

From: Taillon, Jeff
To: Taillon, Jeff <JeffTaillon@gov.sc.gov>
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Subject: S.C. Front Pages - Friday, August, 2, 2013



E GREENVILLE THE KING RETURNS



SPORTS Tigers face five key questions

The Greenville News

A GANNETT COMPANY

FRIDAY,
AUGUST 2, 2013
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

METRO

Storms knock out power to thousands in Greenville County, 1B

FINAL EDITION

School reports draw criticism

Data shows students
improving, schools sliding

By Ron Barnett
Staff writer
rbarnett@greenvilleonline.com

It can happen only in a universe in which you can move forward and backward at the same time. Or in the quantum mechanics of educational accountability.

South Carolina public school students are improving their grades in most subjects, while the majority of their schools are sliding downhill toward a big red F, according to apparently conflicting reports released by the state Department of Education on Thursday.

The percentage of students achieving proficiency in at least two subjects on the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards was up in every grade level. But nearly twice as many schools did worse than did better on the federal A-F scale, the figures show.

The apparent discrepancy, based largely on the fact that the federal accountability system raises the bar every year for schools and uses different formulas to crunch the same data, drew widespread criticism from educators across the state.

Greenville and Pickens school districts maintained their B grade on the new report. Anderson I slipped from A to B, which Jane Harrison, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, said fails to account for new subgroups of students.

"We don't feel it is (accurate) because it's not showing our growth," she told GreenvilleOnline.com.

Jason McCreary, director of accountability and quality assurance for Greenville County Schools, said the district plans to appeal and will ask for some of the high school data to be recalculated.

Ten Greenville County schools — including six high schools — made an F.

Most Greenville schools — 75 — made an A or B, but 55 schools fell by at least one letter grade from last year, with 28 improving and six staying the same, according to an analysis of the figures.

Statewide, 44 elementary schools, 24 middle schools and 15 high schools dropped by two letter grades, with 14 elementary and six middle schools falling from A to F. Four elementary schools jumped from F to A.

Meanwhile, nearly half of the state's school districts — 39 — fell a letter grade, and the state's grade dropped from an A to a B despite improvements

See SCORES, Page 3A

GOP FIREPOWER



TO AID HALEY

By Rudolph Bell | Staff writer | dbell@greenvilleonline.com

Greenville continues to make the A list of places where Republicans running, or thinking of running, for national office come for fundraisers — and to test the waters.

In 2012, both the Republican candidates for president and vice president, Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan, had fundraisers in Greenville.

Earlier this year, two potential Republican presidential candidates, Rand Paul and Newt Gingrich, started statewide tours in Greenville, and Paul helped the state GOP raise money while in town.

Now three nationally known Republican governors — and potential presidential candidates in 2016 — are due in Greenville later this month to help raise money for Gov. Nikki Haley.

Govs. Rick Perry of Texas, Bobby Jindal of Louisiana and Scott Walker of Wisconsin are scheduled to attend the fundraiser at the home of Greenville developer Bob Hughes on Aug. 26, according to an invitation.

They're coming the same day that Paul, a senator from Kentucky, is scheduled to appear at U.S. Rep. Jeff Duncan's annual Faith and Freedom barbecue and fundraiser in Anderson.

A member of Haley's finance team, Spartanburg businessman Barry Wynn, said the visits have more to do with Haley's stature in the party than South Carolina's pivotal, first-in-the-

While there's "always some jostling going on," it's a little early for presidential primary politics, said Wynn, a former chairman of the state GOP.

Brent Nelsen, a political science professor at Furman University, said the governors' interest in helping Haley in Greenville is "absolutely" related to South Carolina's prominent role in presidential politics.

GOP White House hopefuls "know they have to come to South Carolina, and they sure better be friendly with the governor because she could still very well be the governor in 2016," said Nei-

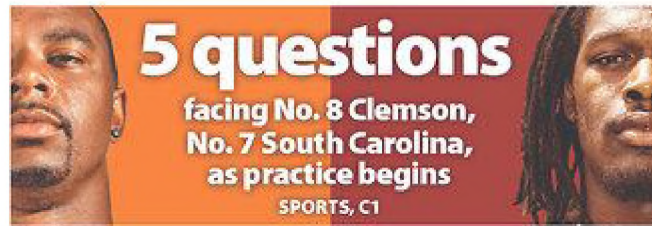




Summerville coach McKissick ready to start 62nd season. SPORTS, C1

Kate's 'baby bump' gets moms talking

MOXIE, D1



5 questions

facing No. 8 Clemson, No. 7 South Carolina, as practice begins

SPORTS, C1

The Post and Courier

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FRIDAY, August 2, 2013

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S.C. SCHOOLS MISS THE MARK

Test scores up but state grades dip, spurring calls for change

BY DIETTE COURRÉ CASEY // dcourrage@postandcourier.com

Although South Carolina students fared better this year on two of the state's biggest tests, they didn't make enough progress to meet the state's goals.

The state set higher achievement targets for 2012-13, and nearly half of the state's school districts fell short of those marks. That meant they earned worse letter grades.

On Thursday, the state Department of Education released three sets of results — scores on the state Palmetto Assessment of State Standards and high school exit exam, as well as letter grades assigned to schools and districts based on those scores.

The conflicting results — better test scores but lower grades — prompted calls from state officials to change the state's accountability systems, but they have different ideas about how to do that.

Some education leaders want the state to abandon the "A" through "F" letter grades assigned to schools based on their performance and growth, saying they aren't valid or reliable. But State Superintendent of Education Mick Zais defended the grades and vowed to fight any effort to "weaken accountability" in the state.

South Carolina schools must meet accountability mandates from the state and federal governments. The state system gives schools report card ratings, and the federal system assigns letter grades. Zais wants to eliminate the report cards and use only the letter grades.

"This new federal report card system is more transparent to parents and the public than the old system," he said.

Please see **SCHOOLS**, Page A5



The grades

This year was the second that schools and districts received grades as part of their federal accountability under the No Child Left Behind law. The grades are based on results from PAASS tests, exit exams and end-of-course tests, as well as schools' graduation rates. Every year, the achievement goals that districts and schools must meet go up, so the expectations for students' scores was higher this year compared to last year. The grade gives schools partial credit for making progress toward those goals.

- A score of 90-100 receives an "A" — substantially exceeds the state's expectations.
- A score of 80-89.9 receives a "B" — exceeds the state's expectations.
- A score of 70-79.9 receives a "C" — meets the state's expectations.
- A score of 60-69.9 receives a "D" — does not meet the state's expectations.
- A score of less than 60 receives an "F" — performance is substantially below the state's expectations.

District	2012	2013
Berkeley	90.3 A	87.5 B
Charleston	89.1 B	83.2 B
Dorchester 2	91.7 A	90.7 A
Dorchester 4	91.7 A	77.8 C
Statewide	90 A	83.8 B

— S.C. Department of Education

To see school-by-school results, go to postandcourier.com/test-results.

CofC's Benson to exit in 2014

President ready for 'normal life'

BY DIANE KNICH
dknich@postandcourier.com

The College of Charleston soon will begin the search for a new president after George Benson announced Friday that he would step down in June 2014.

Benson, 67, who has held the college's top post since 2002, will be leaving several months before the end of his current contract, which runs through Feb. 28, 2015. He said he planned to take a year sabbatical after he stepped down, and then return as a faculty member in the college's School of Business.

Greg Padgett, chairman of the college's Board of Trustees, said the board has seven new members who need to learn a bit more about the college and what being on the board is all about before the group begins a presidential search. But, he said, he expects the group to develop a selection process in the coming months that is "thorough, fair and inclusive."

Please see **BENSON**, Page A6

Doc enters guilty plea in stem cell case

Misdemeanor for ex-MUSC pathologist

BY PRENTISS HINDLAY
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A former Medical University of South Carolina pathologist who had been accused of illegally trafficking stem cells and dipping desperate patients' pockets is guilty of little more than mislabeling a shipment, his lawyer said.

Dr. Vincent Dammit, 42, of Mount Pleasant, pleaded guilty to a federal charge of causing the introduction of stem cells into interstate commerce without the approval of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, a misdemeanor. Dammit entered his plea Tuesday.

Please see **PLEA**, Page A6

Scott among Washington's 50 'Most Beautiful'

BY ROBERT BEHRE
rbehre@postandcourier.com

U.S. Sen. Tim Scott has made the list of Washington's 50 most beautiful people, but a different report suggests that's not always a good thing.

The 47-year-old South Carolina Republican was included in The Hill's annual roundup of the capital's most attractive people — a list mostly dominated by younger staffers, consultants and media figures.

Scott became the state's first black Republican congressman of the modern era in 2011 and was appointed this year to fill the Senate seat vacated by Jim DeMint.

He is up for election to that seat next year, and a study by Smart Politics, a non-partisan news site, sounded a cautionary note.

Smart Politics reviewed the 59 members of Congress who appeared on The Hill's 50 Most Beautiful list between 2004 and

2012. About 57 percent of them eventually lost re-election, failed in a campaign for higher office, resigned in scandal, or retired from political office.

Scott joked with The Hill about being called an "overnight success," adding, "I think of it as 6,000 nights of no overnight success," he said of the 13 years he spent in state and local government before coming to Washington.

The lifelong bachelor also revealed he has a girlfriend but declined to name her. "Oh no, I'm smarter than that," he said.



FILE PHOTO



DAMMIT



Partly sunny High 91, Low 72. Complete 5-day forecast, B8

Bridge... D7
Business... B6
Classified... F1
Comics... D6, 7

Crossword... D6, F10
Editorial... A-H
Movies... D4
Music... D1

Obituaries... D4
The South... D1
Sports... C1
Television... F5

Charleston Deals today

Teal, A Swanky Boutique
Pay \$20 for \$40 in merchandise. See A2

\$120,000 SETTLEMENT: Fired state worker to be compensated. **B1****Gamecocks open practice with high hopes**By JOSH KENDALL
jkendall@thestate.com

South Carolina opens the 2013 season, its 120th of intercollegiate football, at 7:15 Friday night with the first practice of the fall. The Gamecocks, who were ranked No. 7 Thursday in the pre-season USA Today Coaches Poll, finished the 2012 season 11-2 with losses only to No. 9 LSU and No. 3 Florida.

South Carolina has 29 practices scheduled between today and the Aug. 29 season opener against North Carolina in Williams-Brice Stadium. The first

week of practices is expected to be open to the public at the team's Bluff Road practice facility. Here are the five things we'll be watching while we're there:

THE CLOWNEY CIRCUS

Junior defensive end Jadeveon Clowney begins what he has said will be his final season at South Carolina. He has 21 career sacks, eight away from the school record, and is a contender for the Heisman Trophy.

THE QUARTERBACK COMPETITION

Senior Connor Shaw is the starter. Junior Dylan Thompson

will play, and the question is how much. The question probably will be asked every time Steve Spurrier holds a press conference this month.

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

The Gamecocks have four starters returning on the offensive line with a combined 57 starts. The lone newcomer will be the most watched of the fall. That's freshman center Cody Wal-

drop, who replaces four-year starter T.J. Johnson.

LINEBACKER WHO?

Four linebackers, including Nos. 1 and 3 tacklers Shaq Wilson and Reginald Bowers, are

gone, leaving plenty of opportunity in the middle of South Carolina's defense. Middle linebacker Kaiwan Lewis and weakside linebacker Cedrick Cooper are the players to watch.

FOR KICKS

The Gamecocks haven't kicked many field goals the past two seasons, but there have been some important ones. Either Landon Arnd or Nick St. Germain will hold the job this year after the departure of Adam Yates.

**INSIDE**

Gamecocks, Tigers ranked 7th and 8th in preseason Coaches Poll. **C1**
USC position previews: Mike Davis, right, leads runners. **C1**

The State

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 2013 | THESTATE.COM

SEEKING MILITARY MEMORABILIA

The U.S. Army Chaplains Museum at Fort Jackson displays artifacts that tell the history of the chaplain corps from its inception in 1775 until today.

IF YOU GO

HOURS: 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday through Friday; closed weekends and federal holidays

DIRECTIONS: From Interstate 77, take Exit 12 (Forest Drive/Strom Thurmond Boulevard) onto Fort Jackson. All visitors must stay in the far right lane and be prepared to show a driver's license. Once on Fort Jackson, continue on Strom Thurmond Boulevard. Make a left onto Lee Road and another left onto Benning Road. The parking lot is on Benning Road, across the street from the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School. The museum is located under the center's breezeway.

Museum honors chaplains in serviceBy JEFF WILKINSON
jwilkinson@thestate.com

The U.S. Army Chaplains Museum at Fort Jackson has artifacts dating back to the earliest days of the chaplain corps, which was founded by an act of the Continental Congress in 1775. George Washington appointed the first chaplains.

But it is looking now for more modern memorabilia. The museum is reaching out to veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq for stories, memorabilia and artifacts illustrating the service of chaplains in those conflicts. It is especially

**ONLINE**

Scan this QR code to watch a video of a tour of the museum.

looking for items made by soldiers for chaplains and then used by chaplains for ministering to soldiers, said museum technician Tim Taylor.

"We want to collect the stories from those wars, both the good and the bad," said Taylor, a 30-year

SEE CHAPLAINS PAGE A10

Bystander shooting death not what it appeared to be

Man arrested after he allegedly got involved to aid teen gang members

By NOELLE PHILLIPS
nophillips@thestate.com

An argument between middle school-age gang members is what led to last week's shooting death of a man in an apartment complex parking lot, with his 3-year-old daughter nearby, Sheriff Leon Lott said.

While the dispute started between teens, it ended with adults who were watching and others who had been called for backup for the teens.

Lott said the July 24 episode is just one more sign that gang activity in the county has increased throughout the summer.

And he said Thursday that original reports portraying the 25-year-old shooting victim as an innocent bystander who was holding his daughter are misleading.

Kevin J. Lewis, 29, is being held on a murder charge at Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center for the shooting death of Howard

Lott said the July 24 episode is just one more sign that gang activity in the county has increased throughout the summer.

Lott said the July 24 episode is just one more sign that gang activity in the county has increased throughout the summer.

S.C. EDUCATION**Test scores rise but reviews are mixed**By CAROLYN CLICK
cclick@thestate.com

South Carolina public school students in grades 3-8 have demonstrated academic progress in key subject areas across the

ONLINE
Find how your school performed, with this story at thestate.com.

partment also reported an increase in the number of

High school football returns

Sports, 1B

Aiken Standard

YOUR LOCAL NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1867

FRIDAY, August 2, 2013

AIKENSTANDARD.COM

Vol. 147, No. 214 Aiken, S.C. ★★ 75¢

Service helps track sex offenders

BY TEDDY KULMALA
tkulmala@aikenstandard.com

It's likely many would want to know if a convicted sex offender moved into their neighborhood or near their child's school, but checking lists and websites on a daily or weekly basis can be a hassle. A service provided by the Aiken County Sheriff's Office not only keeps track of registered sex offenders in the county, but sends out notifications

if an offender moves within a certain distance of an address.

OffenderWatch has been used by Aiken County for six years, and is used by all 46 counties in South Carolina as well as dozens of other states, according to Sgt. Jason Feemster, a spokesman for the Sheriff's Office.

South Carolina maintains a state sex offender registry that can be searched using an offender's name or by city, but OffenderWatch al-

lows a user to input an address, whether it's their home, school, gym or place of work, according to Feemster. Users can enter as many addresses as they want, and the

program will notify them by email if an offender moves within a certain distance of an address.

The program allows a user to select a search radius of between

Want to sign up?

WHAT: OffenderWatch, a sex offender watch program.
WHERE: <http://goo.gl/OAix3Y>
COST: Free

a quarter-mile and two miles of an address and will display all the

Please see **OFFENDERS**, Page 5A

INSIDE TODAY



Baby of the Year ballot
Inside, 7A

COMING SATURDAY



How did Aiken County
get its shape?

AREA DEATHS

Barry Wayne Cheers, Warrenville
Robert "Rob" Widener Jr.,
Sunbury, Ga.
Grady "Buddy" Thompson,
Monetta
H.A. "Mac" McClearen, Aiken
Harvey Franklin "Burt" Baker,
Gloverville
Shirley C. Arthurs, Aiken
Willie "Wayne" Hensley, Aiken
Deaths and Funerals, 6A

WEATHER



School test results may confuse parents, public

BY ROB NOVIT
novit@aikenstandard.com

A revamped state standardized test — created with the blessing of the U.S. Department of Education — is likely to create confusion about the results, Aiken School District administrators said.

Mick Zais, the state superintendent of education, expressed the need for accountability testing, but acknowledged that ever-increasing performance goals mandated at the federal level are contributing to declining results in some test areas.

District officials continue to have concerns that parents and the public will have difficulty understanding the grades and the criteria that produced them, as in past years.

The school district received a grade of "C" overall, which means the district met state goals. The grades of schools had mixed results. Elementary schools with A grades are Hammond Hill, Millbrook, North Augusta, Belvedere, and Warrenville. New Ellenton and Schofield middle schools also received A grades.

Dr. Randy Stowe,
district director of
administration

Silver Bluff and Midland Valley had the top high school grades with Bs. Dr. Randy Stowe, the district's director of administration, expressed doubt about scores given to Chukker Creek Elementary School (B), Aiken Elementary School (C) and Aiken High, South Aiken High and North Augusta High (all Cs). Several other schools fell below C grades.

The scores are not consistent, said Stowe. The lower scores for some schools are not an indication of those schools' quality of instruction.

AIKEN SCHOOL DISTRICT GRADES

District Grade Overall: C

Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools
• Aiken	• Aiken	• Aiken
• Belvedere	• Jackson	• Aiken Performing Arts Charter*
• Busbee Corbett (Elem/Middle)	• LBC	• Midland Valley
• Byrd	• Leavelle McCampbell	• North Augusta
• Chukker Creek	• Lloyd Kennedy Charter	• North Augusta
• Clearwater	• Midland Valley Prep Charter	• Ridge Spring Monetta
• East Aiken of the Arts	• Kennedy	• South Aiken
• Gloverville	• New Ellenton	• Wagener-Salley
• Greendale	• North Augusta	
• Hammond Hill	• Paul Knox	
• J.D. Lever	• Schofield	
• Jefferson		
• Millbrook		
• Mossy Creek		
• North Aiken		
• North Augusta		
• Oakwood-Windsor		
• Reddiffe		
• RS-M (Elem/Middle)		
• Warrenville		

Reaction to the
local district scores | 2A

* no grade given
for school

These results were released by the State Department of Education. The lower scores for some schools are not an indication of those schools' quality of instruction, said Dr. Randy Stowe, the district's director of administration.

PASS - Palmetto Assessment of State Standards. High school grades are based on performance on the High School Assessment Program (HSAP), end of course tests in selected subjects and graduation rates.

The PASS tests in English, math and writing have a laudable intent, Stowe said, in focusing on a school's capability to reduce the achievement gap in "sub-groups," such as black students, low-income students, English as Second Language students and those with special needs. The Aiken District is committed to improving the performance of students in those groups, Stowe said. That requirement comes from the U.S. Department of Education. The federal agency did grant the State Department a waiver to move from

"The ESEA waiver is not a rating of the overall achievement level of a school," Stowe said via email. "The rating indicates whether students in each sub-category are meeting the state standards or at least making progress toward those goals."

Some schools that are doing well could receive a low waiver rating, if a small group of students are not achieving. Schools with more diverse populations tend to have lower scores than those with a more homogeneous population, Stowe said. The diverse schools have more subgroups that can affect their grade.

In some situations, some schools might make a "D" or "F," yet have the same test performance as schools with much higher grades.

S.C.: High goals led to grade drop

BY JEFFREY COLLINS
Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Letter grades for nearly half of South Carolina's school districts dropped during the past school year, but education officials blame more ambitious performance goals rather than poorer student achievement.

The state Education Department released the report card data on Thursday. They show that 39 of the state's 85 districts went down at least a letter grade this school year. Just eight districts improved by at least a letter grade.

Education officials said they set higher and more ambitious goals for the 2012-13 school year compared with the year before, and other data released on Thursday shows the performance of South Carolina students improving.

Officials said 82 percent of South Carolina high school students passed the graduation exam on the first try. It is the fourth straight year of improvement and the highest rate in a decade. The percentage of students who scored the highest level on the exam also improved this past school year from 25 percent to 32 percent.

The Education Department also released test scores for other standardized tests given to third-through eighth-graders. Nearly all grades continued to show improvement in English and language arts scores, while math results were more mixed.

The report cards are part of the accountability efforts under the federal No Child Left Behind act. Failing grades require schools to provide tutors and allow children to transfer to schools with better grades.

Some parents, schools and administrator groups complained that the report cards depend too heavily on standardized tests and the formula is poorly designed.

They also pointed out how volatile the rankings are. Twenty-one of the state's nearly 1,100 schools went from an A to an F in one year.

"Instead of supporting student and school progress, the state department is sadly maintaining the test, label and then punish approach which is proven not to work with No



College football

Clemson and USC both in preseason Top 10 in first coaches poll **B1**



Herald-Journal

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HJ
IN A HURRY
5 Things to read today



Soup kitchen visit

South Carolina Treasurer Curtis Loftis put on vinyl industrial gloves Thursday and got to work. He doled out servings of shrimp salad at the Spartanburg Soup Kitchen. **PAGE C1**

Traveling for Christ

Shelby McKinney, a 21-year-old Spartanburg native and a graduate of USC Upstate, will be traveling to 11 countries in 11 months, living out of only one suitcase full of minimal essentials. She's taking part in The World Race, a Christian mission trip. **PAGE E1**

New BMW

Production of the third-generation BMW X5 officially began Thursday. The first X5, which was produced at the Spartanburg County facility, is mineral white with a 6-cylinder inline diesel engine. **PAGE C5**

Food safety

The outbreak of a stomach bug two states have linked to bagged salad came as little surprise to food safety experts, who say the process of harvesting, washing and packaging leafy greens provides numerous opportunities for contamination. **PAGE A3**

Tax-free weekend

With North Carolina shoppers on the verge of their final sales tax holiday, the president of the N.C. Retail Merchants Association thinks consumers looking for bargains will travel to bordering states to make big purchases. **PAGE C4**

SOGGY JULY

Upstate breaks record for rain

By JENNY ARNOLD
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As storm clouds gathered Thursday, S.C. Department of Transportation workers set out barricades on a small portion of Vanderbilt Road.

A box culvert, which resembles a small bridge, is sinking near Vanderbilt Lane, and that portion of the road can't be used until DOT workers shore up the earth around the culvert and repave it.

It should come as no surprise that heavy rain weakened the ground around the culvert, causing it to sink.

According to the National Weather Service, 14.45 inches of rain fell in July at Greenville Spartanburg International Airport. The normal rainfall is 4.8 inches for the month, said Jeffrey Taylor, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Greer.

Spartanburg was not alone as

the rain kept falling. In Anderson County, 15.39 inches of rain fell last month. Besides the airport in Greer, another site in Spartanburg recorded 10.33 inches of rain, and the Florence airport had 14.91 inches, all records for July, according to the Southeast Regional Climate Center.

June was also a rainy month, with a total of 9.43 inches of rain recorded at the airport in Greer, about 1.5 inches below the record set in 1886. In fact, it has been a banner year for precipitation. Greenville Spartanburg International Airport has recorded 47.08 inches of rain so far in 2013. The normal level would be 28.18 inches by this time.

Although residents may beg to differ, it wasn't rainy everywhere in South Carolina during July. The airport in North Charleston

◆ SEE RAIN PAGE A7



Motorists make a big splash as they drive through a flooded area on South Converse Street near the intersection of East Henry Street after a rain storm on Wednesday afternoon in Spartanburg.

MICHAEL JUSTUS/MICHAEL.JUSTUS@SHJ.COM

RAISING AWARENESS, MONEY



Local school districts get good grades

By LYNN P. SHACKLEFORD
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Spartanburg school districts fared well on letter grades released Thursday by the state Department of Education.

Statewide, 77 percent of school districts and 76 percent of schools met the state's expectation of a C rating or better on the federal accountability system. This is the second year schools and districts have received the letter grades that correlate to a composite score based on state standardized tests, such as PASS, HSAP, SC-Alt and end-of-course tests, the percentage of students tested and high school graduation rates.

The letter grades replaced Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), and are part of the state's request to modify its reporting under certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), or No Child Left Behind.

Spartanburg school districts 2 and 4 received two of the three highest grades in the state. District 2 received an overall total of 92.8 points or an A rating, just slightly higher than the 91.7 points it received last year. District 4 received 92.7 points, also an A rating, which was slightly higher than the 90.8 points it received last year.

Districts 1 and 5 also earned A ratings with 90.9 points and 90.6 points, respectively. Districts 3 and 6 earned B ratings

RACE DAY

Daniel Alvarez's team hopes its hard work pays off at the track, **1B**

Also inside: Fire station closed temporarily, **2A** • Graham's challenger list grows, **3A**



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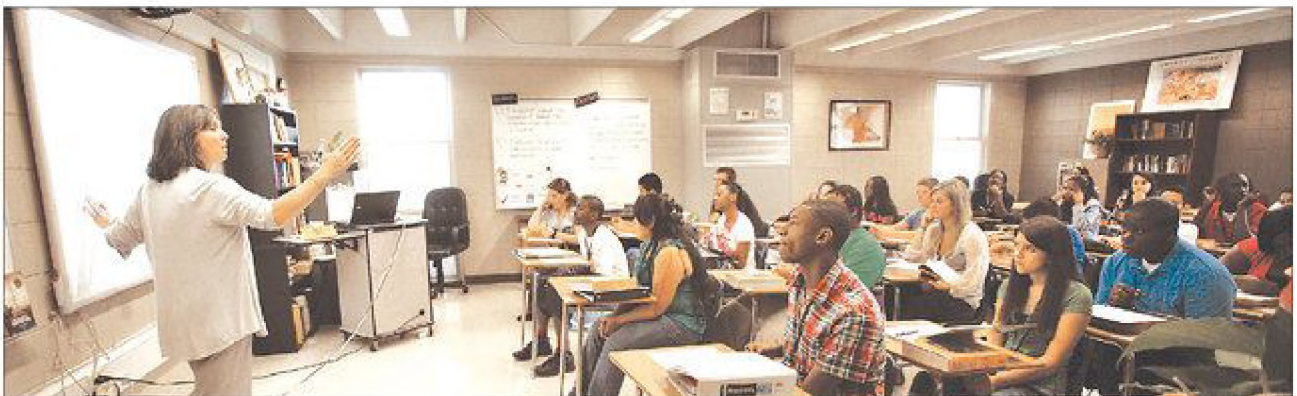
INDEX-JOURNAL

VOL. 95, NO. 92

ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT FEDERAL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

SLIDING SCALE

Ninety Six district posts 4th-best score; D50 plummets



INDEX JOURNAL FILE

A Greenwood High School teacher instructs her class in August 2012. Greenwood High scored a 77.6 (down from an 83.3) in the recently released Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Federal Accountability System grades. As a district, Greenwood District 50 registered a 64.8 for a D.

By SCOTT J. BRYAN

sbryan@indexjournal.com

One Lakelands school district reached an impressive high, while another reached a disappointing low with the release Thursday of a report documenting student achievement and improvement.

The S.C. Department of Education issued the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Federal Accountability System report, which grades schools and districts with numerical and letter grades.

The top performer in the Lakelands was Ninety Six school district, which registered a 91.8 (A), the fourth-best grade in South Carolina.

"Certainly, we're ecstatic," Ninety Six superintendent Mark Petersen said. "I wish I could take the credit, but I think the credit goes to the students, staff, mommies and daddies, and the community at large."

"They have been very supportive of the district for many years. This really just vali-

Online

■ To read the report cards for all districts and schools in the Lakelands, visit ed.sc.gov/agency/news/?nid=1855.

Inside

■ South Carolina leaders blame higher goals for drop in schools' grades. **3A**

dates the efforts our folks are putting forth."

In last year's first year of the grading system, which replaced Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), Ninety Six scored an 88. This year, individual school grades for Ninety Six included Ninety Six Elementary (95.3), Ninety Six Primary (97.3), Edgewood Middle (90.1) and Ninety Six High (87.4). All schools improved from a year ago, with the exception of Ninety Six Primary, which did not have a score.

"We thought (the scores) were going to be very good," Petersen said. "With Common Core coming on, we have some questions we'll have to look at and adjust. But I'm extremely proud."

At Greenwood District 50 — the largest district in the Lakelands — the grades were significantly more distressing.

As a district, it registered a 64.8 (D), dropping from 2012's 85.8. Of 80 districts in the state, Greenwood's mark placed it 66th.

"The 2013 ESEA grades awarded Greenwood 50 schools were surprising and

See **SLIDING**, page 4A

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Federal Accountability System grades were released last week by the South Carolina Department of Education.

Weighted Points (2013)	Grade	W.P. (2012)	School	School District
100	A	93.2	Ware Shoals Elementary	Ware Shoals
99.8	A	(no score)	Long Cane Primary	Abbeville
99.4	A	95.5	Cherokee Trails Elementary	Abbeville
98.3	A	97.3	Lakeview Elementary	Greenwood
97.3	A	(no score)	Ninety Six Primary	Ninety Six
97.1	A	99.3	Diamond Hill Elementary	Abbeville
97.0	A	100	John C. Calhoun Elementary	Abbeville
95.3	A	90.4	Ninety Six Elementary	Ninety Six
95.2	A	96.2	Hollywood Elementary	Saluda
94.9	A	97.6	Calhoun Falls (middle)	Charter Schools
93.4	A	(no score)	Saluda Primary	Saluda
92.4	A	84.7	Ware Shoals High	Ware Shoals
90.9	A	95.3	Pinecrest Elementary	Greenwood
90.1	A	88.0	Edgewood Middle	Ninety Six
90.0	A	97.3	Dixie High School	Abbeville
89.9	B	95.4	Saluda Elementary	Saluda
89.8	B	99.4	Merrywood Elementary	Greenwood
88.6	B	94.4	Wright Middle	Abbeville
87.8	B	91.6	Westwood Elementary	Abbeville
87.4	B	83.6	Ninety Six High	Ninety Six
86.7	B	97.3	Hodges Elementary	Greenwood
84.4	B	87.9	Springfield Elementary	Greenwood
83.3	B	84.4	Saluda High	Saluda
83.3	B	94.4	Saluda Middle	Saluda
81.8	B	50.4	McCormick High	McCormick
80.5	B	86.6	Eleanor S. Rice Elementary	Greenwood
79.0	C	91.4	Ware Shoals Primary	Ware Shoals
77.6	C	83.3	Greenwood High	Greenwood
77.0	C	86.2	Abbeville High	Abbeville
76.9	C	83.5	Northside Middle	Greenwood
76.8	C	72.3	Emerald High	Greenwood
73.3	C	40.0	McCormick Middle	McCormick
72.7	C	93.4	Woodfields Elementary	Greenwood

Lakelands school districts' grades in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Federal Accountability System assessment released Thursday.

Weighted Points (2013)	Grade	W.P. (2012)	School District
91.8	A	88.0	Ninety Six
88.8	B	89.1	Abbeville

High school football practice begins today

B1

The Item



Appeal dismissed for man sentenced to 25 years. A2

S.C. researchers unveil hurricane model named HUGO. A4



VOL. 118, NO. 243 WWW.THEITEM.COM

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 2013 | SUMTER, SOUTH CAROLINA

FOUNDED OCTOBER 15, 1894 60 CENTS

Test scores released

Earlier grades fare better; Sumter students still below state averages

BY BRADEN BUNCH
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Sumter students and their schools tend to perform better in the earlier grade levels, a series of reports released by the South Carolina Department of Education indicate.

On Thursday, the state department released a wide array of scores and results for students and schools from the 2012-13 school year, including testing results from both the High School Assessment Program (HSAP) and Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS), as well

as school and district ratings based on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which typically is referenced as No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

LETTER GRADES BY SCHOOL

Find out how each public school in the tri-county area fared during the 2012-13 school year. **A7**

Within the reports, a pattern of declining improvement throughout the grade levels emerges. In addition, in Thursday's reports, Sumter students continued to perform below state averages.

HSAP

The most notable result in the High School Assessment Program report released Thursday

SEE TESTING, PAGE A7

State blames higher goals for drop in grades

COLUMBIA (AP) — Letter grades for nearly half of South Carolina's school districts dropped during the past school year, but education officials blame ambitious performance goals rather than poorer student achievement.

The state Education Department released the report card data Thursday.

They show that 39 of the state's 85 districts went down at least a letter grade this school year. Just eight districts improved by at least a letter grade.

Education officials said they set higher and more ambitious goals for the 2012-13 school year compared with the year before, and other

SEE GRADES, PAGE A5



ROBERT J. BAKER / THE ITEM

Jimmy Weeks Jr., 35, was granted a \$15,000 surety bond on Wednesday by 12th Circuit Court Judge Michael P. Nettles for a charge of first-degree criminal sexual conduct with a minor younger than 11.

Sex assault suspect gets \$15K bond

BY ROBERT J. BAKER
rbaker@theitem.com

MANNING — A 35-year-old Silver man charged in mid-July with the sexual assault of a 5-year-old Sumter girl who considers him an uncle was granted a \$15,000 surety bond on Wednesday.

During a hearing held at Clarendon County Magistrate's Court, 12th Circuit Judge Michael P. Nettles said Jimmy Weeks Jr. of 1135 Rev. J.W. Carter Road may have no unsupervised contact with minor children, including his own, if he is able to pay for his release from the Clarendon County Detention Center. He has remained there since his arrest July 18, according to the Clarendon County Public Index, three days after the 5-year-old girl's mother said she notified the Clarendon County Sheriff's Office that the suspect allegedly touched the girl's private parts.

The mother told *The Item* on July 19 that Weeks is a close family friend of the girl's father and that the girl thinks of him as an uncle.

The incidents, she said, happened during extended

SEE BOND, PAGE A10

FAMILY GIVES BACK



PHOTOS BY JADE ANDERSON / THE ITEM

After visiting with residents of Sumter Health and Rehabilitation Center and helping them play bingo Wednesday, LaShonda McElveen, back left, and her daughter, Candace Mitchell, sing a song while Desmond Mitchell plays piano and sings along. The whole family is involved with Silver Lashes, a project that aims to give back to the elderly. For more information, email silverlashes93@yahoo.com.

ABOVE LEFT: Desmond, vice president of Silver Lashes and rising Alice Drive Middle School seventh-grader, helps a resident of Sumter Health and Rehabilitation Center play bingo.

LEFT: Candace, rising fourth-grader at Alice Drive Elementary, moves a token for a resident playing bingo at the center. She is founder and president of Silver Lashes, a nonprofit that volunteers with and brings goodies to those staying in assisted-living facilities.



PEOPLE & PLACES Forgotten letter leads Pee Dee soldier to open up about WWII service. **Page 3B**

Morning News

FRIDAY AUGUST 2, 2013

**TODAY'S
WEATHER**

Partly sunny, t-storm in spots with 92 high, 72 low.

DETAILS 2A

www.scnw.com

The Voice of the Pee Dee

75 cents

School grades drop across Pee Dee, SC

No A's, more F's in year 2 of federal accountability model

State blames higher goals for dip

BY ELLEN MEDER

Morning News
emed@florencenews.com

Pee Dee schools and districts followed a statewide trend of declining federal accountability grades, according to data released by the S.C. Department of Education on Thursday.

Of 12 districts in the region half

For more information

on the PASS, visit
<http://ed.sc.gov/data/pass/2013/>

fell at least a letter grade, and only Florence School District 2 increased a letter grade, one of only eight districts out of 85 in the state to do so.

The region's largest districts maintained the highest marks for the sec-

ond year in a row, despite a fall from A's: Darlington had the highest with an 88.7, a B, and Florence School District 1 came in second with 86.1, a B. Florence 2 and Chesterfield County joined them with Bs.

"While I'm pleased with our efforts overall, I believe we still have a great deal of work to do," said Dr.

See **LOCAL**, Page 8A

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Letter grades for nearly half of South Carolina's school districts dropped during the past school year, but education officials blame more ambitious performance goals rather than poorer student achievement.

The state Education Department released the report card data Thursday. They show that 39 of the state's 85 districts went down at least a letter grade this school year. Just eight districts improved by at least a letter grade.

Education officials said

See **STATE**, Page 8A

END-OF-SUMMER READING PARTY



PHOTOS BY JONAS RUSSELL/MORNING NEWS

Library associate Jess Willis (right) leads an interactive song with children Thursday at Chick-fil-A as part of the end-of-summer-reading party. This is the second year for the reading celebration. The free event had storytelling, face painting and balloon sculpting.



Library associate Holly Newman (left) makes a face while painting the face of Rebecca Ali on Thursday as part of the end-of-summer reading party put on by the Children's Department of the Florence County Library System.



Chick-fil-A associate Austin Jernigan (left) serves C.J. Berthea, as both wear balloon art on Thursday.

Wet July's rainfall a record for Florence

BY GAVIN JACKSON

Morning News
gjackson@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — Florence and several locations statewide saw the wettest July on record, according to state climatology officials.

The Florence Regional Airport, where official meteorological measurements are taken, received 14.91 inches of rain in July, the highest for the location since readings were taken in 1948. July 2013 is second to July 1916, when 18.05 inches of rain fell in downtown Florence because of Bull's Bay Hurricane, making for the wettest month in Florence history.

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources climatologist Wes Tyler, who oversees state records, said July 2013 still makes for a record.

"Prior to 1948 they were making observations in the city, downtown and the record for downtown Florence, which is for all months was in July 1916," Tyler said. "But that was in downtown Florence, the new record was at the airport."

In July there was measurable rainfall for 15 of the 31 days helping unseat the prior record of 13.68 inches in July 1959.

Rainfall for the first six months of 2013 totaled 42.02 inches, passing the 2012 total rainfall of 41.62 inches and putting the city on track for the wettest year ever, a record set in 1959 with a total of 64.71 inches of rain. Average annual rainfall for Florence is 43.28 inches.

See **RAINFALL**, Page 7A

Police don't rule out Cheraw robbery link to Pee Dee incidents

BY TRACI BRIDGES

Morning News
tbridges@florencenews.com

photos from the bank, it was obvious it was not the same man, but there's still a possibility they're connected in some way because

Bank on Market Street about 10 a.m. Thursday and passed the teller a note demanding money. The robber did not present a weapon



Darlington police Sgt. Kim Nelson briefs media at the Darlington



CMYK



Odd

CLEMSON, CAROLINA HIGH UP
IN THE COACHES' POLL



#7

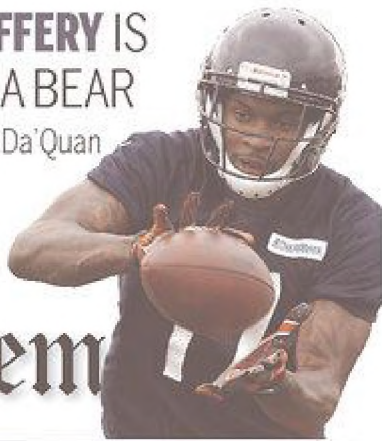


#8

ALSHON JEFFERY IS
'BEAST' OF A BEAR

PLUS: Calling out Da'Quan

SPORTS, B1



FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 2013

The Times and Democrat

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TheTandD.com

3 SECTIONS, 32 PAGES • VOL. 132 • NO. 214

Gunshot killed man found in lake

T&D Staff Report

A day of awaiting answers on the death of a Holly Hill man produced news of a key finding but left open a major question.

Orangeburg County Coroner Samuella Marshall informed The Times and Democrat by email at 8:38 p.m. Thursday that an autopsy concluded that 57-year-old Richard "Rick" Cummings Jr. died from a gunshot wound to the head.

"The manner is pending investigation," she said.

The coroner could not be reached for further comment as to whether foul play is suspected.

Cummings' body was pulled from Lake Marion at about 9 a.m. Wednesday, according to S.C. Department of Natural Resources Region 3 Capt. Robert McCullough. The man had been missing since Monday.

According to an Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office incident report, deputies Monday night met with a childhood friend of Cummings, who said he last saw Cummings Sunday

at his father's residence at Cypress Shores Marina. He said Cummings had taken a swim earlier that day, then returned to his home.

Cummings' wife, Cynthia, said her spouse left for work at 7 a.m. Monday and reported to his workplace, the report stated. When she called to check in with her husband later in the day, an employee told her Cummings had left for a job site about 8:30 a.m., according to the

See GUNSHOT, A3



SPECIAL TO THE T&D

A distracted driver smashed her car through Whitman Mold on U.S. 301 South about 7:30 p.m. Wednesday. No one was injured. The driver, a 19-year-old Orangeburg woman, was charged with driving too fast for conditions. More photos at TheTandD.com

TOP-HEAVY ADMINISTRATION?



CHRISTOPHER HUFF/T&D

South Carolina State University President Thomas Elzey discusses with the board of trustees on Thursday action to be taken in the wake of the school's warning from the accrediting organization SACS. Elzey says the school will prove itself in coming months (Story, A3). See related video at TheTandD.com

S.C. State trustees question Elzey on reorganization moves, plans

By DALE LINDER-ALTMAN
T&D Staff Writer

After seven weeks at the helm, President Thomas Elzey on Thursday faced trustee scrutiny of his ongoing reorganization of the South Carolina State University administration.

Elzey presented trustees with proposed organizational changes that would create three new vice presidential slots as well as new positions for a provost, an associate provost and an associate provost for sponsored programs.

Trustee Robert Nance questioned if the new positions could be created without approval by the board.

"My other point of concern is ... I thought we spent the last two to three years trying to

do away with a top-heavy administration," he said. "This plan seems to be bringing a heavy administration back."

Elzey said he doesn't feel the proposed changes will create a top-heavy administration. The management and operations of the university in certain areas have been sorely neglected over the past few years and the new administrators are needed, he said.

"We don't even have an annual campaign to raise money for this university," Elzey said. "We don't have an enrollment strategy for bringing the number of students back up."

Additionally, there hasn't been a capital improvement plan since about 2000, he said.

Elzey said his proposed reorganization is an attempt to find people with the right skill sets

to address those critical areas and move the university forward.

"If we want to bring the haster back to the university, we have to have the people to do it," Elzey said.

Nance asked if funds are available to pay for the positions.

Elzey said that two vice presidents and another individual are no longer at the university, which will provide funding for the new positions.

Elzey introduced new employee Sonya Bennett, who will fill the newly created position of vice president for external affairs and

See ELZEY, A3

'IT WAS WILD'

Distracted driver's car
crashes into 301 industry

By RICHARD WALKER
T&D Staff Writer

Nights are typically quiet for workers at Whitman Mold on U.S. 301 South of Orangeburg.

Wednesday night, however, was anything but typical.

Employee Travis Player said his shift became quite interesting when he heard a "really loud boom."

"I turned around and I saw a door flying through the air," Player said. "And I saw the front of the car looking right at me!"

Player was just feet away from a wall that exploded at about 7:30 p.m. after a car left 301 and crashed through Whitman Mold.

"It was wild," Player said. "I didn't expect to see a car coming through here."

The next car to pull up was a cruiser belonging to the S.C. Highway Patrol.

Lance Cpl. Judd Jones said a 19-year-old Orangeburg driver was charged with driving too fast for conditions after she tried to make a turn. Jones said the woman had dropped something in the floorboard and was reaching for it while at the same time trying to turn onto Dempsey Road.

That turn morphed into more of an arc, sending the Toyota through the side of Whitman Mold.

Neither the driver nor the passenger in the vehicle was injured.

Player said once the doors stopped flying around inside the building, he helped the two teens get out of the car.

"I was on the phone with 911 at the same time," he said.

It was a little warmer inside the facility Thursday. The only thing standing guard between the car and the outer wall was an air-

See WILD, A3

Panel cites experience in choice



Industry expected to announce expansion

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