

Superintendent's Advisory Council
September 17, 2007 - 6:30 p.m.
Dunwoody Springs Charter Elementary School

Members present: James Wilson, Superintendent; Carolyn Carson, Alpharetta; Barbara Thomas-Milano, Centennial; Kathy Theisen, Chattahoochee; Sharon Albright, Chattahoochee; Lavon Morris-Grant, Creekside; Sue Derene, Milton; Sally Hildebrant, Milton; DeeAnn Weprinsky, North Springs; Susan Auerbach, Northview; Bruce Piefke, Riverwood; Ron Vahey, Roswell; Adrienne Berry, Westlake; Carolyn Briner, NFPTA Council

Staff: Linda Almond, Secretary; Mitzi Woody, Liaison

Guests: Lori Fanning, Director of Mathematics; Andy Ross, Executive Director, Fulton Education Foundation & Coordinator, Partners and Volunteers

Call to Order

Chair Sally Hildebrant called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Introductions

Members introduced themselves. Two were meeting the group for the first time.

- Adrienne Berry, Westlake Cluster
- Ron Vahey, Roswell Cluster

Math Presentation

Lori Fanning, Coordinator of Mathematics, gave a presentation and answered questions on the changes in the math curriculum with the implementation of the new Georgia Performance Standards. Students in Kindergarten through second grade, as well as in sixth and seventh grade, are already using the new math curriculum. This year, students are seeing changes in grades **three through five** and eight. High school students will see changes with the 2008-09 school year. Ms. Fanning informed the group of several forums which have been planned to provide parents the opportunity to learn more about the state's new curriculum.

Superintendent's Update

Mr. Wilson shared that the opening of school went well. He also discussed the first of five early release days built into this year's calendar, which will be coming up this week. The early release calendar was piloted last school year by the Alpharetta and Milton clusters and proved very successful. The second half of early release days will be used for schoolwide professional development activities.

Mr. Wilson advised that earlier in the day, he attended an assembly at Alpharetta High School where the school was awarded the Governor's Cup. The award recognizes the school that makes the greatest gains in its SAT scores over a three-year period. A Fulton County high school has won this award three of the past four years. Banneker and North Springs high schools were Regional winners.

Another "good news" story shared by the superintendent related to the system's distance learning capabilities. For the second year, a teacher at Alpharetta High School is teaching A.P. Calculus to his Alpharetta students, as well as students at Westlake High. Last year, his three Westlake students and the 17 from

Alpharetta all passed the national A.P. exam. Because of this success, this year another Alpharetta teacher is teaching advanced placement physics to students at both schools.

The superintendent thanked the members for their support of the recent budget. In this budget, teachers received additional experience credit and a raise, which administrators hoped would help our teacher retention rate. At the beginning of this school year, the county's loss of teachers from one year to the next was the lowest in years. Mr. Wilson recently participated in a panel discussion at the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce and one of the main topics was teacher retention. He stated that the Chamber is looking for ways to help metro systems with this issue. Already the Chamber is working with some apartment complexes that may waive deposits and utility hook-up fees for teachers who sign leases.

One important issue facing the school system is tax reform under **HR 900**. According to Mr. Wilson, this legislation, if passed, would eliminate local property tax which is the primary funding source for the school system. The school system would then get funding from the state, which takes away local control. The superintendent handed out a draft position statement from the Atlanta Metro Chamber of Commerce on this proposed tax reform.

Sharing of Concerns

Roundtable discussions included the elimination of the Tech III position at schools, yearly budget for professional development, permitting issues, affidavit of residency issues, new school construction, and upcoming redistricting meetings.

Schedule of Meetings

The remaining meetings have been scheduled as follows:

- November 27, Administrative Center, 6 p.m.
- January 29, Administrative Center, Lunch Meeting 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- March 25, Administrative Center, 6 p.m.
- May 1, Dunwoody Springs Charter Elementary School, 6 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

These minutes are approved as of October 15, 2007 with two minor changes, which are noted in bold.