



The Newsletter

August 2008

The Georgia Association of Educational Leaders

STUART BENNETT TO BECOME EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GAEL IN SEPTEMBER



Stuart Bennett, who has served as Chief Deputy Superintendent of Schools for the past five-and-a-half years, will retire from the Georgia Department of Education on August 30. In September, he will take over as the Executive Director for the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders.

“I’m so grateful for Stuart’s years of service to the Georgia Department of Education and his more than 30 years of service to public education,” State Superintendent of Schools Kathy Cox said. “Stuart’s dedication to Georgia’s public schools will continue in his new role, but we will miss him terribly at the department. He has been an invaluable member of our team and it will be very difficult to fill his shoes.”

Mr. Bennett said his new job will allow him to build on the work he has done at the GaDOE.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to serve with Superintendent Cox for nearly 5 1/2 years as she has led Georgia to unprecedented improvement in student achievement,” Mr. Bennett said. “I am looking forward to representing the educational leaders of Georgia in my new role, but I will miss working with the Superintendent and dedicated staff at the Georgia Department of Education.”

In his new role, Mr. Bennett will serve as executive director to an organization that serves 2,000 educational leaders across Georgia. GAEL is also affiliated with the professional statewide organizations that serve local superintendents, principals, curriculum directors, special education administrators, and others. GAEL President Suzi Bonifay said Mr. Bennett’s experience makes him a perfect fit for the Executive Director position.

“Stuart has all the qualifications and skills to provide outstanding leadership for GAEL,” said Dr. Bonifay, assistant superintendent in Decatur County. “His work in local schools and the central office combined with his experience at the Georgia Department of Education has equipped him to lead our association to new heights. The GAEL officers, board of directors, and membership are excited that he has chosen to accept this position.”

Stuart N. Bennett has been an educator for more than 30 years. He spent 11 years as a Social Studies teacher in Douglas County and joined Fayette County schools in 1989. While in Fayette County, he served as a curriculum coordinator, principal, and assistant superintendent. When Superintendent Cox took office in 2003, she named Mr. Bennett as her Chief Deputy.

In his role at the GaDOE, Mr. Bennett has served as the department’s second-in-command and has had direct supervision over policy, legal services, human resources, communications, legislative affairs, state schools, and many other programs. He has also served on the Board of Directors for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Communities in Schools, the Georgia High School Association, and the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders. ◆

Reflections

by Suzi Bonifay, GAEL President 2008-2009

There are no words to appropriately express the exhilaration of being installed as the 35th President of GAEL—the honor and excitement are unparalleled. To know that I represent all Georgia’s educational leaders is humbling, flattering and challenging.

In spite of the humor in my inaugural speech, I was sincere in my comments about GAEL being a family and building unity. It is my desire to represent each affiliate well, to strengthen membership, and to continue to find solutions to fiscal challenges. Every member of GAEL can assist in building cohesion and camaraderie and can find one additional leader to welcome into the organization. Let’s make this a banner year for educational leadership and, more importantly, for students in Georgia. Together we can insure quality learning experiences for all students through visionary and effective leadership and have fun in the process.

Suzi Bonifay

(During the closing session of the 2008 GAEL Summer Conference, Dr. Suzi Bonifay delivered her first speech as the newly inducted GAEL President. The audience received her words and precisely inserted songs with both laughter and applause. The following is a copy of the speech she delivered.)

Before I get started with my message, I want to thank the people who made this possible. My mother, retired English teacher/language arts supervisor and former activist in Florida’s educational political arena, for having high expectations, for showing me by example the importance of service to others, and for keeping me in line with good old fashioned discipline; to my father and grandmother who aren’t with us any longer but taught me valuable life lessons; to Ralph Jones, Superintendent, Decatur Co BOE, and all the outstanding educators in our system for supporting my endeavors; and to GACIS for providing the opportunity. I am truly humbled and I thank you.

Now, each GAEL President is asked to share his/her expectations and goals for the coming year. However, I would rather talk about changes and challenges, the affiliates, our partners, a few newsworthy items and the GAEL organization as a whole. And, since it seems that there is less humor in our business now than there once was, I want to weave in just a little laughter, some good natured ribbing, and a tad of corny-- using music (the universal language) to cement the message.

So strap yourselves in and get ready for the ride. Here we go. This business has changed. Hoo doggies, but it’s changed. Have you ever said, “I Miss Mayberry?” Wasn’t life simpler then? Weren’t we applauded for bud nippin’ rather than being served notice of an impending lawsuit? This business is so much more complex today. In talking to a number of the good men and women in the triumvirate recently (that would be the three principal affiliates) they said, “If I could turn back time.” Well, I just want to tell them that ain’t (isn’t) happening. We got what we got. And what we got is the CRCT, GHS GT, EOCT, SAT, ACT, AP and AYP and few other four-letter acronyms. We’ve got a society who believes we can measure the worth of schools by taking snapshots of children rather than using multiple indicators of success on factors other than achievement, and who believes we can run schools like businesses in spite of the fact that we have no control over the quality of our raw materials. Principals, I know you feel like all the students who transfer in come from Alcatraz Correctional Facility and are “Only 16” (and those 16 yr. olds are just the 5th graders).

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The Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) is a non profit organization that provides unity of educational leadership groups in Georgia, bringing together the Georgia Association of Middle School Principals, Georgia Association of Elementary Principals, Georgia Association of Secondary School Principals, Georgia Association of Curriculum and Instructional Supervisors, Georgia Council of Administrators of Special Education, and Georgia School Superintendents Association on issues of common interest. The GAEL Newsletter is published during the school year as an informational service to members. Articles do not necessarily reflect the positions or views of GAEL; products/services/resources mentioned do not imply endorsement by GAEL. GAEL Board of Directors: President: **Dr. Suzi Bonifay**, assistant superintendent, Decatur Co.; President elect: **Philip Mellor**, executive director of special education, Henry Co.; Past president: **Dr. Larry Johnson**, principal, County Line Elementary; Secretary/Treasurer: **Paul Shaw**, Superintendent, White Co.; **Dr. Jim Arnold**, principal, Shaw High; **Joye Baker**, Curriculum Director, Oglethorpe Co.; **Dr. Richard Bazemore**, principal, T. G. Scott Elementary;

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Winnette Bradley Receives the Fulbright Distinguished Service Award



Winnette Bradley, long-time Georgia educator, received the Fulbright Distinguished Service Award presented by the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) at its conference at Jekyll Island.

The award is presented annually to a GAEL member who has shown significant achievement in the field of educational leadership and who has made important contributions to GAEL. The honor goes to individuals who personify the leadership qualities modeled by GAEL's first president and executive director Dr. H. M. Fulbright.

What Winnette Bradley has accomplished for children on the state level through service to GAEL, GAMSP and through membership on numerous state committees, task forces, and projects, is overshadowed by her contributions to the children in Richmond County. She has been called upon to resolve the most serious issues, to work with the most at-risk students, and she has succeeded in every assignment.

Mrs. Bradley lives her belief that educational professionals must stay well prepared through participation in professional learning opportunities. As a result, she is completing the requirements for a doctorate in educational leadership, because she wants her students to receive the best knowledge and skills she can provide. In everything, Winnette wants to give her best.

Mrs. Bradley has been a consistent and dedicated member of both the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders' and the Georgia Association of Middle School Principals' board of directors and during the 1987-88 school year, served as GAEL president.

She is an active member of a long list of professional and community organizations and has received numerous awards for professional and community service.

GAEL is an association of 2,000 educational leaders in Georgia. Affiliated with GAEL are the Georgia Association of Curriculum and Instructional Supervisors (GACIS), the Georgia Council of Administrators of Special Education (G-CASE), the Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals (GAESP), the Georgia Association of Middle School Principals (GAMSP), the Georgia Association of Secondary School Principals (GASSP), and the Georgia School Superintendents Association (GSSA).

Dr. Larry Johnson, GAEL president, presented the award. ◆

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Emily Bolton, assistant superintendent, Chattooga Co.; **Dr. Maria Bradley**, principal, Gladden Middle; **Lynn Clark**, principal, Funston Elementary; **Jerry Davis**, assistant superintendent, Coweta Co.; **Melinda Dennis**, principal, Wheeler County Middle; **Tracie Fleming**, principal, McIntosh High; **Cindy Flesher**, principal, Centerville Elementary; **Mikki Garcia**, senior director, Chatham Co.; **Dr. Steve Hankla**, vocational supervisor, Colquitt Co. High; **Dr. Bob Heaberlin**, Principal, Lee Middle; **Ray Jordan**, superintendent, Turner Co.; **Alan Long**, principal, Southeast Whitfield High; **Dr. Jack Parish**, superintendent, Henry Co.; **Keith Porter**, assistant superintendent, Dawson Co.; **Dr. Bettye Ray**, superintendent, Social Circle City; **JoAlice Ray**, director, student services, Rabun Co.; **Dr. Rhonda Rowland**, principal, Chatsworth Elementary; **Brenda Schulz**, director, teaching and learning, Forsyth Co.; **Dr. Bonnie Seery**, director, special education, Thomas Co.; **Steve Smith**, superintendent, Lowdnes Co.; **Christi Teal**, director, special education, Douglas Co.; **Dr. Willie Wiley**, assistant principal, Collins Elementary.

Outstanding Educator Awards Presented During the 2008 GAEL Summer Conference



Patty Rooks (left), Assistant Superintendent for K-12 Curriculum in Fulton County, received the Outstanding Educator Award presented by the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) at its recent Conference. Emily Bolton (right), GACIS President presented the award.

Patty has served as teacher, elementary principal, and in a variety of central office leadership roles in the areas of curriculum and instruction in the DeKalb, Calhoun City, Jefferson City, Cobb, Forsyth, and Fulton school districts. Knowing that educational improvement is more than a local matter, she has been a consultant to numerous school districts in curriculum and instruction, served on SACS committees, and has been a trainer and reviewer for many curriculum projects of the Georgia Department of Education.

Dr. Laurie Barron (left), principal of Smokey Road Middle School in Coweta County, received the Outstanding Educator Award presented by the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) at its recent Conference. Jerry Davis (right), GAMSP President presented the award.

Laurie has served Coweta County Schools for each of the 12 years of her education career as teacher of high school English, middle school assistant principal and middle school principal for the past four years at Smokey Road.



John Green (right), principal of North Gwinnett High School in Gwinnett County, received the Outstanding Educator Award presented by the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) at its recent Conference. Tracie Fleming (left), GASSP President Elect presented the award.

After serving as a teacher and assistant principal at other schools, John came to North Gwinnett nine years ago, just as a housing boom transformed a once small rural school to that of a large suburban educational institution. Today, North leads the state of Georgia in the percentage of students who take and pass AP tests during their high school years. John was recently named area superintendent in Gwinnett County.

Sam King (right), superintendent in Rockdale County, received the Outstanding Educator Award presented by the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) at its recent Conference. Jack Parish (left), GSSA President presented the award.

After serving as assistant superintendent, principal, assistant principal and teacher in other Georgia school districts, Sam was named to head Rockdale County Schools and its 15,500 students in 2005. During his tenure there he has seen every school but one meet AYP goals; opened a Charter Career Academy; coordinated the system's five year strategic plan; paid off a \$14 million bond issue four years early; facilitated passage of a \$95 million SPLOST; implemented ninth-grade academies and learning communities; saved over \$1 million by reorganizing school start times; and reorganized the organizational structure of the central office for greater efficiency.



Terry Dover (right), recently retired principal of Lula Elementary School in Hall County, received the Outstanding Educator Award presented by the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) at its recent Conference. Lynn Clark (left), GAESP President presented the award.

As principal of Lula Elementary, Terry made sure that students were the focus of his work. Improved student attendance, steady increases in student academic performance, a parent volunteer program and a business partner program were significant initiatives during his tenure. Just as important were his efforts to know every student by name and to greet them as they arrived at school, rain or shine, so they knew that someone was glad they were there.

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Three Recipients Awarded the John Yates Scholarship

The John Yates Scholarships were awarded to three recipients during the 2008 GAEL Summer Conference. The honorees were chosen from applications of GAEL members who are continuing to develop their leadership skills through enrollment in college or university courses. The scholarships are named after John Yates, in honor of his leadership as former GAEL Executive Director. Each recipient received a \$500 scholarship, along with engraved paperweights to commemorate the occasion. The awards were presented by GAEL President, Larry Johnson



Jennifer Halco is the Learning Support Specialist at Hill City Elementary School in Pickens County. Jennifer, a former STAR Teacher, is enrolled in Kennesaw State University's Educational Leadership Program, preparing to become an elementary school principal and ultimately a curriculum director.

Rhonda Moulder is the assistant principal for instruction at David A. Perdue Elementary School in Houston County. An administrator since 1991, Rhonda is a doctoral student at Argosy University where she is working on her dissertation.

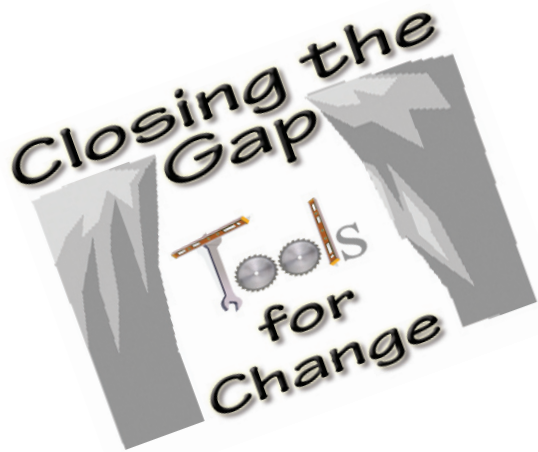


Nancy Strawbridge is the principal of Loganville Primary School in Walton County. She is enrolled in the final year of the Ed.D program in Leadership and Policy Studies at Vanderbilt University. (Picture not available.) ◆

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Peggy West (picture not available), Director of Programs for Exceptional Students in Muscogee County Schools, received the Outstanding Educator Award presented by the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) at its recent Conference. JoAlice Ray, G-CASE President, presented the award.

For 29 years, Peggy has served special needs children in a variety of educational settings, working as a teacher in Dougherty, Cobb, Walton, and Clayton Counties. She was assistant director of special education in Forsyth County and director of special education in Walton. Today, she is Director of Programs for Exceptional Students in Muscogee County Schools. ◆



2008 GAEL SUMMER CONFERENCE

THANKS TO ALL OUR ATTENDEES,
SPONSORS, EXHIBITORS, AND SPEAKERS!





2008 John Yates Beach Run

Male

12 & Under: Matt Maynor, Macon Co.
 13 – 18: Logan Porter, Dawson Co.
 19 – 30: Nick Shipley, Norman Park
 31 – 35: N/A
 36 – 40: Jason Miller, Lee Co.
 41 – 45: Steve Hancock, Fayette Co.
 46 – 50: Tommy Croft, Madison Co.
 51 – 55: Eulin Gibbs, Hart Co.
 56 – 60: Larry Harmon, Pickens Co.
 61 – Over: Donnie Drew, Commerce City

Female

12 & Under: Rachel Sigler, Oconee Co.
 13 – 18: Lindsey Anderson, Floyd Co.
 19 – 30: Michelle Gunter, Cherokee Co.
 31 – 35: Sonya Scott, Grady Co.
 36 – 40: Mary Maynor, Macon, Co.
 41 – 45: Ashley Parish, Henry Co.
 46 – 50: Renee Gillett, Coweta Co.
 51 – 55: Sherrie Gibney-Sherman, Jefferson Co.
 56 – 60: Martha Fowler, Grady Co.
 61 – Over: Kay McGlennen, Jefferson Co.

Beach Run WINNERS

1st Place:	Jack Parish, Henry Co.	23:02
2nd Place:	Delma Watkins, DeKalb Co.	24:14
3rd Place:	David Ray, Rockdale Co.	26:37

2008 Tennis Tournament

Mixed Doubles:	Winners Florence Moffett/ Steven Roberts	Runner's-up Angel Culp/ Michael Ward	
Men's Doubles:	Winners Carlton Gainus/ Tim Helms	Runner's-up Greg Fields/ Hugh May	
Singles:	Winner Wright Kimbro	Runner-up Michael Ward	Consolation Hugh May



ates to R emember



G-CASE New Directors Academy
September 3-5, 2008
Callaway Gardens, Pine Mountain

SSTAGE Fall Conference
September 9-10, 2008
DuBose Porter Center, Dublin

GACIS 2008 Fall Conference
September 25-26, 2008
Georgia Center for Continuing Education, Athens

GAEL Secretary/Support Personnel Conference
October 1-3, 2008
Renaissance Waverly Hotel, Atlanta

GSSA Fall Bootstrap Conference
October 22-23, 2008
The Classic Center, Athens

G-CASE Fall Conference
November 4-7, 2008
Savannah Marriott Riverfront Hotel

GAESP 2008 Fall Conference
November 9-11, 2008
Sea Palms Resort, St. Simons Island

GAMSP/GASSP 2008 Fall Conference
November 9-11, 2008
Jekyll Island Club, Jekyll Island

GACIS Winter Conference
December 1-2, 2008
Reynolds Plantation, Greensboro

2008-2009 New Leaders Program

SSTAGE Winter Conference
January 2009
The Classic Center, Athens

2009 GAEL Winter Conference
February 1-3, 2009
Renaissance Waverly Hotel, Atlanta

G-CASE/DOE Spring Conferences
March 2009
The Classic Center, Athens

2009 GAEL Summer Conference
July 12-15, 2009
Jekyll Island Convention Center, Jekyll Island

GAEL Needs You...

Increasing the membership of GAEL is essential if the association is to truly represent educational leaders before state decision-makers. If you are not a member, please join today. If you are already a member, please recruit a non-member colleague. ◆

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Principals, we do have an obligation to provide quality learning opportunities—not just canned programs or workbook-driven exercises—but cohesive, engaging & thought provoking instruction. But of equal importance, is an obligation to create caring communities of teachers and students. There is one thing that hasn't changed over time—regardless of the level at which you work—all parents still want you to “Take Good Care of My Baby.” I think the principals in this room and in this organization have created those caring communities and teach much more than academia. You understand how vitally important it is to build relationships with all students—but especially with the students who don't get food other than what we provide, who don't have a home to go to, who don't get needed medical treatment, who don't have anyone to ask whether or not they had a good day, and who don't have nice clothes or even clean clothes. In this organization, you are the ones who touch student's lives daily. Continue to build those relationships, share your ideas and best practices with each other, use common sense even when those around you have lost theirs (yes, even Central Office folks), and help the students of Georgia become all that they can be—whether they are entering the workforce, technical studies or are college bound—ensure that they have the thinking skills and work ethic needed to be successful. Thank you for standing on the firing line so that you can improve the lives of boys and girls.

To our newest affiliate G-CASE, as a former SED & RVI teacher you have a special place in my heart and in our organization. And, you have more policies, rules, laws and forms to deal with than there are children enrolled in the schools in our state. You have challenging students, challenging parents, challenging advocates, and challenging hurdles to jump. When asked to solve problems in our systems, many of you respond with “Do You Believe In Magic?” And guess what--you do believe in magic and, in fact, are the magicians. You have the tools to make magic happen with students with disabilities every day. You take students for whom reading, walking or speaking is a challenge, and help them develop those skills—not always in the same time or by the same means as their non-handicapped peers, but you are indeed working miracles. Why? Because it's your passion and “It's the Right Thing to Do.” Thank you for doing the right thing for students and for joining our team.

As for GACIS, the torch bearers for improving student learning--one of our recent challenges has been to deal with a more rigorous curriculum. I know during this period of transition to the GPS, with all of the decisions you had to make regarding resources, parent education, assessment, and professional learning, that “You've Lost That Lovin Feelin.” And, that's probably not all you lost! I've also heard many of you curriculum gurus say over the past few months and years, “Rescue Me.” I am not certain that there is rescue on the horizon or an adequate life vest to help you keep your head above water. Remember, “Mama Said there'd be days like this, there'd be days like this mama said.” I thought mama said days not years—but it feels like years to me. So, GACIS, tie a knot in your rope, hang on and paddle like crazy.

And, to you Superintendents--we are glad you have chosen to step into the fire pit. Somebody has to take the job. Some people think you are just “Crazy” for choosing a job that is often lonely and thankless. We applaud you for taking one for the team. I overheard a group of Superintendent's at Summer GAEL say, “Everywhere I go I get slandered, libeled, I hear words I never heard in the bible. I'm one step ahead of the shoe shine, two steps away from the county line, just trying to keep my customers satisfied, satisfied.” So Superintendents, continue trying to keep that customer satisfied and know that every decision you make is certain to please some and upset others. It's a tough job but we thank you for what you do each and every day.

I would be remiss if I didn't make mention of a few of our partners and a few issues that we have dealt with across the state. The Professional Standards Commission, under the direction of Kelly Henson---you know they try their darndest to keep everyone of us from singing “That's the sound of men working on the Chain Gang.” They deal with a variety of ethical and legal issues such as “Whose Bed Have Your Boots Been Under?” Typically when you get that phone call or open that envelope with the Suite 6000, Peachtree Street return address it isn't good news. However, when in trouble you want them to “Stand by Me, oh Stand by Me.” PSC--thank you for partnering with GAEL.

And our legal eagle friends, Harben and Hartley--where would we be without their wit and wisdom? Of course they owe a huge thank you, and much of their financial success, to another group that we all know and love—the legislature. Our friends under the gold dome are called a variety of names one of which is the “Long Black Train.” Yep, that long black train pulls into the station every January. What our friends don't say when in session is “Anything You Want, You Got It.” Nope, that's what they said when they were running for office. What they have been heard to say during session is

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“What Have You Done for me Lately?” And when they leave town they don’t leave us with “Precious Memories.” They leave us with memories, but they are seldom precious. In all seriousness, we as members of GAEL organization must continue to cultivate a close working relationship with our legislators, we must educate them on important issues, we must talk to them routinely—not just write letters during session, and we must figure out a way to get them to trust us to manage ourselves. And, if that’s not possible, at least help them to do no harm.

Certainly, one of our biggest partners is the Department of Education. They have an awesome task in trying to move Georgia education forward; assist with school improvement; coordinate federal programs; collect and analyze what must be billions of pieces of data; and oversee curriculum, instruction and assessment. They do all of the above with tenacity, perseverance, and efficiency. It is no secret that our State School Superintendent takes her job seriously and she wears a Kevlar vest.

One area that received much recent attention and heavy artillery was this spring’s CRCT—especially middle grades math and social studies. When our local scores came back I said, “I’m All Shook Up.” I imagine many of you were shaken, as well. It appeared that our students statewide “Don’t know much about geography, don’t know much trigonometry, don’t know much about algebra, don’t know what a slide rule is for.” And those were just a few of the content areas students didn’t know much about. When I called to share the bad news with my principals and Superintendent they said “Break it to me Gently.” After hearing the news the educators, students and parents in our county said, “How Blue can you make me, how long til I heal?” All I could say in response was “Where Could I Go But to the Lord.” I imagine there has been much prayer across the state.

To our wonderful sponsors and vendors --- we say “Sincerely” that you are “Unforgettable, that’s what you are.” We could not provide the services we do without the support of the vendors that partner with GAEL. We look forward to a long-lasting relationship that is mutually beneficial.

As I move on to comments about the GAEL organization as a whole, how could I not make mention of Jim Puckett! Just a few months ago, Jim came to visit me. He said “Know When to Hold em, Know When To fold em” That statement was quickly followed by “I’m Walkin.” Given that this was the third resignation of an Executive Director I received in a 6 wk period, all I could think to say was “You Picked a Fine Time to Leave me Lucille.” Jim there are two songs that come to mind when I think of your contributions over the past 12 years to this organization. The first is “I am strong when I am on your shoulders, You Raise Me Up to more than I can be.” Jim – your efforts have raised this organization to a new level. You, along with the GAEL Officers, Boards of Directors, and members have turned us into one of, if not, the premier educational leadership organization in the United States. The second song I think of is this “It’s not what you take when you leave this world behind you, it’s what you leave behind you when you’re gone.” Jim, you have led by example and always with integrity, have challenged us to be all that we can be and you have left a foundation and a legacy on which to build. On behalf of the Board and entire organization, we love you and we thank you.

In closing, I want to say to all of you officers and Executive Directors, that “If You’ve Got Leaving On Your Mind,” you can forget it—no more resignations accepted. The power that we have as an organization is in our unity—we may be six different affiliates but we are unified under one umbrella, and “We Are Family.” Our similarities are much stronger than our differences and, like a family, we can agree to disagree on issues from time to time but boy howdy you let someone else criticize us and we stand together--strong. In the words of folk musician James Taylor--, “We are Bound together in our desire to see the world become a place in which our children can grow free and strong... we are bound together by the test that stands before us and the road that lies ahead... we are bound and we are bound.” We are bound together by our mission to provide quality learning experiences for all students through visionary and effective leadership. And, as we move into another school year facing many tests that lie before us, facing economic challenges and facing legislation that is likely to result in usurping rather strengthening local control, we need to do what we learned in Kindergarten--- enlist others, join hands, laugh, celebrate all our successes—the small ones and the large ones, speak up about what’s right and wrong and sing Kum Bah Ya. And as Billie Holiday so aptly said---if we do all of those things then, “No, No, they Can’t Take That Away From Me.” As you return to your systems, continue to mentor new and aspiring leaders, strongly encourage all your leaders to be GAEL members (arm twisting is acceptable), and I challenge each and every one of you to take an active role in the organization. Remember GAEL members, “We are The Champions My Friend.” I look forward to serving as the 35th President of this championship team. Best wishes for an awesome school year. ◆