

Gore Talks Education at Raleigh School

BY LUCAS FENSKE
Assistant State & National Editor

RALEIGH — Small knots of high school students congregated in the hallways Wednesday morning, gesturing toward Secret Service agents guarding the library doors.

The day at Broughton High School was far from usual, but Democratic presidential front-runner Al Gore doesn't arrive every day to talk with students about education policies.

Flanked by Gov. Jim Hunt and Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., Gore met with a select group of more than 40 students, teachers and parents.

Gore used the forum to illustrate his vision for the future of education.

"I want to make the nation No. 1 in educational progress, and then No. 1 in the world," he said.

Many students said the visit was exciting, but others were left disap-

pointed.

Senior Jennifer Popar said Gore spent too much time discussing policies and not enough talking with students.

"I thought he was here to talk with people and actually have conversation," she said. "He spent more time going over things he wanted to go over."

Besides leaving some discontentment, Gore also earned two endorsements for his presidential campaign.

Hunt and Edwards took the opportunity to endorse Gore for president.

Though Gore is often criticized for his wooden appearance, Edwards said Gore was "warm, compassionate and sometimes funny."

Aside from the campaign sideshow, complete with a bomb-sniffing dog, Gore used the forum to address several education policies.

He proposed several education initiatives, including universal preschool and \$10,000 hiring bonuses for new

teachers entering certain teaching areas.

"Our No. 1 priority is to bring revolutionary improvement to public schools," he said.

Gore also proposed \$25 billion to fund school construction bonds, federal teacher salary subsidies and more money for Pell grants.

Gore justified his programs by saying the U.S. economy was increasingly based on knowledge and education reform efforts needed to reflect this. "Learning must be a more important part of our upbringing."

But Gore might have stepped on some toes when he commented that education was harmed by the feminist

movement and social revolution.

"It had the side effect of turning women away (from the teaching profession)," he said. "Salaries didn't rise, and we suffered as a result."

When Gore finally opened the floor for questions from the crowd of anxious students, he could only answer four before needing to leave.

The students pressed Gore about technology in the classroom, class sizes and the financial problems of minorities entering college.

But not everyone was happy with the questions they posed or the students selected to talk with Gore.

Senior Nicole King said students

were bothered by the number of students able to meet and question Gore.

"A lot of students were looking forward to seeing him, but they've been denied that opportunity," she said.

To ensure students recognized the importance of the visit, a teacher who requested anonymity said school administrators took steps to make Gore's visit memorable. "I find it humorous," she said. "If the vice president has to visit for the hallways to get painted and the toilets to be cleaned, fine with me. Whatever it takes to get things done."

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Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., (left) and Gov. Jim Hunt, D-N.C., both announced their endorsement for presidential candidate Al Gore.



Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., Vice President Al Gore and Gov. Jim Hunt, D-N.C., (left to right) listen as a Broughton High School student expresses his gratitude for a free education.

CAA
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le Pruitt, his roommate, with a congratulatory bear hug.

Pruitt acknowledged the work of his

supporters and campaigners and thanked the other candidates.

"(Walters, Songer and Bell) did an excellent job, they ran great campaigns," he said. "I want to congratulate them and thank my staff."

Pruitt grew visibly more confident as

his lead over the other candidates continued to increase with each poll site's returns. Seated several rows in front of him, two of his opponents looked stunned.

"I was appalled," Walters said of the final vote count.

"We were shocked ... we're extremely disappointed," added a subdued Songer. "We put in a tremendous amount of work for this. We could have made such a tremendous gain for UNC students in a lot of areas."

While hesitant to say whether they would work with Pruitt and CAA next year, Walters and Songer said they would continue to look out for students' interests.

"Our primary interest in getting this was to help students," Walters said. "If that means trying to get seats at the Dean Dome ... we'll do it."

Walters and Songer ran on a platform

supporting increased student seating at basketball games, the use of UNC ONE Cards at Kenan Stadium concession stands and more recognition for Olympic sports.

Corey Bell, the third candidate for CAA president, could not be reached for comment.

Bell ran for the position stating he would push for later Saturday morning and Friday night ticket distribution and reduced or free admission to bars on Franklin Street for Homecoming.

Pruitt said that while he wanted to relax after campaigning, there would be no lull in his CAA work.

"Sports marketing is our focus for the spring," he said. "So I'm going to hop on the phone tonight and take care of that business."

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SBP

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at Bersticker's dramatic last-minute showing. Each time his numbers were announced, cheers, laughter and expressions of amazement erupted in the room.

Other candidates were less pleased with Bersticker's results. "I think Bersticker took a lot of votes from everyone but Brad and Erica," said Michael Harris. "We were all down because of him."

Matt Martin said he was surprised at the number of votes for Bersticker. "You win a few, you lose a few," he said. While Martin was unsure whether he wanted to work in student government next year, he said he would be involved.

Josh Ray said that although the results were disappointing, he was still optimistic because of the high voter turnout. He also said the actual winner was

less important than the quality of all the candidates who had been part of the race. "The candidates got to know each other well, which is important because come next year, all of us will be working together anyway to help the University."

Harris also said the results of the race were exciting overall even though they were a letdown on a personal level.

"I'm looking forward to the runoff, and it should be a very interesting race," he said. "I hoped for more, but I really appreciate those who did vote."

Candidate Preston Smith also said the process had been worthwhile. "It was a great experience, and I met a lot of cool people," he said. "I want to thank everyone who voted for me, who believed in me, and who gave me a minute of their time."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

carolina women's Basketball

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7:00 pm at Carmichael Auditorium

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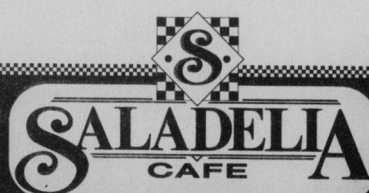
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