



Dr. Cheryl L.H. Atkinson, Superintendent

Guiding Questions - Summary
Dunwoody High School – Region 1 Roundtable
October 29, 2012

1. What are some ideas and /or opportunities that will increase parental involvement?

- Weekly emails from DCSD and/or school
- Weekly texts; use of social media
- Relationships with staff
- Mid-year meeting/update → activities
- Messages from Parent Portal (grades/missed assignments)
- Mandatory trainings should be the same across DCSD
- Revisit scheduling of meetings in order to meet the needs/time constraints of all parents
- What kinds of opportunities are available
- Reach-back (5th to middle school); peer proofing
- Parental knowledge
- Vertical articulation
- Childcare (safe place for child)
- Volunteer (opening our doors to stakeholders)
- Parent burnout (spreading too thin)
- Direct communication for staff
- Implement a parent tutorial to give ways for parents to bring students to standards
- Ways teachers are assessed by parents & students (Surveys for students, but what's available for parents?) Fear of retribution?
- Wireless in every building
- Parents able to act as volunteer paras for overcrowding
- Interpreters needed!!
- Having a direct contact person so that voices are heard
- Receiving a response and the “why” behind the decision
- Sharing data with parents so they can begin to answer their own question
- Better access to the decision makers
- Parental involvement is not a challenge for the Dunwoody cluster
- Charter schools
- Transparency so parents will want to become involved
- Compile information from all groups and share with all the other groups
- Legal fees for Crawford Lewis – “what’s up with that?”

2. What areas within the District are most important for you to know about?

- SACS update; all inclusive update
- Understanding testing, new initiatives
- Quality instruction vs test prep
- Class size: What being done? What's the plan?
- Relationship between DCSD and DeKalb County
- Understanding of how DC issues/priorities affect DCSD
- CCRPI and PARCC
- Rigor and relevance of Science/SS curriculum
- More information about CCGPS
- Explanation of hardware policy
- Transparency related to 2013-2014 calendar
- Unique opportunity for parent dialogue (two-way)
- Positions and salaries
- SPLOST spending and timelines
- RTT spending
- What DCSD is doing for teachers?
- Conflict between HR and other departments in the district
- Will empowered principals actually be empowered?
- How is my child doing? Meaningful feedback. Academics for all students
- How are they being prepared to compete? EIP at all levels
- Where are we?
- What are our goals?
- Are goals appropriate?
- Class sizes/AP classes
- Increased workload
- Reduction of classes
- Teacher salaries
- Individual student attention/feedback
- Lack of conference time
- Curriculum
- Data
- Textbooks
- Budgetary decisions – Why? Rationale?
- Listen to teachers
- School report card drilled down to teacher level (AP specifically)
- Consistent parent portal updates by teachers
- Need back up for parent portal → lost data due to crashes
- Who is impacted by furloughs?
- How do parents handle/voice concerns regarding poor teachers and administrators? What is the process?
- Recycling bad teachers
- Finance transparency needed
- Gifted vs Special Ed

3. What are some unique initiatives (method and frequency) that the district can implement to improve communication with parents?

- Monthly newsletter from District → District highlights via Constant Contact or such
- Divide by Cabinet departments → links to detailed reports; this keeps a district perspective instead of spun by media
- Calendar feedback via SurveyMonkey failed
- More frequent meetings like this → dialogue at least quarterly
- More balanced ways/times to meet → use technology more, innovative ways to interact
- More notice of important issues
- More advance notice of meetings
- Create policy for longer time for pre-published agendas
- Parent advocacy group dialog – authentic
- Transparent online check book – grant proposals and spending, org chart (positions and salaries), RT3 spending, SPLOST 4 spending and timelines
- No messages in Parent Portal
- Teacher notes needed
- Leverage technology → tie parents in
- Involve parents in emailing/communication
- Computer in each school, designated for parents
- Central location on the website to find basic information
- Blog that allows parents to voice their opinion – attached to the website
- More direct electronic communication
- Bulletin Board that allows parents to “post” questions and get feedback from a district representative

4. Parental Engagement/Communication Suggestion Box (What topics do you need to know about in meetings such as this?)

- How district decisions relate/impact the school/region
- Cluster specific forums
- Creative solutions to individual needs
- Parents as “problem solvers”
- School calendar
- Why should we stay in DeKalb
- HR – what DCSD is doing for our teachers compared to what teachers are asking for
- Teacher morale – climate of fear: taxed and maxed out
- Drop “do more with less:
- Transportation? What? Why? ES, MS
- Communication delays
- Transportation website not used (public domain)
- Use K12 alerts
- Lack of English classes/parental support
- Paras for KK
- Overcrowded classrooms
- Parenting skills workshops
- Fundraising ideas
- How long before DCSD is back on track? Timeline?
- When will you bring back furlough days?
- Teacher pay leading to good teachers leaving
- DCSD be honest about what’s happening
- Technology
- Learn from other metro districts about what’s going well
- Need more information regarding eliminating district positions