



BCS News & Notes

A newsletter for parents, students, staff and community

Dec.. 2, 2011

Dedications set for new schools

Dedication ceremonies have been scheduled Friday, Dec. 9, for Jones Valley K-8 School and West End Academy.

Jones Valley's program is scheduled for 10 a.m.

Jones Valley's student body includes students who formerly were zoned for Wenonah Elementary School and the old Jones Valley. It was built to accommodate 740 students.

Jones Valley features art, science, band and choral classrooms, two computer labs, a cafeteria that seats 247 students and a gymnasium with a seating capacity of 300.

McWhorter Co., Inc., was the general contractor. Fuller & Thompson Architects designed the building.

The ceremony at West End Academy is set for 1 p.m.

West End Academy was built on the site of the old West End High School. It houses students who formerly were zoned for Lee, Powderly and Price elementary schools.

The \$10 million facility was built to accommodate 688 students. It has art, band and choral classrooms, a computer lab, a cafeteria that seats 229 students and a gymnasium that seats 300.

Stone Building Co. was the general contractor. NHB Group was the architect.

Policy Committee to meet Dec. 6

The Policy Committee will meet at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 6, in the board room of the Administration Building, 2015 Park Place.

Extracurricular Committee to meet

The Ad Hoc Committee on Extracurricular Activities of the Birmingham Board of Education will meet at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 7, in Room 307 of the Administration Building, 2015 Park Place.



Carver High School students speak to the media at a press conference announcing a donation for the school's engineering academy.

Carver Academy gets donation

Alabama Power Co. announced this week that the Alabama Power Foundation will donate \$120,000 to the Birmingham Education Foundation to support the engineering career academy at Carver High School.

The engineering academy is one of seven being developed in high schools across the district. This is a year of planning, during which the school district is putting everything in place for full implementation of the academies during the 2012-2013 school year. At that point, students will be allowed to transfer from their zoned schools to other high schools that offer academies that interest them.

Administrators selected academies for schools based on the schools' strengths. Carver, for example, has offered an engineering class for 11 years. The school is expanding that into a full-fledged engineering academy.

Superintendent Craig Witherspoon said the academies will give students broader opportunities and offer them hands-on learning opportunities. "Our students need to be exposed to real-world experiences and careers that they may never have considered otherwise," he said.

At a press conference set to announce the donation, Carver students who have taken the school's pre-engineering class demonstrated a remote-controlled robot they built from materials such as plywood and PVC.

Community meetings set

Community meetings have been scheduled for discussion of the future of four schools.

A meeting for Bush Middle School and Councill Elementary School is set for 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Monday, Dec. 12, at Bush.

A meeting for North Birmingham Elementary School and Lewis Elementary School is set for 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 14.

Superintendent Craig Witherspoon will speak about his proposed recommendations for the schools. Those attending the meetings will have an opportunity to ask questions and express their opinions of the proposals.

New website focuses on bullying

The Alabama Department of Education has developed the Stop Bullying in Alabama website to provide students, parents, teachers and school administrators a variety of resources to help combat bullying in Alabama's schools. These supportive resources have been made available on the Alabama Learning Exchange, www.alex.state.al.us, at no cost to educators, students, or parents.

Bullying in Alabama's schools is a serious issue that cannot be ignored. Bullying occurs when a person is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and has difficulty defending him or herself.

Dr. Yvette Richardson, the Alabama State Board of Education member for District IV, is taking the lead in a statewide campaign to stop bullying in educational settings and online.

"No child in our schools should ever feel scared or demeaned for any reason. It is up to adults to help them respond to bullying when it occurs, and also to take every step to ensure it does not occur in the first place," said Richardson.

A link to the anti-bullying website also is on the Birmingham City Schools website, <http://bhm.k12.al.us>.

Teachers win state awards

Two Birmingham City School System teachers have been named teachers of the year by the Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

They are Tarithia Bracey, a health teacher at Carver High School, and Phyllis West, a physical education teacher at Arrington Middle School.

They received their awards at the organization's annual conference in November.

-- Submitted by Dr. Sherri Huff

Carver plans holiday production

The Fine Arts Department at Carver High School will stage a holiday theatrical production entitled "This Christmas."

"This Christmas" follows a teenage girl through Christmas past, present and future. She is not pleased when she is assigned to do volunteer work for a class. She learns to appreciate the true meaning behind the holiday season through her experiences as a volunteer. Drama, choral, band and orchestra students will participate in the show, which will be presented to students Friday, Dec. 9. Two public performances are set for 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10, and Sunday, Dec. 11. Tickets are \$5. For information or reservations, call 231-3520 or 231-3882.

JROTC units pass inspection

JROTC units from eight schools in the Birmingham City Schools underwent a Command Formal Inspection recently. The inspection is held every three years.

The inspections were done by teams from the headquarters of the 6th Brigade, Hunter Army Airfield, Savannah, Ga., and the 6th Brigade Forward at Redstone Arsenal. The inspection process is rigorous and includes everything from administration and cadet leadership to curriculum knowledge and drill and ceremony.

"Our cadets performed superbly. They looked and conducted themselves in a manner that made me very proud to be a part of their lives," said Lt. Col. Willie G. Storey, director of Army instruction. "(Everyone) can be very proud of them. I believe without a doubt that they are our future leaders and the country is going to be left in good hands."

Six schools received the highest grade possible, that of honor unit with distinction. They are Ramsay High School, Carver High School, Parker High School, Jackson-Olin High School, Huffman High School and Woodlawn High School. Wenonah High School was rated as an honor unit, and Kennedy Alternative School was graded as a merit unit. No school failed inspection.

Stories needed for newsletter

If you know of something good happening in the Birmingham City Schools and you want to tell others the news, write a few paragraphs for BCS News & Notes and e-mail the information to Michaelle Chapman, director of communications, at mchapman@bhm.k12.al.us. Digital photos also are needed. Ms. Chapman is editor of "BCS News & Notes."

Woodlawn forms advisory board

Woodlawn High School has formed an advisory board to advise and help guide the school as it continues to develop its new business and finance academy. The board has pledged its commitment to provide ongoing input, feedback and resource, throughout the development phase of the Academy. Woodlawn Principal Fred H. Stewart is excited about the group's involvement.

"We have leaders from some of the most influential firms in Birmingham," Stewart said. "The development of the business and finance academy will provide our students with firsthand knowledge regarding the operation of a company. It is also our goal to combine theories learned in the classroom with real life experiences. The advisory board will be vital in connecting our students with the business community."

Members of the advisory board are:

- Sally Mackin, executive director of the Woodlawn Foundation
- Arthur Bailey of Birmingham Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Inc.
- Melissa Russell, CEO at Social Diary Daily Magazine
- Kevin Hagler of Southwest Funding
- Gregory Clark, a financial advisor at AUREUS Financial Management
- Dr. Emmanuel Chekwa, dean of business at Miles College
- Yvonne Burge, former cooperative education coordinator at Woodlawn High
- Sim Smith, coordinator of the Woodlawn Community School
- Alicia Lumpkin, workforce development director for the Mayor's Office Division of Youth Services
- Aleanna Morton-Young, education liaison for the Mayor's Office Division of Youth Services

-- Submitted by Regina Waller

Huffman student honored

Eduardo Honarato began asking about taking building and construction courses at Huffman High School when he was just a freshman. He is now a junior and in his second year of those classes. He is also the Alabama Construction Recruitment Institute student of the month for November.

Mobile's Fox 10 did a Skype interview with Eduardo about the award.

New building wins award

Bush Hills Academy is officially an award-winning building.

Blalock Building Co., general contractor for the school, entered it in the Associated Builders and Contractors Excellence in Construction competition. Company officials recently learned that the company won the Merit Award for the construction of Bush Hills Academy.