

The Georgia Parent Involvement Coordinator (PIC) Network



Promising Parent Engagement Practices in Action: Gwinnett Parent Leadership Academy

**Wednesday, November 30, 2011
Georgia Department of Education**

**Michelle Tarbutton Sandrock
Parent Engagement Program Manager**



Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
"Making Education Work for All Georgians"
www.gadoe.org

Welcome

Gwinnett Parent Leadership Academy

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Parent Instructional Support Coordinator

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Parent Involvement *equals* Student Achievement

The Gwinnett County Public School Parent Leadership Academy

One Strategy for Increasing Parent Involvement and Student Achievement

Donna Power, Ed. D.
Parent Instructional Support Coordinator, LRMS



Building Community . . . The Foundation for Excellence

No society can remain vital or even survive without a reasonable base of shared values. When community exists, it confers upon its members identity, a sense of belonging, a measure of security. A community has the power to motivate its members to exceptional performance. Community can set standards of expectations for the individual and provide the climate in which great things happen.

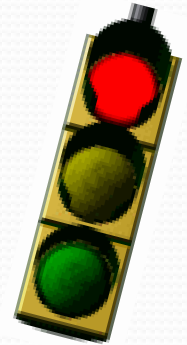
—JOHN W. GARDNER, FORMER
PROFESSOR, STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Question?

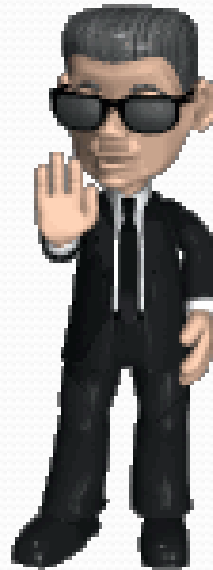
Who should a child look to for their educational development?



**A welcoming environment,
what does that look like
at your school?**



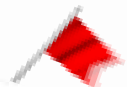
**BEWARE
DO NOT
ENTER!!!**



STOP!!!!!!




YOU MUST SIGN IN!!!!!!





Today's Goal.....

provide a strategy that *will* develop
a shared, collaborative partnership
between parents, school staff, and
community members.



Educators cannot expect total engagement and high standards from students if both families and schools cannot form powerful alliances to guide those students to academic and lifelong success.



Why do parents get involved?

Families of all cultural backgrounds, education, and income levels encourage their children, talk with them about school. They help them plan for higher education and keep them focused on learning.

Programs and interventions that engage families in supporting their children's *learning at home, in school, and in the community* are linked to higher student achievement.





However, many parents are unclear about what role they should have in their child's education.

Gwinnett County Public Schools

Parent Leadership Academy

*Trains and Teaches Parents to become Advocates for their
Children and Ambassadors in their Community*

In the program parents learn to:

- **Define** Meaningful and Effective Parent Leadership
- **Establish and Discuss** the “Guiding Principles” of Meaningful and Effective Parent Leadership
- **Determine** how to *Establish and Cultivate* Effective Parent Leadership
- **Discuss and List** Challenges
- **Share** Ideas, Successes, and Accomplishments

FACT:

**Higher performing schools
“Effectively” involve
families and community**



Parent Leadership

Meaningful Parent Leadership occurs when parents *gain* the knowledge and skills to *function* in meaningful leadership roles and *represent* the “parent voice” to help *shape* the direction of their families, programs and communities. Parent leadership is successfully achieved when parents and professionals “Build Effective Partnerships” and *share* “Responsibility”, “Expertise,” and “Leadership” in decisions being made that affect families and communities. The parents involved in these collaborations are called *Parent Leaders*.

The PLA.....

- focuses on providing parents with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to achieve meaningful parent involvement,
- demonstrates that *parent involvement* looks different than the traditional images they may have grown up with,
- encourages , promotes, and models partnerships between the school, parents, and community,
- teaches School Accountability; Parental Rights and Responsibilities; and School's Decision-Making Process,
- prepares parents to attend Parent Group Meetings by teaching a curriculum that will promote informed questioning and collaborative discussions with other parents, educators, and community members, and
- empowers parents, leading to increased student achievement as well as emotional and social wellbeing for all students, both in and out of school and throughout their life.

The Role of a PLA Parent

- Self Advocate
- Support
- Mentor
- Community Involvement
- Administrative and/or Regulatory
- Legislative



Are Your Parents “Effective” *Parent* Leaders?

Reasons for “Effective” *Parent Leadership*

- *Support* Intense Fundamental Change
- *Raise* Public Awareness
- *Bring* Clarity to Vision and Mission
- *Gain* Knowledge and Skills
- *Succeed* in Various Environments
- *Sustain* Roles and Develop New Parent Leadership
- *Improve* Productivity and Sustainability



Essentials for Building “Effective” *Parent* Leadership

- Effective Communication Skills
- Creative Thinking
- Collaboration and Partnerships
- Negotiation and Conflict Resolution
- Coalition Building
- Public Advocacy
- Facilitation
- Mentoring



FACT:

**The law states parents are to be
“afforded substantial and meaningful
opportunities to participate in the
education of their children.”**

Title I, Sec. 1001(12)

PLA Start-Up

Using a core group of involved parents and interested teachers is a great way to start your school's Parent Leadership Academy. These are parents who support parent involvement and in most cases will be willing to give several evenings to build the curriculum and establish the academy. Additionally, this group will proudly take ownership in the academy.

Step 1 – The Plan

- Planning – Meet with your core group (10-15)
 - Class Topics
 - Number of Classes
 - One/Two Semesters
 - Different Levels
 - Meeting Night
 - Length of Classes
 - Max number of students per class
 - Materials – Notebooks, Books,
 - Translation/Interpretation
 - By invitation?

Radloff's academy was started by 11 parents & 2 teachers!



Step 2 – Vision, Mission, Goals

- Define Meaningful and Effective Parent Leadership
- Establish and Discuss the Guiding Principals of Effective Parent Leadership
- Determine how do we Establish and Cultivate Effective Parent Leadership
- Discuss and List Challenges
- Share Ideas, Successes, and Accomplishments

**It is imperative that your core group of parents work together with you to create the academy's Vision, Mission, and Goals.*

Discussing and Writing Vision, Mission, & Goals.



Step 3 – Get Started

- Ice Breaker – get acquainted activities designed around being an educator
 - The Clock
- Curriculum – outline, teach, evaluate
 - Interesting
 - Relevance
 - Understanding
 - Useful Information
- Book Study - ?
 - Now Discover Your Strengths – Marcus Buckingham
- Fits Your Parents Needs!

PLA Parent Leaders



Ice Breaker



When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more.

Henderson and Mapp, 2002

You Are Invited!!!



*GCPSS Parent Leadership Academy
"Training and Teaching Parents to Become Ambassadors in their Community"*

August 8, 2011

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Congratulations! Based on your dedicated support and enthusiasm towards your child's education and your community at large, you were selected to participate in the 2011-2012 Parent Leadership Academy. The theme for the 2011-2012 Parent Leadership Academy is *Parents: The Important Key to Schools' Success*. The Parent Leadership Academy Orientation is being held at **Louise Radloff Middle School, 3939 Shackleford Rd., Duluth, GA 30096**. The informal orientation gives you a chance to hear information about the academy, ask questions and meet current PLA members and PLA graduates. This year, the fall academy is scheduled for **Tuesday, September 6th at 6:30 PM** in the Radloff MS Media Center. A light dinner and childcare will be provided.

The Parent Leadership Academy at Radloff MS was established in 2008 by thirteen parents who were determined to better understand the system of education in order to become better advocates for their children, and last spring 90 parents graduated from the academy. The series of classes is designed to build and support partnerships between parents, school staff, and community members. Topics include Georgia Department of Education: Learning Your Child's School System, Know Your Leadership Strengths, Understand Your Learning Style, The New NCLB and Understanding Title I, just to name a few. The goal of the academy is to develop parent leaders who can support other parents, teachers, students, and their community.

On Tuesday evening you will have the opportunity to meet other academy participants and learn more about this exciting and informative program. Once you have heard the information and talked with present and past PLA Members, you can decide if the academy is right for you.

We are very excited to bring this program to you and look forward to your involvement in its continued success. Please join us at Louise Radloff Middle School for more information and an opportunity to meet and get to know other Gwinnett County parents just like you on Tuesday evening, September 6th and as always, we thank you for your continued support of Gwinnett's schools and students.

Sincerely,
Donna Power

Sample Curriculum

PARENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY CURRICULUM

Level 1

Team Building: Learning and Growing Together

The goal of the Parent Leadership Academy is to develop "Parent Leaders" to become the best advocates possible for their children and their children's education. As participants gain valuable knowledge about education and grow as leaders, supporting and guiding their community through hardships, decision making, and personal growth becomes vital. Participants become Ambassadors for other parents.

Orientation provides an opportunity for new parents interested in participating in the PLA to get up-to-date information, meet and talk to current PLA participants, hear presentations by PLA graduates, meet PLA staff and get answers to their questions.

Class 1: ~~Go DOE~~ Learning Your Child's School System

Understanding parent involvement in your child's school is the first step to your child's success as a student. With this in mind it seems logical that all parents would be involved. However, that is not the case; actually not even 50% of today's parents are "meaningfully" involved in their child's education. Reasons have been heard and researched, and one particular reason keeps presenting itself time and time again.

Many parents do not know what it "looks like" to be meaningfully involved in their child's education. During this class PLA participants do not only get a look at what meaningful parent involvement looks like, but they walk away with a clear understanding about their child's school system from the state down to the local school. Participants begin to understand the "education" vocabulary, whose office is where, and who is responsible for what. In addition, participants have a general knowledge of the various committees, teams, partnerships, and programs, so they can make a sound decision about where they can best serve in the education of their child.

Class 2: Leadership Qualities/Learning Styles (Now Discover your Strengths) Part 1

Part 1: This class begins with an activity that encourages participants to build relationships, while helping them understand the difficulties teachers experience when trying to provide every parent and student with individualized time and attention. Next, what are your top five strengths? Guess again! Participants are introduced to Marcus Buckingham's book, "Now Discover Your Strengths" (book study) and instructed to pick what they believe to be their top five strengths using Buckingham's list. Next, participants take Buckingham's ~~StrengthFinder~~ Assessment. Were you right? What about your learning style? Are you a Visual, Tactile, or Auditory Learner? What are your child's/children's learning style? PLA participants take a "Learning Style Inventory" to determine how they learn best.

Class 3: Leadership Qualities/Learning Styles (Now Discover your Strengths) Part 2

Part 2: What is a ~~strength~~? During part 2 participants discuss assigned chapters and then work in groups sharing thoughts regarding strengths and weaknesses. In addition, participants hold mock interviews in order to practice the art of listening and capturing insights about the candidate's natural talents and source of motivation.

PLA Description

Parent Leadership Academy

1. What is the purpose of the academy?

After working with children and parents in education for several years I realized that every parent had basically the same goal. Regardless of their race, gender, class, or religion they wanted the best education possible for their child. Armed with this information and three years of research, I developed the Parent Leadership Academy. The original academy began with thirteen parents on March 13, 2008. The PLA was designed to help parents gain the knowledge and skills to function in meaningful leadership roles and represent the "parent voice" that will help shape the direction of their children's education.

2. How the academy is structured...frequency of meetings, types of events, and topics covered.

PLA Level 1 – Meets six times, each meeting last 2.5 hours

DATE	TOPICS:
TBA	Parents: The Important Key to School Success
TBA	GoDDE: Learning Your Child's School System
TBA	Book Study – Leadership Qualities/Learning Styles (Now Discover your Strengths) Part 1
TBA	Book Study – Leadership Qualities/Learning Styles (Now Discover your Strengths) Part 2
TBA	ESEA (Local, State, Federal)
TBA	Title I – Overview
TBA	FT – Barnes & Noble

PLA Level 2 – Meets ten times, each meeting last 2.5 hours

DATE	TOPICS:
TBA	Parents: The Important Key to School Success
TBA	Digging Deeper into ESEA/Title I: State, Local, & Federal Funding
TBA	Book Study – Understanding Poverty (Ruby Payne)/Talking Community Dialogue
TBA	Book Study – Understanding Poverty (Ruby Payne)/Hidden Rules/Building Relationships
TBA	Special Needs Children and the Law
TBA	ESOL Students and the Law/Gifted Students and the Law
TBA	A Deeper Understanding about Gangs and Gang Violence
TBA	School Discipline: Discipline by the Book/2008 Youth Health Survey
TBA	FT – GDCS Alternative School (GIVE West and Gwinnett) (GDCS) Youth Detention Center

PLA Level 3 – Meets eight times for 2.5 hours

DATE	TOPICS
TBA	Parents: The Important Key to School Success
TBA	Graduation Criteria (State & Local)/Project
TBA	Book Study – Now Put Your Strengths to Work (Buckingham)/Project
TBA	Book Study – Now Put Your Strengths to Work (Buckingham)/Project
TBA	Material Review and Adoption: How and Why/Project
TBA	Disaggregating Data: How Important is the Data?
TBA	Project Presentations

*Must attend one Board of Education Meeting

**Must plan and participate in a project that benefits children and/or schools and/or community.

Delivering the Facts



Thank You



Parent Engagement Program Announcements

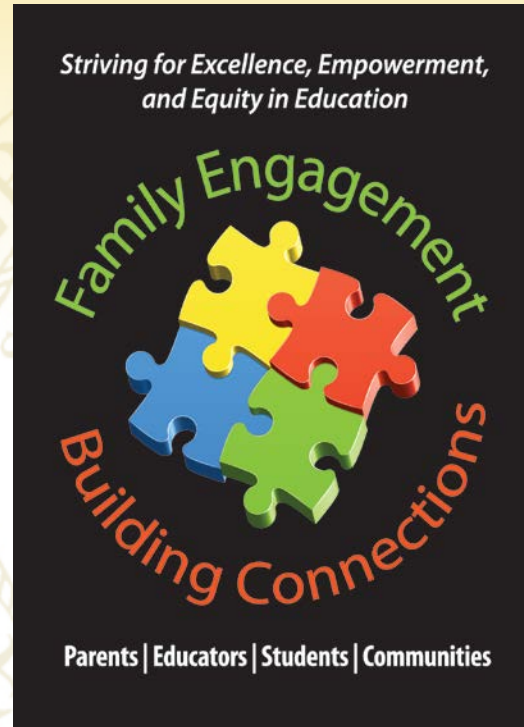
- Parent Leadership Awards
Deadline: Today, November 30, 2011
- Best Get Involved Moment Forms
Deadline: December 16, 2011
- 360 Degrees of Family Engagement: Practice Makes Perfect Session 1 Webinar
Held: December 9, 2011 from 9:30am to 11:00 am
- Family – Friendly Partnership School Awards
Deadline: February 1, 2012



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Georgia Family Engagement Conference

A Partnership of Georgia Department of Education and Georgia PTA



February 16 -18, 2012 in Athens, GA

Learn More and Register At:

http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/tss_title.aspx?Pagereq=StatewideConference



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Monthly Webinar Series Continues...



**Thursday, December 15, 2011
9:30 am – 11:00 am**

**Make and Take Parent Workshop –
*Preparing for College***

**Great Workshop that PICs/Parent Professionals and
School Counselors Can Present Together!**

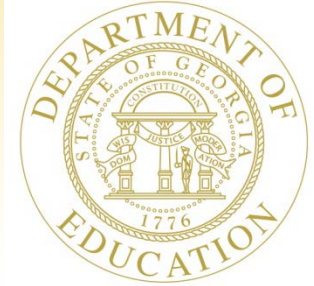


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Open for Questions



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