



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts:

Louise Courts or Margaret Arbuckle

Guilford Education Alliance

(336) 841-4332 (office)

lcourts@GuilfordEducationAlliance.org

LINDA CARLISLE, SECRETARY OF THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES, IS HONORARY CHAIR FOR *ON STAGE!*

***On Stage!* is a showcase of our best student talent in Guilford County Schools**

Guilford County, N.C. – February 18 – Guilford Education Alliance is proud to announce that Linda Carlisle, Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, will be the Honorary Chair of the 2009 ***On Stage!*** production, a showcase of student talent in Guilford County Schools. ***On Stage!*** will be Thursday, April 30th at 7 pm at War Memorial Auditorium.

In its third year, ***On Stage!*** is a collaboration between Guilford Education Alliance and Guilford County Public Schools to promote and support performing arts education in our schools. In times of pressure for increased academic performance, it is important to highlight the impact of arts education. Research has found that arts education improves student achievement, provides opportunities for disengaged youth to be involved in schools and prepares students for an increasingly culturally diverse and knowledge-based workforce. It teaches children to be more tolerant and open, allows children to express themselves creatively, promotes individuality, bolsters self-confidence, and

improves overall academic performance. Guilford Education Alliance is proud that ***On Stage!*** provides students the opportunity to perform to an audience of community leaders, parents and other children in a professional setting. Many of these students would not have the opportunity to showcase their talent otherwise.

“We are honored that Linda Carlisle will be the Honorary Chair of this important event for our community. Having been a long-time supporter of the arts in Guilford County, it is wonderful to have Linda’s leadership at the state level as an advocate for the Cultural Arts. Indeed we are fortunate to have her involvement with this event where students, parents, teachers and the larger community come together to applaud for our children ***On Stage!***” said Margaret Arbuckle, Executive Director of Guilford Education Alliance. “We urge members of our community to be in the audience on April 30th and use this opportunity to show our recently-appointed Secretary of Cultural Resources how much we value arts education.”

Linda Carlisle in a recent address to the United Arts Council of Greater Greensboro focused remarks on arts development as having a significant economic impact on our community in addition to the benefit it has on academic achievement. “Research shows that early exposure to art and involvement with the arts helps students achieve measurable academic success, including higher SAT scores and advanced critical thinking skills,” said Cultural Resources Secretary Linda A. Carlisle. “Arts are also a potent tool we can use to attract jobs that ensure the future vitality and economic stability of our state.”

Guilford County Superintendent, Maurice “Mo” Green stressed the importance of arts education in our public schools and included it in the Guilford County Schools Strategic Plan. “Students’ exposure to and involvement in the arts is of paramount importance in their academic achievement. Through implementation of the GCS Strategic Plan, we will work to offer more intellectually engaging pursuits in the

classroom, including the performing arts. ***On Stage!*** is one way we can promote the value of arts in education and provide an excellent opportunity for students to have the experience of performing in a professional setting. We hope the entire community will come out to support our students.”

The importance of arts education is recognized as a necessary requirement for a sound basic education. House Bill 149 is pending in the North Carolina General Assembly. If passed, the bill would require an Arts Education Credit for High School Graduation. The bill sponsors emphasize that “North Carolina’s economy needs a workforce that is not only educated but able to excel in innovation and creativity. Arts education has been demonstrated to increase the skills and knowledge required for graduation, be a catalyst to close the achievement gaps, improve academic skills in reading and language development, support the math and science curriculum, teach discipline and teamwork, improve self-esteem, and provide a comprehensive, rigorous, and balanced education for all children in North Carolina Schools.”

On Stage! will be held Thursday, April 30 at 7:00pm at the War Memorial Auditorium. Tickets are available at TicketMaster.com or by phone at 1-800-745-3000.

Guilford Education Alliance is a county-wide nonprofit organization whose mission is to make education a TOP priority of all citizens in Guilford County.

For more information, contact the Guilford Education Alliance at 336.841.4332 or info@GuilfordEducationAlliance.org.

###