

# Education Update



NC DJJDP

A Newsletter for Parents and Guardians of Students at Samarkand Youth Development Center

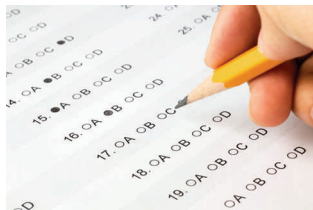
## Surprise! Mid-Year Testing at Samarkand!

It's not the end of the school year, but Samarkand's students have taken the Online Computer Skills Test and completed End-of-Course Tests.

The end-of-course tests in high school are designed to measure students' mastery of the curriculum taught in North Carolina classrooms. High school students take end-of-course tests when they are enrolled in the following courses: Algebra I and II; Biology; Chemistry; Civics and Economics; English I; Geometry; Physical Science; Physics; and United States history. The state tests are linked to the North Carolina curriculum and developed by classroom teachers. Mathematics end-of-course tests take about two hours and 20 minutes to complete. Non-mathematics end-of-course tests take less than two hours to complete.

Student performance is reported by achievement levels. Level I performance indicates insufficient mastery. Level II is inconsistent mastery. Level III is consistent mastery, showing that the student is performing at grade level. Level IV is superior mastery. Students performing at or above Level III are considered at or above grade level.

For additional information on the tests that students are required to take, contact your student's school or the testing director in our central office.



## Annual Holiday Program

Our Annual Holiday Program was held on December 17, 2008. Our talented students presented a play and sang seasonal songs. They were excited and ready to show their talents to staff, faculty, peers, visitors, and parents. They worked and practiced intently for this special event. What fun during this holiday season!



## Tidbits from the Education Administrator

It's hard to believe that we are already preparing for a new semester! The year has really sped ahead and with the changes for students and staff, I must say, it was an excellent first semester. Speaking of changes, we have two new faces on campus. Mr. Undre' Ross joined us on December 8th as English and Social Studies teacher. Mr. Mark Eubanks returned to Samarkand as Exceptional Children's teacher on November 25th. We welcome both of them and I look forward to working with them as we embark on our second semester.

—Dr. Bobbie Little, Instructional Specialist

### Samarkand Staff

George L. Sweat  
*Secretary*

Joanne McDaniel  
*Chief of Staff*

Jane D. Young  
*Superintendent*

Roger Reynolds  
*Campus Manager of Samarkand YDC*

Bobbie Little  
*Instructional Specialist*

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## New Schedule enhances learning

“Block Scheduling” was implemented at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year. This implementation caused a significant adjustment to our school’s schedule. The move to block scheduling comes at a time when more and more North Carolina school systems have adopted this type of scheduling. This means that high school students are in class for 90 minutes per period instead of 45 minutes per period. What was once a one-year course is now being completed in one semester. At the end of the semester, high school students take an EOC (End of Course) test to receive credit for the course. This does not apply to elementary and middle grades; they will continue to take the End-of-Grade (EOG) Tests in the late spring.

Our students have been very focused, realizing that they must put forth their best effort when taking the end of course tests. Many students asked for extra work and extra assistance after class to help them. We salute these motivated, hardworking students!

## Spirit of Seasons Activities

Samarkand’s community volunteers help enhance activities throughout the year and especially during holidays. Reverend James Wicker, Chaplain, and local members of the clergy led special programs on Thanksgiving Day. They also sponsored special activities on Christmas Day for students wishing to participate.

A highlight for many students was a trip on December 2nd to Greystone Baptist Church in Durham for a “Living” Christmas Tree Program and pizza party. The church presented lively music by a thirty-member orchestra and a seventy-member choir, fifty of whom were in the living Christmas tree. The tree’s 50,000 lights were synchronized with the music for beautiful colors and patterns.



Students belonging to the Epiphany Program have enjoyed catered meals and Saturday afternoon bonding with Epiphany Volunteers. This spiritual program began with a three-day on-campus retreat. Monthly reunions that enlisted seasonal themes followed.

Many of the students enjoyed a recent crochet project, taught by a community volunteer. Students learned various techniques for crocheting beautiful afghans, blankets, sweaters, caps, or booties. These items are distributed worldwide by the Guidepost Organization or may be given to local nursing homes. Students may choose to keep some items.

Students continue to enjoy evening “Rings of Fellowship” and Sunday groups that are led by community volunteers. These magnificent volunteers, along with the student groups, also celebrate seasonal themes.



## Keep in Touch!

We all have the opportunity to grow and to excel in the coming year. Please know that the school and center staff are available to work and talk with you about your child. We welcome your visits to the school and encourage you to contact us to make an appointment to talk about your wishes and hopes for your child in this new year. Please let us know how we can assist you in realizing your hopes for your child in the coming year.