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Hoke's schools' letter grades improve

Teacher workplace survey results show improvements too

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Measures of a schools' performance and teacher surveys of working conditions in Hoke County Schools both showed improvements over previous years, according to data presented to the

Board of Education.

The school board received reports last week on the preliminary 2016 North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's School Performance Grades (SPG) as well as the results of the biannual teacher working conditions survey.

This year, all of Hoke's public

schools passed with an overall letter grade of at least a C, with Rockfish Hoke and Don Steed Elementary earning Bs and SandHoke Early College High School earning an A. The state's SPG program is based on student performance in reading and math.

The scores are an improvement

from 2015, when five schools received a D letter grade. West Hoke Middle, Scurlock Elementary, Hawk Eye Elementary, West Hoke Elementary and Sandy Grove Elementary all improved from a D to a C, while SandHoke Early College improved from a B to an A this year.

None of the schools received an F letter grade in reading or math, an improvement from last year when West Hoke Middle received an F in math with a numerical grade of 39. This year, that score improved about 10 points, bringing it up to a D.

(See SCHOOLS, page 9)



The library isn't just books: Lynnette Dial (left) works with Hoke High students Leonie and Shari Kluwig and Jerry Sellie in a drama for children called "Who's in Rabbit's House?" (Ken MacDonald photo)

Library plan: funding, satellite locations

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

A strategic plan for the future of the Hoke County Public Library suggested increasing funding, adding a

permanent children's librarian to the staff and creating satellite locations to better serve Hoke residents, among other recommendations.

A panel of volunteers worked together with Library Director Sheila

Brown, Strategic Performance Systems LLC and University of North Carolina at Greensboro library sciences researcher Dr. Anthony Chow to develop the five-year strategic plan. (See LIBRARY, page 10)

Voters won't need IDs in Nov. Unless Supreme Court rules

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Hoke County Board of Elections staff are preparing for the November 2016 General Election with instructions from the state that photo identification will not be required for people going to the polls, following an appeals court ruling from last month, but that decision could change if the United States Supreme Court steps in.

As it now stands, registered voters going to vote will not be required to show identification, accord-

ing to instructions from the North Carolina Board of Elections sent to the county's elections office.

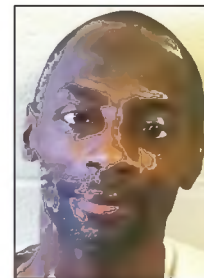
"Absent alternative guidance from the courts, voters will not be asked to show photo identification this election," State Board of Elections Executive Director Kim Westbrook Strach said in a statement.

A court decision last month reversed the state's voter I.D. law.

Gov. Pat McCrory announced plans to appeal the decision, and this Monday asked the United States (See VOTING, page 4)

Security footage leads to arrest in store robbery

Investigators have arrested a man wanted in connection with an armed robbery



Sterling

at a Family Dollar store in Hoke County earlier this month.

Deputies with the Hoke County Sheriff's Office arrested Kaseen Sterling, 51, of the 300 block of St. Pauls Road in Raeford on a charge of robbery with a (See ROBBERY, page 10)

This Week

Hoke High football season starts Friday
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School supplies offered by motorcycle group

A local motorcycle club will hold a back-to-school event this Saturday to give away free school supplies to youth.

The Liberty Riderz will hold the event August 21 from 2-5 p.m. at the Hoke County Recreation Complex at 3195 Red Springs Road. The afternoon will also offer free food,

games, music and a car and bike show.

The event is hosted by over a dozen organizations lending support to the giveaway.

The school supplies will be given away while they last.

This is the fifth year the motorcycle club has held the giveaway for Hoke students.

The official N.C. Fall Festival store is now open, and so is registration for many of the events that go along with the festival.

This year, most of the events Raeford and Hoke County have come to know and love will return.

The parade, one of the highlights of the festival, will be back at a familiar time, but with a different route.

In fact, not much has changed but the name.

The official store for the festival opened the first time 32 years ago with shirts that were donated by Faberge, predecessor of Unilever, which is still a corporate sponsor.

When the first shirts were seen around town, everyone's first comments were "dang, those things are bright." The Lady

Turkey was designed by Hodges Associates of Fayetteville as a donation and was copyrighted as the official logo of the N.C. Turkey Festival. Over the years, the colors of the shirts and themes have changed but the Lady Turkey and the Festival have remained the same, a great event and mascot for Raeford-Hoke County.

This year, with a new

festival name comes a new logo, colors and new designer of the logo.

The winning logo, selected during a blind vote (no one knew who drew what photo), was designed by students at Don D. Steed Elementary. It features the familiar Lady Turkey but added to her is a football, pumpkin, leaves and even her own Tom Turkey free- (See FESTIVAL, page 9)

Citizens Police Academy prepares for next class

The Raeford Police Department will once again hold its citizens police academy, an eight-week program that teaches locals about police work and crime prevention.

"The purpose of the Citizens Police Academy is to foster better communication between citizens and police through educa-

tion," Police Chief Kemp Crumpler said in a statement about the academy. "The academy will create a nucleus of well-informed citizens who possess greater insight into police practices and services."

People who graduate from the academy (See ACADEMY, page 6)



Congressman visits
Congressman Richard Hudson (left) visited Raeford Tuesday, stopping by Sun Path and downtown stores.

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