Guilford County Schools Title I District Parent Advisory Council
Summary for June 1st, 2006 at 11:30 AM

The District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) met on Thursday, June 1st, in the Franklin Blvd. Boardroom. Lunch was provided.

The following Title I DPAC members and guests were present:

Germaine Goggins – Bessemer ES Wanda Peebles – Cone ES Dara Morgan – Hunter ES Julia Vaspuez – Lindley ES Karin Young – Lindley ES Lissa Harris – Murphey ES Diane Davis – Parkview ES Aretha Lawson – Wiley ES Karen Siler – Wiley ES Lywanna Smith-Gregory – Hairston MS Tommy Williams – At Large	Dr. Willette Wooten – Wayne County Schools Dr. Don Hare – Guilford County Schools Linda Mendenhall – Guilford County Schools Kelly Hales – Guilford County Schools Carolyn Gilbert – Guilford County Schools Ronda Robb – Guilford County Schools

I. Welcome and General Comments

Dr. Hare, Executive Director of Federal & Special Programs, greeted all members and provided an overview for the meeting.

II. Closing the Gap Conference Report

Kelly Hales, Title I Program Specialist, led a discussion about the Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps Conference (March 27-29, 2006). She shared content from two specific sessions. The first focused on instruction in elementary schools, using the Kagan model and implementing learning centers. The second topic was parent involvement, introducing the use of "book parties." Parents host these events 4-5 times each year. Children attend with their parents/guardians, participate in reading activities, and then are given books to read at home.

The DPAC sponsored nine parent members and Tommy Williams to attend the conference. Of those ten attendees, two shared their experiences. Mr. Williams attended various parent involvement sessions. He shared the following points to increase parent participation in schools: hold events in which the children participate; provide lunch; offer RSVP letters; host special speakers; hold meetings early in the year; have high principal visibility; hold meetings & functions when parents are most often at school. Mr. Williams felt the conference was well-attended and good interaction between participants was evident. He thanked the Title I office for the opportunity to attend.

The GCS ConnectEd communications system was discussed. It can be a helpful tool to collect RSVPs for school events/activities from parents. Announcements can be made in English and Spanish to meet the needs of your school population.

Karen Siler (Wiley ES) presented at the conference. In addition, she attended sessions about parent involvement and gang awareness.

III. Overview of Title I, II, and V Applications

Dr. Hare provided information about the application process. The district Title I allocation increased by $976,000, thus providing an increase in the per pupil amount distributed to the 37 Title I schools. Planning for Title II (Improving Teacher Quality) is based on the district's needs assessment and will concentrate on Highly Qualified status, reducing class size, and new teacher inductions. In years past, Title V (Innovative Programs) centered on the Magnet, International Baccalaureate, and Montessori programs. This year, due to drastic budget cuts at the Federal level, GCS will focus on its Magnet programs. The magnet concept helps in many ways to meet the diverse needs of our school district.

IV. Monitoring visit for Federal Programs

All school districts in North Carolina will be engaged in a 3-year state monitoring cycle. GCS is on the schedule to be monitored in October 2006, the first year of the cycle. Mr. Williams suggested that we provide an opportunity for a DPAC parent to be available for questions/answers during the monitoring visit.

V. Title I School Spotlight

Northwood:

- Will hold a Father and Son banquet in which 100 participants were initially anticipated, but over 550 were now expected.

Murphey:

- Held workshops on EOG and how to encourage parent participation.
- Sponsor community events where families come together.
- Their interactive principal is most helpful to parent involvement success.
- It's vital for parents to participate at different levels as every little bit helps.

Parkview:

- Had Muffins for Mom and Donuts for Dad events and participant numbers are increasing annually.
- Held a Drama Night ("Goat Lady") with 3rd-5th graders looking beyond themselves to 3rd world countries; school collected funds to help buy a goat for a family in another country.

Hunter:

- Parents need to reach out to other parents to help them work with their children in improving achievement and preparing them for life.
- Will hold a Kindergarten Kamp before school starts; teachers will inform parents about expectations and how the school can support them in their efforts with their children.
- "Grade Teams" – two 'coaches' and two 'assistant coaches' (parents) assist with paperwork, copying, etc. for each grade level.

Lindley:

- A Hispanic mom on the PTA passes information on to other Hispanic parents.
- All materials sent home are in English and Spanish.
- Held various events: Muffins for Mom and Donuts for Dad, Talent Show, picnics, EOG dance (if a student was "caught" being good this semester, his/her name was written on a slip and, if chosen at the dance, picked the next song to play); Latino Night (representatives of local organizations shared information with Hispanic parents).

VI. Parent Involvement with Dr. Willette Wooten

Key points mentioned were:

- Title I is a family.
- The lines of communication should be open between all stakeholders; how can we organize our communication with parents to show them they are valued?
- Parents are the first teachers; they know their children best.
- Rather than "Parent Involvement", the term should be "Parent Engagement."
- Barriers to active parent participation can be transportation, child care, and language differences.
- Parent engagement is at the school level; the state encourages school-based initiatives and decisions.

Dr. Wooten facilitated a small group activity with members discussing, writing answers, and sharing group responses (see attached summary) to three questions.

The role of our DPAC was discussed. Suggestions and questions were made:

- Post DPAC meeting minutes on website; continue to send copies to members and principals.
- It is up to the committee of parents to establish DPAC membership and to decide if bylaws and officers will be established.
- The role of the DPAC needs to be defined collectively and individually; a shared vision must be created; and a focus should be identified.
- Consensus from the group is required as to the role of the DPAC.

VII. Tentative Dates for 2006-06 DPAC Meetings:

Flexible times and locations for next year's meetings were offered; times suggested include early morning, midday, evening, and Saturday times.

VIII. Closing Comments/Remarks

Dr. Hare thanked everyone for their attendance and participation.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 PM.