

Supreme Court justices make tough decisions that affect the lives of young people today.

Pages 8-9

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the highLIFE

“Americans are incredibly selfish, never satisfied until they have the best of the best, the newest upgrades, and the most convenient technology.”



Meghan Hersh
Staff Writer

Page 4

News

Illinois Governor Rob Blagojevich stands accused of attempting to sell the President's old Senate seat.

Page 2

Opinion

President Bush approves a second bailout package, this time for the American auto industry.

Page 6

Features

New teachers struggle to adapt to profession, unhappy with requirements and entry-level pay.

Page 11

Sports

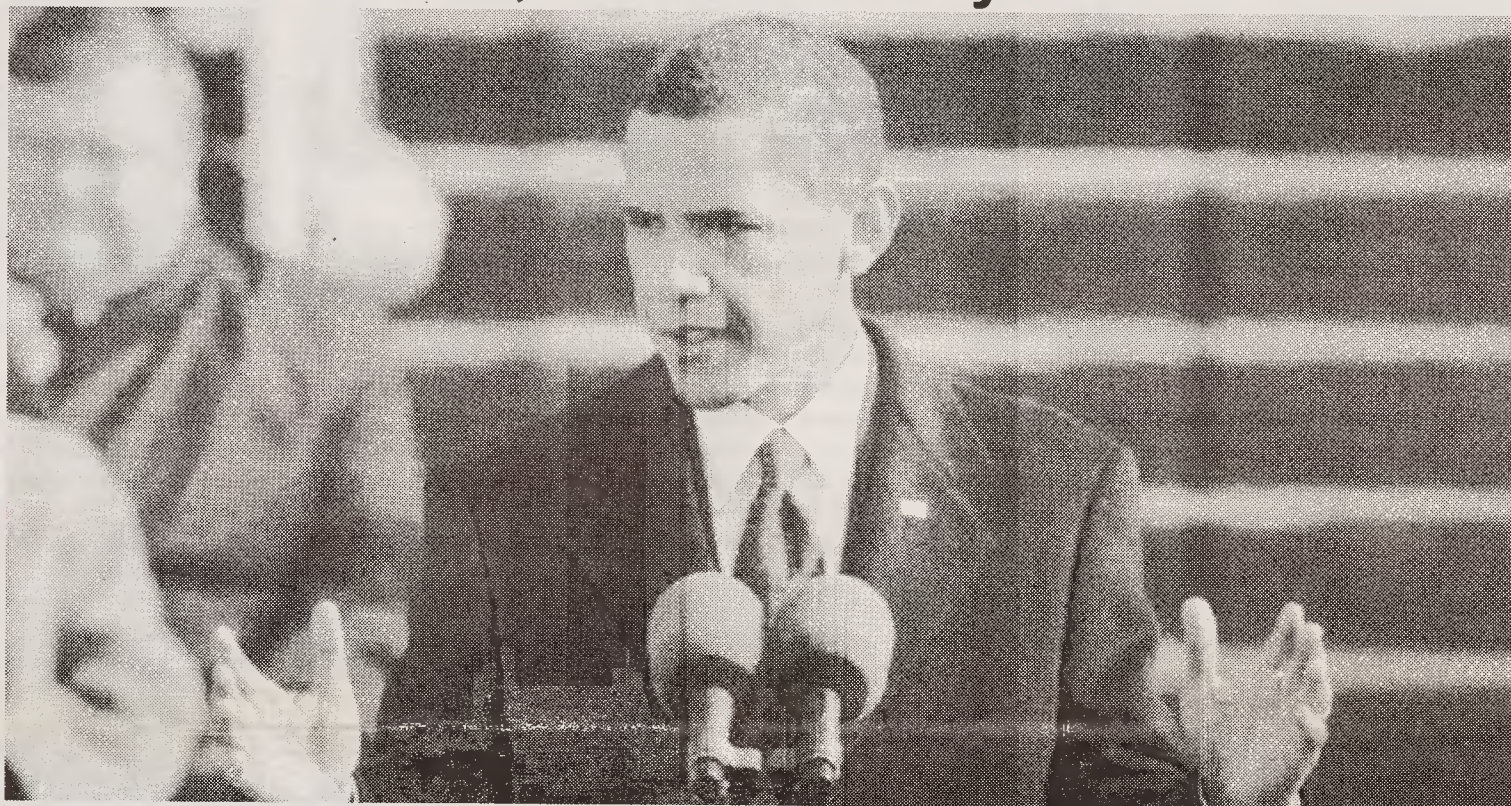
NBA teams may be in danger of losing their best players to higher paying teams in Europe.

Page 16

Index

News	2-3
Opinion	4-7
Spread	8-9
Features	10-13
Sports	14-16

“Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious, and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this, America — they will be met.”



Chief Justice John Roberts swore President Barack Obama into office on Jan. 20, 2009. Millions of Americans amassed in Washington, D.C. to watch this unprecedented event. Both supporters and critics witnessed the first African-American to become the United States Chief Executive.

Guilford County Schools forced to rework budget after recent cuts

BY DANIEL TORELLI
News Editor

As the United States economy continues its downturn, the shockwaves are still spreading their effects through all aspects of everyday life. Now it is the education system.

As of December 19, 2008, the Guilford County Board of Education approved a new budget plan that will cut spending by approximately \$3.8 million. This new plan was necessary for two separate but important reasons. The first and more critical reason was the state government made less money last year than it had first anticipated. The second was 619 fewer students enrolled in Guilford County Schools than originally projected.

In order to cope with the nearly \$4 million in budget cuts, Superintendent Maurice “Mo” Green and his team created a plan that attempts to minimize the impact on faculty and students. Central administration will feel slightly more than half (54%) of the cuts,

while the lesser portion (46%) will affect the schools directly.

With nearly \$4 million less to disburse, the Board of Education has agreed to do the following: institute a hiring freeze for non-instructional positions; withhold approximately 25% of funds for classroom supplies and materials; replace overtime with compensatory time; curtail travel; and delay certain contracted services.

Maintaining a smooth and uninterrupted school year is one of the main intentions of this budget plan. Each cut was made with regards to impact on not only the student body but school employees as well. A central focus while creating this plan was to keep the entire staff employed and not to lay off any workers. The plan is also designed to minimize instructional changes.

Instead of job cuts, the new plan calls for a hiring freeze, which will affect only non-instructional staff members. For example, one position being removed is an employee who coaches new, inexperienced

teachers. While this situation will have no direct impact on students, it will be necessary for everyone to be patient as new teachers settle in.

Such is a good example of how the budget cuts were designed to minimize and distribute the impact inside the classroom. Since new teachers will be forced to adapt quicker, experienced teachers will be expected to assist them, and students must continue to listen and learn while these novices learn the ropes.

Administrators and principals will feel even more pressure. Many programs or services that the administrative team had intended to put into effect this school term may have to wait until next year. Anything that administrators deem non-critical will have to wait. The distinctions do not necessarily mean that some programs will be abandoned due to these budget cuts, but rather be restructured or simply delayed.

Although this new budget plan will allow the school to

function on a normal level under tough economic times, the battle does not stop here.

“Elected officials on the local, state, and federal levels all must recognize the importance of proper funding for the education system, even during such tough economic times,” said Green.

Other chief administrators continue to work with officials in order to attempt to maintain appropriate funding.

Continuing to stress the importance of maintaining an efficient budget, “The plan must utilize the funds that we have been entrusted with efficiently and effectively,” said Green.

Most people involved in the North Carolina school system will undoubtedly feel these budget cuts.

Even so, “It is vital for the new plan to allow us to maintain a successful uninterrupted school year. The new budget plan is expected to keep schools performing well and hopefully have only a small impact on the parties that are affected,” said Green.