This Week In Black America

MILESTONES: Denise P. Meridith has been appointed the associate state director for California. Meridith, who has worked 15 years for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, will assume the responsibility of managing 17 million acres of public lands in California and 1.5 million acres in northwestern Nevada.

EDUCATION: In celebration of the late W.E.B. DuBois' 121st birthday, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst will display the 150,000 items of correspondence, notes, manuscripts, photographs and assorted medals of the civil rights activist. The University is the largest holder of DuBois memorabilia.

BUSINESS: San Diego businessman Royce E. McClanahan was awarded the $10,000 Durfee Foundation Award. The community-based award is given every two years to Californians who have significantly enhanced the human dignity of others through the law or legal instruments.

YOUTH: The Rev. Al Sharpton — who is slated for a 15-day stint in an Albany, N.Y. jail for a contempt of court conviction — says alleged rape victim Tawana Brawley and her mother are writing a book about the teenager's assault. The much ballyhoed case was dismissed by the court after the mother and daughter team refused to testify before a grand jury.

SPORTS: One-tie baseball great Don Baylor has reportedly been offered a front office job by the California Angels.

LAW: Eugene Duffy and Reta Lewis, two former campaign organizers for Julian Bond, have been named in a suit filed by Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Co. The suit charges the organizers failed to pay $11,000 in telephone bills accumulated when Bond last attempted to run for Congress.

ART: The work of ten renowned artists is currently being featured in celebration of Black History Month at the Ormond Memorial Art Museum in Ormond Beach, FL.

SEMI-ANNUAL JOCKEY SALE

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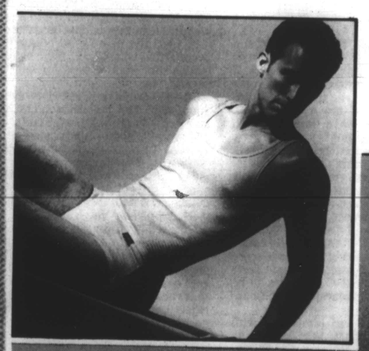

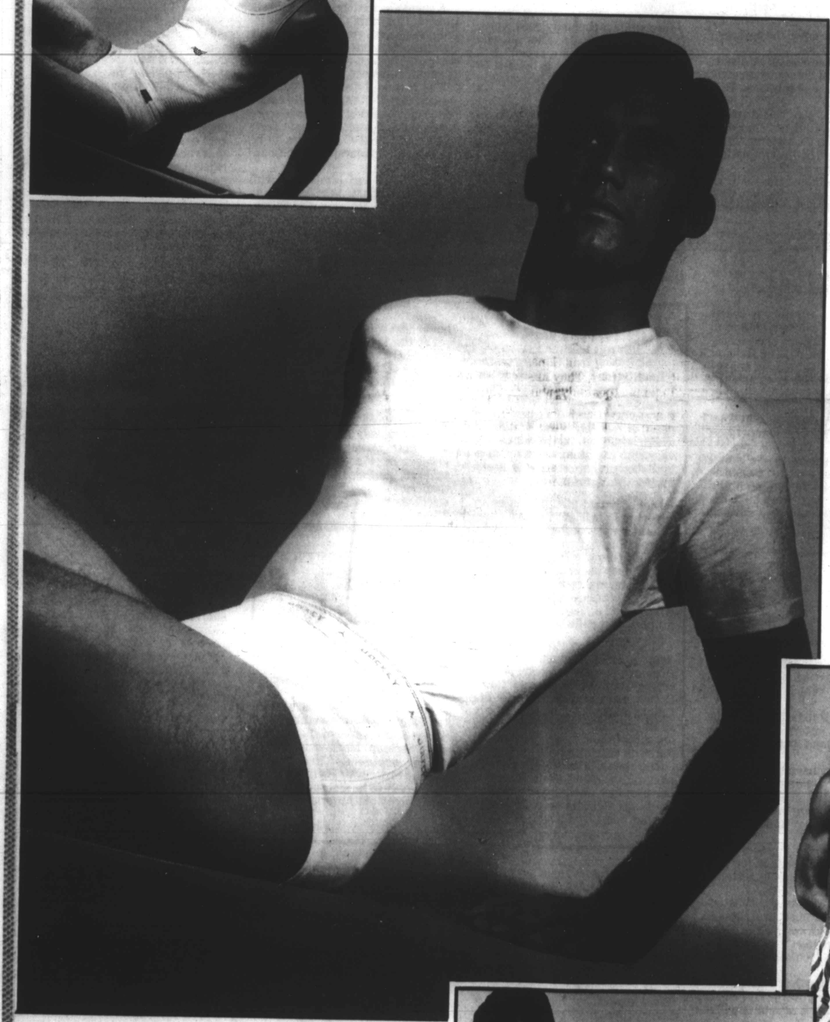

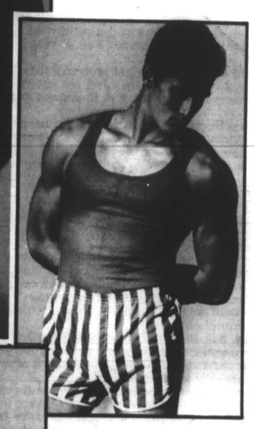

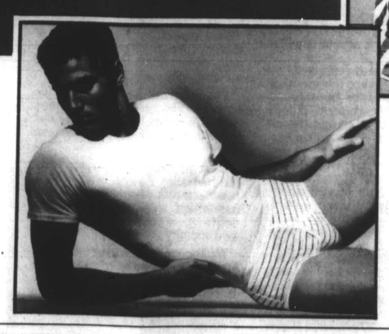

TODAY THRU SUNDAY, ONLY

CLASSICS

Example of the savings:

	Reg.	SALE
• Briefs 9007, 3-pk.	13.50	10.08
• T-shirts 9711, 3-pk.	16.50	12.28
• V-necks 9714, 3-pk.	16.50	12.28
• A-shirts 9613, 3-pk.	13.50	10.08
• Boxers, 2-pk.	12.00	8.98
• Boxers, each	6.50	4.78

LIFE

	Reg.	SALE
• Lo-Rise brief	5.00	3.68
• Deck shirt	8.50	6.28
• Tapered boxers	6.50-7.50	4.78-5.58

FASHION

	Reg.	SALE
• Elance, 3-pk.	13.00	9.68
• Elance stripe, 3-pk.	13.50	10.08
• Poco, each	6.50	4.78
• String bikini, each	6.50	4.78

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The Afro-American Section B

METRO PROFILE

■ Lifestyle B4
■ Kids Talk B7

Saturday, February 25, 1989

Coalition of Essential Schools:

Walbrook High School: They are erasing the negativism

By Delfield S. Yoes, III
AFRO Staff Writer

Early in the school year, Walbrook Senior High School was thrust into the national spotlight against a backdrop of prolific violence, when Oprah Winfrey descended from her television mountaintop to investigate the problems of Walbrook/Southwestern.

Everyone wanted to know, what was wrong at Walbrook? All the negatives were reported with great zeal, but for the past couple of years, something very positive has been happening at Walbrook.

The Coalition of Essential Schools, was adopted from an investigation called, A Study of High Schools, that was conducted from 1981-1984.

This investigation identified five "imperatives" for improving the quality of education in the secondary school system: "Allow students and teachers to work and learn in their own, appropriate ways, insist that students clearly exhibit mastery of their school work, identify the right incentives for students and teachers, focus the students' work on the use of their minds and keep the structure simple and flexible."

These imperatives were outlined in a book called **The Dilemma of the American High School**, by Theodore R. Sizer. The Coalition has had widespread success on the national level and it has helped to create an academic renaissance of sorts at Walbrook. 1985 was a planning year for the adoption of the Essential Schools program at Walbrook and in 1986, the program was implemented.

Samuel Billups, the principal of Walbrook and Marian Finney, the program's coordinator, have been instrumental in putting the Coalition into effect at Walbrook.

"The Coalition helps students become part of the learning process and it encourages them to take responsibility for their education," stated Billups. Since the Coalition has been established at Walbrook, attendance rates have improved and Maryland Functional Reading Test scores have risen. "We're looking forward to seeing an improvement on the SAT scores. This is not the answer, but it's a step in the right direction," said Billups.

The Coalition of Essential Schools at Walbrook,was established with the help of the Morris Goldseker Foundation, Inc. The foundation awarded the school two grants; one for $85,000.00 that was applied to the 1986 to 1988 school years and the other grant of $42,000.00, that will be used from 1988 to 1990.

There are several integral players partly responsible for the program's success thus far, however the real stars of the Coalition are the students themselves. The first thing you notice about these students, who were chosen at random to participate in the Coalition program, is their level of confidence and the enthusiasm they exhibit.

When the AFRO arrived at George Jackson's 11th grade Algebra II class, we were surprised that the students would not allow the classroom to be interrupted. In order to discuss the Coalition with them, we had to wait until the lesson, (fraction-square roots), was complete.

The students, who will be the first graduating class under the Essential School Coalition curriculum, discussed the reasons behind their success. "I'm confident, I know that I can achieve what I want to achieve, because I know that I can find the resources I need to do well," said Angela Westbrook.

How has all the negative publicity that Walbrook has received effected the students? Nathan Scovens responded. "The negative does not effect us, they, (the press, the public), aren't here to see the good side." All the kids agreed that the Coalition has helped to motivate them outside of the classroom. One student commented that it's almost like they don't receive a summer vacation, because they are encouraged to work over the summer as well.

The AFRO also spoke with Dorothy Turner and her 11th grade English Humanities class. On this day, there were two representatives from the Philadelphia School System at Walbrook to observe the Coalition.

"These students are no brighter than the average student, but what sets them apart is motivation and confidence. They aren't afraid of failure, because they know it will be corrected, that's why they are confident," said Turner.

The students discussed the Coalition, their education in general and the future. Angela Westbrook said, "I didn't even think about college before I entered the Coalition, now I know that I'm prepared for life after high school."

"The negative publicity that we have received makes us work harder to prove them wrong."

All of the students want to attend college and most of them plan on attending traditionally black undergraduate institutions. They are very aware of the academic and personal advantages available at black colleges and universities.

In many classrooms in Baltimore and around the country, the student-teacher relationship is an adversarial one. Within the Coalition, the student-teacher relationship is a partnership; respect is reciprocated. The students also perform in the role of teacher so that they may receive a complete understanding of the education process. This student as teacher concept, also assists the student in their masteryof the subject material.

This nurturing atmosphere helps to create positive attitudes and higher self-esteem, that result in improved academic performances.

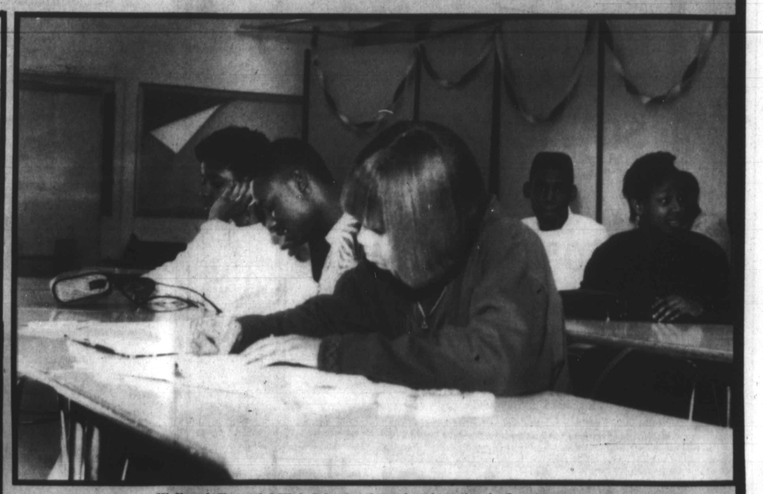
It becomes very clear when you talk to these young women and men, that they are intent on reaping every benefit that they can from their education.

They are dedicated and committed to being successful and competitive in high school and beyond. They believe in their abilities and they believe in themselves, this is the real reason behind the success of the Coalition. One of the students, Nathan Scovens said, "The negative aspects are being to fade, the tide is turning."

Marian R. Finney, coordinator of the Essential Schools Coalition at Walbrook Sr. High School.

Samuel R. Billups, principal of Walbrook Sr. High School.

Marian Finney and Samuel Billups, discuss aspects of the Walbrook Essential High School.



Walbrook Essential High School 11th graders in action in the classroom.