

Letter to Editor
September 7, 2009

Close-knit communities with good schools at the center have long been the hallmark of Baldwin County. Volunteers across the district have worked hard in recent years to build local education foundations that support neighborhood schools and help to merit that distinction.

The severity of the current crisis underscores the pressing need to join forces in securing stable funding for education. Clearly, it has never been more important for citizens to assume shared responsibility for the success of every Baldwin County child.

Toward that end, our board of education faces the most critical decision it has been called upon to make in a generation. Our next superintendent must possess the skills and experience to manage our schools strategically through the coming, difficult period. A proven leader with the ability to engage our entire community is crucial to renewing confidence and inspiring action.

The seven Baldwin County education foundations are working together to better understand how this crisis evolved. We have committed to continuing our partnership to help bring community expectations into line with present resources.

We urge the Baldwin County Board of Education to undertake the same kind of reflection and collaboration by conducting a broad search for the next superintendent of schools. Done properly, it is a process that will require thoughtful consideration of its mission and vision and -- for the minimal cost -- the single most prudent investment they can make at this time.

While every other choice confronting the board at present involves learning to live with less -- at least in the short term -- this one offers hope for finding the right person to improve our prospects.

Ashley Hammond
President
Supporting Educational Enrichment in Daphne's Schools

(The Baldwin County Education Coalition is a newly formed partnership of seven local education foundations including Alabama Gulf Coast Area Educational Foundation, Central Baldwin Education Foundation, Fairhope Educational Enrichment Foundation, North Baldwin Coalition for Excellence in Education, South Baldwin Chamber Foundation, Spanish Fort Educational Enrichment Foundation and Supporting Educational Enrichment in Daphne's Schools.)