

“Educating Georgia’s Future”

PARENT ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2015

“STRENGTHENING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS AND SCHOOLS”

Since taking office as Georgia’s School Superintendent on January 13, 2015, I have been focused on improving outcomes for K-12 students and championing policies that are child-focused and classroom-centered.

Two months into office, I understand one important fact – none of this will happen without your help. Without meaningful collaboration between parents and educators, we cannot accomplish our mission of Educating Georgia’s Future.

Early on in my journey as an

educator, I discovered the value of parent and community support. As a former teacher and administrator, I have witnessed firsthand the impact of involved parents on individual children – and on entire communities. The 2015 Georgia Parent Leadership Award winners and the Superintendent’s Parent Advisory Council members show us that parents are making a difference in our schools and communities. Time and time again, we see that involved parents are the driving force in making success possible for all students. As your State School Superintendent, I look forward to

further opportunities to support strong family-school partnerships.

I am grateful for all of your hard work and dedication, and want you to know that I am open to your feedback and concerns. Please reach out and share your thoughts at any time – my email address is rwoods@doe.k12.ga.us. I am here to provide Georgia’s students with the best educational opportunities possible, and to provide support to our teachers, administrators, and parents. I want to hear what you have to say.

-MR. RICHARD WOODS, GEORGIA’S SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

FROM THE GEORGIA PIC NETWORK BLOG

“Teachers That Make A Difference”

I would like to thank an awesome teacher named Mrs. Melissa McCallar who I first met when my kids were in Pre-K. This is my story how she made an impact in my son’s life.

One day, I was desperately trying to find a book that interested my middle son. After spending hours at the public library and the Joseph Martin Elementary School library, I couldn’t find anything that held his attention. Just as we were about to leave, in walks Mrs. McCallar and asks why my son Patrick wasn’t checking out any books like his sister, Eboni, who had an arm full of books.

Of course my son, being the wiz kid that he is, responded by saying, “I’m not a big reader like my brother and sister. I’m more into numbers and math.”

To which Mrs. McCallar, being the fabulous teacher she is, replied, “Why not do both?”

I smiled and explained how I

had been searching for books that might interest him but was having some difficulty because I was not a very big reader myself. Sensing that I was in need of some help, she paused for a moment and suggested that I introduce him to the children’s book series Junie B. Jones.

We tried it, and my son – the one who hated reading, especially books with more than fifty pages – now reads books with 200 or more pages and was recognized this past summer for reading the most books in all of Liberty County!

As a parent, I couldn’t be more grateful for teachers like Mrs. McCallar. She could have easily gone on her way that day and not offered to help. But she chose to stop, ask questions, and get involved. Because she took a moment out of her day to assist a distressed parent, she helped ignite my son’s love of reading – to which I am forever grateful.

Mrs. McCallar is now helping parents and students at the high school level and her new school, Bradwell Institute, recently won first place at the state level in the Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl.

I wanted to share my story to let educators know that they can and do make a difference. I would like to thank Mrs. McCallar and all the other educators who choose to get involved and make a difference in the lives of students and their parents every day!

*-by Wendy Underwood
School Superintendent Parent Advisory Council Member*

For more blog posts, videos, and engaging discussions visit the Georgia PIC Network blog at: gadoeparentengagement.edublogs.org



The 2015 Georgia Parent Leadership Award Winners!

CRYSTAL EPLIN
Gwinnett County Schools

MELINDA GITTLEMAN
Marietta City Schools

ANTWAN MCKEE
Atlanta Public Schools

LORI ROWE
Tift County Schools

TOWANNA WALKER-MILLER
Camden County Schools

TYESHA WHITELY
*Savannah-Chatham County
Public Schools*

Congratulations to the six parents selected as the winners of the 2015 Georgia Parent Leadership Awards! The Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Parent Teacher Association created the award to recognize parents across Georgia who utilize their various skills and talents to strengthen our schools and positively impact the lives of our children.

The Georgia Parent Leadership Award recognizes the many skills and talents of Georgia's parents. Parent Leadership Award winners are chosen not only based on their demonstrated talents, but also on how their work has benefited the

entire school community on behalf of all children. The award also hopes to inspire all parents to use their unique talents, no matter how big or small, to lead the way in building positive outcomes for all children.

Winners of the Georgia Parent Leadership Award are afforded opportunities throughout the year to share their many recognized talents by promoting and assisting with parent engagement activities at the state Title I level. To learn more about the Georgia Parent Leadership Awards visit: <http://tinyurl.com/mos2z5j> for more information.

MARCH

Music in Our Schools Month

– This month promotes students having access to music education taught by excellent music instructors.

APRIL 12 - 18, 2015

Week of the Young Child

– The purpose of this week is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families.

APRIL 20 - 24, 2015

Public School Volunteer Week

– This week invites families to assist school teachers and administrators with everyday activities by volunteering with their children.



APRIL 23, 2015

Take Our Daughter and Sons to Work Day – This program was created to inform the future generation of young boys and girls about the variety of career paths they can have.

Program Staff

Nathan Schult,
**Interim Parent Engagement
Program Manager**
nschult@doe.k12.ga.us
404-463-1956

Keisha Jeffries,
**Parent Engagement
Communications Specialist**
kjeffries@doe.k12.ga.us
404-656-2633

Deana Bearden,
**Parent Engagement
Specialist**
dbearden@doe.k12.ga.us
404-232-1148

Vision Statement

The Parent Engagement Program believes that parents, schools, families, and communities working together can create meaningful partnerships that ultimately lead to significant gains across the board in student achievement.

Have a Question?

AskDOE

404-656-2800 ❖ askdoe@doe.k12.ga.us

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Georgia Department of Education

Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent
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