

The Parent Post

Parent and Family Engagement, Title I

Volume IX, Issue 2

Welcome to The Parent Post! This newsletter is published four times per year and sent home with students being served with Title I funds at Douglas County schools. These schools include Annette Winn Elementary, Beulah Elementary, Bright Star Elementary, Burnett Elementary, Chestnut Log Middle, Eastside Elementary, Factory Shoals Elementary, Lithia Springs Elementary, North Douglas Elementary, Stewart Middle, Sweetwater Elementary, Turner Middle and Youth Villages - Inner Harbour Campus. For more information, please contact Patti Sullivan at (770) 651-2118 or email patti.sullivan@douglas.k12.ga.us

- Mr. Trent North
Superintendent
-
- Lisa Dunnigan
Title I Executive
Director
-
- Patti Sullivan
Parent Outreach
Specialist
-
- Douglas County
School System
Board of Education
- Ms. Tracy Rookard
Board Chair
District Three
- Ms. Michelle
Simmons
Vice Chair
District Four
- Mr. Devetrian
Caldwell
District One
- Mr. D.T. Jackson
District Two
- Mr. Jeff Morris
District Five

Engaging Parents Through Better Communication Systems

By Dr. Mary Jackson, Instructional Lead Teacher, Eastside Elementary School

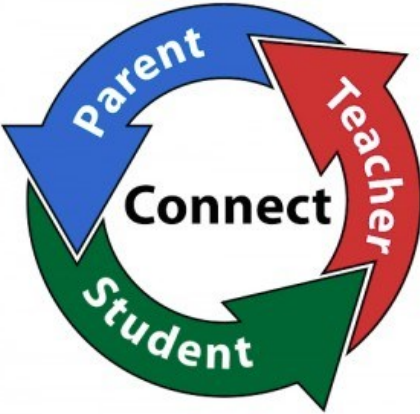
New research shows that frequent personalized outreach to parents works. School leaders play a significant role in promoting teacher-parent communication by making active outreach to parents a school-wide priority and by dedicating resources to these efforts. Teachers have to be intentional how they communicate with parents. Between the years of 2007 and 2012, the communication gap between parents and teachers steadily dropped among all socio-economic backgrounds but has increased in recent years due to the access of the internet. Some barriers include low rate of teacher-parent communication, outdated contact communication, and a school-wide communication policy.

The process can begin by having parents complete a survey on what is the best way to communicate with them. This question is included in the Douglas County Annual Title I Survey that is distributed each Spring. In recent years, I have noticed several responses include technology as a preferred communication choice. However, if school leaders don't make it a formal expectation and combine it with sufficient time, teachers may take a passive approach.

Digital technology is a part of our everyday lives. Nearly every adult has some type of mobile device. Families of all backgrounds can connect with these types of devices. There is a growing number of apps that can be used to communicate with parents. Among some of them are Bloomz, Class Dojo, Remind, School CNXT, Edmodo, and Living Tree. They are safe and most of them provide translation features. You can keep parents informed about academics, school absences, school events, or just to let them know that their child had a good day in school. Digital technology is going beyond the teacher-parent communication piece. There are textbooks, homework tutorials, and coursework explanation tutorials that can help parents assist their child at home. Some educational organizations provide summer on-line activities that can boost children reading skills.

Finally, we have to engage parents as partners in education if we want schools and teachers to expand their positive influence on students.

Kraft, M. (2017, September)
Engaging Parents Through Better Communication Systems.
Educational Leadership, 75(1), 58-62.



CCRPI: How Can Parents Help?

By Wiley Dailey, Director for Assessment, Accountability and Evaluation, Douglas County School System

In February of 2012, Georgia schools received a Flexibility Waiver from Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), which assessed schools based on one accountability measure. Schools are now assessed utilizing the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI). CCRPI is a comprehensive school improvement, accountability, and communication platform for all educational stakeholders that will promote college and career readiness for all Georgia public school students. CCRPI does not assess schools with only one measure but with multiple indicators. Schools receive a score up to 50 points based on the criteria listed below.

Elementary School CCRPI includes the following indicators:

- Percent of students scoring at Developing Learner or higher on Georgia Milestones in ELA, math, science and social studies,
- English Language Learners showing positive growth on ACCESS,
- Students with disabilities served in the general education environment for more than 80% of the school day,
- Lexile measures for 3rd grade students,
- Lexile measures for 5th grade students,
- Students in grades 1-5 completing Georgia's 17 Career Cluster lessons,
- Percent of 5th grade students with a complete career portfolio by the end of grade 5,
- Student attendance and
- Percent of students in grades 3rd – 5th scoring as Proficient and Distinguished Learners on all Georgia Milestones.

Middle School CCRPI includes the following indicators:

- Percent of students scoring at Developing Learner or higher on Georgia Milestones in ELA, math, science and social studies,
- English Language Learners showing positive growth on ACCESS,
- Students with disabilities served in the general education environment for more than 80% of the school day,
- Lexile measures for 8th grade students,
- Students completing 2 or more state defined career assessments and a stated defined individual Graduation Plan by the end of grade 8,
- Student attendance and
- Percent of students in grades 6th – 8th scoring as Proficient and Distinguished Learners on all Georgia Milestones.

High School CCRPI includes the following indicators:

- Percent of students scoring at proficient or higher on the Georgia Milestones in Ninth Grade Literature, American Literature, Algebra I, Geometry, Physical Science, Biology, U.S. History and Economics,
- Percent of students completing a CTAE pathway, or an advanced academic pathway, or fine arts pathway or language pathway,
- College readiness graduates, ACT/SAT scores, etc.,
- Percent of graduates earning credits for accelerated enrollment,
- Percent of graduates completing a career-related Work-Based Learning Program or Capstone Project,
- Lexile at 1275 on the Georgia Milestones American Literature,
- Percent of students scoring at the highest level on all Georgia Milestones,
- Student attendance,
- 4 – Year graduation rate and
- 5 – Year graduation rate.

All schools (elementary, middle and high) receive additional points based on:

- Student growth - labeled Progress Points. This category is worth up to 40 points,
- Closing the achievement gap - labeled Achievement Gap. This category is worth up to 10 points,
- Performance of economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities and English/Language Learners – labeled ED/EL/SWD Performance Points. Every school can also add bonus points through Exceeding the Bar options. Combined, the ED/EL/SWD Performance Points and the Exceeding the Bar points are worth up to 10 points.

Combined, these scores total a potential 110 points. Although these criteria do not cover every aspect of CCRPI, you can see that it is much more detailed than our traditional Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The Georgia Department of Education website contains a wealth of information pertaining to CCRPI at www.gadoe.org. You can also access your school's CCRPI by visiting <http://ccrpi.gadoe.org/2017/>.

As a parent, what can you do to help with your school's CCRPI? Ensuring that your child is at school is key to improving your child's academic success as well as aiding in increasing CCRPI for your school. Your child misses valuable information when he/she is not at school. Reading with your child nightly will also increase his/her reading comprehension. An increase in reading comprehension will increase the achievement level on Georgia Milestones as well as increase his/her Lexile level and both of these will increase your school's CCRPI. Play math games with your child. Go to www.math.com for math games that will increase your child's mathematical abilities thus improving his/her achievement level on Georgia Milestones as well as your school's CCRPI. Visit your child's teacher for additional ways that you as a parent can increase your child's skills and improve the CCRPI for the school.

Staying Sharp Over the Holiday Break

By Dr. Adriane Williams, Instructional Lead Teacher, Factory Shoals Elementary School

All children look forward to the holiday break! Two whole weeks without getting up at 6:00 a.m., no set schedules, spending fun time with friends and family, playing with toys, or maybe just napping all day. With so much free time, it is not difficult for children to fall out of the habit of learning and doing school work each day. Sure, parents want to give children a break from the hectic schedules and busy school days. However, it is important that learning continues and does not come to a halt.

The holiday season affords so many opportunities for family time, including preparing for special dinners, spending time with relatives, and traveling to visit family and friends. With children home from school for a long break, let's also utilize some of the free time for learning. Time during the holiday season presents many ways to increase children's learning and reinforce skills taught at school. What can kids be doing over the break?" parents may ask themselves. Don't fret! There are so many fun, educational activities that children can participate in over the break that will keep their brains occupied and ready to start fresh in January. Below you will find a suggested list of these activities.

READ! READ! READ!- One of the most vital things parents can do, beyond keeping children healthy and safe, is to read with them. It is important that children read while enjoying their time off. Many families take long trips to Grandma's house or to a relative's house for the holidays. While traveling the long distance, one way children can incorporate reading into their holiday schedules is by listening to audiobooks along the way. Audiobooks can be very engaging, keep children entertained, and make the trip time go by much faster. Children can learn just by sitting in the car for several hours. Research emphasizes that read alouds from adults and audiobooks offer many benefits to children such as building confidence, enhancing fluency, and strengthening comprehension (Polette, 2005). After read alouds from audiobooks, parents can also ask children various questions to check for comprehension skills and understanding of content. Remember, read alouds don't just benefit younger children, but children of all age groups. Another reading activity that children can do over the break is read a longer, chapter book. Reading a longer book that tells a great story can be extended over a few days and occupy students' during the holiday period. Be mindful that it is important to choose a book that is engaging to children so that they enjoy it over the break and want to read it in its entirety. Don't forget that children may be around a lot of family during the holidays. They can participate in the reading fun too! Reading together can be a great activity for the whole family.

COOKING AND BAKING- Cooking and baking always come to mind when thinking of the holiday season. Allow children to help in the kitchen. Assisting in the kitchen gives many opportunities for reinforcement of skills especially in mathematics. For example, when baking or preparing a dish, ask children to double or half the ingredients of the recipe depending upon the number of servings that is needed to feed the family. Having children to double or half the ingredients for the recipe provides students with opportunities to multiply and divide fractions. Allowing students to figure out that the number of people being served will determine how recipes must be adjusted. When baking or cooking in the kitchen, younger children can help out too by preparing and adding ingredients to recipes in a sequential order. When allowing younger ones to help in the kitchen, remember to use transition words to demonstrate sequence such as first, second, next, then, finally, and lastly when baking or preparing holiday dishes.

SHOPPING WITH FAMILY- During the holidays, many families do a lot of shopping. When shopping, budgeting is often important. Parents often create a budget to go shopping for gifts and buy groceries for holiday dinners and parties. Through budgeting, children can practice real-life, mathematical situations, and many math skills can be reinforced. One way children can be involved is by getting them to help prepare a budget and a grocery list of essential supplies. Children can add all of the items needed for dinner and subtract the total from the family's budget. Children can also attend the grocery store with their families to retrieve the needed items. A trip to the grocery store allows children to compare prices which reinforces decimal skills as well as compare the better buy of generic brand items to more popular brands. Another activity that children can participate in while shopping for gifts in the mall or any other store is allowing them to calculate sale prices. For instance, if a shirt is \$40.00 with 20% off, children can calculate the price of the shirt to see if the shirt falls within the family's budget. There are also ample opportunities for younger kids to learn when shopping with their parents. Some of these activities include children reading boxes as well as practicing their letters, colors, and numbers.

ONLINE GAMES AND WEBSITES- Children can also spend time during their break working on educational games and websites at home. Students can work on web sites at home that they may also work on at school such as Education Galaxy, myon.com, ilearn.com, xtramath.com, and etc. Students can work on these web sites to practice and enhance their reading and math skills. If you need more information on how children log on to these web sites, please contact the school for the required information.

Although it is important for children to spend time with relatives and friends as well as rest over the holiday break, it is essential that learning continues. Children being engaged in learning activities over the break, not only, allow them to spend quality time with their families, but also allow them to engage in math and literacy activities that reinforce their developing skills. Continued learning throughout the holiday break will help children get back into the swing of things much faster easier and faster when the new semester begins in January.

Polette, K. (2005). *Read & Write It Out Loud!: Guided Oral Literacy Strategies*. El Paso, Texas: Pearson.

U P C O M I N G W O R K S H O P S

Parents of children being served with Title I funds may attend any workshop, regardless of location.

Annette Winn Elementary School Parent Resource Center
3536 Bankhead Highway, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
Tanya Clagette (770) 651-3131

Academic Parent Teacher Teams Meeting 2

Monday-Tuesday, January 22 and 23, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Grades K through 5 will meet with the parents of their child's homeroom to discuss data based on foundational skills they have chosen. They will then create and practice activities to work with their children at home and discuss goals for APTT meeting #3.

Beulah Elementary School Parent Resource Center
1150 Burnt Hickory Road, Douglasville, GA 30134
Kanesha Howard (770) 651-3338

Technology and Testing-Tech Talks and Testing Tips

Monday, January 8, 2018 at 6:00 PM
A night of learning about various technology we use in the classrooms and Georgia Milestones testing tips.

Bright Star Elementary School Parent Resource Center
6300 John West Road, Douglasville, GA 30134
Tenia Boone (770) 651-3470

Georgia Milestone Informational

Thursday, February 15, 2018, 5:30 PM
Parents will be invited to learn information about the Georgia Milestones Assessment Systems test. They will learn the benefits of this assessment, and what they, the parents, can expect and do to help their child prepare for the assessment.

Burnett Elementary School Parent Resource Center
8277 Connally Drive, Douglasville, GA 30134
Cynthia Brooks (770) 651-3533

Math Lunch and Learn

Tuesday, January 30, 2018, during scheduled lunch times
This math day event is for parents who are looking for strategies to use at home to help their children with math. We will focus on the Georgia Performance Standards being taught in your child's classroom. Parents walk away with strategies and support materials they can use when helping their child in math as well as receive information on how this area will be tested on the Georgia Milestone Assessment System. Websites and other technological resources will be provided to parents that will help their child/children become more prepared for the test.

Chestnut Log Middle School Parent Resource Center
2544 Pope Road, Douglasville, GA 30135
Chris Atkinson (770) 651-5180

Georgia Milestones Test Prep Meeting

Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Come out and learn important test taking tips and strategies for the Georgia Milestones Assessment.

Eastside Elementary School Parent Resource Center
8266 Connally Drive, Douglasville, GA 30134
Dr. Mary Jackson (770) 651-3885

Next parent workshop coming soon!

Visit the Parent Resource Center or see the next newsletter for more information.

Factory Shoals Elementary School Parent Resource Center
2375 Mount Vernon Road, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
Dr. Adriane Williams (770) 651-3966

GMAS Informational Meeting

Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Parents will learn strategies to help students achieve success on the Georgia Milestone Assessment. Parents will gain information on improving Lexile scores to increase Reading comprehension as well as information on ways to help students in the area of mathematics.

Lithia Springs Elementary School Parent Resource Center
6946 Florence Drive, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
Pam Bates (770) 651-4192 and Barbara Lark (770) 651-4167

Academic Parent Teacher Teams Meeting 2

Monday-Tuesday, January 29 and 30, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Grades K, 1, 2 and 3 families will be trained to support children's academic goals by linking home and school learning.

North Douglas Elementary School Parent Resource Center
1630 Dorris Road, Douglasville, GA 30134
Carmilla Hilton (770) 651-4833

GMAS/Social Studies Night

Tuesday, February 6, 2018, at 6:30 PM
We will discuss the GMAS Assessment and scoring and parents will view a PowerPoint of the importance of preparing their students for the test. Parents will also visit the Wax Museum to view and listen to different inventors and their inventions.

Stewart Middle School Parent Resource Center
8138 Malone Street, Douglasville, GA 30134
Elizabeth Reid (770) 651-5473

Georgia Milestones Test Prep Meeting

Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Come out and learn important test taking tips and strategies for the Georgia Milestones Assessment.

Sweetwater Elementary School Parent Resource Center
2505 East County Line Road, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
Schontal McClary (770) 651-4659

Technology Talk

Tuesday, January 30, 2018 at 9:00 AM
Sergeant Jesse Hambrick from the Douglas County Sheriff's Office will present information on how to protect your child from some of the dangers of social media. Mr. Darien Carruth, Instructional Technology Specialist, will demonstrate some of the great technology our students and teachers use every day! Learn how to use technology to help your child at home.

Turner Middle School Parent Resource Center
7101 Turner Drive, Lithia Springs, GA 30122
Dr. Carol Lobban (770) 651-5563

Science Night

Thursday, January 11, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Our Science night will afford parents an opportunity to view some of their students science exhibits, as well as, expose parents to some of the scientific concepts their students are learning in an entertaining and engaging setting.