

# SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE



## **Board of Education Meeting** *September 10, 2007*

### **Summer School Graduation**

Summer school graduation for the Dougherty County School System was held on Sunday, August 26<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in the Westover High School auditorium. Thirty-one graduates from the 4 high schools participated in a very nice ceremony. Forty-six students were eligible to participate.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

On September 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, the DCSS will hold conferences for all grade levels. This is the first year that middle and high school students will be released early in order for conferences to be scheduled with parents. Letters have been sent home inviting parents to sign up for conferences.

The Superintendent's Council for middle school teachers and high school teachers is responsible for the Parent-Teacher Conferences being included in the calendar for the 2007-08 school year.

### **Open House for Grades 10-12**

Open House for Grades 10-12 will be held at each high school on Thursday, September 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **Superintendent's Council Meetings**

The first of three meetings scheduled for the year for each of four councils will be held in September. This is the second year that the Superintendent's Councils have met. The Elementary Council (comprised of a K-2 representative and a Grades 3-5 representative from each of the 16 elementary schools), the Middle School Council (comprised of department chairs from each of the 6 middle schools), the High School Council (comprised of department chairs from each of the 4 high schools), and the Non-Instructional Council (comprised of representatives from the departments on the operational side of the system) were initiated to give staff input from their school level and/or department perspective.

### **I Care**

Training has begun for representatives in the schools and throughout the system for implementation of **I Care**. Last year's Leadership Albany Class will assist the DCSS in the rollout of the program in the community.

## **SACS –CASI District Accreditation**

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS-CASI) district accreditation process helps schools focus on a continuous process of improvement. Eight professionals will serve on the Quality Assurance Review Team (QAR Team). These team members are from the following states: Alabama (1), Arkansas (1), South Carolina (1), Florida (2), and Georgia (3).

The schedule for the September 23<sup>rd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> visit is as follows:

**Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup>** – Meetings with school system staff, Board Members, principals whose schools are not being visited, community members, and parents.

**Tuesday, September 25<sup>th</sup>** – The team has made a request to visit eight schools [2 high schools, 2 middle schools, and 4 elementary schools]. The schedule is being determined by the QAR Team. Team members will be divided into pairs, and each pair will visit 2 schools (one school in the morning and one school in the afternoon).

**Wednesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>** – The QAR Team will report to the Board of Education, all principals, and all directors at the 2:30 p.m. Board Meeting in the Board Room. (Prior to this report, the team will have met with the senior staff and me.)

## **School Improvement Plans**

Each spring and early fall, the school's Leadership Team at each school, under the direction of the principal, analyzes the test data as well as survey data to develop the School Improvement Plan. The plan addresses those academic areas that need to be strengthened from the previous year as well as from trend data over the past three or more years. Strategies to accomplish the objectives are included as well as measures to evaluate the progress.

The School Improvement Plans for 2007-08 are being evaluated and revised for implementation this year.

## **Curriculum Academic Team Visits**

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction makes Curriculum Academic Team visits to the schools to assist the schools with their School Improvement Plans, evaluate test data, and make observations in the classrooms. Although extremely time consuming and demanding, this strategy has proven very effective and continues to have a significant impact on school improvement.

## **Principal Conferences**

Conferences have been scheduled in September with all 29 principals/leaders of our 16 elementary schools, 6 middle schools, 4 high schools, 1 alternative school, 1 Pre-K Center, and OakTree Psychoeducational Center. School improvement goals and personal goals are discussed. Additional topics of discussion include the following: AYP, attendance, retention rate, dropout rate, graduation rate, child nutrition, equipment inventory, and staff absenteeism.

## **Executive Council for High School Students**

Executive Councils will be formed in each high school this year. Student representatives will be selected for each grade level as well as Student Council Officers and club representatives. Tentatively, at least 2 meetings will be scheduled in each high school to allow students an opportunity to give input to the Superintendent.

## **2007-08 Title I Distinguished Schools**

Prior to the enactment of **No Child Left Behind** in 2001 and the reauthorization in 2002, Adequate Yearly Progress was only applicable to Title I schools. Therefore, Title I schools would have the possibility of achieving 9 consecutive years of making AYP. There are 14 Title I schools that have made Adequate Yearly Progress for 3 or more consecutive years:

Three schools have made AYP for 3 consecutive years:

Albany Middle, Dougherty International Education Middle, and Southside Middle.

Eleven schools have made AYP 4 or more consecutive years:

Alice Coachman (5), International Studies Elementary Charter (6), Jackson Heights (6), Lamar Reese (8), Magnolia (5), MLK, Jr. (5), Morningside (5), Sylvester Road (5), Turner (5), Radium Springs Elementary (6), and West Town (6).

The schools having made AYP for 4 or more consecutive years have been invited to a Celebration Banquet in Atlanta on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **Non-Title I Distinguished Schools**

Schools that were not Title I schools were added in the 2002-03 Adequate Yearly Progress Report. The maximum number of years that a non-Title I school could have made AYP is 5 years.

Three Non-Title I schools have made Adequate Yearly Progress for 5 consecutive years:

Lake Park, Lincoln, and Robert Cross.

## **Superintendent's Advisory – UGA**

The College of Education Superintendents' Education Policy Advisory Group will meet again in early October, and I will participate in the advisory group again this year.

## **Performance Learning Center (PLC) Update**

On Friday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, Neil Shorthouse, Executive Director of Communities In Schools - Georgia and three state CIS staff members met to review the 2006-07 data for our PLC. Highlights include the following:

- 85.5% of the PLC students improved their academic average.
- The academic average increased from an average of 69.1 to 77.2 for these students. Although we have set a goal for this average to increase to an academic average over 80 during the 2007-08 school year, we must realize that these students were not successful in the traditional school environment.

- From the end of the year survey results, the following perceptions were compiled:
  - 96.3% feel more focused on school work
  - 100% of the students want to graduate
  - 100% know they can be successful
  - 93% would recommend the PLC to others

The maximum student enrollment for a traditional schedule is 75, and we have the maximum enrolled this year. We are exploring alternate schedules for the PLC as well.

### **National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future**

The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future in Washington, D.C. has an initiative entitled Knowledge Works Foundation for Teaching for the Future to explore the education agenda and how change can be catalyzed in various states. Georgia has been invited to participate in the project, and I have been asked to serve as a taskforce member.

### **Enrollment**

As of September 7<sup>th</sup>, the enrollment for the DCSS was 16,506 as compared to the enrollment of 15,666 on August 13<sup>th</sup>. The enrollment for each high school was as follows:

	<u>8/13/07</u>	<u>9/7/07</u>
<b>AHS</b>	732	827
<b>DHS</b>	853	1005
<b>MHS</b>	976	1152
<b>WHS</b>	1197	1275