

## Dunwoody's Jester declares for state school chief

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By Art Ditmar For The Crier |

On a beautiful autumn day at Brook Run Park Monday, former DeKalb Board of Education member, Nancy Jester of Dunwoody announced her plan to run for state school superintendent.

Surrounded by supporters—including her mother, her children's teachers and public officials—Jester proclaimed that she would be the taxpayer's watchdog on education spending.

"Georgia spends more per pupil than states such as Mississippi, Texas and Arkansas and those states have higher graduation rates," said Jester.

Jester has long called herself "a mom with a calculator" but in fact her background is as an actuarial consultant and she asserts it was her questions and investigation of DeKalb School Board spending that led to the investigation of the board.

"I uncovered the malfeasance. SACS used my spreadsheets," proclaimed Jester. "This demonstrates my commitment to telling the truth."

SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) is the accrediting agency that put the DeKalb Board on probation and recommended removing all board members, including Jester.

Asked how she would overcome the problem of being a member of the ousted board, Jester responded that she was not concerned and that her record would speak for itself.

Jester previewed several themes that can be expected to form the heart of her message.

"More classroom and less bureaucracy. That's what they'll get from me," said Jester explaining that Georgia had a 41 percent increase in students from 1992-2009 but spending on administrators and other non-teaching staff grew by 74 percent.

"Had Georgia kept the growth rate of spending on administrators to the same rate as student enrollment increases, Georgia teachers could have earned over \$7,700 more per year."

Jester grew up in Georgia and earned her bachelor's degree in economics. She and her husband, Stanley, have three school-age children.

Jester will join Matt Shultz, Richard Woods and Fritz Johnson in the GOP primary running for the empty seat left vacant when John Barge announced he was running for governor.

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