

## "Accepting the greater challenge" necessary

When Calvin Dark addressed the school at the Martin Luther King Jr. Assembly last month, he presented a challenge to the NCSSM students, faculty, and staff. Dark asked the students to let their hearts lead the way in their actions, and to realize though academics are important, they are not everything.

Yet there is another challenge for NCSSM students.

Students at NCSSM need to make an investment in their school and community. Like Dark's challenge, this mission faces the same difficulties of students whose priorities lie more with books than with other issues. But the problem also results from students who spend more time complaining than actually doing.

Students at NCSSM seem to have a distorted sense of tunnel-vision. Instead of working to improve our school or to leave a legacy behind, many of us seem intent on whining about our physics homework or the oppressive administration.

Students need to understand that despite all its faults, NCSSM remains an excellent education in an excellent environment. More importantly, we need to understand that NCSSM represents more than just an excellent education. NCSSM is a selective challenge that has been offered to every individual in the student body. In addition to accepting that "greater challenge" academically, we must accept it institutionally.

NCSSM students need to issue their own challenge; to take pride in their school, to get involved and to see about making a difference. It is unrealistic to believe we can fully return to the early days of NCSSM, where a community almost four times smaller was able to operate on a closer and more intimate level. But the mechanisms are in place for action beyond mere complaining. SGA has made impressive steps in the bureaucratic battle for student representation on hearing boards. Activities such as the Martin Luther King Jr. Assembly and Worldfest represent instances where largely student-dominated groups have pulled off successful events.

But making a difference can be on any scale. It may be as simple as talking to your SLI or fellow student, or organizing an off campus trip or activity. Figure out how you can make a difference for the school community. Because, for all the conventional clichés, the challenge is there, and we must accept it.

## No votes for Ballot

NCSSM has signed a contract that seems more like a death certificate for NCSSM dances. Much to the displeasure of this staff, Rich Ballot has been signed as the official DJ for all SAB sponsored dances during the '96-'97 school year.

At every dance, he insists on playing the same songs in an only slightly different way. This is made even worse by the selection he plays, replays, and plays again. At every dance, we listen to the same music we heard at those seventh grade dances we excitedly attended so long ago.

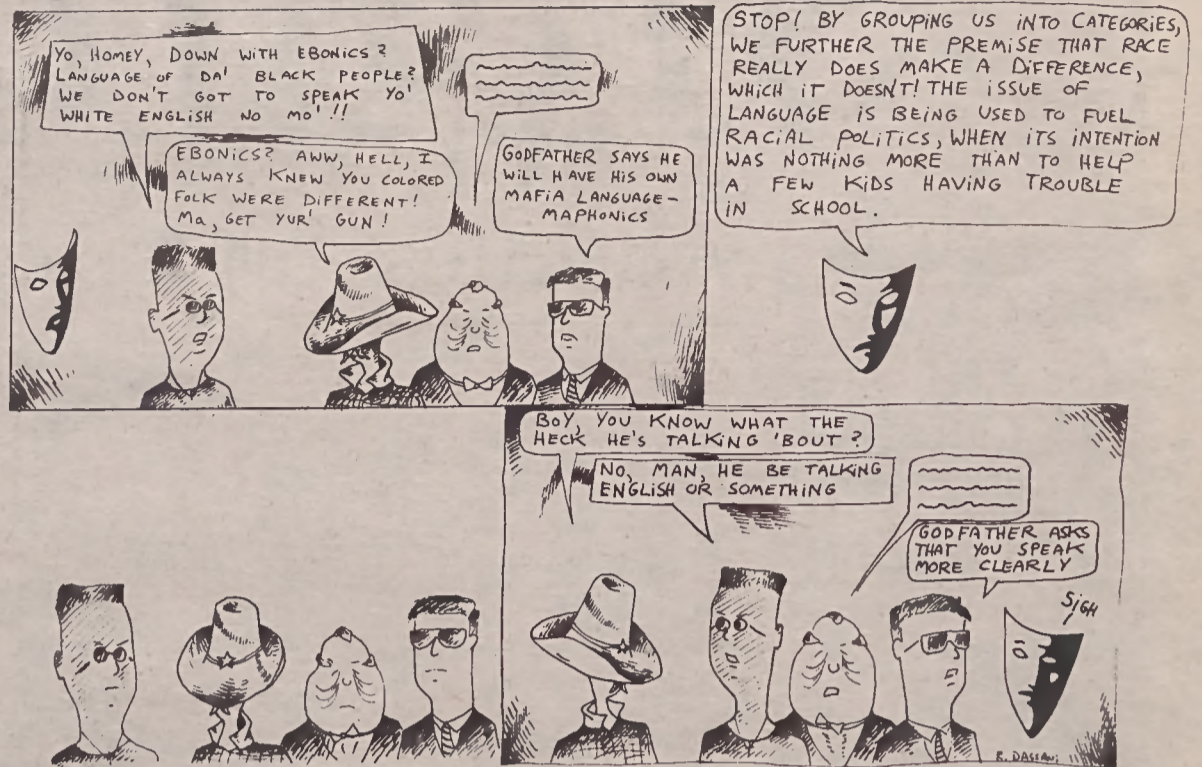
The most recently overplayed song, the much dreaded "Macarena," is one novelty we can assuredly do without. And that country song, the only country song ever played at an NCSSM dance, is played every time.

Perhaps the students would be a bit happier if Ballot would take a student request (with the exception of "Time Warp"). If new, more popular songs were played, perhaps the dances would get a larger turn out.

Before the life of next year's dances is signed away, SAB should consider using up-and-coming DJs on campus. Will Wilson (a grand senior who DJ-ed last year) and Matt Richards and John Borwick (DJs for the Worldfest dance) did jobs equal to, if not better than, Ballot.

Richards and Borwick played a larger variety of songs, both new and old, including some international music. Richards also allowed the crowd to make requests.

If students are given more input in the selection of songs played at the dances, many will find themselves in the "dance spirit." Perhaps better songs, and a better DJ if necessary, will give dances a larger turn out.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

As chairperson of the Judicial Advisory Committee, and an advocate of a voting role for student Hearing Board members, I feel it appropriate to respond to Director Friedrich's consideration of a "non-voting presence [for student members] in expulsion matters."

As it is stated in the NCSSM 1996-97 Handbook, "the primary consideration in each [Hearing Board] decision must be, 'What is best for the community?'" The NCSSM community would experience many benefits as a result of the integration of student members and their capacity to serve in expulsion cases. Because students represent such a vast proportion of the community, they should not be without voice in decisions affecting it. Student Hearing Board members have the potential to provide a unique perspective to the disciplinary system, but only if they are allowed the authority to do so.

Though student Hearing Board members would face the possibility of criticism, they would benefit from the experience as well. By allowing the student body a means of expressing and communicating thoughts regard-

ing disciplinary procedures, an opportunity would arise for the development of skills imperative to the future leaders of North Carolina.

If the best interests of the community truly are the paramount concern of the Hearing Board, there can be no doubt that these would be better served by student representation.

The question, then, seems to be one of whether community interests should be served at the expense of the individual; as Director Friedrich stated, "...we are wrestling with the issue of whether it is fair to place a student in the stressful situation of voting to recommend expulsion." To this, I have but one response.

Life is a stressful situation. Term papers are a stressful situation. MathCad is a highly stressful situation. In short, if the administration wishes to alleviate "stressful situation[s]" from the lives of the students, the very existence of this institution is in dire jeopardy.

Instead, students attending NCSSM accept the onslaught of stressful situations. The words, "I accept the greater challenge," are not empty, nor should they be construed to mean, "I accept the low-stress chal-

lenge." Morals are not prized possessions to be placed on a shelf and dusted on occasion, but mechanisms which become more valuable with use. Good judgment is not a garment we wear to impress others, but the fabric of decency. If we, as a community, are unwilling to utilize our greatest assets, we are destined to fail in all we undertake.

If students have the ability to make "tough and fair" decisions, as Director Friedrich states, I urge the administration to make full use of this ability. If, however, fear of criticism impedes this ability, then no ability exists to begin with, for there can be no ability without strength. After all, what good are values unless we are willing to be held accountable for them?

Though I appreciate Director Friedrich's concerns, my belief that students possess the maturity to be held responsible for their values, judgments, and decisions dictates that I respectfully suggest a voting position for students in expulsion matters.

With sincerity,  
Tree Calloway

Dear Editor:

As a junior last year, I expected the Martin Luther King celebration to be just what I had experienced before - a chance for Blacks to "get back" at Whites for the injustices we imparted on them. Well, I was wrong. The assembly encouraged all races to use this day to celebrate our differences and to see how far America had come, but also to look toward the future and continue the fight for one race. I

found myself being compassionate rather than feeling I had to defend myself in a hostile environment. Above all, the celebration made me want to create change - never to allow such terror to be inflicted on any race or group. So often we are overloaded with this law or that regulation that "ensures" equality, but the performance on Alt-Day showed me that the issue is much deeper. It's about treating each person as a brother and an equal and seeing through outward ap-

pearances to the light of everyone inside. I applaud the insightful and encouraging approach to the Martin Luther King celebration; it is definitely a part of my "NCSSM experience" that I will never forget.

Katie Hobbs  
Student Body President