

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #149
Wadesboro, NC
28170

Postal
Customer

THE EXPRESS

205 West Morgan Street • Wadesboro, NC 28170 • 704-694-2480 • TheExpressNews@gmail.com • www.TheExpressNewspaper.com

Enjoy our special supplement, Particulars, in this week's edition. Thank you for reading!

Cutting Edge Tool Allows Schools to Assess and Meet Student Wellness Needs

In a move that will fundamentally shift how schools, school districts, and college campuses meet and respond to student needs and ensure their success in the classroom and beyond, EverFi, Inc. today announces their development of the Wellness Index™. The Wellness Index is a powerful analytic tool for school districts to identify, monitor, and respond to the wellbeing of their students in such areas as financial capability, digital responsibility, and alcohol and other drug use, with numerous further topics central to student wellness in development.

The Wellness Index™ utilizes student attitudinal, behavioral, demographic, and performance data in a proprietary indexing algorithm that enables EverFi to identify students' needs and strengths across these wellness areas and then provide them with specialized course content, services, and support. Beginning in the 2012-2013 school year, EverFi, the leading education technology company to develop critical skills through its online platforms, will provide the Wellness Index™ to all current K12 school district partners nationwide. Each school using one or more EverFi platforms will receive tailored reports detailing their students' wellness profile in relation to the national aggregate, identifying students' needs and relative strengths, and providing demographic profiles of the riskiest students.

"Imagine schools being able to use an online education platform to pinpoint a student who's really struggling with risky financial behaviors, or early substance abuse, and immediately provide individualized resources to alleviate some of those problems," said EverFi Director of Research Todd Wyatt. "The Wellness Index provides this extremely powerful capability."

"We are excited to be among the first districts to receive and utilize data provided by the Wellness Index in conjunction with our use of EverFi learning platforms," said Anson County School District Superintendent Greg Finn. "We know that substance abuse and financial pressures impact student dropouts, but we often learn about these issues too late. The Wellness Index will give us real-time, actionable information so that we can respond accordingly, before our students slip through the cracks. We see this as a major step forward in addressing our critical need for keeping students successfully engaged in school."

"EverFi has built a powerful network of schools across the US with the sole focus of helping their students achieve optimal academic and lifelong success," said EverFi Chief Executive Officer Tom Davidson. "Until now, the vast majority of education data and research has focused on student test scores, with no ability to adapt curricula real-time based on student performance. That needs to change. We're on a mission not only to provide students with individualized, relevant online content, but also to offer every school district, university administrator, and parent in the country with a rich demonstration of their students' wellbeing. Empowered by this knowledge, the adults and communities surrounding our students can better support them in areas with such profound impact on their life."

The launch of the Wellness Index reinforces EverFi's commitment to identify and support the predictors of student success. Survey data gathered through EverFi's learning platforms not only helps strengthen these programs, but also provides schools and institutions with rich data to inform their efforts to optimize student success. EverFi also shares their insights with experts, educators, and behavioral scientists regarding students' risk and protective factors across a variety of wellness indicators. This broader initiative, known as Assembly™, aims to change the landscape of how educational data is used to support student wellbeing and success across the lifespan.

EverFi, Inc. is the leading education technology company to teach, assess, and certify students in critical life skills to ensure their success in the classroom and beyond. EverFi's education platforms address financial literacy, digital literacy, cyberbullying, substance use prevention, and sexual assault awareness and prevention. The company's programs are implemented in schools and districts nationwide using the latest adaptive pathing technology, cutting-edge media, high-definition video, gaming simulation, rich graphics, and avatars. EverFi's programs are now offered in 46 of the 100 largest U.S. school districts and more than 500 colleges and universities around the country. EverFi's AlcoholEdu for College® is one of the few education technology programs demonstrated through independently conducted, empirical research funded by the National Institutes of Health to reduce student alcohol use and negative consequences. Learn more at www.everfi.com.

Anson Unemployment Rate Was 11% for March

Anson County's unemployment rate in March was 11%, barely changed from February's 11.2% rate. Statewide the unemployment rate for March was 9.6%, February's rate was 10.1%.

Looking back at March 2011, the rate then for Anson County was 12.2%. Anson's total labor force in March was 10,874. Of that number 9,682 were employed and 1,192 were unemployed. In February the total labor force was 10,862, with 9,648 employed and 1,214 unemployed.

Unemployment rates fell in 98 of North Carolina's 100 counties in March, increased in the remaining two counties. Unemployment rates declined in 85 counties, increased in 14 and remained the same in one when compared to the same month last year.

"Unemployment rates were down in nearly every county in March," said N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll. "Over-the-year numbers show a positive downward trend as we continue to focus on supporting employees by growing jobs in North Carolina. We offer job search assistance, resume writing and many other programs at our employment service offices statewide for citizens in the job market."

North Carolina had 35 counties that were at or below the state's seasonally unadjusted unemployment rate of 9.6 percent. Unemployment rates decreased in all 14 Metropolitan Statistical Areas.

Statewide the number of workers employed (not seasonally adjusted) increased in March by 14,122 to 4,197,446, and those unemployed decreased 26,890 to 444,977. Since March 2011, the number unemployed decreased 34,823 and the number employed increased 44,443.

Orange County had the state's lowest unemployment rate in March at 6.0 percent. Graham County had the highest unemployment rate at 18.5 percent.

State Unemployment Extension Program Set to Expire

Based on recent notification from USDOL, North Carolina is no longer eligible for the Extended Benefits (EB) program. The last payable week of EB will be the week ending May 12, 2012. Workers who file their claim through the EB program will no longer be eligible to receive extended benefits once the period ends. Roughly 199,000 people are receiving benefits in North Carolina. Of those, 17,000 people are currently receiving benefits in the EB program.

DES is working quickly to notify those who are potentially affected by this program ending. Claimants currently in the extended benefits program will be notified by mail.

In February, Congress reauthorized 100-percent federal funding for Extended Benefits and a provision allowing states to adopt "three-year look-back" triggers through the end of 2012. With the exception of Alaska, states offering EB have enacted what is known as an "alternative total unemployment rate trigger," which requires states to have an unemployment rate of at least 6.5 percent and a current three-month average unemployment rate that is at least 10 percent greater than it was during the same three-month period in any of the previous three years (the "three-year look-back"). The estimated last payable week is when states will fail to meet the three-year look-back requirement based on each state's current three-month average unemployment rate.

The EB program is operated by the State of North Carolina pursuant to state law, federal law, and U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) policy. The EB program is subject to labor market conditions in each state.

Pee Dee Wildlife Refuge Fishing Rodeo

The Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge will host their annual Youth Fishing Rodeo this Saturday, May 5. The event will take place from 8 a.m. until noon on Sullivan Pond at the refuge, located on Highway 52 approximately 7 miles north of Wadesboro. The Refuge and Friends of the Pee Dee Refuge are proud to present this event.

Children 12 and under may enter the rodeo, but people of all ages are invited to participate. Prizes will be awarded for the largest fish, the smallest fish, and the most fish caught.

Fishing rods, tackle and bait will be available if you do not have your own, so come on out for this great outdoor event and help celebrate National Fishing and Boating Week. A hot dog lunch will be provided by Friends of the Pee Dee Refuge following the fishing activities at 11 a.m. Other goodies will also be provided.

Here are directions: On Highway 52 look for the Wildlife Refuge signs. Turn there and follow the roadway for about 1/2 mile past the office to Sullivan Pond.

For more information you can call the Refuge at 704-694-4424.

National Letter Carriers Association Food Drive is May 12

The Wadesboro Post Office will hold their Second Annual Food Drive on Saturday, May 12. The postal carriers are asking everyone who is on their delivery routes to please donate non-perishable food items by placing the items in a bag near their mailbox that day. All the food collected will go to help those people in need right here in Anson County.

Letter Carrier Alyssa Ostrander said, "Last year was our first food drive here in Wadesboro, and we were amazed at the generosity of our customers. With their help we were able to collect almost 8,900 pounds of much needed food. This year, with more of our customers aware of the food drive, we are hoping to exceed that amount. We are asking our customers to again astonish us with their donations, which are greatly needed during these tough economic times."

Don't forget, Wadesboro postal carriers will be picking up food items on Saturday, May 12!

Anson County Early College Students Enjoy Prom 2012



Look how much fun Anson County Early College students are having at prom as they dance the night away! ACEC's annual prom was held on Friday, April 20th at the Lockhart-Taylor Center in Wadesboro.

The Lockhart-Taylor Center was transformed into a magical End-of-the-World themed ballroom. Fancy silver mirrors greeted students as they entered, symbolic of a time for reflection upon themselves. Clocks decorated the entrance and accented every table. Artwork, lights, and decorations designed by ACEC students further enhanced the atmosphere. Music of all genres, DJ-ed by ACEC super-senior Lamar Gaines, filled the air and set the scene for an evening of celebration.

The ACEC prom committee, comprised of students, planned the eventful evening. Thank you to ACEC parents, staff, and chaperones for making the night memorable for students!

Details from Board of Education Meeting

The Anson County Board of Education met on Monday, April 30. Here are some details from the meeting:
Change in May Board of Education meeting date A change in the May Board of Education business meeting date was approved. The May meeting will take place on Tuesday May 29th at the regularly scheduled meeting time.

Local Budget The BOE approved administration's recommended local spending plan. The BOE approved Local budget will now go to the County Commissioners as a request for funding. The AC Commissioners will now review and take action on appropriations for the school system. The budget request is a "maintenance of effort" budget seeking to fund the schools at the current level. It does not call for any increases in revenue from the county.

Personnel The process for filling the Lilesville Elementary School Principal position was announced. First round interviews will take place the week of May 7th with school, parent, and community participation the following week.

In a like manner, the process for filling the Ansonville Elementary Principal position will begin the week of May 7th. School, parent, and community participation will be the following week (week beginning the 14th of May).

In other personnel news, administration will begin interviewing for the Assistant Superintendent: Curriculum and Instruction the week of May 21st.

Ms. Mary Ratliff Appointed Ms. Mary Ratliff, Interim Principal at Lilesville, was recommended and appointed to the Administrator: Student and Administrative Services position beginning July 1, 2012. Superintendent Greg Finn said, "I am very pleased to welcome Ms. Ratliff to the central office leadership team. Ms. Ratliff brings, to this leadership position, building administrative experience at both the high school and elementary school level as well as an accomplished teaching background in Career Technical Education (CTE). She will work closely with Mr. McLeod in transition over the next two months in preparation for assuming full leadership responsibilities in July."

Board passes Resolution The Board unanimously approved a resolution requesting that the Legislature of the State of North Carolina eliminate discretionary reversions for the betterment of public education for all school systems in North Carolina. The elimination of the reversions will allow Anson County Schools to offset the loss of federal Edujob funds at the end of this fiscal year, and would put an end to discretionary reversions in North Carolina.

Board approves Meal Prices for SY 2012-2013 The Board of Education approved an increase in the price of a full paid student lunch meal by 5¢ and an increase in the paid breakfast price by 15¢. The increase is due to the reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Program by Congress, Section 205 "Equity in School Lunch Pricing," which requires LEA's to start gradually increasing the price of a full paid student meal to match the reimbursement rate for a free student meal.

AIG Program Change Proposed Ms. Georgia Maner, Administrator: AIG, Assessment and Instructional Technology presented a "concept" plan for changes in Academically and Intellectually Gifted programming at the elementary level. The plan will be posted later this week.

In other news Anson County Schools will relinquish responsibility for Pre-Kindergarten programming to the Union County Community Action (Headstart). Anson County Schools will continue as a partner with UCCA and the Anson County Partnership for Children in efforts to provide the highest quality early childhood learning experience for Anson County children.

This move was precipitated, in part by changes in Title I funding requirements that required schools systems that use Title I funds to operate PreK services as "centers" rather than school specific programs. This requirement would result in countywide registration and the most needy students being placed irrespective of their residents.

Currently, Anson's two Pre-K programs (Ansonville, Morven) significantly use Title I funds. The change in service providers will increase Title funds at both schools. These funds will be used to better meet the needs of K-6 students at each school.

Mr. Michael Freeman, Deputy Superintendent, communicated that no staff will be displaced as a result of this change. Mr. Freeman will work with PreK staff on placement for next year.

Battle of Bands Rescheduled for Aug. 17

South Piedmont Community College's fifth annual Battle of the Bands has been rescheduled for the evening of Friday, August 17. The event was originally scheduled for April 21 but was postponed because of threatening weather. The event is held each spring on the L.L. Polk Campus in Polkton.

It is too early to know if all the artists who were scheduled to perform earlier this month will be able to attend the rescheduled event. A list of performers will be released later in the summer.

The Battle of the Bands is sponsored by SPCC's Student Government Association.

Annual Balloon Release for Deceased Children

The local chapter of the Compassionate Friends will hold their annual Balloon Release on Thursday, May 10 at 6:30 p.m. at the Polkton Depot. This recognition of deceased children and balloon release will be followed by a covered dish dinner in the neat and attractive depot building.

Families and friends of deceased children of any age are invited. For information call Ken Caulder at 704-694-2524, Becky Wallace at 704-475-5005 or Irv Thompson at 704-694-8774.

Paper Clover Promotion Supports Anson County 4-H

Starting May 2nd through May 13th Tractor Supply in Wadesboro is partnering with the National 4-H Council to offer a Paper Clover Promotion to help support local 4-H programs in counties that have these stores. The cost for a paper clover is \$1. Proceeds will come to the local 4-H program that must cover costs for trips, summer day camps, conferences and volunteer trainings. So if you have not already done so, please go down to the store and purchase one or ten clovers.

To date over \$300,000 has been raised through this promotion nationally. Remember, the proceeds are going to a great program that supports great youth and adults in Anson County! Hope to see you there!

Children's Party at BRLC

Burnsville Recreation and Learning Center invites parents and children to come out and enjoy food, fellowship, music and fun during their "God Loves You" Children's Party. It will take place on Saturday, May 12, from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. All food and drinks are free. There will be free t-shirts and a box of Lego toys for the first 100 children!

The party is hosted by the BRLC Afterschool Kids Cafe Volunteers. For more information, or if you would like to help, please call Mary Hammond, Brenda Benton or Linda Pratt at 704-826-8337.

BRLC is located at 13349 Highway 742 North in Burnsville, across from the Fire Department.

Look inside for special inserts from IGA