

ETC promises new technology

by Magda Kotek

As technological advances become more and more prominent, education plays a bigger role in a student's success in the future. In its goal to "accept the greater challenge", the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics will construct a high tech laboratory/classroom complex to better serve the needs of its students, teachers, and the North Carolina community.

The Education and Technology Complex will house classrooms and labs that will combine current technology with educational methods. These technology labs will consist of the most modern forms of technology such as robots and computers and will be completely dependant on funding.

Labs will be adaptable to all classes through the use of roll-away carts. These carts will store this technology and will be rolled into and out of each lab area.

Along with the labs, four classrooms will be constructed to expand the distance-learning department. In this program, courses not available in some North Carolina schools are broadcasted to students and teachers around the state with the use of satellites and television sets. After construction of the ETC, NCSSM will be able to reach every part of the state through this program.

Also in the ETC will be ten music rooms for private practice and a 650 seat auditorium equipped with electronic connections to a 125 seat lecture hall and to the PEC. This electronic connection will provide a needed graduation rain-out sight for the expected 3,000 (from 1994 figures) graduation guests. The auditorium will also be able to transmit and receive performances through the North Carolina Information Highway.

The \$8 million complex will hopefully be completed by August of 1996 and will be located across from Bryan Residential Hall, facing the Science Department. It will cover part of the parking lot between Bryan and the Maintenance Facility Center, though this will not cause a shortage of parking spaces on campus. One problem may arise with the disruption of classes because of the noise created by construction.

Along with the building, restoration of Weich Hall is planned. The hall will provide 8,000 square feet of dormitory space to house visitor students and teachers during special learning programs on campus. Main computers will be linked to the library and student computers to form an information triangle, and if private funding is obtained, a student recreation center may be added under the ETC.

With the addition of 43,000 square feet of teaching space, ten teachers will be added to the teacher faculty and revision or addition of academic courses will occur. These course revisions will vary with the types of technology available in the labs.

The addition of the ETC will hopefully continue a process of construction and development intended to further the education of students at Science and Math and around the country.

NCSSM adopts new schedule

by James T. Wallace

"The purpose of the Curriculum Council is to facilitate the development of the best possible curriculum for NCSSM students and of excellent curriculum products that provide North Carolina educators with what they need to improve teaching and learning in the state." And, so, the Curriculum Council was chartered. It was to be co-headed by the Principal and the Director of Student Activities with other members of the community as voting representatives. One of the hottest topics on the agenda was the class schedule. Many things were considered, from looking at schedules of other institutions like NCSSM to creating a custom, tailor-made schedule from scratch. No matter what the case, the growing sentiment among council members urged for a new or modified class schedule. This was due in part to a survey of faculty in which many said our current schedule does not allow for "innovative" teaching methods. Onward the snowball rolled. . . Soon into the Council discussions arose the possibility of allowing current students to serve as voting members. The Council felt students "lack the experience" of staff and alumni and that serving on the Council "would be perhaps too big a burden." The Council decided it would be better to try to better encourage students to attend the open meetings, but not to have them as voting members. However, a student was allowed as a member of the subcommittee which evaluated the schedule options and presented recommendations to the Curriculum Council. As for the schedule, surveys were given concerning aspects of a new schedule, such as a class free day, as well as aspects of the current schedule to see what the faculty would like and what they felt would best suit NCSSM. Council members went to some classes and followed students' schedules for a few days to take notes on improvements and good qualities of the current schedule. Outside consultants were also hired for input in coming up with a new schedule. The discussions continued. All School Assemblies were held, along with several evening input sessions for students. The Council kept working and soon came up with a proposal: the 10.50. It would be evaluated by the community through a think-through which included surveys and question forms. The "TASTE the New Schedule" forms would be useful in the evaluation process since they promoted organization. Basically, for a week last fall, the NCSSM community went through the normal class schedule, but occasionally stopped to reflect on the current schedule and imagine the activities of the proposed schedule. The evaluations were used to improve the 10.50 to make it "right" and also involve more student input in the matter, as their attendance at meetings had steadily increased. A couple months later, the Council had come up with two new drafts: Proposed A and Proposed B. These drafts were posted around campus for the community to see. The Council decided to suggest Proposed A to the Administrative Cabinet for implementation next year. The Cabinet heard concerns and voted on and approved the implementation of Proposed A for next year. The Executive Director, however, expressed concern that students needed more input and urged for students to be allowed as voting members of the Council. So, Proposed A will be in full swing next year. Also, two students shall act as voting representatives of the Curriculum Council. As for the specifics of the schedule, it will include a loosely structured Alt Day along with common lunches, seven periods, and Flex time. It will be evaluated by the Curriculum Council next year, yet no major changes will be made to the schedule during the school year. It is obvious NCSSM has a lot of work to do next year. We must acquaint ourselves with the new schedule and use it to its fullest potential to make next year successful. We must also rigorously evaluate it in facilitating the process of making it better. Many surprises will spring up, some good, and some bad, but we will have to work with them in fulfilling our obligation to NCSSM to make next year the most rewarding year possible.

Graduation news

by Jason Stajich

Graduation for the class of 1994 will be held on Saturday May 28, 1994. The speaker for the graduating class will be Orson Scott Card, a science fiction writer who lives in Burlington. The writer is known for his many science fiction novels including *Ender's Game*, *Speaker for the Dead*, and *Xenocide*.

The student speaker for the graduation will be Sheryl D. Mebane. Sheryl, a Morehead scholar from Coleridge, NC, was chosen to speak as closing speaker for the graduating class.

The class of '94 is the 13th graduating class of NCSSM, with 268 seniors.

A change of ponds?

by Carl Leitner

The Biopond on campus was established many years ago for research purposes. Today, its fate is changing, moving from behind Hunt dorm to another part of campus. With this change in location will come a change in size, as it is reduced to a much smaller version. Through years at NCSSM, the pond has become progressively containimated, and a move of the biopond will necessitate careful watch of the life. One reason for the move is that it does not receive enough shade during the summer causing the water to get too hot for the life, and also to make way for new sports facilities.

Currently, the biopond serves several purposes. It is used as a small track, for fishing and canoeing practice, and math projects. Over the years it has been drained, slid upon when frozen and served as a great way to celebrate birthdays on the soccer team. When drained last year, a large unbroken glass jar of sodium was found. If the sodium reacted with the water would have caused a sizable explosion. With the move of the biopond, much of the history will be lost, yet the change will help to establish new traditions.

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