

The Public School Forum's Friday Report

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Friday Report Alert...

The arguments on the motion for summary judgment in the June Atkinson Lawsuit will be heard at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, July 15, 2009 in the Wake County Courthouse in a courtroom designated by the Trial Court Coordinator, Michelle Bailey, or the Trial Court Administrator, Sallie Kearns.

This Week's Friday Report is a Thursday Report!

Because of the 4th of July holiday, this week's *Friday Report* is being issued a day early. The Forum offices will be closed for the holiday and we wish readers a Happy 4th of July. The *Friday Report* will resume publication on Friday, July 10th.

Stopgap Spending Plan Approved; Governor Urges Quick Decision

The Senate, in a 35-13 vote, approved on Tuesday a stopgap spending bill that will keep state government operating in the absence of a new budget. The Senate agreed to House changes, including a two-week limit on the plan. The legislation provides for spending across state government at 85 percent of the level approved in the 2008-09 budget.

After signing the bill, Governor Perdue urged the legislature to agree on a state budget, warning that North Carolina is missing out on \$5 million a day in budget cuts and tax increases. Talking to reporters outside the Capitol Wednesday, the Governor said she doesn't care what combination of budget cuts and tax increases lawmakers settle on between the competing House and Senate Plans. "I need the General Assembly to step up and come to consensus," said Governor Perdue.

NC STEM Community Collaborative Kicks off New Education Plan

The NC STEM Community Collaborative, a statewide leader in incubating collaborative STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) programs in North Carolina communities, announced this week that more than 50 cross-sector leaders from throughout the state and nation gathered on Monday for the STEM Community Technical Assistance Kick-off hosted at the William and Ida Friday Institute for Educational Innovation on N.C. State's Centennial Campus.

The Technical Assistance Kick-off served as the initial step in an estimated six-month collaborative design process in the first three Ready-to-Launch STEM communities. The Kick-off achieved its goals of initiating inter- and intra-community engagement, introducing partners to the process and to each other, and generating energy and urgency toward a successful and ground-breaking approach to helping children succeed.

The next phase begins this summer with Community Engagement, when communities will introduce the process, conduct surveys, and hold structured open discussions throughout their community to engage and deeply understand local challenges and needs. NC STEM utilizes the investments and expertise of MCNC, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and NC STEM's founding partners to ensure the success of all North Carolina students while also providing their communities a workforce that aligns to richer economic opportunities.

State Board of Ed Meets Next Week via Conference Call

The State Board of Education will meet next Thursday, July 9, from 1:30-3 p.m., via conference call. Following is a summary of the Board's regular agenda. The complete agenda and executive materials are posted online at www.ncpublicschools.org/stateboard/meetings/

Individuals may come to the 7th Floor Board Room, Education Building, 301 N. Wilmington Street, Raleigh to listen in or pick up the meeting on their computer via audiostream (www.ncpublicschools.org/stateboard/meetings/ and scroll to the Live Audio Stream links). For more information, contact the NCDPI's Communications division at 919/807-3450.

Forum Board Chair Joins Brady Services, Inc.

Public School Forum board chair Phil Kirk has accepted a position as the new business development / corporate marketing leader for Brady Services Inc.'s Energy Services Group. Expected to start in late July, Kirk will be based out of Brady's Triangle office in Morrisville.

Serving as a member of the management team, Kirk will represent Brady at various statewide business meetings and will work with the Brady team on business development and other related marketing roles. Brady Services Inc. is a comprehensive energy services company specializing in heating, air conditioning and energy-efficient buildings.

Goodnight Appointed to National Board Roundtable

Ann Goodnight, director of community relations for SAS, has been appointed to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards' National Board Certification roundtable. Good night, who continues to dedicate herself to helping improve and reform the nation's education system, will be working with other business, political and community leaders to expand the program, which recognizes teacher who have "met rigorous standards through intensive study, expert evaluation, self-assessment and peer review."

NC Teacher Receives National Award

Kris Thomasson, a teacher at Martin Middle School in Wake County Public Schools, was named the 2009 national middle school adviser of the year. Thomasson, in her 8th year as a science teacher and her 17th year as student council adviser at Martin Middle School, received the 2009 Warren E. Shull National Middle Level Adviser of the Year award from the National Association of Student Councils. The award recognizes advisers of "exemplary character, leadership, and commitment to young people and their development as student leaders."

NC Committee on Dropout Prevention to Hold Conference Call

The North Carolina Committee on Dropout Prevention will meet via conference call on Wednesday, July 8th, from 10-11 a.m. Agenda items include approval of revised fiscal guidelines for the 2009-10 Dropout Prevention RFP and discussion of the 2009-10 grant award process. Members of the public who would like to participate should contact Stacy Downing at 919.807.3694 for instructions or come to Room 150N of the Education Building, 301 N. Wilmington Street, Raleigh. For more information, please contact Debora Williams at dwilliams@dpi.state.nc.us or 919.807.3925.

National News...

More States Face Possible Shutdown as Fiscal Year Ends

As of Monday afternoon, of the 46 states whose fiscal year ended June 30th, 32 (including North Carolina) did not have budgets passed and approved by their governors. Although the majority of them were expected to pass eleventh-hour budgets, five states are bracing for possible shutdowns this week as time runs out for lawmakers to close billion-dollar gaps in their fiscal 2010 budgets. For Indiana, one of those five states, the last time it missed its deadline for passing a budget and had to shut down the government was during the Civil War.

Since 2002, only five states have been forced to shut down their governments. Some of the closures were brief; in 2007, Michigan's doors were closed for four hours before lawmakers passed emergency measures that bought them time to close a \$1.75 billion deficit. In California, state finance officials were planning to issue IOUs on Thursday if lawmakers and the governor could not agree on a way to close a \$24 billion shortfall. The IOUs would go to local governments, vendors, taxpayers and college students receiving state financial aid. The state has issued such IOUs only one other time (1992) since the Great Depression.

Forum News...

Call for EPFP Applications

Applications are now being accepted for the Forum's Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP). The ten month seminar program meets weekly on Tuesday night from 5:30 to 8:30 pm from September 15, 2009 to May 11, 2010. The program addresses issues related to policy and leadership development. North Carolina boasts almost 600 EPFP alumni. The program seeks high energy individuals committed to enhancing their professional career through networking and exploring leadership and policy in the "real" world. An application may be obtained at the Forum's website. Go to www.ncforum.org and click on EPFP. The deadline is July 31st. Don't delay. Apply today!

Did You Know...

US Citizenship Test Stumps AZ High School Students

According to a new report by the Goldwater Institute, a conservative think tank, only 3.5 percent of Arizona's traditional public high school students would be able to pass a U.S. citizenship test. Charter schools and private schools didn't show much better with only 7 percent and 14 percent of those students passing the test, respectively.

The survey, conducted in November 2008, asked 1,350 public high school students 10 questions pulled at random from a list of 100 on the U.S. citizenship test. The standard on the citizenship test is that they applicant must be able to answer at least six of 10 questions correctly on the test, which is not multiple choice.

The Goldwater report follows the Center for Education Policy's 2007 report that found schools were pumping math and reading instruction by sacrificing other disciplines. In their report, a third of the districts surveyed reported cutting social studies. How well would you do on the citizenship test?

Test Yourself

1. What is the supreme law of the land?
2. What do we call the first 10 amendments to the Constitution?
3. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?
4. How many justices are on the Supreme Court?
5. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?
6. What ocean is on the East Coast of the United States?
7. What are the two major political parties in the United States?
8. We elect a U.S. senator for how many years?
9. Who was the first president?
10. Who is in charge of the executive branch?

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