



ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

NEWS AND ISSUES IN ALABAMA PUBLIC EDUCATION, K-12

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2005

WHAT'S INSIDE ...

- Superintendent of the Year
- Good News
- Winter Heating Costs
- STAR
- Professional Development

Meeting The AYP Challenge, Closing The Achievement Gap =

T

he rigorous guidelines of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) have raised the performance bar for public schools across America. For those schools that met the challenge of making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2005, reward for their hard work and determination was given in the form of recognition and monetary awards.

A task force comprised of Alabama educators and stakeholders developed the Rewards and Sanctions plan for the state's public schools. The task force used information from 2004-2005 student test data, released in August 2005, to determine which schools were eligible for recognition and monetary rewards. The eligible schools are in two categories, which is consistent with the Rewards and Sanctions plan approved by the State Board of Education on Nov. 13, 2003, and are consistent with NCLB.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION VICE PRESIDENT SANDRA RAY, District 7, said while this much-deserved reward will help, the biggest reward is one these schools have given themselves. "Making AYP is a challenging goal under the best of circumstances. Schools with a poverty rate of more than 80 percent that still manage to make AYP stand as an example of how dedication and commitment can overcome any obstacle," Ray said.

Rewards

"More importantly, it dispels the notion that poor students can not perform academically on the same level as everyone else."

The criteria below were used to identify schools eligible for rewards based on 2004-2005 test data.

Schools Meeting or Exceeding AYP for Two Consecutive Years

Honor Roll Schools 113

Schools that met or exceeded AYP for two consecutive years receive recognition.

Meeting the Challenge Schools 43

Schools that met or exceeded AYP for two consecutive years and had at least 80% poverty rate are rewarded \$1,400 from the state. Title I schools are rewarded an additional \$7,500 from Title I funds.

Schools Closing the Achievement Gap

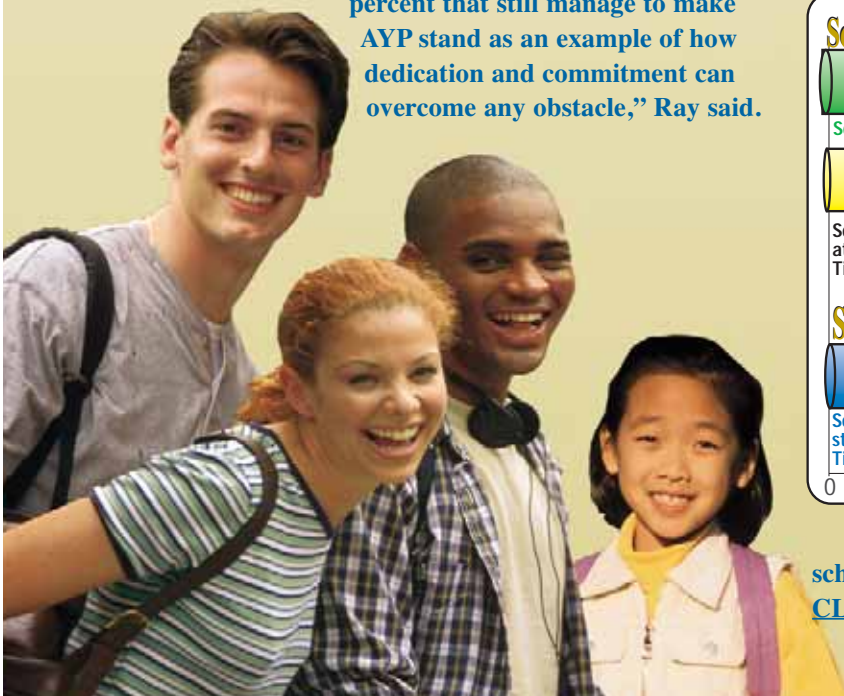
Gap Closer Schools 73

Schools that significantly closed the achievement gap between student groups are rewarded \$450 from the state for each gap closed. Title I schools are rewarded an additional \$2,500 from Title I for each gap closed.

0 20 40 60 80 100 120

The monetary rewards are made available to individual schools to be used as the entire faculty chooses.

[CLICK HERE](#) for school listings.



Dr. Harold Dodge Is Named 2006 Superintendent Of The Year

DR. HAROLD W. DODGE of the Mobile County School System has been named

Alabama's 2006 Superintendent of the Year by the School Superintendents of Alabama (SSA). Dr. Dodge will represent Alabama in the National Superintendent of the Year program, sponsored by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and ARAMARK ServiceMaster Facility Services. The national winner will be announced Feb. 23 at the AASA Annual Conference in San Diego, CA.

Dr. Dodge has served as Superintendent of the Mobile County School System since 1998.

As leader of the state's largest public school system, with an enrollment of 66,000 students, 7,500 employees, 100 schools, 23,000 acres of land, and 7 million plus square feet of buildings, he is highly respected and viewed as a role model by other superintendents for his accomplishments.

According to ESCAMBIA COUNTY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT MELVIN POWELL, Dr. Dodge is admired for the way he "spearheaded" the district's crisis response to the Hurricane Katrina

disaster. "While school facilities in Mobile County sustained in excess of \$35 million in damages, students missed only nine days of school – a miracle under the circumstances," said Powell. "With thousands of Mobile County students left homeless from the storm, Dr. Dodge has been the motivator of staff and school communities to assist their own children and welcome over 800 friends and neighbors from Mississippi and Louisiana."

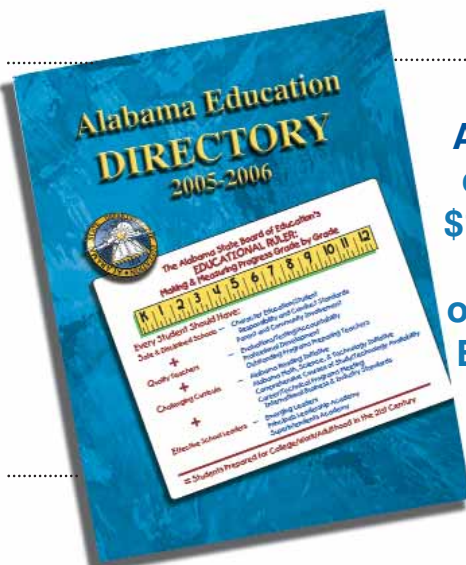


Dr. Harold W. Dodge

2006 Superintendent of the Year Finalists

- DR. JAMES H. CARTER
SELMA CITY SCHOOLS
- MR. RONNIE DRIVER
COVINGTON COUNTY SCHOOLS
- DR. JIM JEFFERS
TALLASSEE CITY SCHOOLS
- MR. EVAN MAJOR
SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS
- MR. JACKY SPARKS
CALHOUN COUNTY SCHOOLS
- MR. BRAVELL JACKSON
MARION COUNTY SCHOOLS
- DR. RICHARD GARDNER
SHEFFIELD CITY SCHOOLS

SSA represents superintendents and school system leaders around the state, and is an affiliate of the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools (CLAS) and the state affiliate for the AASA. 🍎



**The new 2005-2006
Alabama Education Directory
can be purchased for \$20 or
\$10 on CD. Contact Claire Hall
in the Purchasing Section
of the Alabama Department of
Education. Call 334-242-9763
or [CLICK HERE](#).**



Board Briefs

OCTOBER

- Passed Resolution Commending Jermaine King, "Barbara Fannin Memorial Employee of the Quarter," October-December 2005
- Passed Resolution Proclaiming Nov. 13-19 as Alabama American Education Week
- Passed Resolution Commending Recipients of Alabama Safe Schools Initiative 2005 Awards of Excellence
- Authorized Review of a Teacher Education Program, University of South Alabama, Mobile
- Announced Intent to Repeal and Adopt New *Alabama Administrative Code* Chapter Pertaining to Career/Technical Education
- Received Recommendations of the State Textbook Committee for Adoption and Rejections of Science Textbooks
- Passed Resolution Adopting Technology Coordinator Job Description and Effective Program Elements
- Selected State Board of Education Vice President Sandra Ray as Delegate for the 2005 Alabama Association of School Boards (AASB) Delegate Assembly
- Appointed Sherry Key as Career/Technical Education Interim Director
- Adopted Fiscal Year 2007 K-12 Budget Request

NOVEMBER

- Adopted Amended *Alabama Administrative Code* Rules Pertaining to Annual Apportionment of the Foundation Program Funds, Annual Apportionment of Transportation Funds, and Annual Apportionment of Public School Fund as Permanent Rules
- Adopted Amended *Alabama Administrative Code* Rule Pertaining to Regulations Governing Public Schools as a Permanent Rule
- Approved Recommendations of the State Textbook Committee for Adoption and Rejection of Textbooks for Science
- Passed Resolution Commending Nancy Beggs for Dedicated Service to Public Education in the State of Alabama
- Passed Resolution in Recognition of Maria Blokh and Steven C. Kim, 2005 Advanced Placement State Scholars
- Passed Resolution Honoring Sarah Verser for Outstanding Commitment to Public Education and Nomination to the Alabama Association of School Boards Education Media Honor Roll
- Authorized Appointment of Directors for Child Nutrition and Technology Initiative Programs
- Passed Resolution Recognizing Malcolm Dakota Brundidge, Kids Cancer Connection "Courageous Kid" Honoree
- Passed Resolution Recognizing Nov. 15 as National Community Education Day

State Career Tech Director Retires

Alabama's **CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) DIRECTOR NANCY BEGGS** officially retired with more than 28 years of service in education on Nov. 1. During her career in education, Beggs was recognized as the Alabama Vocational Educator of the Year, Alabama Outstanding Trade and Industrial Education Teacher of the Year, and was a runner-up for the National Trade and Industrial Education Teacher of the Year Award.

"Beggs worked to ensure that our career technical education programs maintained rigorous standards and implemented progressive and challenging programs for our students," said **STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON**. "Because of her dedication, Alabama's career tech programs have become a national model of excellence and are considered by many to be one of the most forward-thinking CTE programs in America. Mrs. Beggs made immeasurable contributions to this department and I wish her continued success in the future."

Under Beggs' leadership, every CTE program in Alabama received Business and Industry Certification (BIC) through a process that is International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certified. Alabama's Department of Education is the only state-level



Beggs takes the podium to thank and recognize co-workers, family, and friends during her retirement luncheon at the Capital City Club in Montgomery on Oct. 26.



Retiring Career Technical Education Director Nancy Beggs admires a diamond pendant presented to her by friends and family as new Interim Director Sherry Key looks on.

educational agency in the nation to earn this certification.

In October, the Alabama Board of Education appointed **SHERRY KEY** as CTE Interim Director. Since coming to the Alabama Department of Education in 2001, Key has served as the Education Administrator for the Curriculum Innovations Unit. Prior to working for the department she had been a career tech teacher, principal, and career tech director in the Troy City and Pike County School Systems.

"Beggs dedicated her career to two

philosophies – "There is dignity in hard work and teachers who love teaching help students love learning," said Key. "These philosophies are the key cornerstones of our programs. We will work even harder to ensure that career and technical education opportunities are available to all of Alabama's students and will create more avenues for students to reach their dreams of career, academic, and personal success."

To learn more about the Alabama Department of Education's CTE program, [CLICK HERE](#). 🍏

U.S. Secretary of State Visits Alma Mater



U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Principal Alice Shipman (left) are surrounded by Hill Elementary School students on Rice's recent visit to her alma mater in Birmingham.



U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is joined by Great Britain Foreign Secretary Jack Straw and Hill Elementary School students to celebrate her homecoming.

Good News

in Alabama Schools



Photo by Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

A GIFT FOR HAL HENDERSON ELEMENTARY

Excerpts taken from *The Daily Home*, 9/30/05, written by Staff Writer Amanda Casciaro

After 50 years of recess on the same playground equipment and years of taking hand-me-downs from other schools, students at Northside Hal Henderson Elementary School

Talladega, donations poured in from every direction. "There are no words to describe it," Gaskin said during the work day. "All these people took their time to build this for our kids."



Alabama Education News Editor's Note: Susan Gaskin, on her own initiative, went online and found out about the playground project. She poured hundreds of hours into the project despite being a single parent of two children and her battle against a rare form of cancer. She wrote the grant application, convinced the national sponsors to choose her students, and campaigned for local support to make the playground a reality. Hal Henderson is the only Alabama school selected for the project.

State Board of Education Member: Stephanie Bell, District 3

Talladega City Schools Superintendent: Lee Messer
Northside Hal Henderson Elementary School

Principal: Alicia Laros

received a brand new race-themed playground and a lot of love from the community on Sept. 29.

As part of Racing to Play, a program sponsored by Joe Gibbs Racing, Home Depot and Kaboom!, hundreds of volunteers, businessmen, community leaders, and even a celebrity collaborated to bring the children a race-themed playground and an afternoon of activities.

While volunteers and members from the No. 20 NASCAR racing team worked to install playground equipment, driver **TONY STEWART** signed autographs and talked with the real beneficiaries of the project, the students.

Since July, when kindergarten teacher **SUSAN GASKIN** learned the school had been chosen for the program she worked so hard to bring to

STUDENTS TURN LEMONS INTO LEMONADE

Submitted by Third-Grade Teacher Nancy Dallas, Elberta Elementary School

The second-grade classes of Elberta Elementary School recently read the Stuart J. Murphy story *Lemonade for Sale* in our McGraw-Hill basal reader. This story inspired students to host a lemonade sale on campus to benefit victims of Hurricane Katrina. Donations of cups and presweetened lemonade mix poured in from all second-grade classes.

The advanced reading classes designed and made cardboard lemonade booths decorated with pictures of sunny, yellow lemons; glittering glasses; and dancing pitchers of lemonade. Parent volunteers mixed the lemonade and second-graders working inside the booths graciously thanked each student who bought lemonade or made an additional donation.

The first sale, held on Sept. 23, raised \$360, which was donated to the Summerdale



Church of Christ serving as a hurricane relief shelter in Baldwin County. The students requested their donations be used to purchase clothing for the displaced people sheltered at the church. Additionally, the unused containers of presweetened lemonade mix and cups were also donated to the shelter.

The \$304 raised during the second sale, held a week later, helped purchase items for students of Elberta Elementary's adopted school, D'Iberville Elementary in Mississippi. Having experienced the generosity of others during Hurricane Ivan, many of Elberta's students wanted to return the blessings.

State Board of Education Member: Randy McKinney, District 1
Baldwin County Schools Superintendent: Dr. Faron Hollinger
Elberta Elementary School Principal: Hope Miller Zeanah



Milken winner Charles Willis (center) receives his award from Dr. Lewis Solmon (left) from the Milken Family Foundation and State Superintendent of Education Joe Morton (right).



Stoney Beavers (center) is surrounded by Cleveland High School students who are proud of his Milken award.

2005 MILKEN AWARD WINNERS

CHARLES WILLIS, principal at Smith Middle School in the Birmingham City School System, and **STONEY BEAVERS**, English and Language Arts teacher at Cleveland High School in the Blount County School System, were both awarded the coveted Milken Educator award during surprise announcements at each school Oct. 28. **STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON**, along with Milken Family Foundation representatives **DR. LEWIS SOLMON** and **KRISTAN VAN HOOK**, presented both of these deserving educators with what is considered the “Oscar” award in the field of education.

Both Willis and Beavers will receive an unrestricted

\$25,000 cash award and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., to participate in the annual Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference in May 2006.

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

Birmingham City Schools Superintendent: Dr. Wayman Shiver Jr.

Smith Middle School Principal: Charles Willis

State Board of Education Member: David F. Byers Jr., District 6

Blount County Schools Superintendent: James E. Carr

Cleveland Elementary School Principal: Dr. David Bradford

ATTENTION! LANETT HIGH SCHOOL FEMALE CADET RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

Every year the Legion of Valor of the United States of America awards the Bronze Cross for Achievement recognizing Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) cadets who have demonstrated excellence in military, scholastic, and civic affairs.

To be nominated, recommendations are sent to the Awards Chairman of the Legion of Valor who conducts reviews to ensure adherence to all criteria, including the rule that the Cross is to be presented for performance through the next-to-last year of school. Because of the rigid standards and the thorough screening processes employed, less than 50 cadets and midshipmen receive Crosses each year.

One of this year’s nationwide honorees is **CADET LT. COL. LEAH CARPENTER**, a JROTC student at Lanett High

School (LHS), now in her fourth year of JROTC. She is a three-time graduate of the JROTC Cadet Challenge Leadership Camp, cadet battalion commander, and commander of the LHS Panther Battalion’s JROTC Golden Knights’ award-winning drill, color, and rifle teams.

Additionally, Carpenter is a member of the Key Club, Student Council, National Honor Society, and leads the LHS Golden Panther Marching Band as drum major.

The Bronze Cross for Achievement program began in 1951 and was extended in 1961 to all Army ROTC cadets. High

school cadets of the Junior U.S. Marine Corps ROTC also participate in the program. One of its objects is to stimulate patriotism in the minds of America’s youth and engender a national pride and interest in the United States Armed Forces.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

State Board of Education Member: Betty Peters, District 2

Lanett City Schools Superintendent: Charles Looser

Lanett High School Principal: Joan Gilbert



Congratulating Cadet Lieutenant Col. Leah Carpenter are (left-right): Lanett City Schools Superintendent Mr. Charles Looser, Lanett High School (LHS) Principal Joan Gilbert, LHS JROTC Senior Army Instructor retired Maj. Danny McQueen, retired Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie Adkins, Carpenter, LHS JROTC Army Instructor retired Sgt. 1st Class Michael Young, and parents Melinda and Mike Carpenter.



Schools Brace For Costly Winter Utility Bills

As the cost for natural gas continues to rise, the nation has been put on notice concerning elevated home heating bills and ways to conserve through what is predicted to be an expensive winter. Just as schools have had to confront astronomical increases in fuel prices for school buses, heating bills for schools this winter are adding yet another burden to the local revenue of many cash-strapped school systems.


According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), by Jan. 2006 the average cost of natural gas is projected to increase 37 percent since Jan. 2005. Residential users of propane and heating oil can also anticipate significant increases in heating bills. In March of 2005, the average residential price for home heating oil was \$2 per gallon. As of Oct. 3, 2005, this average increased to \$2.75 per gallon, an increase of 37 percent. Systems operating on electric heating are not off the hook either as electricity costs, due in large part to the increase costs of natural gas, are expected to rise as well.

These same increases are affecting Alabama schools, 75 percent of which operate on some form of gas. **ASSISTANT STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION CRAIG POUNCEY** says increased heating costs are just another expenditure school systems are going to have to

work with on a local level. With set amounts allocated for utilities, these unexpected rate increases may mean money intended for various projects will now have to be used for staying warm this winter.

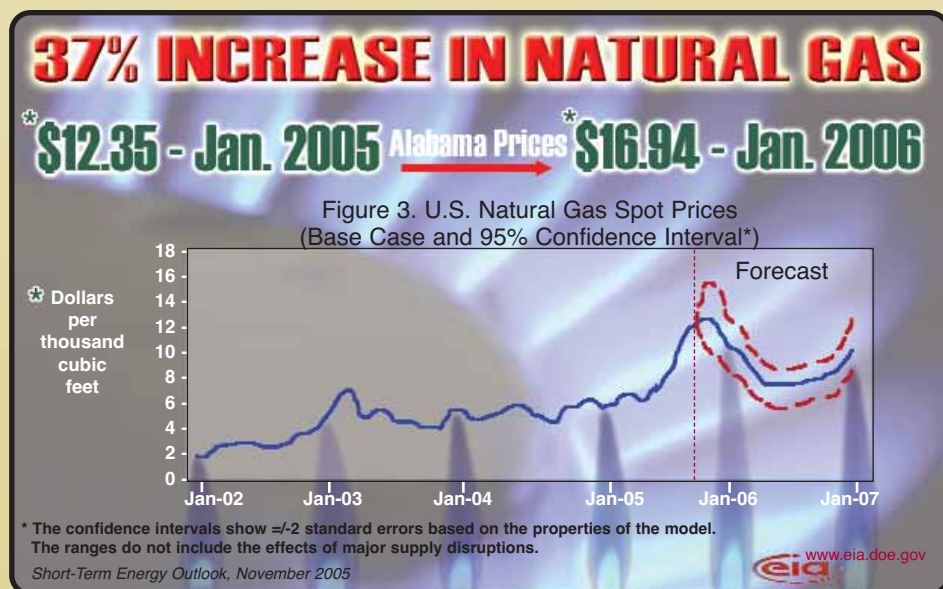
"Schools have only one fund source for utilities – the Other Current Expense (OCE) allocation. Currently, much of that is being used to pay for support workers. Anything above what's allocated for utility use is the obligation of the local system," Pouncey said. "Schools are going to have to conserve as much as possible, probably delay certain other maintenance projects, and minimize other various expenditures to make up for the rising costs of gas."

This "robbing Peter to pay Paul" type of financing may be necessary for many schools to pay higher bills with a fixed amount of funding. **TOM FERGUSON**, assistant superintendent of operations for Shelby County Schools, points out ways school systems can conserve and be proactive in the effort to manage utility costs. Ferguson said the majority of the schools in Shelby County operate primarily on electric heating but the system is ready for whatever may come.

The DOE has published an "Energy Savers" guide that offers many more easy ways to conserve. [CLICK HERE](#) for more ways to manage energy more efficiently. 

HEATING & COOLING TIPS

1. Save on energy costs without sacrificing comfort. It's expensive to heat and cool school buildings, but indoor temperatures must be comfortable so teachers can concentrate on teaching and kids can concentrate on learning. Consider setting thermostats at 68 degrees for heating and 78 degrees for cooling. Using fans can make people feel degrees cooler, at much less cost than air conditioning.
2. Where classrooms or other areas are uncomfortably cold or drafty, find out why and fix the problem. Custodians, teachers, and students should work together to increase building comfort.
 - Don't block the airflow around vents. Keep bookcases and other bulky items away from the heating and cooling units so they don't block and/or absorb the warm (or cool) air that should be coming into the room.
 - Install programmable thermostats in areas like the cafeteria to minimize operating hours of the heating and cooling systems during low occupancy periods.
 - Turn down heat in the hallways and keep classroom doors closed. Otherwise, the heat runs down the hall and outside where it is wasted to the outdoors.
 - Clean furnace filters regularly.
3. Stop leaks! Look for simple draft-beating strategies.
 - Have students determine areas of energy loss by using "draftmeters" made from plastic wrap and pencils to study where drafts are coming in.
 - Avoid infiltration in conditioned spaces.
 - Have students help replace insulation and stuff energy loss "holes" through innovative measures, such as making translucent window quilts to hang in classrooms and "insulation snakes" to put at the bottom of doors and windows.
 - Work with facility staff to install permanent weather stripping, caulking, and insulation.
4. Use on-demand water heating systems, which heat water as it is used.



Stars Fell On Alabama Fourth-Graders

Learning Through Sports founder **BRIAN SHULMAN** recently launched STAR Sportsmanship at Montgomery's Head Elementary School. STAR Sportsmanship is an interactive, web-based character education computer program, which Shulman developed to encourage students to **STOP, THINK, ACT, and REPLAY.**

Legislators, **COUNCIL FOR LEADERS IN ALABAMA SCHOOLS (CLAS) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DR. JOHN DRAPER, ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DAN WASHBURN, MONTGOMERY COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT DR. CARLINDA PURCELL, HEAD ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL SUSAN BRODERICK MALLET, DISTRICT 5 STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER ELLA BELL, and STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON** also took part in the STAR character education kickoff.

Since 1995, the Alabama Legislature and Alabama Board of Education have required a minimum of 10 minutes of character education instruction daily. Additionally, the state Board's Educational Ruler includes character education as a component toward its first goal of safe and disciplined schools. Alabama public schools have implemented the character education requirement in various ways. STAR Sportsmanship is a character education instructional tool designed to assist educators and engage students.

"Character education is a mandate in our state and it is a wise investment in our young people. STAR Sportsmanship provides teachers with an instructional resource to teach children how to make the right choices about their behavior. Its online format gives teachers and coaches maximum flexibility in implementation," said Morton.



Montgomery County Schools Superintendent Dr. Carlinda Purcell speaks about the importance of such programs as STAR while students and District 5 State Board of Education Member Ella Bell look on.



STAR is available to every fourth-grade student at school, home, public libraries, or anywhere with Internet access. CLAS also distributed STAR packets with suggested teaching strategies to every fourth-grade teacher in Alabama. STAR lessons encourage parental involvement as well as character education since they can be taught at school or used at home by students and parents. [CLICK HERE.](#) 🍏



Learning Through Sports founder Brian Shulman, with the help of Head Elementary fourth-graders, demonstrates the STAR program to the media in the school's computer lab.

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

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

The 6th Annual Alabama School Communicators Association (ASCA) Conference will be held at the Renaissance Ross Bridge Golf Resort and Spa in Hoover, Feb. 13-14, 2006. The conference will feature speakers Brian Woodland, a communication professional and expert in crisis management and response, who has earned more than 100 national and international awards and is included as part of "Who's Who in Public Relations in North America." For further information, contact Cindy Warner, Shelby County Schools, at 205-682-7084 or [CLICK HERE](#). **Deadline: Jan. 13, 2006**

The 2006 Legacy Environmental Partnership Conference will be held in Mobile, Mar. 1-3, 2006. [CLICK HERE](#) for conference information.

The 88th Annual Alabama PTA Convention will be held in Huntsville, Apr. 21-22, 2006. [CLICK HERE](#) for conference information.

AWARDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

First in Family Scholarships give deserving students a chance to attend college. High school seniors holding a minimum "C" average who complete volunteer or community service are eligible. Special consideration is given to applicants who would be the first family member to attend college. [CLICK HERE](#) or call 205-250-6669 for further information.

Deadline: Jan. 15, 2006

The National Teachers Hall of Fame (NTHF) is now accepting nominations for induction. Individuals inducted serve as ambassadors for NTHF and the teaching profession and receive student scholarships and educational materials. [CLICK HERE](#) or call 1-800-86-TEACH.

Professor Weissman's Software announces the availability of free copies of Math911 to middle schools and high schools. Math911 is a Windows application that makes it easy for students to master Pre-Algebra, Introductory and Intermediate Algebra, College Algebra, Trigonometry, Calculus, and Statistics. To apply, call 347-528-7837 or [CLICK HERE](#).

For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

Live It! is a FREE program encouraging middle school students to lead healthy, active lifestyles and reach the President's goal of "a healthier United States." The campaign takes a fun approach to being physically active daily and choosing healthy foods, especially at school. To get your students involved, contact Kristin Gilmer at 866-521-3453 or [CLICK HERE](#).

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2005

7

DECEMBER

- 1 Rosa Parks Day
(Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus in 1955)
- 5-9 Alabama High School Graduation Exam Administration
- 8 State Board of Education Meeting/Work Session
- 14 Alabama Admission Day
(Alabama added as the 22nd state of the Union in 1819.)
- 21 First Day of Winter
- 25 Christmas
- 26 STATE HOLIDAY

JANUARY

- National Staying Healthy Month
- 1 New Year's Day
- 2 STATE HOLIDAY
- 12 State Board of Education Meeting
- 16 Lee/King Birthdays
STATE HOLIDAY
- 25 National School Nurse Day
- 26 State Board of Education Work Session



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ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

Alabama Board of Education Members

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Copies available in Braille or other forms upon request.

November Teach Of The Month



Alice Yarbrough

ALICE YARBROUGH, a teacher in the Auburn City Schools System has been selected as the Teacher of the Month for November. Yarbrough received her bachelor's degree in early childhood and elementary education from Athens State University, teaching in Decatur and Huntsville before receiving her Master's Degree in school psychometry from the University of Alabama in Birmingham. Prior to coming to Dean Road Elementary, she taught in the Mountain Brook City School System.

"I believe that children learn best within a positive learning environment," said Yarbrough who teaches second-graders. "I spend a great deal of time during the first weeks of school teaching my students the rules and routines that will help our classroom to run smoothly. Children feel safe when

they know what is expected of them and when limits are set."

As this month's winner, Yarbrough will receive \$1,000 from Alfa Insurance and her school will receive a matching award from the Alabama Farmers Federation.

During the 2005-2006 school year, Alfa Insurance and Alabama Farmers Federation will recognize one teacher from each state school board district, two private school teachers, and two principals. The next call for entries will be Dec. 1, for school board districts 4 and 5, and principals. The application deadline is Jan. 11, 2006.

[CLICK HERE](#) for further information .