

Legislators will instruct classes

Smith to test teaching ability

By ALISSA LEHMANN Reporter

State Sen. Kent Caperton and State Rep. Richard Smith will test their teaching abilities this week in support of a statewide program to promote communication between legislators, students and teachers.

Smith and Caperton will participate in Texas Public Schools Week by teaching classes in local public schools. The governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house also will be participating in the back-to-school event.

Each of them will spend all or part of a day teaching and observing in a Texas classroom.

Dr. Terry Heller, senior education aide for the Senate Education Committee, said the event was organized by Senate Education Committee Chairman Carl Parker.

She said Parker challenged the rest of the legislature to spend a day teaching during Texas Public Schools Week.

Parker says he hopes the legislators will gain insight into education issues that may be addressed in the next legislative session.

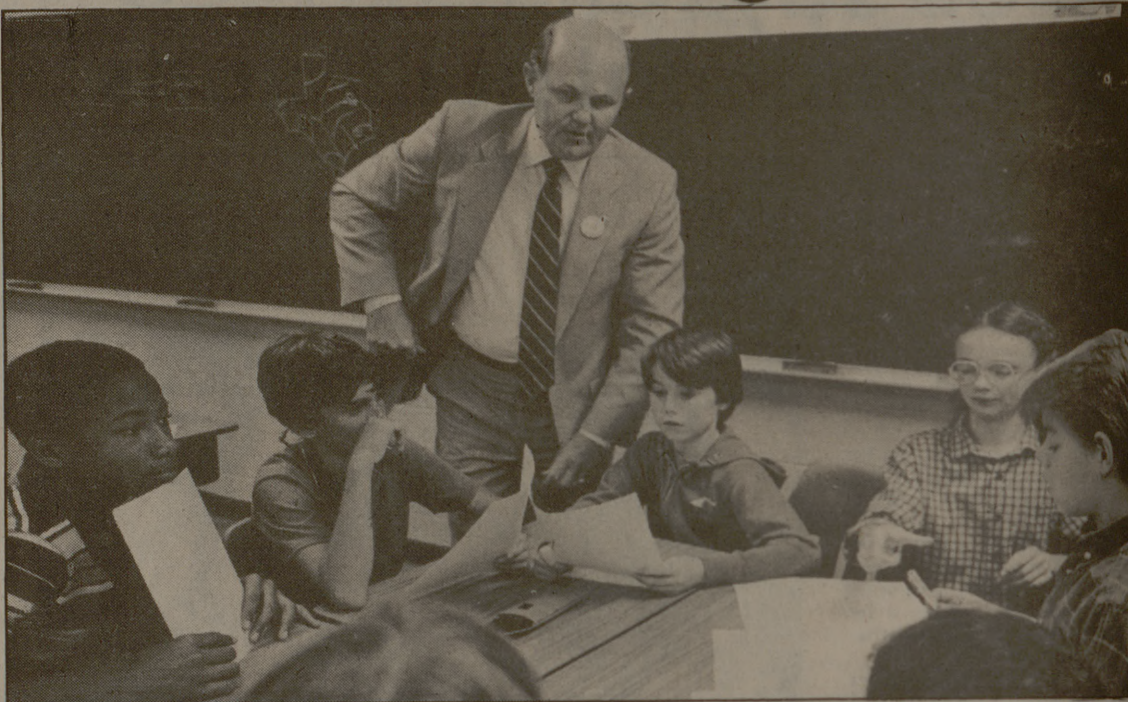
"We can never know enough about something as complex as the education enterprise," Parker said.

Heller said recent school reforms have been tough on public schools. House Bill 72, she said, caused significant changes that have had quite an impact on teachers.

She said changes include teacher and administrator tests, a career ladder based on experience and new performance standards.

Legislators' direct participation in the classroom, Heller said, will serve to show support for teachers while also boosting their morale.

Caperton said, "During the last legislative session, many teachers called to suggest that I visit the



Rep. Richard Smith explains the legislative process to Oakwood Elementary 6th graders.

schools to see first-hand the impact of the recent education reforms.

"I anticipate some valuable insight into future legislation that may be needed to fine-tune some of the recent reforms."

Caperton will teach at Oakwood Middle School and Southwood Valley Elementary in College Station today. He will spend the morning at Oakwood teaching two sixth-grade social studies classes about his role in government.

Pam Wyatt, Oakwood Middle School teacher, said Caperton will participate in bus duty and will be with her during her planning pe-

riod. He'll see what is involved in preparing lesson plans and what is required of a teacher, Wyatt said.

Caperton then will join Maryvonne Cooper's fourth-grade class at Southwood Valley Elementary for a brown-bag lunch. Cooper said during Texas Public School Week, each grade level is assigned a day to bring a brown-bag lunch and parents are invited to have lunch with the children.

Caperton will spend the remainder of the day teaching Cooper's class. She said he will cover the essential elements of her lesson plan but has also developed his own plans.

Smith ate lunch at Oakwood Middle School Wednesday. He discussed public education problems with teachers and administrators.

Smith then took his turn as Wyatt's sixth-grade social studies teacher and spent the rest of the day observing classes.

Lia Stokes, district office administrator, said Smith divided the day into House and Senate groups. She said he then took the students through the theoretical process of passing a bill.

He wanted to teach them about the positive aspects and the shortcomings of the legislative system, Stokes said.

Pierre Auguste Renoir, the French Impressionist painter, was born Feb. 25, 1841, and this year marks the 145th anniversary of his birth.

Few people realize that Renoir painted some of his most important works with hands that were badly crippled with arthritis. In his later works, Renoir seemed to focus on

dexterity and the use of the hands. "Jean Renoir, the Artist's Son," painted in 1900, shows a young boy doing needlework. The year before his death in 1919, Renoir painted

"Woman Tying Her Shoe." Today the Arthritis Foundation says modern medication and treatment methods can prevent or delay much of the pain and deformity.

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