

Rapport ONLINE

for Fulton County School System employees

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We're proud of...

- Our 40 teachers who achieved National Board Certification, as announced by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. This brings the total number of National Board Certified teachers in Fulton to 164—more than any other Georgia school system. (See the article on page 2 for more information about certification.) The 40 teachers who successfully completed the intensive process are: **Kathleen Yarbrough**, Conley Hills ES; **Deborah Myrick**, Crabapple Crossing ES; **Michele Mark**, Dunwoody Springs ES; **Gary Wildeboer**, Esther Jackson ES; **Lizabeth Wilson** and **Kendra Murray**, Mimosa ES; **Denise Ross**, Ocee ES; **Margaret Ross**, Parklane ES; **Arnetta Eady**, **Princess Lockett** and **Patricia Jones**, Randolph ES; **Deborah Wilson**, Roswell North ES; **Tonya Tolbert**, Summit Hill ES; **Linda Ockwell**, **Katherine Robertson** and **Elizabeth Keene Kwasny**, Shakerag ES; **Patricia Cloy** and **Susan Wallace**, State Bridge Crossing ES; **Suzanne Lamb**, Autrey Mill MS; **Kristina Orf**, Crabapple MS; **Linda Manley**, Elkins Pointe MS; **Anne Clark**, Haynes Bridge MS; **Patricia Hooper**, River Trail MS; **Jeanne Bayer**, **Mary Mitchell**, **Ileana Del Rosario**, **Alyce Goldberg Hackett** and **Cheryl Sgro Ellis**, Taylor Road MS; **Sheldon Fisher**, **Mary Angela Reed** and **Jared Rashford**, Alpharetta HS; **Diana Brown**, **Tia Jolley Thompson**, **Mary McCord** and **Gwen Kaminsky**, Centennial HS; **Simone Burke**, McClarin HS; **Rochelle Lofstrand** and **Judith Carter**, North Springs HS; **Celeste Wesner**, Roswell HS, and **Gyimah Whitaker**, TAG Department.
- **Bettye Evans**, fourth grade teacher at New Prospect ES—selected as the winner of Channel 11's Class Act Award.
- Autrey Mill MS foreign language teacher **Maria Purwin**; and music teachers **Christy Ray**, **Tim Anderson** and



Wendy Milstead—helped lead Autrey Mills “Home for the Holidays” musical performance along with students, parents and other teachers. Maria wrote a holiday story incorporating songs from around the world that was read by Fox5 news anchor Russ Spencer, and Christy, Tim and Wendy blended the music for the tale.

- **Kati Searcy**, TAG teacher at Mountain Park ES—selected to lead a session on “Every Drop Counts” at the Space Station Educators Conference in Houston, Texas, in February. This is the third consecutive year Kati has been asked to present at this international conference. Her session will focus on water recycling processes on the International Space Station and future space transportation vehicles.
- **Mimi Szutz**, business and technology teacher at Chattahoochee HS—recently returned from Japan as a participant in the Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program. Mimi was one of only 200 teachers selected for this honor from a pool of more than 2,000 applicants from across the nation.

On the move...

Welcome to...

- **Tishangi Bennett**, from Imaging and Records Program Manager for Best Assets Citiwest to Records Retention Manager
- **Debra McAlmont**, from WIC Nutrition Program Manager for the DeKalb County Board of Health to Area Supervisor of School Nutrition

Farewell to...

- **Elizabeth Longshore**, Principal, Esther Jackson ES
- **Roger Mohlenhoff**, Transportation Services Supervisor
- **Ellen Rogalin**, Communications Project Manager

Coming up...

DECEMBER 20-JANUARY 2: Winter break—Happy Holidays to all!

F.I.Y. (Fulton Information for You)

National teacher certification supported in Fulton

—With 40 new national board certified teachers in Fulton, we now have 164 certified teachers in our district. These teachers have worked hard to earn this prestigious recognition. During the certification process, teachers demonstrate their knowledge and skills through performance-based assessments tied to national standards, document subject matter knowledge, provide evidence of effective teaching skills, and demonstrate their ability to manage and measure student learning.

National teacher certification was established in 1993 by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to provide advanced evaluation of experienced educators and to complement state certification processes. Teachers can gain national certification in teaching areas including English/language arts, ESOL, foreign language, social studies, physical education/health, music, art, exceptional needs, library media, career and technical education, mathematics, science, school counseling and literacy.

National Board Certification is voluntary and open to all teachers who have a bachelor's degree and three years of classroom experience in either a public or private school. Certification is valid for 10 years, after which a teacher must seek renewal.

Fulton teachers interested in pursuing certification who would like financial assistance with the \$2,300 fee must first apply to the school system. For information, call 404-669-8090 ext. 138. Fulton funds the application fee for selected teachers and offers two support workshops each month. One workshop each month focuses on general topics such as videotaping; descriptive, analytical and reflective writing; choosing work samples and artifacts, and scoring and assessing commentaries. The second monthly workshop is centered on group collaboration in one of three major areas. In addition, individual appointments are scheduled with National Board Certified teachers to address specific questions.

Once certified, Fulton teachers receive a 10 percent salary increase. In return for the financial and professional support, Fulton candidates agree to complete the certification process, remain in Fulton for at least two years following certification and assist future candidates.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is a non-profit, non-partisan independent organization set up to advance the quality of teaching and learning by:

- maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do;
- providing a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these standards, and
- advocating related education reforms to integrate National Board Certification in American education and to capitalize on the expertise of National Board Certified Teachers.

Additional information about National Board Certification is available through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards at www.nbpts.org.

In the news . . .

FCS students continue to score above national average on ITBS—Fulton County students continue to score well above the national average on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) according to recently released results of the fall ITBS testing.

Our students outscored the nation by at least 10 percentile points in all grades tested in the core areas of total reading, total math, total language, social studies and science. There are no state level comparisons because school systems have the flexibility to test at any time of the year. Fulton administered the test in September to students in grades three, five, and eight.

ITBS norm-referenced tests allow us to compare the performance of our students with the performance of a national sample of students in the same grade who took the tests at the same point in the school year. ITBS is not a measure of what a child should know in his or her current grade level, but rather a measure of what children have learned over their entire time in school.

School system and national percentile scores are listed below. For more information and individual school scores, go to http://www.fultonschools.org/fultonfacts_testscores.asp.

Percentile Results of Iowa Tests of Basic Skills Fall 2004

	Total Reading	Total Math	Total Language	Social Studies	Science
Grade 3					
Fulton	68	74	71	71	71
Nation	50	50	50	50	50
Grade 5					
Fulton	68	71	69	71	69
Nation	50	50	50	50	50
Grade 8					
Fulton	60	63	62	61	63
Nation	50	50	50	50	50

Growing from good to great in Fulton County

Editor's note: One way for each of us to grow from good to great – and to help our system grow from good to great – is to learn how to manage the “good” stress of holidays that can affect us both personally and professionally this time of year. Following are tips for handling holiday-related stress excerpted from an article from The Family Institute of Northwestern University.

Stress-Reducing Tips for the Holidays

There are several simple things you can do to make the holiday season more relaxing, meaningful and stress-free for you and your family and friends.

1: Understand what makes the holiday season special for you - and focus on those things. Some people like the holidays because they enjoy being with family and friends. Others enjoy entertaining, gift-giving or singing holiday music. Still others cherish celebrating the religious significance of the holidays. Spend some time before you begin making your holiday preparations thinking about what make the holidays special for you. This will make it easier for you to prioritize what is really important, and will prevent you from getting distracted by relatively unimportant details.

2: Be wary of becoming a "holiday perfectionist." Too often we idealize the holidays and imagine them as times of perfect peace, joy and love. But because we are only human, holidays often turn out to be days like any other - marked by family disagreements, mishaps and unfulfilled expectations. Because we believe that the holidays are special, however, we can become angry, disillusioned and feel "let down" when our expectations don't become reality.

Try to make your expectations of the holidays as realistic as possible. It also helps to develop a sense of humor. When things go wrong (which they will), it is helpful to be able to laugh rather than cry!

3: Recognize, and accept, your own limitations. If you are a "holiday perfectionist," you may find yourself trying to do everything perfectly - buying the perfect gifts, making the perfect meal, decorating the perfect house, etc. The holidays will be more relaxing if you focus on the few things that you find are most important or enjoyable - the simple and less complicated, the better.

4: Maintain your normal routine as much as possible. Sometimes the holidays are stressful simply because they require that we break out of our normal routine. Your eating patterns may be disrupted when you attend holiday meals and parties. If your holiday plans require travel, being away from home can wreck havoc with your customary way of doing things. Sometimes being a guest in someone else's home can be the most stressful thing of all!

Make an effort to keep to your normal schedule as much as you can. If you have regular exercise, sleeping or eating patterns, try to stick to these as much as possible to avoid disrupting your body's natural rhythms.

5: Give yourself the gift of self-care. The holiday season often is extremely draining, because all of those extra activities require additional time and energy. It is important for you to take good care of yourself during the holiday season - consider this the most valuable gift you can give yourself. Eat well, exercise, get plenty of sleep and take "time out" to enjoy things that you love - a special hobby, reading a good book, going for a walk, etc.

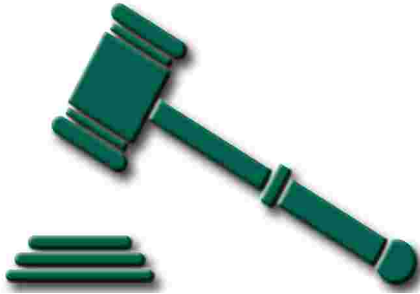
6: Develop family rituals. Rituals can be fun and meaningful ways to celebrate the holiday season. Traditions passed down through the generations can become cherished memories. But the key is to keep rituals simple - they do not have to be elaborate to be meaningful.

7: Practice good communication with your family and friends. Holiday stress can be caused when misunderstandings or disagreements occur between family members or friends. It can be tempting to avoid creating more conflict, so we often tend to ignore the problem and hope it goes away. However, a better solution is to address your concerns directly with your family or friends in a gentle but honest manner. Encourage them to be open with you as well. Work together to find a solution that is satisfactory to everyone.

School Board in action

At its December 7 and 9 meetings, the Board of Education...

- Voted to suspend the Policy Governance® Model as its governance system. With the vote, the Board will retain its focus on results while reverting back to the former Policies and Procedures followed prior to October 2004. Beginning in January, Board meeting agendas and schedules will return to the format used before the adoption of Policy Governance



The motion to suspend Policy Governance was made by **Julia Bernath**. “I still strongly believe in Policy Governance,” said Mrs. Bernath, “but we have to realize that we as a district are facing many issues that require our attention. The challenge of adding another change has led to unnecessary conflict and confusion among the Board, the staff and our stakeholders.”

Board members agreed that they find certain components of Policy Governance to be complementary to the Fulton culture. They expressed their desire to continue to expand many Policy Governance areas, including the opportunity to increase the community’s involvement in decision-making and engage all of the representative groups of stakeholders for input at Board Roundtable meetings.

The Board feels it is important to continue to develop its Results Policies to set student achievement goals and provide direction for the administration. The Board expects to continue to discuss Results Policies in January and to hold community meetings for additional input within a few months.

Said Board Member **Liz Hausmann**, “I feel we have grown through this process, but I believe it is time for us to focus on the students, not our governance model.”

In other December action, the Board...

- Approved personnel items (see *On the move . . .*)
- Heard presentations about architectural plans for the Westlake HS replacement, Woodland MS replacement and the Jones Hall ES site. A presentation containing

3-D images and “walk-through” technology of the replacement Westlake HS was shown to the Board. The presentation, which is posted online at <http://www2.fultonschools.org/dept/operations/EDSP/EC/Westlake/westlake.asp>, allows site visitors to access architectural renderings showing the school’s proposed design. Visitors can view the front exterior, commons area, stairwell, outdoor courtyard, media center, sports plaza, cafeteria and a sample classroom. The “walk-through” technology allows a 360-degree view of each area. The architectural firm of Gardner Spencer Smith Tench & Hensley is designing the project. The school is scheduled to open in August 2007.

- Discussed how to gather input from the community with Executive Director of Communications **Mitzi Edge** and the Superintendent’s Advisory Council
- Received an update on program management
- Received two charter school petitions for first reading. Action on the petition is expected in January.
 - Dunwoody Springs ES petitioned to become a conversion charter beginning in 2005-06.
 - Fulton Educational Services, Inc. petitioned for a start-up charter high school, Technology Enriched Accelerated Charter High (TEACH), beginning in 2005-06.
- Reviewed a Georgia Power easement request at Northview HS

Upcoming Board meetings

...**December 15, 1 p.m.**—Swearing-in ceremony for new Board member Linda Schultz and returning Board members Gail Dean and Linda Bryant, Professional Learning Center

...**January 11, 4:30 p.m.**—Board meeting, Dunwoody Springs ES

...**January 13, 5 p.m.**—Board workshop, Location TBA

...**January 13, 6:30 p.m.**—Board meeting, Location TBA

...**January 27, 4 p.m.**—Board roundtable, Administrative Center

The 2004-05 calendar of Board meetings, workshops and roundtables can be found on the county web site under the Board button at the top of the front page. Please check the web site frequently for updates.

Behind the headlines...

Enrollment projections show growth to continue

throughout the county—Last month Director of Planning **Patrick Burke** presented enrollment information for 2004-05 and beyond at a Board workshop. His data showed a 20th-day enrollment of 75,533 – within one-half of one percent of the enrollment that he had projected.



This amazing accuracy is attributable to the forecasting methods used by Patrick and his staff. They use a research-based forecasting approach that includes:

- cohort-based model;
- explicit consideration of development and land use;
- birth trends, and
- detailed demographic trends.

The Planning Department also develops geographically specific forecasting that aligns short- and long-term capital program planning and school attendance zone planning. They consider planned and active development, and pending and recently approved development in the three major areas of the district – North Fulton, Sandy Springs and South Fulton.

Patrick's major 2004-05 enrollment observations for each of the three district areas reveal the variations in growth in different areas.

North Fulton

- The kindergarten population declined in 2003-04, but the growth pattern returned in 2004-05.
- High school enrollment projections increased because of the influx of students from the North Fulton charter high school.
- The average mobility rate for high schools increased, especially in the Alpharetta, Milton and Northview high school areas.

Sandy Springs

- There are stable patterns of enrollment growth.
- Growth occurred in high density residential areas on Roswell Road and near Northridge.
- There is an imbalance between state capacity and instructional capacity in the elementary schools.

South Fulton

- The rate of residential growth increased in the Creekside and Westlake cluster areas.
- New residential developments continue to be approved in far south Fulton.
- There is an influx of middle school students in the Sandtown area.
- The enrollment of the East Point region continued to decline.

Patrick also presented projections showing an estimated 86,136 students in Fulton County by the 2008-09 school year.

Our Mission

is to educate students to be responsible, productive citizens.

Our Vision

The Fulton County School System is a place where all children learn to their full potential in a safe, nurturing environment supported by involved and committed staff, family, and community in helping to prepare them for a successful future.

Report ONLINE is produced every two weeks during the school year and once a month during the summer by the Fulton County Schools Communications Department. For comments, questions or to submit information: Ellen Rogalin, 404.763.6830 or Rogalin@fultonschools.org.

It is the policy of the Fulton County School System not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability in any employment practice, educational program, or any program, activity or service.

If you wish to make a complaint or request accommodation or modification due to discrimination in any program, activity or service, contact Compliance Coordinator Randy Reece at 786 Cleveland Avenue SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30315, or phone 404-763-4585; TTY 1-800-255-0135.