

IN THIS ISSUE



- New Leader in Wichita, p.3
- Charlotte is Global-Ready, p.7
- LEGISLATIVE**
- ESSA in Limbo, p.10

## Boston to Boost Aid To Homeless Students

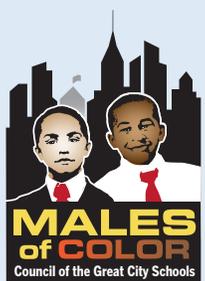
Boston Public Schools plans to invest some \$1 million in specialized services to students experiencing homelessness, which would benefit some 3,000 district students identified as homeless.

“For students experiencing homelessness and added barriers to success, additional resources and services provide them better opportunities to thrive,” said Boston Mayor Martin Walsh in a press release. “Boston Public Schools are taking an added step in investing in programs that are critical in working toward eliminating access and achievement gaps for the most vulnerable students in our city.”

The Boston school system has launched a new operation, the Opportunity Youth Department under the Office of Social Emotional Learning and Wellness to support the implementation of wellness initiatives, including the Homeless Education

**Homeless Students** continued on page 4

## Mentoring Showing Results in City Schools



The *Urban Educator* takes a closer look at how urban schools are using mentoring programs to improve achievement for males of color. *Close-up* story on page 5.

## Work-Ready Initiative Launched in Toledo To Prepare Students for New Jobs

Superintendent Romules Durant of Toledo Public Schools (TPS) often talks about the East Toledo neighborhood where he grew up, surrounded by hardworking neighbors who had good jobs at the local factories and who, in turn, supported local Mom and Pop shops.

Watching that way of life slowly erode because of the closing of factories helped to focus Durant on a mission: making sure TPS students are ready for today’s global workforce and supporting the efforts of companies willing to locate in Toledo and pay livable wages.

That’s why the Toledo, Ohio, school system has partnered with the Lucas County commissioners to make sure area residents are aware of and ready for the hundreds of new, living-wage manufacturing jobs that will be coming to the Toledo area in coming months.

*WorkReady Manufacturing* is an initiative to connect job seekers within Lucas County with these manufacturing jobs, many of which are related to the automotive industry because Detroit is roughly an hour north of Toledo.

Dana Inc., based in the Toledo suburb of Maumee but with a global reach, is already building an axle plant in the 80-acre Overland Industrial Park being developed by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority on the site of an old Jeep plant. The company expects the plant to have 300 employees in three years. Workers will initially make axles for the Jeep Wrangler but company officials say there is room for other work at the facility.



**Toledo Schools Superintendent Romules Durant, left, looks on as Woodward High School Principal Jack Renz talks about the importance of new manufacturing jobs for his students, their families and residents of the surrounding neighborhood.**

Detroit Manufacturing Systems LLC has also announced a new plant in the industrial park that will employ at least 140 people to make interior parts for the next-generation Jeep Wrangler.

Once building is completely finished, there could be 1,000 or more employees working in the industrial park, county officials say, many of them making in excess of \$70,000 a year.

To make sure area residents have the best chance to secure those jobs, the Lucas County Department of Planning and Development and the Ohio Means Jobs-

**Toledo Initiative** continued on page 4

# \$25,000 Milken Educator Awards Announced

During the past three decades, the Milken Family Foundation has honored top educators across the country with the Milken Educator Award and a \$25,000 cash prize.

One of this year's recipients is Jayda

Pugliese, a fifth-grade science and math teacher at Andrew Jackson Elementary School in Philadelphia, where 100 percent of the students are eligible for free and reduce-priced lunch. More than 80 percent of her students showed at least one year's

growth in math skills during her first year at Andrew Jackson, and many of her students work above grade level.

She has completed several successful crowdfunding and education grant campaigns that have helped to equip her classroom with state-of-the-art science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM) learning tools. And Pugliese, who is hearing-impaired, is the first in her family to graduate from high school and earn a college degree.

In addition to Pugliese, five teachers from districts represented by the Council of the Great City Schools were also selected as recipients of the 2017 Milken Educator Award.

Masaru Uchino is a third-grade teacher at Hawaii's Momilani Elementary School who has instructed winter and summer science camps. Since 2007, his third-graders have scored at least 25 points higher than the math median on the state assessment exams.

Kelly Sutcliffe is also a teacher in Hawaii, where she focuses on real-world problem-solving with her



Students at Andrew Jackson Elementary in Philadelphia give teacher Jayda Pugliese a hug after she received the 2017 Milken Educator Award. Photo credit: Milken Family Foundation

**Educator Awards** *continued on page 3*



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# Chicago Launches Initiative to Recruit Business Professionals to Teach

Considered a first-of-its-kind collaboration, Chicago Public Schools has partnered with the Windy City’s corporate community to recruit and train experienced science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) professionals to become teachers in high-needs communities.

The nation’s third largest school system recently launched BEST (Bringing Experts to STEM Teaching), a partnership among Chicago Public Schools, the University of Illinois-Chicago, National Louis University and the city’s corporate community.

The program will allow STEM professionals, especially those planning a career transition or retirement, to share their expertise in schools to help students grasp the importance of and opportunities in gaining a STEM education.

Two companies – Baxter International and Accenture -- have already signed on to BEST.

“Health sciences is our expertise. Combine that with our goal of fostering tomorrow’s innovation, and it’s a nice cross section. It’s our sweet spot,” says Alice Campbell, Baxter’s senior director of global

community relations in the *Chicago Sun-Times*. “We hope other companies with STEM expertise join us.”

The Chicago school system believes the BEST program may be the first comprehensive effort by a large urban school district to develop a pipeline of STEM teachers in coordination with corporate and higher education partners.

“Teachers with professional experience in the STEM fields are in a unique position to connect with students and demonstrate the real-world applications of their studies,” says the school system’s Chief Education Officer Janice Jackson in a press release. “By developing a pathway to bring experienced STEM professionals into the schools that need them most, we hope to provide our students with a new set of role models and mentors who can highlight the value and opportunity that the STEM fields have to offer.”

STEM professionals who plan a career transition or retirement and interested in teaching can contact their respective companies that are in the BEST program. The

company will interview the employee and send successful candidates to Chicago Public Schools, which will vet each candidate’s education and experience.

Subsequently, the school system will refer qualified candidates to an adviser at a partner higher education institution to help determine if the candidate is a good match for full teaching certification or a certification in Career and Technical Education (CTE).

For candidates to join the traditional teaching track for high school math, science or computer science, they must possess

**Chicago Initiative** continued on page 12



**Educator Awards** continued from page 2

fourth-grade students at Jefferson Elementary. Under her instruction, students have built portable air-conditioning units, and studied sustainable farming and agriculture. Beyond her concern for students, Sutcliffe also mentors future educators from nearby universities.

Tiffany Tynes Curry is a third-grade teacher at Weinland Park Elementary School in Columbus, Ohio, whose students earn two years’ worth of growth by year’s end. A graduate of the Columbus City Schools, her fourth-graders turn in the highest performance in the division cohort for math and science.

Paul Campbell is a first-and second-grade teacher at Chester Valley Elementary in Anchorage, Alaska. A product of the Anchorage School District, he is on his

school’s leadership team and helped draft the school’s Title I improvement plans.

And Lukas Hefty is a science and math coordinator at Douglas L. Jamerson, Jr. Elementary School in St. Petersburg, Fla. From 2011 to 2015, his efforts to enhance science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education has produced a 33 percent increase among fifth-grade students scoring 3 or higher on the science state assessment test.

There were 35 education professionals selected as Milken Educator Award recipients this year, which marked the award’s 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Since 1987, more than 2,700 education professionals have been presented the award, which recognizes and praises early-to mid-career teaching professionals.

## Wichita Selects New Superintendent



**Alicia Thompson**

Alicia Thompson is a graduate of Kansas’ Wichita Public Schools, who has served several positions in her 24 years with the district, including teacher, principal and curriculum and staff developer.

She will now add one more position to the list: superintendent. Thompson was recently selected as the district’s future superintendent. She will begin the position on July 1, succeeding John Allison, who is leaving to head Kansas’ Olathe Public Schools beginning next school year.

Thompson, who began her teaching career in Wichita in 1992 as a 3rd-grade teacher, is currently the assistant superintendent of elementary schools for the 50,561-student school system.

“The Wichita community has made investments in me, and I want to honor those investments by giving back to the community by serving as the future superintendent of the Wichita Public Schools,” said Thompson in a news release.

**Toledo Initiative** *continued from page 1*

Lucas County staff conducted *WorkReady Manufacturing* seminars in January at two TPS high schools – Scott and Woodward – that are situated in struggling neighborhoods with high unemployment. Waite High School, Superintendent Durant’s alma mater, is set to host a *WorkReady* informational meeting in mid-March.

The seminars cover a broad range of topics, including job requirements in manufacturing, employment survival skills training and other services to help job seekers get ready for the application process. More than 1,000 Toledo residents attended the initial seminars at the two high schools.

Durant views this initiative – and the promise of good-paying jobs – as positive signs of a resurgence of industry in Toledo.

“The *WorkReady* program is a shining example of collaboration at its best,” Durant says. “Numerous entities have come together to provide our community members with the training and tools they need to be successful.”

In announcing the seminars, Lucas County Commissioner Tina Skeldon Wozniak said, “This is a partnership that really makes sense to work with our Toledo Public Schools system and to work with the young people who are the workers of the future.”

Durant said he is particularly happy with the *WorkReady* collaboration because it is aimed at city residents, many of whom could be parents of current TPS students, and at new graduates of the district who can immediately put their School to-Work skills to use.

In addition, with TPS being one of the largest employers in Toledo, it was particularly important for the school district to support efforts to make Toledo a vibrant manufacturing center once again, Durant said.

Karla Spangler, director of Career Preparation and Readiness, said the district is so committed to making sure the new manufacturing jobs are filled by TPS graduates and their families that it is proctoring ACT’s WorkKeys assessments, which measure necessary workplace skills and

help employees build career pathways.

The employers coming to Toledo have agreed to accept the results of the assessment – which will test Applied Mathematics, Locating Information and Reading for Information--as the first step in their hiring process. The assessments have varying degrees of difficulty so the potential employees can obtain higher level certificates.

Each assessment has a tutorial component to review prior to taking the test. Both Scott and Woodward high schools are testing sites for WorkKeys and are open the second and fourth Saturday of each month, from 8:45 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. One hour for each test is allotted and tests can be retaken for a higher score if the applicant would like to try again.

Spangler says the reviews are particularly important because such assessments are “not always easy for our displaced workers because of their years out of school and the lack of review of educational material.”

To learn more about the collaboration, visit [www.workreadylucascounty.com](http://www.workreadylucascounty.com).

*(Story reported by Mary-Beth Matthews in Toledo)*

## El Paso Superintendent’s Tenure Extended



**Juan Cabrera**

Superintendent Juan Cabrera of the El Paso Independent School District in Texas recently received a contract extension from the district’s Board of Trustees.

He was given a new five-year contract to 2022.

“It’s well-deserved based on merit and his outperforming our expectations for him and his goals,” said board president Dori Fenenbock in the *El Paso Times*.

Superintendent Cabrera has headed the El Paso school system since 2013.

**Homeless Students** *continued from page 1*

Resource Network to help schools respond to homeless students’ needs.

“I am thankful for this important investment from Mayor Walsh,” Boston Public Schools Superintendent Tommy Chang stressed. “With students experiencing homelessness facing serious challenges outside the classroom, this investment allows us to better support young people in reaching their academic successes.”

Under the guidance of the Opportunity Youth Department, Boston schools will be

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**“Our students who are experiencing homelessness face many unique barriers to learning”**

—Boston City Councilor-At-Large Ayanna Pressley

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able to decide how their funding portion will be spent to support their individual student populations. The school system will provide enhanced training for teachers, aides and administrators to help homeless students receive individualized resources to succeed in the classroom.

The Homeless Education Resource Network connects students experiencing homelessness with essential resources, such as transportation, mentoring, tutoring, enrichment programs and social-service organizations that assist with food, clothing and shelter.

“Our students who are experiencing homelessness face many unique barriers to learning,” said Boston City Councilor-At-Large Ayanna Pressley. “These students deserve and are in dire need of greater wrap around services to support their stabilization, health, scholastic and life success.

“I am pleased the Administration and the Boston Public Schools recognize this and are doing something about it while the City simultaneously continues the work necessary to end homelessness for all Boston residents,” Pressley emphasized.

## Supporting Male Students of Color Through Mentoring

By Tonya Harris

Antwon Cooper, 33, was working as a hall monitor at a high school in Baltimore three years ago when the assistant principal asked him to help a 20-year-old African-American male student graduate. “I need you to talk to this young man and get him across the stage,” Cooper recalled the principal saying to him in an *Urban Educator* interview. He mentored the student and at the end of the school year, the young man walked across the school’s stage to receive his high school diploma.

“From that moment on, I have been a mentor to young men across Baltimore city,” said Cooper, himself a graduate of the Baltimore school system. “This is my life’s work, it’s my passion.”

That passion has culminated in Cooper being one of four full-time African-American male mentors at Baltimore’s Renaissance Academy High School, where the ratio of boys to girls is 2-to-1. The school is in a community that, according to census data, has the highest rates of homicides in the city, the lowest life expectancy and is a mile from where Freddie Gray lived, whose arrest and death in the custody of the Baltimore police department spurred protests and civil unrest.

Having four full-time mentors in the school was the brainchild of principal Nikkia Rowe, who in 2014 used Title I funds to hire mentors for 48 male students who were struggling academically and had low attendance rates. The mentoring initiative, known as Seeds of Promise, has now expanded to where each boy who attends Renaissance is paired with a mentor based on personality, life experience and future goals.

The mentoring begins the moment the boys enter the school where they must check in with their mentor, who follows them into the classroom to provide academic support. Trained in restorative practices, the mentors hold daily advisory group sessions, including having students sit in circles. Cooper has found that circles



Antwon Cooper, center, with two of the boys he mentors at Renaissance Academy High School in Baltimore.

are essential because oftentimes young people believe their voices are unheard, but everyone who participates in a circle, whether it’s four students or 20, is given an equal opportunity to talk.

“We’ve done circles so much with our boys that if a [situation arises] between a group of students, they will say ‘let’s call a circle,’” said Cooper.

### CLOSE-UP

And the mentoring doesn’t stop when the boys leave school. Cooper and his fellow mentors attend basketball and football games, organize weekend field trips and answer students’ phone calls when they need to talk to someone. When one of the students became addicted to drugs, it was a mentor who placed him into a rehab facility.

“In an era of rigorous standards and high stakes testing, we’ve lost relationships,” said principal Rowe, in a speech she recently gave at the National Mentoring Summit. “But we know that human beings change their behaviors based on their deep interpersonal relationships and that is what

these gentleman do with these young men.”

Rowe credits Seeds of Promise with reducing absenteeism and in 2015, 63 percent of participating students were found to have improved their grade-point averages (GPA). The program now includes two junior mentors, who graduated from Renaissance last year, to work with freshman students.

Last year, principal Rowe experienced firsthand how important the mentoring program was when during a three-month period three male students were lost to violence, including a student killed in the school by another student.

“In all that grief, I remember a mentor saying to me ‘with all these young men face, imagine the number it would’ve been had there not been a Seeds of Promise,’” recalled Rowe.

### Teachers as Role Models

In 2010, when Christopher Chatmon became executive director of the Office of African American Male Achievement for California’s Oakland Unified School District, he conducted a survey of 700 black male students in the district. And what he found is that students wanted access to African-American men during the school day.

As a result, he created the Manhood Development Program, an academic mentoring model that offers elective classes taught by African-American male teachers featuring an Afrocentric curriculum that exposes black males to their history.

“I wanted to create classes taught by African-American male teachers where black boys could have a safe space where they could be okay with who they are and understand their cultural prosperity,” said Chatmon. “I can’t be my best, if I don’t know that I come from the best.”

**Mentoring Programs** continued on page 5

**Mentoring Programs** *continued from page 4*

The program began as a pilot in three schools and is now in 22 schools, with GPA's 25 percent higher for students in the program than for black students who haven't taken the courses. In addition, black male graduation rates in the district have improved from 42 to 57 percent since the program was introduced.

San Francisco Unified School District has implemented the program at four schools while school systems in Seattle and Washington, D.C., are interested in piloting the courses. The program has also been recognized by the White House as a best practice to improve the educational outcomes for black boys.

When Chatmon first created the Manhood Development Program he was often told that there were no African-American male teachers to hire. But in seven years, the district has doubled the amount of black male teachers and the initiative has a 92 percent retention rate.

Chatmon recruits teachers from the coaching ranks as well as afterschool providers and believes that what is most important is a teacher's attitude.

"I can't teach you how to love black children," said Chatmon, "but I can teach you skills if you love black children."

The program also brings in African-American males from the community, from professionals with degrees to janitors, plumbers and electricians, who hold group mentoring sessions as well as one-on-one career mentorships.

"I don't think any successful person makes it to where they are at by themselves and the higher you go, the more people you can attribute your success," said Chatmon, who also mentors students. "Our mantra is moving brothers from not working to networking."

### **Keeping Boys on Track**

Texas' Austin Independent School District was one of 10 districts selected last year to participate in President Obama's My Brother's Keeper Success Mentors Initiative, designed to pair students with men-



**A teacher in Oakland's Manhood Development Program helps a student at Frick Middle School.**

tors to help students improve attendance.

The district identified 300 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade Hispanic and African American boys who suffered from chronic absenteeism and provided them with a teacher who served as a mentor, touching base with them several times a week and providing support to make sure they were attending school.

Data from last year's program revealed that half the students are no longer chronically absent and this year's program is showing the same results.

In fact, district officials plan on expanding the initiative to include students in the lower grades, including first graders, with the hope that it will lead to more male students of color being on grade level.

Austin's males of color are also benefiting from the district's partnership with the University of Texas at Austin Project MALES (Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success) Student Mentoring

Program. Piloted at Travis High School in 2011, the mentoring program is now at eight district high school and middle schools in East Austin, a historically black and Latino working class community.

University undergraduates mentor approximately 100 Hispanic and African-American males every week for an hour. The curriculum for the mentoring program is designed around three rubrics: leadership, brotherhood and college and career readiness with all mentoring instruction and activities centered on these pillars. Mentors, who primarily are male and female students of color, are required to take a service-learning class and receive a stipend.

According to research, 20 percent of Latino males are earning higher education degrees, compared to 30 percent of African American males and 45 percent of white males.

Project MALE officials hope the mentoring program will not only lead to increased achievement and retention of male students of color in high school, but also build a stronger college-going culture.

"Our mentoring approach is about building relationships with these young men and providing role models that may be lacking for them in their schools and neighborhoods," said Emmet Campos, director of Project MALES. "Research shows that mentoring could be that critical piece to keep these young men on track."

### **A Community Approach**

When Derald Davis, assistant superintendent, **Mentoring Programs** *continued on page 7*



**Austin students participate in the Project MALES Student Mentoring Program summer academy.**

**Mentoring Programs** *continued from page 7*

tendent of innovation and special projects for Missouri's Kansas City Public Schools, met new superintendent Mark Bedell for the first time last June, Bedell told him that as a high school principal he had most of his teachers involved in a mentoring initiative. "He saw how it changed the trajectory of the building," recalled Davis, "so he believes in mentoring."

That belief is why Bedell has put Davis in charge of an initiative to have at least 50 percent of the district's 16,000 students involved in a mentoring program within the next three to five years.

Davis has been busy creating a diverse portfolio of mentoring programs, including one-on-one, group, academic and career mentoring. He has met with dozens of local organizations such as black fraternities and sororities, churches and corporations, including the National Society of Black Engineers who want to mentor students who desire to enter STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields.

According to Davis, the school district has not been able to pass a bond in 40 years because so many students attend charter, private or schools in neighboring suburban districts. So he hopes the mentoring project becomes a catalyst for having the community wrap its arms around the Kansas City school system.

The district-wide mentoring program will launch in the fall and while males of color who make up a significant portion of the student population will be helped, the program will also focus on providing mentors for other subgroups.

"It's not about looking at it just as a deficit lens, that a kid has to be struggling to need a mentor," said Davis. "It's about all of us; we never get to an age where we no longer need a mentor."

For more info:  
**Seeds of Promise**- [www.seedsofpromise.us](http://www.seedsofpromise.us)

**Manhood Development Program**- <http://www.ousd.org>

**Project MALES**- <http://diversity.utexas.edu/projectmales/>

## Charlotte Designated Global-Ready District In North Carolina

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is one of two school systems recently awarded a Global-Ready District designation by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction for ensuring that students are prepared for global engagement and citizenship.

The designation, also awarded to Onslow County Schools, was created after the 2013 release of "Preparing Students for the World: Final Report of the State Board of Education's Task Force on Global Education."

A school district must apply for the designation, which is based on 10 attributes identified by the state's Department of Public Instruction as essential for effective

global education, by completing a rigorous, comprehensive report on how it meets the global standards.

"We are very proud to be a Global-Ready District," said Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Superintendent Ann Clark. "This designation recognizes our long-standing commitment to preparing our students for success in a diverse, globally linked workplace and world.

"That commitment is expressed in our curriculum and focus on teaching world languages, cultural knowledge and sensitivity, and how to succeed in a 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace," she added.

The designation is effective for three years. Then a district can apply again.

## San Diego School Unveils Mock Trial Courtroom

Students in the Mock Trial Team at San Diego's Abraham Lincoln High School now have an actual courtroom where they can hone their legal skills.

The new courtroom facility is the result of a donation to the school by Sony Electronics Inc.

The courtroom will primarily serve the school's Mock Trial Team and the criminal justice program, which offer work and real-life experiences for students to explore ca-

reers and how to address real issues related to the criminal justice system.

The Mock Trial Team at Abraham Lincoln High School has been in existence for four years, and the use of a life-size courtroom will be a major asset to their preparedness.

The mock courtroom will also be used for the SAY San Diego Teen Court diversion

**Mock Courtroom** *continued on page 8*



Students, staff, and legal professionals come together to celebrate the opening of a new courtroom facility at Abraham Lincoln High School in San Diego.

## Journalist Returns to Houston Alma Mater To Host TV Show

A graduate of Houston's Yates High School, journalist and author Roland Martin recently returned to his alma mater to broadcast his TV One's morning show, *News One Now*.

Martin hosted a live broadcast of his morning show from the television studio on the campus of Yates. The show focuses on news and analysis of politics, entertainment, sports, and culture from an African-American perspective. Martin is a 1987 graduate of the communications program at the high school, which was initiated nearly 40 years ago.

Following the live broadcast, Martin spoke with students regarding the journalism industry and answered questions.

His visit to his alma mater culminated in him being honored with a Distinguished Alumni Award during a State of the Schools address by Houston Schools Superintendent Richard Carranza.

The Distinguished Alumni Award is given to graduates from the district who have established themselves as persons of extraordinary achievement and meaningful contributions in their profession and community.

In addition to being the host and managing editor of TV One's *News One Now*, Martin also is the creator and host of *The Roland Martin Show*, a daily syndicated radio broadcast in 20 markets across the country; a nationally syndicated columnist with Creators Syndicate and the *Daily Beast*; and a senior analyst with the *Tom Joyner Morning Show*, the nation's No. 1 syndicated urban morning radio show.

"One of the reasons why I wanted to do my show from Yates was because I wanted folks to know that a graduate of the school could come back and do something successful who didn't play sports," said Martin in his remarks upon receiving his award.

"When it comes to where we are in this [journalism] industry, we need to have diverse voices. The reality is that [Yates] could very well produce more and more Roland Martins. This school should be a crown jewel when it comes to communications."

Not only Martin, but his parents and several family members are graduates of the district. "I am a proud graduate of this district," said Martin. "And so I say all around the country 'we can produce great students in our public schools.'"



Left to right, Kenneth Davis, the principal of Houston Yates High School, and Houston board trustee Jolanda Jones talk with journalist Roland Martin during a broadcast of his national show from Yates High School. Photo Credit: Dave Einsel, Houston Independent School District

## Laundry Program In Baltimore Schools Aims to Improve Student Attendance

Students at eight elementary and middle schools in Baltimore will now have access to washers and dryers as part of a new pilot program to boost attendance.

Care Counts™ is a laundry program created by Whirlpool to explore the link between clean clothes and attendance.

Launched last year, the program is operating in 30 schools in five school districts across the country, including North Carolina's Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and Metro Nashville Public Schools.

As part of Care Counts™, each school identifies students with a need for clean clothes and tracks their loads of laundry, attendance and grades throughout the school year.

Results from the first year of the program found that more than 90 percent of students tracked improved their attendance, averaging 6.1 more days in school than the previous year.

The pilot in Baltimore is a partnership between Whirlpool and the nonprofit Family League of Baltimore.

"We are hoping to prove how the simple act of washing clothes has the power to make a positive impact on students and communities," said Family League spokeswoman Amy Bernstein in an interview with the *Baltimore Sun*.

**Mock Courtroom** continued from page 7

program, whose goal is to end the "school-to-prison" pipeline. Because some students may have had negative interactions with courthouses, the new courtroom will provide a safe environment for students in the program to practice critical thinking and communication skills.

## Denver School Board Member Responds to ‘Two Callings’

When Allegra “Happy” Haynes was growing up in Denver, she wanted to become a teacher.

Her mother had instilled in her the value of education and how it can propel one to succeed in life.

After graduating from Denver’s East High School, Haynes departed the Mile High City and attended Barnard College in New York City, and student-taught at an elementary school in Harlem.

But Haynes went on to lead a long career in city politics and education – not in classroom teaching.

“I had two callings,” she says in an *Urban Educator* interview, explaining the call “to help the Denver community fulfill its potential” and to educate the children in the city.

Today, she carries out three public roles. She is the secretary on the Denver Board of Education, executive director of the city’s Department of Parks and Recreation and, in January, became deputy mayor of Denver.

“I was surprised,” she says of the appointment by Mayor Michael Hancock. “He put me to work immediately on January 1.”

As deputy mayor, Haynes is on call to represent the mayor when he’s out of town and serves on his behalf at meetings and events. The City of Denver was recently named the second best place to live in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report* behind Austin, Texas.

Asked how she finds time to juggle the three public posts, Haynes says, “It can be difficult at times.” But she notes that working with the city, schools, and parks and recreation provides “important intersections” to help children of Denver succeed. “This works perfectly for my personal interests,” she emphasizes.

Haynes, 64, and single with no children of her own, notes that she has always had a passion for kids and an interest in the outdoors and the environment. The intersection of the school system and the parks and recreation department helps Denver



students get exercise and appreciate the environment and natural resources, she points out.

By wearing three hats, she faces a juggling act in making choices to maintain her busy schedule, which includes spending time away from home to participate in evening meetings and events. But she points out that she is serving “the same community.”

### Career in Public Service

Asked why she returned to Denver after earning her baccalaureate degree in political science from Barnard College, she says, “I loved New York City, but I’m a Western girl.”

She went on to earn a master’s degree in public affairs at the University of Colorado in Denver, and then became involved in Denver politics and launched a career in public service in her native city.

In 1990, Haynes won election to the City Council, becoming the first African American woman to serve on the policy-making panel. She served for 13 years on the City Council, and was president from 1998 to 2000. While on the Council, she indicates that she was involved in education in various ways, and spent time in schools in the district.

After 26 years in city government, she joined the Denver Public Schools in 2005, becoming an assistant to then-Superintendent Michael Bennet for community partnerships. Subsequently, she assumed the post of chief community engagement officer of the school system.

She departed Denver Public Schools in 2011 to work at a political and public administration consultant firm. She was also asked by members of the community to run for the at-large seat on the Denver school board.

With her passion for kids, Haynes says that she heeded the call from the community to pursue the board seat. “I felt like I had something to bring to the table, and I was committed to the school district’s direction.”

She has now been on the Denver school board for five years, serving as president for two and now as the policymaking body’s secretary.



Denver school board member Happy Haynes visits a school.

## ESSA Implementation in Limbo

By Jeff Simering, *Director of Legislation*

State and local education officials are charged with implementing the first year of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) beginning July 1, 2017 for most programs. Yet, the FY 2017 appropriations to fund ESSA will not be finalized until later in April at the earliest, and the federal regulations, guidelines, and application forms are on hold, under review, subject to revision, or possibly nullified by the new administration or the new 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. Nonetheless, the U.S. Education Department has retained the two-cycle application deadlines for ESSA state plans of April 3, 2017 or September 18, 2017. And, already some 20 states have indicated their intent to apply on the earlier date, despite uncertainty regarding what rules and requirements will apply.

To date, two sets of final ESSA regulations have been issued, along with 11 sets of ESSA guidance documents and an ESSA state plan template. The ESSA regulatory process was among the most contentious in decades. Still, the ESSA assessment regulations survived negotiated rulemaking and were issued on December 8, 2016 -- and are now in effect. But, the ESSA accountability and state plan regulations were issued on November 29, 2016 and never took effect since the effective date was formally delayed by the Education Department until at least March 21, 2017. The state template (application form) is also now being revised and is slated for reissuance by March 13, 2017. And, the controversial Supplement-Not-Supplant regulations were never issued in final form, but were withdrawn from the White



House review process in the waning days of the previous administration.

Additionally, all of the final ESSA regulations are subject to congressional nullification under the rarely used Congressional Review Act (CRA). The ESSA accountability and final state plan regulations have been “disapproved” by the House of Representatives and await disposition in the Senate. The Trump administration has indicated its support for the disapproval resolution in a statement of administration policy (SAP). It appears unlikely, however, that other ESSA regulations would be considered under the CRA. However, the Education Department could revisit any of the ESSA regulations or guidance documents through normal administrative procedures. But, there also remains the question of whether a new Negotiated Rule-making process would be required to reopen and revise the ESSA assessment regulations now in force.

Unfortunately, states and local school districts are left with the task of planning for the implementation of ESSA in the upcoming school year without knowing funding levels to be provided or the rules and requirements to be followed. Many school officials are looking to the actual requirements of the Act itself, and are making reasonable judgments about what to do in school year 2017-18. At present, there are simply not definitive answers to many of our ESSA implementation questions.

## St. Petersburg Fla., School Wins Ethics Bowl

Students at St. Petersburg High School in the West Coast Florida city recently competed with high school students from private, public and charter schools around Pinellas County to win the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Ethics Bowl competition.

“The ethics bowl is a competitive and collaborative event in which students discuss real-life ethical issues,” says a Pinellas

County Schools news statement. “Teams take turns analyzing ethical cases and responding to questions and comments from the other team and a panel of judges.”

The student competition is based on cases provided by the University of North Carolina Parr Center for Ethics and usually reflect current debates in society and globally.

Now the St. Petersburg High School moves on to a Virtual Ethics Bowl play-off using Google Hangouts to declare a regional winner. The regional winner will be able to compete in the National Ethics Bowl Competition at the University of North Carolina.

## Urban Students Compete in TV Cooking Show

Jayla Hill is a student at Palms Middle School in Los Angeles and Jasmine “Jazzy” Bell is a student at Piedmont IB Middle in Charlotte, N.C.. They are both 13 and both share a passion for cooking that has landed them as contestants on a television cooking show.

Hill was a recent contestant on the Food Network’s show “Chopped Junior,” which features four competitors between the ages of 9 - 13 who must take a mystery basket of ingredients and turn them into a creative dish in 30 minutes.

After watching an episode of the show Hill applied online and by May, she was on a plane to New York to tape the show.

For the first round, Hill was given a basket filled with ground beef, spinach, chive blossoms and chocolates and was directed to make an appetizer.

She made a ground-beef taco with a chocolate Mexican creme sauce and coleslaw that received raves from the panel of judges. She was able to progress to the entire round where she made a pork tenderloin earning her a slot in the dessert finale.

After she was given a mystery basket of trail mix, gelatin parfait, honey and apples, she added licorice, which the judges didn’t like very much and she lost out on the top prize of \$10,000.

Even though she didn’t win, Hill learned from the criticism she received and since the show ended has been teaching free



Jayla Hill on the set of the Chopped Junior television show she competed in.

culinary classes to elementary and middle school students.

“You have to take the good with the bad and next time I will do better,” said Hill in an interview with *LAUSD Daily*, an online newspaper. “Although I didn’t win, I learned some valuable lessons that will help me to propel my business.”



Jasmine Bell with her specialty red velvet cupcakes.

Bell is showcasing her culinary skills on the competition series MasterChef Junior, **Students Cooking** continued on page 12

## Atlanta Students To Take Part in Arts Research Project

Do the arts contribute to the social and emotional well-being, along with the overall health, of a student? This is what Atlanta Public Schools aims to find out through a research project that will be conducted in partnership with the Woodruff Arts Center, Pace University and the University of Arkansas.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) awarded the University of Arkansas a grant of \$149,500 to administer the research project.

The two-year study involves 700 fourth- and fifth-grade students from the district who will be exposed to different art forms throughout the school year. Students will take field trips to Woodruff Arts Center, where half of the students will experience three art forms, including a theatre performance, a symphony orchestra and an art exhibition and workshop. The other students will only be exposed to one of the three art forms. Students will complete surveys that ask their perspective, tolerance and interest in the art activities.

This study marks the first research funded through a new program, NEA Research Labs, dedicated to learning how the arts contribute positively to individuals and the community.

**Atlanta Students** continued on page 12

## STEM Scholarships Available to 2017 Class

For the eighth consecutive year, ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships are available to graduating high-school students in the 69 big-city school districts represented by the Council of the Great City Schools.

Four 5,000 scholarships for two males and two females each will be awarded to two African American and two Hispanic students graduating in the Class of 2017.

In 2010, former NASA astronaut Dr.

Bernard Harris Jr., a physician and businessman, and ExxonMobil wanted to help under-represented students pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) studies, and to increase diversity in the STEM workplace.

This year’s high-school seniors can apply for the competitive scholarships online at [www.cgcs.org](http://www.cgcs.org). Deadline to submit applications is April 10.



Dr. Bernard Harris, Jr.



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### **Students Cooking** *continued from page 11*

which began airing this February.

After a nationwide search, she was one of 40 of the best cooks between the ages of 8 and 13 selected to compete in a culinary battle in the MasterChef Junior kitchen in front of celebrity chefs Gordon Ramsay and Christian Tosi.

Only 20 will move forward in the competition and the winner will take home a trophy and \$100,000.

“I couldn’t do any of this without the support of my parents,” said Bell. “...My goal is to become a better chef and to inspire other people.”

Bell became interested in cooking a few years ago after taking culinary classes at a summer science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) camp.

After graduation, she plans to attend Johnson & Wales University or the Culinary Institute of America to major in culinary management and minor in pastry arts.

She also desires to own restaurants and food trucks and is currently taking a community youth entrepreneurship program to help her learn business basics.

### **Atlanta Students** *continued from page 11*

“We have made social and emotional learning an important part of the educational experience we offer our students,” said Atlanta Schools Superintendent Meria Carstarphen in a press release. “We believe this study will provide us with tremendous learning about the benefits of what we’re doing and how we can make it even more impactful in the future.”

### **Chicago Initiative** *continued from page 3*

the postsecondary hours required for state licensure, according to the school district. To help them attain the needed instruction to serve as teachers, each corporate partner provides a \$15,000 grant to National Louis University to help the candidate complete the teacher licensure program.

For candidates seeking CTE certification, which doesn’t require teaching licensure, they would have to demonstrate 4,000 hours of industry experience and earn a provisional license from the state.

Selected candidates for the BEST program must commit to teaching in Chicago Public Schools for three years.