

# "Discourse"

A Newsletter For And About The Staff Of  
Warren County Schools

September 2004

Volume XX, Number 2

## Board Highlights

.... from September 13, 2004

✓ The Board recognized Zandra Spruill, teacher assistant at Northside, as Stellar Performer for August.

✓ Also recognized was Roger Taylor from the National Council for Family Advancement, who sponsored a Back to School event at WCHS in July.

✓ Warren County High School was recognized for receiving the Exemplary Sportsmanship award from the NC High School Athletic Association for 2003-2004.

✓ The Board recognized Joyce Long, principal at Mariam Boyd Elementary School, for receiving the Best Attendance Award for the first attendance month of school.

✓ Carol Montague was recognized for her six years of service as principal at WCHS.

✓ Costel Evans, associate superintendent, presented a report on the system's 2004 results on the SAT, showing a 6 point increase in the composite score over the previous year.

✓ Gary Ward, Finance officer, presented an End-of-Year financial report prepared on a program basis for the period of July 1, 2003 through June 20, 2004.

✓ Mr. Ward also provided information on a draft budget for 2004-2005, based on State allotments and a county appropriation of \$2,535,226. Ward indicated that recent action in several areas will necessitate that changes be made in the budget.

✓ Rosemary Harrison, Elementary Programs director, provided information on the SACS 2004 Super District for Quality Schools Program. Warren County earned this distinction since all eligible elementary, middle and secondary schools in the district are accredited by the Southern Association

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## SAT scores on the rise

Warren County's average SAT score rose by six points to 868 this past year, according to information presented by Associate Superintendent Costel Evans at Monday night's Board of Education meeting.

In 2004, 90 students (53.3% of the seniors) were tested, as compared to 101 (62% of the seniors) in 2003. "The verbal score increased by nine points, and math decreased by three points," Evans said.

Evans presented data back to the 2000-2001 school year, which was the best among four consecutive years. "That year, our average was 891," he said, "with a 442 in math and a 449 in verbal."

In subsequent years, the average scores were 859 and 862, respectively.

"We are pleased that they are on the rise again," Evans said, "but we still have a climb to get back to where we were in 2001."

## Middle school scores questioned

The State Board of Education's Compliance Commission for Accountability, the Board's advisory council, recommended on Friday that a key portion of the official ABCs middle school results be cancelled and recalculated without reading scores for sixth graders, according to an article in *The News and Observer* on Saturday, September 11, 2004.

"The committee concluded that middle schools were judged inaccurately based on an outdated scoring formula," the article stated. "If the State Board of Education agrees, middle school results would be recalculated, with many of them expected to show gains. That, in turn, could mean bonus pay for teachers in those schools."

Testing officials acknowledge that schools were hurt by the results, which showed significantly lower gains in grade six. "The tests themselves weren't at fault, officials said; what was faulty was the mathematical formula used to measure the growth that schools make from one year to the next."

Only 32 percent of some 400 middle schools reached their goals for either expected or high growth last year, while 85 percent of elementary schools and 97 percent of high schools did so.

"Only two middle schools statewide showed even expected growth in sixth-grade reading," the article states. "These numbers lead me to believe that something is not right," Chris Cobitz, chief of reporting for the Department of Public Instruction, told the panel."

According to the information in the article, newly appointed State Superintendent Patricia Willoughby and the State Board are gathering information, and a decision on recalculating scores statewide for the 2003-2004 school year has not yet been made.

"Board chairman Howard Lee said it is too soon to say how the board will respond or whether teachers will receive bonus pay if their schools are found to have made sufficient progress. 'It's one of the questions that the board will have to consider,' Lee said. 'I just don't know what the options are. But cost should not be the basis of us trying to make a fair and equitable decision.'"



## Stellar Performer

*Jamar Perry is there  
for everyone*

This month's Stellar Performer is Jamar Perry, Media specialist at Mariam Boyd Elementary School.

Perry was selected for the distinction by the school's Leadership Team.

"We couldn't have selected a better person," said Principal Joyce Long. "He works hard with other teachers, he works with special groups, he works with individual students, he serves on just about every committee in the school—he's there for everyone."

Long said that particularly important for the school is Perry's "way" with students. "They relate to him so well. He's positive, and they become positive in return."

Perry is a 1994 graduate of Warren County High School. He has a degree in history and a master's in Information Science from N.C. Central University. He is currently working on a master's in School Administration from N.C. State University.

Perry was first employed by Warren County Schools when he reported to South Warren Elementary School in 1999 as a fourth grade teacher, where he worked through the 2001-2002 school year.

During the summer of 2002, he took a part-time job in the media center at Duke Children's Hospital. "I really enjoyed the work there."

Apparently Danylu Hundley, Mariam Boyd's principal at the time, heard that Perry had worked there, and in need of a Media specialist, called him about the opening at the school.

"I decided to take the job and was very glad that I had taken the courses in Information Science," Perry said.

According to Long, Perry frequently returns from his classes and shares ideas he's learned with teachers in the school, ideas that are helpful to them in the classroom, especially in the area of testing.

Loree Harris, counselor at the school, commented that Perry is a "true professional" with an earnest desire to work with students. Concurring with Long, she said, "He also works well with the entire staff. He's forever finding materials that are helpful for the teachers."

Perry can think of several people who have influenced his style of work over the years. "There are several past principals and co-workers who have meant a great deal to me," he said. "They have all been supportive and upbeat, and I see myself that way, too. I hope to someday be a blend of these people and become good administrator."

Perry does not discount the students when it comes to his teaching style. "I have learned a lot from the students along the way—I enjoy my connection with them and love spending time with them," he said.

He went on to say that when students struggle a bit, then achieve, something happens. "When they accomplish something, and I see that smile, it's just an inspiration. The job doesn't pay that much, but it's all worth it when you see that smile."

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

### Monthly Attendance Award



Warren County Schools  
*Putting Our Children First*

Attendance figures for the first attendance month of school are in, and it looks as though students are flocking through the doors in record numbers. Mariam Boyd takes the Best Attendance banner with a rate of 98.143 percent, slightly above South Warren's 98.136 percent. Close behind is Northside with 97.980 percent and Vaughan with 97.707 percent. WCMS is next with 96.666 percent, and then WCHS with 94.880 percent.

All schools have risen above the system's average attendance rate for 2003-3004 which was a mere 94.87 percent. Please encourage students to keep up the good work!

Since this is the first attendance month of school, there is no Most Improved Award this month. With these rates, the challenge is on for making any sort of improvement!

### Monthly Attendance Award

*Most Improved*



Warren County Schools  
*Putting Our Children First*

## Teachers' Corner

► *The DPI mathematics staff* has scheduled a series of six, two-hour interactive teleconferences for teachers, supervisors and principals. These sessions will be available at eight sites and will be taught by Dr. George Bright, Professor Emeritus at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Participants should have a copy of NCTM's *Navigating Through Probability in Grades 6-8* for use as a resource during these sessions. Teleconferences, which will be held on Wednesdays from 4:30-6:30 p.m., are scheduled for Sept. 15, Oct. 20, Dec. 1, Jan. 19, Feb. 16, and March 16. The location serving this region is the NC Department of Public Instruction in Raleigh. All teleconferences will be taped and copies will be available for purchase from the DPI's Publications Section. For further information or questions call Linda Patch at 919/807-3841 or by email, [lpatch@dpi.state.nc.us](mailto:lpatch@dpi.state.nc.us).

► *The newly revised Teacher's Edition* of North Carolina State University's "Living in Our World" social studies textbook series for grades 4-7 is now available online, free of charge. The "Living in Our World" Web site, located at <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/livinginourworld/>, offers units of the Teacher's Editions from grades 4-7, as well as maps, black line masters, chapter worksheets and assessments, ELL worksheets, and graphic organizers. Also included are guidelines for seminars, a comprehensive list of North Carolina cultural resources, and essays on geography and government. All materials are available for downloading and printing free of charge. The classroom activities offered on the Web site conform to the latest goals and objectives for the NC Standard Course of Study for social studies and feature character education, civics, and global connections. Most of the activities are integrated with language arts, math and science components. Many offer suggestions for adaptations in working with students learning English. North Carolina classroom teachers created all the activities. For more information, contact Regina Higgins (919/515-9063; [regina\\_higgins@ncsu.edu](mailto:regina_higgins@ncsu.edu)); or James Clark (919/515-4145; [jim\\_clark@ncsu.edu](mailto:jim_clark@ncsu.edu))

► *Teachers are reminded* that the North Carolina Visitor Center in downtown Raleigh has left its Blount Street location and relocated to the lobby of the N.C. Museum of History. Please spread the word to your peers regarding this location change. For more information or to schedule a tour, educators can call toll-free 866/724-8687, or locally, 919/807-7950.

### STELLAR PERFORMER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

While in the classroom at South Warren, Perry remembers a couple of his students who made significant progress. He was warned about one student by other teachers, who admonished that he would not be able to get through to the student.

Perry proved them wrong. The student worked hard all year and managed to score a three on End of Grade testing. "He was thrilled and so was I. He was like a big teddy bear—not at all like the others had said."

Just before leaving South Warren, the mother of a student came to see him and brought a cake. Perry said that she thanked him profusely for all he'd done for her child and even began to cry as she wished him well. "That brings joy," he said.

There is very little spare time for Perry, with his work at school, his involvement with the many committees on which he serves and his studies for graduate school. "When I have the opportunity, I spend time with friends and family," he said.

"I also like to read and go to the movies. I love to travel, but that will have to wait."

## Expenditures approved

The Board of Education gave the nod on Monday night for school officials to proceed with five of seven expenditures proposed in the 2004-2005 current expense expansion budget.

Items to be funded are: \$32,000 in teacher retention supplements for teachers with two to nine years of service; \$23,000 in incentives for non-certified staff for skill enhancement; \$14,000 for new computers and upgrades; \$45,299 for a School Health Educator; and \$45,299 for an additional School Social Worker.

Remaining items under consideration are \$122,385 to place a mobile computer lab at each school and \$12,000 for network printers for each school.

## Coming Up - - -

❖ *The Coastal Carolina Indian Center* is sponsoring the Great Salt Water American Indian Heritage and Veterans Pow Wow, Nov. 5-7, at the Onslow County Fairgrounds/American Legion Building, Jacksonville. An educational field day has been planned for Friday, Nov. 5, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. For more information, including a teaching primer, please go online to <http://www.coastalcarolinaindians.com/> and click on "School Day Event Info" or call 252/354-5905 or 252/622-1908.

### Special Notice - - -

**Thaddeus (Flash) Alston**  
Of Mariam Boyd  
now holds the distinction  
of being the **WORLD'S** only  
recipient of  
Warren County Schools'  
*Super Sneaker Award!*

## From DPI- - -

◆ Questions related to No Child Left Behind are answered in a comprehensive new document posted on the NCLB Web site at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/faqs/>. Answers address such issues as Title I, Adequate Yearly Progress, the ABCs, testing, NCLB student groups, reporting requirements, public school choice, supplemental educational services, “Highly Qualified” teachers, and requirements for Title I teacher assistants. Answers will be continually updated and new questions will be added as issues evolve.

◆ A new high school social studies listserv has been created to provide the latest information to high school social studies teachers and administrators on a regular basis. The update will include social studies grants, curriculum ideas, professional development opportunities, competitions for students, and best practice teaching strategies. To join, please send an email to: [join-nchss@lists.dpi.state.nc.us](mailto:join-nchss@lists.dpi.state.nc.us). As a reminder, there also are listservs for elementary and middle school social studies teachers and administrators. To subscribe to the elementary school social studies listserv, please contact Tracey Greggs at [tgreggs@dpi.state.nc.us](mailto:tgreggs@dpi.state.nc.us). To subscribe to the middle school social studies listserv, please contact Penny Maguire at [pmaguire@dpi.state.nc.us](mailto:pmaguire@dpi.state.nc.us).

### BOARD HIGHLIGHTS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

✓ Dr. Linda Mason, Human Resources director, provided information on the Training for Enrichment (TFE) Program sponsored by Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments. The program employed 51 students in a six-week summer employment program. Participants will continue employment during the school year.

✓ Dr. Spain provided an overview of the development of a Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Fund Action Plan that is required in order to receive a \$777,500 award resulting from the State Supreme Court decision in the Leandro case. The Board approved the plan for submission to the State.

✓ Overnight field trips were approved for the following: Mariam Boyd Elementary fifth graders to travel to Manteo, Kitty Hawk and Kill Devil Hills, March 23-24.

✓ The Board approved the receipt of a donation a computer valued at \$500 from Scott McCullough Builders for the Tots ‘N Teens Daycare Center at WCHS.

✓ The Board approved the following for employment: Deborah Hayes, EC teacher, WCMS; Charles Hooker, math teacher, WCHS; Adrian Rodriguez, Spanish teacher, WCMS; and Folami S. Alston, administrative assistant for Child Nutrition, Central Office. Approved as a substitute for all schools is Alfred C. Wright.

✓ The Board accepted the resignation of Jessica Potish, Spanish teacher, WCMS, and James Johnson, teacher assistant, WCHS.

✓ Individuals were approved for Extra Duty Assignments at WCMS, WCHS and the Comprehensive Exceptional Children Accountability System.

✓ Vacancies include: an Exceptional teacher and a kindergarten teacher at South Warren; a fifth grade teacher and an assistant principal, Northside; a band teacher and a science teacher, WCMS; at WCHS, a teacher assistant, a choral music teacher, two EC teachers, one math teacher and an assistant principal. A Speech-Language therapist is needed districtwide.

**“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](http://www.warren-countyschools.org)

## Calendar September

- 15 1 p.m. Dismissal
- 16 WCMS Fall Pictures  
WCHS College Day  
1:30 - 2:30 p.m.
- 17 South Warren Safety Patrol Mr. and Miss South Warren Fundraiser, 5:30 p.m.
- 20-24 Northside Career Awareness Week  
South Warren Accountability Meetings
- 20 Senior Staff, 10 a.m.
- 21 International Day of Peace
- 22 First Day of Autumn  
South Warren School Improvement Team Meeting, 3 p.m.
- 23 Mariam Bpud Math Fun Night 6-7 p.m.  
Northside PTA Meeting, 7 p.m.
- 27 Senior Staff, 10 a.m.  
Mariam Boyd School Improvement Team Meeting  
3:05 p.m.
- 28 Reading and Math Benchmark Assessment I, Gr. K-8  
WCMS 2nd Round Hepatitis B Shots, Gr. 6  
WCMS PTSA Exec. Bd. Mtg.  
6:30 p.m.
- 30 Northside Dad’s Breakfast, Gr. K, 4 & 5, 7:45-8:20 a.m.  
South Warren Reading Lock-In  
3-6 p.m.

## October

- PARENT INVOLVMENT MONTH;  
 CRME PREVENTION MONTH;  
 AIDS AWARENESS MONTH;  
 COMPUTER LEARNING MONTH
- 1 Northside Dad’s Breakfast, Gr. 1, 2 & 3, 7:45-8:20 a.m.
  - 4-8 Fire Prevention Week
  - 4 Leadership Team, 10 a.m.
  - 5 WCMS Burger King Night,  
5:30 - 8:30 p.m.
  - 8 End 1st 9 Weeks  
South Warren Breakfast with Dads, 8 a.m.
  - 11 Columbus Day  
Begin 2nd 9 Weeks  
Senior Staff, 10 a.m.  
Board Meeting, 7 p.m.