

# Advisory Group Searches For Strategies To Stem Teacher Shortage

By HERB WHITE  
Post Staff Writer

More career choices and bigger bucks are slowly draining Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools of minority teachers, say officials who are working to reverse the trend.

Dr. Joe Flora, assistant superintendent for personnel, said the system's minority personnel committee, established last September, has been looking into the shortage of minority teachers in Mecklenburg and ways to remedy it.

"I think to an extent, some people had the perception" that the number of blacks in personnel wasn't consistent with the number of minority students in the county.

Mecklenburg's minority enrollment makes up about 39 percent of the 74,000 student system, but minorities make up a little more than 30 percent, said Oscar Bidgood, Charlotte-Mecklenburg personnel director.

While the percentage of minority teachers is fairly close to the ratio of students, the number of non-white teachers is getting smaller.

"We're finding that more of the



Members of the community advisory group are (l-r): John Pappas, Calvin Lewers, Janice Brown, Josephine Smith, Joseph Flora, Oscar Bidgood, Jan Richardson, Gwendolyn Bradford, John T. Crawford and William Leak.

non-white teachers are reaching retirement," Bidgood said. "We're trying to come up with strategies to identify" young minority prospects, he said.

Bidgood and Flora place the shortage of minority teachers on the expanding field of professions offered to blacks in recent years.

"We found more and more of our black youngsters are going into other fields," Bidgood said. "It used to be that being a teacher or preacher were the only professions open to blacks but that's not the case now."

Said Flora: "The numbers aren't there because younger minority students are no longer go-

ing into education. There are fewer students going into education regardless of color, but it's more so for minorities. We find

that we have to work twice as hard to keep up with where we were two or three years ago."

The numbers from two or three years ago aren't exactly thrilling, Bidgood points out. He said colleges aren't graduating as many education majors as before, with white institutions barely turning out any black majors.

Black colleges, a prime source of black teachers in the past, aren't faring much better. Charlotte's Johnson C. Smith, for example, graduated 51 education majors in the 1978-79 school year. In 1984-85, nine students graduated. Winston-Salem State had 92 in '78-79; 48 in 84-85 and North Carolina A&T 139 and 76.

"As we go out recruiting, we see less and less minority students talking to us about the educational experience," Bidgood said.

Flora said there is a more pressing need for minority teachers of science and math. With private corporations offering huge sums of money for

mathematicians and scientists, finding black teachers in those areas is very difficult, he said.

The 10-member committee, which has conducted meetings monthly since its inception, has recommended several steps to bolster minority teachers and personnel.

Increases in salaries, reduction in work load away from the classroom and more incentives are some ways Mecklenburg can make teaching more attractive, Bidgood and Flora agree.

A program to identify prospective teachers at each of Mecklenburg's 10 high schools has been in place over a year.

But it will take time to determine the program's success, with three years of high school and four years of college before teachers emerge. For now, however, better pay and benefits are the incentives to draw the best and brightest minorities to teaching.

"We're getting better in that area," Bidgood said, "but that is the farthest problem right now."

## Leadership Charlotte Honors Louise Sellers For Achievement

Leadership Charlotte, a community leadership program, has named Louise J. Sellers, Biddleville-Five Points community leader, the 1988 recipient of its Dr. Schley R. Lyons Circle of Excellence Award. The award honors Leadership Charlotte graduates who have distinguished themselves through community leadership, service and achievement.

The award was presented during Leadership Charlotte's 10th Anniversary gala on Tuesday, May 10, 1988, in the Adam's Mark.

Earlier in the program, the award was re-named to honor Dr. Schley R. Lyons, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and professor of political science at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Dr. Lyons and UNCC, in cooperation with the Greater Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, established Leadership Charlotte 10 years ago with a grant from Title I of the Higher Education Act of 1965. He directed the program during its first three years, during which time Leadership Charlotte made a successful transition to private funding and a Board of Directors composed of program graduates.

Louise Sellers is a graduate of Leadership Charlotte V (1983). Her community work has been concentrated in the Biddleville-Five Points neighborhood, an area she is credited with saving from destructive redevelopment. She has coordinated numer-



Sellers

ous community clean-up campaigns; secured gas lines, sidewalks, curbs and gutters for the area; conducted area relocation and public housing surveys, and provided housing assistance and placement for transients.

Among her many community activities, Ms. Sellers is president of the Biddleville-Five Points Community Organization, Inc.; a member of the Project Catalyst Steering Committee; a director of the West Trade-Beatties Ford Area Merchants Association and the Friends of Johnson C. Smith University; vice-chair of the Business Incubator, and a member of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Citizens Forum, the Community Issues Council, the School Health

Advisory Committee, Strategies to Elevate People, Grass Roots Leadership Organization, the Central Planning District Committee, Focus on Leadership and Summit Avenue Housing Project Advisory Committee.

Previously, she served on the 2005 Plan Advisory Task Force, the National Low Income Housing Information Service (Washington, D.C.) Low Income Coalition (Washington) and the Carolina Community Project.

Ms. Sellers, who was born in Pembroke and reared in Maxton, has worked as a cashier and factory supervisor and currently manages her professional cleaning service (Wright & Associates) and owns a taxicab.

"Ms. Sellers' story is most inspirational because her accomplishments are an excellent example of a person utilizing her God-given talents for her community in spite of her limited financial resources," said Dr. Paula R. Newsome, Leadership Charlotte alumni affairs director, in presenting the award.

She previously has received the Urban Life Associates Neighborhood Award (1984), the Harold Learner Award for Community Service from Johnson C. Smith University (1981-82), International Women's Day Award (1985) and Black Media Citizen of the Year Award (1986).

Ms. Sellers joins the five previous Dr. Schley R. Lyons Circle of Excellence recipients: Carla E. DuPuy (1987), Bob Goodale (1984), Ray Gooding (1986) James E. Rogers (1985) and Sam Smith (1984).

## Jesse: Blacks Want Bigger Slice Of Pie

Continued from page 1A.

when he was preparing to graduate from North Carolina A&T State University, blacks could not reasonably expect to be president or governor, Jackson said. They were preoccupied with winning the right to vote.

But now, blacks --- and other racial minorities and women --- have loftier goals. As the Democratic Party's most loyal constituency, they expect party leaders and elected officials to help them attain positions of power through the ballot box and appointments.

"Just talk reasonable expectations," Jackson told his supporters. "Nothing way out, nothing different, no amendments to the Constitution, no special breaks. We just want a reasonable return on our investment. ... We cannot allow our expectations to remain low."

What constitutes a "reasonable return" he didn't say. But he said North Carolina had not measured up.

"In North Carolina, no black congressmen out of 11 districts," Jackson said. "Democratic Party, be fair. Make room for us. In North Carolina, a state where black votes make governors and senators, no more all-white slates. That's an insult."

State Rep. Dan Blue, D-Wake, chairman of Jackson's campaign in the state, defines reasonable expectations as "full participation" in the political and governmental arena.

As blacks vote, become active in party affairs and work to elect Democrats, he said, it's only natural that a proportionate number will be elected and appointed.

Jackson and Blue distinguish between such rewards and preferential treatment, saying they

don't want the latter. They depict victories at the polling booth and appointments to government posts as wages for honest labor in Democratic vineyards, not handouts.

White Democratic leaders generally agree blacks are entitled to more offices and power. But they say the top priority must be defeating Republicans so there will be power to share. These white Democrats often perceive, rightly or wrongly, a choice between supporting a black --- and losing --- and winning with a white moderate.

In endorsing Sen. Albert Gore Jr. for president, Sen. Terry Sanford and former Gov. Jim Hunt said Gore was the candidate best positioned to carry the South and win in November. But Jackson argued that he had earned their support. It's still a sore point.

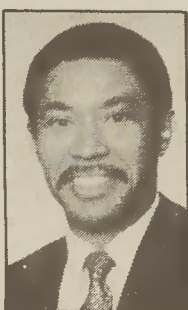
"The fact is Sanford got only 42 percent of the white vote ... and yet he won" because of overwhelming black support, Jackson said. "It's reasonable to expect that Senator Sanford will endorse my campaign."

"We define our friends by their willingness to be fair and to be just. One thing about politics, it does not go up and down. It goes

### Town Meeting

The public is invited to a Town Meeting Sunday, May 19, at First Baptist-West Church, 1800 Oaklawn Ave., beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Cedric H. Jones candidate for County Commission, at-large, is the facilitator.



Blue

round and round. Everything that goes around comes around."

The Jackson agenda --- "New South politics," he calls it --- will not go away regardless of what happens this fall. Black Democrats will continue pushing for a bigger slice of the pie, presenting the party leadership with difficult choices.

Not that it's impossible to satisfy minorities without alienating the white majority. In the past year, Democrats won enactment of a law creating nine new Superior Court judgeships in predominantly black areas. They also worked out a compromise with Robeson County minorities on replacing slain Indian judicial candidate Julian Pierce.

Still unresolved, however, are such thorny issues as runoff primaries and the scarcity of minorities in top governmental posts such as congressional seats and Council of State offices.

### Sue Myrick Will Speak On Crime Awareness

The Uptown Crime Awareness and Prevention Association, Inc. will host a breakfast meeting on May 26, 1988 from 7:30 - 8:45 a.m. in the 6th floor cafeteria of the uptown Belk store.

The Association is positioned as a focal point for the uptown community to address its common security and safety concerns. This breakfast meeting is to further introduce the association to the uptown community and begin the promotion of the campaign "Tell some one who cares."

Speakers will include: Mayor Sue Myrick, Police Chief Sam Killman and CCA's Betty Chafin Rash.



## Charlotte Will Receive Community Development Block Grant Funds

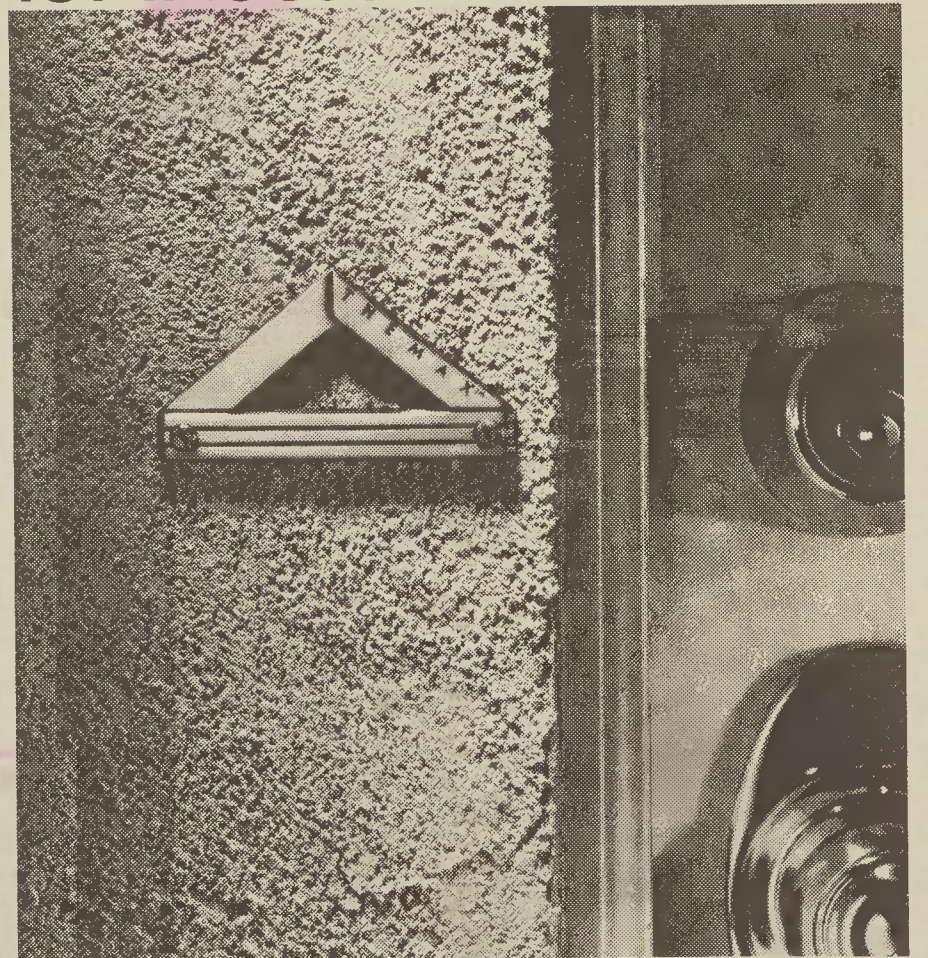
The Charlotte City Council approved on May 9, 1988 the final statement of Community Development objectives and the projected use of \$3,335,000 in FY89 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, \$1,350,000 in program income, and \$75,000 in reprogrammed funds for a total of \$4,760,000.

Copies of the final statement of Community Development objectives and projected use of funds; the City's plan for minimizing displacement of persons as a result of CDBG funded activities; and the plan to assist persons actually displaced by CDBG activities are available at the following locations: Community Develop-

ment Department (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, 600 E. Fourth Street), Office of the City Clerk and Public Service and Information Department (City Hall), 600 East Trade Street.

The City of Charlotte, with federal approval will use \$4,760,000 of Community Development Block Grant Funds in the fiscal year which begins July 1, 1988. The Community Development Block Grant is a major source of federal money to assist local communities in developing and maintaining decent housing and expanding economic development opportunities for low and moderate income persons.

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