



**Conference set**  
Espy, Blue to highlight National Business League Conference.

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**Dellabrook's 35th**  
The Rev. Warner Durnell returns for Sunday sermon.

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## Paddling: Black students punished most

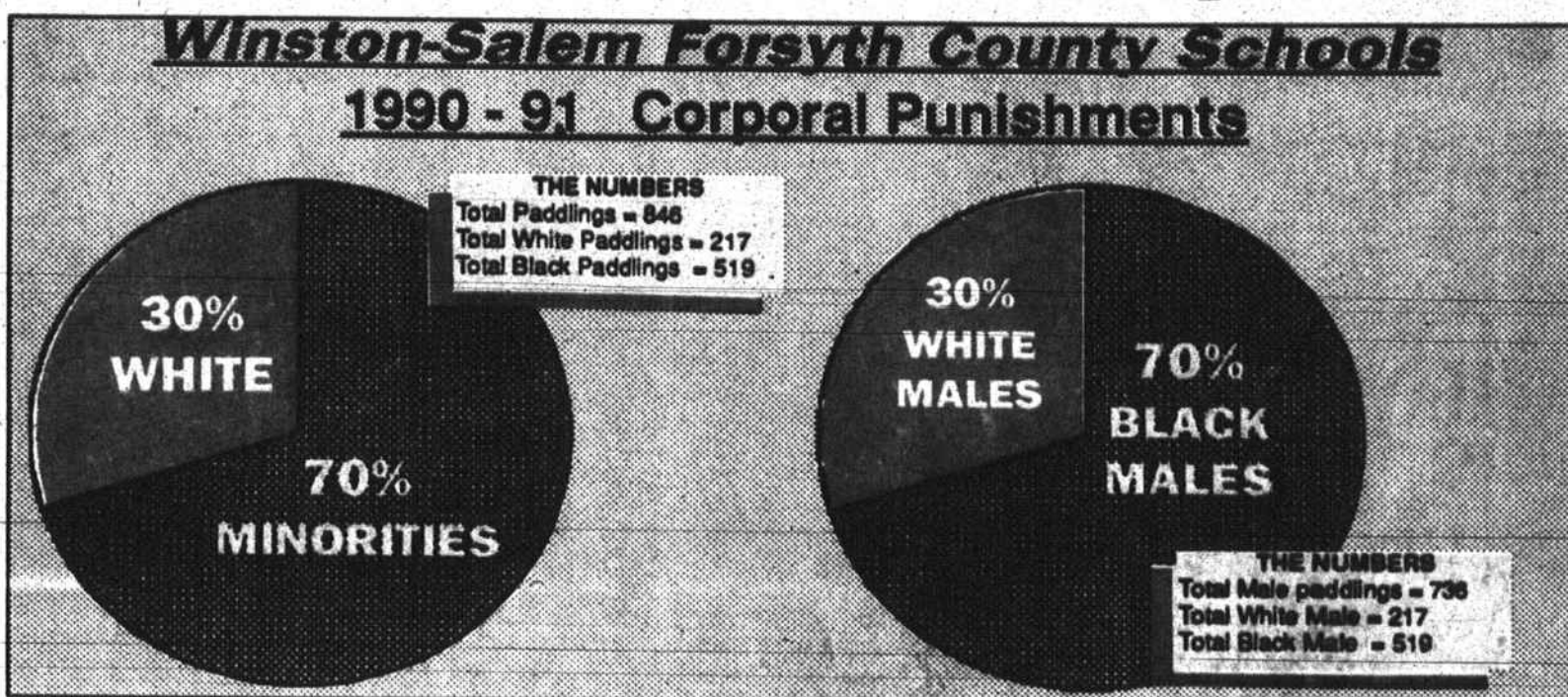
Paddling for whites decreased by 35

By SHERIDAN HILL  
Chronicle Staff Writer

School figures for 1990-1991 show that black students system-wide received 70% of paddlings, although they make up only 37% of all elementary students. Last year, corporal punishment (paddling) was used 846 times on elementary students. Of that number, 596 paddlings were to black students, and 253 paddlings were to white students.

Educators and black leaders both agree that any serious examination of corporal punishment must take into account four factors:

(1) the need for white educators to have a thorough understanding and appreciation of black culture; (2) the need for a relevant curriculum; (3) the need for more black educators; and (4) the need for alternatives to corporal punishment.



### CULTURAL BIAS IN THE CLASSROOM

"What those statistics highlight and evidence is that the school system is failing our young people,

especially African-Americans, and African-American males," says the Reverend John Mendez. "There is a cultural neglect and bias in the classroom and in the school system in general that is cancelling these young

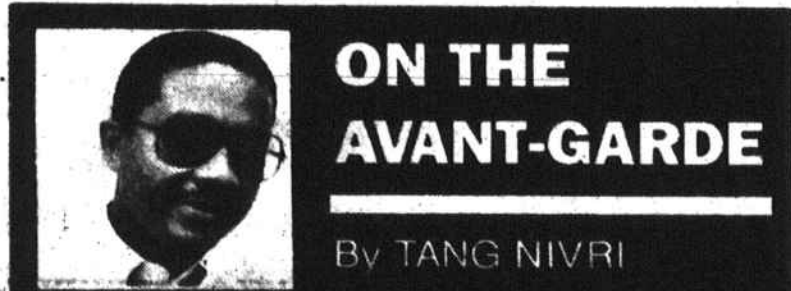
people out."

Compared to the year before, the incidence of paddlings in Forsyth County schools decreased significantly for white students but not for black students. White children received 35 fewer paddlings last year than the year before, but black children received only four fewer paddlings.

"The NAACP has never opposed corporal punishment when it is used as a discipline tool, as opposed to abuse," says Walter Marshall, former president and current co-chair of the NAACP education committee. "Spanking was always prevalent in black schools, but integration created a real problem, because black parents typically don't want their kids punished by whites."

But the Rev. Mendez believes that students respond to the expectations of their teachers. "A young child knows whether a teacher likes him or not. Too many white teachers have made up their minds that these children cannot be taught. If the teacher approaches them with an attitude that they can't learn anyway, then the kids approach learning the same way. 'Since you think I'm dumb, I'll be dumb.'"

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### ON THE AVANT-GARDE

By TANG NIVRI

#### It's all Yale's fault

Look, I'm just trying to make sense out of this whole mess. But tell me this: Why is it that whenever it looks like black folks are just about to make a little progress, something ALWAYS happens? Why is that? I mean why is it that when it looks like we are about to take one step forward instead we take two backwards and one sideways? There is something mighty strange going on here and I suspect it has something to do with a certain ivy league university — Yale.

"What is it now?" I said to myself as I heard that there would be new allegations against Judge Thomas. Then I saw her. It was Anita Hill. Hill, a former colleague of Thomas and now a professor of law at the University of Oklahoma, was alleging that she had been the victim of sexual harassment while working under Thomas. First, while at the Department of Education where he headed the civil rights division, then later at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission where Thomas served as agency head. And it was a sister too!

What in the world is going on? Why it's yet another Yale graduate. I was very angry. Very angry, indeed.

"Why was she doing this, I asked myself? Why was she coming forward almost a decade later? Could this be the very nasty and ugly side of politics?"

It took me a while to work through my anger. But, I did. After all, I do have a daughter and I know that I want her to grow up and be strong — to be mentally strong enough to know a man or woman down, if need be. I want her to be able to be herself without fear of intimidation and retribution. I want her to have the same opportunities as any other human being who lives in this society. I want the same thing for my boys.

I know that sexual harassment is real and that it will continue to exist unless a company or agency puts its foot down. I also know that often it goes unreported and that there are times when little if anything is ever done about it.

But, where do we draw the line? Where do we draw the distinction between harassment and simply the basic disagreement — the back and forth — that exists between individuals as to what behavior is acceptable and what behavior is not? What about the gray areas of where my mouth might say no but my eyes say yes? It's all Yale's fault.

Somebody speculated that this whole thing may be about two people who may very well have liked each other at one point and that one

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### 'They are the world'

## Best Choice children have a future

By SHERIDAN HILL  
Chronicle Staff Writer

In a converted church on Highland Avenue, ten small children fasten their attention on Arlease Smith, who sounds out a rhythm using her voice like a snare drum: "Boom chuck-a, boom chuck-a, bop-bop-bop." They clap and step and sway to the beat.

"They do it better with music," says Arlease, a woman with a warm smile and the face of an angel. But no apology is needed: it is abundantly clear that these children are in the right place, doing just what they ought to be doing.

"I am going to be somebody," they sing. Their voices are clear and strong. "I am going to be something." Then each child finishes the sentence, "I am going to be a ..." One girl answers "a nurse," a boy answers "a policeman."

A frail-boned five-year-old girl in a red sweater wears seven braids held in place with red, white, and green berets. Michelle Wolf is the smallest child in the room. When it's her turn, she says, "I am going to be a lawyer." We see the hope in her face, her conviction in her voice, and believe her.

"If you've got another rhythm, use it," coaxes Smith. "Don't worry about using mine." Indeed, the philosophy at this super enrichment program is exceptionally supportive of each individual child. The attitude of the whole place seems to say: We will support you in developing your own style, help you find the best way for you.

At Smith's request, the children sit

quietly so the reporter can ask them what they like most about coming to Best Choice. It seems puzzling that more than half of them answer: "Doing my homework."

Dorothy Graham-Wheeler, Best Choice director, is not surprised. "Many of them don't have anyone at home to help them with their homework." At Best Choice, staff and volunteers work with students every afternoon on every subject, from homework assignments to large projects. The center uses two paid professional staff, ten unpaid volunteers, six educational assistance staff, and three certified teachers. Graham-Wheeler's husband, who taught music in public schools for 30 years and trained several jazz bands, is forming the Best Choice Center Band.

When asked what they would be doing if they weren't at Best Choice, some of the children confess that they'd be doing dreaded chores. Two little girls mention drugs.

"If I wasn't here, I might be doing drugs, because they're all around," answers one girl, "and people try to give

### Funds needed for programs

A \$220,000 fundraising campaign is underway for the Best Choice Center. The amount which remains to be raised is \$145,000. To date, the largest donors are the city of Winston-Salem, which gave \$50,000, and the Crosby Foundation, which gave \$40,000. Several organizations gave \$25,000, including R.J.R. Tobacco, the Kate B. Reynolds trust, the James G. Hanes Foundation, and the

family of Best Choice director Dorothy Graham-Wheeler.

Reginald G. Hanes and Ernest H. Pitt are the campaign chairs. Dorothy Graham-Wheeler asks that every single person in the community get involved.

"We are appealing to those who believe in helping at-risk children in this community," says Graham-Wheeler. "No gift is too small nor too large."



Pictured (left to right) are Chris Cannon, Denesha Moore, Latoya Byrd and Janice Oliver.

Children are referred to Best Choice by teachers, ministers, parents, and other members of the community. School

busses begin dropping them off at 2:30, and some arrive and leave on foot, accompanied by parents or relatives.

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Thomas

## Thomas' fate hangs on hearings

WASHINGTON (AP) — Clarence Thomas will "look the American people in the eye" and deny sexual harassment allegations that suddenly threaten his Supreme Court nomination, his chief backer said Wednesday. The woman accusing Thomas pledged cooperation with a new Senate investigation.

"This is not going to be an easy hearing," Judiciary Committee Chairman Joseph Biden said Tuesday after a day of drama in which Thomas "totally and unequivocally" denied the allegations. Democratic support for the nomination eroded and the Senate agreed to a one-week delay of its confirmation vote.

With the vote put off until next Tuesday, Biden, D-Del., said the FBI would be called to investigate, and witnesses would be subpoenaed if necessary for a hearing. "It is uncomfortable for everyone, but it must be done because we cannot fail to take seriously such a charge," he said.

President Bush and Senate Republicans rallied around Thomas, a conservative federal appeals judge — and sought to

limit the scope of the renewed confirmation proceedings.

"This is a test for Clarence Thomas," Senate GOP leader Bob Dole of Kansas said. "It's a test of his character, and I believe he's up to the test."

Danforth, R-Mo., Thomas' chief advocate in the Senate, said he hoped there would be no "fishing expedition" or chance for "people to come forward with whatever they want to dump on Clarence Thomas."

Interviewed Wednesday on ABC-TV's "Good Morning America," Danforth, still angry at the sudden turn of events, said Thomas wished the "torture" of the delay was over but wanted a chance to rebut the allegations.

As his Judiciary Committee began its new review, Biden said "any questions about his (Thomas') conduct in terms of whether or not he harassed this individual or any other indi-

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