
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Trenton schools need consistent support

Each year the Trenton School Board must deal with the cold reality of receiving inadequate state funds to operate the school system. The administration must resort to the annual practice of freezing accounts in order to create an artificial surplus to operate the schools. This means not hiring staff or filling approved purchase orders for educational supplies, materials and equipment.

In anticipation of receiving less support for operating funds in the coming school year the layoffs of necessary staff must be implemented in order to avoid the potential of running out of money before the school year ends. However, this approach, which is being used earlier each year, is beginning to lose its effectiveness as a funding tool.

Last year Dr. Bernice Venable, superintendent of Trenton Public Schools, informed the board that in the coming years, funds for the public schools will be drastically re-

duced because of Gov. Whitman's "Core Curriculum" funding plan — proposed for the state public school system — that is now being reviewed by the court and the Legislature. The effect of these cuts will put on the chopping block such programs as vocational education, bilingual education, special education, year-round schooling, alternative education, advanced placement, student activities, sports night, high school band, courtesy busing and a host of other necessary educational services, regardless of their value to our students and the local community.

After the layoffs were implemented, Dr. Venable also informed us that she would reach out to our local legislators to get their support for these critically needed funds, not only to bring back the laid-off staff but also to maintain the integrity of the educational programs and services throughout our school system. Assemblywoman Shirley K.

Turner clearly understood the scope of our chronic funding problem and introduced a bill (A-1891) that would provide \$4 million to the Trenton School district. Assemblywoman Turner recognizes, as Dr. Venable has constantly stated, that the only way to ensure that our children will get a fair opportunity to have a quality education is to provide a stable and rational funding source. This infusion of funds will only be a stop-gap measure at best, but our funding dilemma will continue until the courts decide on what the state constitution means by "thorough and efficient" and the cost of providing it to the Urban 30 public schools.

I encourage everyone who cares about our public school system to support the passage of this legislation.

Alexander Brown
Trenton

The writer is former president of the Trenton School Board.

TCHS seniors nominated to Times all-star team

English

Qianna Snooks successfully balances the rigors of Advanced Placement course work while maintaining her leadership roles academically as president of student government, captain of the Red Karate Sports Nite Team, a varsity athlete on the cross-country, indoor and outdoor track teams, a staff member of the Bobashela yearbook and TCHS TV, and a member of the prom committee and the National Honor Society.

Snooks ranks No. 1 in her class and is a National Merit Scholar semifinalist.

She possesses a love for literature which is evident not only in her voracious reading habits, which include the classics as well as popular romances, but also through her sophisticated writings.

In addition to her outstanding performance academically, she also volunteers at Martin House and St. Francis Medical Center. She is an employee of Channel 19 Comcast, where she interns in preparation for her decided college major of communications/journalism. She is also a member of La DeBu Debutantes. Her hobbies include writing poetry, singing, sketching and tennis.

"Qianna demonstrates excellence in scholarship, as she independently researches works studied from the Canon as well as current multicultural standards, to provide cogent, focused and stimulating contributions to both analytical discussions and her writing," said nominating teacher, Jane E. Reed.



Qianna Snooks

Trenton Times, January 18, 1997

Seniors from TCHS nominated to academic team

Social studies

Elizabeth Lammons exemplifies the qualities of a student dedicated to achievement.

She has been employed in the Student Activities office as an assistant for the past two years.

She has earned numerous honor awards, including the National English Merit Award in 1993. She is also the 1997 Achievement Program Commended to Colleges recipient.



In addition to her awards, she has been involved in Writing Club, Debate Team, Student Government Association, track and field, cross-country, and served as mistress of ceremonies for Trenton Central High's

annual Sports Nite Gym Show.

Her community service involvement includes Habitat for Humanity and the annual CROP Walk for hunger. During the summer of 1996 she voluntarily spent many hours in school to prepare the 1996-1997 Student Handbook.

Lammons plans to become a journalist/documentarian and possesses excellent skills in this area.

She has also tackled the task of preparing a special bulletin for students each week. It provides current information about school activities, scholarships, job opportunities and special events. Her eloquence and outstanding writing ability have contributed greatly to her success with this project.

Her commitment and the quality of her work are commendable. As a senior, she has devoted enormous amounts of time to responsibilities which many of her peers have not begun to consider important.

"I have had the pleasure of having Elizabeth in my class for two separate courses in the Social Studies Department and I can say, without reservation, that she will always give her best. She is like a star that will forever shine in my memory," said nominating teacher, Osei A. Omowale.

Trenton Times, May 24, 1997