes. "I make sure they should never be embarrassed or ashamed of their errors. Errors are a part of learning anything. I am continually reinforcing their progress. I keep charts, save their papers and show them how far they've come," she says. She keeps a large banner with the words "I Can Do It" posted at the front of her classroom as a constant reminder to students of their capabilities.



Jennie Lopez

"I strongly set and communicate high positive expectations to my students and parents. I know from the very beginning of the school year my students will be successful and obtain greater academic performance." As a result of her engaging teaching style, her class has one of the most consistently high attendance records in the school system.

Lopez graduated from the University of Puerto Rico with a bachelor's degree in education. She received a master's degree in education from Lee University and an education specialist degree from Lincoln Memorial University. In addition to her teaching duties, she serves as a member of the City Park School Council as well as on the school and district technology committee and other district-wide committees. She has previously been honored with the Disney American Teacher Award and as Fort Hill School Teacher of the Year. She was recently accepted to teach teachers of second language learners for West Georgia College through its extension program at Dalton State College.

The Tom Jones Educator of the Year is the highest honor conferred by the Dalton Education Foundation. The winning teacher receives a crystal apple and a \$3,000 cash prize with an additional \$1,000 award going to his or her school. Most importantly, said Foundation President Cindy Ray, "It represents the best the profession has to offer."

#### Law Named Counselor of the Year

**Brian Law**, Odom Elementary School counselor, has been selected as Colquitt County's Counselor of the Year. Brian has been employed at Odom since 1996 and serves 590 students in grades pre-K through five.

As an active member of the Georgia School Counselors Association, he currently holds the office of vice president and frequently conducts presentations at the association's fall conference.

Law currently serves as president of Colquitt County's local PAGE chapter. He is also the director of the Crossroad Cloggers, sponsored by the Adel/Cook

County Recreation Department.

#### Local High School Teacher Honored for Academic Excellence

RadioShack Corporation has presented a 2003 RadioShack National Teacher Award (RSNTA) to **Susan Presley**, technology teacher at North Cobb High School in Kennesaw, GA. Presley received a \$3,000 cash award and was among 110 educators receiving RadioShack National Teacher Awards this year for demonstrating a commitment to academic excellence in mathematics, science or technology.



Susan Presley

In addition, North Cobb High School will receive a \$500 RadioShack Tech Tool Grant.

The school may use the grant to buy equipment, software or supplies to enhance the learning experience for students in the classroom.

"The RadioShack National Teacher Award is a huge blessing," Presley said. "It confirms to me that I'm doing the job God intended for me to do."

Presley, an educator for 20 years, teaches introduction to technology, technology and communication technology. She is a member of the International Technology Education Association, Georgia Industrial Technology Education Association, Professional Association of Georgia Educators, National Technology Preparation Association and the Technology Student Association.

"What is most rewarding about being a teacher is helping students realize they are 'holders of knowledge,'" Presley said. "It makes my day."

The RSNTA recipients were recognized at the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) convention, held on March 27-30 in Philadelphia. Leonard Roberts, chairman and chief executive officer of RadioShack Corporation, presented the individual awards during a reception and dinner. ■

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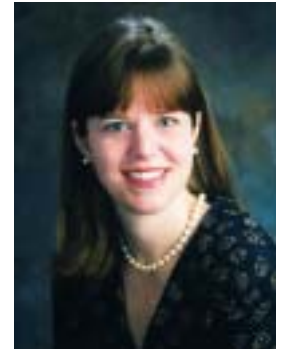
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# 2003 PAGE Final Legislative Report

This year's legislative session set a modern record for length and perhaps an unofficial record for legislative logjams, fatigue and frustration. Legislators were in session for the required 40 days and in recess for another 35 days, which were interspersed throughout the nearly four months of the session. The decline in state revenues, coupled with dramatic leadership changes, made it one of the most difficult sessions in recent memory for lawmakers and lobbyists alike. Below is the summary report compiled by PAGE General Counsel Jill Hay.



The following bills passed this session and have been sent to the governor for his signature. The governor has 40 days after adjournment to sign or veto any bills or resolutions. At the end of these 40 days, any bills neither signed nor vetoed automatically become law on the effective date listed below.

• **HB 25 (Restoration of Sick Leave)** This bill provides for the restoration of sick leave that was forfeited due to a withdrawal from service for a period of 12 or more consecutive months. Specifically, it provides that any personnel who forfeited such leave shall be entitled to regain such leave after returning to service for a period of two consecutive years. This bill shall become effective on July 1, 2003.

• **HB 266 (Public School Employees Retirement System)** This bill provides that the board of trustees of the PSERS is authorized to adopt from time to time a method or methods of providing for increases in the retirement allowance paid up to the maximum benefit provided in the law. Such method shall be based upon: 1) the recommendation of the actuary of the board, 2) the maintenance of the actuarial soundness of the fund and 3) such other factors as the board deems relevant. This bill shall become effective on July 1, 2003.

• **HB 590 (Out-of-State Teachers - Certification Requirements)** This bill as amended in the last days of session makes some changes in the law regarding teacher certification requirements by the Professional Standards Commission (PSC). Most importantly, it gives the PSC

some flexibility in certifying holders of valid, professional out-of-state certificates. It states that requirements for these people may include, but are not limited to, the following: computer skill competency, course work in the identification and education of children who have special educational needs, recency of study and standards of ethical conduct. These requirements may be completed during the validity period of the first Georgia certificate. At the time of application for the first Georgia certificate, satisfactory proficiency in subject matter content appropriate to the applicant's field of certification may be determined based on PSC approved tests or combinations of successful teaching experience and academic, technical and professional preparation as outlined in the rules of the PSC. The bill also amended language in the law relating to paraprofessionals and aides. Specifically, it deleted the definition of "aide" and added language to the definition of "paraprofessional" which states that "if assigned to positions governed by federal regulations, the paraprofessional must meet specified federal hiring requirements." This bill shall become effective on July 1, 2003.

• **SB 29 (Use of Electronic Communication Devices)** This bill authorizes each local board of education to establish a policy either to permit or prohibit the possession of electronic communication devices by students in school. It repeals the current law that prohibits local boards from allowing such devices and basically leaves the decision up to the local board

with one exception. This exception is that if possession of an electronic communication device by a student in school is permitted, the local board policy shall not permit the use by a student of any personal electronic communication device during classroom instructional time. This bill shall become effective on July 1, 2003.

• **SB 178 (School Counselors & Social Workers)** This bill provides for a 10 percent state salary increase for National Certified School Counselors and Social Workers. In order to qualify for this salary increase, the school counselors must be certified by the National Board for Certified Counselors and the school social workers by the National Association of School Social Workers. It also allows for two days of approved paid leave to prepare the documentation required for national certification and for the participation fee to be reimbursed by the state upon certification. If the school counselor or social worker does not work in a Georgia public school in their field for at least one year after receiving national certification, they shall be required to repay the participation fee to the state. This bill shall become effective on July 1, 2003. Note: There were no funds appropriated for this salary increase in the FY 2004 Budget.

• **SB 193 (Fair Dismissal & 5 Percent Pay Raise)** This bill restores fair dismissal rights to those persons who became teachers on or after July 1, 2000. It restores those rights taken away in Governor Barnes' Education Reform Act of 2000, HB 1187. Now all teachers, no matter when hired, will be able to gain rights under the Fair

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Dismissal Law after signing four consecutive full-year contracts. The bill also includes a provision that allows for a 5 percent increase in state salary if a teacher shows a significant increase in average scores on the CRCT or any other test selected by the State Board of Education. The State Board shall define "significant increase." Although there was much debate about this second provision and when it would go into effect and the fact that it would have to be subject to appropriation by the General Assembly, the provision was left in the bill so as not to kill fair dismissal for this year. More than likely, this 5 percent increase in salary provision will be re-addressed by the General Assembly next session. This bill shall become effective on July 1, 2004.

• **SB 223 (Salary Amounts on Contracts)** This bill provides that teacher and other professional employee contracts shall be complete in all terms and conditions, including the amount of compensation, and shall not contain blanks or leave any terms and conditions of the contract open. The bill also provides that a letter of intent or similar document shall not constitute a contract and shall not be

construed to require or otherwise legally bind the teacher or other professional employee to return to such school system. This bill shall become effective upon the approval of the governor, or upon its becoming law without such approval.

• **SB 249 (Governor's Education Bill)** This was the only one of the two governor's education bills that passed and it passed in a much shorter version. The bill, as passed, includes flexibility for one year only in spending at the system level, removing site-based restrictions for that year. Specifically, 100 percent of funds designated for direct instructional costs must be spent on direct instructional costs at the system level; 100 percent of funds for EIP, remedial education and alternative education shall be spent on one or more of these programs at the system level; 100 percent of funds designated for media center costs shall be spent for such costs at the system level; and funds designated for staff development may be spent for any program approved under the QBE. The bill also delays the lower class size implementation for one year only in grades 4-12. Grades K-3 shall be lowered as required by HB 1187, except that a Kinder-

garten class may be increased to 20 students if a paraprofessional is present in addition to the certified teacher. For the 2003-2004 school year, compliance with maximum class size requirements shall be determined by the system average for each grade, and no class shall exceed the applicable maximum size by more than two students. The bill also provides that the State Department of Education shall pay fees charged for advanced placement tests according to rules set by the State Board of Education subject to appropriation by the General Assembly. Finally, the bill allows up to 15 percent of funds designated for the 20 additional days of instruction to be spent for transportation costs incurred for transporting students who are attending the additional classes funded by these designated funds. This bill shall become effective upon its approval by the governor, or upon its becoming law without such approval.

• **SB 346 (Teen Dating Violence)** This bill provides that the State Board shall develop an educational program for preventing teen dating violence for grades eight through 12. Local systems may choose to implement such a program if

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they so desire. This bill shall become effective on July 1, 2003.

• **HR 65 (House Study Committee on Technology Education)** This resolution creates a House Study Committee on Technology Education to be composed of three members of the House. The committee shall make its report, if any, on or before Dec. 31, 2003.

• **SR 146 (Senate Educational Testing Study Committee)** This resolution creates a Senate Study Committee on Educational Testing to be composed of five members of the Senate. The committee shall make its report, if any, on or before Dec. 1, 2003.

### The following is a list of highlights from the FY 2004 budget that passed:

(\* The amounts in parentheses represent reductions.)

#### Adjustments to FY 2003 Appropriation:

- Reduce the central office budget by applying a 3 percent reduction to common object classes: (391,297)
- Eliminate funding for various contracts: (5,025,000)  
*Conference Committee Restored 3 O'clock Project, Achievers International, Foreign Language for grades 1-5 and a portion of I Can Learn*
- Reduce all other contracts by a minimum of 3 percent (1,058,180)  
*Conference Committee restored \$300,000 to Communities in Schools*
- Reduce QBE formula grants by 2.51 percent: (156,764,424)
- Provide for an austerity adjustment to non-QBE formula programs: (12,712,213)  
*Conference Committee restored Non-Certificated Health Insurance & Retirement funds*
- Decrease funding for non-QBE formula grants by 3 percent (4,811,631); pupil transportation by 3 percent (5,026,553) and student testing by (1,099,647): (10,937,831)
- Reduce Statewide Reading Program by 3 percent: (1,723,009)
- Reduce funding for the Vocational High School program by eliminating some funding for extended daycare and a 3 percent reduction to the remaining programs: (5,586,592) *The governor had recom-*

*mended eliminating all funding for extended day by (12,097,223) and the Conference Committee restored some of this.*

- Reduce funding for equalization grants by 3 percent: (8,347,782)
- Provide for an additional austerity adjustment of 1 percent but exclude grants to local school systems from this adjustment: (591,938)
- Reduce funding for tuition multi-handicapped (109,060) and special education at state institutions (128,482) to reflect FY 2002 expenditures: (237,542)
- Increase funding for QBE formula grants based on 1.8 percent FTE growth: 101,307,995
- Increase funding for growth in training and experience: 60,312,969
- Add funding for equalization grants so a system gaining funds from the prior year limited to 70 percent of the gain and a system losing funds limited to 70 percent of the loss: 15,008,868
- Add funds for QBE formula grants to the state charter school in Bulloch County: 759,006
- Add funds for 36 additional principals at new schools: 1,564,708
- Increase funding for the GA Psycho-education network: 1,466,623
- Increase funds for the preschool handicapped program for additional students: 417,881
- Increase to Local Five Mill Share to reflect the most recent tax digest: (105,523,082)
- Annualize the reduction to the QBE formula based on an FY 2003 error: (12,995,413)
- To release a sample of questions from the CRCT and end-of-course tests rather than releasing all test questions that appear on these tests each year: (1,800,000)
- Transfer the Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP) to the Department of Human Resources, including 2 positions, operating expenses and federal funds: (48,000)
- Reduce various contracts (Virtual High School, Teacher Conference, Executive

Assistant, Environmental Science Grants): (1,000,000)  
*Conference Committee took out 3 percent reduction for RESA's*

- Reduce funding for school improvement teams: (10,000,000)  
*House had recommended a reduction of (19,932,402) and conference committee decided on (10,000,000)*
  - Reduce funding for CRCT tests: (2,000,000)  
*House recommended reduction of (2,000,000); Senate recommended no reduction and Conference Committee settled on (2,000,000)*
  - Reduce funding for pay for performance: (2,000,000)  
*House recommended reduction of (2,000,000); Senate recommended no reduction and Conference Committee settled on (2,000,000)*
  - No reduction in staff development. Will remain at 1 percent of certificated personnel.
  - Reduction of 10 percent in various contracts (SciTrek, Fernbank, GYSTC, National Science Center and National Science Center Foundation): (295,715)
  - Adjust funding for post secondary options: (236,082)
  - Adjust funding for additional 20 days of instruction: (2,117,585)
  - When applicable, to reflect adjustments in workers' compensation contributions, the employer portion of employee life insurance contributions, GBA real estate rental rates and Georgia Technology Authority telephone billings: (306,258)
  - Transfer funds for the State Data and Research Center from the Board of Regents: 4,313,017
- #### Enhancements:
- Provide for a 10 percent salary supplement to 380 teachers who were awarded National Board Certification in November 2002: 2,376,442  
The budget also transfers funds to community health to fund the school nurse program; does not provide a state salary increase for certificated personnel; and provides for a \$.50 increase in the monthly retirement benefit for the Public School Employees Retirement System from \$12.50 to \$13 per month per year of service. ■



**A:** I believe that a lot of the problem might be solved through the better use of technology. For example, at the beginning of every school year I was asked to fill out a form with a lot of routine background information—the same information I provided at the beginning of every school year. Why couldn't that information be stored electronically and teachers simply be asked to correct any information that had changed from the previous year? There is so much unnecessary redundancy in filling out forms.

**Q: As the leader of 100,000-plus Georgia educators, how do you plan to raise the public's image of public education?**

**A:** I think it starts with an awareness that we have a lot of good things happening in Georgia, and I want to make sure that those stories are told. I recently had a conversation with some people at Georgia Public Broadcasting about starting a program that could highlight some of the great things that are happening in our schools.

Another thing I plan to do is to get in here and work hard for improvement. When the public sees that educators themselves are interested in improving student achievement, the public will hopefully back what we want to do and be willing participants.

**Q: In the past, it seemed that the DOE's resources may not have been allocated as well as they might have been. How do you plan to organize the department so that it can better perform its functions?**

**A:** We have actually gone through a comprehensive process to reorganize the department and have been helped in recent weeks by a Boston consulting group hired by the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce to perform a thorough analysis of the department. One area on which we will place more emphasis is school improvement. We will offer school systems a comprehensive menu of choices for school improvement and not assume that one model will fit all. That whole piece of school improvement will get a lot more attention. Another area is curriculum. The re-write of the curriculum was brought back into the department, and I believe that Dr. Ida Love, who came to us from the Decatur City School System, will be a tremendous asset to help local systems

with their curriculum needs. I am going to focus our efforts on the schools that need the most help and make those a real priority.

**Q: You and the governor are apparently in agreement that there needs to be a delay in implementing the class size requirements under HB 1187. How important do you believe it is to eventually implement these reductions?**

**A:** Having just left the classroom after teaching 15 years myself, I understand the importance of class size to teaching, and have thought carefully about the effect this legislation will have on teachers in the classroom. The governor and I share teachers' concerns about class size, and we remain committed to going forward with reductions in the future. It is essential to note, however, that these bills do not increase class size; they simply delay the reductions by one year. The new bills (HB 515-516) also provide flexibility for districts to meet class size reductions, enabling systems to accommodate students who may move into the district after the school year has started without creating a new class with a new teacher.

**Q: To many observers, it appears that the DOE has been woefully understaffed in dealing with the challenges of charter school petitions and applications. Do you believe that the department is sufficiently staffed to handle the issues surrounding charter schools?**

**A:** I will work to make the support of charter schools a key aspect of my administration because I view them as a central component of any visionary approach to educational reform. My strong positions in favor of local control and on modeling the "business that is school" upon successful business practices find their fulfillment in the charter school concept. At this point, the moves that we make are to a great degree dictated by the difficult budget situation we face, but we will continue to work to establish the Department of Education as a service-oriented, policy-driven and restructured agency that meets the needs of local systems as they go about the business of educating Georgia's school children.

**Q: You and many of your staff are new to the Department of Education, and you are certain to receive a lot of advice from many different people.**

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**How do you assess the quality of advice that you receive?**

**A:** We're going to work closely with the governor, legislature, state board, local systems and education groups to ensure that our agenda for Georgia's schools is shaped by solid educational policy that is backed by research and proven to work. Too often, educational legislation is based on feel-good fluff or fads that sound good but don't work. Obviously we'll receive many suggestions for improving Georgia's schools. Our chief criteria for judging the viability of such suggestions will be that they are proven to work and that they share our philosophy of the department's role as a facilitator that provides local school systems with the resources they need to enact more innovative solutions to their problems and to meet the needs of their unique student populations.

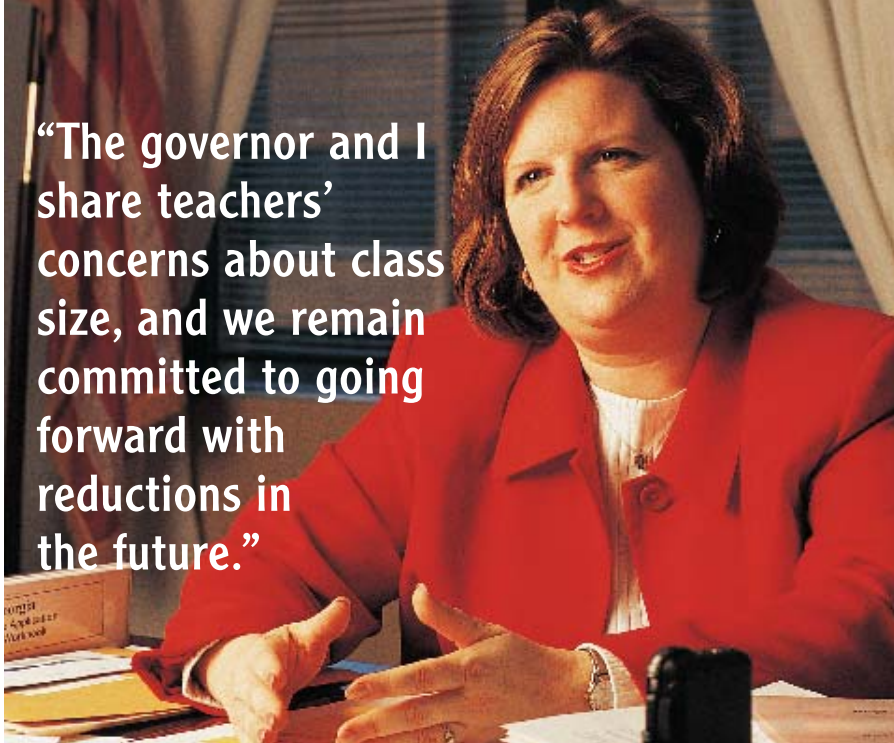
**Q: How do you plan to engage the business community in public education?**

**A:** In our new economy in which school and work are inextricably intertwined, we must take a dual approach to public school reform that includes both education and business leaders. Clearly, the changes facing our society and our economy are the changes that both schools and businesses must adapt to in the 21st century: demographic shifts, economic changes, advances in technology and changes in the workplace. If our society and economy are reflections of the success of public school, our business community and our schools must partner together to ensure that the educational system continuously improves and expands in order to meet these changing needs. Either we educate our children for the changing needs of the 21st century, or we condemn them to work longer hours for lower pay. We will work to build strong local partnerships with businesses, educators and education groups as we endeavor to better prepare a diverse student population for the higher order thinking and reasoning skills required in an increasingly knowledge-based, service-driven economy.

**Q: As Georgia's school population continues to grow, what do you believe the state can do to help local school systems find and retain the qualified teachers they will need in the years ahead?**

**A:** Clearly, our focus must be twofold: in order to reduce the teacher shortage and turnover rates, we must attract new people to the profession while retaining the quality teachers we currently have in the system. We need to recruit mid-career professionals, early retirees and college graduates without education degrees and provide them with a paid first-year internship that gives them opportunities to observe, practice and develop curriculum while being monitored and mentored during that first year. In order to motivate these teachers to remain in the profession and continue to be productive and feel rewarded, we must provide them with opportunities to advance their careers without leaving the classroom.

**Q: What is the DOE's role in staff development and in helping teachers deal with the increasing diversity in our schools?**



**“The governor and I share teachers’ concerns about class size, and we remain committed to going forward with reductions in the future.”**

**A:** In the midst of our teacher shortage and our efforts to ensure that Georgia places a highly qualified teacher in every classroom, it is increasingly necessary to provide teachers with continuous learning in order to meet the changing needs of our student population. We must ensure that, rather than cutting staff development due to funding priorities, we provide the kind of relevant training opportunities that keep educators up-to-date on the latest teaching methodologies. To be effective and relevant, staff development must be based on a broader school improvement plan, focusing especially on initiatives designed to improve student achievement; connected to several elements of instruction (e.g., curriculum and assessment); extended in time (affording teachers consequential learning opportunities and follow-up); organized with teacher involvement; and observed and evaluated.

**Q: What are your views on 25-year retirement?**

**A:** I approach that issue from a somewhat different perspective than some other educators. What I want to do is to provide incentives so that the later years of a teacher's career are his or her most rewarding years. This would include giving step increases to teachers every year until they retire.

**Q: Is there any other message you would like to leave with our members?**

**A:** I want to leave PAGE members with the message that Georgia has a lot to be proud of educationally and that we have some truly outstanding people working in our schools at all levels, from superintendents to paraprofessionals and custodians. We are going to keep them motivated so they will continue to do the outstanding jobs they have been doing, and hopefully, we can attract more and more good people into the field to make the changes and improvements we need. We really are at a crossroad in Georgia and have the opportunity to do some tremendous things. I intend to work very hard to bring people together to make things happen. ■

*For more information about Kathy Cox or the Georgia Department of Education, you can visit [www.doe.k12.ga.us](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us) or call ASK DOE at 1-800-311-3627.*

# A Tradition of Making a Difference

## The University of Georgia Announces Creation Of The Mary Frances Early Teacher Education Professorship

Mary Frances Early holds a significant place in Georgia history – she is the first African-American graduate of the University of Georgia.

Although undergraduates Charlayne Hunter and the late Hamilton Holmes were the first African-American students to attend UGA, it was Early who received the first degree – a master's in music education in May 1962.

Early has spent her entire career as a teacher – first in elementary education to her present position as chairperson and associate professor of music at Clark-Atlanta University.

The UGA College of Education is pleased to announce that Early's extraordinary courage, determination and love of teaching will be commemorated through the creation of the Mary Frances Early Teacher Education Professorship.

The College hopes to honor Early with the selection of an outstanding professor to this position who will bring the same commitment and dedication to teaching that she has, and who will attract and mentor diverse students from throughout the nation. The professorship will be funded by a \$250,000 private endowment.

At the time Early applied to UGA, she was working full-time as a teacher and enrolled in post-graduate courses at the

University of Michigan – a school where she was both happy and accepted.

However, when she heard about the struggles Hunter and Holmes were having because of the color of their skin, Early decided to change the direction of her own educational journey.

But it would not be easy.

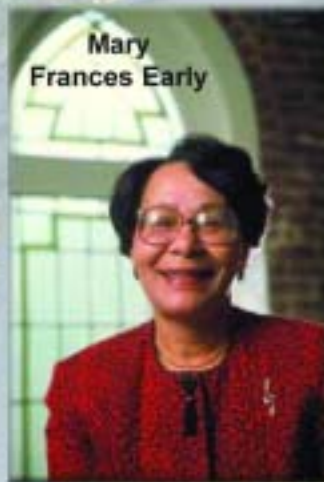
Despite the discrimination she faced at UGA four decades ago, Early has fond memories of her days in the music education department – whose faculty and students provided her solace and encouragement.

"I came to love Georgia as a school. I didn't like a lot of things that went on sometimes, but the music department was a place of refuge," she said.

Early thinks UGA is headed in the right direction today.

"I think that there is a will to make it better, and I hope that in my lifetime I'll see the kind of equity and diversity that our state university deserves," she said. "But we shouldn't forget our history because it gives you direction as to what role you ought to play in the present and future."

For more information on the Mary Frances Early Teacher Education Professorship, please contact the UGA College of Education at: 706/542-2267 or email [ibarrett@coe.uga.edu](mailto:ibarrett@coe.uga.edu).



Mary  
Frances Early

### UGA's Overall Graduate Programs Rank Among Nation's Best

- √ 3<sup>rd</sup> among education colleges in the South
- √ 18<sup>th</sup> nationally among public education colleges
- √ 23<sup>rd</sup> nationally among all education colleges

### Five UGA Programs Among Top 10

- √ Vocational/Technical 4<sup>th</sup>
- √ Elementary Education 5<sup>th</sup>
- √ Secondary Education 5<sup>th</sup>
- √ Counseling/Personnel 7<sup>th</sup>
- √ Curriculum/Instruction 8<sup>th</sup>



### And two more in the Top 15

- √ Educational Psychology 14<sup>th</sup>
- √ Administration/Supervision 15<sup>th</sup>

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