

PAGE ONE

Professional Association of Georgia Educators

November/December 2004

show progress
ol system in
op 25 percent

action to AYP

Elementary
schools hit
AYP mark

schools focused on
ing AYP in 2004-05

Getting off "The List"

More Georgia
schools meet
federal stand

Changing Grades • PAGE Teacher Academy •
Effective Teaching • No Child Left Behind? •
New PAGE Foundation Trustees

address AYP

Take your teaching ~~teaching~~ to the next level



"I knew I needed a master's degree to get ahead."

Joy Wood
MA in Education student

Master of Arts degree in Education

- Adult Education
- Instruction

Specialist in Education degree

- General Educational Administration

Become the best in your field

Education degrees from CMU in Atlanta will give you real-world skills to use immediately in your real-live classroom. Expand your knowledge, enhance your teaching and position yourself for career advancement.

MA in Ed courses teach foundational skills every educator needs:

- Human relations skills
- Learning theories and their application in the classroom
- Integrating technology into the classroom
- Advanced curriculum design

Specialist in Education degree will:

- Build on your skills as an educator
- Allow you to move your career to the next level
- Deepen your understanding of your profession

Class times and student services you need

We know you're busy. Our programs are designed to accommodate you.

- Convenient locations
- No-hassle registration
- Evening or weekend classes
- No GRE

Count on CMU for quality

CMU is an accredited university with a 110-year tradition in teacher education. More than 55,000 students have graduated through CMU's off-campus programs.

Find out more.

Call CMU in Georgia. (877) 591-2635

www.cel.cmich.edu/atlanta



OFFICERS
President
Dr. Diane Ray
President-Elect
Ken Russell
Secretary
Vickie Hammond
Treasurer
Hosie Waters
Past President
Deena Hoch

DIRECTORS

District 1 Tronya Fulcher	District 8 Kathy Corwin
District 2 Vickie Joiner	District 9 Catherine Strickland
District 3 Raymechia Smith	District 10 Judy Teasley
District 4 Tim Mullen	District 11 Lamar Scott
District 5 Mary Carzoli	District 12 Richard Thomas
District 6 Mike Smith	District 13 Luann Avery
District 7 David Brown	District 14 Jan Godwin

EDITORIAL STAFF
Editor
Tim Callahan
Associate Editor
Erica Driver
Assistant Editor
Lynn Varner

NEW SOUTH PUBLISHING
President
Larry Lebovitz
Publisher
John Hanna
Editor-in-Chief
Riley McDermid
Graphic Designer
Jack Simonetta
Production Coordinator
Mike Johnson
Account Executive
Treacy Gledhill
Advertising/Sales
(770) 650-1102, ext.128
Consultant
Susan Thompson Lewis

PAGE ONE magazine (ISSN 1523-6188) is mailed to all PAGE members, selected higher education units and other school-related professionals. An annual subscription is included in PAGE membership dues. A subscription for others is \$10.00 annually. Periodicals postage paid at Atlanta, Georgia, and additional mailing offices. (USPS 017-347) **Postmaster: Send address changes to PAGE ONE, P.O. Box 942270, Atlanta, GA 31141-2270.**

PAGE ONE magazine is published five times a year (January, March, May, September and November) by New South Publishing, Inc.; 1303 Hightower Trail, Suite 101; Atlanta, GA 30350; 770-650-1102. Copyright ©2004

FEATURES

- 4** Getting Off "The List"
by Lee Raudonis

DEPARTMENTS

- 2** **From the President:** The Effective Teacher Makes the Difference in Student Learning

- 3** **From the Executive Director:** Two Achievements and a Promise

10 Foundation News

Carolyn Lovett of BellSouth to Chair PAGE Foundation
Former Georgia Governor Among State Leaders Joining PAGE Foundation Board of Trustees
2004 Year End Giving Opportunities
New "Strategic Agenda" Approved at PAGE Foundation Board of Trustees Annual Meeting

Honor Your Favorite Teacher

Wiley T. Nixon—A Friend of PAGE and the Georgia General Assembly

- 16** **Professional Insights:** PAGE's Teacher Academy: Helping Novice Teachers Become Teacher Leaders

- 20** **Legal:** Changing Grades

- 24** **Members In The News**

- 25** **Forum:** No Child Left Behind?

- 26** **Ideas**

- 28** **Words of Wisdom**

- 29** **PAGE Planner**

- 29** **PAGE Letters**

NEWS & INFORMATION

- 22** Field Trip Destinations

- 23** New Employees

- 30** PAGE 2005 Legislative Priorities

CONTENTS



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.

Notice to Members

Contributions or gifts to the PAGE Foundation are tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. However, under other provisions of the IRS code, costs for PAGE lobbying activities on behalf of members are not deductible. PAGE estimates the nondeductible portion of your 2003-2004 dues allocated to lobbying is .07 percent. Please call the PAGE office at 1-800-334-6861 if you have questions.

The Effective Teacher Makes the Difference in Student Learning

First and foremost, every teacher told me they were all about teaching and learning, and they loved what they did. I witnessed these teachers focusing on themselves first as the single most important factor influencing what happened in the classroom every minute of the day.



DR. DIANE RAY

I recently had the opportunity to visit some of the most distinguished schools in Georgia during the 12th Annual Partnership for Excellence in Education “Bus Trip Across Georgia.” This was not the first time that I have had the pleasure to witness educational excellence across Georgia, but it was the first time that I placed a focus on why the teachers were so effective with their students. The vast majority of these schools were not new, they were not affluent, and they were not without their problems. As I observed teachers and students, and asked teachers and support personnel why they were effective, I continued to get the same three answers.

First and foremost, every teacher told me they were all about teaching and learning, and they loved what they did. I witnessed these teachers focusing on themselves first as the single most important factor influencing what happened in the classroom every minute of the day. The teachers told me that they must be the role model and set high expectations for their students. Thus, they set high expectations for themselves. These teachers are true professional educators who understand the importance of continuous professional learning and strive to raise the achievement level of every student. It did not matter what content or level these teachers taught, their focus was on helping students achieve. The band director from Bonaire Middle School in Houston County stated, “I love what I do, and I am enamored by it.” A teacher from Crawford Primary School stated, “We don’t take no for an answer, we keep plugging at it and want to make students better.” Wow, these are the educators across Georgia, teachers who are captivated and charmed by what they do and dedicated to the success of every student!

Secondly, teachers, principals and superintendents alike told me that they were committed. Moreover, commitment was evident as I observed well-planned lessons and well-managed classrooms. During my visit, I remembered an analogy from a passage in one of Harry Wong’s books about the well-managed classroom being like a fine department store. Everything in the classroom organized and accessible, and the teacher efficient, friendly and knowledgeable. I saw this fine department store in each classroom that I entered. I also questioned the teachers about

their professional learning, which I was certain took the greatest amount of commitment. The teachers at Wilkinson County Primary/Elementary School recounted how their school had been on the needs improvement list for seven years. Their commitment to professional learning and intense, ongoing analysis of data has instigated numerous improvement initiatives that have increased student learning. At Thomson Elementary School in McDuffie County, the teachers have committed to a three-year intensive training for the implementation of the Learning Focused Schools program model. These teachers have worked hard to implement instructional strategies consistently in every classroom, and the dividends have been great! These teachers have learned so much, but more importantly, they have taken what they learned and put it into practice. This, I know, is true commitment.

Finally, teachers and support personnel told me that none of their success with students would have been possible without the opportunity to plan collaboratively with one another. Every teacher valued collaborative planning with other teachers because it helped them to validate and confirm the implementation of strategies that worked for students. Furthermore, the teachers told me that planning together allowed them to have a common focus for each teacher and each student. They recognized the greatest expertise in student learning came from their fellow peers. What a testament to teacher effectiveness!

A love of teaching and learning, commitment to being an educational professional and the opportunity to collaborate with fellow peers are only three ingredients for teacher effectiveness. Textbooks are filled with research that defines the qualities of an effective teacher, and I am delighted to state that I witnessed some of the best, most effective teachers in our state! They had to love teaching and learning and be extremely committed to make the progress in student achievement that I witnessed at these schools. The process of school improvement does not happen overnight, thus I commend every educator for the hard work, determination, and continual reflection on ways to improve. Being a teacher is an amazing profession, and teachers make an impact on students in various ways. However, it is the effective teacher who really makes the difference in student learning. ♦

Two Achievements and a Promise

This issue of PAGE One celebrates two outstanding examples of student, teacher and school achievement, and we also cover an upcoming PAGE program full of promise for the future—the Teacher Academy.

PAGE President Dr. Diane Ray participated, as did several other staff members, in the 12th Annual Bus Trip Across Georgia, sponsored by the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education. She articulately caught the flavor of what was seen at those schools shown in this issue. Inspired teachers, innovative and challenging teaching and students achieving at ever higher levels. Isn't that what all our schools should be about?

The cover story on “Needs Improvement” schools faced with the challenge of meeting AYP standards also tells about hard work, achievement and the refusal to accept the status quo. Reading it, I could not help but be impressed by some of the comments educators in those schools made:

“Our attitude is to solve the problems and meet the challenges. We're here because we care about kids. Although it was frustrating to be on the list, it forced us to look at ourselves, which isn't a bad thing.”

“Whatever it took, they did. They (teachers) came early and stayed late. They even came on Saturdays to work with students in need of extra help. For two solid years, this faculty made a concerted effort to improve our students' math scores, and they succeeded. They worked very hard, and they got their students to work hard and take pride in their accomplishments.”

“Virtually everything we do academically is data-driven. You can't just get new books or extend the school day. These kinds of things won't help much unless you analyze data to determine the root causes of your deficiencies. It all comes down to the quality of instruction.”

No outstanding practitioners or nationally renowned researchers could say it any better. The schools we visited and write about in this issue are working hard to meet the needs of every student, and they are succeeding. Again, isn't that what all our schools should be about?

Finally, with as many as 50 percent of new

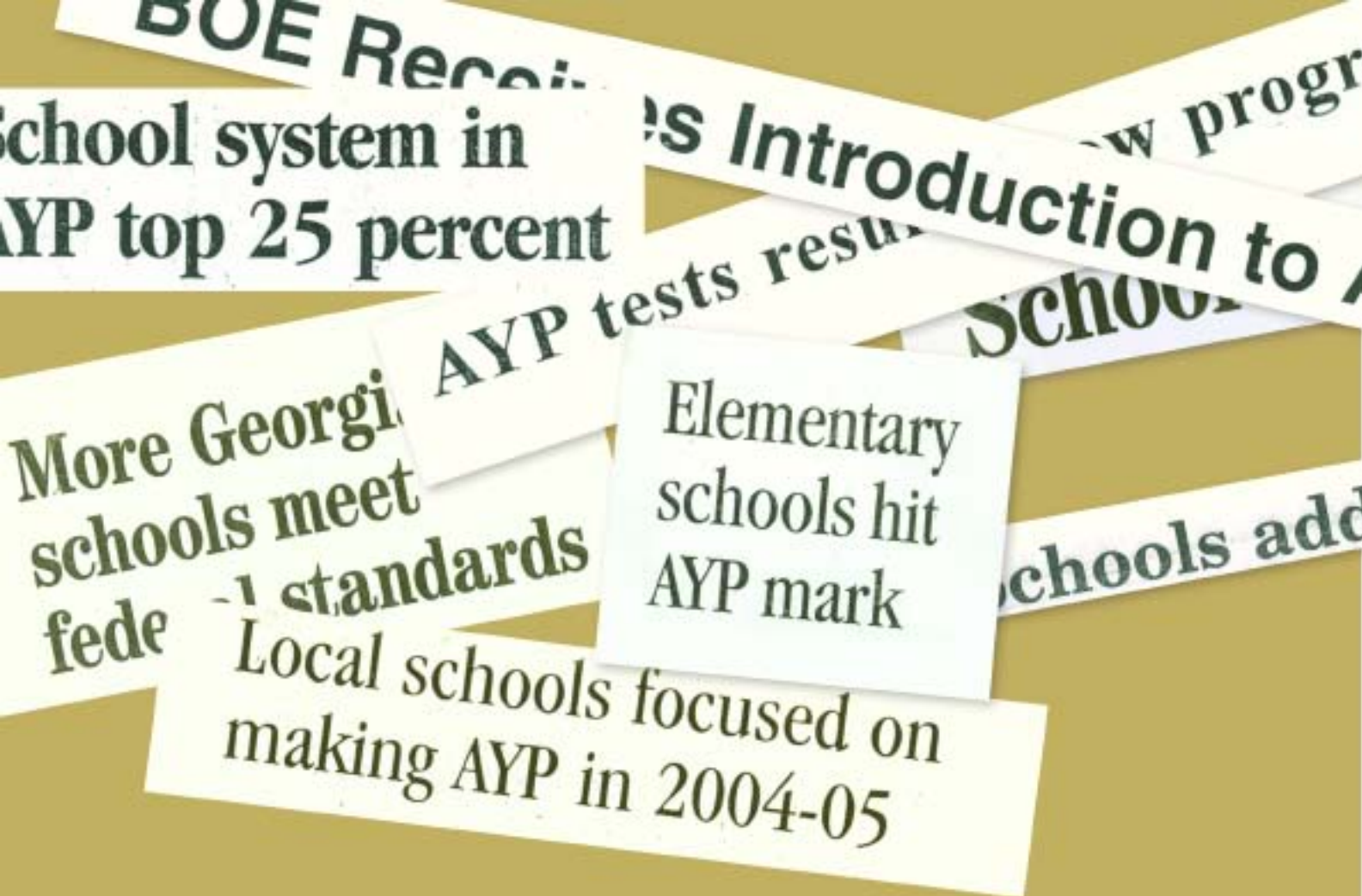
The cover story on “Needs Improvement” schools faced with the challenge of meeting AYP standards also tells about hard work, achievement and the refusal to accept the status quo. Reading it, I could not help but be impressed by some of the comments educators in those schools made.

teachers leaving the profession during the first five to seven years of service and the majority of the teaching force reaching retirement age, we believe that innovative and substantive ways must be found to hold on to our most promising novice teachers.

Accordingly, PAGE has instituted the Teacher Academy with the purpose of helping teachers in their critical first few years to be more effective in the classroom, to see teaching as a rewarding and long-term career, and to begin to assume leadership roles in creating a culture of change in the profession and in the schools in which they teach. You can read about it on page 12. I don't think anything could be more timely or important, and we are extremely optimistic about the promise such an academy holds for our teachers, our students and the future of our state. ♦



DR. ALLENE MAGILL



GETTING OFF *"The List"*

By Lee Raudonis

Outside of the world of sports, there may be no other field in which statistics, lists and comparisons play such a prominent role as in education. Particularly in this age of educational accountability, students, schools and school systems are tested, measured, compared and ranked only slightly less than athletes and sports teams. The comparisons are ubiquitous: the state with the lowest Scholastic Achievement (SAT) score; the student with the highest grade point average (GPA); students making the honor roll; the school with the highest pass rate on the graduation test in science or language arts; the school with the worst average daily attendance. The lists and rankings go on and on.

A decade ago, President Bill Clinton signed into law legislation (the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) that required all Title I schools to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). In 2002, President George Bush signed into law the "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) act extending the AYP requirement to non-Title I schools and imposing consequences for not making AYP. The list of "Needs Improvement" (NI) schools became one list on which no educators (or parents) wanted their school to appear.

"This school has a proud history," says Sheila Hollins, assistant principal of Snapfinger Elementary School in DeKalb County. "As a magnet school and a former Georgia School of Excellence (1994), Snapfinger has always had a reputation of achieving at a higher standard. To be considered in need of improvement was difficult for some of the staff and parents to accept."

Making "the list" was also disconcerting to the faculty of Long Branch Elementary School in Lumpkin County.

ess

om to discuss AYP

AYP

ress AYP

“What was so frustrating was that we knew we were all working very hard and thought we were doing a good job,” says Principal Sharon Head. “After all, it wasn’t easy trying to educate 900 students in a building that had been built for 550. To be put on the list of NI schools was discouraging, because it made us feel that our efforts weren’t appreciated.”

Betty Jo Jackson, principal of Cobb County’s Austell Elementary (Primary) School, is also concerned about a perception that teachers in NI schools aren’t doing a good job.

“That just isn’t true,” she says. “The teachers here are outstanding and work exceptionally hard. Being on the list should not reflect negatively on them.”

In spite of negative perceptions related to NI, educators in five schools that have recently worked their way off the list agree that being on the list can be a strong motivator.

“To some, it doesn’t seem fair to use the same criteria to compare schools with very different populations,” says Snapfinger’s first-year Principal Nikki Hildebrand. “On the other hand, it does focus the staff, the local school systems and the Georgia Department of Education (GDOE) on making sure that we are educating all children to a certain level. That type of accountability is a good thing.”

“Self-reflection is always very difficult, but being on the list forced us to look at what we were doing,” says Assistant Principal Hollins. “After all, there has to be accountability for teachers and schools—and change, if necessary.”



Snapfinger Elementary School Principal Nikki Hildebrand (left) with her Assistant Principal Sheila Hollins (right)

Long Branch Elementary’s principal had a similar reaction. “On the whole, educators are not whiners or grumblers,” Head explains. “Our attitude is to solve the problems and meet the challenges. We’re here because we care about kids. Although it was frustrating to be on the list, it forced us to look at ourselves, which isn’t a bad thing.”

Vanessa Biggers, principal of Muscogee Elementary School, also sees a positive side to the list.

“Yes, being on the list is stressful, but it

is also motivating,” the Columbus educator explains. “When I first came here last year, the school had already met AYP for one year, and I told the faculty that we would definitely get off the list the next year. I knew they would meet the challenge, because they are dedicated educators who want to be at this school and believe that their students can achieve at a high level. We have the right people. They want to make a difference.”

“There is no doubt about it,” says Pulaski Elementary School Principal Jane



Teacher Delores Cooper, Snapfinger Elementary School, DeKalb County with two of her 2nd-grade students

“For two solid years, this faculty made a concerted effort to improve our students’ math scores, and they succeeded. They worked very hard, and they got their students to work hard and take pride in their accomplishments.”

Hilliard. “Being on the list has definitely made all of us more focused on instruction. We have taken the ‘fluff’ out of teaching and become very selective about any activity that takes teachers or students out of the classroom and away from the primary goals of teaching and learning the objectives of the Quality Core Curriculum (QCC).”

In a nutshell, as Clint Terza, principal of Austell Elementary School’s intermediate division (grades 3-5) puts it, “It definitely gets your attention and forces changes.”

Lissa Pijanowski, director of the School Improvement Division of the Georgia Department of Education, has visited many of the state’s NI schools and has found most educators cooperative and ready and willing to tackle the challenges they face.

“No one likes being on ‘the list,’” she says. “However, most educators in the state have overcome the label and are truly focused on making the changes needed to get off the list. They have come to realize that this is the age of accountability that we live in now and that as an educational leader, not only in Georgia, but in the country, this is part of our job. Although some do not agree with how all parts of NCLB or AYP is determined in our state, they accept the challenge and have students’ best interest at heart.”

How does a school make it onto the Needs Improvement list? What are the consequences of being on the list? How does a school work its way off the list? Here is a brief explanation.

According to the Georgia Department of Education, a NI school is a school that has been identified as needing to improve

in specific areas. The GDOE stresses that these are not “failing” schools. Rather, they are schools that do not make AYP for two or more consecutive years in the same subject.

AYP requires schools to meet standards in three areas: test participation (the Criterion Reference Competency Test) for both mathematics and reading/English language arts, academic performance for both mathematics and reading/English language arts, and a second indicator.

Schools that do not meet AYP in the same subject for two or more consecutive years are placed in Needs Improvement status with escalating consequences for each successive year. (“Same subject” is defined as two years of not making Reading/English Language Arts participa-

tion or academic performance or two years of not making mathematics participation or academic performance or two years of not making the second indicator.)

There are no consequences the first time a school does not make AYP, although schools are encouraged to use information from the AYP report to identify areas that need attention and make necessary adjustments. If a school does not meet AYP in the same subject for two consecutive years, the school moves into Needs Improvement status. At this point, the school must notify parents of its status, and the parents will have the option to transfer their children to a higher performing public school in the local system. Additionally, the school must develop a school improvement plan that identifies the specific areas that need improvement and work with parents, teachers and outside experts to develop a plan to raise student achievement.

With each additional year on the Needs Improvement list, the consequences increase (see sidebar entitled Needs Improvement Consequences). A school can work its way off the list by making AYP in its deficient category two years in a row. And it should also be pointed out that all schools on the Needs Improvement list are eligible for special assistance.

“We have four regional support teams in our state made up of representatives from colleges and universities and many different education organizations such as GDOE staff (School Improvement, Title I, Special Education), RESAs, Georgia Learning Resource Centers, Professional Standards Commission and Educational Technology Training Centers,” GDOE’s Pijanowski explains. “These teams work together to coordinate regional support services to the 424 schools on the Needs Improvement list. We have also offered our 141 highest priority schools the assistance of a GDOE leadership facilitator to serve as an on-site coach and provide support for the school improvement process. These leadership facilitators are assigned three to four schools and work with system and school staff to support improvement efforts already in place, analyze performance data to make informed decisions and provide assistance with implementation and monitoring of strategies. The selection and place-



Graduate Programs • Bagwell College of Education

Kennesaw State University • 1000 Chastain Road Box #0120 • Kennesaw, Georgia 30144-5591

About KSU

Kennesaw State University is a dynamic, rapidly growing institution that is committed to excellence in teaching research and service. KSU currently has an enrollment of over 17,000 students. With a long-standing tradition of outstanding education. KSU is an institution committed to serving the continuing academic, professional, cultural and social needs of local, state, national and international communities. The Bagwell College of Education at Kennesaw State University is the second largest teacher preparation of teachers and has one of the largest number of Educational Leaders graduates in the state of Georgia.

Education is a rapidly changing profession – and the graduate programs in education in the Bagwell College of Education and the Professional Teacher Education Unit at Kennesaw State University offer you the opportunity to learn the latest strategies to be an effective expert in learning to bring students to high levels of learning through effective, research-based practices in classroom instruction, and who enhance the structures that support all learning.

The Collaborative Development of Expertise in Teaching and Learning

The Master of Education degree program at the Bagwell College of Education is delivered through a conceptual framework known as the Collaborative Development of Expertise in Teaching and Learning. This model is designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and dispositions of graduate students in education. To that end, the Bagwell College of Education and the



Professional Teacher Unit, is committed to developing expertise among all candidates in initial and advanced programs as teachers and leaders who possess the capability, intent, and expertise to facilitate high levels of learning in all of their students.

Finally, the Bagwell College of Education and the Professional Teacher Education Unit recognizes, values and demonstrates collaborative practices across the college and university and extends collaboration to the community at large. Through this collaboration with professionals in the university, the public and private schools, parents and other partners, the

ultimate goal is to assist Georgia Schools in bringing all students to high levels of learning.

The Bagwell College of Education offers the following Programs in Graduate Education:

- M.Ed. Adolescent Education (4-12)
- M.Ed. Educational Leadership
- M.Ed. Elementary and Early Childhood Education (P-5)
- M.Ed. Special Education

Non-Degree Programs

- Certified teachers may apply for admission to pursue non-degree course work leading to endorsements or add-ons in the following course work:
- Educational Leadership
- English to Speakers of other Languages (ESOL)
- Interrelated Special Education (IRR)

- Learning Disabilities (LD)
- Behavior Disorders (BD)
- Mental Retardation (MR)
- Preschool Special Education
- Reading

Benefits of the M.Ed. Program

- Classes scheduled to accommodate working and non-traditional age students.
- Many classes scheduled for one night a week.
- Expert Advisement.
- Timely completion of your degree—usually within two years.

Praise for M.Ed. Programs at the Bagwell College of Education

- The high quality of relationships at the Bagwell College of Education.

- The availability of faculty to work with students in need of assistance.
- The highest degree of competency demonstrated by the Bagwell
- College of Education faculty in students after graduation.
- The diversity of practical training available at the Bagwell College of Education.

Graduate programs in education at Kennesaw State University are fully accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education and meet the Georgia Professional Standards Commission Program Standards (PSC). Source: *Kennesaw State University 2004-2005 Graduate Catalog*. www.kennesaw.edu

For further information contact: Graduate Studies in Education, (770) 423-6122 or www.kennesaw.edu/education



Angela Parker, 3rd-grade Teacher, Snapfinger Elementary School, DeKalb County

was to make the faculty aware of what might happen if we didn't get off of the list and help focus all of our efforts on raising our students' math scores, which was our critical subject area."

Once they understood the consequences, Snapfinger's faculty was more than up to the challenge.

"They responded as the true professionals that they are," says the assistant principal. "Whatever it took, they did. They came early and stayed late. They even came on Saturdays to work with students in need of extra help. For two solid years, this faculty made a concerted effort to improve our students' math scores, and they succeeded.

They worked very hard, and they got their students to work hard and take pride in their accomplishments."

Once they began to assess the school's academic program, Snapfinger's faculty worked not just to escape the Needs Improvement list, but also to make significant changes in the way children are taught.

"Although math was our only critical area, and we were deficient only by one or two points, just getting off the list wasn't good enough for a school that was accustomed to higher standards of achievement," says Hollins. "The faculty decided to make much broader changes."

One of these changes was to adopt the America's Choice design model.

"What we have done is make a paradigm shift in the way children are taught, not just math, but all subjects," Hollins explains. "We have morning programs, afternoon programs and Saturday programs. We utilize different brain-based strategies, mentoring programs, writers' workshops, readers' workshops and much, much more."

ment of leadership facilitators are based on the specific needs of the schools to ensure optimal success.

"We have also provided a consistent statewide process for school improvement planning, corrective action planning and restructuring planning," adds Pijanowski. "These are compiled in our School Improvement Fieldbook and are available on our website. We provide regional training for all NI schools."

Initially, there was some confusion about the definition of AYP, the consequences of failing to meet it and the resources available. As a result, some schools may have been a little slow in reacting to being placed on the NI list.

"When I first came to Snapfinger three years ago as one member of a completely new administrative team, it quickly became apparent to us that we had come to a school with an outstanding faculty that was completely dedicated to helping children achieve at a high level," says Hollins. "I don't think, however, that the faculty as a whole had a clear understanding of the consequences of remaining on the state's NI list. One of our first tasks

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT CONSEQUENCES

School Not Making AYP in Same Subject (Each year's consequences added to those of previous years)

YEAR 1

No consequences

YEAR 2

Moves into "Needs Improvement" status.

Must notify parents of its status, and they will have the option to transfer their children to a higher performing public school in the local system.

Must develop a school improvement plan that identifies the specific areas that need improvement and work with parents, teachers, and outside experts to develop a plan to raise student achievement.

YEAR 3

Provides parents with the option of having their children take advantage of free tutoring and other supplemental educational services either from their school or from a state-approved outside group.

YEAR 4

Develop a corrective action plan, which means the school must make a fundamental change to help boost student achievement. This may include replacing some school staff, appointing an outside expert to advise the school, extending the school year or school day, or restructuring the internal organizational arrangement of the school.

YEAR 5

Develop a restructuring or "alternative governance" plan, (which does have to be implemented). The plan may include converting the school into a charter school, replacing all/most of the staff, turning it over to a private management company, or any other major restructuring of the school's governance arrangement that makes fundamental reforms.

YEAR 6

Fully implement the "alternate governance" or restructuring plan developed during the previous year if the AYP is not met in the sixth year in the same subject.

"We have a wonderful school," says Principal Nikki Hildebrand. "This challenge has helped focus us on the goal of improving student achievement—and we are succeeding."

Once aware of the consequences, teachers at other schools have also rallied to the challenge. At each of the schools visited for this article, the faculty has made significant changes in the way children are taught.

"In the early stages of AYP and NI, we were somewhat frustrated because the criteria changed, but we finally decided to look at what we were doing well and what we were not doing well and not worry about AYP and the list," says Sharon Head. "Under the leadership of Dana White—our principal at that time—we identified attendance as our major weakness and developed strategies to get kids to come to school on time and stay all day. It was an issue that had been a problem for years."

"We started a program called 'Bell to Bell' through which we reward children for good attendance, and the principal or assistant principal personally called the homes of all students not in school each day."



Fourth-grade Teacher Cathy McMullen (top) rewards children for participating in the Bell to Bell Program at Long Branch Elementary School in Lumpkin County. Long Branch Elementary School's Principal Sharon Head (left.)

"And," adds fourth-grade teacher Cathy McMullen, "we now give parents schedules showing what their children do each week so that they understand that missing school means missing valuable lessons."

The results: the percentage of students missing more than 15 days during the school year has decreased from 19.4 percent in 2003 to 8.1 percent last year.

But the Long Branch faculty did not just address the NI criteria.

Continued on page 27

Through all life's stages ...



... there's AIG VALIC.

From birth through retirement

and after, AIG VALIC can be there for you. What you're doing today may determine what you do when you retire. So if your retirement role isn't assured yet, now's the time to start writing your script.

So call us. Today.

770-395-4779 or
1-800-448-2542

Securities and investment advisory services are offered by VALIC Financial Advisors, Inc., member NASD, SIPC and an SEC-registered investment advisor.

AIG VALIC is the marketing name for the group of companies comprising VALIC Financial Advisors, Inc.; VALIC Retirement Services Company; and The Variable Annuity Life Insurance Company (VALIC); each of which is a member company of American International Group, Inc.

Copyright © 2004, American International Group, Inc. All rights reserved.
Houston, Texas
www.aigvalic.com

VL15821 STC-B4 05/2004



Carolyn Lovett of BellSouth to Chair PAGE Foundation

Carolyn Lovett, the senior director of External Affairs for BellSouth in Georgia, has been elected chair of the PAGE Foundation for a two-year term, according to Foundation President Tom Wommack. Lovett succeeds Curley M. Dossman, Jr. of Georgia-Pacific. Lovett served as vice chair of the PAGE Foundation during the past year and chair of the 2004 Planning Committee. Other officers elected by the PAGE Foundation Board of Trustees at its September Annual Meeting include Ben Boswell of Wachovia, who will serve as vice chair; Margaret Hylton Jones of Margaret Jones and Associates, who has accepted another term as secretary; and Ernest Jordan of AIG-VALIC, who succeeds Boswell as treasurer.

"Commitment is the first word that comes to mind when we think of these officers," asserted Wommack. "Each of

Carolyn Lovett



these individuals has a long history with the PAGE Foundation, and their commitment to its work has been demonstrated repeatedly through their gifts to the

foundation and through the countless hours they have invested in helping us grow and improve."

Wommack pointed out that Carolyn Lovett chaired the laborious work of the Planning Committee, which recently concluded nine months of work charting the Foundation's future. In addition, Lovett has advocated for the PAGE Foundation within BellSouth Corporation and the BellSouth Foundation, bringing in more than \$40,000 in recent years to support Future Educators of America in Georgia. Ben Boswell, who also served on the Planning Committee, is responsible for more than \$80,000 in gifts from the Wachovia Foundation and is credited with opening doors that allow the PAGE Foundation to compete for large grants offered under the "Teachers and Teaching Initiative" of the Wachovia Foundation in North Carolina.

Wommack noted that Margaret Hylton Jones, who has chaired the foundation's Nominating Committee for several years, is personally responsible for recruiting onto the board many of its most respected members, and Ernest Jordan has advocated for the PAGE Foundation within AIG-VALIC resulting in annual gifts of \$15,000 in support of National Board Certification. Jordan and his staff are also credited with creating the foundation's new Investment Policy, a particularly sophisticated document that is expected to increase the performance of the PAGE Foundation Endowment Fund portfolio.


"I am very excited about this slate of officers," said Wommack. "They bring to the leadership of the Foundation great professional experience in management, charitable giving, public affairs and finance. I am also very grateful that Curley Dossman has agreed to remain on the Board of Trustees for at least one more year to assist Carolyn and this team of officers as they move into their new duties. Curley has been an outstanding chair, and it has been our great pleasure to work with him during his two-year term." ♦

T **E**
Teachers, take a step up in your career.
E
Earn an M. Ed. or Ed. S. degree
from Brenau University.

- * M.Ed. in Early Childhood, Middle Grades or Special Education (Learning Disabilities, Behavior Disorders or Interrelated)
- * Ed. S. in Early Childhood or Middle Grades Education

Classes offered one night a week or on alternating weekends.

Brenau University
Evening and Weekend College
(770) 538-4390 (800) 252-5119
Atlanta Gainesville Waleska



www.brenau.edu

Former Georgia Governor Among State Leaders Joining PAGE Foundation Board of Trustees

Former Georgia Governor Joe Frank Harris and a distinguished group of state leaders from business, government and education were elected to the PAGE Foundation Board of Trustees at its Annual Meeting on Sept. 21, according to PAGE Foundation President Tom Wommack.

In addition to Harris, new trustees include Mike Vollmer, the commissioner of the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education; Sadie Dennard, the president of the Georgia School Boards Association; Heath Garrett, chief of staff for Congressman Johnny Isakson; Bill Kitchens, managing partner of Arnold, Golden and Gregory; Dr. Dorothy Leland, president of Georgia College and State University; and Dr. Yiping Wan, dean of the Bagwell College of Education, Kennesaw State University.

Other new foundation trustees include Ken Russell, president-elect of PAGE; Ani Agnihotri, president and CEO of the IIIrd Millenium Corporation; and Ben Tarbutton III, assistant vice president of the Sandersville Railroad Company.

"This is an extraordinary group of new trustees by any measure, and we feel very fortunate to have earned their support," said Wommack. "Captured within this group of outstanding individuals are leaders with great depth in the areas of education, governance and business. For example, former Governor Harris is responsible for the Quality Basic Education Act, which really set an aggressive agenda for public school improvement in Georgia. Mike Vollmer was the founding executive director for Georgia's HOPE Scholarship Program and later the state's Pre-K Program. Heath Garrett provided direct support for the state school board when Congressman Isakson chaired that board and has a great understanding of public education issues and needs. Our other trustees are equally knowledgeable and accomplished providing what we might call a 'dream team' of new people for the board."

Wommack noted that trustees are elected for a three-year term with the understanding that the bylaws provide

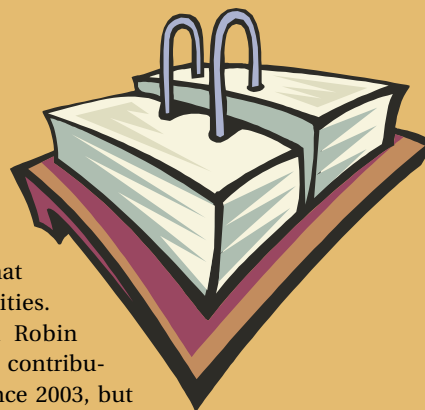
for a second three-year term upon re-election. This year several trustees completed their terms on the board, and each was honored at the Annual Meeting by being elected as trustee-emeritus, the first time in the history of the foundation that such recognition was bestowed upon an outgoing trustee. Among those elected to a five-year term as trustee-emeritus are retiring trustees Ann Cramer of IBM, Lee Hughes of Smurfit-Stone Corporation, Bill Kinzy, who is a retired school superintendent, Melvin Kruger of L.E. Schwartz & Sons, Inc., and Kirby Thompson of Equifax.

"We regret losing these five wonderful men and women from the Board of Trustees," said Wommack, "but we are delighted to maintain our relationship with them through their service as our first group of trustee-emeritus leaders. These individuals have made innumerable contributions of many kinds to the



PAGE Foundation, and they richly deserve this honor." ♦

2004 Year-End Giving Opportunities



It's that time of year again to check into year-end charitable donations that could lighten your 2004 tax liabilities. According to PAGE auditor and CPA Robin McIntire, tax laws regarding charitable contributions have not changed substantially since 2003, but opportunities to reduce taxes can be found in appreciated property.

"As a general rule, gifts of capital gain property are deductible at their fair market value on the date of the contribution," said McIntire. "For example, if a donor contributes an asset that has appreciated in value, such as stock, the donor does not need to include in income any gain on the disposition of the asset but is still able to deduct the appreciated value."

McIntire added that donors can receive a meaningful benefit by contributing stock to charitable organizations such as the PAGE Foundation. She added that charitable donations are always an option for reducing tax liabilities and can provide tax saving alternatives for your beneficiaries. Consider including the PAGE Foundation as a beneficiary as you prepare for the current and future disbursements of your assets. For assistance in making tax-deductible contribution to the PAGE Foundation, call the PAGE office at (770) 216-8555 or send an e-mail to the foundation's staff at jevarner@mindspring.com. ♦

New "Strategic Agenda" Approved at PAGE Foundation Board of Trustees Annual Meeting

The PAGE Foundation Board of Trustees approved a new "Strategic Agenda" or business plan at its Annual Meeting on Sept. 21, according to PAGE Foundation President Tom Wommack. "The Strategic Agenda will guide the priorities and focus of the foundation for the next several years and represents the culmination of nearly nine months of work," said Wommack. "Special thanks go to Carolyn Lovett, Curley Dossman, Ben Boswell, Dr. Diane Ray, Paul Copeland, Bill Hare and Dr. Allene Magill who worked diligently for so many months and through so many challenging issues as members of the Planning Committee."

The Strategic Agenda, which was approved unanimously by the Board of Trustees, includes a new mission statement which states, "The PAGE Foundation will promote world class education through initiatives that recruit, develop and retain highly accomplished teachers for all of Georgia's students." Supporting this mission statement are five major goals, a number of key initiatives, major tactics, measurable performance indicators and a list of who is accountable for achieving the results anticipated in the plan.

"The Strategic Agenda was very well received by the Board of Trustees," commented Wommack. "In fact, Deena Hoch, the immediate past president of PAGE and a foundation trustee, declared that this agenda has the potential to change the state of Georgia if it is implemented properly. Other trustees were similarly impressed by the Planning Committee's work."

Wommack noted that the ultimate result of the committee's work is to place the focus of the foundation squarely on teachers and their recruitment, development and retention. "We do not want to overstate the teacher shortage issue," said Wommack,



Newly-elected PAGE Foundation Chair Carolyn Lovett (left) and PAGE Foundation President Tom Wommack (right) honors outgoing Chair Curley Dossman, Jr. for two outstanding years of leadership at the helm of the PAGE Foundation during ceremonies at the Board of Trustees Annual Meeting in September.



Outgoing PAGE Foundation Chair Curley Dossman (right) commends newly-elected Chair Carolyn Lovett (center) during ceremonies at the Board of Trustees Annual Meeting as newly-elected Vice Chair Ben Boswell (left) looks on.



PAGE Director of Professional Services Dr. Edie Belden tells trustees at the PAGE Foundation Annual Meeting that the new Teacher Academy will focus on building teacher-leaders among high-potential novice teachers.



Mary Ruth Ray of the PAGE Foundation staff tells members of the Board of Trustees that the Student Professional Association of Georgia Educators (SPAGE) will be 're-invented' in 2005 to be more responsive to the needs of non-traditional college students who aspire to become teachers.

"but data from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission strongly suggest that the demand for teachers during the next 10 years or more will outstrip the state's ability to graduate new teachers or 'import' qualified teachers from other states. We think we can help offset some future shortages by recruiting capable young people into teaching through PAGE FEA and SPAGE, hold onto high-potential novice teachers through the Teacher Academy, and retain veteran teachers through National Board Certification and other professional learning programs that reinvigorate excellent teachers and recognize their immense contribution to the people of Georgia."

Wommack noted that the Board of Trustees embraced this agenda enthusiastically because it addresses a major state need, the obligation to ensure every Georgia student the highly-qualified teacher he or she deserves.

The foundation president was quick to note that traditional student achievement programs of the PAGE Foundation including the PAGE Academic Bowl for Middle Grades and the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon remain valued programs that directly benefit students. Wommack said the foundation is currently looking for partners from higher education to assist in the work of the student achievement programs to share the labor and operating costs of the student programs. "I don't foresee a day when the PAGE Foundation isn't connected in some way to these valuable and respected student programs," said Wommack, "but we would like very much to bring in partners who can help us perpetuate these wonderful programs as we increasingly focus on the recruitment, development and retention of highly-accomplished teachers for Georgia." ♦

Honor Your Favorite Teacher

By Dr. Cheryl Crooks, 2004 State PAGE STAR Teacher Honors Chemistry, Wheeler High School, Cobb County

After contemplating for two months who my favorite teacher has been, it finally occurred to me that in the timeline of my 48 years there have been several special people that have made a significant impact on my life. There is one common thread that all these people possess even though their influences in my life are very diverse. These common qualities are best summed up in Proverbs 3:3-4, which states, "Let love and faithfulness never leave you, bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man." These special people reached out to me with love and faithfulness and inspired me with their passion.

They encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone and excel so that I could grow and reach my potential in that particular area. I would like to briefly acknowledge a few of these teachers in my life.

Glen and Betty Hicks: Two godly parents who have always encouraged me to believe I could accomplish anything.

Coach Richard Harris: A high school basketball coach who taught me that teamwork and diligent practice could lead us to a state championship.

Dr. William McMahan: A chemistry professor who saw potential in me and gave me an opportunity as a graduate assistant.

Dr. Thomas Pearson: A friend who taught me the value of discipline and perseverance to complete the many marathons of life.

Dr. Kie Bowman: A favorite pastor who taught me the truth of God's word and the power of prayer.

Dr. John Crooks: A friend and husband who inspired me to learn and grow in the area of leadership.

Cathie Banks: A master teacher, mentor and friend for the past 18 years who has been an excellent role model and has encouraged me to grow professionally.

Last on my list, but certainly not least, is Cathie Rees Banks, currently known as "Mother Magnet." She is one of the visionaries, founders, and assistant coordinators of our Math, Science and Technology Magnet School at Wheeler High School. When I came to Wheeler 18 years ago, I knew there was something very special about this woman as she interviewed me for a chemistry position. Her charm and passion for her school, the sciences, the staff and the students were very evident and that

convinced me that Wheeler was where I wanted to be! This woman is unbelievable! She has been in education for 39 years, has been retired for two years, but she just won't go away because she is so devoted as a lifelong learner and wants to share her wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm with anyone who is willing to learn.



Dr. Cheryl Crooks and Cathie Banks

She is available to help and guide many people, from tutoring students struggling in biology during her lunch hours, to teaching staff development in new technologies and strategies for all of Cobb County, counseling 375 magnet students, updating and reviewing the curriculum of the magnet program. She leads magnet teachers and advises the magnet student board and the parent foundation. She has received numerous awards, including the STAR Teacher, Cobb County's Science Teacher of the Year, MLK Humanitarian Award and the yearbook dedication. She is a beloved teacher by all ages, and her record has been just that for 39 years and is still going! She is one of the busiest people I know, yet she always makes me feel like I am the most important person in the world and that time is not an issue. That is a characteristic that I really admire because she surprisingly does that with all who know her.



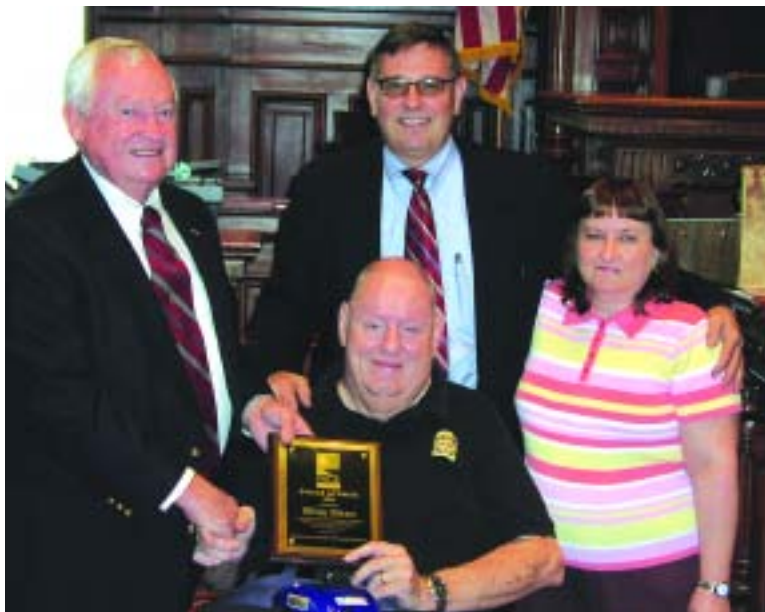
Cathie Banks, assistant magnet director, Wheeler High School

Cathie Banks has been a favorite teacher of hundreds of students, faculty, staff, and administrators over the years. She possesses a dedication to life-long learning as well as the qualities of love and faithfulness that not only have had an impact on my life but many others as well.

In conclusion, I ask that you think about your favorite teachers throughout your life. What qualities did they possess? Do they even know they had an impact on your life? Have you told them or written them a note to thank them? Finally, but most importantly, are you a person someone would put on their time line as one of their favorite teachers in their life? Let's all strive to be the person who makes a significant difference in our students' lives!

Footnote: Unbeknownst to Dr. Crooks and Grace Tiao (2004 State PAGE STAR Student and contributor of last issue's "Honor Your Favorite Teacher,") both chose to honor Cathie Banks as an inspiring educator in their lives. This is the first time that an educator was simultaneously honored since the "Honor Your Favorite Teacher" editorial series began. ♦

Wiley T. Nixon—A Friend of PAGE and the Georgia General Assembly



PAGE Director of Legal and Legislative Services Tom Wommack (far left) presented General Assembly Postmaster Wiley T. Nixon (center) with a "Friend of PAGE" award. Joining them for the presentation are Nixon's wife, Shirley, and Robbie Rivers, clerk for the Georgia House of Representatives.

Wiley T. Nixon has an almost impossible job: keeping 236 Georgia legislators happy. But as the Georgia General Assembly's postmaster and special assistant to the House, he succeeds and finds the time to keep other Capitol regulars happy as well. So much so, in fact, that the PAGE organization wanted him to know how much it appreciates his presence there under the gold dome. As Director of Legal and Legislative Services Tom Wommack has had ample opportunity to see Nixon work his magic.

"Wiley is friendly, efficient and effective and always with a smile," said Wommack. Nixon supervises nine employees and is responsible for two post offices at the Capitol that deliver thousands of pieces of mail, twice every day. He also does what he can to problem-solve in order to keep the Capitol as smooth-running as possible. PAGE has chosen to honor him as "A Friend of PAGE" for all of the support that he has given to PAGE personnel on site at the Capitol, the PAGE organization, as well as House and Senate members, agency heads and personnel. ♦



More than 70 PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon (GAD) Coaches and Coordinators participated in the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon (GAD) Coaches Workshop held at the Holiday Inn Macon Conference Center in August. **(Pictured)** GAD Coach Cynthia Cox, of Villa Rica High School in Carroll County, leads a session entitled "Research, Resources, and Practical Coaching Tips." Other featured sessions were, "Things I Learned My First Year of Coaching," presented by GAD Coach Jennifer Garner, of Forsyth Central High School, and "Essay Construction and Writing," presented by GAD Competition Coordinator for Essay Jamie Lovett, who is also a teacher at McIntosh High School in Fayette County. GAD State Director Dr. Ruth Cowan also lead a session entitled, "How Can We Improve Decathlon Preparation and Study?"

This year's PAGE GAD State Championship will be held on February 25 and 26 at Berkmar High School in Gwinnett County.

Allison Will, Future Educators of America in GA (FEA in GA) member from Parkview High School in Gwinnett County, delivered the "Inspiration" at the July meeting of the State Board of Education. Also on hand at the meeting was Parkview FEA Advisor, Tammy Thomas (not pictured). As an FEA in GA member, Will participates in extracurricular activities that are designed to provide her with a realistic, meaningful and substantive means to explore teaching as a viable career option.

Last year, there were 62 FEA in GA chapters in 39 school systems. It is the goal of the PAGE Foundation and its partner Phi Delta Kappa International, to expand the program to all 180 Georgia public school systems by 2006. FEA in GA chapters participate in many activities at the local level to explore careers in education, promote professionalism and support local school initiatives. At the state level, students can participate in events such as the annual FEA in GA Fall Conference, Day on Capitol Hill, and FEAST (Future Educators of America Student Training).

For more information on FEA in GA, visit the PAGE Foundation website at www.pagefoundation.org, and click on FEA in GA. Or you can contact the FEA State Director Mary Ruth Ray at (888) 413-1078 or maryruth@pagefoundation.org.



FOUNDATION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

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

PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon

The PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon State Championship will be held on Feb. 25-26, 2005, at Berkmar High School in Lilburn, Ga. Volunteers are needed to serve as judges for Speech and Interview. Volunteers are also needed to serve as Proctors for Essay, Testing and Super Quiz. Judges serve in groups of three (3) for Speech and Interview presentations. Proctors work with a student assistant in a testing homeroom of nineteen (19) or more students. Super Quiz proctors monitor individual student responses during the course of the Super Quiz Oral relay. A judges' training session is conducted prior to the competition. Volunteers can choose Friday, Saturday or both days. Friday's session lasts from 3:45 to 9:30 p.m. Saturday's session begins at 7:30 a.m. and continues until 1 p.m. (Super Quiz proctors are on site from noon until 3 p.m.)

PAGE Academic Bowl for Middle Grades

The Academic Bowl takes place in January and February. Regional competitions will be held across the state on Saturday, Jan. 8 2005, during the morning and early afternoon. Each region will need a minimum of 20 volunteers to assist with reading questions, judging and timekeeping during the competition. This opportunity will require a time commitment of 4-6 hours. Approximately 40 volunteers are needed for the State Semi-finals to be held on Saturday, Jan. 22, 2005, in Macon. This competition will require a time commitment of about six hours.

Please complete and return the form below if you are interested in volunteering for one or more of these PAGE Foundation programs.

PAGE Foundation Volunteer Form

Name: _____ Home phone: _____

Home Address: _____ Work phone: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Company: _____ Title: _____

E-mail: _____

Area of Interest: Academic Bowl - Saturday, Jan. 8 Decathlon - Friday, Feb. 25
 Academic Bowl - Saturday, Jan. 22 Decathlon - Saturday, Feb. 26

Returning this form in no way obligates you to a particular event. It just lets us know of your interest in volunteer opportunities.

Respond to Michelle Crawford by:

Mail: PAGE Foundation • P.O. Box 942270 • Atlanta, GA 31141-2270

Phone: 1-800-334-6861 • 770-216-8555

Fax: 770-216-9672

E-mail: mcrawford@pagefoundation.org



DR. EDIE BELDEN

PAGE Teacher Academy

Helping Novice Teachers Become Teacher Leaders

Powerful research indicates, and PAGE believes, that a competent, effective teacher is the best way to improve the achievement of students, and that teachers who feel competent and experience satisfaction and accomplishment in their work will choose to stay in the profession.

Beginning teachers rarely make a smooth transition into teaching. There are many reasons why. They are hired at the last moment, assigned to the lowest achieving classes or a mainstream classroom with many special needs students, given no support in acclimating to the school or community culture and expected to make Annual Yearly Progress with students they may not be certified to teach. The consequences of these scenarios is that as many as 50 percent of new teachers nationwide leave the profession during the first five to seven years of service. With the majority of the current teaching force reaching retirement age, the increasing shortage of persons choosing teach-

ing as a career and the high exit rate in the first years of service, new intensive measures must be instituted to hold on to the most promising novice teachers.

As an organization, PAGE has been very concerned about the attrition of novice teachers from the profession and the need to have more competent and better qualified teachers in

classrooms. As an outgrowth of PAGE's commitment to become a better professional partner, a Teacher Academy for teachers with less than four years experience began on Oct. 1, 2004. Powerful research indicates, and PAGE believes, that a competent, effective teacher is the best way to improve the achievement of students, and teachers who feel competent and experience satisfaction and accomplishment in their work will choose to stay in the profession.

PURPOSE AND GOAL

The purpose of the PAGE Teacher Academy is to provide high potential new teachers with the information, technology, teaching techniques and skills and connect them with exemplary

veteran teachers in order to better prepare them for the challenges that overwhelm new teachers. Novice teachers will be required to examine their roles as teacher leaders and plan for appropriate professional growth. The goal is to prepare novice teachers so they will be more effective in the classroom, view teaching as a rewarding and long-term career and assume leadership roles in creating a culture of change in the profession and in the schools in which they teach.

PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS

To be a participant in the Teacher Academy, a person must be:

- a certified teacher
- employed in a Georgia school system
- have less than four years experience
- recommended by a principal
- personally committed to the two year program

Participants in the 2004-05 Academy were required to submit an application with responses to four questions. The responses to the questions and the letter from the principal were the determinants used by the review team, composed of PAGE staff, PAGE board of directors and nationally board certified teachers to select 30 participants—10 elementary (K-5), 10 middle (6-8), 10 high school (9-12)—from across the state. Priority was given to low income, high diversity schools or school systems. Plans are currently in development to induct the second group of Teacher Academy participants for the 2005-06 session.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND CURRICULUM

The program for the Academy participants is extensive and intensive. It is a two-year program with six required sessions per year.

Year I 2004-05	Year II 2005-06
2 sessions Fall	2 sessions Fall
2 sessions Spring	2 sessions Spring
1 Fall Conference	1 Fall Conference
1 Summer Conference	1 Summer Conference

FRIDAY	FACULTY	CURRICULUM STRAND
1-3 p.m.	Dr. Deborah Lowther	Strand I Technology: <i>The Student and the Teacher</i>: The teacher focuses on incorporating technology into instruction and in using technology to locate professional and instructional resources.
3:30-5:30 p.m.	Dr. Timothy Blair	Strand II <i>Teaching in the Mainstream Classroom</i>: The teacher focuses on engaging and supporting all students in learning.
7:30-9:30 p.m.	Dr. Ann Stucke	Strand III Group work, speakers, development of Individual Development Plan (IDP)
SATURDAY	FACULTY	CURRICULUM STRAND
8:30-10 a.m.	Dr. Michael White	Strand IV <i>Using Data to Make Instructional Decisions</i>: The teacher focuses on assessing student work and instructional experiences and on using standardized test data to make instructional decisions.
10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.	Mary Lou Jordan	Strand V <i>Standards & Curriculum Mapping</i>: The teacher focuses on the new Georgia Performance Standards, developing a year-long instructional plan, and two exemplary lesson plans.
1:30-3:30 p.m.	Dr. Denise Crockett	Strand VI <i>Community and School Cultures</i>: The teacher focuses on an examination of the context (community, school, and classroom) in which he/she teaches.

The format is from noon on Friday until 4 p.m. on Saturday. Friday night sessions are required. For the 2004-05 participants, the curriculum is divided into six strands each with a different faculty member.

PAGE'S COMMITMENT

PAGE has a strong commitment to this endeavor, both in spirit and in funding. PAGE provides all the resources necessary for the development and implementation of this effort. There are no costs to the schools or the school systems that have teachers participating in the academy. PAGE pays the following costs:

- Reimbursement to school system for

substitute teachers

- Lodging, food and travel expenses for the 30 participants
- \$100 stipend for each participant per session to cover personal expenses, e.g. child care
- Fees and travel expenses for all Teacher Academy faculty
- Books and materials needed for instruction

In addition, Dr. Ann Stucke joined the PAGE staff in August. She will have direct responsibility for the continued development and operation of the Teacher Academy.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the pro-

gram and provide data for changes and further development, Dr. Angleika Pohl, an experienced researcher, has been selected as the external evaluator.

DEVELOPING MAXIMUM POTENTIAL AND MAXIMUM SERVICE

The PAGE Teacher Academy is about valuing novice teachers and supporting them through the most difficult time in their professional careers. It is about developing a better trained, more effective classroom teacher. It is about helping teachers, new in the profession, develop their maximum potential with emphasis on career satisfaction and longevity. ♦

TEACHER ACADEMY PARTICIPANTS



Laura Baldree
Berkmar High School
Gwinnett County
9-12th Grades Visual Arts



Amelia Barnes
National Hills Elementary School
Richmond County
4th Grade



Jennifer Bowers
Houston County High School
9-12th Grades Foreign
Language



Keisha Browning
Stone Mill Elementary
DeKalb County
Kindergarten

TEACHER ACADEMY PARTICIPANTS



Pauline Cody
Metter Middle School
Candler County
Computer Skills Middle School



Stephanie Earnest
Liberty Middle
Forsyth County
6th Grade



Erin Fesler
Peachtree Ridge High School
Gwinnett County
9th Grade Language Arts



Michael Forehand
Jackson Elementary School
Butts County
3rd Grade



Karen Gerow
Whit Davis Elementary
Clarke County
3rd Grade



Nena Greene
Pope High School
Cobb County
English



Kara Helweg
Spring Place Elementary
Murray County
Kindergarten



Beatrice Holmes
Roberta T. Smith
Clayton County
Kindergarten



Julie Kight-Washburn
Dublin High School
Dublin City Schools
9-12th Grades
Accounting/Computers



Alicia Kirkpatrick
Anita White Carson Middle School
Greene County
6th Grade



Autumn Kitchens
Dodge County Middle School
Dodge County
6th - 8th Grades



Sharita Leonard
Eagles Landing High School
Henry County
9-12th Grades Business

TEACHER ACADEMY PARTICIPANTS



Chad Martin
Chestnut Log Middle School
Douglas County
8th Grade



Melissa McClure
Cooper Middle School
Cobb County
6th Grade



Heather Morel
Mary Lee Clark Elementary School
Camden County
3rd Grade



Eric Ritter
Palmer Middle School
Cobb County
7th Grade



Heather Bland Robinson
Madison County Middle School
Madison County
8th Grade Math



Tara Smith
Sharp Creek Elementary
Carroll County
3rd Grade



Emily Spake
Northside High School
Houston County
9-12th Grades Spanish



Lane Tyus
Shaw High School
Muscogee County
9-10th Grade English



Gena Welsh
Varnell Elementary
Whitfield County Schools
1st Grade



Stephanie Whittington
North Atlanta High School
Atlanta City
9-11th Grade Math



Amanda Wilson
Madison County High School
Madison County
10th Grade Literature



Tamara Wilson
Renfroe Middle School
City Schools of Decatur
7th Grade Life Science



Nick Zomer
Liberty Middle School
Forsyth County
6th Grade

Changing Grades



LEONARD D. WILLIAMS

If you haven't already in your career, you will, at some point, assign a grade to a student that someone (student, parent, coach, supervisor, etc.) will be unhappy with. You may even be pressured by someone with authority or influence to change the grade. How should you handle a situation like that?

Let's say that Tommy, a student in your class or school, earns a D for the semester. Everything

(test scores, homework, classwork, projects) indicates that Tommy really did earn the D, but someone wants you to give him a C instead. This is a dilemma many educators have faced. Unfortunately, some educators will alter a grade without good reason and then find themselves under investigation by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) for an ethical violation and/or face disciplinary action from their school system. This is a serious situation which can be avoided.

If faced with a situation like this, the first thing to do is determine if there is a legitimate reason to change the student's grade. If there has been a mistake, miscalculation, omission or failure to follow county grading

policy or some other valid reason that can be documented, then there really shouldn't be a problem changing a grade. If a grade has been changed by a teacher, the teacher should be able to explain it. If a parent or someone else who does not have authority over the teacher requests a grade change and there is no valid reason to do change it, the request should then be directed to the principal or supervisor.

If the principal or supervisor requests a grade change and there are no legitimate grounds for the change, the second thing for the teacher to do is to ask for the directive in writing. An employee should follow any reasonable directive issued by a supervisor. Rarely will a supervisor put an unethical or illegal directive in writing. Many times, a supervisor will back off, and

the situation is resolved with this simple request.

Thirdly, if this request is put in writing and there really is no basis to change the grade, the teacher should send a short memo to his/her principal explaining the reluctance to change the grade and reminding him/her (in a professional manner, of course) of the possible consequences for this action. Falsifying, misrepresenting or erroneously reporting a student's grade may be a violation of Standard 4 of the Code of Ethics for Educators. Furthermore, one who orders another to falsify, misrepresent or erroneously report a student's grade will be committing an unethical act as well. Many school boards also have policies regarding accurately assigning students' grades. This is another step that may resolve the situation rather quickly.

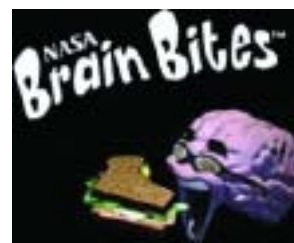
Fourthly, if your principal continues to insist that the grade be changed where there is no legitimate reason to do so, the teacher should bring this to the attention of your principal's supervisor, and so on, until you've made it clear to everyone up the chain of command that there is a professional concern about the possible ethical violations that could result from this action. While it's not necessary to write memos to everyone, it is necessary to leave a paper trail in case of any further developments.

Finally, if all else fails, the teacher should contact the GaPSC. Educators have a duty to report ethical violations to the GaPSC. If you have knowledge of a violation of Standard 4, then you are obligated to report that to the Commission as soon as possible, but no later than 90 days from the date of the incident. The PSC can be reached by calling (800) 869-7775 or visiting www.gapsc.com

It is important to know that the Official Code of Georgia Annotated Section 20-2-940 (a) states that a teacher, principal or other contracted employee cannot be suspended or terminated for refusing to change a grade where there is no good and sufficient cause to do so. By following these steps and contacting the PAGE Legal Department for help along the way, you should be able to safely navigate your way through this difficult situation. ♦



The next time a student asks you,
“How long would a round trip to Mars take?”
you can answer with a NASA Brain Bite™.



NASA Brain Bites are a series of 60-second video shorts to be used as a learning tool in helping educators and parents answer questions students have about space or aeronautics, or to introduce classroom activities on topics such as gravity, acceleration, motion, friction, Newton's Laws and more. Not only will these video shorts help feed hungry minds but they will help students gain a better understanding of how space science and aeronautics work.

Do your students know what launch windows are and why NASA uses them when sending a crew into space? If not, then let Super Bowl Champion Quarterback, Kurt Warner help (spaceflight.nasa.gov/brainbite/launch). Warner explains that a launch window is similar to a play in football. For a space mission to meet its target, such as the moon or a distant planet, it must take off in a certain time period. Warner explains the same is true in football. When he throws the football, he doesn't aim directly for his teammate, instead, he aims for where the ball will intersect his teammate's path. Whether launching a football or launching a spacecraft, timing is crucial. If you take off at the wrong time you might miss your target completely.

Students are also interested in finding out how astronauts train here on earth. NASA can't send astronauts into space to work on the International Space Station if they have never had training in a simulated zero-gravity environment, so there are a few ways space travelers can train. One way is with a specially modified plane called the KC-135, also termed the "Vomit Comet," (spaceflight.nasa.gov/brainbite/vomitcomet), and another is a giant swimming pool called NASA's Neutral Buoyancy Lab, (spaceflight.nasa.gov/brainbite/underwater). Both give astronauts the necessary training they need to work adequately in space.

"NASA Brain Bites are a great resource for the classroom. They can easily go along with a science lesson," says NASA employee, Jenna C. Mills, who is currently working on the Brain Bites project. "They answer questions in a way that makes it easy for middle and high school students to understand."

Teachers and parents can also get their students' directly involved with Rocket Science at Home (RSAH), which works in conjunction with NASA Brain Bites. NASA hopes this will stem further interest, get students more intrigued with science and hopefully take what they have learned to explore more concepts of science on their own. By visiting the NASA Brain Bites website,



Do your students know what launch windows are and why NASA uses them when sending a crew into space?

students can learn how to build a hovercraft with the help of a teacher or parent (spaceflight.nasa.gov/brainbite/rocketscience). This activity can be integrated into the classroom or as a Saturday afternoon project. It's a great way to get students directly involved with science principles and build something really cool at the same time.

You can view the NASA Brain Bite videos by visiting brainbites.nasa.gov, where you will also find links to supporting educational material, including grade-appropriate activities that are mapped to national standards. Brain Bites can be downloaded from the web at no cost, in presentation-level quality, for educational purposes at any time.

In the near future, you will be able to obtain a videotape copy of NASA Brain Bites for your classroom through NASA CORE at 1-866-776-CORE or core.nasa.gov, or through your area NASA Educator Resource Center. For any additional information, you may also contact Jenna C. Mills at 281-483-9261 or email the team at brainbites@nasa.gov.



ASO Young People's Concerts



ASO Young People's Concerts (YPC) entertain as they enlighten! The ASO annually presents 36 school-day concerts for young people from pre-school through 8th grade. In 2004-2005, young listeners will explore the concept of musical style in Classical Music: A Matter of Style. Student tickets are \$6. Call 404-733-4871 for information or click on www.atlantasympphony.org/education/index.html to download a ticket order form. Young People's Concerts are sponsored by Next Generation: GE Energy, Discover, Symphony Street: Target

2004-2005 YPC Concert Dates

- Feb. 8, 2005
- Feb. 9, 2005
- Feb. 15, 2005
- March 29, 2005



ASO Coca-Cola Family Concerts

Introduce your youngest family members to the fun world of symphonic music as dancers, puppeteers and beloved characters from children's literature join Maestro Jere Flint and the Orchestra. Sundays at 1:30 & 3:30 pm. Complimentary cookies and juice are served between performances.

www.atlantasympphony.org/calendar/subseries/family.html for more information.

Coca-Cola Family Concerts are sponsored by Coca-Cola with additional support from Publix Super Markets Charities

February 20, 2005
Peter and the Wolf

April 3, 2005
Carnival of the Animals

May 29, 2005
The Mozart Experience



Looking for some great places to take your students for fun and educational field trips this year? Here's a list of exciting and interesting field trip destinations in the Georgia and Atlanta area:

Atlanta Braves
Turner Field
Atlanta, GA 30302
(404) 614-2310
atlantabraves.com

Atlanta Symphony
1292 Peachtree Street
Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30309
(404) 733-4870
atlantasympphony.org

CNN Studio Tours
One CNN Center
Atlanta, GA 30348
(877) 4 CNN TOUR
cnn.com/StudioTour/

Elachee Nature Science Center
2125 Elachee Drive
Gainesville, GA 30504
(770) 535-1976
elachee.org

Georgia State Parks and Historical Sites
127 Peachtree Street
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 588-1013

Imagine It! — Children's Museum of Atlanta
275 Centennial Olympic Drive
Atlanta, GA 30313
404-659-KIDS
childrensmuseumatl.org

Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum
441 Freedom Parkways
Atlanta, GA 30307
(404) 865-7101
jimmycarterlibrary.org

Port Columbus
Columbus, GA 30075
(706) 327-9798
portcolumbus.org

Roswell Magnolia Storytelling Festival
617 Atlanta Street
Roswell, GA 30075(770) 640-3253
Southeastern Railway Museum
Duluth, GA 30096
(770) 476-2013
www.srmduluth.org

Tennessee Aquarium
One Broad Street
Chattanooga, TN 37401
(800) 262-0695
tnaqua.org

U.S. Space Camp
One Tranquility Base
Huntsville, AL 35805
(800) 637-7223
spacecamp.com

World of Coca-Cola
55 Martin Luther King Drive
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 676-6074
woccatlanta.com

Zoo Atlanta
800 Cherokee Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30315
(404) 624-5822
zooatlanta.org ◆



New Employees

Ann H. Stucke, Ph. D., began working in September in the newly established position of assistant director for professional learning. Dr. Stucke served as a high school teacher for 10 years, and comes to PAGE from North Georgia College and State University where she was a professor for six years. Her responsibilities include the PAGE Teacher Academy and the Drive-In conferences.



Dr. Ann H. Stucke

Carol Crook joined the PAGE staff in April as the administrative assistant for the Professional Learning Department. Her background includes over 25 years experience in the insurance industry prior to her work with the ING group of companies. ♦



Carol Crook

ANSWER THE
CALL OF THE
WILD!

Visit www.zooatlanta.org or call 404.624.5822 for more information on these exciting

education programs:

- Self-Guided Field Experiences
- NightCrawler Overnights
- Preschool, Elementary, Middle and High School Programs
- Guided Tours

ZOO ATLANTA

PAGE ONE READERS

\$5 off per person on a group NightCrawler enter coupon code PAGEONE2. Coupon cannot be combined with any other offer and can only be used on new reservations.

Renew Your Passion Advance Your Career

Find out what so many Georgia teachers have already discovered.

- You can earn your M.Ed. in just one weekend a month for 22 months near your home or school!
- Share ideas, address real-life issues, and learn with the same group of dedicated educators in Lesley's unique, supportive format.

Our Master of Education programs in **Georgia** include:

- Creative Arts in Learning
- Technology in Education
- Curriculum and Instruction: Literacy

Classes are now forming in **Albany, Atlanta, Augusta, Calhoun, Columbus, Kingsland, Macon, Savannah, and Temple.**

Founded in 1909 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Lesley University is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, one of the six regional accrediting associations.

Learn about our accelerated weekend study format!
(888) LESLEY-U
learn@lesley.edu
www.lesley.edu/info/ga

Explore Lesley today!

LESLEY UNIVERSITY

Members in the News

COACH PATRICK MUENCHEN NAMED SPORTINGKID MAGAZINE'S 2004 NATIONAL P.E. TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Creek View Elementary Teacher **Patrick Muenchen** has been named the 2004 recipient of the P.E.4LIFE "My Favorite P.E. Teacher" Award by the physical education advocacy group. The Alpharetta P.E. teacher is also a marathon runner, fundraiser for the American Heart Association, a certified personal trainer and a motivator of children and faculty alike.

During his three years at Creek View, Muenchen developed a comprehensive P.E. program that provides a broad spectrum of activities for children including movement concepts, throwing, catching, dance, gymnastics and fitness. Muenchen typifies the trend in P.E. today to make school-based physical education more inclusive of all students, regardless of ability level.



Patrick Muenchen

In his nomination for the award, Creek View Principal Ronald Trussell writes, "Patrick Muenchen is a valuable professional who fulfills his duties in a reliable and enthusiastic manner. His leadership efforts continue to promote student learning, community involvement and fosters a learning environment that benefits our Creek View children."

For more information about P.E.4LIFE visit www.pe4life.org.



(left to right) Millie Scruggs, Jim Greeman, Sherry Jesse and Sheila Brock

MUSCOGEE COUNTY PAGE AWARDS OUTSTANDING MEDIA

Jim Greeman, reporter for the Columbus Ledger and professor at the University of Georgia, accepts the Outstanding Media Award 2004 from Muscogee PAGE members (left to right) Millie Scruggs, Sherry Jesse and Chapter President Sheila Brock. Greenman received the award in August for his fair and impartial reporting on local and statewide education issues.

TEACHING THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF LANGUAGE WITH SUCCESS

McIntosh High School English teacher **Dawn Burnette** developed a program that successfully helps students grasp the concepts of grammar and usage. This Peachtree City educator decided eight years ago that the traditional methods for teaching high school grammar simply weren't working. By the time sophomores entered her classroom, most were still unable to recognize the difference between an adverb and a preposition. That was when she devised a program titled Daily Grammar Practice.

Daily Grammar Practice is a complete grammar course that gives students daily tasks that take five minutes or less to complete. An exercise typically consists of a sentence that lacks punctuation or capitalization. The program helps students understand grammar concepts so they can correct errors in their own writing.

"What makes this program unique is

that it is a more effective, streamlined approach to traditional instruction – it's fast, fun and provides daily reinforcement," said Burnette. "A lot of people ignored teaching grammar because kids couldn't apply it. The kids couldn't apply it because they couldn't understand it. This program changes all that."

Burnette's program, published in 2003 and recently featured in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, has been so wildly successful that teachers in 375 schools in 35 states are using the program. It is also being used in Japan, Turkey and Bermuda. The cost for each "Teacher's Guide" is \$29.95, which includes materials to be copied and distributed to students. Student workbooks are \$5.95 and both are available through DGP publishing dgppublishing.com or by calling (770) 632-7609. Burnette is also publishing a Daily Grammar Program for French I, II, and III, with programs for German, Spanish and Latin coming out in January



Dawn Burnette

No Child Left Behind?

I love America. Only here would we bold enough to say “no child left behind.” Communist and socialist countries have been known to divide their students into the categories of work force, college or vocational starting at a very early age. But here we give the students the freedom to make the choice of what they will become. Here we believe that any student can do anything.

As teachers we all have had at least one student that has been left behind. The concern over the reality of the legislation is real. How can we leave no child behind? It seems impossible and incredibly naïve to think that all children will progress at the appropriate levels. We all know that not all children want to learn. Not all children can learn on the same level at the same time. We have spent years modifying and accommodating teaching practices to different learning styles and special needs, and still not all children progress. We have taught to the child’s strength and helped them to compensate for their weaknesses, only to be told that they cannot use any of the modifications on standardized tests. The word frustration is an understatement! Many teachers are concerned that we will need parking lots at elementary schools once the new pass/fail law goes into effect. It’s a valid point.

I work with EIP students—many of whom are more than a grade level behind where they are expected to be. Some have been retained at least once. I find it difficult to expect my students, with IQs in the 70s and 80s, to learn the same material in the same time as those students with IQs in the average or above average range. And yet, if I label them and expect less I’m putting them in a box. I have found that these students will put forth only as much as is expected of them. That should be reason enough to re-examine my expectations.

So how in the world do we meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Law? I can see many of you leaning forward in your seats to hear my response. Sorry to disappoint you, but I don’t have the answer. I’m not sure anyone does. However, I can say that after my initial panic and irritation over the law, my perspective has changed. I realized that

teachers are not being insulted, but complimented by our politicians. They think we are so talented that we can actually make this happen. They have determined that we are, in fact, miracle workers, and when properly pressured, we are able to solve the nation’s educational dilemmas. They are looking to us to rise to the occasion and initiate the changes necessary to reach every child. When I look at it from that perspective, somehow it makes my resolve that much stronger and increases my determination to achieve that goal. It has become my personal goal to reach every student in my classroom, regardless of IQ. The government knows that teachers are a stubborn, competitive group; the nature of our job is to keep trying over and over for improvements sake. If that were not the case, we wouldn’t have chosen teaching as a profession.

I believe our government is putting this



challenge before us in order to find an answer to the question, “How in the world do we reach them all?” It will take creativity, resolve, forward thinking, fresh ideas, experimentation, dedication and commitment to figure it out. As teachers, those are the characteristics we possess. When you stop to think about it, we are the perfect choice to take on the challenges of new legislation and put our heads together to find solutions. We can teach children that they don’t have to be left behind. ♦

Where are you going?



Explore the TROY Campus in Phenix City, AL that offers M.S. Elementary Education, ED.S. Elementary Education and ED.S. Education Leadership.

- By tape and on the weekends
- These degrees qualify you for certification in Georgia and Alabama

A future of opportunities.

Contact Jack Miller, Director of Distance Learning
Toll Free 866-876-9787 EXT 5129/5106 or e-mail jmiller@troyst.edu

Honoring Excellence in Students and Teachers



Advance your leadership beyond the classroom.

Earn an M.Ed. in educational leadership at Mercer University.

- Classes begin in January
- Designed for in-service teachers wanting to move into administrative roles
- Offered in Macon, Atlanta and McDonough
- "Add-on" certification available for candidates currently holding an M.Ed.

For more information, call (678) 547-6100 or visit us on the Web at www.mercer.edu/education.

MERCER
UNIVERSITY

**TIFT COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION**

Atlanta ■ Macon ■ McDonough



Students from Decatur County spoke at last year's STAR banquet. Front row (left to right) Beth Pack, Crystal Freeman, Angela Andrews and Desiree Rogers. Back row (left to right) Justin Johnson, Ruth Fryer and Sam Hughes



Decatur County PAGE Scholarship recipient Philip Young (right) with his STAR teacher Joan Beers (left)

Each year the PAGE Foundation, in conjunction with the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, helps honor the state's top students and teachers through the Student Teacher Achievement Recognition (STAR) program. The student in each high school who makes the highest combined score on the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) is recognized as the school's STAR student and he/she chooses the teacher who has had the greatest influence on his/her education as the STAR teacher for that school. These students, along with their teachers, then compete with other STAR students for system, region and state honors.

The STAR program may be the best-known program honoring both teachers and students, but fortunately, the idea has also caught on in some local Georgia school systems. In Grady and Decatur counties, the local PAGE chapters sponsor events that honor the systems' top graduates and give them an opportunity to say thank you to their favorite teachers. "This is a great STAR program that is sponsored by the Grady County PAGE Chapter," says Tim Helms, principal of Cairo High School. "They recognize all honor graduates—usually 20-30—who have a 3.5 GPA or higher, and the students invite their most influential teachers to come to the banquet with them. They keep the program short and simple. The students tell why they chose their particular teacher, and the

teachers say a few words about the students who choose them. There are no other speakers except for the students and teachers."

The Decatur County program was started a couple of years after Grady's, in 2001 according to Susan Lanier, school psychologist at the Board of Education Annex and former PAGE director for District 2 states, "We recognize all students who have the mathematical possibility of being honor graduates, based on their grades after the first semester of their senior year," Lanier explains. "The students then choose the teacher or paraprofessional who has had the most significant influence on them in their academic careers."

"On the Monday after Mothers' Day, we host the Honored Graduates/Honored Teachers Banquet for these students and teachers, and we usually have 250 people attending. The local PAGE chapter pays for the dinner and provides a scholarship of \$500 to one student, chosen on the basis of academic achievement, school and community involvement and financial need. We have 6-8 student speakers who tell why they chose their teachers. We also put together a booklet that includes the students' plans for the future. It is a great event," Lanier added.

For additional information about the Grady program, you can contact Tim Helms at (229) 377-2222 and for further information about the Decatur program, contact Susan Lanier at (229) 246-4964. ♦

GETTING OFF "THE LIST"

Continued from page 9

They actually implemented much of their restructuring plan.

"We did a lot of research on what works in schools and decided to implement a lot of our plan whether we had to or not," explains Head. "We developed new ways to motivate students, increased the inclusion of special education students and started a parent involvement committee."

"We have made major changes," McMullen concurs. "We've changed faculty attitudes, and we are finding ways to teach all children better."

The faculty of Muscogee Elementary School has also exceeded the goal of meeting AYP. The bulletin board outside Principal Vanessa Biggers' office is covered with newspaper articles and letters of congratulations for the school being named one of Georgia's "Top 30 Achieving Schools for 2004."

How did a school go from the NI list to the "Top 30 Achieving Schools" list so quickly?

"Virtually everything we do academically is data-driven," explains Biggers. "We use the Muscogee Accountability Plan (MAP) to develop data to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each student."

"This includes sample tests four times a year to assess where our students are using the same test protocol as a real Criterion Reference Competency Test (CRCT). Then we disaggregate the data and focus on those areas in which individual kids need help."

"On our first assessment in August, we hope the students will meet at least 30 percent of that year's objectives," explains testing coordinator, Tammy Pope. "On the second test, we hope they will meet 50 percent of the objectives, 70 percent on the third test, and so on. We believe this is clearly one reason that our scores increased by 25 points last year, which made us one of the 30 schools with the highest increase on the CRCT. Our goal now is to make the list of Distinguished Schools."

To accomplish that goal, Muscogee is doing more than administering tests and disaggregating data.

"We have the right people who want to make a difference in children's lives," says Biggers, "and they are willing to try new things to see what works best."

"We have teachers who have looped up a grade with their students and others who decided to team-teach to accentuate their strengths. We also have mentors from the military base, and we place tremendous emphasis on reading and writing. But the key is having excellent teachers who hold students accountable for their learning."

Good things are also happening at Austell Elementary in Cobb County.

"Our reading scores were very low," says Primary Principal BettyJo Jackson. "The teachers were very disappointed, but under the leadership of retired principal, Stephanie Kitchens, the staff disaggregated the test scores, analyzed the problem and decided to adopt the America's Choice Reform Model. They have embraced America's Choice and continue to do whatever it takes to help the children make progress, including coming in early and staying late. The results have been positive. Our scores have definitely improved."

One of the reasons for improvement is the America's Choice "Safety Net" program, says Clint Terza, Cobb County's Bryant



(above, left to right) Muscogee Elementary School Parent Coordinator Evelyn Burks, Testing Coordinator Tammy Pope and Principal Vanessa Biggers



(left) Clint Terza, principal of Austell Elementary, Intermediate Division with (right) BettyJo Jackson, principal of Austell Elementary, Primary Division.

Primary/Intermediate School principal

"Using this program, we look at each child as an individual and help move him or her from one level of accomplishment to the next. Knowing the scores of each individual child causes teachers to reflect and analyze how to teach each child."

Terza also credits the America's Choice math specialists with getting students very excited about math. And, he credits the NI list and NCLB with encouraging schools to pay attention to all children.

"No matter what their circumstances or where they come from, we have an obligation to educate all of them," he says, "and I am very pleased that all of our third-grade special education students made AYP last year."

Significant changes have also occurred at Pulaski Elementary in south central Georgia.

"Our principal, Jane Hilliard, has been our number one cheerleader and our instructional leader," says Janet DeLoach, an EIP teacher who spends two periods each day helping with administrative tasks. "What has helped us most is learning how to use test data to drive instruction. We analyze the data to assess the progress of every child so that we can determine what objectives of the QCC each child has and has not mastered."

Other changes at Pulaski include the use of Coach software to analyze test results; prioritizing CRCT objectives; greater emphasis on attendance; after-school reading and math programs; pos-

Continued on page 28



School Bus Driver Prayer

*God board this bus with me
Keep us all accident free
Watch the children as they wait
We know you hold their fate
Give the brake that extra push
Put it in us not to rush
Be with us as we start each day
Now until the end of May
Carry us in your hand
While we try to satisfy every demand
With each hardship that comes along
Give us strength to carry on.*

-Shawn Wooten,
Henry County Schools

This poem is dedicated to the children who are hit each year by cars illegally passing school buses. Look for more information about this topic in upcoming issues. If you have Words of Wisdom you would like to share with other paraprofessionals, bus drivers or support personnel, please submit your contribution to Erica Driver at edriver@pageinc.org. ♦

GETTING OFF "THE LIST"

Continued from page 27

itive reinforcements to encourage attendance during test week; adoption of a new series of reading texts; and a focus on QCC objectives.

The key, says Hilliard, is a thorough analysis of what the school has done well and what it hasn't done as well.

"You can't just get new books or extend the school day," she explains. "These kinds of things won't help much unless you analyze data to determine the root causes of your deficiencies. It all comes down to the quality of instruction."

These are just five schools out of hundreds that have been on the NI list. What about the other 400+ in the state? Is "the list" making a difference in how children are being taught in those schools?

"I do believe that NCLB is helping to improve Georgia's schools," says Lissa Pijanowski. "Never before have all schools in our state been held accountable for all students. NCLB promotes the use of data and requires that leaders in our state become adept at data analysis and utilization and become familiar with the most current research on improving student achievement and determining ways to improve instructional and organizational effectiveness.

It is a win-win for our students and our schools. We went into education because we want to help students succeed. Now, we are having to collectively build the processes and systems of support to truly help us reach our goals for student



Pulaski Elementary School's EIP Teacher Janet DeLoach (left) with Principal Jane Hilliard (right)

achievement. The way in which Georgia has embraced the law and has begun to address these changes in a systematic, deliberate manner provides us a golden opportunity to truly lead the nation in improving student achievement," Pijanowski concluded.

Does that mean that all schools and school systems in Georgia have embraced AYP and the NCLB requirements? Not entirely, says Herb Garrett, executive director of the Georgia School Superintendents Association.

"There is no doubt that AYP and the NI list have forced the world of public education to put greater emphasis on educating kids we have heretofore been unsuccessful with," says Garrett. "And there are many schools out there receiving a lot of positive recognition for meeting AYP in spite of their relative lack of resources and the challenges that their students face.

"However, a lot of educators are concerned that the NI list is yet another

'gotcha' list that does not always accurately represent the quality of the schools on the list."

"For example," says Garrett, "I spoke to a superintendent recently who had a school that does very well academically, but failed to make AYP in attendance, which was its second indicator. And the reason the school failed was because of an outbreak of flu two weeks before Christmas."

Garrett is also concerned that as the standards for making AYP become increasingly more challenging, more and more schools will wind up on the NI list, which would make the list less meaningful.

"What good is a list if everyone is on it?" he asks.

Pijanowski hopes that AYP and the NI list will remain positive forces for change in spite of the difficulties.

"We still do have some schools in the state with leadership 'digging' their heels in," she says. "It is important that schools and systems get past the label and fighting the reform legislation and get on with the business of making the necessary improvements. It won't do the students any good to wait. NCLB is not a 'here today, gone tomorrow' piece of legislation. It was bipartisan and education reform is here to stay."

It is clear that schools such as Snapfinger, Long Branch, Austell, Muscogee and Pulaski elementary have no fear of labels or lists. For these schools, what really matters is doing everything possible to help ALL students learn. ♦

PAGE Planner 2004-05

December 2004

4 NBPTS Workshops, Turner Co. Spec. School, Northside H.S. and St. Marys Elem. School, North Ga. RESA

11 NBPTS Workshops, North Ga. RESA, Macon State College and Callanwolde Fine Arts Ctr., Columbia Co. Admin. Complex

January 2005

8 PAGE Academic Bowl Regional Competition

8 NBPTS Workshops, Turner Co. Spec. School, St. Marys Elem. School, North Ga. RESA, Macon State College, Northside H.S. and Columbia Co. Admin. Complex

15 NBPTS Workshop, Callanwolde Fine Arts Ctr.

22 PAGE Academic Bowl Semi-final Competition

22 NBPTS Workshop, Macon State College

February 2005

5 NBPTS Workshops, St. Marys Elem. School, Northside H.S. and Columbia Co. Admin. Complex

7 PAGE Academic Bowl Final Competition

8 PAGE/SPAGE Day on Capitol Hill

12 NBPTS Workshops, North Ga. RESA, Macon State College, Callanwolde Fine Arts Ctr. and Turner Co. Spec. School

15-17 Drive-In Conferences*

25-26 PAGE GAD State Championship

26 NBPTS Workshop, Callanwolde Fine Arts Ctr.

March 2005

5 NBPTS Workshops, Turner Co. Spec. School, St. Marys Elem. School, Northside H.S., North Ga. RESA, and Columbia Co. Admin. Complex

12 NBPTS Workshop, Macon State College

15 FEA Day on Capitol Hill

15-17 Drive-In Conferences*

19 NBPTS Workshop, Northside H.S.

26 NBPTS Workshop, Callanwolde Fine Arts Ctr. and North Ga. RESA

April 2005

2 NBPTS Workshop, St. Marys Elem. School

9 NBPTS Workshops, Turner Co. Spec. School and Macon State College

13-16 USAD National Competition, Chicago, IL

30 PAGE Scholarship Application Deadline

Last Week TBA PAGE State STAR Banquet

May 2005

7 NBPTS Workshop, Macon State College

14 NBPTS Workshop, Turner Co. Spec. School

June 2005

6-8 FEA in GA Summer Institute, GA College & State University, Milledgeville, GA

21-23 Pre-conference (Mentoring)

24-25 Summer Conference

* For a complete listing of topics, speakers and locations see page 30 or go to www.pageinc.org and click on the heading Professional Learning, then go to "A Year of Learning with PAGE."

PAGE ONE Magazine

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

Title of Publication: PAGE ONE Magazine: Professional Association of Georgia Educators. Publication Number: 1523-6188. Date of filing: September 27, 2004. Frequency of issue: Five times yearly. Number of issues published annually: Five. Location of known office of publication: New South Publishing, Inc., 1303 Hightower Trail, Suite 101, Atlanta, GA 30350. Owner: Professional Association of Georgia Educators, 2971 Flowers Road South, #151, Atlanta, GA 30341.

Extent and Nature of Circulation: Circulation of single issue published nearest to filing date: Total copies printed, 59,072. Sales through vendors, dealers, carriers and over the counter: 0. Mail subscriptions, 56,709. Total paid circulation, 56,709. Free distribution (by mail carrier or other means, including samples) 2,211. Total distribution, 58,920. Copies not distributed (office use, unaccounted for) 213.

Average circulation for each issue in preceding 12 months. Total copies printed, 58,622. Sales through vendors, dealers, carriers and over the counter, 0. Mail subscriptions, 56,288. Total paid circulation, 56,288. Free distribution (by mail, carrier or other means, including samples) 2,211. Total distribution, 58,499. Copies not distributed (office use, unaccounted for) 123. Percent paid and/or requested circulation: 96.0%.

PAGE Letters

Dear [Member Services]

Thank you for your time in helping me today. From our conversation I now understand that I can renew my PAGE membership next year as a "Friend of PAGE," beginning in October. Since I will be separated from the school system and going on active duty for training in the U.S. Air Force, I wondered how I could maintain my PAGE membership. I appreciate your assurance that I'll be able to continue my PAGE membership and thereby my group life insurance policy with CBCA. I've truly appreciated PAGE over the years – mostly because of the caring professionals, like you, on the other end of the phone. Thanks again for your assistance and support.

Sincerely,
Chad Wilson
Gwinnett County



Dear [MSR]

Thank you [your Director of Legal Services and Assistant General Counsel], for coming to the hearing last night. What a victory for us! Your support meant so much. The speech last night and help with the revision of our letter were exceptional.

Thanks,
Nan Johnson
Oconee Elementary

Dear [PAGE Staff Attorney]

I just wanted to let you know that things went well for us at the hearing on Friday. The woman accusing us of assault on her son was totally unprepared. Frankly, I would not have been surprised if she hadn't shown up at all. Everything we did to restrain the student was by the book and witnessed by at least one other person. [Our network attorney] did a fantastic job of defending us. He was prepared and knowledgeable.

Thanks for all your help.
Charley Blair
Clarke County

PAGE 2005 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

These are our final legislative priorities for 2005, as determined by our members. We encourage you to contact your local representatives in support of them.

I. STUDENT LEARNING & ACHIEVEMENT

Through the QBE Formula, Provide the Following:

- Fully implement the lower pupil-teacher ratio as mandated by current Georgia law by providing for the required teachers and permanent facilities.
- Provide students with art, music, and physical education teachers in grades K-8 at the rate of at least one of each for every 345 students (five-year phase-in).
- Preserve the middle school program by allowing for a curriculum that includes the core subjects but also provides for music, the arts, physical education, and connections.
- Enable districts to employ paraprofessionals in grades 1-8 for the purpose of enhancing the academic program, permitting teachers to focus on individual students' instructional needs.

II. ATTENDANCE & STUDENT SERVICES

Through the QBE Formula, Provide the Following:

- At least one school counselor for every 400 students in grades K-8.
- At least one school social worker for every 1200 students.
- At least one school psychologist for every 1200 students.
- Expand the alternative education program to include Grades K-5.

III. ATTRACTING & RETAINING QUALITY EDUCATORS

- Ensure that Georgia teacher salaries reach and remain above the national average and lead the Southeast by increasing the state base scale by six percent.
- Add steps to the state teacher salary scale to extend salary steps through 30 years.
- Improve state support of the State Health Benefit Plan to reduce the rate of premium increase and maintain the integrity of the plan.
- Continue enhancement of salaries and retirement benefits of educational-support personnel in the Public School Employees Retirement System.
- Provide for optional retirement with full benefits after completing 25 years of creditable service in the Georgia Teacher Retirement System (five-year phase-in).
- Increase the TRS multiplier from 2% to 2.5% (five-year phase-in).

IV. PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- Provide additional support for professional learning and leadership opportunities for educators.
- Provide increased program expansion and state support for the Mentor Teacher Program.
- Make the National Board salary incentive program available to certified counselors, audiologists, speech-language pathologists, social workers, and school psychologists.

PAGE POSITIONS

PAGE SUPPORTS:

- Continued support of the National Board Teacher Certification Program.
- Utilizing alternative sources of funding for public education.
- Maintaining a state salary scale for certificated personnel.
- Application of the Fair Dismissal Act to all educators.
- Use of retired teachers to alleviate Georgia's teacher shortage.
- Transfer of full experience from one school system to another for all personnel.

PAGE OPPOSES:

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



You are Invited to
a Reception for
**PAGE Day on
Capitol Hill**

Where: The Depot
When: Tuesday,
Feb. 8, 2005
5-7 p.m.

- *Meet your state legislators one-on-one*
- *Get to know members from other school systems*
- *Hear updates from the Governor's office and the DOE*

We Don't Know Where You Are Unless You Tell Us!



- Are you in a new school this year?
- Have you recently been married?
- Has your job title changed?
- Have you moved?
- Has the phone company changed your area code?
- Has the post office changed your zip code or address for 911 purposes?

We won't be able to update your record unless you tell us. Someday it might be critically important for insurance purposes! Help us keep postage costs (and your dues) down.

Call toll-free (800) 334-6861

Or write: **PAGE**

P.O. Box 942270

Atlanta, GA 31141-2270



The Best Educators Never Stop Learning.

Nearly 400 of Georgia's finest educators have enrolled in our graduate programs in education since May, 2003.

We offer Master's, Specialist, and Doctoral degree programs in Curriculum & Instruction and Educational Leadership designed to help you raise your level of professional education to the highest degree.

Leading practitioners teach small classes, with an emphasis on contemporary issues of critical importance to educators in Georgia.

Day, evening, weekend, and online classes are available year round at our Atlanta Campus. *Or, you can join one of the many cohort programs forming at locations around the state.*

New programs in all disciplines begin in **OCTOBER, and JANUARY.**
Call the Admissions Office for details.

1-888-671-4777 ext. 1006
www.argosyu.edu/atlanta



ARGOSY UNIVERSITY/ATLANTA
990 Hammond Drive
Atlanta, GA 30328
(Near Perimeter Mall and MARTA)

Argosy University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association (NCA) (20 North La Salle Street, Suite 2400, Chicago, IL 60602 www.ncahlc.org 1.312.263.0456).

Argosy University/Atlanta is authorized by the State of Georgia's Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission (2189 Northlake Parkway, Building 10, Suite 100, Tucker, GA 30064, 770.414.3300, www.gnpec.org)



College of **EDUCATION**

*Bringing **UGA** to you*

Online

Degree

M.Ed. in Adult Education

Add-on Endorsements

L5 - Educational Leadership

ESOL

*English to Speakers of Other Languages
Language Education*

GCE

*Gifted and Creative Education
Educational Psychology*

Reading Education

SETWEB

*Special Education Training on the Web
Special Education*

Off-Campus



THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
at **GWINNETT**
GWINNETT UNIVERSITY CENTER • LAWRENCEVILLE

*Check with individual departments
for more information.*

For more information, visit our web site at
www.coe.uga.edu or contact us at (706) 542-6446.

For information on UGA at Gwinnett, visit our web site at
www.uga.edu/gwinnett or contact us at (678) 407-5302.