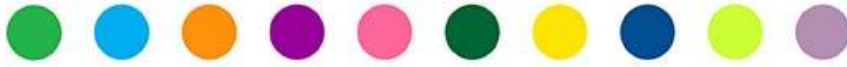


Strategic Priorities



Building a Better Gwinnett

Dear Parents and Guardians,

These past few weeks have been a very exciting reminder of why we do what we do. In October, Gwinnett County Public Schools was named 2010 winner of The Broad Prize for Urban Education, the country's most prestigious award in K-12 education. While Gwinnett County adults— teachers, administrators, support staff, parents, business leaders, and community members— are tremendously proud and excited about this recognition, it's the kids who are the real winners. And that's where our emphasis should be, on our students.

We were quite purposeful in putting Students as our first priority (followed by Parents, of course) in GCPS' Strategic Priorities for 2010-2020.

What we do in our school and in our classrooms each day centers around the children in those classrooms. It's just that simple. While the whole community benefits when we have strong schools, that community pride is a byproduct of student success, not the goal. Becoming a system of world-class schools won't happen if every child is not receiving a quality and effective education that prepares him or her for a successful life.

Here's what the Student Priority says:

As engaged learners, our students will reach their full learning potential. They will be critical thinkers, creative problem-solvers, and effective communicators. What they experience as Gwinnett students will encourage their growth as curious, analytical, imaginative, and adaptable learners. They will take responsibility for their own learning, achievement, and behavior, making the most of opportunities in Gwinnett schools. Students will demonstrate high levels of character, taking pride in their school, community, and country. They will understand that America's greatness is built upon three things... our form of government— a representative democracy; how we do business— our free-enterprise system; and how we educate our people— our system of public education. They will develop leadership and teamwork skills, preparing to be successful American citizens who function effectively in a global economy. Students will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and expertise to succeed in college, work, and life in the 21st century.

I don't think anyone can argue that this is what we all want for our students. Kids who are excited and involved in their learning are going to learn more and remember what they've learned. They're going to be able to turn around and apply that knowledge in other situations. Students need a strong foundation of basic skills, but once that foundation is set, it's what we call higher-order skills that

will prepare our students to be successful after high school. Young people who can be creative, analyze data and solve problems, work in teams, communicate effectively, and use prior knowledge to adapt in new situations will be ready for what the future holds.

(Technology is such an important part of a Gwinnett education that it has its own Priority.)

Experts tell us that our children are being educated today for jobs that don't yet exist. The knowledge, skills, and expertise that our students acquire in a Gwinnett classroom will be a launching pad for the amazing things they will do and be in adulthood.

We know that children must have a stake in this enterprise we call education if they are going to reach their potential. That's why we emphasize that students will take responsibility for their learning and make the most of the opportunities available in our school. I know and you know that it's a shared responsibility though. The faculty and staff at school promise to do our part in helping your child reach his or her potential and we appreciate all that you do at home to support your student's success.

Together, we'll work to make sure that Gwinnett County Public Schools becomes the system of world-class schools we want for our children and helps build a better Gwinnett for all of us.

Sincerely,
Karen Head
Principal
Brookwood Elementary