

Goals of law lofty

By JERRY HOYLE

No Child Left Behind (NCLB), signed into law last year, represents the federal government's largest ever expansion of involvement in K-12 education. This 1100 page law forces schools across the nation to follow federal regulations and guidelines in teacher and assistant teacher hiring, increases standardized testing, requires schools to provide alternative education paths, and regulates pupil assignments to schools.

The goals of the law are lofty. High expectations are to be established for all children regardless of his/her racial group, income group, special needs, or English proficiency. Under the law, each state must develop target goals that will be defined as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The ultimate goal is for all students to be proficient in reading and mathematics by 2013-2014.

The law also sets new standards for teachers and teacher assistants, which must be met by June 30, 2006. North Carolina's efforts at increasing the skills of teachers have been praised as one of the best in the nation.

Still, because of North Carolina's high requirements for complete certification, about 30 percent of North Carolina's 85,817 classroom teachers do not meet NCLB requirements that all teachers be fully certified.

The law also requires each state to develop and administer standardized tests in reading, mathematics, and science. This will not greatly expand testing in N.C. because N.C. was one of the models for this program. The greatest effect will be on how we look at the results. NCLB focuses on the performances of nine subgroups of students: white, black, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Multiracial, Limited English Proficient, Students with Disabilities, and Economically Disadvantaged. Each year every subgroup is expected to make the state established AYP goals in both reading and mathematics. If any group does not make AYP, the whole school is labeled as failing.

Title 1 schools (schools with high numbers of poor children) will receive severe sanctions if any of their subgroups of students do not reach the set goals for two or more years.

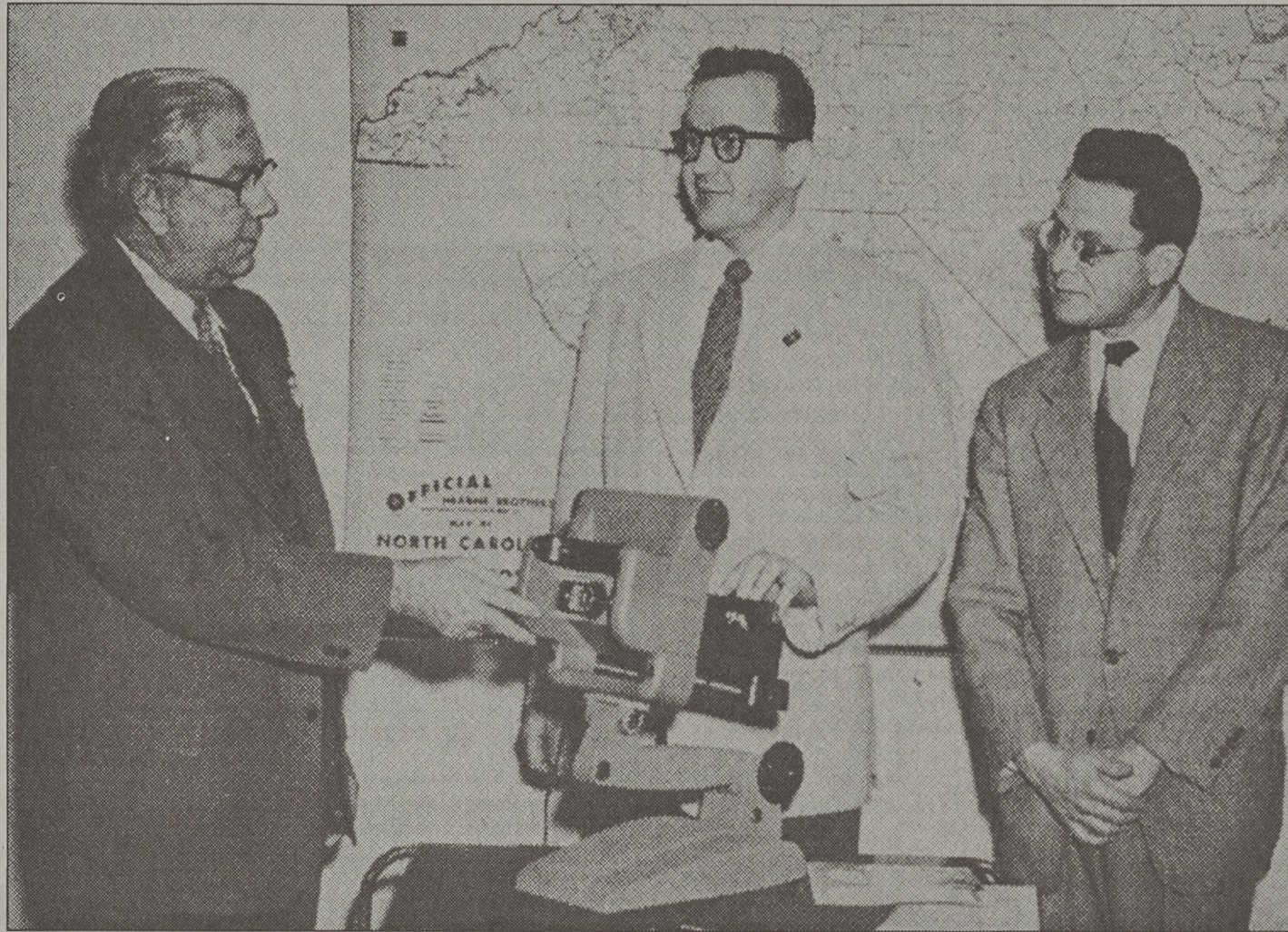
This new law will greatly impact East Elementary School although I believe that we would have met the AYP goals if they had been in place for the past several years. We are among only a handful of Title 1 schools that would have done so.

Currently all of our teachers meet the certification requirements and our assistants are already working on their required training. The higher requirements will make hiring far more difficult. Another problem for East School is the vastly increased federal paperwork that will be required.

We remain committed to work to achieve the law's highest intentions even though we strongly disagree with many of its requirements. At East School we believe that all children can learn and have had great success in the past in teaching all children. We are dedicated to the task of making sure that all of our students continue to learn.

(Jerry D. Hoyle is principal of East Elementary School in Kings Mountain)

LOOKING BACK



This photo from the 1953 Herald shows Dr. N. H. Reed, center, and Lion's Club President George H. Houser, right, are pictured as they presented a tele-binocular vision-testing machine to Superintendent B. N. Barnes, left.

What is the purpose of standardized testing for students?



Abigail Wolford
Staff Writer

What exactly is education? For the last few years, legislators have shown that the ability to pass standardized tests reflects a good education. However, the ability to pass standardized tests means little in the real world. So why does it matter in the schools?

Standardized testing means nothing. I have reason to believe many educators and even school board members from all over the United States agree with me. The tests prove nothing. They do not encourage success but teach failure. They tell children that they are certainly "not as smart as kids were when we were their age," which is the most erroneous, ignorant statement I have ever heard. Fifty years ago, the children would have done just as badly on the tests, probably worse without the research and reading material so easily accessible on the internet.

It should say something to the community when legislators who once backed the bill all of a sudden no longer support it due to the misrepresentation (outright lies) of the dominant party in Washington. Republicans said the bill would bring increased funding to education. It did not. It will not. Democrats who had supported the bill originally refused to go the celebration when it went into effect because they said it would make the education systems worse.

Times have changed. Jobs require a large base of knowledge. "The basics" might get you a job flipping burgers at McDonald's, although I am not sure about that. Most of the managers at my summer jobs wanted to know if I participated in any activities at the high school and whether they could contact my coaches and band directors to learn about my work ethics. I do not recall any employers asking about whether I had passed the proficiency test.

My sister recently earned a presidential scholarship from West Virginia Wesleyan. Although her grades in high school have been very high, the scholarship committee looked at much, much more. They looked at her community service and her after-school activities. They wanted to know what her interests were more than what her ACT and SAT scores were. Many colleges and universities do not even require these tests anymore, saying that

See Abigail, 5A

The sun doesn't shine on the same dog all the time



Jim Heffner
Columnist

Ever since former CBS newsman Bernard Goldberg wrote "Bias," a book outlining liberal bias in the news media, all the left-leaning print and TV journalists have gone out of their way to prove Goldberg's book was a lie.

They've made no headway whatsoever, and that's because, in their hearts they know the book tells the truth, and that Goldberg himself is a liberal, albeit an honest one. I do have a problem with Goldberg. Recently, he appeared on one of those cable TV shows and made a statement that I construed as: "all southern white people over the age of five are racists."

As a Southerner, I resent that, but that's another column.

Some TV talking heads have launched a campaign to reverse the argument. Phil Donohue did a complete show whereby guests tried to plant the seed that the news media is biased in a conservative direction. His guests were Goldberg, Mario Cuomo and that paragon of political astuteness Al Franken.

Goldberg was a target for the three others all night, and Donohue made the statement several times that the media is run by right-wing conservatives. Franken, blithering idiot that he is, made a couple of off-the-shoulder remarks about the Goldberg book, and when challenged by the author, was forced to back down with an embarrassed smile.

Those three flaming liberals spent an hour castigating Goldberg, and of the three, only Cuomo admitted he is a liberal.

Isn't it strange that conservatives don't mind admitting their persuasion, but, as a rule, liberals refuse their rightful label.

Anyway, I was watching the cable news shows one night simply because there was nothing else on the tube, and I had just finished reading my book and didn't want to start another that late. The book, incidentally, was "Things Undone" by Mount Holly native Max Childers, Jr. It's a remarkable book, hilarious and tragic at the same time. Max Childers is now on my list of writers to be read whenever possible.

See Jim, 5A

LOOK BACK

Politics was hot news item in February '53

From the February 5, 1953 edition of the Kings Mountain Herald:

O.T. Hayes Sr. and Harold Phillips filed Monday their notices of candidacy for the Ward 4 commissioner post, and Warren E. Reynolds filed Saturday for the Ward 2 commission seat. Other candidates who have filed to date are Glee A. Bridges and Garland E. Still for mayor; Olland R. Pearson for Ward 3 commissioner; and Sam Stallings for Ward 5 commissioner.

The city's ex-police chief, S.R. "Pop" Davidson, issued a statement this week purporting to explain certain charges against him made by City Commissioner Olland Pearson at the time of his dismissal, and also leveled a blast at C.E. Carpenter, current responsible authority in the police department, who had recommended that Davidson be dismissed.

Pvt. Kenneth L. Hamrick, son of Mr. and Mrs. R.H. Hamrick of Grover, is returning to the U.S. after a tour of duty with the 43rd Infantry Division in Germany.

Parent-Teacher Association of Park Grace School met Monday. Mrs. Nevette Hughes presented a devotional based on I Corinthians after which Mrs. B.L. Biddy sang "The Love of God."

Mr. and Mrs. John O. Plonk and Miss Mary McGill are in St. Louis this week on a buying trip for Plonk Bros.

Ollie Harris Jr. scored 29 points to lead Kings Mountain High's basketball team to a 66-47 win over Lincolnton. Shirley Falls scored 10 of KM's 16 points in a 61-16 loss.

Peggy Keeter scored 49 points to lead the undefeated Grover girls to a 56-41 win over Belwood. It was the 18th straight win for Gene Turner's team. Tommy Keeter had 22 points and Joe Mullinax and Donald Ellis added 11 each as the Grover boys won 50-43.

Grover captured a Cleveland County double-header over Bethware in the new Bethware gym Friday night. Peggy Keeter slapped in 29 points in a 74-46 win for the Grover girls, and Tommy Keeter scored 20 as the Grover boys won 37-32.

SIDEWALK SURVEY

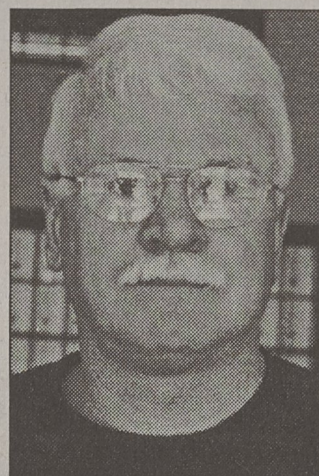
BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD
THE HERALD

Do you think the U.S. should continue its space exploration after the recent Columbia disaster?



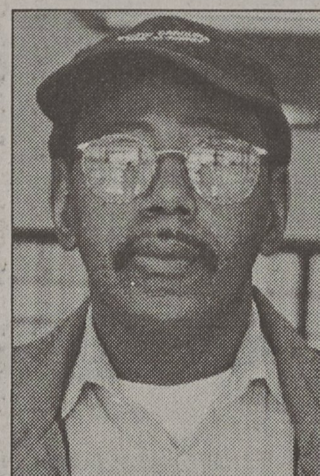
"I think so if it's going to help with our national defense, but if they're just up there experimenting, then I don't think so."

Cheryl Mercer
Kings Mountain



"I definitely do. If they quit coming when the ship sunk, they would have never discovered America."

James Russ
Kings Mountain



"Yes, I do. I personally think that they need to discover stuff. There's a lot up there to discover. I'm curious about it myself."

John Degree
Kings Mountain



"Definitely. How else are we going to continue with our efforts for knowledge?"

Paula Selph
Kings Mountain



"No, I don't. I just think it's too dangerous."

Wendy McKinney
Kings Mountain