

WSSU Band bound for Atlanta for coveted Showcase

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Winston-Salem State University's Red Sea of Sound Marching Band has accepted an invitation to the Honda Battle of the Bands Invitational Showcase.

The coveted competition will take place in Atlanta's Georgia Dome on Jan. 29, 2011. The Red Sea of Sound will join bands from seven other historically black schools - Virginia State University's Marching Trojan Explosion, South Carolina State University's Marching 101, Albany State University's Marching Rams Show Band, Jackson State University's Sonic Boom of the South, Bethune Cookman University's Marching Wildcats, Clark Atlanta University's Mighty Marching Panthers and Tennessee State University's Aristocrat of Bands.

Honda Battle of the Bands has been called the world's largest and most highly anticipated HBCU musical event and scholarship program of its kind. The program, which will mark its ninth year in 2011, is a platform to highlight and showcase the heritage and showmanship of the HBCU college marching bands and an important facet of HBCU culture - music education.

Representatives from the Honda Battle of the Bands organization were on the WSSU campus Tuesday to formally invite the school's band.

Schools

from page A1

Martin said.

In order to meet the parameters of the closure model outlined by the federal government, Atkins must reassess its students, Helm said. Students in its current residential area would be divided between Parkland, Glenn and Carver, which is expected to see a significant drop in enrollment once the new Walkertown High School opens in the 2011-12 school year. Currently, about one third of the Atkins population - roughly 240 students - hail from outside the Atkins district, Martin said. The school has a capacity of 1,000. Students who wish to attend Atkins may apply as magnet school candidates.

"We're certainly hoping Atkins is going to be successful as a countywide magnet," the superintendent stated. "...I think a lot of people will want to return to Atkins and we want them to return."

Joe Childers would serve as principal at Atkins under the new



WSSU Photos by Garrett Garris

The Red Sea of Sound Marching Band performs in the heart of the Winston-Salem State campus on Tuesday to celebrate its invitation to the Honda Battle of the Bands Invitational Showcase.

plan, Dr. Martin said. Childers, now the principal of the School of Computer Technology at Atkins, moved to Atkins at the start of the 2010-11 year from Hanes Magnet Middle School. Hanes, which is situated in a similar demographic area, has seen considerable enrollment success, and Martin is confident Childers will generate enthusiasm for the Atkins curriculum as well.

"He's been the principal of a very successful magnet school," Martin said of Hanes, which grew from 600 to more than 900 students during Childers' tenure. "There have been hundreds and hundreds of kids that have flocked to Hanes."

School Board member Vic Johnson believes the changes will bode well for Atkins. Johnson, an alumnus of the original Atkins High School and a strong proponent of the new school's construction, said he would support the proposed changes at Atkins.

"I think it's for the betterment of the school," he said of Atkins. "I think it's to increase the enrollment at Carver and trying to

increase the attendance at Atkins ... we've got kids from all across the county that could benefit from this program."

System officials also asked the Board to consider changing two existing schools: Konnoak and Brunson elementary schools, to magnet curriculums. Konnoak would retain its residential population, but would add an international

focus that will feed into the International Baccalaureate programs at Paisley and Parkland. Brunson would adopt a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) focus that would feed into Hanes - which houses the Project Lead the Way pre-engineering program - and Atkins. Brunson would become a dedicated magnet beginning with its

band received a \$1,000 grant for its participation in the pre-qualifying Celebration Tour. Through this program, American Honda annually awards a total of \$205,000 in scholarships to HBCU music programs. Since the program's inception, an excess of \$1 million in grant money has been bestowed to black colleges.



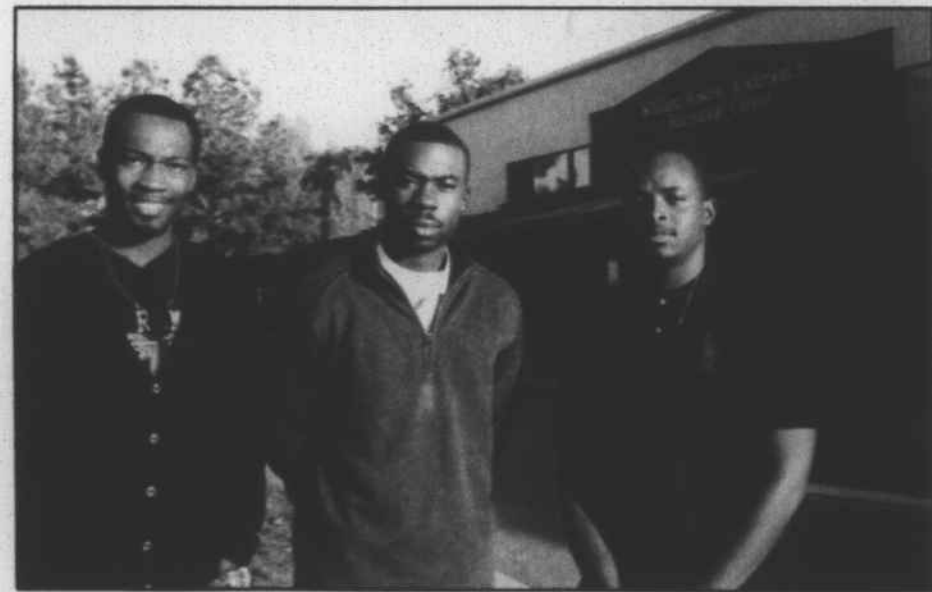
File Photo

Several plans are on the table for Atkins.

kindergarten class, meaning it would gradually give up its residential population to nearby Cook Elementary. System officials hope to combine both schools in a new building on the Cook campus with funding from a future school bond, with construction starting as early as the 2014-15 school year if the bond is passed.

Adding the two elementary schools to the system's growing list of magnet offerings would complete the outstanding magnet strands, allowing students to choose any available magnet curriculum and follow it from kindergarten through high school. Helm said. Bolstering programs in the lower grades could lead to better attendance at the high schools they feed in the years to come, he added.

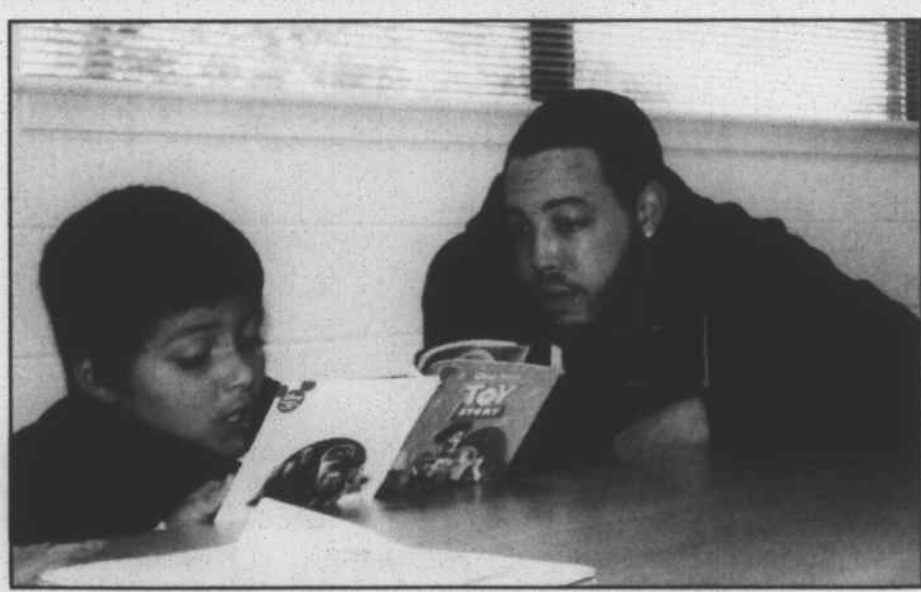
The board will be asked to make a decision about all of the schools in question during their Nov. 23 meeting. If the board approves the changes, Atkins would become one school at the start of 2011-12 with magnet enrollment opening in January 2011.



Photos by Layla Farmer

Left: Ram Reps from left: Wesley Smith, Lorenzo Kornegay and Morgan Davis.

Right: Josh Lennon works with a student.



Rams Rep

from page A1

Kornegay writes on the group's facebook.com fan page. "We're changin' that."

The organization, which seeks to "promote school unity, pride and spirit through creative activities," quickly grew to encompass residence hall step teams and volunteer service, attracting more than 65 members to its ranks. The group prides itself on its inclusive nature and regularly recruits freshmen membership.

"Starting out, it was just something to do," Kornegay explained, "but once we started to see we could actually make a difference (in the community), we wanted to expand on that."

This school year, the Ram Reps began volunteering at the William Roscoe Anderson Jr. Recreation Center (formerly Reynolds Park) down the street from the school. Center Director Bryant McCorkle said he encouraged the Ram Reps to get involved in tutoring some of the more than 60 children who flock to the center every afternoon. It was a task that McCorkle and his staff had previously



Back row: (left to right) Josh Lennon, Wesley Smith, Demetria Alexander and Morgan Davis. Front Row: (left to right) Ebony Hunt, LaNesha Scott, Sony Sheffield, Shamika Saddler and Vanessa Mapp.

handled on their own. "I told them, 'I need some help; I need some volunteers.' I recruited them and they got involved," related McCorkle, who has helmed the center for more than a decade. "When you have students that are eager

to give back, you must utilize that. You must give them the opportunity to see their vision through." Around 15 Ram Reps now visit the center Monday through Thursday, to tutor 20-25 youth in various subjects. McCorkle says their

presence has made an impression on the children. "They've pretty much been consistent. It makes a whole lot of difference when you've got somebody who's consistent," he said. "It means a whole lot (for the kids) to know their tutor."

The Ram Reps are planning to start a youth step team that will perform during basketball games at the center, and are looking to add more activities, such as a powder puff football game, in the spring. "We like to build leaders

as Ram Reps," Kornegay explained. "We're trying to provide opportunities for you to grow as a person. When you come down here and work with the kids, that gives them an opportunity to shine."

Ram Rep Morgan Davis coined the group's slogan, "Who Next?" to encourage both the youngsters and fellow Ram Reps members to strive to be the next great thing.

"We want our members to take back something more than a degree when they graduate," related the junior sports management major. "We don't need the degree to come down here and help the little kids out."

Wesley Smith, assistant director for Affairs for the group, said working with the children has been a rewarding experience for him.

"It helps you experience the full college experience," related the sophomore, nursing major. "It helps you appreciate the fact that you're in college, that you were given a chance to be successful at this point and time."

For more information about Ram Reps, visit www.facebook.com.