

Conference

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Campbell, the keynote speaker at the event and North Carolina native, roused the audience as he hailed affirmative actions programs and asked for more support for black officials from the African American community.

"Just as we have fought the old battles there are still new ones to be fought," said Campbell, who in 1960 was the first African American graduate of Raleigh's Enloe High School. "Sometimes we, as elected officials fail, but sometimes it's not for lack of leadership, but fellowship that keeps us from moving forward."

"It's not an overstatement to say that the African American community is relying on you," he said. "We're all dependent upon the policy makers in this room."

Campbell noted that since state's had instituted bans on affirmative action, minority enrollment at colleges across the U.S. had plummeted.

"Ground zero is the fight for affirmative action," he said. "It is a battle of biblical proportion. Affirmative action is the way America can live up to its ideals. I will end the fight for affirmation action as soon as they end racism and discrimination."

Womble says the conference gave black legislators a chance to develop strategies for passing

legislation aimed at helping African Americans.

"We, as legislators, want to hear from our own African American constituents, rather than us saying what is important," he said. "The information needs to be coming from the bottom up."

The Rev. Carlton Eversley, pastor of Dellabrook Presbyterian Church, was the keynote speaker for a breakfast held during the conference. He said African Americans should back black legislators.

"We complain, but we don't give up our followership, support and accountability," he said.

Sit-In

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backs.

"They can give money," he said. "Everyone cannot give \$10,000, (but) you can help by giving one-dollar and five-dollar bills. Every little bit counts. (The museum) is something we all should take ownership in. It's something they ought to be proud about."

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

Schexnider

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According to a story run by The Virginian-Pilot newspaper, on June 21, 1997, Cone resigned her position as Vice-President of Finance at Norfolk State last June, just weeks before Marie V. McDemmond came on board as the schools president. McDemmond replaced Dr. Harrison Wilson, who served the institution for 22 years.

McDemmond hinted before taking office that she was concerned that the university might be running in the red. However,

after audits were complete, Norfolk State learned that it was running at a \$6.5 million deficit.

That deficit was cut to \$4 million because McDemmond took measures, which included massive layoffs, to remove nearly one-third of the school's deficit.

The Virginian-Pilot also reported on January 6, 1998 that, "The deficit, which McDemmond attributed to 'mismanagement' by the previous administration, will lead to layoffs of up to 100 employees - including faculty members,

administrators and non teaching staff - this year."

Because of the budget cuts undertaken by McDemmond, the university, last week announced that 116 employees, including 13 faculty members would be laid off in June.

Some faculty members at WSSU say they hope that situation doesn't happen at WSSU.

"There have been some situations that we feel are unclear," one source said. "This whole thing doesn't look good for us. We just hope that the direction we take here is not the same."

Fields

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already on the bubble, he said.

Factors like mobility, which measures the number of students who leave a school in a year aren't taken into consideration. The rating used for schools also don't take into consideration percentage of students who are underprivileged which researchers say is major performance indicator.

A recent study which analyzed last year's testing results showed that in school, like Latham, were 90 - 99 percent of students qualify for free lunch ABC test scores were 45.4 percent. In schools where less than 10 percent of the population qualified for free lunch overall scores jumped to 85.4 percent, which means the vast majority of students are performing at or above grade level.

"I don't have a problem with being accountable for anything I do," he said. "But I do know there are some things that have been left out of the model that they are going to be fixed. There is no standard error of measure that takes into account schools like this. It's not there."

Fields is also worried teachers will be less likely to want to teach at schools like Latham because they may worry about job security.

"Teachers are human," he said. "Why would you want to come work as hard as they work at a school like Latham when other schools are getting better scores and perks."

While the OCR ruling says it found no evidence the program will hurt blacks disproportionately, Fields says many principals in schools that will be deemed low-performing under ABC standards are minority, a sentiment echoed

by Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education member and long-time educator Geneva Brown.

"I think school systems tend to put minority principals or minorities, period, in inner-city schools," she said. "And they take their best and put them in suburban outlying areas. There's a feeling in this country that Larry or even me, when I was a principal, could handle those children. That's really not true. The handling of children comes with the basic knowledge people have of what children's needs and wants are."

Fields says high mobility wreaks havoc with his scores because it means schools are made accountable for the scores of students that have not spent much time in their classrooms. In order for math and reading scores to count, students have to have been at the school for at least 106 days.

The writing test has no such prerequisite, which Fields says hurts his overall scores.

"A kid can walk into this school tomorrow and take the writing test and not have spent one day in this school and we have accept that score," he said. "That gives people in this community and state a poor reference. People assume that if a child doesn't make a certain score on the writing test they have been with us all year. And that's simply not the case."

According to Fields of Latham's 450 students, only 53 have been at the school through five grades.

State Board of Education officials recognize the shortcomings of the system and will meet later this week to discuss ways to more accurately gauge the progress of schools, said Winston-

Salem/Forsyth County Superintendent Don Martin.

Martin says he agrees with Fields that the state's standards need modification.

"Larry and I are on the same wavelength about it," Martin said. "The issue we have with it is the formula they use to compute it. The formula, I think, has some problems."

Martin points out that the current ABC's formula lacks a "standard error of measure" which would take into account mitigating circumstances in individual schools.

"The state department (of education) has agreed to investigate," he said. "The state will calculate a standard error that will help some of those schools with lower scores."

Martin says the local school system will join several other counties in a study to come up with a more balanced model.


"ABC does have its drawbacks, but it has done one thing, it has forced teachers and schools to emphasize the basics," Martin said. "It has given schools focus."

Until the new standards are in place, Fields says he will continue to monitor the state's progress in coming up with a more representative model. This year, his school's scores are up and according to Martin, the district as a whole has stronger scores in reading and math than last year.

"I want the mobility rate to be factored in," Fields said. "I want the growth standard error of measure to be factored in to reflect true growth in a particular school like this. Because of the economic, because of the social issues, because of the disadvantage. I want it all to be factored in."

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