

"Discourse"

A Newsletter For And About The Staff Of
Warren County Schools

March 2004

Volume XIX, Number 8

Board Highlights

.... from March 8, 2004

✓ The Board recognized Alexandra Tharrington, WCHS senior, who learned last week that she will receive the Morehead Award to attend UNC-Chapel Hill.

✓ The Board recognized Barbara Baker as the Stellar Performer for January. She is the Child Nutrition manager at Warren County Middle School.

✓ Also recognized were the February Lights of Character: Shamanesha Hargrove and Mattie Hawkins, Hawkins; Elizabeth Smith and Catherine Carter, Mariam Boyd; Shayna Boyd and Mary Jackson, Northside; Shawn Davis, Jr. and Rose Moss, South Warren; Marquii Short and B.J. Bunnell, Vaughan; Fallon Felts and Wanda Hunt, WCHS; Lindsay Stevenson and Earlene Palmer, WCMS; and Delbera Kearney, Central Office.

✓ Vaughan Elementary School students and staff were recognized for receiving the Best Attendance and Most Improved Attendance awards for the sixth attendance month of school.

✓ Rosemary Lewis, Student Services director, provided a report to the Board on the system's dropout data and analysis. Warren County's rate improved from 4.69 percent in 2001-2003 to 3.73 percent in 2002-2003. Lewis also presented a five-year summary report.

✓ Costel Evans, associate superintendent, presented a report to the Board on the services provided to the system by the Division of School Plant Operation. The cost to Warren County Schools for services during the 2004-2005 school year will be \$6,750.00.

✓ Gary Ward, Finance officer,

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Board to host public events

Warren County Schools' Board of Education and administration will sponsor two public events during the month of March, according to Superintendent Dr. Ray V. Spain.

On Sunday, March 14, 2004, there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at 3:30 p.m. to celebrate the official opening of the emergency exit road located on the Warren County High/Warren County Middle School campus.

"In November 2002, additional funds were received from the Warren County Commissioners to pave and complete this road," Dr. Spain said. "The road was completed in October 2003, with the exception of installation and wiring of electronic gates," he added. "We are pleased to include members of the County Commissioners as well as the local community who have had an interest in this project for a long time."

The public is invited to attend the ribbon cutting which will be held on site, on the Connell Road, at the emergency exit. Refreshments will be served at Warren County Middle School following the ceremony.

A second public meeting will be held on Thursday, March 18, when the Board of Education hosts a Public Forum at Warren County High School at 7 p.m. in the school's theater.

Information will be presented on goals developed and adopted by the Board of Education and the superintendent for FY 2004. Additionally, there will be material provided on Warren County Schools' performance on the NC School Report Card, as well as on the system's progress on the Hawkins gym rebuilding project.

During the forum, there will be time for public comment. "We are asking for public input on the Hawkins gym project, as well as any other interests or concerns," Dr. Spain said.

Those wishing to address the board with commendations or concerns will be asked to sign up for a time for their comments.

Ali Tharrington: *Morehead Scholar*

WCHS senior Alexandra Tharrington is among forty young leaders from high schools across the nation and Great Britain, including 20 from North Carolina, to be named a Morehead Scholar at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Among the largest and most competitive scholarship programs in the United States, the Morehead pays all expenses for four years of undergraduate study, including costs of a laptop computer and four summer enrichment programs. The value of the Morehead is approximately \$75,000 for each in-state student and \$125,000 for each out-of-state student.

The winners were selected through a nomination and interview process that began last fall, when approximately 1,500 high school seniors nationwide and in Great Britain were nominated by their high schools or applied for the Morehead.

Selection criteria are leadership, academic achievement, moral force of character and physical vigor. Morehead recipients are chosen by merit and accomplishments.

Only two other Warren County students have received the Morehead Award: Bill Taylor in about 1962, and Hassan Kingsberry in 1997. Tharrington, daughter of Victoria Lehman and Blaine Tharrington, was nominated for the award by the North Carolina Governor's School after she attended last summer.



Stellar Performer

Barbara Baker: Energy that Never Stops

This month's Stellar Performer is James King, a member of the team of people who comprise the Maintenance Department for the school system.

"He is our electrician, and he is good," said Joe Mustian, Maintenance/Transportation director. "He is a multi-skilled tradesman."

Mustian said that King has an "extra sense" when it comes to electrical matters and has pursued training opportunities and certification processes that have supplied him with the skills needed to address electrical issues in the system.

"Not only is he our chief electrician, but he has taken on the energy management system," Mustian said. "And he is doing it very well."

King is responsible for overseeing the computerized system that controls heating and cooling for all of the system's buildings. "We have new software, and he's the one who has mastered it," Mustian said.

King is also skilled in HVAC—heating, ventilation and air conditioning—and has devoted considerable time and energy to familiarizing new employees with the HVAC equipment in the system.

That King has undergone the course work and training to receive a "journeyman's license" is significant to Mustian. "By doing this, he is trained at a skill level above and beyond what is required of his position here," Mustian said. "He doesn't have to have that."

King is a native of Warren County and worked in a family business (L.R. West) for 15 years. He then worked at Peck Manufacturing for four years as a mechanic and lead electrician before coming to Warren County Schools in September of 1998.

"I do it all," King said. "I try to make people happy."

Addressing employees' and students' comfort level is a huge charge, he said. "There's a lot of equipment in this system. And as we've added buildings and facilities, we haven't added maintenance staff. I try to be fair."

Being responsible for the energy management system involves raising and lowering set points in various buildings, according to King. "I'm also responsible for the settings for night and weekend events. "

He uses the computerized system as a troubleshooting tool. "I can look at the computer and often tell what's going on—then I get in my truck and go fix it."

King's drive to learn and master the electrical business has to do with "reverse influence," after observing others fairly close to him making poor choices. "I decided that I would choose a different road," he said.

The road he chose has been to the benefit of Janet Farrar, Child Nutrition director, and her staff. "James is marvelous. He is very helpful to us and always there for us," she said.

"The cafeteria staff appreciates him because he is so personable. Not only does he fix their equipment problems, but also he talks with them, explains what he's done, then he comes to see me to explain situations. He always keeps me aware of what kind of money I'm going to have to spend. He is wise."

(SEE **STELLAR PERFORMER**, PAGE 3)

Monthly Attendance Award



Warren County Schools
Putting Our Children First

The contest for Best Attendance has never been closer than during the sixth attendance month of school, with Vaughan barely squeaking beyond three other schools with an attendance rate of 94.67 percent. Northside was right on Vaughan's heels with 94.65 percent attendance, and Mariam Boyd and South Warren next in line with 94.60 and 94.32 percent, respectively.

Vaughan's showing secured the Most Improved banner also, but only by a hair - .01 percent. Vaughan students improved by 2.53 percent, and WCMS by 2.52 percent. WCHS was the only school whose attendance actually dropped during the sixth month.

Monthly Attendance Award

Most Improved



Warren County Schools
Putting Our Children First

Deadline close for Spelling Bee

The registration deadline is approaching for the Warren Education Fund's Fourth Annual Community Spelling Bee on Friday, March 26 at Warren County High School.

"We are hoping that all schools will register at least one team—and more if possible," said Portia Hawes, Fund president. The deadline for registration is Friday, March 12.

The evening will begin at 6 p.m. with refreshments, and the actual spelling bee will begin at 7 p.m.

The competition is open to adults and high school students. The bee will be limited to 40 teams of four persons each at a cost of \$40 per table (\$10 per person). During the event, teams will be given several seconds to determine the correct spelling of each word called. If a word is misspelled in one of the early rounds, a team has the opportunity to "buy" the word for \$10 and remain in the competition. During the final elimination round, teams will not have the option to buy words, but must rely on their spelling talents to stay in the competition.

Funds raised at the Bee will be used to support the Teacher MiniGrant Program and the Schoolwide Grant Program.

For further information or to register a team, see a school principal or contact Mary Hunter in the Central Office, 257-3184, or Portia Hawes, Fund President, 257-9194.

Article reveals retention findings

The following article appeared in the PEN Weekly NewsBlast and may be of interest. In "The Role of the Principal in Teacher Retention," the Charlotte Advocates for Education (CAE), a Charlotte-area education fund, studied the relationship between principals and teacher retention. This study focused on local principals, particularly those in high needs schools, who have been more successful in retaining teachers while also increasing student achievement.

Key findings are outlined in their report and can be accessed from the link below. In addition, the report includes specific recommendations for addressing principal recruitment and hiring, principal preparation and support, as well as the recommendation to re-examine the traditional leadership structure within our schools. To read more, please go online to <http://www.advocatesfored.org/principalstudy.htm>

Benefits manual available online

The updated Employee Benefits Manual is available online at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/benemanual>. Due to the cost of printing and mailing, a manual will not be printed for distribution to schools.

STELLAR PERFORMER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

King is married to the former Tammy West, and they have three children—Jonathan, 19, Jessica, 16, and Logan, 6. When he is not busy with technology on the job, he enjoys a technological hobby that's probably new to most—geocaching—a computer game of sorts that involves search for and finding a "cache" hidden somewhere in the United States using GPS.

"I also love canoeing and camping in the mountains. I love the mountains. I'd like to live in the mountains."

Tornado Drill

March 14-20 is Severe Weather Awareness Week throughout North Carolina. A tornado drill has been scheduled for Wednesday, March 17, at 9:15 a.m., at which time the National Weather Service will issue a required weekly test over the NOAA weather radio system. This can serve as a signal for schools to initiate their own tornado drills. The drill will conclude when participants complete their drill activities. There will not be an "all clear" message issued. If there is any possibility of inclement weather that day, the drill will be held on Friday, March 19.

Principalship survey published

The recent winter issue of LEADERSHIP, published by the Principal's Executive Program, has an excellent summary of the 2003 Principalship Survey.

In this issue, Dr. Anita Ware provides additional information gathered from the 500+ responses to the survey. A total of 93 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they understand the expectations of the NCLB legislation and the meanings of Adequately Yearly Progress.

Nearly 30 percent of principals stated that they spend the majority of their time with instructional issues, but 52 percent disagreed that the majority of their time was spent in instructional areas. Almost 33 percent agreed that too much time was spent on student disciplinary issues.

Strategies that responders listed to address principal shortages included coaching or mentoring for principals, increasing the number of scholarships for prospective administrators, having add-on license processes for a principal license and lateral entry opportunities for principals. Go online to www.ncpep.org for additional information or to read the full summary.

Coming Up - - -

❖ *Gov. Easley has proclaimed* April 18-25 as the “Days of Remembrance of the Victims of the Holocaust.” North Carolinians are encouraged to “remember the inhumanity of those who perpetrated the Holocaust, and to reflect upon our own humanity and the need for respect of all people.”

❖ *If you haven't already registered* for the Eighth Annual Closing the Gap Conference scheduled for March 29-31 at the Sheraton Four Seasons/Koury Convention Center in Greensboro, it's too late, as the conference has reached capacity. Those with questions should contact Marvin Pittman, Director of School Improvement, DPI, 919/807-3911 or by email, mpittman@dpi.state.nc.us.

❖ *Register now for World View's* spring seminars on “Hispanics/Latinos in the Carolinas” (March 9-10) and “Eastern Europe” (March 10-11) to be held at the Friday Center, Chapel Hill. For program information, including online registration, please visit www.unc.edu/world or call 919/962-9264. Individual registration is \$135 for one seminar or \$225 for both. Discounted rates are available for teams of four or more. (1.5 CEUs offered.)

❖ *The North Carolina Partners of the Americas* is offering a Teacher-in-Residence program. The selected English teacher and/or administrator will travel to Cochabamba, Bolivia, to spend one month in a professional development exchange program. The program is funded under USAID and is conducted in cooperation with the bi-national centers of Latin America. Travel costs are covered, and a small stipend is provided. The candidate will be housed with a host family. The ability to speak Spanish is a plus, but not required. Selection of the candidate will occur in late April with travel scheduled for June or July. Interested candidates should send a resume and other pertinent details to Sallie Abbas at swabbas@nc.rr.com. For more information call Abbas at 919/467-0382 or go online to www.ncboliviapartners.org

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

presented a report to the Board on the system's current budget expenditures.

✓ The Board approved a recommended list of individuals to the Board to serve as the Calendar Committee to develop a school calendar for 2005-2006. Dr. Charles Grady was named to the committee as the Board appointee.

✓ The Board approved overnight field trips for: WCHS FBLA students to attend the State Leadership Conference, Greensboro, March 26-27, 2004; for WCHS VICA students to attend the NC Skills Competition, Greensboro, April 6-8; and for WCHS FCCLA students to attend the Leadership Conference/Competitive Events, Greensboro, April 29-May 1, 2004.

✓ The Board added the following individuals to the system's substitute list: Fannie Davis, Previs Foster, Crystal Newell, Elaine Sledge, Carolyn Tunstall and Valerie Washington.

✓ Current vacancies include: Career-Technical director, districtwide; an EC teacher, South Warren and WCMS; a Language Arts teacher, WCMS; music teachers, Mariam Boyd and WCMS; a mathematics teacher, WCHS; and an administrative assistant, Central Office.

“Discourse” is published monthly during the school year by the Community Schools office of Warren County Schools. News items for each issue should be submitted to the Community Schools office by the Tuesday prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Warren County Board of Education.

Dr. Ray V. Spain, Superintendent
Mary Lang Hunter, Editor
www.warren-countyschools.org

Calendar

MARCH

- 8-11 Reading and Math Benchmark Assessment, III, Gr. K-8
- 10 Northside School Improvement Team Meeting, 3:15 p.m.
- 11 End 3rd 9 Weeks
South Warren *Breakfast With Dads*, 8:30 a.m.
WCHS Winter Athletic Banquet, 6:30 p.m.
- 12 Begin 4th 9 Weeks
Mariam Boyd Accelerated Reader Celebration
- 14 Emergency Exit Ribbon Cutting 3:30 p.m.
- 16 WCMS Spring Pictures
WCMS PTSA, 7 p.m.
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 18 1 p.m. Dismissal-Make-Up Day
Parent Conferences, 3-7 p.m.
Public Forum, 7 p.m., WCHS
- 19 1 p.m. Dismissal-Make-Up Day
- 20 First Day of Spring
- 23 Vaughan School Improvement Team Meeting, 3:15 p.m.
South Warren Reading Family Fun Night, 4-6 p.m.
Board Work Session, 6 p.m.
- 24 Northside Triple “A” Awards
Gr. K-2, 9 a.m.; Gr. 3-5, 10:15 a.m.
South Warren School Improvement Team Meeting, 3 p.m.
- 25 NC Early Math Placement Test
WCHS
Mariam Boyd Volunteer Recognition Tea, 10 a.m.
SPLASH/Cultural/Character Night, 6-8 p.m.
- 26 South Warren Super Kids Awards Day, 1 p.m.
WCMS Positive Behavior Support Dance, 7 p.m.
- 29 WCMS School Improvement Team Meeting, 3 p.m.
- 30 WCMS PTSA Exec. Board and Committee Mtgs., 5:30 p.m.

APRIL

- 2 South Warren Fantastic Friday 1 p.m.
Mariam Boyd PTA Talent Show, 7 p.m.