



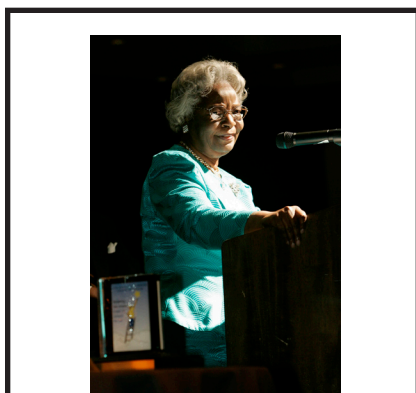
Atlanta student Shaylithia Copeland, left, shares her views at the Council's town hall meeting as fellow students Thu Hien Dang and Devin Thornton listen, along with Atlanta Schools Superintendent Beverly Hall, student Matt Westmoreland, Hillsborough County Schools board member Candy Olson and Toledo Schools Superintendent Eugene Sanders. Boston Superintendent Tom Payzant also participated.

Urban Educators and Students Discuss High School Reform

ATLANTA — Four high school students from Atlanta Public Schools shared the stage with four big-city

school leaders at the Council of the Great City Schools' recent national town hall meeting. They were there to discuss an issue that affects students and educators alike: high school reform.

The panel was moderated by Claudio Sanchez, education correspondent for National Public Radio, who noted that 100 years ago, only 10 percent of



And the Winner Is...

Find out who won the 2005 Richard R. Green Award on page 9.

Civil Rights Leader, Author and Scholar Address Council

ATLANTA — Julian Bond, chairman of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, recalled that the best-selling U.S. history textbook in the 1950s had only one paragraph devoted to the experience of African Americans.

The paragraph began with the words, "As for Sambo."

"America, from its symbols to its substance, from the Klan to Katrina, is infused with race," Bond told conferees at the Council of the Great City Schools' 49th Annual Fall Conference.

Nearly 1,000 urban school leaders attended the five-day conference here

continued on page 6



Julian Bond

In this Issue

- Urban School Leaders Discuss Katrina Impact.....3
- Fall Conference Pictorial.....8
- Legislative Column: No Thanksgiving for Ed. Spending.....10

urban Educator

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

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| Albuquerque | Memphis |
| Anchorage | Miami-Dade |
| Atlanta | Milwaukee |
| Austin | Minneapolis |
| Baltimore | Nashville |
| Birmingham | Newark |
| Boston | New Orleans |
| Broward Co. | New York City |
| Buffalo | Norfolk |
| Charleston | Oakland |
| Charlotte | Oklahoma City |
| Chicago | Omaha |
| Christina | Orange County |
| Cincinnati | Palm Beach |
| Clark Co. | Philadelphia |
| Cleveland | Pittsburgh |
| Columbus | Portland |
| Dallas | Providence |
| Dayton | Richmond |
| Denver | Rochester |
| Des Moines | Sacramento |
| Detroit | St. Louis |
| Fort Worth | St. Paul |
| Fresno | Salt Lake City |
| Greensboro | San Diego |
| Houston | San Francisco |
| Indianapolis | Seattle |
| Jackson | Shreveport |
| Jacksonville | Tampa |
| Kansas City | Toledo |
| Long Beach | Tucson |
| Los Angeles | Washington, D.C. |
| Louisville | Wichita |

Newsletter Staff:

Executive Director Michael Casserly
Editor Henry Duvall
Associate Editor Tonya Harris

Council Officers:

Chair

Arlene Ackerman
 Superintendent, San Francisco

Chair-Elect

George Thompson III
 Board Member, Nashville

Secretary-Treasurer

Carol Comeau
 Superintendent, Anchorage

All news items should be submitted to:

Urban Educator

Council of the Great City Schools
 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 702
 Washington, D.C. 20004
 (202) 393-2427 / (202) 393-2400 (Fax)

Editor's E-mail: hduvall@cgcs.org

Associate Editor's E-mail: tharris@cgcs.org

Complaining Party Bears the Burden In IEP Cases

The U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled that the complaining party challenging individualized education programs on behalf of special education students bears the burden of proof to show the IEP is inadequate.

In a 6-2 decision, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor emphasized in the majority opinion, "The burden of persuasion in an administrative hearing challenging an IEP is properly placed upon the party seeking relief, whether that is the disabled child or the school district."

The Council of the Great City Schools had weighed in on the case, *Schaffer v. Weast*, a dispute between a disabled student's parents and the superintendent of Maryland's Montgomery County Public Schools in suburban Washington, D.C.

Filing an *amicus* brief before the Supreme Court, the Council, joined by other education groups, countered the plaintiff's claim that the burden of persuasion shall entirely be placed on school districts, and that the Schaffers did not satisfy the burden and should not be allowed to shift the payment of their son's private school tuition and expenses.

The Council argued in its "friend of the court" brief, "A rule making it possible for parents to prevail without actually carrying the burden of proof would only invite additional litigation designed to shift the costs of private-school education from parents to public schools."

In a concurring opinion, Justice John Paul Stevens commented, "I believe that we should presume that public school officials are properly performing their difficult responsibilities under this important statute."

continued on page 12

L.A. Wins Vote To Build Schools

Education measures passed muster with voters in Los Angeles, Detroit, Denver and Toledo, but not in Charlotte of the ballots cast in numerous municipal elections around the nation in early November.

A nearly \$4 billion bond measure was passed to build new schools and repair existing school facilities in the Los Angeles Unified School District, the second largest school system in the country.

Said Superintendent Roy Romer of the victory, "Voters have made an unprecedented commitment, in overwhelming numbers, to improve the educational environment in the Los Angeles area."



Detroit

Detroit voters renewed a non-home-stead millage, primarily a business levy that "is critical to the operations of the Detroit Public Schools," said the school system's chief executive officer, William Coleman III. It accounts for 6 percent of the district's annual budget.

Also in the Motor City, voters went to the polls to choose the first elected school board since a 1999 state takeover.

Denver

In Denver, voters said "yes" to a pay-for-performance plan for teachers called ProComp, or Professional Compensation System for Teachers, that rewards teachers for their professional accomplishments while linking pay to the school district's instructional goals.

continued on page 7

Inside the Council

Urban School Leaders Discuss Katrina's Impact

ATLANTA — Hurricane Katrina devastated not only the city of New Orleans, but also the New Orleans Public Schools which served 53,000 students.

A firsthand account of the devastation the hurricane unleashed on the school district was given at a session during the Council of the Great City Schools 49th Annual Fall Conference.

Entitled "Hurricane Katrina: The Great City Schools Help One Another," the session not only featured the leader of the New Orleans school system, but also the superintendents of neighboring urban school districts who have opened their schools to displaced students.

"We've been through hell and high water," said Ora Watson, the acting superintendent of the New Orleans school system.

"I don't think that there's too many superintendents who have gone through the experience of having a school district wiped out at the start of the school year."

She said that 116 schools are still closed and that approximately 30 school system employees are currently working to try and reestablish the district.

The staff carries laptops and cell phones to communicate because there are no land lines. The employees have lost their homes and are staying in temporary housing. "We are a homeless administration trying to set up a school district," said Watson.

She explained that the district is fo-

cusing on opening schools in the West Bank of the city because those schools have received the least damage

She described the difficulties facing her district as a devastating event.

"Challenging is the term we use," said Watson, "when we think about it positively."



New Orleans Acting Superintendent Ora Watson discusses the challenges facing her school district.

Conferees also heard from William Roberti, the managing director of Alvarez and Marsal, LLC; and Sajan

George, the company's

chief financial officer. The private firm was hired by the state last spring to oversee the school system's operations and finances.

George recalled that in the days following Hurricane Katrina he and Roberti drove through police checkpoints in an effort to reach the school district's data center and retrieve important information, such as a list of all the district's employees.

The firm and district officials have made a decision to open up schools as quickly as possible. "We needed to send a signal to people that if you come back, there will be schools," said George.

The district is trying to reach families through a call center and website it has set up as well as public service announcements in neighboring states.

However, before any schools can open, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency must declare the schools are safe. The district must also find buses to provide transportation because only 13 buses remain of the district's fleet of 300.

"We've got our challenges, financial and academic," admits George. "But we have a tremendous opportunity to build a state-of-the-art, world-class 21st century school system."

Districts Open Their Doors

Many citizens from New Orleans fled to Houston. As a result, the Houston Independent School District began registering children a week after Hurricane Katrina.

"We registered a little over 7,000 people," said Houston Schools Superintendent Abelardo Saavedra. Currently, the school system is serving 5,000 displaced students.

To accommodate evacuees, the district reopened two of the six schools it had closed last year, although most students from New Orleans are now attending neighborhood schools.

According to Saavedra, the school district's main concern was to serve the children as quickly as possible and worry about the bills later. "Now we're worried," said Saavedra.

Houston officials have received a commitment from the U.S. Department



Houston Schools Superintendent Abelardo Saavedra explains how his district helped displaced students as Memphis Schools Superintendent Carol Johnson looks on.



Jackson Schools Superintendent Earl Watkins listens.

continued on page 12

Inside the Council

Continued from page 1

High School Reform...

so of the nation's teenagers enrolled in high school.

"Why are we even discussing high school these days?" Sanchez asked the panelists. "Why has it become such a big issue?"

"Some of it has to do with the current emphasis on accountability and national standards," said Eugene Sanders, the superintendent of Ohio's Toledo Public Schools. "There is more public awareness of high school issues than before as a result of NCLB (No Child Left Behind law)."

According to Candy Olson, board member for Florida's Hillsborough County school district in Tampa, a large percentage of jobs in manufacturing, which required only a high school diploma, has disappeared. "We have an obligation to prepare today's kids to live in the world of tomorrow," said Olson.

Tom Payzant, superintendent of the Boston Public Schools, observed that the nation has always done a good job educating a certain percentage of students, but now all students must be educated under NCLB.

He said that the good news is that educators are instituting reforms and attempting to make the effort. "We must change the culture of achievement and engage all students to get them ready to have access past the 12th grade."

Beverly Hall, superintendent of Atlanta Public Schools, said that there are

studies available that tell educators what is needed to fix schools.

"The heart of high school reform lies in the quality of teaching that's taking place in each and every high school in America," said Hall.

Sanchez asked each of the four student panelists to explain who their best teacher was and why.

Thu Hien Dang, a student at Frederick Douglass High School, said she admires her calculus AP teacher. "He's smart; he doesn't need a book to teach," said Dang. "He's a genius."



Student Matt Westmoreland and Hillsborough County school board member Candy Olson

Shaylithia Copeland, a student at George Washington Carver High School, said her favorite teacher is showing students how to be successful and become millionaires. "We've learned how to change our mindset," said

Copeland.

Matt Westmoreland, a student at Henry W. Grady High School, cited his newspaper adviser and applauded the fact that this teacher offers his assistance to students before and after school and dedicates so much of his time to helping his students.



Moderator Claudio Sanchez

"He has made the biggest impact on me other than my parents," said Westmoreland. "He makes me want to become a teacher."

Devin Thornton, a student at Booker T. Washington High School, believes that teachers are underappreciated.

Thornton participated in a program at his school in which students were given the opportunity to teach in classrooms, and said this experience greatly increased his appreciation for the hard work teachers do every day.

"The best teachers are the ones who don't care about money," said Thornton. "In order to be a good teacher, your heart has to be in it."

Atlanta Superintendent Hall recalled that there was a time, when for women and minorities, teaching was the only option for entering the middle class. But she acknowledged that this is no longer the case.

"We have lost a lot of other people to other careers and more lucrative employment," said Hall. "...We want people to begin viewing teaching as a good opportunity to go on and be a part of the American dream."



Toledo Schools Superintendent Eugene Sanders

According to board member Olson, school systems attract great teachers and then drive them away because of the demands the central administration places on teachers.

"We take all the joy out of teaching," said Olson, who believes the challenge for educators is to find ways just to let teachers teach.

What is one thing you could do to a high school to make it better tomorrow? Sanchez asked the panelists.

Toledo Superintendent Sanders said school systems should impart passion on the part of individuals and "try to instill in every employee this degree of passion and commitment."

Among the Atlanta students, Thornton said there should be more qualified

continued on page 5

Inside the Council

Continued from page 4

High School Reform...

substitute teachers and Dang believes there needs to be more qualified teachers who can prepare students for testing.

Copeland said the problem is more of a generation thing because teachers often don't know what their students experience. "For us to learn, teachers should live in our communities," said Copeland.

The moderator turned to the audience in a question-and-answer session, and the issue of testing was addressed to the panelists.

Student Westmoreland believes students are required to take too many standardized tests and said many of the things he has learned in class cannot be taught on a test.

According to Boston Superintendent Payzant, the issue is not whether there should be a test, but about making sure the tests adequately measure what students should be learning.

"It's about good tests and bad tests," said Payzant. "The goal of testing is to provide checkpoints to see what we know."



New Council Officer

Anchorage School District Superintendent Carol Comeau has been elected secretary-treasurer of the Council of the Great City Schools. She has been a member of the Council's Executive Committee.

Dayton, Guilford Supts. Discuss High School Options

ATLANTA-- In an effort to improve the academic achievement of high school students, a number of big-city school districts are developing district/university partnerships.

At the Council of the Great City Schools' 49th Annual Fall Conference, two urban superintendents gave presentations on partnerships in their districts in a session titled "Do Urban Middle College and Early College High School Programs Work?"

Percy Mack, the superintendent of Ohio's Dayton Public Schools, discussed the district's Early College Academy in which students earn both a high school



Percy Mack

diploma and up to two years of college credit toward a bachelor's degree.

The school is a collaboration between the district and the University of Dayton and was created in 2003 to prepare urban students for postsecondary education.

Housed at the University of Dayton, the school serves up to 400 high school students who have trouble learning in a traditional school setting. Many of them are students of color with economic challenges who have not had the access to the academic preparation needed to meet college readiness standards.

All of the students who attend the academy are assigned a teacher-adviser and the school has a 97 percent attendance rate.

"Many of the students in this program are the students who would've dropped out in Dayton Public Schools," said Mack.

Guilford County Public Schools in Greensboro, N.C., has teamed with several local four-year and two-year colleges to design high schools that "fit" students.

"Our traditional high schools serve the top 20 percent of students very well," said Terry Grier, superintendent of the Guilford County Schools. However, he believes many high schools have not done a very good job educating the



Terry Grier

rest, especially those disconnected students who have shown academic promise but have dropped out of school.

As a result, the district has created six middle college high schools.

The middle colleges maintain a standards-based curriculum, but the combination of smaller classes and innovative teaching techniques -- all in a college setting -- has decreased the dropout rate for these students and improved their academic performance.

*Continued from page 1***Civil Rights...**

under the banner “Achieving the Dream: Great City Schools for All.”

In his rousing speech, Bond said that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the Montgomery Bus Boycott – the beginning of a mass movement that destroyed segregation and permanently changed the world.

And he called the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case the movement’s greatest legal victory because it changed the legal status of black Americans.

“I believe in an integrated America: jobs, homes and schools,” said Bond. “I believe in it enough to have spent most of my life in its elusive pursuit.”

The grandson of a slave, Bond noted that his grandfather, who graduated from college in 1892, belonged to a transcendent generation of black Americans born into slavery and freed by the Civil War, who were determined to make their way as free women and men.

He told conferees that Martin Luther King Jr. also belonged to a transcendent generation of black Americans born into segregation and freed from racism by their own efforts who were determined to make their way in freedom.

“That the quest for meaningful equality – political and economic equity – remains unfilled today is no indictment of past efforts,” said Bond. “It is testament to our challenge.”

The winner of the National Freedom Award, Bond criticized the war in Iraq and said the money spent fighting the war could’ve paid for more than 23 million children to go to Head Start for a year and given more than 8 million four-

year full scholarships to public universities.

Bond explained that the NAACP is an organization that fights racial discrimination and is one of the few organizations which concentrate on social justice.

“We believe that racial discrimination is a prime reason why the gaps between black and white life chances remain so wide,” said Bond. “And we believe that to the degree we are able to reduce discrimination and close these race-caused gaps, we will see the economic and educational lives of our people improve and their prosperity increase.”

Bond said that the nation has a long and honorable tradition of social justice and that every American -- black, yellow, red and white -- are needed in this fight.

“All of us are implicated in the continuation of inequality,” stated Bond. “It will require our common effort to bring it to an end.”

Kozol Speaks

Also addressing the conference was award-winning author Jonathan Kozol, whose latest book is *The Shame of the Nation, The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America*.

Kozol, who was fired from his job as a teacher in Boston after reading aloud a poem by black poet Langston Hughes, told urban educators they have one of the toughest jobs in America.

“Running a major school system in the nation,” said Kozol, “is like bearing the weight of democracy on your shoulders.”

He warned educators that the segregation of black and Latino children has returned to public education with a vengeance.

He observed that a photo taken today of a typical inner-city classroom would look much like a photo taken in a classroom in Mississippi in 1927 or 1932 when segregation was the law of the land.

“The proportion of blacks attending integrated schools in America is the lowest since 1968, since Martin Luther King died,” said Kozol.

In a bit of irony, he noted that many of the schools in urban cities named after the civil rights leader are in antiquated buildings, and have the largest class sizes and the lowest graduation rates.

“We need to save the name of Dr. King for a school that lives up to his dream,” stressed Kozol.

The best-selling author said the results of not financing public education are seen in the many cities he visits. He recalled that a high school he toured in the Bronx was so crowded that the school serves lunch in seven shifts and the first shift begins at 9:20 in the morning.

“These vulnerable children have done absolutely nothing,” said Kozol. “They are too small to harm us. Their only sin is to be born poor and of the wrong color.”

Kozol also criticized what he called the “nonstop obsessive testing,” required under the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act.



Jonathan Kozol

continued on page 7

Inside the Council

Continued from page 6
Civil Rights...

The former teacher said he is not opposed to tests and standards, but as an independent voice who loves kids, believes testing has gone too far.

"In some schools I visit, the principals are so terrorized they are starting high-stakes testing in kindergarten," observed Kozol.

The author recalled that his greatest mentor, children's television star Fred Rogers, traveled with him one day to the South Bronx to visit the kids Kozol profiles in his books.

According to Kozol, Rogers did not say much but let the children talk because he believed listening to what children have to say is very important.

Kozol said there is nothing in NCLB for patient listening. "What a different notion this would be," said Kozol, "if Mr. Rogers had been the U.S. Education Secretary."

Cole on Leadership

Conferees also heard from Johnnetta Cole, the 14th president of Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, N.C.

Cole shared with urban educators what she believes are some of the things that make a strong leader.

The first African American woman to serve as chair of the board of United Way of America, Cole said that leaders must believe in change. "You can't be a leader if you don't honest to goodness believe it can change," said Cole. "You have to believe it will be better."



Johnnetta Cole

She also advised educators to respect diversity, from color to gender. The college president emphasized she could not imagine someone in the field of education who would disregard every possible form of diversity.

"Without respecting the diversity in this nation of ours," stated Cole, "how dare one even imagine being in a school system in one of our urban districts."

Cole, who had also served as president of Spelman College, listed fundamental aspects that can help improve public education:

- Improve teacher expectations. "There is a relationship between teacher expectations and student performance," observed Cole. "You get what you ask for."
- Tackling poverty and racism in our country. Cole noted that the faces the nation saw following Hurricane Katrina are not just particular to New Orleans. "We cannot build great schools until we truly address poverty and racism in our country," said Cole.
- Providing schools with adequate resources. "Money and resources will not alone fix our schools," observed Cole. "But I'd like to see how we fix them without resources."

Cole stressed to conferees that everyone must work together-- elected officials, parents, teachers, school board members and superintendents -- to create change and improve public education

"Dr King said we've got to create change by education and legislation and where necessary by agitation," Cole stressed.

D.C. Superintendent Gets Confidence Vote

Superintendent Clifford Janey of the District of Columbia Public Schools has been given a vote of confidence from the school board after one year at the helm.



Cliff Janey

The board recently extended his three-year contract a year until 2008, giving Janey time to implement his reform measures.

Continued from page 2
Vote...

Passage of the annual \$25 million tax increase to pay for higher teacher salaries will boost the pay for current teachers who chose to enter the ProComp system and for all teachers hired after Dec. 31.

Toledo

In Toledo, Ohio, voters approved a 2.5-mill renewal levy to help fund infrastructure and equipment costs in the Toledo Public Schools. "We did a pretty good job conveying to the public in a clear and concise way where the money would go," said Superintendent Eugene Sanders in the *Toledo Blade*.

Charlotte

But in Charlotte, N.C., voters rejected a bond package, which included \$427 million to build and renovate Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools. "I'm deeply concerned about the message we are sending our children and our teachers who struggle each day in severely overcrowded schools and aging facilities," said Superintendent Frances Haithcock.

Inside the Council

Pictorial of 2005 Fall Conference



Atlanta Superintendent Beverly Hall, left, congratulates the recipients of the Distinguished Alumni Awards. Left to right, Rogsbert Frenzell Phillips, Herman Russell, Jasmine Guy, Glenda Hatchett and Asa Yancey. Council Executive Director Michael Casserly looks on.



Charlotte Superintendent Frances Haithcock chats with Dallas Superintendent Michael Hinojosa, center, and Austin Superintendent Pascal Forgiene.



Left to right, St. Louis Superintendent Creg Williams, Detroit Chief Executive Officer William Coleman, Buffalo Superintendent James Williams and Richmond Superintendent Deborah Jewell Sherman share their views at a session on Council strategic support teams.



Johnnetta Cole, second from left, is presented with a painting from an Atlanta student. Left to right, Atlanta school board chair Michael Holiman, Atlanta Superintendent Beverly Hall, Council Executive Director Michael Casserly and Council Chair Arlene Ackerman.



Margaret Spearman, one of the winners of the Council's Marcia Page Scholarship sponsored by Texas Instruments, addresses conferees.

Photos by Clarence Tabb Jr.

Inside the Council



Anchorage Superintendent Carol Comeau and Florida's Orange County Schools Superintendent Ronald Blocker share information at a session.



Anna Dodson, center, receives the Richard R. Green Award from Kelly Green-Hardwick, the daughter of the late Richard Green, as Council Chair-elect George Thompson III looks on.

Wichita Superintendent Winston Brooks and board president Connie Dietz give a presentation at a session on engaging the community.



Former Norfolk Board Member Wins Top Prize

ATLANTA — Norfolk Public Schools was recently awarded the Broad Prize, one of the largest awards in education for improving student achievement.

The district continues its winning streak with the presentation of the Richard R. Green Award for outstanding contributions to urban education to former Norfolk school board member Anna Dodson.

She received the award in front of her peers from across the nation at the Council of the Great City Schools 49th Annual Fall Conference.

“Now I know how an Academy Award member feels when they receive their Oscar,” said Dodson upon accepting the award. “Because tonight the Richard R. Green Award is my Oscar!”

Sponsored by ARAMARK and the Council of the Great City Schools, the award is presented in the memory of the late Richard R. Green, who led the Minneapolis and New York City public school systems.

Dodson served 12 years as a member of the Norfolk school board and dur-

continued on page 11



Charleston Superintendent Maria Goodloe listens intently at a session.

Boston Superintendent Tom Payzant listens as Norfolk Superintendent Stephen Jones gives a presentation at a session featuring the 2005 Broad Prize finalists.



No Thanksgiving for Federal Education Funding

By Jeff Simering, Director of Legislation

It would seem that once every decade or so a massive fight develops in Washington over federal education funding. The time has come once again as Congress begins to rein in its profligate defense, transportation, and farm spending and tax cuts of the last four years.

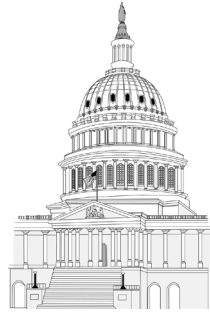
Three major legislative initiatives with serious implications for education are moving through Congress: hurricane relief funding, the budget reconciliation bill, and the regular appropriations bill.

The Gulf Coast hurricane relief measure has been inching its way through Congress for three months with aid for school districts directly impacted by the natural disaster and schools receiving displaced children and families.

Complicating the bill, however, is an Administration-backed, \$500 million voucher proposal for private schools enrolling displaced students.

The proposal was defeated in committee, however, and an attempt to add it into the bill afterwards was also beaten back.

The voucher proposal was slated to be part of a second legislative package—the \$49 billion House Budget Reconciliation measure—designed to cut entitlement spending in programs like Medicaid, Food Stamps, and college student loans.



LEGISLATIVE COLUMN

The measure (H.R. 4241) narrowly passed in the middle of the night after two weeks of negotiations, which eliminated or watered down some of the bill's most controversial provisions, including Arctic oil drilling, food stamps eligibility limits, school lunch eligibility limits, and Medicaid benefit reductions.

The House bill now goes to conference committee with the Senate, which passed a more modest \$35 billion ver-

sion of the legislation (S. 1932) and includes a hurricane relief authorization and its own private school subsidy.

At the same time, the FY 2006 appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (H.R. 3010) was being negotiated by a House-Senate conference committee. The measure contained cuts of over three-quarters of a billion dollars in *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) programs compared to last year.

The all-important Title I and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs received increases that fall far short of inflation, about \$100 million each, but all other major education programs from teacher training to vocational education were frozen or cut. Other programs were terminated. The House rejected the funding bill, however, in a dramatic floor vote; and the Senate sent its members back to the drawing board with instructions to be more generous.

The juxtaposition of education cuts in the appropriations bill and the voucher proposal and other cuts in the reconciliation package—all while Congress debated extensions to the tax cuts—sparked a loud outcry from education and other interest groups and a mini-revolution among legislators.

But the fight is not over. Congress will be back after Thanksgiving to pick up the battle once again.

Let's hope that Christmas comes soon.

Great City Grads



Anthony Kennedy

U.S. Supreme Court Justice

1954 graduate
(valedictorian)

C.K. McClatchy High School
Sacramento Unified City
School District

Inside the Council

Continued from page 9
Top Prize...

ing her tenure she developed a successful parental involvement program as well as several programs that involved community volunteers.

As a board member, Dodson was also instrumental in helping the district narrow the achievement gap between students of different racial groups within the district's schools, an achievement recognized by the Broad Foundation, which awarded the district a \$500,000 prize.

As the recipient of the Richard R. Green Award, Dodson receives a \$10,000 college scholarship to present to a deserving high school senior of her choice from Norfolk Public Schools or from her alma mater.

Alumni Awards

Atlanta Public Schools presented several Distinguished Alumni Awards to graduates who have excelled in their chosen professions. Receiving alumni awards were Jasmine Guy, actress; Glenda Hatchett, judge and television personality; Ragsbert Frenzell Phillips, surgeon; Herman Russell, entrepreneur; and Asa Yancy, surgeon and former Atlanta school board member.

Also receiving a Distinguished Alumni Award was lawyer and presidential adviser Vernon Jordan, who accepted the award on behalf of his teachers.

"They taught us more than reading,

writing and arithmetic, they taught us values," said Jordan. "Whether I'm giving advice to a president, king or queen, I know I stand on their shoulders."

Urban Impact Award

The Council of the Great City Colleges of Education, an affiliate group of deans working with big-city school leaders, awarded the seventh annual Urban Impact Award to Florida International University and Miami-Dade County Public Schools for their



Council Executive Director Michael Casserly, right, congratulates the Urban Impact Award winners from Florida International University and Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Families Learning at School and Home Program (FLASH), designed to improve the academic performance of children by increasing parental participation in school activities.

The award honors exemplary programs between universities and school districts that have had a positive impact on teaching and learning, with each receiving \$1,000. The award is sponsored by Helping One Student to Succeed (HOSTS), a national program to help students achieve.

Queen Smith Award

Josephine Scott, the executive director of curriculum and staff development for Ohio's Columbus Public



Vernon Jordan

Schools, was the recipient of the eighth annual Queen Smith Award for Commitment to Urban Education. The \$1,000 award is named in honor of the late vice president of urban programs for Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Publishing Company.



Hurricane Shreds Broward District Headquarters

Hurricane Wilma, one of many storms that wreaked havoc during the 2005 hurricane season, ripped off the siding of the Broward County Public Schools administration building in late October in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. After the storm, Superintendent Franklin Till said of the building in the *Sun-Sentinel*, "It's not completely destroyed, but it's certainly unusable for many, many months." About 60 employees in the affected offices have been relocated.

Press Awards Given

An Atlanta high school newspaper and a Houston middle school paper won top awards recently at the National Scholastic Press Association Journalism Convention.

In addition to the newspaper honor, Atlanta's Grady High School also won a top news broadcast award.

Houston's Marshall Middle School newspaper won first-place honors in the junior high category.

*Continued from page 3***Katrina Impact...**

of Education to provide funds, but the appropriation has not been made yet.

The Houston district is also working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to identify the costs of serving the displaced students, including providing psychological services.

Saavedra estimates that it is costing the district \$180,000 a day to serve these additional children.

He praised the generosity of the local community and said that the outpouring of donations has been so generous that the district has received more "school supplies than we know what to do with."

Memphis City Public Schools has also taken in a number of evacuees, according to Superintendent Carol Johnson. She said that two of the district's schools that were closed were reopened as shelter housing and district officials created a team to register students in the city's schools.

She noted that school counselors

have made a concerted effort to identify twelfth graders from New Orleans so they could graduate.

And Hurricane Katrina has also forced the district to rethink its own emergency preparedness initiatives.

"We are revising our own plans because Memphis sits on a fault line," said Johnson.

Also at the session was Earl Watkins, the superintendent of the Jackson Public Schools in Mississippi. The district has 1,900 evacuees from New Orleans enrolled in its schools.

The Jackson school system has a mandatory uniform policy and has provided free uniforms to all displaced students.

"We have also given great attention to making sure families have received the utmost respect," said Watkins

New Orleans Acting Superintendent Watson thanked all of the Council districts that have opened their schools and offered their assistance to the school district. "Please understand you are doing a great service."

*Continued from page 2***Complaining Party ...**

"With that in mind, this is a victory for a presumption that school officials are effectively writing and implementing the children's IEPs under the requirements set out in IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)," says Julie Wright Halbert, the Council's legislative counsel, who wrote the *amicus*.

However, the U.S. Supreme Court also considered the argument by several states to decide "that states may, if they wish, override the default rule and put the burden always on the school district."

Because the Schaffer case arose in Maryland, where such law or regulation does not exist, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to decide the issue.

"Our school districts must be vigilant on this issue, as disability advocates will approach state legislatures to enact statutes to enforce this burden on school districts," stresses Council Executive Director Michael Casserly.



Council of the Great City Schools
 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
 Suite 702
 Washington, D.C. 20004

PRESORT
 First Class
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Washington, D.C.
 Permit No. 251