

FROM THE EDITOR

Schools and 'The Vicious Circle'



Realtors guide newcomers to neighborhoods with the “best” schools. Companies make decisions about relocating based on, at least in part, the quality of a community’s education system. In many cases, voters support bond issues and tax increases based on whether they believe the district is doing a good job.

These truths, while not universal, show how schools are tied to a local community’s economy. And they also speak to the topics in Senior Editor Del Stover’s cover story, “The Vicious Circle,” on Page 14.

For this piece, Stover traveled to northern Mississippi and the town of Holly Springs, which has been bypassed by multiple companies despite inexpensive land, low taxes, and access to major highways. One reason, the company officials have told Marshall County leaders, is that the quality of the schools is lacking.

The story’s title comes from a quote by Mike Ward, a University of Southern Mississippi professor who has written for *ASBJ*. I’ve known Mike for almost a decade, since he was state superintendent in North Carolina, and he knows what he is talking about.

“It’s a bit of a vicious circle,” Ward

says in the story. “If industry won’t relocate because of poor schools, the resources to strengthen the school system don’t expand, so industry won’t relocate, so resources won’t grow.”

It’s food for thought.

As *ASBJ* continues to strengthen its website, we are particularly pleased with our new blog, “The Leading Source” (<http://leadingsource.asbj.com>). Each weekday, our editors weigh in with a look at the stories they are working on, the day’s news, or an essay related to education. Each entry is short—especially compared to other articles you see in our print edition—and enlightening.

This month, on Page 10, we are featuring a “Best of the Blog” entry to entice you to visit “The Leading Source” regularly. Senior Editor Lawrence Hardy’s entry, “My School,” is about his daughter’s first day of kindergarten and the importance of your jobs as educators and school leaders. It’s guaranteed to make you think while bringing a tear to your eye.

Until next month. ...

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