Guilford Parent Academy
2015 Evaluation

Prepared for Guilford County Schools

July, 2015
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“Founded by parents for parents.”
GPA Staff Member

“Doing great things with the resources they have.”
Participant

“We are gaining momentum.”
Continue the movement ....
Friends of GPA

“The staff is always willing to help us in any way. We know they are here for us.”
Grassroots
Executive Summary

Guilford Parent Academy is a comprehensive, quality parent engagement program worthy of praise and recognition. Designed by and for parents, the vision, support, and collaboration which served as the foundation for Guilford Parent Academy in its early stages, have continued to inform and guide its work. As a result, Guilford Parent Academy has remained focused on its goal to provide strength-based support for parents and families. In turn, GPA continues to garner tremendous support from the community. Currently, 70 partners contribute to the success of GPA, and the program continues to grow and flourish. The accomplishments and offerings of GPA are nothing short of amazing, and this program should serve as a model for districts across North Carolina and the United States.

This year marked the fourth year for the Guilford County Schools implementation of Guilford Parent Academy. From the beginning, its mission and vision have remained constant. Guilford Parent Academy’s vision and mission respectively are:

Vision: With the support of Guilford Parent Academy, parents and caregivers in Guilford County will be true partners in their child’s education and will be engaged at every level. Children will graduate prepared for the 21st century.

Mission: Guilford Parent Academy is a community collaborative designed to engage all parents and caregivers in the academic, social and emotional success of their children.

Guilford Parent Academy accomplishes its vision and mission through a multitude of programs, activities, and resources. This report presents information from the program evaluation that demonstrates program outcomes and identifies opportunities for continued improvement.

Key Findings

1. Guilford Parent Academy continues to increase its reach to families.
   
   - Participation in programs and activities has increased each year since its inception. Since January, 2011, there has been a 212 percent increase in GPA participation.
   - GPA workshop offerings have increased by 102 percent in the past four years.
   - GPA online accounts have increased over 70 percent from 5,843 in July, 2013, to 9,986 in May, 2015.
   - The 2014 Parent Involvement Conference, Parent Liaison Programs, Male Summit, Family Fun Day, GPA on the Go expansion, and mini-grants funded through Cone Health all provide additional opportunities to engage parents.
- GPA is inclusive of all families, making special efforts to engage Spanish speaking families.
- Participants report high quality of workshop sessions.

2. Guilford Parent Academy and families are focused on children’s well-being and academic success.

- Health and Well Being Session was the most popular session offered, with 2,306 participants attending 16 sessions.
- Helping Your Child Succeed (101/102) was the second most popular session offered, with 1,110 participants attending 21 sessions.
- Planning for College/CFNC Night sessions were the third most popular sessions with 684 participants attending 13 sessions.
- Resources and Support for families increasing.
- Brainfuse, online tutoring, although relatively new is being used and appreciated by families.

3. Guilford Parent Academy leadership is strong and supported.

- Partners and parents feel valued and included in decision making.
- Participants report feeling supported by the director and staff members.
- GPA is growing in offerings, participation, and resources available to parents.
- Focus groups discussed the strengths of the director, including his vision of wanting parents to be in the educational lives and serving in advocacy role for their children. He is described as involved, compassionate, and visible.

**Recommendations**

1. Continue to focus on engaging and serving diverse families.

- GPA is delivering content in some sessions in both English and Spanish, and written materials are sent home in English and Spanish. To increase opportunities, GPA may want to consider adding more trained interpreters in the workshop content.
- Transportation barriers for parents were discussed in all focus groups. Some solutions may be utilizing school buses in the evenings, utilizing higher education transportation system, taking sessions into communities (i.e. summer child nutrition sites, community centers), and recording sessions and putting online as a resource.

2. Continue to keep stakeholders engaged.

- Engagement with parents, community partners, volunteer liaisons, and GCS staff (principals, teachers, curriculum team, etc.) must be ongoing to continue growth and improvement journey. Recommend considering possibility and
feasibility of being a standing agenda item for principals’ meetings, teacher advisory meetings, and district curriculum team meetings to keep people informed and engaged. Utilizing all staff members to visit principals and teachers (if possible) early in the year with liaisons would be helpful.

- Consider sessions to support teachers in their learning regarding communication with parents and adding volunteer liaisons in all schools, even if unpaid or not reimbursed.

3. Build capacity to serve more families.

- Increase collection of data and analysis of data. Consider data types such as participant race and ethnicity, special populations, students with IEPs, participation by location/time, number of unique families, how families learned about session, perceptions of quality, outcomes or changes after sessions.
- Simplify print materials regarding events and resources and send home with students.
- Address transportation concerns as resources become available.
Guilford Parent Academy - Current Status

About Guilford County Schools

Guilford County Schools is the third largest school district in North Carolina, serving more than 72,000 students – 23,481 high school students, 16,284 middle schools students and 33,842 elementary students each year. There are 127 schools in the district, including 46 magnet schools and choice schools with 54 programs. Guilford County Schools has 69 elementary schools, 23 middle schools, 28 highs schools, and 10 alternative schools. In 2009, the school district instituted a regional system for organizing schools composed of five regions across Guilford County for the purpose of providing more targeted and individualized support and supervision to schools and developing closer connections and relationships with local communities.

Guilford County Schools serves diverse student and family populations. In 2014-15, there are 72,191 (not including Pre-K) enrolled in district schools. Over one-third of all students (41 percent) are Black and 35 percent are White.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District Percentage</th>
<th>American Indian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Pacific Islander</th>
<th>Multi-Racial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>13.46</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students speaking approximately 100 languages and dialects attend schools throughout the district. Almost two-thirds of Guilford County Schools students are considered socioeconomically disadvantaged.

The experiences of families in school and school district interactions influence their connection with their child’s school and education. Some of those experiences come from interactions through exceptional children and limited English proficiency programs. More than 10,500 (14.4%) of GCS students have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and 9.0% are English Language Learners (ELL). Similar to the racial and ethnic distribution for the district and school, averages mask the wide range of student circumstances by school. For example, the percentage of students with FRL varies in schools from less than 11 percent to 100 percent (NCDPI Data and Reports, 2013-14).

The Guilford County Schools 2016 Strategic Plan for Parent, Family, and Community identifies a strategy to “Develop a shared vision and guidelines regarding parent and community communication/public engagement in GCS. Leverage GCS resources across divisions in alignment with GPA and a shared vision for parent and community outreach, engagement and partnership with GCS.” Guilford County Schools has embraced Epstein’s Framework of Six Major Types of Involvement. The Epstein model will be utilized by Guilford Parent Academy and disseminated to departmental and school levels to guide parent engagement work throughout Guilford County Schools.
### Epstein’s Six Types of Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 1</td>
<td>Parenting: Assist families in understanding child and adolescent development, and in setting home conditions that support children as students at each age and grade level. Assist schools in understanding families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 2</td>
<td>Communicating: Communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 3</td>
<td>Volunteering: Improve recruitment, training, work, and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences at school or in other locations to support students and school programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 4</td>
<td>Learning at Home: Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework, other curriculum-related activities, and individual course and program decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 5</td>
<td>Decision Making: Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through PTA/PTO, school councils, committees, action teams, and other parent organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 6</td>
<td>Collaborating with Community: Coordinate resources and services for students, families, and the school with businesses, agencies, and other groups, and provide services to the community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D. et al., Partnership Center for the Social Organization of Schools

### Family Engagement

This focus on families is supported by extensive research that documents the connection between parent and family involvement and improved educational outcomes for all students, regardless of background. Studies suggest that family engagement can be a powerful intervention that is considerably less costly than other programs or incentives. For example, schools would have to spend $1,000 more per pupil to reap the same gains in student achievement that an involved parent brings (Westmorland, et al., 2009, p. 1).

In fact, more than four decades of research demonstrates a strong link between family engagement and student achievement. Studies show that when caring adults are involved in their child’s education, there is higher student achievement, better attitudes toward learning, lower dropout rates, and increased community support for education, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic or racial background, or parents’ education level (e.g. Antunez, 2001) (Epstein, 2001) (Jeynes, 2013). Additionally, trust between home and school creates a context that supports student achievement, even in the face of poverty (Payne, 2001, 2010). In other words, students perform better when their families are involved in their learning.

The activities and characteristics of family engagement programs vary among and within school districts across the country. A recent meta-analysis of 51 parental involvement programs found four types of programs to be associated with positive student achievement outcomes, and they were:

- encourage parents and children to read together;
- promote parent-teacher partnerships that treat parents and teachers as equal partners in improving student academic and behavior outcomes;
- encourage parents to check their child’s homework daily; and
- employ school-based efforts to increase communication between parents and teachers (Jeynes, 2013).
While many families readily engage in their child’s education, others face barriers. School districts and communities can help to address barriers to engagement by reaching out to families, making purposeful connections to learning, and investing in high quality programming and staff. In addition, communication systems and evaluation for accountability and continuous learning are examples of important large-scale improvements that can be made by districts and schools (Westmorland, et.al., 2009).

Guilford County Schools recognizes that all parents bring strengths to their child’s education and specific skills, practices, and knowledge can enhance their efforts in helping their children achieve his or her potential.

“They have good leadership.... They are passionately engaged in workshops.”

Parent Focus Group Participant

About Guilford Parent Academy

Guilford Parent Academy (GPA) was established in January, 2011, as a result of a collaborative strategic planning process including a series of superintendent town halls, small groups, and online surveying indicating concern about parent involvement needs. Three parent advisory groups representing university, community, and parents were all enthusiastically focused on how to get parents engaged. Parents and teachers were on the steering committee leading to Guilford Parent University (now Guilford Parent Academy). From the beginning, the vision was for workshops and providing staff development for parents. The Guilford Parent Academy staff members, along with parents and community/business representatives, have led in the planning and implementation of this work. Each year staff members, parent leaders, participants, and Friends of GPA have worked to improve and develop the program, retaining core components and modifying plans and strategies to benefit more schools, families, and students. Consistent core components throughout the four years of operation are:

- **Learning Experiences/Events** – offering educational programming for parents on a variety of topics
  - Tools for Parents – some examples:
    - GPA on the Go
    - How to Help Your Child with Mathematics
    - Internet and Cyber Safety for Your Child
    - Parent Homework Dictionary
    - Kitchen Table Conversations for Title I Parents
    - Fathers Matter! (Series)
    - Understanding the Teen and Tween Brain
- **School Success** – some examples:
  - Building Character – Courage
  - Transitioning to College
  - Student Led Conferences
  - ACT Information Session
  - High School Options Night
  - Middle School Transitions (5th grade)
  - Power School Parent Portal

- **Health and Well Being** – some examples:
  - The Facts about Pre-diabetes and Diabetes
  - Teen Parenting – the Facts
  - Family Fitness and Fun Night
  - Health Eating
  - Wellness: Let’s Get It Started
  - Healthy and Fit on a Budget
  - Extreme Foods Makeover & Get Fit

- **Personal Growth and Development** – some examples:
  - Introduction to English
  - Citizenship Class
  - Women’s Literacy Class
  - GPA 101: Online Learning Resources for Adults
  - Introduction to Microsoft Word
  - Getting to Know Email
  - Brainfuse JobNow: an on-line resource that parents can receive live one-on-one expert academic tutoring through the Brainfuse Adult Learning Center. Support includes GED prep, US citizenship test prep, Microsoft Office help and career resources including popular job links.

- **Information** – one-stop shop for parents to learn how they can support their children
  - GPA website
    - gpa.gcsnc.com
  - One-on-One online tutoring
    - Brainfuse HelpNow: services include expert academic tutoring and self-study tools. Students access live, on-demand academic help and state-aligned skills building lessons from expert tutors.

- **Social and emotional**
  - All Pro Dads
  - The Impact of Fathers
  - Getting Your Preschooler Ready for School
  - Anti-Bullying
  - Positive Behavior Support at Home
  - GCS eBook Shelf
  - National PTA Resources

- **Online academic resources**
  - Destination Math
  - Destination Reading
Edmark
netTrekker
Connect with Kids Education Network
Core Learning Online

- **Connections and Resources** – a point of connection for parents to various resources offered by partnering organizations throughout Guilford County to include churches, local colleges and universities

  - Over 70 Business and Community Partners – some examples:
    - City of Greensboro
    - Public Libraries
    - YMCA
    - Tanger Outlet Center
    - Weaver Foundation
    - Lincoln Financial
    - Evonik
    - Center for Creative Leadership
    - Communities in Schools
    - Polo Ralph Lauren
    - News and Record
    - United Way
    - Syngenta
    - ConvaTec
    - Family Life Education Services

Each of the featured family engagement examples grew from problem-solving, attention to family experiences, community input, and constant refinement in the context of emerging opportunities and challenges. Many of these innovations were created by community-based organizations, universities, education advocates, and conducted in partnership with families, staff, and schools. They attest to the capacity for creative solutions to emerge locally and broader replication. The visual below developed by the Guilford Parent Academy highlights the effect of all stakeholder engagement in the process.
The Guilford Parent Academy staff includes a director, a coordinator, two program administrators, and a Title I program specialist. To extend its reach through relationships, GPA selects a parent volunteer in each middle school to assist with parent engagement priorities and opportunities. These volunteers, called Grassroots Parent Coordinators, can receive up to $150 a month to communicate with other parents about volunteer opportunities, lead parent-outreach activities, assist the school and GPA staff with planning and publicizing parent workshops and to increase parent awareness of GPA. In addition to Grassroots Parent Coordinators, every Title I school in Guilford County Schools selects a parent representative for the Title I Parent Ambassador position. The ambassadors serve as liaisons between parents and school officials to help other parents become more engaged in their child’s educational success, increase the positive school culture at the school, and meet monthly with Title I parents to learn more about what is happening in GCS in an effort to strengthen the home-school partnership. Title I Parent Ambassadors can receive up to $150 monthly in cash rewards for completing certain parent involvement tasks. Both groups meet monthly with GPA staff. Highlights of the meetings for this year included a book study on Beyond the Bake Sale, information updates, and an opportunity for sharing ideas. Both of these parent liaison programs provide valuable services to the schools by serving as the connection between home, school, and the Guilford Parent Academy.
Additional strong GPA events/programs that should be noted are 1) the 2014 Collaborative Parent Involvement Conference, 2) “Guilford Parent Academy on the Go,” 3) Family Fun Day, 4) Male Summit, and 5) mini-grants to schools for parent engagement activities. All these activities are impressive standing alone, but together they stand as beacons for others in doing whatever it takes to support and equip parents and families with the most challenging role there is—supporting students in ways leading to their success.

In collaboration with the Guilford County Schools Title I Department and Guilford County Councils of PTA, Guilford Parent Academy leveraged resources to provide a parent involvement conference in September, 2014. It was an all-day conference providing numerous sessions to increase parent awareness of GCS academic programs, needs and resources to support Title I schools, and functions and roles of Guilford County Councils of PTA.

Another outreach program led by Guilford Parent Academy is GPA on the Go, which has been a strategy of GPA from the beginning. GPA and 30 community partners work with 24 employers to identify topics of interest and to coordinate presentation times for GPA on the Go sessions in the workplace. The partnership process is fairly simple, with the employer or business hosting workshops during lunch breaks or between shifts. The time-frame can range from 30 minutes to 1 ½ hours, and the format is basically a lunch-and-learn. GCS provides the presenters, all of whom either work for GCS or for local organizations. One of the employers engaged through this program stated, “the GPA staff really treats us as partners in decision making, our folks love them, and we do them (the workshops) quarterly.”

Family Fun Day held on a Saturday each spring. The most recent Family Fun Day held at High Point City Lake Park in Jamestown, NC, hosted over 7,500 participants. Guests of all ages enjoyed water slides, boating, train and carousel rides, great food, fun activities, and a wealth of family resources were shared. Families were able to enjoy the day together without the many barriers that often prevent such a lovely, carefree day.

GPA staff and schools continue their focus on engaging parents and other caring adults in order to help build relationships, knowledge, and skills that will support student success. Marketing is managed through advertisements at schools, information on the website, flyers, bulletins, Connect-Ed messages, weekly newspaper ads, text messages, social media, emails, volunteers, and word of mouth. Social media also plays a role in the marketing efforts of GPA – there have been 1,093 likes on Facebook which is an increase of 27%. Adjustments are made in learning sessions based on all data sources to further align content to district goals and strategies included in the GCS Strategic Plan for 2016.

Guilford Parent Academy also continues work to ensure that families are supported in accessing services by removing as many barriers to participation as possible. To assist families speaking Spanish as their first language, interpreters and translated materials are available. On-site child care is often provided for events/programs. In some learning sessions, children and youth participate alongside their parent or family member.
The Guilford County Schools vision for parent engagement states… “In GCS, we will:

- Value, honor and appreciate all parents as partners in the education of our children;
- Create opportunities for collaboration between parents and school officials;
- Listen carefully to the feedback provided by parents;
- Respect each parent’s unique challenges and circumstances;
- Engage all parents, based upon their needs, regardless of their socio-economic status and
- Meet parents where they are – no judgment or critiques, only concern and support.”

It is evident in the planning and facilitation of Guilford Parent Academy that parents, staff, schools and community believe and demonstrate their commitment to parent engagement.
Results

Data Review

Participation in GPA sessions and activities has increased each year. From July through May of the present school year, 38,169 participants were counted through sign-in sheets at GPA offerings including learning sessions held at schools, GPA on the Go, Family Fun Day, and other events. This total should be considered a conservative estimate, as sign-in data has not been collected from all sessions. Of this total, it is not known how many unduplicated participants are included in the data. From inception of the Parent Academy in January, 2011, to the present, there has been a 212 percent increase in documented participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>1028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>1691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>5593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>12232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Workshop offerings totaling 408 in the 2014-15 school year represent a 102 percent increase from January, 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Workshops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guilford Parent Academy has provided over 330 parent learning sessions during the spring of 2015. Based on evaluations and surveys, the most popular workshops are identified below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop</th>
<th># of Sessions</th>
<th># of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health and Well Being</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping Your Child Succeed (101/102)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning for College/CFNC Nights</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG Transitions</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandparents Raising Grandkids</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guilford Parent Academy programming has been determined by attendance at sessions, evaluations of sessions, parent surveys, and parent/participant comments and suggestions. Requests from schools and GPA on the Go partners are additional sources of program feedback.

Parents have been able to open a free online account on the Guilford County Schools Parent Academy website since July, 2013. By signing up for an account, parents can register for classes and access interactive and relevant online resources. Community partners provide tutoring, classes, learning experiences, online content and videos at no cost on the website as well. Almost 10,000 subscribers have signed up for accounts, making these resources and more available to them. More than 13,000 Brainfuse tutoring sessions and/or database use have been utilized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>GPA Accounts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2013-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>5843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>6169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>6347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>6580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>6822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>7026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>7140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>7400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>7493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>7807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>7807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>7817</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use of Data for Continuous Program Improvement

It is suggested that Guilford Parent Academy increase the collection and analysis of data for continuous improvement to strengthen family engagement strategies and to highlight its important work. Aimee Guidara, executive director of the Data Quality Campaign, expressed well:

*We need to use data as a flashlight, not a hammer. In the past, education data has been used oftentimes as a blunt instrument … to make educators feel like they’ve failed … Data, when used well, can be used to shine a light on what’s working … This idea of data as a flashlight is absolutely critical to the idea of using data not only for compliance purposes, not only for accountability purposes, but for using information for continuous improvement.*

Continuous improvement processes help answer the questions, “Who are we? What are we trying to do? What’s happening with our efforts? Are we making progress toward our goals?” More importantly, continuous improvement processes will prompt GPA to think about how they will use data to improve the reach and quality of their services. Using these processes will give GPA the tools needed to strengthen the family engagement work as they go, which increases opportunities for success and, subsequently, enhances support for its efforts among stakeholders. It will also allow the GPA staff to make timely improvements to family engagement efforts to ensure they are meeting the current needs of the families served.

The School Reform Initiative, SRI, is an excellent source of guidance for building your Academy’s capacity to discuss how continuous improvement processes can strengthen family engagement strategies, and outlines the mindset and key practices that organizations need to adopt in order to use data to understand and improve upon their work. The protocols (which set forth a guided process for exploration and discussion) can help your team: investigate outcomes of sessions/events and examine data.

GPA staff will also need to help key stakeholders understand the purpose and context of findings from data analysis. At its heart, continuous improvement is about ensuring the quality and sustainability of an organization’s efforts. Doing so will increase the capacity to use data to change for the better so that children and families benefit, all stakeholders are engaged and empowered, and Guilford Parent Academy will exceed its goals.

**Suggested Data Types**

- Race and Ethnicity – data from students of participating families
- Special Populations – participating families with free-reduced lunch and families of students with limited English proficiency
- Students with IEP’s – percentage of participating families
- Participation by Class Location and Time – What location had the strongest participation? Which session time had the strongest participation?
- Number of Unique Students/Families Served for each session/event
- How Parents Learned about GPA Session
- Perceptions of GPA Session Quality and Usefulness Monthly
- Outcomes/Changes of Participants after Sessions
Appendix A: Methodology

The subjective part of the evaluation included interviews and focus group sessions. Dr. Donna Peters and Cindy McCormic, consultants with Leadership Solutions Group, visited Guilford County Schools on May 15, 2015. LSG believes that significant time and effort must be allocated in listening to all stakeholders to properly understand all elements of GPA. This is accomplished through a set of structured questions (see Appendix B) that are asked of all those interviewed individually or as focus group participants. The conversations were completely confidential in terms of the use of names of individuals to provide an environment for frank and candid discussions and the freedom to speak freely to any issues. LSG conducted interviews with the GPA director, GPA staff members, and with Dr. Nora Carr, Chief of Staff, Guilford County Schools. A series of focus groups were conducted, representing a cross section of stakeholders, including: Grassroots Parent Coordinators, Title I Parent Ambassadors, parent participants, district staff members, principals, and community partners.

The objective part of the evaluation included, but was not limited to review of:

- Participation rates
- Workshop session offerings
- Event fliers
- Session evaluations
- Monthly reports
- Digital, online resources
- Parent Academy Grant (Race to the Top) Goals and Strategies
- Guilford County Schools Strategic Plan
- GPA website review
- Initial Planning Review Document

The overall intent of this methodology was to personally speak to a significant number of stakeholders and to listen and record their thoughts and ideas about GPA. Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, areas of strengths and areas for suggested improvement were identified. Based upon this information and data collected, assessments were made and then translated into recommendations which may be considered, as appropriate, by Guilford Parent Academy and Guilford County Schools.
## Appendix B: Focus Group Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question(s)</th>
<th>Parent Leaders</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Friends of GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe the current strengths of the GPA program.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe any areas of improvement.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who supports your work with the GPA? How are you supported by those individuals?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What additional support is needed? From whom and what?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What needs or concerns do you have regarding your child’s school or education that could be addressed by GPA?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss the quality of workshops and services provided in which you have participated.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How could GPA further contribute to the overall work of GCS and its strategic plan?</td>
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<tr>
<td>In addition to Parent Academy on the Go, discuss GPA partnerships, relationships, and outreach with community members, organizations, and businesses?</td>
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<tr>
<td>In the Optional Budget Supplement, it stated, “Seeking to build not only parents’ capacity, but also teachers’ understanding of the value of nontraditional forms of parent engagement, ones that parents in high-need communities may be most able and likely to make.” How has this been accomplished – specifically with teachers and principals? What are the evidences?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>In moving toward realizing your vision of helping GCS parents, are there additional services you would like to see provided beyond the scope of what is currently offered?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on the Public Opinion Survey done in November, 2014, why is participation rate only 16% and declining? What suggestions do you have for increasing participation?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to several data sources, there are discrepancies in awareness and participation rates among different populations – with Hispanic/Latino rates significantly lower in both. What strategies are being used or might be used to address this discrepancy?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your final thoughts regarding the future of the GPA? - to include any suggestions for improvement.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: References


Guilford Parent Academy is a project of the Guilford County Schools.

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