Board takes next steps in lease/purchase agreement

Progress continues to be made in establishing the lease/purchase financing plan that will allow GCPS to keep building classrooms its students need. Terms of the agreement between Gwinnett County Public Schools and the Gwinnett County Development Authority have been accepted by both parties. Work is underway on finalizing the financial structure, which will be ready for approval in March or April.

Under the agreement, GCPS will obtain funding through the Authority for construction and capital improvements approved by voters in the November 6, 2001, sales tax referendum. GCPS will make annual payments to the Development Authority until the lease is paid, using revenue from the one-cent sales tax.

The lease/purchase financing plan has several benefits. It allows the school system to keep building classrooms while taking advantage of a very favorable financial climate. Interest rates are at a 40-year low and the school system’s credit rating is the best it can be— triple A from Moody’s Investors Services. That means GCPS can obtain the advance funding it needs at very low cost. In addition, land, which is becoming more scarce and more expensive, can be purchased now for the 30 or so new schools the system expects to need in the next building program. A public hearing on the lease/purchase financing option is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on March 11, prior to the School Board’s monthly meeting in the Board Room at Lawrenceville East.

Wilbanks to study funding formula on state task force

Gwinnett County Public Schools CEO/Superintendent J. Alvin Wilbanks is one of 19 Georgia leaders appointed by Gov. Sonny Perdue to study state education funding. The task force will reexamine the Quality Basic Education (QBE) funding formula, which determines how state funds are allocated to Georgia’s K–12 schools.

“School systems throughout Georgia struggle with funding issues as they work diligently to better serve their students,” Mr. Wilbanks says. “Whether the system is large and growing, like Gwinnett, or it has a small, stable enrollment like many in Georgia, the charge for the task force is to ensure that appropriate funding is provided by the state so that each one can deliver a quality educational program. As we realign the funding formula, it is critical that decisions be made in the best interest of all students and that teaching and learning remain the focus.”

XFAT recommends way to close achievement gap

Last month, a crossfunctional action team (XFAT) suggested ways to close the achievement gap. Some of the recommendations, which are under review by Superintendent/CEO J. Alvin Wilbanks and cabinet members, may require more study. Recommendations include:

- Implementing a research-based model of school improvement, such as the AKS Continuous Improvement Model, at each local school;
- Continuing to develop AKS target calendars and lesson plans for language arts and mathematics at all grade levels;
**EB News (Continued)**

**XFAT, continued**

- **Restructuring the academic calendar** to provide enrichment and remedial instruction for students between grading periods;
- **Providing financial incentives** to recruit and retain educators at high poverty schools; and
- **Supporting a strong, comprehensive mentoring program** to support teachers.

“Each team draws from experts around the system so that we can tackle complex issues with both the depth and breadth of knowledge needed to develop comprehensive solutions,” says Dana McGraw, director for Continuous Improvement. “This XFAT looked closely at how we can continue to post strong academic performances, even as our student population grows and changes.” Keep up with the status of these recommendations and activity from all Gwinnett XFATs through the Continuous Improvement database, which includes nine active and 20 legacy XFATs. Questions? Contact Ms. McGraw at 770-513-6643, or send her a LotusNote.

**Under the Gold Dome:**

**Key education bills up for legislative review**

At the halfway point in the Georgia 2004 General Assembly, some important education bills are up for discussion… issues that could have important implications for GCPS. Some of the hot issues currently on the table include:

- **Budget:** GCPS is seeking to restore proposed cuts to K–12 funding. These cuts could affect operating budgets, proposed salary increases, and other key areas.
- **Flexibility/Accountability:** GCPS is seeking flexibility on a number of fronts. Lawmakers are debating legislation on class-size reductions that, among other things, could postpone the final phase until 2005–06, a move that could save $20 million in much-needed funding for fiscal year 2005. GCPS also is seeking more flexibility on local school council regulations and laws governing how state funds are allocated.
- **Truancy/Discipline:** Proposed legislation could divert crucial resources.

Gwinnett County continues to have good representation on important education committees, a fact that will be helpful to GCPS, says David McCleskey, GCPS coordinator for Governmental Relations and Community Partnerships. “The Gwinnett County Legislative Delegation is receptive and supportive of the issues that have an impact on GCPS, ranging from budget issues to setting good, sound policy,” Mr. McCleskey says. “Mr. Wilbanks and our School Board appreciate the positive relationship we have with our delegation.”

Keep up with events as they unfold during the 2004 session on the Web or on Georgia Public Television. Check local listings for more information.

**New cutting-edge program takes tech ed to next level**

A vet technician gives a dog a check-up. A production assistant reviews music in the post-production studio. A management trainee plans an upcoming conference with the hotel manager. Starting in August, GCPS upperclassmen will get a taste of such science, fine arts, and technology careers through classes in the new Grayson HS Technical Education Program.

The Grayson HS program will offer hands-on, cutting-edge courses and equipment that go beyond what is available at other Gwinnett schools. The Grayson facility will include a commercial training kitchen with a 25-seat presentation and dining area, a climate-controlled greenhouse, an industry-donated electron microscope, an animal husbandry building, a black-box performance area, and professional music-recording and TV production studios. Students also will benefit from business, community, and postsecondary partnerships, including agreements with American Express, Marriott, the University of Georgia, and IBM.

(continued)
Grayson HS Technical Education Program, continued

Classes in 15 areas are planned for the fall, including Biotechnology; Commercial Photography; Culinary Arts; Digital Media and Design; Environmental Horticulture; Environmental Science; Hospitality, Travel, and Tourism; IT: Network Systems and Support; Law Enforcement/Public Safety; Music Recording; Music Technology; Technical Theater (Scenery and Lighting, and Costume and Makeup); Veterinarian Technology; and Video Broadcast Production.

Next month, rising juniors and seniors will select their courses for the 2004–05 school year during registration at their local schools. At registration, students will be able to enroll in the Grayson program, which is open to students pursuing a college prep, technology/career prep, or dual diploma. The Grayson technical education classes are offered in two blocks, on either a half-day or evening schedule, with classes Monday through Thursday. Students may choose to attend their home school for core subjects and Grayson for their technical classes, or transfer to Grayson for all their classes. Transportation is not provided.

“The Grayson program will give students the chance to learn about a career, and even get a head start, before committing to a postsecondary program. They’ll have the opportunity to learn skills that will be necessary for them to be successful in some very specialized career fields,” says Grayson Principal Keith Chaney. “Combine those things with access to state-of-the-art equipment and technology, and you have the potential for a very positive impact on student achievement.”

E-mail eases communication, requires E-etiquette

In the past decade, the number of people who regularly use e-mail has jumped from two percent to over 50 percent. E-mail has become significantly more common in the workplace and in homes, paving the way for improved school-home communications and simpler communications between colleagues (whether down the hall or across the county). As with any type of communication, e-mail has its own “rules” of etiquette. A few guidelines include:

• **Write a meaningful subject line** to help readers prioritize mail and locate your message.

• **Don’t type in all caps,** which is interpreted as shouting and can cause offense or get in the way of your intended message.

• **Proofread.** Keep your messages clear and error-free by using spell check, but don’t depend on it to catch all grammatical lapses.

• **Keep your messages brief.** A long e-mail can be difficult to read, and easy to put off until “later.” Keeping it brief ensures you’ll be understood and get all of your points across.

• **Don’t attach unnecessary files.** Only send attachments when absolutely necessary; they take up space and may be slow to download.

EB Bulletin Board

BOE announces leadership appointments

On Feb. 12, the Board of Education (BOE) announced the following appointments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>New position</th>
<th>Current position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Esther Adames-Jiménez</td>
<td>Principal, Beaver Ridge ES</td>
<td>Principal, East Boston Early Education Center (Boston, Mass.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cynthia Burgess</td>
<td>Principal, Chattahoochee ES</td>
<td>Assistant Principal, Beaver Ridge ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Harvin Davenport</td>
<td>Principal, Henry Partee ES</td>
<td>Principal, John Hope ES (Atlanta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dion Jones</td>
<td>Principal, Rockbridge ES</td>
<td>Assistant Principal, Craig ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana Pugh</td>
<td>Principal, Summerour MS</td>
<td>Assistant Principal, Richard Hull MS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appointments, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>New position</th>
<th>Current position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary Ray</td>
<td>Principal, Craig ES</td>
<td>Principal, Simpson ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cindy Truett</td>
<td>Principal, Harbins ES</td>
<td>Assistant Principal, Bethesda ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judith Riffel</td>
<td>Coordinator, Non-Title Schools</td>
<td>Teacher on Special Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Child Left Behind” Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gale Smith</td>
<td>Technology Training Coordinator,</td>
<td>Local School Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media and Info. Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asst. Director, Infrastructure</td>
<td>Coordinator on Special Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solutions, Info. Management</td>
<td>Coordinator, Internet Networking,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Information Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Stone</td>
<td>Assessment Coordinator,</td>
<td>Assistant Principal, W. C. Britt ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curriculum and Instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the principalships have opened as veteran principals moved to other locations. However, two retirements prompted job changes. Chattahoochee ES Principal Jane Coomer and Rockbridge ES Principal Linda Daniels will retire at the end of the 2003–04 school year. New principals begin July 1, 2004. The other appointments are effective this month.

NCLB listening session set by congressman

U.S. Rep. Johnny Isakson wants to listen to concerns and answer questions during a Education Listening Session, to be hosted by Brookwood HS, from 3 to 4 p.m., on Monday, March 8. While that date is a holiday for many local school staff members, Rep. Isakson hopes to connect with front-line educators and have a conversation about the challenges and possibilities presented by the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Retirees-to-be have until March 15 for state paperwork

Retirement paperwork must be completed and submitted to the state by March 15 to ensure no delays in retirement pay. Considering a summer retirement? Be sure to schedule an appointment with the Retirement Office by sending a LotusNote to the GCPS Retirement Office or calling Brandi Sikes at 770-963-2840 or 678-377-8942.

Red Cross offers low-cost safety training opportunity

The American Red Cross (ARC) will teach low-cost CPR courses to adults and students (ages 12 and older) during CPR Saturday activities on March 6. Gwinnett classes are offered at Cannon United Methodist Church in Snellville and Peachtree Corners Baptist Church in Norcross. For more about this lifesaving first-aid technique and the $10 training class, call the ARC Gwinnett Service Center at 770-963-9208. Pre-registration is recommended.

Calendar reminders for March

March is full of national recognitions, from middle grades to fine arts to nutrition. “Connect with Music” is the theme for Music in our Schools Month. National Middle Level Education Month celebrates “Middle Schools: Advancing the Vision in Challenging Times.” Get a “Taste of Art” during Youth Art Month. March also marks American Red Cross Month, National Nutrition Month®, Irish American Heritage Month, Social Work Month, and Women’s History Month. Exceptional Children’s Week starts March 1, as does Newspaper in Education Week. Start your day with a nutritious meal every day, but especially during National School Breakfast Week, beginning March 8. March 2 is Read Across America Day, this year celebrating the Seussentennial… the 100th anniversary of the birthday of Dr. Seuss.
Calendar, continued

While you have your calendar out…

• For ES and MS students, the 3rd nine weeks ends March 5, and the final nine weeks begins March 10. The 5th six weeks for HS students ends March 26, and the final six weeks begins March 29.

• Students and 180-, 190-, and 200-day staff have a holiday March 8. Students and 180-day staff have off March 9, unless inclement weather requires use of this priority 2 snow day.

• The next meeting of the Gwinnett County Board of Education is March 11.

• Gwinnett Tech’s winter quarter ends March 18, The spring quarter begins March 30.

• The main administration of the Georgia HS Graduation Test runs March 22–25.

• Grade 3 writing evaluations begin March 29.

Travel plans on the agenda

Periodically, readers will find notices about travel opportunities, arranged by educators for educators, on the EB Bulletin Board.

Spanish-for-credit trip heads to the Dominican Republic: Travel June 27–July 10, 2004, at a cost of $1,795. (Airfare is not included.) Trip includes intensive language and conversation classes, “field trips” to practice the language, and outdoor activities, from rafting to rock climbing. Learn more about the trip at a meeting on March 1, 5:30–6:30 p.m., Dacula HS, LC 29. RSVP with a LotusNote to John Williams at Dacula HS.

Get your passport ready… Here are a few upcoming travel options:

• Tour France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, and Norway—June 14–24, 2004. Cost is $2,645. Deadline is March 5.


• Tour Germany, Italy, Austria, and Switzerland—June 1–11, 2005. Cost is $1,949.

• Tour Ireland and the Aran Islands—June 20–29, 2005. Priced at $2,639.

• Tour Italy and Greece—July 4–12, 2005. Cost is $2,313.

Prices for these trips include airfare, hotel, most meals, sightseeing, and admission to special attractions. Prices guaranteed for spring registration only. Sign up by Feb. 29 and qualify for free luggage drawing. Contact Linda H. Waters at 770-205-9442.

HR BRIEFS

Teacher Placement Preference process ends Feb. 27

On Feb. 13, principals forwarded a copy of the Placement Preference Form to all teachers in their buildings. Teachers who will complete their third year in their current Gwinnett school by the end of the school year (2003–04) are eligible to request a transfer to another school in the district. As openings are identified for the 2004–05 school year, principals will consider submitted transfer requests in filling those vacancies. Eligible teachers have until Feb. 27 to submit their transfer requests via LotusNotes on the Placement Preference Form. In-System transfers will be completed between Feb. 27 and April 15.

Q & A addresses school leadership application queries

What positions are classified as school leadership positions? Principal and assistant principal are considered school leadership positions.

What documents should I submit? Submit the following: a letter of interest, current résumé, a School Leadership Information Form, a Behavioral Recommendation Form, and a
Leadership application process, continued

copy of your Georgia professional certification at Level 5 or higher in Educational Leadership.

Where can I get the School Leadership Information Form and the Behavioral Recommendation Form? Download the information from the system Web site.

How do I submit my application? There are three ways...

• By mail—Send your complete packet to Gwen McCants-Allen, Human Resources Manager, School Leadership Staffing, P.O. Box 343, Lawrenceville, GA 30046-0343 (or send through the courier to 52 Gwinnett Dr.).
• By fax—The fax number is (678) 376-8684.
• In person—Drop off your packet at 52 Gwinnett Dr. in Lawrenceville.

What is the process after my application documents have been submitted? The application material is reviewed, then candidates selected for a screening are contacted.

What is a screening? A screening consists of an interview with a panel of administrators and a written exercise. Screenings last approximately one hour.

When is the application deadline for school leadership positions? We accept applications throughout the year. However, to be considered for a position for the 2004–05 school year, you must submit all application materials by March 31, 2004.

How long does an application remain active? Applications remain on file for two years.

Who should I contact if I have additional questions? Contact Ms. McCants-Allen at (678) 377-8910 or by Lotus Notes.

HOPE awarded for advanced degree in critical fields

Students pursuing advanced education degrees in specific areas may be eligible to apply for the HOPE Teacher Scholarship for Graduate Study in Critical Shortage Fields. For the 2004–05 academic year, degrees covered under the provision include advanced degrees in education for exceptional children with behavior disorders, interrelated special education needs, learning disabilities, or mental retardation (grades Pre-K–12); education for students with hearing, visual, or orthopedic impairments; foreign language education in French and Spanish (grades Pre-K–12); mathematics education (grades 7–12); science education (grades 7–12, for broad field, biology, chemistry, Earth/space, or physics); middle grades education in math or science (grades 4–8); secondary English (grades 7–12); health occupations; trade and industrial education; and business education. (Note: Critical areas change each year. In May 2005, critical areas may be added or removed from the list for the 2005–06 academic year.) Recipients of the HOPE graduate scholarship repay their loans by teaching in their critical shortage fields—one year for every $2,500 awarded. The scholarships are awarded each spring on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, contact the Georgia Student Finance Commission at 770-724-9000.

UGA offers special education degree at Gwinnett Center

The University of Georgia now offers a bachelor’s degree in Special Education through the Gwinnett University Center in Lawrenceville. Students develop skills to work with individuals who have mild disabilities (such as MID, LD, BD) at all age levels. Graduates are eligible to pursue certification as interrelated special education resource teachers. The program offers the flexibility of evening classes, and allows full-time paraprofessionals to fulfill internship requirements in the special education classroom, working with their current students. Because this program constitutes the final two years of an undergraduate degree, interested applicants must have at least 60 transferable college credit hours. A Fall 2004 cohort group is now forming, and has room for 30 new students. Contact Kevin Ayres by e-mail (kayres@uga.edu) or phone (678-407-5374) for more information.
HR Briefs
(Continued)

Periodically, Human Resources provides information about discount programs extended to GCPS employees by local businesses. All discounts are subject to change. GCPS does not endorse any business or service, and is not liable for any change or inaccuracies this list may hold. For additions or corrections, call Kelly Herndon at 770-513-6665. Unless otherwise noted, show your GCPS ID badge to get the discount.

Tax-time reminder:
Educator expense deduction applies for 2003 tax year

For one more tax year, full-time teachers, paraprofessionals, counselors, and administrators may claim an “Educator Expense Deduction” of $250 in qualified expenses when figuring adjusted gross income (AGI). (Prior to the 2002 tax year, such purchases could be subtracted only as miscellaneous itemized deductions, and were subject to a two-percent reduction of the AGI). While the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) doesn’t require an itemization of purchases, tax advisors suggest that educators maintain a file for receipts— noting date, amount, and purpose of the purchase. This is the last tax year for the deduction. Questions? Contact the IRS or a qualified tax advisor.

GCPS Personnel Perks

• Accounting Consortium (Grayson): Employees get $10 discount on income tax preparation, plus a $5 donation to the employee’s school of choice. GCPS employees who make referrals to friends and family can earn an additional $5 donation for their school. Call Mark Bove at 770-995-4482 or send an e-mail to markb@accountingconsortium.com.
• Atlanta Toyota: Pay $1 over invoice on all new vehicles (plus tax, tag, and fees). Call Terri Anderson at 770-622-7998. Employees also get 10% off service bill (can’t be combined with other offers). Check hours, directions, and vehicle availability online.
• Château Élan: Just for GCPS, a Spring Getaway features an $89-a-night room rate (plus tax, space limited) for March 7, discounted spa treatments, and no greens fee on the links.
• DISH Network: Get lower monthly rates on multiple TVs, more channels, and more free equipment, including the new 811 High-Definition receiver. Equipment and installation is free, and the $49.99 activation fee is waived for GCPS employees. Call 678-576-8835 or send an email to timweekley@mindspring.com. Offer expires June 30, and applies to new, first-time residential customers only. Credit approval and major credit card required.
• Kathy Johnson, CPA. Staff members get a 15% discount on tax preparation services. Call 770-277-3000 or send an email to kathyjohnsoncpa@mindspring.com.
• Richport Properties. GCPS employees take an additional $1,000 off the cost of new homes built by Richport Properties in seven communities in Gwinnett, Forsyth, Newton and Jackson counties. Four new communities available this summer. That’s on top of other current incentives. Visit the Web site for details.

EB Spotlight

GCPS’ counselors, advocate honored for contributions

In recognition of the vital role that counselors play in support of the school system’s core business— teaching and learning— Gwinnett County Public Schools named its top school counselors at an annual breakfast on Feb. 6. This year’s winners are:
• Kathy Bond of Sugar Hill ES— 2003–04 ES Counselor of the Year
• Cindy Lancaster of Alton C. Crews MS— 2003–04 MS Counselor of the Year
• Dr. Vicki Hoffmann of North Gwinnett HS— 2003–04 HS Counselor of the Year
• Karen Robinson of Shiloh MS— 2003–04 Counseling Advocate of the Year
• David Young of Brookwood ES— 2003–04 Writer of the Year

These Gwinnett winners will go on to compete at the regional level. District winners then vie for state recognition. Gwinnett County counselors are consistently among the most recognized in the United States in state and national honors. The recognition breakfast was the culminating event for National School Counseling Week, celebrated the week of Feb. 2.
Shiloh HS teacher to serve on PSC

Stephen Dartt, a mathematics and chemistry teacher at Shiloh HS, has been appointed by Gov. Sonny Perdue to fill the vacant HS teacher seat on the Professional Standards Commission (PSC). Mr. Dartt was sworn in at the PSC meeting on Feb. 12. The PSC is charged with “establishing a certification/licensure process that is streamlined, understandable, and flexible in order to remove barriers and to attract qualified individuals to the education profession.” Mr. Dartt’s appointment runs through July 1, 2006.

Spotlight on…

• Dr. Cindy Loe, associate superintendent for Organizational Advancement— selected for the 2004 Urban Superintendents Academy, fully funded by the Broad Center for Superintendents. This 10-month executive leadership development program prepares future superintendents to meet the unique challenges facing urban public school districts.

• Richard Marshall of Collins Hill HS— received the Citation of Excellence Award from the National Bandmasters’ Association.

• Bill Holleman of Peachtree Ridge HS— honored as 2003 National HS Coach of the Year for Division I by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America. Mr. Holleman also will coach the McDonald’s All American HS Soccer Game this summer.

• Melanie Leyva-Abad of Nesbit ES— named 2004 Teacher of the Year by the Council for Exceptional Children. She will represent Georgia at the national convention in April.

• Dory Rogers of Shiloh HS— named K–12 Teacher of the Year by the Foreign Language Association of Georgia (FLAG).

• Lynne Gant of J. P. McConnell MS— selected as 2004 FLAG Teacher of Promise, an honor for teachers in their first years of teaching.

• Glenn Burrows of Shiloh MS— received the state’s MS Technology Education Program Excellence Award. He will be honored by the International Technology Educators Association.

• Gregg Tavani of Duluth HS— honored as the 2003 Georgia Soccer Coach of the Year. Mr. Tavani also earned his National “A” Coaching License from the U.S. Soccer Federation.

• Billy Jones of Grayson HS— coached varsity and JV teams to state wins at the Science Problem Solving Bowl.

• Lisa Green of Kanoheda ES— earned a specialist’s degree in Education Leadership from Lincoln Memorial University.

• Mandi Burgess of J. C. Magill ES— earned a master’s degree in Reading and Literacy from Walden University.

• Dion Corn of Kanoheda ES— earned a master’s degree in Reading and Literacy from Walden.

• Karen DeLoach of Kanoheda ES— earned a master’s degree in Reading and Literacy from Walden.

• Rhonda Dominguez of W. J. Cooper ES— earned a master’s degree in Reading and Literacy from Walden.

• Tina Hutto of J. C. Magill ES— earned a master’s degree in Reading and Literacy from Walden.

• Ashley Kirkland of Norcross ES— earned a master’s degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of Georgia.

• Patty Kratzer of J. C. Magill ES— earned a master’s degree in Reading and Literacy from Walden.

• Fran Ray of J. C. Magill ES— earned a master’s degree in Reading and Literacy from Walden.

(continued)
Spotlight, continued

**Degrees**

- Ricci Thomas of Kanoheda ES— earned a master’s degree in Early Childhood Education from Piedmont College.
- Kristin Uihlein of Kanoheda ES— earned a master’s degree in Early Childhood Education from Piedmont.
- Christy Williams of Kanoheda ES— earned a master’s degree in Early Childhood Education from Piedmont.
- Dr. Gale Hey, director of Professional Development— graduated from the National Staff Development Council Academy, a multi-year leadership program.
- Samela Reid of Parkview HS— earned National Counselor Certification and National School Counselor Certification from the National Board for Certified Counselors.

**Presentations**

- Two Gwinnett educators presented at the National Staff Development Council conference. Dr. Lea Arnau, Teacher/Staff Development coordinator, presented “You Can Teach an Old Dog New Tricks: Professional Growth for Veteran Teachers;” and Dr. Connie Burch, teacher on special assignment in Professional Development, presented “National Board Certification: A Tool to Enhance the Quality of Teaching.”
- Dr. Cindy Loe, associate superintendent for Organizational Advancement— presented “How to Improve AP Participation and Narrow the Achievement Gap” at the National College Board conference in New York City.
- Melanie Leyva-Abad of Nesbit ES and Caroline Whitten of Rock Springs ES— were keynote speakers for the Tennessee Department of Education Annual Assistive Technology Institute in December.

**Publications**


**Participants**

- Alton C. Crews MS— hosted the Minister of Education from the British Virgin Islands, several education officials, and representatives from IBM for a tour of the school to highlight the integration of instructional technology into the curriculum.
- Brian Westlake of Berkmar HS— selected by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education to serve on a validation/standard-setting panel for a teacher licensure test.
- Peggy O’Neill of Transportation— as a member of Step In Time dance team, won the “Team Cabaret” world title at the United Country Western Dance Council World Championships.

**Grants**

- Several Gwinnett teachers were awarded mini-grants of up to $250 from the Junior League of Gwinnett and North Fulton. Recipients were Debi Shane of Arcado ES; Stacy Butler Howard of Berkmar HS; Julie Nelson of Centerville ES; Jennifer Benton of Central Gwinnett HS; Tracy Schofield of Dacula HS; Diana Forrest of Gwin Oaks ES; Ivy Carruth of J. G. Dyer ES; JoEllen Barnett of K. E. Taylor ES; Sandy Parks of Lanier MS; Ashley Kirkland of Norcross ES; Roberta Romeo of Oakland Center; Ammee Robbins and Janice Moriarity, both of Peachtree ES; Rand Bissell of Peachtree Ridge HS; Naomi Curry of Summerour MS; and Amy Valk and Andy Cash, both of W. J. Cooper ES.
Meet the Payroll Services Team

**Department/Area:** Office of Payroll Services, Business and Finance Division

**The Payroll Services Team:** Sandi Roberson, coordinator; Kathy Pitcher, payroll system accountant; Lisa Foster, disability payroll/employment verifications; Andy Hambrick, FLSA/substitute payroll; Joan Kahoun, direct deposit/miscellaneous payroll/garnishments; Dottie Langford, benefit withholdings/taxes; Dianne Phillips, PeopleSoft; Chris Seblink, classified salary calculations; Dennie Steele, leave accounting; Suzanne Wallace, monthly/GRS payroll; and Linda Weeks, certified/contract salary calculations.

**By the Numbers:** Each month, Payroll Services processes more than $50 million in gross salaries in the monthly payroll alone. Another $4 million is processed each month for the miscellaneous, substitute, semi-monthly, and disability payrolls. Processing more than 20,000 checks and direct deposits each month, Payroll has a 99.9% accuracy rate, and is continually striving for total accuracy. For tax year 2003, Payroll Services processed some 22,500 W-2 forms with taxable gross salaries of more than $556 million, compared to a decade ago—11,922 W-2’s and $190 million in taxable gross salaries.

**Some Things You Need to Know About the Payroll Services Team:** As the name implies, Payroll Services handles the payroll, but the office also maintains the leave, substitute, and miscellaneous programs; verifies employment; processes benefit deductions; produces W-2 and 1099R forms; calculates certified and classified salaries; routes direct deposits to banks all over the U.S.; handles wage garnishments; and remains in compliance with Internal Revenue Service reporting.

**Quotable Quote about the Team:** “The Payroll Services Team does whatever it takes, each and every month, to ensure that every GCPS employee receives his or her paycheck in an accurate and timely fashion,” says Jeff Weiler, chief financial officer. “They do this with smiles on their faces, all with a healthy dose of great customer service.”

To review the state curriculum draft... [http://www.glc.k12.ga.us/spotlight/gps1.htm](http://www.glc.k12.ga.us/spotlight/gps1.htm)
For more on the legislative session... [http://66.223.51.57/clients/gsba/default.asp](http://66.223.51.57/clients/gsba/default.asp)
For more on the five-year forecast... [http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/gcps-mainweb01.nsf/pages/EnrollmentForecasts0-PlanningforOurFuture](http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/gcps-mainweb01.nsf/pages/EnrollmentForecasts0-PlanningforOurFuture)
For more about CPR Saturday... [http://www.redcроссatlanta.org/frameset.htm](http://www.redcроссatlanta.org/frameset.htm)
For tips on e-mail etiquette... [http://www.emailreplies.com](http://www.emailreplies.com)
For calendar reminders...
  - [http://www.menc.org/guides/miosm/MIOSMFront.html](http://www.menc.org/guides/miosm/MIOSMFront.html) (Music in Our Schools Month)
  - [http://www.nassp.org/schoolimprove/activities.cfm](http://www.nassp.org/schoolimprove/activities.cfm) (Middle Level Education Month)
  - [http://www.nea.org/neighborhood/resources/index.html](http://www.nea.org/neighborhood/resources/index.html) (Read Across America Day)
For application for loan forgiveness... [http://www.gsfc.org/gheac/dsp_defbor_ans10.cfm](http://www.gsfc.org/gheac/dsp_defbor_ans10.cfm)
For more about school leadership... [http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/gcps-hrweb01.nsf](http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/gcps-hrweb01.nsf)
For more on the Gwinnett University Center program... [http://www.coe.uga.edu/gwinnett/sped](http://www.coe.uga.edu/gwinnett/sped)
For more about HOPE... [http://www.gsfc.org/GSFA/SCL/dsp_teacher_scholarship.cfm](http://www.gsfc.org/GSFA/SCL/dsp_teacher_scholarship.cfm)
For more about Personnel Perks...
  - [http://www.atlantatoyota.com](http://www.atlantatoyota.com)
  - [http://www.richport.com/](http://www.richport.com/)

Click Here Connection