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# School dropout rate in the crosshairs

## Bowers to lead alternative learning, early college

## Palm: A daunting task, but a strong team

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

D.F. Walker Elementary Principal Jamie Bowers has been tapped to head early college and alternative learning programs as local school officials bear down on the goal of eliminating dropouts.

Bowers' new position is part of a high-level staffing shift that will go into effect for the 2015-2016 school year.

In other staffing changes

announced June 3 by Edenton-Chowan Schools Superintendent Rob Jackson, Michelle White, who is presently the principal at White Oak Elementary School, will move into Bowers' position at D.F. Walker, and Sheila Evans, principal at John A. Holmes High School, will become the new principal at White Oak Elementary.



BOWERS

Bowers' new job will be a full-time position, according to Michelle Maddox, director of human resources for the school system.

Jackson said the creation of the new position was in keeping with his determination not to have a single student drop out of the local school

See LEAD, 4A

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

Frank Palm views education in Chowan County with what might be called chastened optimism.

The outgoing chairman of the Edenton-Chowan Partnership's Education has an optimistic view of local education because that's his spirit - buoyant and positive.

The optimism is chastened by an honest facing of hard facts.

"We have huge work to do," Palm



PALM

said. "But we have a strong team that's together."

Palm has headed the committee since it was formed. But he's stepping down now as he and his wife, Beverly, prepare to move to Pennsylvania later this month.

One of the sobering facts Palm

See TASK, 4A

## SYMBOL OF GOD'S LOVING CARE



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

Sally Holloway presents Al Walker a Bible on behalf of Chowan-Perquimans Habitat for Humanity during a dedication ceremony at Walker's new home on Morris Circle Saturday morning. Walker's home is the chapter's 14th and the eighth in Chowan County.

## Budget: Schools hope for best, prepare for worst

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

The local school system is bracing for a tough budget year.

At the May 27 special meeting of the Chowan County Board of Commissioners, Edenton-Chowan Schools Superintendent Rob Jackson asked for an opportunity to address

the issue of schools current expanded funding. Because of state-mandated salary increases and increases in the cost of employee benefits, not getting an increase in current expense funding in the county is effectively a cut, he said.

The county commissioners will hold a public on the proposed 2015-2016 county budget at their meeting

Monday at 6 p.m. The recommended budget from County Manager Kevin Howard includes a six-cent increase in the property tax rate, bringing the rate to 76 cents per \$100 valuation; increased schools capital outlay funding by \$400,000 over the current year's level; and maintains schools

See BUDGET, 3A

## Staff reassigned for next school year

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

All four of Chowan County's schools will have new principals for the 2015-2016 school year.

In staffing changes that were announced June 3 by Edenton-Chowan Schools Superintendent Rob Jackson, Michelle White, who is presently the principal at White Oak Elementary School, will become principal at D.F. Walker - replacing Jamie Bowers, who will head early college and alternative learning programs for the school system; and Sheila Evans, principal at John A. Holmes High School, will become the new principal at White Oak Elementary.

Evans was the principal at D.F. Walker prior to moving into the leadership position at Holmes.



WHITE



EVANS

See REASSIGNED, 4A

## Council opts for greater oversight on infrastructure

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

A frank discussion held



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at a town budget work session last Thursday has prompted the town to implement changes that it hopes will lead to better communication between town staff and the town council.

In a memo provided to Mayor Roland Vaughan and council members late

Monday, Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said the changes would include more direct conversation between town department heads and the council.

"In addition to monthly reports, I think it will be helpful to schedule each department head to present annually a review of

their work plan - prior year and current year," she said. "And along those lines, I will ask the Electric Department to submit a monthly written report to you, the way Public Works, Fire, Code Enforcement and Police provide."

See OVERSIGHT, 6A

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- Arts & Crafts Show
- All Vehicle show
- People's Choice
- Judging begins at 4pm. Must be in line at 3:45pm to judge.

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