

## Clark County, Christina Districts Name Leaders

Nevada's Clark County School District in Las Vegas is one of the nation's fastest growing school systems and has been searching for a superintendent since July when Carlos Garcia announced his resignation.



Walt Rulfes

The 291,510-student school district's search recently ended with the selection of Walt Rulfes, who has served in a dual interim superintendent capacity with more than 30 years of experience in education.

Before becoming an interim superintendent, he was the district's deputy superintendent of operations. He



Lillian Lowery

has also served as the superintendent of the Cheney School District in Washington State.

The Christina School District in Delaware also selected a veteran educator, Lillian

Lowery, to lead the state's largest public school system, serving some 20,000 students in Wilmington and surrounding communities.

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## Council, Education Dept. Explore Research Agenda

Many of the priorities facing the nation's urban school districts have not been addressed by the education research community.

So said Michael Casserly, executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools, in recent testimony before the National Board for Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education.

"One would be hard-pressed, in fact, to find much educational research on how to guide systemic reform in urban schools," he stressed, indicating that most education research in this country focuses on variables, subgroups, programs, or individual schools – not on whole school systems.

When it comes to questions involving issues of implementation and practice of educational approaches, most researchers do not view them as worth their time, Casserly noted. "Yet, practitioners consider them to be 'make-or-break' issues that they wish the research community would spend more time on," he emphasized.

In shaping its research agenda over the next several years, the Department of Education's Institute of

Education Sciences may want to consider ways to support research aimed at addressing "broader, more systemic, strategic questions about the reform and improvement of urban schools," Casserly testified.

Casserly also pointed out that the department may want to consider more capacity building for research in the largest urban school systems, and funding research efforts that foster "collaboration between the producers and users of research."

The Department of Education appeared receptive to exploring the priorities outlined by Casserly.

### Legislative Conference March 18-21

The Council of the Great City Schools will hold its Annual Legislative/Policy Conference next month in Washington, D.C.



Topics to be discussed include the reauthorization of the *No Child Left Behind* Act in 2007 and federal spending priorities. Preliminary conference highlights on page 11.

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**urban Educator**

A newsletter published by the Council of the Great City Schools, representing 66 of the nation's largest urban public school districts.

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## First New High School Built in 50 Years Opens in Oklahoma City

Douglass High School in Oklahoma City has more than 50 classrooms, a mock courtroom and a spacious courtyard, but these amenities are not the only reason the school, which recently opened its doors, is making headlines.

Douglass High is the first new high school to be built in the district in more than 50 years.

The \$27.8 million facility was built as a result of the landmark MAPS for Kids initiative, a nearly \$700 million community-designed plan approved by voters in 2001 to rebuild Oklahoma City Public Schools into a model urban school district.

The plan calls for every student in the district to attend school in a brand new or newly renovated school. The initiative also provides funds for transportation and technology improvements designed to prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace.

Douglass High School, named for abolitionist Frederick Douglass, was built to serve 1,200 students in grades 7-10.

According to district officials, the building opened with fewer than 800 students, but the line for new enrollees extended out of the administration office the day before the school opened.

"It's pretty roomy; it isn't crowded," said senior Julius McKaufman, who is a student at the new high school. "It makes you feel more mature like you're in college. It brings your sense of pride up a level."

Douglass High School is one of three new high schools the district plans to open in the coming months.

## Los Angeles School Named For Alumnus and Role Model

The late Johnnie Cochran was inspired to become a lawyer after enrolling in a debate class at Mount Vernon Middle School in Los Angeles.



Johnnie Cochran

That school has now been renamed the Johnnie Cochran, Jr. Middle School. The Los Angeles school board recently voted to change the name of the school to honor Cochran's work as a civil rights attorney and community activist.

Cochran attended the school in the 1950s.

Scott Schmerelson, the current principal of the school, called Cochran a role model and said the name change will inspire all students at the school to excel academically.

Cochran, who died last year, became well known for representing high-profile clients while also pursuing justice on behalf of everyday people who often gave up hope of receiving justice from the legal system.

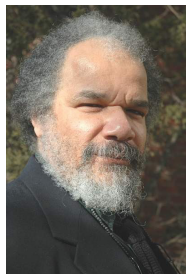
**Inside the Council**

*Continued from page 1*  
**Leaders...**

Lowery is an assistant superintendent in Virginia's Fairfax County school district. She will succeed Joseph Wise, who is now the superintendent of the Duval County School District in Jacksonville, Fla.

**Interim Leaders**

In another development, Minneapolis Public Schools has named an interim superintendent, William Green, to lead the 38,590-student school system.



**William Green**

Green, an associate professor of history at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, is no stranger to the Minneapolis school system, having served as a board member from 1993 to 2001.

He will succeed Thandiwe Peebles, who recently resigned from the district. She had led the district since July 2004 after serving as a regional superintendent in the Cleveland school system.

The Cleveland Municipal School District has also selected an interim superintendent, Lisa Ruda, who currently serves as the school system's chief of staff.



**Barbara Byrd-Bennett**

Ruda will succeed Barbara Byrd-Bennett, who resigned from the school district after serving as the chief executive officer since 1998.

**Contract Extended**

Texas' Austin Independent School District recently extended the contract of Superintendent Pascal Forgione by one year, to June 2010.



**Pascal Forgione**

In a statement announcing the extension, the Austin board of trustees indicated that under Forgione's

leadership students have performed above the national average on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Also, the number of students graduating has increased, and more students are applying to postsecondary institutions.

Forgione has been at the helm of the 80,000-student school district since August 1999.

**Urban Districts Conducting Superintendent Searches**

**Boston Public Schools**

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools**

**Cleveland Municipal School District**

**Detroit Public Schools**

**Kansas City Missouri School District**

**St. Paul Public Schools**

**Toledo Public Schools**

**Baltimore Adopts Black History Curriculum**

The Baltimore City Public School System recently adopted an African American history curriculum developed by the new Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture in partnership with the Maryland State Department of Education.

Called "An African American Journey: A Resource for Learning the History of African Americans in Maryland and the United States," the lessons are aligned with Maryland content standards and the voluntary state curriculum in social studies, reading and the fine arts.

Before the Baltimore museum opened last fall, the Maryland State Department of Education and the museum, named for an African American businessman, forged a partnership to improve the quality and instruction of black history and culture in the state.

Students get the opportunity to take the "African American Journey" from Colonial America to the present, beginning in the classroom. Subsequently, schools can schedule field trips for students to visit the museum for further study.

Guided school tours are offered at the museum for elementary, middle and high school students.

In a letter to principals and teachers, Sandy Bellamy, executive director of the Reginald Lewis Museum, pointed out, "The resources and exhibitions of the museum, combined with the lessons of "An African American Journey," will not only educate and inform visitors about the richness of African American history and culture, but will also stimulate and broaden the way that teachers and students view United States history."

## St. Louis Kicks Off Plan To Improve High Schools

Superintendent Creg Williams of St. Louis Public Schools has created a path to improve the quality of education in the district's high schools.

In the first of a series of district-wide initiatives, he unveiled an action plan last month that moves the entire freshman class of 266 ninth graders out of Vashon High School, along with their teachers and an administrator, into a learning center in the nearby Williams School, which has been vacant.

Simultaneously, approximately 65 Vashon seniors on a track to graduate will be getting an early introduction to college life. They begin taking high school and college-level classes five days a week at the University of Missouri-St. Louis and Ranken Technical College.

Says Superintendent Williams about the actions, "We simply don't have the luxury of making a gradual change over a long period of time. We need to act now."

The new ninth grade center in Williams School will provide rigorous instruction and more individual student attention in an academy-like environment. After this semester, the students return to Vashon for 10<sup>th</sup> grade in August.

Vashon's senior students tapped to attend classes at the two college campuses will continue to take high school courses as well as college-level courses. They will have the opportunity to earn college credit hours.

The St. Louis Public Schools superintendent also plans to introduce changes at another high school later this year, while conducting an assessment of all district high schools to determine the possible need for restructuring or reorganization.



Creg Williams

## Wichita, Broward Districts Win EPA Air Quality Awards

In an effort to improve the indoor air quality of its schools, Wichita Public Schools in Kansas provides certified indoor environmentalists who are trained to recognize and identify poor air problems.

And in Broward County Public Schools in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., administrators implemented an indoor air quality program in 88 schools.

As a result, both districts were among six school systems in the nation to receive Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools (IAQ TFS) Excellence Awards, presented recently by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Created in 2000, the awards are given to school districts that have outstanding IAQ TFS programs and have demonstrated a strong commitment to providing a healthy and safe school environment.

School nurses in Wichita have been trained to recognize potential sources of IAQ problems, such as outdated or improperly stored chemicals in science labs that could trigger asthma attacks. The district also plans to have by 2006, air conditioning and upgraded fresh air ventilation in all buildings as a result of a \$285 million bond issue passed by citizens.

In 2002, the Broward County school district implemented an IAQ TFS program after seven elementary schools encountered moisture problems. This year, the program will have an impact on 108 schools.

According to the EPA, studies have shown that students who are exposed to poor indoor air quality experience diminished concentration levels and score lower on standardized tests than those students attending schools with good air quality.

## Atlanta Superintendent Receives Martin Luther King Award

Beverly Hall, the superintendent of Atlanta Public Schools, was recently among eight recipients of the First Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Ground Crew Service Award, presented by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.



Beverly Hall

The award gets its name from a phrase in a speech made

by Martin Luther King Jr., when he was presented with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. Upon accepting the prize, King acknowledged "the many people who make a successful journey possible -- the known pilots and the unknown ground crew."

Hall has been the superintendent of Atlanta Public Schools since 1999 and under her tenure, student academic performance has improved, aging facilities have been renovated and the district has developed partnerships with business and community organizations.

**Inside the Council**

**Space Shuttle Anniversary Has Special Meaning to Palm Beach Official**

Last month, the nation commemorated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster. For Judith Garcia, an administrator with Florida's Palm Beach County schools, the day held a very special meaning.

Garcia would have been on the space shuttle had Christa McAuliffe, a teacher from New Hampshire, not been able to fly that day.

Approximately 20 years ago, Garcia was selected as one of 10 finalists in NASA's first-ever "Teacher in Space Program."

McAuliffe was the finalist selected to be the first teacher to fly to space, but Garcia was named the alternate and trained with the crew of the Space Shuttle Challenger.

And on January 28, 1986, she watched as McAuliffe and six other astronauts boarded the space shuttle, which exploded after launch, killing everyone on board.

"The horror would last not a week or two but maybe two years, and perhaps always," said Garcia in the *American Reporter*. "The ten finalist teacher-astronauts were closer than friends. We had trained the same way Navy and Marine fighter pilots train at Pensacola. The loss can't be explained."

A former high school teacher of French, Spanish and history, Garcia was scheduled to be the next teacher in space, but after the shuttle accident the program was suspended.

She is currently the manager of instructional support for the School District of Palm Beach County's television station and recently attended a memorial ceremony at the district's Christa McAuliffe Middle School, named for the first teacher in space.

Although 20 years have passed, Garcia still keeps in touch with her fellow NASA teachers as well as McAuliffe's family.

"I've talked to them on the phone," said Garcia in the *Reporter*. "I'm with them. I'm always with them."



Shortly after the Space Shuttle Challenger accident, President Ronald Reagan presented Judith Garcia with a model aerospace plane.

**Broward District Bridging the Digital Divide**

This school year, Florida's Broward County Public Schools in Fort Lauderdale accelerated its efforts to increase in-school use of technology, while also extending computer training to parents in support of student learning at home.

Both parents and students have been involved in the district's new Digital Divide Program, which is designed to narrow the so-called digital divide between families that have access to technology and those who don't.

Selected parents often attend technology training sessions in many cases with their children, who help the parents gain the know-how to operate computers.

After parents complete the program, they are given surplus desktop computers and related equipment free of charge for use in their homes to assist their children with their educations.

"By engaging the parents, we enhance the effort to further engage students in the education process – both in the classroom and at home," says Superintendent Frank Till.

Thus far, some 150 parents have completed the Digital Divide Program and received free computers.

Late last year, another Broward district technology initiative saw 75 middle school students demonstrate their skills in disassembling and rebuilding computers in the school system's first Dell TechKnow program.

To further enhance student technology skills, the school district launched Dell TechKnow, a national program that

*continued on page 12*

**Clark County Educator Honored**

George Ann Rice, the associate superintendent of the human resources division for Nevada's Clark County School District in Las Vegas, was recently honored at the Council of the Great City Schools' Human Resources and Personnel Directors Meeting in Tampa, Fla.

Rice, a former assistant principal, received the Fourth Annual Human Resources and Personnel Directors Award.

Sponsored by SAP Public Services, the award is presented to an official who has demonstrated distinguished service in public education.

## Baltimore Launches Student Breakfast Club

Students in the Baltimore City Public School System can boost their attendance and improve their academic performance by joining a new club.

Launched last month, The Breakfast Club is a program offering free breakfast to all students at the district's 155 elementary, middle and pre-K to 8 schools.

District officials believe the program will help parents in increasing student attendance, punctuality and academic achievement by offering students a nutritious breakfast every day before they start school.

According to studies conducted in five Baltimore elementary and middle schools, providing a free breakfast increased students' academic and social skills.

One study found that students who participated in the breakfast program had fewer absences, compared to non-participants. The study also found that students who ate breakfast at their schools posted higher math scores.

In another study, average daily attendance for students at three Baltimore schools that offered free breakfast rose from 86 percent to 89 percent, disciplinary incidents were cut in half and tardiness decreased by two-thirds.

“The academic success so many of

our students enjoy begins with a good breakfast,” said Baltimore Schools CEO Bonnie Copeland. “This is another way to support their academic achievement and to show them how much we care about their mental, physical and emotional well being.”



Baltimore Schools CEO Bonnie Copeland (standing) greets students at the kick-off of The Breakfast Club program. Also at the event were (left to right) Sheila Dixon, Baltimore City Council president, and Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley. (Photo by Donald Williams)

Free breakfast has been offered to eligible students at 116 district schools and The Breakfast Club will expand the program to 39 elementary, middle and pre-K to 8 schools. It also marks the first time no-cost

breakfast has been offered to all of the district's pre-K to 8 students.

District officials expect that more than 5,000 new students will join The Breakfast Club at a cost to the district of approximately \$1.00 per student. The program is sponsored in part by the Mid-Atlantic Milk Association and a local radio station.

## Council Historic Moments

*With this issue, the Urban Educator launches "Council Historic Moments," a series of tidbits on the 50-year history of the Council.*

When the Council was founded in 1956, these districts were among the first to join the group in the first five years:

- |                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Baltimore</b> | <b>Los Angeles</b>   |
| <b>Buffalo</b>   | <b>Milwaukee</b>     |
| <b>Chicago</b>   | <b>Philadelphia</b>  |
| <b>Cleveland</b> | <b>Pittsburgh</b>    |
| <b>Detroit</b>   | <b>San Francisco</b> |
| <b>Houston</b>   | <b>St. Louis</b>     |



## Denver District Offers Students 9-1-1 Emergency Course

Denver Public Schools is offering a 40-hour course designed to help students become emergency dispatchers.

The class involves actual 9-1-1 calls and scenarios that provide students the opportunity to apply their knowledge and learn from experience.

After completing the course and passing a written examination, students

can become certified as professional emergency telecommunicators by the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch.

The course is being offered at the Career Education Center Middle College of Denver, which allows students in grades 9-12 to earn credits toward an associate degree while taking courses at a local community college.

**Inside the Council**

**\$6 Million in Federal Bonds Issued To Nashville District**

The school system in Nashville, Tenn., recently received more than \$6 million in federal bonds to renovate science laboratories.

Thirty-three middle and high schools in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools now have more than \$6 million to renovate and modernize their science labs through the federal Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZAB) program.



Q Z A B s are taxable bonds with a low interest rate, issued through state authorities to qualifying districts.

“This is amazing,” said Sarah Baker, the Nashville school district’s science coordinator, in a press release. “This allows us to improve our programs and facilities through funds we wouldn’t otherwise have.”

The school system, which provides education to students in Nashville and Davidson County, received the bonds from the Tennessee State School Bond Authority based on a percentage match from private contributions, and free and reduced meal demographics.

The Vanderbilt Center for Science Outreach and the Nashville Alliance for Public Education, contributors to the Nashville school system’s science program, helped to make the QZABs possible.

**SPEAK OUT**  
A Call to Action

**By Superintendent Arlene Ackerman  
San Francisco Unified School District**

*(Dr. Ackerman, chair of the Council of the Great City Schools, delivered the keynote address at the Council’s recent Fall Conference in Atlanta. These are excerpts from her address.)*

What I will say today, may indeed, make some of you uncomfortable, but what I hope my words might do is motivate you to accelerated action that improves the academic standing of more of our students before it is too late.



Arlene Ackerman

I want to speak frankly about an institution that Thomas Jefferson calls the foundation for a democratic society. . . that institution is our public schools.

There is an old saying . . . that when the elders would visit villages in some African countries, they would ask one simple question, “How are the children?” Only if all the children were well . . . would the elders consider that all was well in the village.

This morning, ladies and gentlemen . . . my colleagues in public education. . . I want to tell you that in many of our public school systems . . . all is not well with all our children, specifically, our African American, Latino and English Language learners.

These young people are usually educated in schools that reflect the serious social problems found in our larger society . . . problems that this country can’t or won’t fix. These children are too often impacted by conditions of poverty that result in poor health, nutrition and serious childhood illnesses like diabetes and asthma.

Many of our urban students come from fractured families that can provide little academic support and then go to schools where some adults have little or no expectations that they can or will achieve at high levels.

If we really want to change the outcomes for all of our children, it will take a laser like focus on improving achievement for the children at the top. . . pushing them to higher levels. . .while closing the gap for those who are at the bottom by accelerating their achievement.

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*Continued from page 7*  
**SPEAK OUT...**

If we are to educate all children well, it will take educators who are willing to go the extra mile and extend an outreached hand to engage parents in this process of educating the “gifts” they send to us . . . regardless of the parents economic or social circumstances . . . .

It will take superintendents, board members, district staff, principals and teachers who are committed and willing to give to other people’s children what they would for their own.

If we, districts in the Council of Great City Schools, are going to Achieve the Dream for All . . . we must mobilize the community to dedicate all available resources to the educational development of its youth . . . it will take universal preschool for all children so that they come to school ready to learn and don’t start the academic race behind in kindergarten.

Finally, it will take the unwavering support of politicians, business, civic, religious and community leaders who clearly understand that our urban cities will never thrive if our public schools are barely surviving . . . everybody must understand that it cost less to educate our young people today. . . than to incarcerate them or put them on welfare rolls tomorrow.

It will take a call to action . . . a call to action at every level. . . local. . . state. . .and federal. If we are to leave a legacy upon which future generations can build . . . then it will take each of us taking responsibility for all of our children . . . and I mean all of them. We cannot wait any longer... because those children can’t wait!

## **EPA Honors L.A. District For Health, Safety Leadership**

The nation’s second largest school district was recently presented an award by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for developing an environmental program, which has been so successful, that it has been converted into a national model.

The Los Angeles Unified School District conducts a comprehensive environmental review on all school sites built as part of the district’s \$14 billion New School Construction Program.

This school health and safety inspection program has become a national model for the EPA called the Healthy School Environments Assessment Tool (Healthy SEAT). The program aims to improve the health of the nation’s students by ensuring that all potential environmental and safety hazards, such as chemical releases and pesticide exposures, are being properly managed.



Los Angeles school board member Julie Korenstein receives an award from EPA officials.

In addition, Healthy SEAT helps school systems integrate and manage all school facility environmental, health and safety programs. School districts across the nation are now able to voluntarily assess and track health problems in students and staff.

“...LAUSD has done an excellent job in ensuring the safety of our students and staff at our schools because of our comprehensive school health and safety inspection program,” said Los Angeles board member Julie Korenstein, upon accepting the award from the EPA. “I am very pleased that our safe school plan will be utilized by school districts across the nation.”

The Los Angeles School District has also developed other environmental initiatives, including a recycling program that has saved the district more than \$77,400 in purchasing costs and \$11,800 in disposal costs. The school system also has a program to reduce the number of pesticides used to manage pest problems. As a result, the number of pesticides used on school grounds has been reduced from 120 to 35 products.

## **Duval Superintendent Receives ‘Champion for Children’ Award**



Joseph Wise

Joseph Wise, the superintendent of Florida’s Duval County Public Schools in Jacksonville, was recently named the 2006 Champion for Children.

Sponsored by the Northwest Evaluation Association and HOSTS Learning Partnership, the award was given to Wise for his work in improving the Christina School District in Delaware, where he served as superintendent before recently taking the helm of the Duval school system.



**Inside the Council**

**Birmingham District Gives Boost to School Libraries**

Most of today's parents and educators grew up in a time when research meant poring over the card catalog and "Reader's Guide to Periodicals" in the library. The next step was finding the books and magazines that contained the information that was needed.

Students in the Birmingham City School System don't have to be in the library to accomplish much of what took previous generations hours to do.

They can sign onto any Internet-connected computer – even at home – and access a new system that provides information on books and other resources in libraries in all of the district's 67 schools. They can even use the system to reserve a resource in their own school's library.

The Birmingham district this year rolled out its new Accent library automation system, which takes library automation a big step farther than the systems used in most schools.

Judy Armstrong, media specialist at Birmingham's Ramsay High School, said students quickly learned about the advantages Accent offers them. She has seen students run into the library between classes, grab a specific book from the shelf and check it out before their next class.

They've been able to do that because Accent tells them if a book is on the shelf and includes a picture of what the book's cover looks like.

Teachers and administrators also have access to Accent and can book resources at their schools or the centralized instructional resource library.

Armstrong said students and teachers can ask their media specialist to borrow resources from another library. "We

have been sharing resources for years. The difference now is it is so much easier to find who has what," she said. "Teachers used to have to call one library after another to locate a resource."

Sadie Denson, media resources coordinator, said the Accent system cost the district \$435,000. That included computer workstations for each library, data conversion and training for library staffers.



A Birmingham student gets help using the district's new library automation system.

**Atlanta Pupils Welcome Civil Rights Icons**

South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Rev. Jesse Jackson applaud John Hope Elementary School kindergartners after the pupils sang the opening medley for the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame induction ceremony recently at the Atlanta school. Archbishop Tutu was among the 2006 inductees to the Walk of Fame, which is located at the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, adjacent to Hope Elementary. (Photo by Scott King).

# A Matter of Priorities: Bush Budget Proposes More Education Cuts

*By Jeff Simering, Director of Legislation*

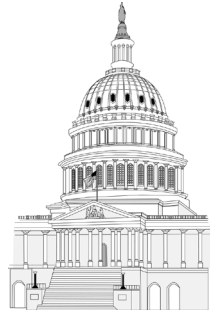
On the heels of recent cuts by Congress of the federal appropriations for the *No Child Left Behind* Act (NCLB), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the Perkins Vocational Education Act, President Bush has recommended more of the same in his FY2007 Budget proposal.

The President's State of the Union message also highlighted new mathematics and science expenditures as part of his American Competitiveness Initiative, but this new \$380 million investment in elementary and secondary schools is offset by \$3.1 billion in cuts to U.S. Department of Education programs (including \$1.6 billion in one-time hurricane relief funding).

The FY2007 budget, moreover, proposes no new funding for Title I grants to school districts, which is NCLB's centerpiece in efforts to close achievement gaps. This shortfall stands in stark contrast to prior year proposals for Title I that recommended increases of between \$600 million and \$1 billion a year. The Administration's proposal does include a new \$200 million initiative to build state capacity to provide technical assistance to low-performing schools, but none of the funding would have to be passed on to schools at the local level; and the Administration has proposed to override the local hold-harmless provision in the \$500 million state school improvement set-aside, an action that would likely result in further cuts to local Title I allocations in a number of states. Under the President's new budget proposal, the majority of the nation's school districts would receive no

new Title I funding or would suffer reductions for the fourth consecutive year.

In addition, the new budget proposal contains no new funding—for the fourth straight year—for teacher quality and professional development programs—even though the law's Highly Qualified Teacher provisions kick in this year. And, there would be no additional funding for English language learners initiatives for the fourth consecutive year.



**LEGISLATIVE COLUMN**

Other critical education programs fare even worse in the FY2007 Budget. The \$272 million educational technology program, the \$346 million safe and drug-free school program, the \$303 million Gear-Up program and the \$93 million smaller learning communities program are targeted for termination, along with 38 other education programs. The \$1.3 billion vocational education program would be eliminated under the proposed budget in order to finance the Administration's resurrected high school reform agenda. And students with disabilities under IDEA would receive less than a 1 percent increase, well below the level needed to move toward Congress' full funding goal or even to maintain current services.

These new education budget cuts recommended by the Administration are merely proposals, of course, and have to be enacted by Congress to become effective. Congress is not obligated to follow the President's FY2007 proposals for any individual program or in the aggregate. But the public should know that this same 109<sup>th</sup> Congress cut \$1 billion from *No Child Left Behind* in FY2006.

Congress may be more leery of following the President's budget advice in an election year on an issue—education—that polls so high on the public's list of priorities. But the public shouldn't count Congress doing the right thing automatically. They will need to be reminded that Americans consider the public schools and their funding one of the country's highest priorities. Now is the time.

## Great City Grads



**Michael Hinojosa**

Superintendent of the Dallas Independent School District

1975 graduate  
(All Around Boy Nominee)

Sunset High School  
Dallas Independent School District

## Inside the Council

### The Council of the Great City Schools

#### Annual Legislative/Policy Conference

March 18-21, 2006

Washington Marriott Hotel, Washington, D.C.

#### Preliminary Conference Highlights

##### Saturday, March 18

8:00 am - 5:00 pm	<b>REGISTRATION</b>
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Fall Conference Planning Meeting
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel Meeting
11:30 am - 2:00 pm	Lunch & Meeting of Legislative & Federal Program Liaisons
12:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Lunch & Executive Committee Meeting
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Urban Task Force Meetings
5:00 pm - 6:30 pm	Great City Colleges of Education Steering Committee Meeting
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	New Members & Newcomers Orientation
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm	Welcome Reception

##### Sunday, March 19

7:00 am - 5:00 pm	<b>REGISTRATION</b>
8:30 am - 11:30 am	Board of Directors Meeting
8:30 am - 11:30 am	Great City of Colleges of Education Meeting
12:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Luncheon with Speaker
2:00 pm - 5:30 pm	Legislative Briefings
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm	Reception: "Sunny San Diego"

##### Monday, March 20

8:30 am - 12:00 pm	Legislative Briefings with Speakers
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm	Luncheon with Speaker
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Capitol Hill Visits
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm	Reception on Capitol Hill

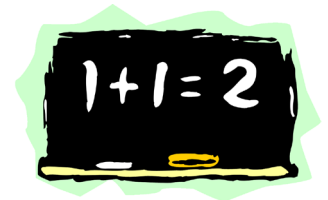
##### Tuesday, March 21

8:00 am - 10:30 am	Breakfast with Speaker
8:30 am - 10:30 am	Legislative Briefings
12:00 pm	<b>ADJOURN</b>

## Math, Science Teachers Sought for Presidential Awards

The issue of how to improve math and science education has become a hot topic with President Bush in his recent State of the Union address, unveiling a program to encourage more math and science professionals to become teachers.

And in an effort to recognize outstanding math and science teachers



across the nation, the White House and the National Science Foundation are seeking nominations for the 2006 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Created in 1983, the awards are given to exemplary teachers for their contributions in the classroom and to their profession.

In addition to honoring individual achievement, the goal of the awards is to expand and exemplify the definition of excellent science and mathematics teaching.

This year, the awards will honor teachers in grades K-6 who have at least five years of mathematics and science teaching. Teachers cannot nominate themselves for the award, but nominations may be received from principals, students, parents or the general public.

The deadline for nominations is May 1, 2006 and nomination forms can be found at [www.paemst.org](http://www.paemst.org).

*Continued from page 5*

### **Broward District...**

provides hands-on training in computer hardware and allows students to keep the computers they worked on.

The school system's efforts to step up the pace to advance technology and close the digital divide began last fall with a \$68-million technology "refresh" program to upgrade district-wide technology.

Broward County Public Schools provided 40,000 Apple and Dell laptop computers in classrooms in all of its more than 250 schools, housed in mobile carts that move from classroom to classroom as needed.

"These laptops are fast becoming the primary learning tool – replacing textbooks, notebooks, paper and pencils," Superintendent Till points out.

All of the computers have wireless access to the district's technology infrastructure and to the Internet, eliminating the need for wired connections for either electricity or network and Internet service.

## **Guilford Implements College Program**

Guilford County Schools in Greensboro, N.C., is piloting a program developed by the College Board to help students in grades 6-12 gain the skills they need to be successful in college.

The Springboard Training Program is designed around the rigorous College Board Standards for College Success. These standards are focused on building students' analytical, problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

This summer, all of the district's middle school language arts and math teachers will learn new strategies for teaching mathematics and English language arts. Teachers will also have year-round access to online mentors.

Several middle schools are currently piloting the Springboard Training Program and district administrators plan to expand the program to all middle schools by next year.

## **Food for Body And Mind**

The food service director for the Orange County Public Schools in Orlando, Fla., recently won a national FAME award for spearheading improvements in the school district's food service program.

The honor prompted Superintendent Ronald Blocker to emphasize, "While we are in the business of feeding the mind, we also realize the importance of providing our students with tasty nutritious food for the body."

Lora Gilbert, director of Food and Nutrition Services for the school district headquartered in Orlando, received the Foodservice Achievement Management Excellence (FAME) Silver Rising Star Award last month from the School Nutrition Association.

"We have proven that in today's competitive environment that it's just plain good business to provide, promote and serve healthy foods to our students," says Gilbert in a news release.



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