



## GCSA Weekly Update

**Dear Jeniffer,**

Happy New Year! Welcome to the second half of the school year. The GCSA staff is excited about our upcoming annual conference and will continue to send weekly updates to keep you informed.

Again, Happy New Year... And we here at the Association wish you much success in 2008.

### **GCSA - NEWS & EVENTS**

#### **Kevin Johnson, Former NBA All-Star, and Ian Jukes, Renowned Educational Spokesman Keynote Speakers for GCSA's 6th Annual Conference**

*January 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>*

Kevin Johnson is a twelve-year veteran of the National Basketball Association and Ian Jukes, a former teacher, administrator, educational consultant, and university instructor will offer their unique thoughts and insight to education reform and charter public schools.

In 2003, in partnership with the Sacramento City Unified School District, Mr. Johnson opened PS7, an elementary charter school that currently offers a rigorous curriculum for nearly 400 children in grades K-8 and five autonomous small schools on the Sacramento High School (Sac High) campus. Sac High, Johnson's alma mater and the second oldest public high school west of the Mississippi, had experienced years of neglect and underperformance prior to SHPS' intervention. SHPS, a charter public school, now provides opportunities to learn to more than 1,300 students at Sacramento High School who are enrolled in either the School of the Arts, School of Business and Communications, School of Law and Public Service, and School of Math, Engineering and Health Sciences.

As the Director of the InfoSavvy Group, an international consulting group that provides leadership and program development in the areas of assessment and evaluation, strategic alignment, curriculum design and publication, and professional development, Mr. Jukes has influenced educators across the world. Over the course of the past 10 years, Ian has worked with clients in more than 40 countries and made more than 7,000 presentations typically speaking to between 300,000 and 350,000 people a years. Recently Consulting Magazine Online named him one of the top ten educational speakers in America.

### ***Remember ...***

The 6th Annual Georgia Charter Schools Conference will be held January 24-26, 2008 at the Marietta Conference Center & Resort in Marietta Georgia.

**Ask us about the new scholarship program available to assist you in sending a teacher (s) to the conference! Space is limited, so apply today!**

For Online Registration and Hotel Reservations: [Conference Registration](#)

- Lower advanced registration rates available until January 18; after January 18, registration will be available on site
- Make hotel reservations by January 10 to ensure lower group rates; you might want to post the actual instructions:

### **Hotel Reservations Online**

- Go to [www.mariettaresort.com](http://www.mariettaresort.com)
- In the Make a Reservation box, Click on "Special Rates"
- Then click on "Group Reservations"
- Group Discount Code is gacharter

OR

### **Hotel Reservations by Phone**

Call (770) 427-2500 and ask for Hotel Reservations and let them know you are with the Georgia Charter Schools Conference

## **CHARTER NEWS**

### **New York Times Uses Front Page to Highlight Georgia Charter School on Christmas Day**

[A School in Georgia as a Laboratory for Getting Along](#)

December 25, 2007

Parents at an elementary school here gathered last Thursday afternoon with a holiday mission: to prepare boxes of food for needy families fleeing some of the world's horrific civil wars. The community effort to help refugees resembled countless others at this time of year, with an exception. The recipients were not many thousands of miles away. They were students in the school and their families. More than half the 380 students at this unusual school outside Atlanta are refugees from some 40 countries, many torn by war. The other students come from low-income families in Decatur, and from middle- and upper-middle-class families in the area who want to expose their children to other cultures. Together they form an eclectic community of Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews and Muslims, well-off and poor, of established local families and new arrivals who collectively speak about 50 languages. "The fact that we don't have anything in common is what we all have in common," said Shell Ramirez, an American parent with two children at the school. *(use link to read entire article)*

### **Students Recognized for Academic Excellence and Outstanding Leadership**

[Two Tech High Charter School Seniors Awarded College Scholarships Thanks to Posse Foundation and Its Partner Institutions](#)

December 21, 2007

After a three month selection process, 2 local charter high school leaders received full-tuition college scholarships to attend either Boston University or The College of Wooster in the fall of 2008, thanks to The Posse Foundation and its partner schools. On December 11<sup>th</sup>, the Scholars were recognized at

an awards ceremony attended by more than 150 guests.

The Posse Foundation recruits and trains outstanding young people from urban high schools and sends them to elite colleges and universities as part of small groups - called "posses." During a rigorous eight month training program, the Scholars will address issues of teambuilding, cross cultural communication, leadership, and academic excellence. Students will arrive on campus well prepared for academic work and campus life. In addition to the scholarship, students will have an on campus mentor and attend weekly Posse meetings which are designed to provide ongoing support.

The two Tech High scholarship recipients are:

**Shabaaka Smalls** and **Abiose Spriggs**

*(use link to read entire article)*

### **[So-Called Reforms Won't Help Johnny Read ... Real Reform Will](#)**

By Georgia Representative Jan Jones

December 26, 2007

Talk about public education reform is like a cheap dress. Adding lace around the hem and pressing with starch won't turn it into couture. Likewise, gussying up public education won't make Mary and Johnny learn. Real change will. Nationally, Georgia ranks near the bottom of the heap in SAT rankings, standardized test scores, and with its 73 percent graduation rate. Governor Sonny Perdue and State School Superintendent Kathy Cox deserve solid credit for increasing the graduation rate by 10% since taking office five years ago. That's significant - and reflects higher standards, stronger curriculum, targeted initiatives and hard work by educators. On the other hand, Georgia had nowhere to go but up - and the next 10 percentage points in the graduation rate will be even harder to come by. *(use link to read entire article)*

## **HIGHLIGHT YOUR SCHOOL!**

GCSA wants to highlight your school on the "new and improved" GCSA website, which will be launched very soon! GCSA would like you to forward a photo of your school building or a school sign with a short sentence which can be used as a descriptive caption. Please forward all photos to Andrew Lewis at [alewis@gacharters.org](mailto:alewis@gacharters.org).

Jeniffer Collins  
Georgia Charter Schools Association

[Forward email](#)

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