



- Reading Summit
- Einstein Exhibit
- Good News
- Homework Alabama

Alabama Schools Gladly Open Doors To Hurricane Victims

We've all seen the horrific images of New Orleans and the Gulf Coasts of Mississippi and Alabama, left behind in the devastating wake of Hurricane Katrina. Americans have witnessed unimaginable scenes of human suffering and catastrophic destruction both firsthand and in the media. But as with every tragedy, there is always a light of hope at the end of the tunnel. Alabama educators helped shine that light and make it bright for so many people in need of hope and the presence of some sort of normalcy back in their lives. By welcoming students, parents, and teachers displaced by Katrina into schools and communities and helping ensure their physical and emotional needs were met, Alabamians answered the desperate call of thousands of victims overwhelmed by the monster storm.

As of the publication date of *Alabama Education News*, over 5,700 displaced students from Louisiana and Mississippi have enrolled in public schools statewide. Temporary classrooms, uniform donations, school supplies, and a lot of hugs welcomed the students to their new schools. Some will stay indefinitely and some will return to their home state when conditions allow. In either case, the displaced students are thriving in Alabama both in the classroom and in extracurricular activities. "I am proud to say that I have not heard of one negative comment or unsolvable problem that our school systems have encountered," said **STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON**. "Of course, I am not surprised

that educators in this state rose to the challenge of helping those that are less fortunate by taking charge of a difficult situation and making positive things happen." Teachers and counselors have helped make the transition of displaced students into Alabama's regular student population a smooth one. Alabama students have welcomed their neighbors and conducted fund-raising activities to help provide needed supplies.

Of course, Katrina also affected southern counties in Alabama. In Mobile County, schools did not resume for more than two weeks following Katrina. Some schools were either flooded or received structural damages and Grand Bay Middle School was unable to open at all due to the destruction. Baldwin County schools received damages as well and Choctaw County schools did not reopen for more than a week due to power outages. "We are very thankful. It could have been much worse," said Morton as he toured Mobile school campuses damaged by the storm.

A CALL TO ACTION

In the first few days following the hurricane, the Alabama Department of Education immediately formed an internal task force to develop a Katrina Crisis Plan. Key coordinators focused on many aspects of the plan including student enrollment and tracking, funding, meal provisions, health and safety, special education services, English as a Second Language (ESL) provisions, transportation, facilities, personnel shortages, and testing provisions.

(Continued on Page 6)



Alba Middle School (top photo) and Grand Bay Middle School in the Mobile County School System

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

Every Student Should Have:

State & Decentralized Schools	Character Education/Student Responsibility and Conduct Standards
Quality Teachers	Parent and Community Involvement
Challenging Curricula	Teacher/Teacher/Community Professional Development
Effective School Leaders	Outstanding Programs/Program Teachers
	Alabama Reading Initiative
	Alabama Math, Science, & Technology Initiative
	Alabama Career & Technical Education Initiative
	Career/Technical Programs Meeting International Business & Industry Standards
	Emerging Leaders
	Principal Leadership Academy
	Superintendents Academy

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

September Board Briefs

- Passed Resolution Endorsing Alabama School Bus Safety Week as October 16-22, 2005
- Passed Resolution Proclaiming October as Statewide Parent Visitation Month in Alabama
- Passed Resolution Recognizing the Family of Rachel Bond, Madison City Schools, as the Statewide Winning Family in the 2005 Poster Contest on Parental Involvement
- Passed Resolution Commending Meagan E. Rockett, Hoover High School, Hoover City School System, for Achieving a Perfect Score on the ACT
- Passed Career-Tech 2004-2005 Outstanding Education Program of the Year Resolutions:
 - Huntsville Center for Technology, Huntsville City School System, Technical
 - Montevallo High School, Shelby County School System, Agriscience
 - Sylacauga High School, Sylacauga City School System, Business/Marketing
 - Elmore County Technical Center, Elmore County School System, Health Science
 - Keith High School, Dallas County School System, Jobs for Alabama's Graduates (JAG)
 - Bob Jones High School, Madison City School System, Family and Consumer Sciences

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October 2005



ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

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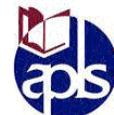
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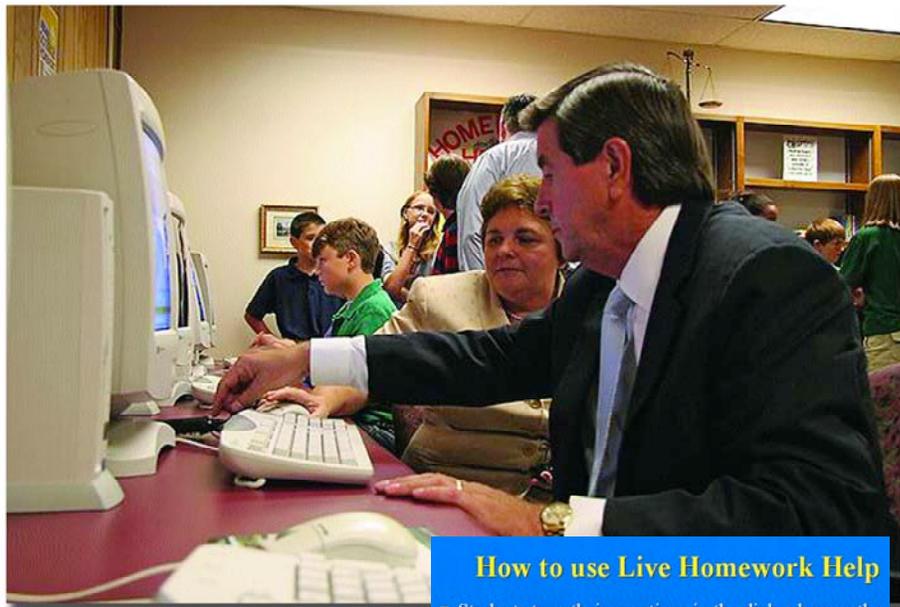
Copies available in Braille or other forms upon request.

Are Your Students Stumped By Their Homework Assignments?

Turn Them On To Homework Alabama!

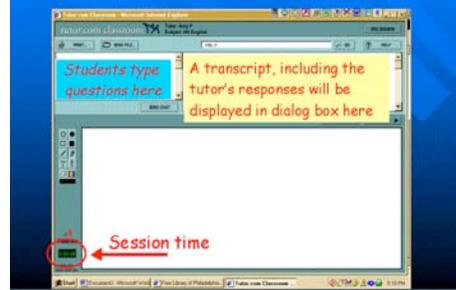


ALABAMA
PUBLIC LIBRARY
SERVICE



How to use Live Homework Help

- Students type their questions in the dialog box on the left and click the SEND CHAT button.



Students in Grades 4-12 can get help with homework online. [CLICK HERE](#). Homework

Alabama is the state's new online tutorial program designed to help Alabama students with their homework. The Alabama Public Library Service – APLS ([CLICK HERE](#)) offers this innovative, new after-school program free of charge to all Alabama residents.

At the announcement of Homework Alabama, **Gov. BOB RILEY** said, "Homework Alabama literally transcends the walls of the traditional classroom. We are committed to providing children all across the state with the best learning opportunities possible, and that commitment doesn't stop when the school day ends."

Students can access Homework Alabama at local libraries or at home. The Internet-based tutorial service uses instant messaging technology to help students in math, science, social studies,

and English. Highly qualified specialists in the four subject areas are available to answer student questions seven days a week, from 3 p.m. until midnight. All tutors are certified teachers, college professors, and graduate students who have undergone criminal background checks and certification. The tutor and the student communicate by typing messages back and forth.

For more information, contact your local public library or call Rebecca Mitchell, statewide program administrator, at 334-213-3900, 1-800-723-8459, or [CLICK HERE](#). 🍏

A Message From The State Superintendent

Now that the 2005-2006 school year is in full swing, I wanted to take this opportunity to inform you about Alabama's accountability timeline for the 2006-2007 school year.

State Department of Education staff are committed to providing student assessment results to local school systems in an expedient manner. That commitment includes releasing an extremely massive and accurate amount of reliable data annually. Since the receipt of data at the local school system level is necessary to comply with the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) in regard to school choice, I wanted to let everyone know that we anticipate releasing all student assessment data and school status information relating to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by Friday, August 4, 2006.

In keeping with that deadline I am strongly recommending to local superintendents that no school system should resume classes prior to Monday, August 7, and if a school is eligible for school choice classes should not resume before August 10. Adhering to this recommendation will help to ensure enough time is allotted to notify parents/guardians of the school choice option prior to the first day of school. Of course we all know failure to comply with NCLB guidelines can lead to a loss of federal funding in school systems.

Have a great school year and thanks to each of you for serving Alabama public school students and their parents in a most professional manner.


Joseph B. Morton

OCTOBER 2005

Governor's Reading Summit –

A Celebration of Success

Approximately 700 people filled the pews of Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Birmingham for the 2nd annual Governor's Reading Summit – A

Celebration of Success on Sept. 15. Legislators, superintendents, principals, teachers, and reading coaches attended the one-day event honoring the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI). The event hosted by **GOV. BOB RILEY**, featured **U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION MARGARET SPELLINGS** as guest speaker.



"The ARI is about transforming children's lives by igniting passion, enthusiasm, and excitement in Alabama schools. That's what helps make it work," said Gov. Riley. "The future of Alabama is dependent on whether or not we teach our children to read. By teaching our students in Grades K-3 to read, when those children reach the fourth-grade and take the national reading test, Alabama scores will move from the bottom to the top of the nation in reading proficiency."

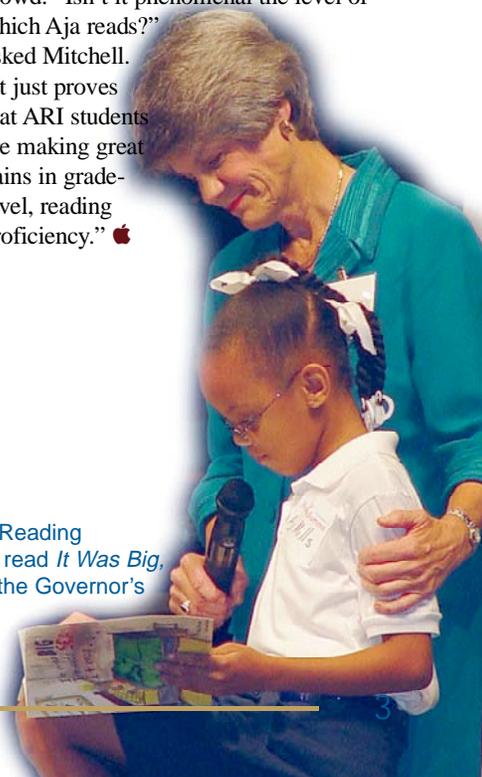
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION JOE MORTON spoke on how proud he is of the accomplishments made by ARI schools. "The Alabama Reading Initiative is the birth child of this state to battle illiteracy and it works," Morton stated. "As the ARI expands statewide in Grades K-3, we will begin to see greater gains made in reading by all students. Additionally, data show the ARI has made a significant impact in helping special

education and minority students improve test scores."

Morton continued showering accolades while introducing Spellings. "Having U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings with us today is a monumental honor. You know she is from Texas, which also has a stellar reading program that runs a close second to the ARI."

As the crowd laughed, Secretary Spellings praised the ARI. "Today, thanks to evidence-based approach instruction like the Alabama Reading Initiative, progress is being made toward the *No Child Left Behind* goal that every child will be reading on grade level by 2014," said Spellings. "Currently 80 percent of Alabama students in Grades K-3 are proficient in reading. Keep up the good work."

ASSISTANT STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION FOR READING KATHERINE MITCHELL added to the excitement by telling stories of student success. The highlight of the event was when Birmingham City's Central Park Elementary first-grade student **AJA MILLS** fluently read *It Was Big, It Was Scary, It Was* by **DIANA TREND AUBUT** to the crowd. "Isn't it phenomenal the level of which Aja reads?" asked Mitchell. "It just proves that ARI students are making great gains in grade-level, reading proficiency." 🍏



Assistant State Superintendent of Education for Reading Dr. Katherine Mitchell helps first-grader Aja Mills read *It Was Big, It Was Scary, It Was Big* to the audience during the Governor's Reading Summit.

Good News

in Alabama Schools

OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR HONORED FOR SCIENCE TEACHING

When it comes to teaching science, the names Einstein, Darwin, and Summers ring a bell, right? “Who’s the last guy?” You ask. That would be **ROBERT SUMMERS**, Alabama’s 2005 Outstanding Biology Teacher of the Year, designated by the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT).



Summers has taught biology for the past five years at Loveless Academic Magnet Program (LAMP) in the Montgomery County School System and according to the school’s principal **VEVERLY ARRINGTON**, students are crazy about Summers and his teaching methods. “Mr. Summers teaches with excitement, which helps his students grasp and retain biology instruction,” said Arrington. “We are truly lucky to have him as part of our faculty and are proud of the recognition he has received and so richly deserves.”

Criteria for the Outstanding Biology Teacher of the Year is based on teaching ability, school and community involvement, inventiveness, relationships between student and teacher, professional and academic background, and classroom observations. Summers will represent Alabama this month at the NABT annual convention in Milwaukee, WI. [CLICK HERE](#) to submit nominations for the 2006 awards. 🍏

State Board of Education Member: Ella Bell, District 5

Montgomery County Schools Superintendent: Dr. Carlinda Purcell

LAMP Principal: Ververly Arrington



Photo courtesy of Garrett Davis, Montgomery Advertiser

Biology teacher Robert Summers

AUBURN SCHOOL TAGGED AS SCHOOL OF ACADEMIC DISTINCTION



Educators display honor on school marquee.

The Alabama school receiving the Intel Corporation and Scholastic 2005 Schools of Distinction award for literacy achievement is the Auburn Early Education Center in the Auburn City School System. The winners in 20 schools across the nation demonstrated exceptional commitment to achievement and innovation in education, and serve as exemplary models for success.



To celebrate each school’s extraordinary commitment to educational excellence and innovation, the schools each receive a \$10,000 cash grant from the Intel Foundation in addition to a host of prizes ranging from curriculum materials and professional development resources to software and hardware valued at more than \$3 million.

Representatives from the winning schools also received an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., to participate in an awards gala on Oct. 6. “In honoring these schools, we not only highlight their accomplishments, but share valuable best practices for raising student achievement with schools all across the country,” said **FRANCIE ALEXANDER**, Chief Academic Officer, Scholastic.

The annual awards program, established by Scholastic, the global children’s publishing, education, and media company, and Intel, the world’s largest chip maker and longtime champion of educational improvement, rewards innovative initiatives promoting student achievement.

Auburn Early Education Center was selected from more than 3,000 participating schools from coast to coast. A winning elementary and secondary school were chosen in each of 10 categories including: overall academic achievement, literacy, science, mathematics, teamwork, leadership, collaboration, professional development, technical excellence, and technical innovation. 🍏

State Board of Education Member: Betty Peters, District 2

Auburn City Schools Superintendent: Dr. Terry Jenkins

Auburn Early Education Center Principal: Dr. Lilli Land

FFA STUDENTS "HAIL THE CHIEF"

ALABAMA FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA (FFA) PRESIDENT JORDAN HAMILTON and STATE FFA SECRETARY MATT WILSON met PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH at the White House during the national FFA State Presidents' Conference in Washington, D.C., in July. Students from all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands were afforded the opportunity to participate in the leadership development conference.

Hamilton, a junior at Sand Rock High School in the Cherokee County School System, and Wilson, a junior at Jacksonville High School in the Jacksonville City School System, also met U.S. SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE MIKE JOHANNIS and other United States Department of Agriculture officials. The secretary, himself a former FFA member from Nebraska, credited much of what he had accomplished to the leadership experiences he received through agriscience education and FFA.

FFA is a national youth organization of more than 490,000 student members who are preparing for careers in the science, business, and technology areas of agriculture. Alabama has approximately 14,500 members who enjoy the benefits this organization offers. To learn more, contact 334-242-9114 or [CLICK HERE](#). 🍏

State Board of Education Member: Stephanie Bell, District 3

Cherokee County Schools Superintendent: Brian Johnson

Sand Rock High School Principal: Ben East

Jacksonville City Schools Superintendent: Dr. Eric G. Mackey

Jacksonville High School Principal: Mike Newell



White House photo by Paul Morse

President George W. Bush visits with members of the National FFA Organization State Presidents' Conference Thursday, July 28, 2005, in the State Dining Room of the White House.

WAL-MART HONORS TEACHER WITH \$10,000 DONATION TO SCHOOL

A Gulf Shores Middle School teacher has been honored as the best in the state for excellence in education. **MACHELE MARTIN** has been selected by Phi Delta Kappa International professional education association as one of the nation's top educators in Wal-Mart's 10th annual Teacher of the Year program.

During a special recognition ceremony Sept. 23, representatives from Phi Delta Kappa and the Gulf Shores Wal-Mart Supercenter presented Martin with a \$10,000 educational grant from the Wal-Mart and SAM'S CLUB Foundation for the school.

"We applaud the achievements of educators, who like Mrs. Martin, are making a positive difference every day in the classroom," said **MARY JANE EWING**, store manager.

Through this program, which is one of the largest teacher recognition efforts in the country, Wal-Mart will give back \$4.3 million this year alone to the schools of winning teachers. Since the Teacher of the Year program began in 1995, Wal-Mart Stores Inc. has honored more than 25,000 teachers nationwide and donated more than \$18.5 million to local schools. Last year alone the company provided more than \$45 million in support of educational initiatives. 🍏

State Board of Education Member: Randy McKinney, District 1

Baldwin County Schools Superintendent: Dr. Faron Hollinger

Gulf Shores Middle School Principal: Sherry Frazier

CELEBRATE LITERACY AWARD

The Tennessee Valley Reading Council presented the Celebrate Literacy Award to **DR. REBA WADSWORTH**, principal of Woodmeade Elementary School in the Decatur City School System. The Celebrate Literacy Award recognizes individuals who have made significant literacy contributions at the local, state, and provincial level. Dr. Wadsworth has shown exemplary accomplishments in direct teaching at many levels, organizing local literacy programs, promoting support from the public relative to enhancing literacy, producing teaching materials for literacy programs, conducting research related to literacy, and providing opportunities that focus on their literacy needs.

The Tennessee Valley Reading Council is a professional organization committed to the improvement of literacy in Decatur City, Hartselle City, Morgan, and Lawrence County Schools. 🍏

State Board of Education Member: David Byers, District 6

Decatur City Schools Superintendent: Dr. Sam Houston

Woodmeade Elementary School Principal: Dr. Reba Wadsworth



Machele Martin (l) receives award from Wal-Mart store manager Mary Jane Ewing.



Presenting the Literacy Award to Dr. Wadsworth is Tennessee Valley Reading Council Vice President Margaret Laughmiller (r).

(Continued from Page 1)

Under the federal *McKinney-Vento Act*, displaced students qualify for enrollment (without the usual required student documentation) and free meal assistance. The act also ensures students with special needs receive appropriate services.

State enrollment requirements have been temporarily waived until student records can be obtained from students' home states. Students who enroll in systems are being counted in each system's Average Daily Membership (ADM) for 2007 funding purposes. The enrollment data will also be used in the calculations for the 2006 distribution of current units. To accurately identify displaced students, student information is being tracked through the Software Technology Inc. (STI) student management system. Additional funding and resources will be forthcoming to aid in accommodating displaced students; therefore, accurate student records are necessary to ensure systems receive the correct amount of reimbursement.

On the topic of funding, systems also faced fuel crunches in the initial wake of Katrina after pipelines and refineries in the Gulf were damaged or destroyed. Not only were some systems low on diesel fuel but school personnel also faced a gas shortage. In both cases, fuel costs were extremely high. Diesel fuel rose from \$1.60 per gallon in October of 2004 to a high of \$2.86 per gallon at press time.

Adults displaced by the hurricane also flooded the state, many looking for jobs. Teachers and support personnel desiring employment can contact local school systems for vacancies. Superintendents then submit their credentials to the teacher certification section at the Alabama Department of Education for the issuance of a temporary Alabama emergency teaching certificate. Background checks are performed on those applying for positions.

GIVING TO OTHERS

With many displaced students arriving without anything except the clothes on their backs, students were lacking supplies and uniforms necessary to start school. That shortage did not last long thanks to the benevolence of surrounding



District 1 State Board of Education Member Randy McKinney looks over donations at Alba Middle School with Mobile County Schools Superintendent Dr. Harold Dodge.

communities. **MOBILE COUNTY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT DR. HAROLD DODGE** urged citizens to purchase and donate Wal-mart and K-Mart gift cards so uniforms and supplies could be purchased. The outpouring of generosity was phenomenal. Additionally, members of two Gulf Coast families, now living out of state, decided they needed to lend a hand. **LINDA DAVIS**, a Gulf Shores native who now resides in King George, VA, rallied members of her community together to collect much-needed school supplies for Mobile and Baldwin County schools and schools in Long Beach and Pascagoula, MS.

Davis, a baseball coach along with a fellow teacher, rented a 15-foot truck and with the help of neighbors and friends filled it to the brim with over 700 bookbags, 60 teacher kits, 60 bins of school supplies, and books donated by the community's school students. The two educators drove more than 900 miles to deliver the goods Sept. 22-24. Davis' niece attends Elberta Middle School in Baldwin County.

Collier Elementary School is named



Students at Red Level School in Covington County hold Hurricane Katrina relief drive.

after Mobile matriarch **ELSIE COLLIER**. When her great nephew heard the school was in need of supplies, he loaded up a Ryder truck and drove the supplies down to the school. **CURT COLLIER** lives in the Bronx in New York City.

Students and teachers in several Alabama schools worked diligently to collect supplies and money to help Katrina victims. Florence Middle School erected a tree in the hall for students to pick colorful paper leaves listed with the wants and needs of 29 displaced students who have enrolled in the Florence City School System. The concept was taken from the **SHEL SILVERSTEIN** book *The Giving Tree*, which tells the story of a tree that provides a young man with his needs, teaching unselfishness and kindness.

In Covington County, the student council at Red Level School is leading a fund-raising effort in conjunction with the national school anti-drug program, Red Ribbon Week. The drive appropriately titled Clear Heads = Open Hearts will conclude Oct. 30.

Additionally, many schools across the state collected items and money during weekly football games, pep rallies, and other events. In fact, Baker High School environmental science teacher **JENNIFER STEVENS** took her class on the road by to Pascagoula, MS, on Thursday, Sept. 22. Twenty-two juniors and seniors traveled to the First Baptist Church on Pascagoula Street to distribute needed items to local residents. During the trip, Stevens discussed the environmental impact of the hurricane, the contamination of the waterways, the clean up, and other relevant topics.

Since Katrina, additional hurricanes have threatened the Gulf Coast and the possibility of more storms is probable considering hurricane season is not over until Nov. 30. But, as with Ivan and Katrina, Alabama educators and students did everything possible to make the best of tough situations. If and when the need arises again – Alabamians will stand united and strong to help ensure their fellow man is well taken care of. 🍏

[CLICK HERE](#) to check the Alabama Department of Education's Website for regularly updated information regarding Hurricane Katrina education assistance.

ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS



Einstein Exhibit Opens At Birmingham's McWane Center

“Dear Mr. Einstein, What’s beyond the sky? My mother said you could tell me.”

This excerpt from a child’s letter shows how the genius, life, and works of the 20th century’s most celebrated scientist has captured the imagination and curiosity of children for decades.

Today, children around the world are still amazed by the science of **ALBERT EINSTEIN**. Now, Alabama students can experience an exhibition on Einstein like never before at the McWane Center in Birmingham during its, “Einstein, A Revolutionary Exhibit on the Man and His Science” show through Jan. 22, 2006.

The exhibition brings to life Einstein’s most astonishing visions of the universe – light’s duality as both particle and wave, time as the fourth dimension, and space-time as a curved geometry – through engaging, high-tech interactives while exploring Einstein’s influence, not only as a scientific genius, but also as a complex man actively engaged in the social and political issues of his time. **ASHLEY THOMAS**, public relations and media manager, said the exhibit shows the many sides of Einstein. “Guests will see the real man behind the science, the struggling student behind the brilliant theories, and the humble character of a man who changed the world,” Thomas said. “This exhibit presents Einstein’s concepts, theories, and ideas – that may seem almost impossible to decode, let alone understand - in simple, clear descriptions and interactive elements that fuel the visitors’ curiosity and interest in the man and his science.”

Thomas said what makes the exhibit remarkable is that it’s not purely scientific. “Yes, science and physics are the heart and soul of the exhibition; however, what makes this a well-rounded, world-renowned, interesting presentation are the personal aspects of Albert Einstein revealed in the exhibit.”

The McWane Center is a prime destination for field trips as educators are encouraged to help make Alabama the most Einstein-informed state in the country by having their class take “The Einstein Challenge.” [CLICK HERE](#) to become Einstein Certified.

Alabama senators pose with Einstein masks to promote the Einstein Challenge.

To get this certification students can read a book about Albert Einstein. You can choose among the many fascinating books for all ages, OR accomplish at least one of the following activities:



Take a tour of **EINSTEIN** – the blockbuster exhibit at Birmingham’s McWane Center, before Jan. 22, 2006. Students and teachers can participate in special school programs and field trips offered by the McWane Center. Contact 205-714-8414 or [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.



Attend a presentation at a participating public library. For example, in Birmingham, check out the public library’s Brown Bag Lunch programs.



Visit a Web site about Albert Einstein.

If you are participating in The Einstein Challenge as a group, such as a school class or science club, the group will have the chance to win a **FREE** field trip to the McWane Center including:

- **FREE Admission to McWane Center and the EINSTEIN exhibit for up to thirty 30 people.**
- **FREE IMAX® film – “Adrenaline Rush: The Science of Risk.”**
- **FREE Lunch at McWane Center.**
- **FREE 30-minute or 45-minute Einstein school program at McWane Center. McWane Center school programs meet Alabama Courses of Study standards.**

[CLICK HERE](#) or [CLICK HERE](#) to visit special Web sites for more information. 🍏



Calendar

OCTOBER

STATEWIDE PARENT VISITATION MONTH

CHILD MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

COMPUTER LEARNING MONTH

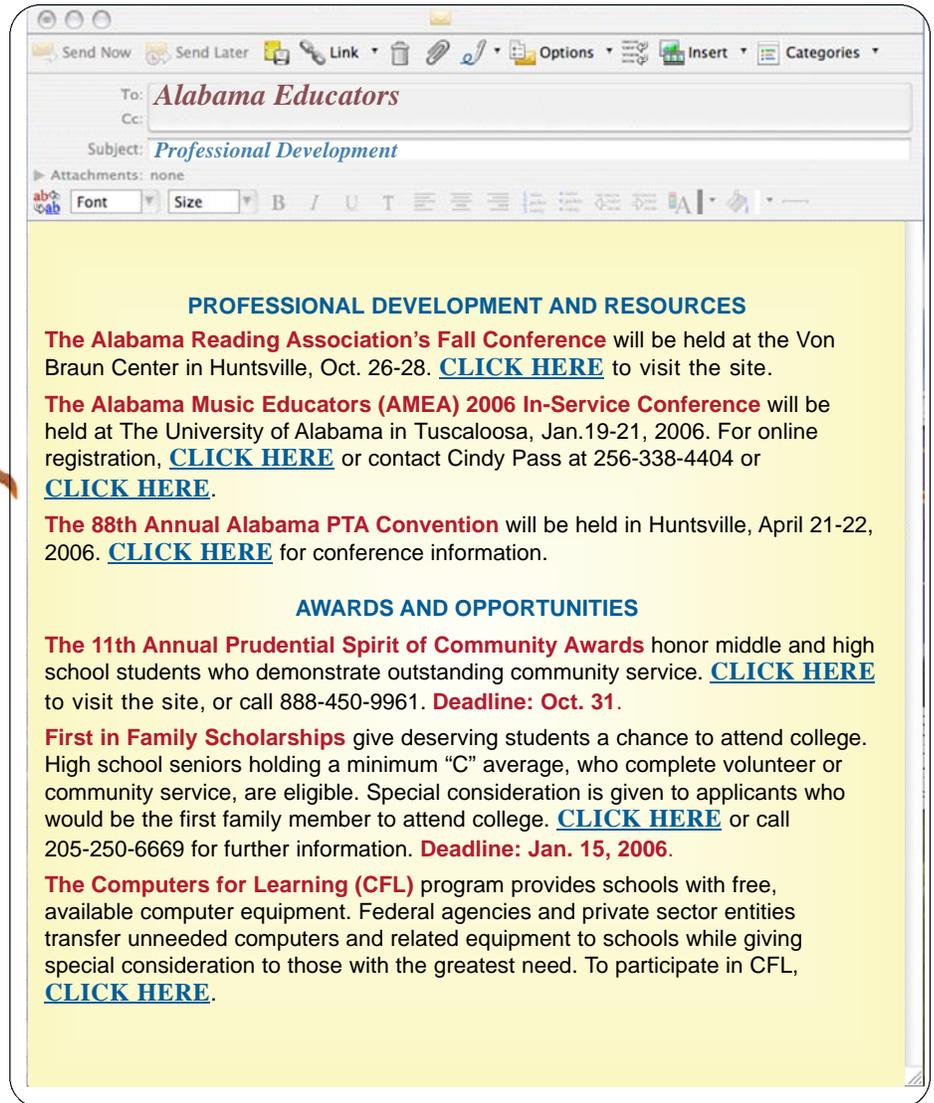
- 13 State Board of Education Meeting
School Bus Safety Week
- 16-22 Teen Read Week
- 20 Lights On After School Day
- 22-30 Red Ribbon Week
- 27 State Board of Education Work Session

NOVEMBER

CHILD SAFETY PROTECTION MONTH

GOOD NUTRITION MONTH

- 1 National Family Literacy Day
- 8 Election Day
- 10 State Board of Education Meeting/Work Session
- 11 Veteran's Day STATE-NATIONAL HOLIDAY
- 13-19 American Education Week
- 17 National Young Readers Day
- 24-25 Thanksgiving Holidays



The screenshot shows an email client interface. At the top, there are menu options like 'Send Now', 'Send Later', 'Link', 'Options', 'Insert', and 'Categories'. The email header shows 'To: Alabama Educators', 'Cc:', and 'Subject: Professional Development'. Below the header is a toolbar with 'Font' and 'Size' dropdowns, and buttons for bold, italic, underline, and text color. The main body of the email is highlighted in yellow and contains the following text:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

The Alabama Reading Association's Fall Conference will be held at the Von Braun Center in Huntsville, Oct. 26-28. [CLICK HERE](#) to visit the site.

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](#).

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

AWARDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The 11th Annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards honor middle and high school students who demonstrate outstanding community service. [CLICK HERE](#) to visit the site, or call 888-450-9961. **Deadline: Oct. 31.**

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 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](#).

Career/Tech's 'Outstanding Programs' Honored



The state Board of Education recognized the achievements of Alabama's top career/technical education (CTE) programs by passing resolutions during their K-12 meeting on Sept. 8. Winners of the 2004-2005 Outstanding Program of the Year awards are:

- Agriscience Education – **MONTEVALLO HIGH SCHOOL**, Shelby County School System.
- Business/Marketing Education – **SYLACAUGA HIGH SCHOOL**, Sylacauga City School System.
- Family and Consumer Sciences Education – **BOB JONES HIGH SCHOOL**, Madison City School System.
- Health Science Education – **ELMORE COUNTY TECHNICAL CENTER**, Elmore County School System.
- Jobs for Alabama's Graduates – **KEITH HIGH SCHOOL**, Dallas County School System.
- Technical Education – **HUNTSVILLE CENTER FOR TECHNOLOGY**, Huntsville City School System.

CTE is a statewide program designed to prepare students for college and a variety of career opportunities. Currently, one out of every two high school students in Alabama participates in a CTE program. These students explore career options in more than 215 courses, earn advanced diplomas, and receive

college credit. To participate, local CTE programs from throughout Alabama completed

applications, submitted several high-quality photos and newspaper articles, and outlined in detail their program's accomplishments and plans to further the educational experiences of their students. CTE programs participating in this year's selection process were judged in six distinct categories, which included Curriculum, Student Enrollment and Placement, Student Organization Participation, and Local CTE Staff Information. They also submitted a 200-word overview of their most innovative practices.

All applications for local CTE programs interested in participating in next year's Outstanding Program of the Year selection process must be received by the SDE by May 15, 2006.

To learn more about the Outstanding Program of the Year award or any of the other educational opportunities offered by Alabama's career/tech programs, contact your local board of education, visit [CLICK HERE](#), or call 334-242-9111. 🍏

Teacher of the Month

DEBBIE BARNES, a teacher at Vincent High School in the Shelby County School System, has been chosen as Teacher of the Month for October. Barnes has been recognized twice as Teacher of the Year for Vincent High School and has developed a program utilizing Advanced Placement Biology students to teach various classes at Vincent Elementary School. For professional development, Barnes attends workshops, such as biology training at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab.

"Whether lecturing or conducting a science lab, Mrs. Barnes' classes are some of the most



Debbie Barnes

highly engaging I have ever seen," said **GARY MINNICK**, Principal. "Her knowledge of subject matter is so strong that she rarely refers to notes while lecturing, which impresses and inspires both her students and administrators."

As a reward for her excellence, Barnes will receive \$1,000 from Alfa Insurance and her school will receive a matching award from Alabama Farmers 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. 🍏