



### WHAT'S INSIDE ...

- Health and Fitness
- Parental Involvement
- Phishing
- Good News
- Alabama's TOY

# Alabama Schools Make Annual Yearly PROGRESS!

**Progress is our most important product.**

- General Electric Corp. Motto

**M**uch like the motto, making progress in Alabama's public schools by ensuring all students receive a quality education is our most important goal. Meeting that goal will result in preparing students for the challenges of the 21st century. Considering the poverty level of students statewide is 51 percent, accomplishing our most important goal will not happen overnight. But, the groundwork is beginning to pay off.

Data for state accountability, student assessments, and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) was released statewide Aug. 11, in the largest data collection project ever undertaken in Alabama education history. This year the data shows that more students were tested, scores increased, more schools and school systems made AYP, and participation rates were almost perfect. Additionally, many high-poverty schools showed great gains from last year and, overall, black students and students qualifying for free/reduced meals improved their achievement/proficiency levels as well.

(Continued on Page 8)

### The Alabama State Board of Education's EDUCATIONAL RULER: Making & Measuring Progress Grade by Grade



#### Every Student Should Have:

- |                            |   |   |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Safe & Disciplined Schools | + | Character Education/Student Responsibility and Conduct Standards<br>Parent and Community Involvement  |
| Quality Teachers           | + | Evaluations/Testing/Accountability<br>Professional Development<br>Outstanding Programs Preparing Teachers   |
| Challenging Curricula      | + | Alabama Reading Initiative<br>Alabama Math, Science, & Technology Initiative<br>Comprehensive Courses of Study/Technology Availability<br>Career/Technical Programs Meeting International Business & Industry Standards |
| Effective School Leaders   | + | Emerging Leaders<br>Principals Leadership Academy<br>Superintendents Academy  |

= Students Prepared for College/Work/Adulthood in the 21st Century

“The Educational Ruler, adopted by the Alabama Board of Education in 2004, is a blueprint to help all Alabama schools and students *Make and Measure Progress Grade by Grade*. Each category includes areas which will serve in helping educators meet the objectives in a timely manner. The successful implementation of the four categories will ensure all Alabama students have the opportunities to receive a quality education, preparing them for future endeavors. I can't stress enough the importance of implementing the Educational Ruler because we can see examples of its effectiveness when we look at certain schools that are truly achieving success.”

- State Superintendent of Education Joe Morton



# Meet Alabama's 2005 Teacher of the Year



Alabama's top teacher is **MARGARET PETTY**, an elementary teacher at Rainbow Elementary School in the Madison City School System. As Alabama's State Teacher of the Year, Petty will spend the 2005-2006 school year as an ambassador for public education and the teaching profession.

**STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON** commended Petty for her dedication to her students and to public education in Alabama. "As an educator, you enrich the lives of Alabama students," said Morton. "Your dedication and your ability to spark the passion for learning are truly commitments that bring attention not only to your school and school system, but also to our state."

A teacher for 23 years, Petty has taught special education/reading and mathematics at Rainbow Elementary School for the last three years. She is a National Board Certified Teacher who presents workshops on teaching children with dyslexia in the general education classroom, as well as training for teachers and parents on students with learning disabilities.

The selection process for Alabama's Teacher of the Year begins at the school system level. Each school system can nominate one elementary and one secondary teacher at the district level. One elementary and one secondary teacher are selected from each of the



Gov. Bob Riley and Alabama Board of Education District 8 Member Dr. Mary Jane Caylor congratulate 2005 Teacher of the Year Margaret Petty.

eight state Board of Education districts. A state selection committee narrows the 16 district finalists to four. The committee interviews those four teachers (two elementary and two secondary) to determine the Alabama Teacher of the Year and Alternate.

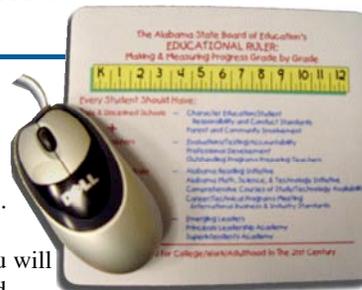
The Alabama Teacher of the Year Program is the oldest recognition program for teachers and is affiliated with the National Teacher of the Year Program. Alabama's Teacher of the Year automatically becomes a nominee for National Teacher of the Year, which will be announced from the White House in April 2006. 🍏

## From The Editor...

Now that the new school year has begun, I am sure there will be many exciting events and Good News stories to share with *Alabama Education News* (AEN). I want to hear all about what's going on in your classroom or school. If your story is used in AEN, you will receive a **FREE** Alabama Educational Ruler mousepad. Include your name and contact information with your stories and photos and send them to: Rebecca Leigh White at [rwhite@alsde.edu](mailto:rwhite@alsde.edu), or call me at 334-242-9952. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to Alabama's schools and students.

*"The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery."*

— MARK VAN DOREN, 1894-1973, American Poet and Dedicated Teacher



## ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

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### ONE FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS

One Alabama teacher is making history, literally. **STEPHANIE C. ROBINSON**, a teacher at Fultondale High School in the Jefferson County School System, was selected as the Alabama recipient of the *Preserve America* History Teacher of the Year Award.

*Preserve America* and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History sponsor the national program honoring outstanding teachers of American history from across the nation. As the state representative, Robinson receives \$1,000 and her school receives an archive of primary historical materials. She will also represent Alabama and compete for National *Preserve America* History Teacher of the Year at a recognition ceremony in Washington, D.C., this fall.



Robinson was honored with a resolution by the Alabama Board of Education during its Annual Meeting in Montgomery on July 12. (l-r) District 4 State Board of Education Member Dr. Ethel Hall, Robinson, and State Superintendent of Education Joe Morton.

### TEACHERS TAKE TO THE ROAD FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teacher leaders from Mobile experienced a pilgrimage as they visited two of Alabama's most prestigious schools, Meadowview Elementary and C.H.A.T, both in Selma.

Meadowview Elementary School is a wonderful demonstration site in which to observe instructional practices of the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) and the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) working together to improve academic achievement of west Alabama students.

The acronym C.H.A.T. stands for Communication, Humanities, Arts, and Technology. The school is project-based, has high moral and academic standards, and prides itself in being on the cutting edge of technology. Programs offered at C.H.A.T. range from dance, theatre, art, radio/television broadcasting, music, journalism, and engineering, in addition to many academic areas.

The teacher leaders were provided with a wealth of information to take home to their faculties and students. Each school has a healthy, rich learning environment that stimulates the success for every student. **DR. KAY ATCHISON-WARFIELD**, Alabama Department of Education Team Leader for Region 10, coordinated the Best Practices Site visit to Selma and the enrichment activities for Teacher Leader Network meetings. The experience encourages and supports teacher leaders to lead by example and promotes a vested interest in the school's leadership.

### PRINCIPALS RECOGNIZED FOR OUTSTANDING PRACTICES

Each year, MetLife and the National Association of Secondary School Principals recognize outstanding secondary school leaders who demonstrate excellence in educational leadership, complex problem solving, professional growth, and community involvement. This year **MARGUERITE EARLY**, principal of Hokes Bluff Middle School in the Etowah County School System, and **TOMMY LEDBETTER**, principal of Buckhorn High School in the Madison County School System, were named the 2004 Alabama Middle Level and High School Principals of the Year.

Similarly, the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the U.S. Department of Education sponsor the National Distinguished Principal of the Year award. **JANE HAMPTON**, principal of Oak Mountain Elementary School in the Shelby County School System, took the honor for Alabama. Hampton was selected by her peers through a statewide search conducted by the Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators.

### STAYING AHEAD OF THE TECHNOLOGY GAME

Congratulations to the winners of the 2005 Chiquita Marbury Technology Innovation Award who were recognized during the annual awards ceremony at the Alabama Educational Technology Conference (AETC) in Birmingham on June 15. Entrants were judged in five criteria: Innovation and Creativity, Impact on Teaching and Learning, Leadership, Teamwork, and Scholarship.

#### Winners are selected in four categories:

**Teacher – Mandy Fox, Hoover City Schools**  
**School Administrator – Faustin N. Webber, Montgomery Catholic High School**  
**District Technology Coordinator – Dr. Angela Guess, Jackson County Schools**  
**Superintendent – Dr. Faron Hollinger, Baldwin County Schools**



Chiquita Marbury

The Chiquita Marbury Technology Innovation Award is given in honor of **CHIQUITA MARBURY'S** invaluable years of service as a technology innovator in Alabama. Ms. Marbury (1952-2002) was a passionate visionary in technology integration and led the charge to help educators in the state toward improved teaching, leading, and learning through technology. She served as the director and original organizer of the Alabama Department of Education's statewide training initiative Technology in Motion.



West Jasper Elementary School Principal Eric Smith

### CHANGE IS GOOD FOR WEST JASPER ELEMENTARY

The National School Change Award is one of the nation’s most prestigious honors schools can receive. West Jasper Elementary School is one of only six schools in the nation to earn the Sixth Annual National School Change Award from the American Association of School Administrators, Pearson Education, and Fordham University Graduate School of Education.

West Jasper Elementary was selected from 91 nominations and is the only Alabama school to ever win the award, which recognizes schools that rise from underperforming to exemplary. The school receives a \$5,000 grant, national recognition, and an opportunity to participate in a major national research project focusing on school change.

As an Alabama Department of Education Torchbearer School, West Jasper Elementary is one of 13 schools recognized for overcoming the odds of being a high-poverty school to stand out as a high-achievement school. The school is also an Alabama Reading Initiative school.

*State Board of Education Member: Sandra Ray, District 7*

*Jasper City Schools Superintendent: Philip Woods*

*West Jasper Elementary School Principal: Eric Smith*

### PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM A FIRST FOR BALDWIN COUNTY SCHOOLS

When school opened Aug. 9, four-year-old children entered the halls of Baldwin County Public Schools for the first time. The south Alabama school system has introduced a Pre-Kindergarten program with six schools chosen as sites. They are Bay Minette Elementary, Foley Elementary, Loxley Elementary, Perdido Elementary, Pine Grove Elementary, and Summerdale Elementary. Selection of these sites was based on schools receiving federal funding.

Knowing that the years between birth and age five are the foundation upon which successful lives are built, the goal of the Baldwin County Pre-Kindergarten program is to help foster achievement for students. Classroom activities are child-initiated, teacher-supported learning experiences. Additionally, there are interest areas, or learning stations, providing activities to promote independence, foster decision making, and encourage social involvement as well as physical development.

The Pre-Kindergarten program in Baldwin County is funded through the federal Office of School Readiness.

*State Board of Education Member: Randy McKinney, District 1*

*Baldwin County Schools Superintendent: Dr. Faron Hollinger*



### FALKVILLE ELEMENTARY WINS THIRD STATE READING CHAMPIONSHIP

Reading is Fundamental, Inc., the nation’s largest and oldest nonprofit children’s literacy organization, and MetLife Foundation honored Falkville Elementary School at a state awards ceremony on May 24. The special event celebrated student achievement in meeting personal reading goals and the site’s ability to engage community support for children’s literacy.

Falkville Elementary is the large site Alabama state champion of Read with Me: The 2005 Reading is Fundamental (RIF) Community Reading Challenge and has won this award for the past THREE YEARS! The children and community volunteers at this site earned the distinction out of more than 1,100 sites, and 300,000 children pledged to participate nationwide. The challenge seeks to motivate children to read for fun and enlists the powerful support of families and communities in the struggle for a more literate America.

During two weeks in January, community members, civic and business leaders, and employees of local businesses read with children. Falkville Elementary participated in 23 different reading activities that involved students, faculty, and the community. The school receives \$500 in gift cards to purchase books, a commemorative certificate, and necessary material to create a fun-filled awards ceremony where medals were presented to participating students and the Read with Me state champion flag was raised.

*State Board of Education Member: David Byers, District 6*

*Morgan County Schools Superintendent: Don Murphy*

*Falkville Elementary School Principal: Hank Summerford*



# Good News in Alabama Schools

## ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL #1 IN THE NATION

*Newsweek* named Jefferson County International Baccalaureate School (IBS) the top public high school in the nation on the magazine's List of 1,000 Best U.S. High Schools in the May 16 issue. A highly competitive program emphasizing Advanced Placement and college-level courses, Jefferson County IBS attracts students from across the nation and outside of Jefferson County and admits about 100 new students each year.

The state Board of Education commended the faculty, students, and parents of Jefferson County IBS with a resolution during its meeting in Montgomery on June 9. Additionally, five other Alabama high schools were included in the *Newsweek* list. They are: Alabama School of Fine Arts in Birmingham; Auburn High School, Auburn City Schools; Grissom High School, Huntsville City Schools; Loveless Academic Magnet Program, Montgomery County Schools; and Mountain Brook High School, Mountain Brook City Schools.

*State Board of Education Member: Dr. Ethel Hall, District 4*

*Jefferson County Schools Superintendent: Dr. Phillip Hammonds*

*Jefferson County IBS Principal: Jane Baker*

*Jefferson County IBS International Baccalaureate Coordinator: Linda Jones*



## GREENE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL INTERVENTION

"Intense financial planning and a lot of hard work helped turn Greene County Schools into a solvent working system," said ASSISTANT STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION CRAIG POUNCEY after the system was released by the Alabama Board of Education from three years of financial intervention in June. Pouncey credits new leadership, fiscal and ethical accountability, and increased parental involvement as three key factors that aided the financially strapped system to pull itself from the red into the black.

*State Board of Education Member: Ella Bell, District 5*

*Greene County Schools Superintendent: Dr. Douglas Ragland*

### FACTORS LEADING TO FINANCIAL INTERVENTION

- FY 1999 School system expenditures exceeded \$1 million
- FY 2001 Financial Advisory Team assigned
- 2002 Financial action plan submitted to Alabama Department of Education was not approved
- Aug. 2002 Total deficit = \$700,000
- Oct. 2002 System placed on Financial Intervention



Greene County Superintendent Dr. Doug Ragland (center) proudly displays the Alabama Board of Education Resolution releasing the Greene County School System from financial intervention with (l-r) Greene County Board of Education Member Lester Brown, State Superintendent of Education Joe Morton, Greene County Board of Education Chairperson Mrs. Elzora Fluker, State Board of Education District 5 Member Mrs. Ella Bell, State Senator Bobby Singleton, Alabama Department of Education Assistant State Superintendent Craig Pouncey.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS MADE FOR RELEASE FROM FINANCIAL INTERVENTION

- ✓ Accounts Payable are now current for all accounts
- ✓ All bank loans repaid and no further loans required
- ✓ Number of substandard classrooms reduced
- ✓ New superintendent and chief financial officer hired
- ✓ New buses purchased with bus maintenance and repairs made in a timely manner
- ✓ All staff salary schedules reviewed and revised to regional average
- ✓ Central office reorganized for more efficiency
- ✓ Additional revenue provided through Bingo receipts and through Sixteenth Section Lands settlement

# New School Year Offers Healthier

**W**ith reports of high obesity and diabetes levels in Alabamians, educators and health advocates chose to address these serious health risks. Making positive changes in students' health, nutrition, and fitness habits will help the state's students become healthier adults. Limiting the intake of non-nutritive foods, promoting more physical fitness, and providing comprehensive instruction on healthy choices helps students feel better, which increases learning abilities.

## Some Alarming Statistics

Life expectancy rate for an Alabama citizen 74.1 Years	Life expectancy rate U.S. average adult 77.2 Years
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- Life expectancy for an Alabama adult in 2001 equaled the average American adult in 1981.

- Alabama adults rank:

**1st** in the United States in terms of being overweight and obesity.

**2nd** in the United States in the prevalence rate of Diabetes.

**3rd** in the United States in the prevalence of Hypertension.



Source: America's Health: State Health Rankings 2004, United Health Foundation

**T**he Alabama Board of Education voted to form a committee to review the state of health of Alabama's young people on July 13, 2004. The recommendations, made by the Statewide Committee to Review the State of Health of America's Youth with Particular Emphasis on Alabama's Youth and approved by the Alabama Board of Education in July of 2005, call for schools to develop plans to phase out low-nutritive foods in vending machines and school stores and phase in high-nutritive food replacements, eliminate unhealthy foods in cafeterias, and add more physical education activities and requirements. Once those school plans are reviewed, approved, or have additional recommendations added by the State Superintendent of Education, the state Board will then reconsider the situation to enable full implementation to begin in the 2006-07 school year. "It will be important to revisit this issue to see what works and what doesn't work in the school plans," said **STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISTRICT 4 MEMBER DR. ETHEL HALL.**

"As educators, it is our responsibility to make sure our students receive the correct guidance when it comes to health and fitness for many years to come."

Some Alabama public schools already have comprehensive health and fitness plans in place, while others will undergo quite a few changes to implement the plan. One difference will be the inclusion of more locally grown

fruits and vegetables and the elimination of fried foods in school meals. Another change will limit the amount of soft drinks in vending machines for different grade levels. Additionally, new physical education guidelines require all students in Grades K-8 to participate in quality physical education classes daily, and beginning this school year, waivers for non-participation were approved by the Alabama Department of Education. **STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON** explained, "The 2005-06 school year will serve as a pilot year to get full implementation



ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

### STATE CARBONATED BEVERAGES IN SCHOOLS GUIDELINES

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:** No carbonated soft drinks. Only non-carbonated products.

**MIDDLE SCHOOLS:** 70% of selections in vending machines are to be noncarbonated water, fruit juices, milk products, teas and sports drinks. 30% of selections can be carbonated soft drinks. Of those, at least 50% (15% of total) will be low/no calorie soft drinks.

**HIGH SCHOOLS:** 50% of selections in vending machines are to be non-carbonated water, fruit juices, milk products, teas, and sports drinks. 50% of selections can be carbonated soft drinks. Of those, at least 50% (25% of total) will be low/no calorie soft drinks.

**VENDING MACHINE FRONTS:** Elementary/ Middle Schools – All vend fronts will picture water or fruit juice products. High Schools – During the 2005-06 school year, vend fronts will be primarily water and juice products, with only occasional soft drink vend fronts allowed. During the 2006-07 school year, all vend fronts other than those located in athletic spectator settings (e.g., football stadium) will be water and juice products.

# Choices & Changes for Students

## ADDITIONAL TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ **Appoint a committee to develop an assessment manual to accompany the *Alabama Course of Study: Physical Education*.**
- ✓ **Assess students for fitness and report assessment results of students in Grades 2, 5, 7, and 9 to the Alabama Department of Education annually.**
- ✓ **Train teachers in proper testing techniques to ensure test data collection is uniform.**
- ✓ **Have school systems develop a plan to increase physical activities before, during, and after the normal school day.**
- ✓ **Offer professional development for the LIFE course.**

of the 'no exceptions/no substitutions' policy set by the state Board. Exceptions will be reviewed and require full justification on a student-by-student basis. Additionally, funding to provide new physical education teachers by the 2007-08 school year must be included in the fiscal year 2007 Education Budget and approved by the state legislature."

Beginning in the 2006-07 school year, students in Grades 9-12 will still be required to complete one unit of physical education to graduate, but the addition of specific guidelines pertaining to waivers will be followed. The term Lifelong Individualized Fitness Education (LIFE) will be used instead of physical education for the one required graduation unit, which includes documentation of program completion and fitness testing.

## PROVIDING ACCURATE INFORMATION IS KEY

Something else new in schools this year includes access to the Discovery Health Connection, made possible by a partnership between the Alabama Department of Education and Discovery Education. The program will give

**AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2005**

educators statewide valuable tools to help inform students on making the right health choices easily and effectively. The Web-based subscription service combines traditional health and prevention curriculum programs with teachers' guides, worksheets, videos, extension exercises, and literacy lessons designed to facilitate cross-curricular instruction while improving reading comprehension and writing skills.

Every Alabama school system has access to a one-year subscription to Discovery Health Connection. Each system selects a participating school that will have access to the convenient, research-based curricula and support materials designed to instruct students in health and school safety/violence prevention. The project is funded through the state's Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) Program.

"Every day, students across the country are faced with difficult decisions that affect their health and well-being," said **STEVE SIDEL**, Executive Vice President

for Discovery Education. "Discovery Health Connection gives teachers the tools they need to help their students develop skills to make informed choices and live healthier, smarter lives."

Additionally, a recent independent evaluation for Discovery Education indicates the program's instruction helps improve students' reading comprehension and writing skills. On average, students whose teachers used Discover Health Connection's literacy lessons as part of their classroom curriculum experienced a 5 percent greater improvement in reading comprehension than those students who were not instructed with the service. 🍏



**S**tudents in the Opelika City School System have been seeing healthy changes in school meals since 1993 thanks in part to **MELANIE PAYNE**, the system's school nutrition director. Payne, along with Opelika City Schools, was recognized for having one of the nation's best nutrition programs by *Southern Living* magazine in its August 2005 issue. By deleting fried foods, serving fresh fruits and vegetables including Alabama-grown produce, and providing cooking lessons from professional chefs to school kitchen managers, the system's school lunchrooms serve healthy and delicious menu items daily.

**Melanie Payne and Glyen Holmes** holding prepackaged vegetables.  
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(Continued from Page 1)

## ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

This year's AYP is measured and based by the performance and participation on 2005 criterion-referenced assessments in reading and mathematics of students in Grades 3-8 and 11. An added factor in determining AYP is an Additional Academic Indicator (AAI), which includes attendance rates (elementary and middle schools) and drop-out rates (high schools).

AYP designations for Alabama schools and school systems are determined primarily by student achievement and participation rates on the *Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test (ARMT)*, the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE)*, and the *Alabama Alternate Assessment (AAA)*. The Alabama Department of Education is one year ahead of the 2006 *No Child Left Behind* deadline in assessment compliance. Results from these assessments were included in determining if schools/systems met their NCLB goals. Depending on the makeup of the student population and the number of students in a specific group, most schools and systems will have from five to 38 AYP goals.

In accordance with NCLB and U. S. Department of Education (USDE) regulations, if a school/system does not make AYP within any one of its goals, the school is considered not to have made AYP, which means missing just one goal will prevent a school/system from making AYP. This year's results indicate the number of

schools meeting 100 percent of their AYP goals almost doubled from last year. Out of 1,366 Alabama public schools, 725 schools met 100 percent of AYP goals compared to last year's 319 (427 after appeals) out of 1,361 schools. The increase in participation rates helped raise these numbers.

The number of students tested increased from the 2003-04 school year as

did the test scores and participation rates – all part of Alabama's accountability reporting system. Adding the ARMT in Grades 3, 5, and 7 tremendously increased the number of students tested this year in reading and mathematics. The number of students participating in the ARMT reading subject-area test totaled 343,709

(compared to 168,633 in 2003-04). The number in math increased from 113,082 to 343,870.

NCLB requires schools and local school systems to meet annual goals in the academic achievement of the overall student population and by student groups within the general population, including economic background, race/ethnicity, limited-English proficiency, and special education. Under NCLB, schools must meet annual goals in all student groups to be identified as having achieved AYP (not applied to a group that has fewer than 40 students). However, groups from schools with fewer than 40 students when totaled at the system level could reach or exceed 40 students and affect the system's academic status. If the group size for a school/system in the All Students category is fewer than 40, the school/system will receive a status for the All Students category only.

The goal of NCLB is for all students to achieve grade-level proficiency in reading and mathematics by 2013-14. The Rewards and Sanctions system, approved by the state Board of Education, will assist the state's schools in achieving full accountability by rewarding systems and schools for making progress and sanctioning systems and schools that do not show improvement.

## ASSESSMENTS AND CLOSING THE GAP

The scores of all student groups (students in the aggregate, the All Students group, and each group of students) must meet or exceed the state's annual measurable objectives (AMO) for reading and mathematics. Annual measurable objectives are established separately for reading and mathematics for each grade included in accountability calculations. AMOs are expressed as the percent of students scoring Level III and above. For determining AYP, scores are combined across grades using a proficiency index. Even though all students in the school must be tested and their assessment results reported, schools are held accountable only for scores of those students enrolled for a "full academic year." All students enrolled in schools or school systems for a "full academic year" are included in the calculations for determining if the proficiency goal has been met. A "full academic year" is defined as students enrolled as of October 1 and enrolled on the first day of the state testing window.

Groups also must meet the 95 percent participation rate and, if safe harbor is invoked, meet the additional academic indicator requirement. The racial/ethnic groups that have been identified are as follows: American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, and White.

ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

AYP SUMMARY					
	Percent of Goals Met	Number of Schools		Percent Meeting Goals	
		2004-05	2003-04	2004-05	2003-04
87%	100 percent	725	319	53.07	23.44
	90 to 99.99	247	75	18.08	5.51
	80 to 89.99	216	201	15.81	14.77
8%	70 to 79.99	76	143	5.56	10.51
	60 to 69.99	33	164	2.42	12.05
5%	Less than 60%	69	459	5.05	33.73
TOTAL SCHOOLS		1,366	1,361	100	

The AYP State Status Report reflects the significant gains made by all students, minorities, and free/reduced meals students. In reading and mathematics, each of the nine student categories met the participation goal as compared to three last year in reading and five in math. In the reading proficiency area, two of the four student categories not making AYP last year made AYP this year. In math, two categories (Special Education and Blacks) did not make AYP last year. This year one category (Blacks) made AYP by improving its proficiency rate from -3.78 to 1.00. "I said when I was elected to serve on the state Board of Education that I wanted to see the achievement gap closed in my lifetime," said **STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISTRICT 5 MEMBER ELLA BELL**. "We are truly beginning to see that accomplished."

The group not making AYP for the second year, but still making huge gains, is special education students. One of the most difficult issues facing schools is the inclusion of special education students in the assessment and accountability systems.

Despite this hurdle, special education students improved the proficiency rates in reading and mathematics dramatically.

### SCHOOLS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

This year marks the first cycle of full implementation for the state's accountability system, which includes consequences for public schools and school systems that do not make AYP. If a school does not make AYP for two consecutive years in the same indicator (reading, mathematics, and AAI), the school enters School Improvement status. The Alabama Department of Education has identified 470 schools in need of improvement that will be provided some measure of state academic assistance. Those schools missing AYP for at least two consecutive years will receive specific training and technical assistance for analyzing their assessment data and developing a school improvement plan that includes best practices as learned from the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) and the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI).

Of Alabama's 1,366 public schools subject to the state and federal accountability plan, 876 are Title I schools. This year, 313 of those Title I schools did not make AYP based on the state's full accountability plan. A Title I school in School Improvement status must offer school choice if the school system has another school with similar grade levels. One hundred and fifty-seven non-Title I schools are in year one of School Improvement. However, only Title I schools must offer school choice if applicable. Any school in School Improvement may add curriculum support and after-school programs to reinforce classroom performance. Additionally, Title I schools beginning the improvement process may, at the local system's discretion, add various supplemental education services such as tutoring and after-school services to improve student achievement. Title I schools

**A**ccountability, assessment results, and a listing of all schools, including their respective AYP and School Improvement status can be found on the Alabama Department of Education's Web site under "2005 Accountability Reporting System." [CLICK HERE](#) to view. This online tool provides overall results for the state, as well as individual schools and systems. Web users also are able to view detailed information on all the categories for which data are made available and to view data from past years.

in improvement for years two and beyond are required to offer access to supplemental educational services.

### LOOKING AHEAD

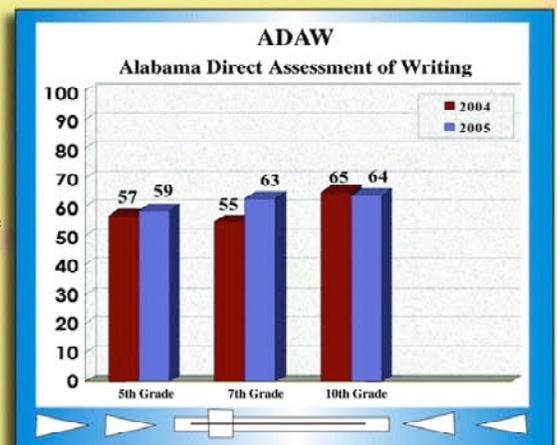
In future years, assessing science in Grades 5, 7, and 11; assessing writing in Grades 5, 7, and 10; and passing all subject-area tests of the AHSGE by the end of Grade 12 will be included in Alabama's accountability system.

Approximately 160,000 students statewide in Grades 5, 7, and 10 took the Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing (ADAW) in March 2005. Grades 5 and 7 have undergone the writing assessment every year since the early 1990s; however, this was only the second year for Alabama tenth graders to participate in the test. The results from fifth-grade students indicate

(Continued on Page 11)

STATE AYP STATUS REPORT						
READING						
School Year	Participation Goal = 95%		Met Participation Goal		Proficiency Index Goal = 0.00	
	2004-05	2003-04	2004-05	2003-04	2004-05	2003-04
All Students	99.20	94.58	Yes	No	11.81	21.89
Special Education Students	97.81	86.41	Yes	No	-31.74	-70.54
Amer. Indian/Alaskan Native	99.16	96.89	Yes	Yes	17.87	30.28
Asian/Pacific Islander	98.92	95.78	Yes	Yes	22.16	58.05
Black	98.93	93.79	Yes	No	1.17	-4.73
Hispanic	98.52	91.58	Yes	No	0.60	1.69
White	99.39	95.14	Yes	Yes	18.45	36.78
Limited-English Proficient	98.02	N/A	Yes	N/A	-6.85	-39.42
Free/Reduced Meals	98.97	90.51	Yes	No	2.98	-0.59

STATE AYP STATUS REPORT						
MATHEMATICS						
School Year	Participation Goal = 95%		Met Participation Goal		Proficiency Index Goal = 0.00	
	2004-05	2003-04	2004-05	2003-04	2004-05	2003-04
All Students	99.15	95.28	Yes	Yes	15.34	29.8
Special Education Students	97.91	87.08	Yes	No	-25.15	-53.98
Amer. Indian/Alaskan Native	99.24	98.11	Yes	Yes	24.69	39.04
Asian/Pacific Islander	99.30	97.21	Yes	Yes	35.55	96.46
Black	98.89	94.51	Yes	No	1.00	-3.78
Hispanic	98.92	96.11	Yes	Yes	7.20	21.9
White	99.30	95.71	Yes	Yes	23.94	47.68
Limited-English Proficient	98.83	N/A	Yes	N/A	3.14	5.84
Free/Reduced Meals	98.96	91.57	Yes	No	4.22	3.75



# Parental Involvement is Crucial for Students' Educational Success

**P**arental Involvement Month is approaching. This October, the Alabama Department of Education (ADE) and educators statewide encourage parents to get involved with their children's education. In an effort to garner support for the observance of Parental Involvement Month, the ADE conducted a statewide poster contest, with the winning design chosen to don billboards across the state. Additionally, poster designs from 12 Alabama families were selected by a panel of judges as finalists, all of which are being used as part of the 2005-2006 Alabama Parental Involvement Calendar, available online beginning in October.

**STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON** selected a design by **RACHEL BOND**, a ninth-grade student at Discovery Middle School in the Madison City School System, as the statewide winner to officially raise awareness of the key role parents and families play in the education of their children. This year's parental involvement theme is "*Celebrating Parents – A Child's Lifetime Teacher.*"

**JUDY BOHANNON**, ADE parenting/mentoring specialist, said the winning design was displayed in July at the MEGA Conference in Mobile for thousands to see. Bohannon said more celebrations and awards will be held locally in various areas during October, and the winning design will be displayed on billboards statewide in September and October.

The ADE knows teachers play an intricate role in promoting parental involvement throughout the school year and that parental involvement is a major factor in a student receiving a quality education. To help promote Parental Involvement Month, teachers are encouraged to copy the tips provided (see right) to send home to parents. 🍎



## HOW CAN PARENTS GET INVOLVED?



**Be there.** While back-to-school nights and parent-teacher meetings may be the last things you want to attend after a busy day at work, showing up at these and other school events shows your child you care about his education and creates a form of bonding. It also provides an opportunity for you to talk with other parents and teachers.

**Join the parent-teacher organization in your school.** It keeps you better informed about the activities going on in your child's school.

**Use e-mail and the Web to stay connected to your child's school.** In addition to printed newsletters, many schools have Web sites that will keep you informed about school happenings. You may be able to e-mail your child's teacher, but be sure the teacher has announced this is okay and be aware that it may take a teacher a few days to get back to you.

**Have lunch with your child at school.** Talk about ways you can help your child with school work and school activities.

**Talk to your child's teacher or parent-teacher organization leaders about how you can contribute to school events.** Even if you can't chaperone a field trip or be in charge of a class party, you may be the right person to write an article for the newsletter, make goodies for school celebrations, or call other parents to get them involved.

**Connect with other parents.** Parenting isn't easy, but it's more manageable if you have a network of others who are going through the same experiences, even if your children are at different schools or in different grades. One way to meet others is to set up an informal group of employees with school-aged children at your workplace. Go to lunch once a month and swap stories and advice about how you all stay connected to your children and involved in their schools.

(Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

# Board Briefs

## 2005 SUMMER RECAP

- ✎ Passed Resolution Commending the 2005-2006 Alabama Teacher of the Year, Alternate Alabama Teacher of the Year, and District Teachers of the Year
- ✎ Passed Resolution Recognizing the Autauga County Board of Education Transportation Department
- ✎ Passed Resolution Recognizing Alabama's 2005 Recipients of Corporate-Sponsored National Merit Scholarships
- ✎ Passed Resolution Commending Mountain Brook High School, Alabama School of Fine Arts, Auburn High School, Virgil Grissom High School, and Loveless Academic Magnet Program for Being Included in the America's Top Public High Schools Listing by *Newsweek*
- ✎ Passed Resolution in Honor of Lance J. Collins, 2005 Presidential Scholar
- ✎ Appointed Shirley Milligan to the Alabama School of Fine Arts Board of Trustees
- ✎ Elected Sandra Ray, District 7, Vice President for the State Board of Education
- ✎ Elected Randy McKinney, District 1, President Pro Tem for the State Board of Education
- ✎ Passed Resolution Commending Debbie Key for the "Barbara Fannin Memorial Employee of the Quarter Award" July-September 2005
- ✎ Passed Resolution Recognizing the McWane Center for its Alabama's Einstein Challenge Exhibit
- ✎ Approved Parental Notification Letter in Compliance with the *No Child Left Behind Act, 2001*
- ✎ Approved the Student Health Committee Recommendations
- ✎ Approved the Proposed Alabama Educator Code of Ethics
- ✎ Approved the Proposed Standards for Instructional Leaders

## "Don't Get Hooked by a Crook"

identity theft has become an annoying and costly problem for many Americans. **GOVERNOR**

**BOB RILEY** and the Alabama State Banking Department are working with Auburn University's Office of Information Technology (OIT)-Media Production Group to develop Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to warn Alabamians about "Phishing." The theme of the PSAs, selected by the Alabama State Banking Department, is "Don't Get Hooked by a Crook."

Phishing is a criminal's way of trying to steal financial information by sending e-mail users a fake site asking for updates to bank account information and/or other information. The site might

look like it came from a bank and might even threaten to close a person's bank account if the e-mail is not answered. By answering the email, crooks receive everything needed to steal a person's financial identity.

Alabama banks have been used by crooks as bait for phishing emails. Gov. Riley and **SUPERINTENDENT OF BANKS JOHN D. HARRISON** want Alabamians to know that no bank will ask its customers to provide information it already has. 🍏

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#) to contact **ELIZABETH BRESSLER**, General Counsel, Alabama State Banking Department.



The OIT-Media Production Group production crew filming the "Don't Get Hooked by a Crook" PSAs on location in Gadsden at the Mary G. Hardin Center for Cultural Arts.

## AYP (Continued from Page 9)

modest improvement from last year in the tested writing skills, up 2 percent from 2004, while tenth-grade test scores, remained stable. Seventh-grade scores, however, are up by a very significant 8 percent – one of the most significant gains in writing in state history due to a new focus in writing curriculum in the elementary and middle school grade levels over the last three years.

State Superintendent of Education Joe Morton is convinced the implementation

of the Educational Ruler is the key to achieving all the state's goals. "Making sure all schools and school systems embrace the components of the Alabama Educational Ruler will keep us moving in a forward direction," Morton says. "If you look at specific examples of schools that are making progress, you will see the components are in place. We owe it to our students to help provide them with a stellar education backed by a plan that has proven, positive results." 🍏

## SEPTEMBER



NATIONAL SCHOOL SUCCESS MONTH		PTA MEMBERSHIP MONTH	
5	Labor Day (NATIONAL/STATE HOLIDAY)	11	
8	Alabama Board of Education Meeting		
13-14	Fall System Test Coordinators Meeting	18	
15	2nd Governor's Reading Summit		
19-23	Alabama High School Graduation Exam Administration	24	25
22	Alabama Board of Education		

## OCTOBER



ARTS & HUMANITIES MONTH		PARENT VISITATION MONTH	
3-4	Alabama Science Teachers Conference	5	15
10	Columbus Day/American Indian Heritage Day (STATE HOLIDAY)		
11-13	Federal Programs Coordinators Conference	18	23
12	State Board of Education Meeting		
27	State Board of Education Work Session		

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

The **Alabama Reading Association's Fall Conference** will be held at the Von Braun Civic Center in Huntsville, Oct. 26-28. [CLICK HERE](#) to contact Georgina Pipes or [CLICK HERE](#) to visit the Web site for further information.

**Pre-registration Deadline: Oct. 5**

**Homework Alabama** offers free online homework assistance to students in Grades 4-12. [www.homeworkalabama.org](http://www.homeworkalabama.org) is open from 3 p.m. until midnight for free tutoring in math, science, social studies, and English. Students can access the service from any computer with Internet access by typing their zip code. For more information, contact the Alabama Public Library Service at 800-723-8459.

The **Alabama Music Educators (AMEA) 2006 In-Service Conference** will be held at The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Jan.19-21, 2006. For online registration, [CLICK HERE](#) or contact Cindy Pass at 256-338-4404 or [CLICK HERE](#).

### AWARDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The **Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program** offers teacher exchanges in over 25 countries and administrator exchanges in more than a dozen. For requirements and more information, call 1-800-726-0479 or [CLICK HERE](#).

**Application Deadline: Oct. 15.**

**Alabama's Einstein Challenge** invites teachers in Grades K-12 to get their students "Einstein Certified" [CLICK HERE](#) to visit their Web site. The winning classroom will receive a FREE field trip to the McWane Center in Birmingham to tour the Einstein exhibit on display through Jan. 22, 2006. **Deadline: Nov. 15**

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

# Teacher of the Month Program

During the summer months of June and July, the Teacher of the Month program honors two principals in the state for their outstanding leadership and school accomplishments.

The principal of Robertsdale High School in the Baldwin County Schools System, **THERESA J. BRYANT** (not pictured), feels teachers should tailor their lessons so all learning styles are addressed at some point in the teaching unit, and recognize accommodations for learning can be made for all students, not just special education students.

As a result of this principal's concern for every student and teacher and the manner in which her school has excelled under her leadership, Bryant was recognized in the Teacher of the Month Program for June. Under Bryant's leadership, Robertsdale High School has implemented pilot programs in mathematics, career preparation, and science. She has also written grants for the school, served as a presenter at various state and national conferences, and earned more than 30 hours of professional development each year.

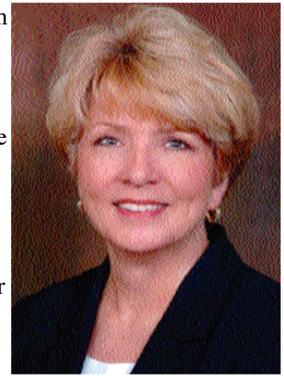
A Selma City Schools Principal was named in the Teacher of the Month Program for July. **JANIS WINGATE STEWART** has served as principal of Meadowview Elementary School since 1998 and from 1997-1998 worked at the Alabama Department

of Education as a school support team member.

In her education philosophy, Stewart knows all students can learn and feels it's educators' jobs to ensure they do. As an elementary administrator, Stewart strives to have teachers, students, parents, and community members work collaboratively in accomplishing their goal. Stewart is described by her superintendent as having a strong base with both parents and community leaders as a support for the improvements needed at Meadowview School.

As a reward for their excellence, both principals receive \$1,000 from Alfa Insurance Company, and their schools receive a matching gift from the Alabama Farmer's Federation.

During the 2005-2006 school year, Alfa Insurance and the Alabama Farmer's Federation will honor one outstanding teacher from each of the eight state school board districts as well as two principals and two private school teachers. 🍏



**JANIS WINGATE STEWART**