

# ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

NEWS AND ISSUES IN ALABAMA PUBLIC EDUCATION, K-12

NOVEMBER /DECEMBER 2004

## WHAT'S INSIDE ...

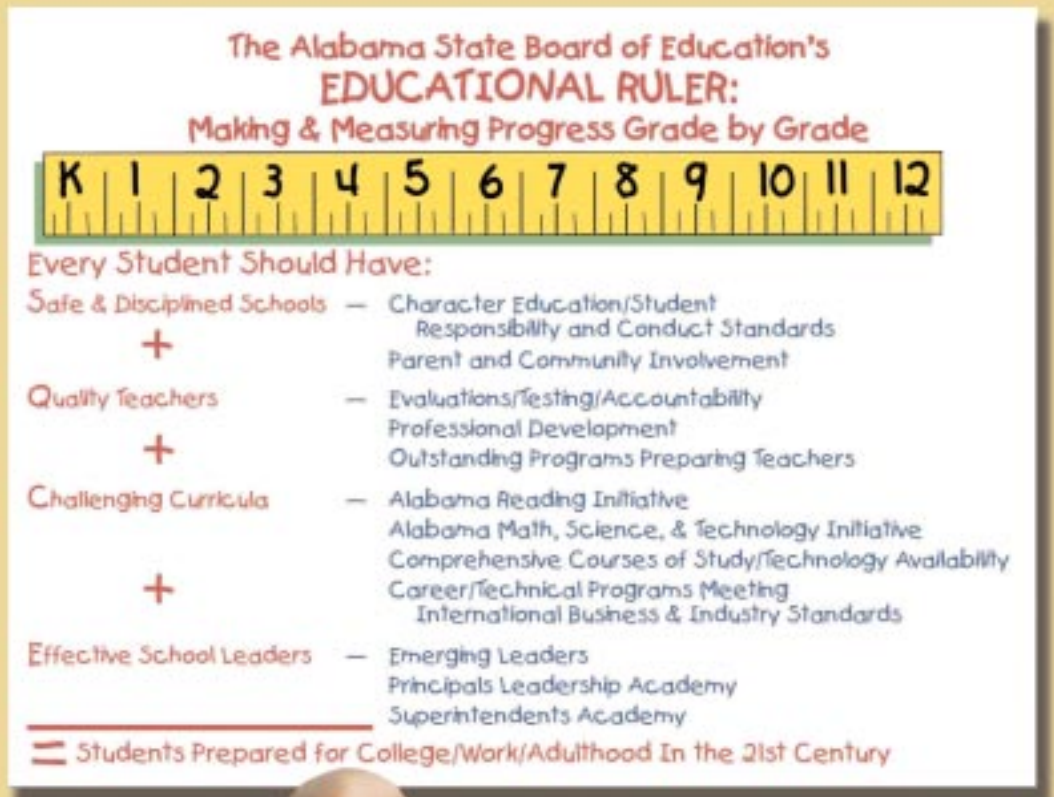
- Good News
- Milken Award
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## MEASURING SUCCESS ... WITH THE ALABAMA EDUCATIONAL RULER

**T**o measure every inch of an established set of strategic goals and objectives, the state Department of Education has pared down a multitude of individual and collective expectations into one concise diagram. It is simply referred to as the Alabama Board of Education's *Educational Ruler: Making and Measuring Progress Grade by Grade*.

Using a 64-page document prepared by the state Department of Education and the state Board of Education as its outline, **STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON**, set out to condense the essence of the extensive education manifesto into a practical, one-page rule of thumb that can be clearly understood and implemented in public schools. This simplified list of goals and

(Continued on page 2)



**“THIS WILL BE OUR GUIDE AS WE GO ABOUT THE GOAL OF IMPROVING EDUCATION IN ALABAMA. THESE GOALS SHOULD SERVE AS A COMMON PLATFORM FOR ALL OF US BECAUSE AFTER ALL, IT'S ALL ABOUT THE STUDENTS.**

**JOSEPH B. MORTON, STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION**

**”**

# BOARD BRIEFS

## OCTOBER AGENDA ITEMS:

- ◆ Adopted Amended *Alabama Administrative Code* Rules Pertaining to Fifth-Year and Sixth-Year Programs for Teachers as a Permanent Rule
- ◆ Adopted Resolution Commending Martha Donaldson as the Recipient of the "Barbara Fannin Memorial Employee of the Quarter Award" October – December 2004
- ◆ Adopted a New Mission and Goals Statement, "Making and Measuring Educational Progress"
- ◆ Adopted American Star of Teaching Resolution
- ◆ Adopted Resolution Proclaiming November 14-20, 2004, as American Education Week in Alabama
- ◆ Adopted Resolution Proclaiming October as Arts and Humanities Month
- ◆ Adopted Resolution Proclaiming October 25-31, 2004, as "Red Ribbon Week" in Alabama Public Schools
- ◆ Adopted Resolution Endorsing Alabama School Bus Safety Week, October 17-23, 2004
- ◆ Received Recommendations of the State Textbook Committee for Adoption and Rejection of Textbooks for Social Studies
- ◆ Authorized Review of a Teacher Education Program, Huntingdon College, Montgomery
- ◆ Received Lee v. Macon Special Education Report

## NOVEMBER AGENDA ITEMS:

- ◆ District 6 Board Member and Board Vice President David Byers Resigned as Board Vice President
- ◆ District 7 Board Member and Board President Pro Tem Sandra Ray Assumed Board Vice Presidential Duties Pending Board Discussion
- ◆ Adopted Resolution Commending Lou Ann R. Patton, 2004 Recipient of the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award
- ◆ Adopted Fiscal Year 2006 K-12 Budget
- ◆ Approved Annual Report of *Lee v. Macon* Special Education Consent Decree
- ◆ Approved Adoption and Rejection of Social Studies Textbooks
- ◆ Authorized Review of Teacher Education Programs, Faulkner University, Montgomery
- ◆ Approved Issuance of Alabama Alternative Baccalaureate-Level Teacher's Certificate
- ◆ Received Dr. Ethel Hall's Report on the National Association of State Boards of Education Meeting
- ◆ Adopted Amended Alabama Administrative Code Rule Pertaining to Regulations Governing Public Schools Regarding Truancy

(Continued from page 1)

objectives will serve as a guide as the state Department works with schools, communities, and the legislature to identify areas of concern and effectively measure progress being made.

The Educational Ruler consists of four primary components, which are all must-haves for Alabama school children to succeed in their education careers. Each of these components is matched with initiatives and programs used to execute them.

According to Morton, it is important to note the four core elements of the Educational Ruler are very comprehensive, and because the areas of concern are so vast, the headings shown encompass many programs which might not be apparent. For instance, art, foreign language, and health are not specifically mentioned in the new diagram, but they are covered under the umbrella of the state's *Courses of Study*. In order to ensure the desired results, it is important that each of the four essential elements work cooperatively.

"It takes all four components – leaving one out won't do," Morton continued. "The combination of these objectives and incentives provided for Alabama's schoolchildren means students will be prepared for college, work, and adulthood in the 21<sup>st</sup> century." And while the state Department of Education and the state Board are responsible for the content of *The Alabama Educational Ruler*, Morton maintains the basic objectives are to be embraced not only by educators, but also by parents and Alabama citizens. Once it is disseminated throughout schools and the ideology is embraced, the next goal is to establish the methods by which the ideals are implemented and measured.

The Alabama Department of Education is committed to ensuring the goals and expectations for schools statewide by fulfilling obligations to every local school system, significantly reducing the existing achievement gap between affluent school systems and those economically disenfranchised, while improving achievement in all schools. "The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) is not the catalyst behind the introduction of *The Alabama Educational Ruler*, but the intentions do parallel one another in certain areas and fit rather nicely," stated Morton.

In the state Board's January work session, more specifics about the implementation of *The Alabama Educational Ruler* and methods to measure its effectiveness will be discussed. As the state prepares to meet the mandates of federal regulations and more importantly, its own expectations, a collaborative effort on the part of school administrators, teachers, students, parents, extended families, and community leaders is needed to provide the children of Alabama the best educational experience possible. 🍏

## STATEWIDE PARENT VISITATION MONTH

Congratulations to school systems statewide on the success of events held during Statewide Parent Visitation Month in October. The Alabama Department of Education would like to remind Parent Visitation Month coordinators to please e-mail your *School/School System Evaluation Form* as soon as possible to [Judy Bohannon \(click here\)](#).





xylophones lend a unique sound to an orchestra or band, but when students unite to lend a helping hand to those in need, it sends an important message in perfect tune. Prompted by concern for their neighbors following the destruction of Hurricane Ivan, some members of the Robert E. Lee High School Band laid down their mallets and picked up yard tools as they helped clean up yards and haul away debris the Saturday after the storm. They even pitched in to clear the grounds of the school's campus in preparation for their return to school the following Monday. Giving to others through music and community service shows these Montgomery high school band members march to the beat of a truly different drum.

**State Board of Education Member: Ella Bell, District 5**  
**Montgomery County Schools Superintendent: Dr. Clinton Carter**  
**Principal: Randy Skipper**



## Volunteerism is Increasing in the State's High Schools



## Outdoor Classrooms Make Learning Fun!



Yams fresh from the garden can be delicious, but when they are grown by students to help teach them about science and personal responsibility, the taste is very sweet. One school in the state using gardens as outdoor classrooms is University Place Elementary School in Huntsville. The students grow flowers and vegetables, learn about the insects and animals found in a garden, and receive hands-on experience in the school's core subjects at every grade level. The outdoor classroom, which is home to fish and frog ponds, a rock waterfall, and bird feeders, was certified as an official Outdoor Classroom by the Alabama Wildlife Federation and the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in September.

**State Board of Education Member: Dr. Mary Jane Caylor, District 8**  
**Huntsville City Schools Superintendent: Dr. Ann Roy Moore**  
**Principal: Helen Taylor**

**Special thanks to: Peggy Long, Special Education Teacher/Project Coordinator University Place Outdoor Classroom for providing Alabama Education News with this wonderful "Good News" story.**



BEFORE  
AFTER



Zeal is having enthusiasm and diligent devotion in pursuit of a cause or goal. Zeal is exactly what reading specialist **NANCY THOMAS WILLIS** exhibits, whether she is instructing students at R.L. Young Elementary School or touring the Japanese countryside. Willis, who has taught in the Talladega City School System for 27 years, was one of the state's first 24 National Board Certified Teachers. Most recently, she joined 200 fellow educators from across the nation in an October visit to Japan through the Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program. Educators visit schools and are housed with Japanese families to experience first-hand the unique culture just as Japanese educators do when visiting the United States through the program. Launched in 1997, the Government of Japan sponsored the program to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the U.S. government Fulbright Program which enabled 6,000 Japanese citizens to study in the U.S. [CLICK HERE](#) for further program information.

**State Board of Education Member: Stephanie Bell, District 3**  
**Talladega City Schools Superintendent: Leonard Messer**  
**Principal: Virginia Paris**



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## Reading is Exciting!



ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS WANTS YOUR SCHOOL'S GOOD NEWS STORIES. SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
 REBECCA LEIGH WHITE, ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – COMMUNICATION, GORDON PERSONS BUILDING,  
 50 N. RIPLEY ST., ROOM 5307, MONTGOMERY, AL 36104 OR E-MAIL [rwhite@alsde.edu](mailto:rwhite@alsde.edu).



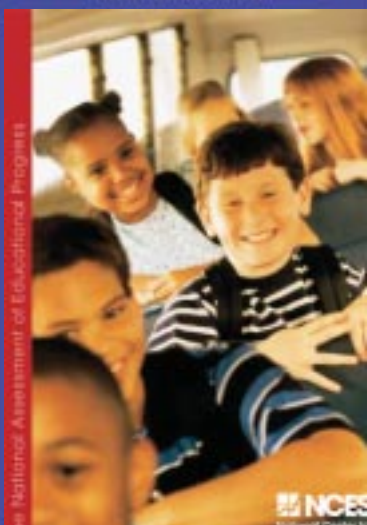
# Alabama NAEP News

*The National Assessment of Educational Progress*

## NAEP 2005 is Coming!

### Measuring Student Progress for 40 Years

NAEP began in 1964 with a grant from the Carnegie Corporation to set up the Exploratory Committee for the Assessment of Progress in Education. The first national assessments were conducted in 1969. Voluntary assessments for states began in 1990 on a trial basis, and in 2002 and 2003, selected urban districts participated in the assessment on a trial basis. In 2003, the first NCLB-mandated NAEP assessments in reading and mathematics were administered.



**Who will take NAEP?** The 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) will be administered to a statewide sample of students in Grades 4, 8, and 12. The *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) requires schools selected for the sample to participate in the reading and mathematics assessments.

**What will NAEP assess?** NAEP 2005 will assess reading, mathematics, and science in Grades 4, 8, and 12. NAEP will also be conducting pilots and special studies during the NAEP assessment window.

**When will NAEP be administered?** NAEP will be administered January 24 through March 4, 2005.

**When will results be reported?** State and national results for Grades 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics and national results for Grade 12 in reading and mathematics are scheduled to be released by October 2005. A release date for the science results has not yet been scheduled.

**Where can you find additional information?** [CLICK HERE](#) to contact Mark Ward at the Alabama State Department of Education or call 334-242-8038. Parent and Teacher Guides, Question Tool Quick Reference Brochures, and other information can be ordered at ED Pubs, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD, 20794 -1398, by calling 1-877-433-7827, or [CLICK HERE](#) to visit their Web site.

### Operational NAEP

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Testing Window</i>
<i>Reading, Mathematics, and Science</i>	<i>4, 8, and 12</i>	<i>Jan. 24 to Mar. 4</i>

### Pilots and Special Studies

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Testing Window</i>
<i>Civics, Mathematics, Reading, U.S. History, and Science Bridge Study</i>	<i>4, 8, and 12</i>	<i>Jan. 24 to Mar. 4</i>
<i>Economics and High School Transcript Study</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>Jan. 24 to Mar. 4</i>



# MILKEN EDUCATOR ANNOUNCED



**G**

untersville Elementary School teacher, **LOU ANN RAINS-PATTON** was caught completely off guard as she was recognized for her exceptional work as an educator on Oct. 22. **STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON** was on hand to name Patton as the only in-state recipient of the prestigious \$25,000 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award – the Education “Oscar.” Morton delivered the surprise announcement during a ‘disguised’ school-wide assembly. The assembly was actually called for co-workers, community leaders, and others to recognize Patton and congratulate her on the success she has experienced in education.

Morton effectively engaged the audience, a gymnasium full of elementary school students, by telling them that while all of their teachers make one great team, one player on this team has been named the Most Valuable Player. As the ceremonial mock check, still covered up, was brought forward by two students, Morton piqued the children’s curiosity and drew them into the surprise.

“How many of you think \$250 is a lot of money?” Morton asked to the applause of the children. “What about \$2,500... What about \$25,000?” As the crowd roared, the cover was lifted exposing the check as Morton called out for Lou Ann Patton to come accept her award. A shocked Patton descended the bleachers to accept the prize.

“I’m speechless. I don’t know what to say,” said a tearful Patton. “I work with the greatest group of teachers in Alabama... in the nation. I accept this on behalf of the most supportive community, parents, and children I have the pleasure to work with.”

Patton, a second grade teacher, has sixteen years of experience as an educator. She joins 100 Milken Educators from 47 states and the District of Columbia selected for this honor, which includes an unrestricted \$25,000 cash award. In addition to the \$25,000 financial award, Milken Educators receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., to participate in the annual Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference in May 2005. They also become part of the Milken Educator Network, a nationwide coalition of nearly 2,000 top educators who have access to a variety of



TOP: Morton and Patton pose with the mock \$25,000 check provided by the Milken Family Foundation.

RIGHT: Principal Margaret Daniels congratulates an ecstatic Patton as Morton Looks on.



professional resources to help cultivate and expand innovative programs in their classrooms, schools, and districts.

Educators are recommended without their knowledge to the Milken Family Foundation by an independent blue-ribbon panel appointed by each state’s department of education.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information on the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards, or [CLICK HERE](#). 🍏

# MONTGOMERY TEACHER GAINS NATIONAL STAR

CYNTHIA HENDERSON SHARES THE EXCITEMENT OF RECEIVING THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AMERICAN STAR OF TEACHING AWARD, IN HER OWN WORDS...

October 27, 2004

Greetings, to all my fellow teachers. I am a kindergarten teacher in the Montgomery County School System at Floyd Elementary School. Recently, I was selected by the U.S. Department of Education as one of America's 50 Teaching Stars. This is a wonderful opportunity for teachers to represent our individual states, counties, and schools.

I believe this newly formed Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative will be the springboard for positive communication between teachers across the U.S. and the District of Columbia. We, as teachers, are called to make significant differences in the lives of children, and I feel that we take every opportunity to teach and make lasting impressions on them that will last for the rest of their lives. My children are bright and they make me shine.

Along with this amazing honor, I also received an invitation to appear on the Oprah Winfrey Show in early 2005. This is much, much more than I could have ever imagined in my lifetime! I have always admired Ms. Winfrey for her awesome accomplishments and for being such a great role model for women all over the world. Mere words cannot express how excited I am about meeting Oprah.

I would like to give special thanks to God, and to everyone who encouraged me along the way. I would also like to encourage my peers to go the extra mile and make a difference in the classroom.



Floyd Elementary School is a Title I school serving a mostly African American student population. The school strives to develop highly motivated individuals who are able to access and process information needed to function in a variety of settings. Cynthia Henderson is one of the many excellent teachers at Floyd Elementary who has high expectations for all students and believes all children can achieve. She is a fully certified elementary teacher whose students meet benchmark levels on the end of the year DIBELS assessment.

[CLICK HERE](#) to go to Floyd Elementary School's Web site.

## THIS SEASON – GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE

**J**ust as record numbers of young people across the country have embraced their civic responsibility in the political arena, the American Red Cross is targeting much of the same group to give to a greater cause – life.

**KEITH JORDAN**, communications manager for the Red Cross, Alabama Central Gulf Coast Region, said young people are eligible to give blood at age 17. With this in mind, the Red Cross has implemented a campaign for Alabama

high school blood drives called "You Have The Right." The campaign is working with Alabama schools to make sure students aged 17 - 19 are educated about the importance of giving blood and encouraged to make a difference. "The age of 17 is very important. It's the formulation of adulthood. Just as young people get

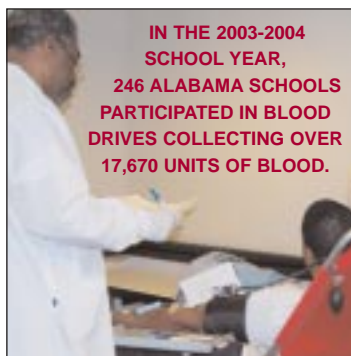


ready to earn a driver's license and learn to vote, we want giving blood to become just as important, and it needs to be something they do with regularity," Jordan said.

It's the goal of the Red Cross to educate, inform, recruit, and retain young people as donors. One of the ways to accomplish that is by getting students involved in the blood donation process by using campaigns such as "You Have The Right." Jordan said workshops are being conducted with students on hundreds of Alabama high school campuses that show students and teachers alike how to put on a successful blood drive of their own. Additionally, the Red Cross provides teachers with free curriculum materials to teach the importance of blood donation.

As the nation heads into the holiday season, Jordan said, there is no better, or more needed, gift than the gift of life. Ironically, it's during the holidays – the time of giving – that the Red Cross sees its largest drop in blood donations.

For information on how your school can receive curriculum material, present a workshop, or host a blood drive, contact the Red Cross at 1-800-GIVE-LIFE, or [CLICK HERE](#) to contact **ANN SMITH**, Community Relations Manager Alabama Central Gulf Coast Region, or call 205-918-1075. 🍎





**AND THE WINNER IS...** **JANE HAMPTON**, principal of Oak Mountain Elementary School in the Shelby County School System. Hampton is one of 65 principals chosen across the nation, District of Columbia, private, and overseas schools as a 2004 National Distinguished Principal (NDP) by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP).

The National Distinguished Principals Program was established in 1984 as an annual event to honor exemplary elementary and middle school principals who set the pace, character, and quality of the education children receive during their early school years. The program is jointly sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and NAESP. Public school principals are nominated by peers in their home states, and the final selection for each state's NDP is made by the NAESP state affiliate, which is the Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators/Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools.

For further information about NDP, [CLICK HERE](#). To check out the school's Web site [CLICK HERE](#).

*A newspaper article on Hampton and the NDP program ran in USA TODAY on Oct. 26.*



Jane Hampton

**COULD YOU LOCATE SUDAN** on a map of the world? One group of Montgomery fifth-graders not

only can pinpoint Sudan, they are also helping children being held in refugee camps there by sending them school supplies. Students in two classes of Halcyon Elementary School social studies teacher **MINDY BEAN** decided they wanted to help children in the African country after reading an article describing the dreadful conditions children faced in the camps. "One of the things I try to do as a teacher is to get students to think beyond the borders of Alabama and learn about things that are happening across the country and the world," said Bean.

More than a million people in the Darfur region of Sudan have been driven from their homes into the deserts of Sudan and neighboring Chad by armed militia groups. [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about Halcyon Elementary.

*Bean was featured in a news article published in the Montgomery Advertiser on Oct. 20.*



Social Studies Teacher Mindy Bean (R) poses with students who helped children in Sudan.

**THERE ARE MANY DEDICATED ALABAMA EDUCATORS,**

but how many have been bitten by a snake while trying to rescue lab equipment from an environmental classroom before Hurricane Ivan hit? The good news is Baldwin County High School science teacher **JUDY REEVES** received no serious injuries from the snakebite, and the even better news is that her dedication to her students paid off in the form of national recognition.

Reeves is one of 20 educators nationwide, to be selected to the All-USA Teacher Team, sponsored by USA TODAY. Winning K-12 teachers were chosen by education professionals who considered how well the teachers defined and addressed student needs, and most importantly, the impact those teachers have on their students.

All 20 receive trophies and \$500 cash awards, with \$2,000 going to their schools. Additionally, they will be featured in USA TODAY throughout the school year.

Students in the Bay Minette school assembled four greenhouses on campus last August. After Ivan, only one remained standing. Reeves said, "The students, faculty, and I will use the \$2,000 to help rebuild the Aqua Science Greenhouse."

[CLICK HERE](#) to visit the school's Web site.

*The All-USA Teacher Team was featured in USA TODAY on Oct. 13.*

### USA TODAY

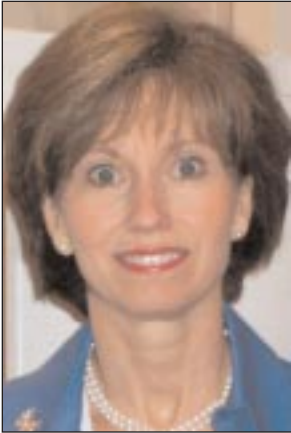


Greenhouse after Hurricane Ivan



Baldwin County High School student checks one of the many aqua ponds.

# TEACHER OF THE MONTH FOR NOVEMBER



## *State Board of Education District 2*

**CAROL HAM**, an Alabama Reading Initiative coach at Ogletree Elementary School in the Auburn City School System, is the Teacher of the Month for November.

Ham believes educators must guide children to be good citizens. "We must help children develop responsibility as individuals and as members of the classroom and school, and in turn this will carry over to their community," said Ham. "Every child may not grow up to be a scientist, doctor, or mathematician,

but every child will become a citizen of a community." To promote citizenship, Ham allows her students to vote on class decisions and meet in small groups to solve problems.

Ham and her school each receive \$1,000 from ALFA Insurance Co. and the Alabama Farmers Federation. Since 1998, the Teacher of the Month program has provided more than \$160,000 in cash awards to outstanding teachers, principals, and schools. In 2005, one teacher from each of Alabama's eight school board districts as well as two principals and two private school teachers will be recognized.

[CLICK HERE](#) for award criteria and application information.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

**The Alabama Music Educators Association Conference** will be held Jan. 20-22 at The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. [CLICK HERE](#) for conference information.

**The Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowships** are for distinguished elementary and secondary school mathematics and science teachers. Einstein Fellows usually serve for 10 months in professional staff positions in a Congressional Office or federal agency. Contact Todd Clark at (202) 586-7174 or [CLICK HERE](#). **Deadline: February 1**

**The No Child Left Behind Toolkit for Teachers** includes guidance on the law and how it supports teachers and schools. [CLICK HERE](#) to order a free copy or [CLICK HERE](#) to download a copy.

## AWARD AND GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

**The Librarians for the 21st Century Grant Program** supports efforts to recruit and educate the next generation of librarians and the faculty who will prepare them for careers in library science. [CLICK HERE](#) for further information. **Deadline: Dec. 15**

**The Discover Card Tribute Award Scholarship Program** recognizes the achievements of high school juniors in areas beyond academics, and awards scholarships for any type of post-high school education or training. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information. **Deadline: Jan. 7**

**The Toyota Tapestry Grants for Teachers** are for K-12 science teachers who make science come alive in the classroom. Fifty grants of up to \$10,000 each and a minimum of 20 mini-grants of \$2,500 each will be awarded. [CLICK HERE](#) for registration information. **Deadline: Jan. 19**

**The Toshiba/National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) Exploravision Awards** are open to K-12 students who combine their imaginations with science tools to create and explore a vision of future technology. [CLICK HERE](#) or call 1-800-EXPLOR-9 for competition information. **Deadline: Feb. 1**



NOVEMBER							1
CHILD SAFETY & PROTECTION MONTH							
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14-20 American Education Week							
9	15-21	Children's Book Week					15
	18	Alabama BOE Meeting					
16	25	Thanksgiving STATE HOLIDAY					22
23	30	26	STATE HOLIDAY				29

DECEMBER							
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	1 World AIDS Day						
7	6-10	Alabama High School Graduation Exam Administration					13
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## ALABAMA Education News

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### Alabama Board of Education Members

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**Editorial Staff - (334) 242-9950**  
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