



PTA POST

everychild. onevoice.

Volume 11, Issue 5

February 2003

From The President

The population of Wake County Schools is growing more culturally and racially diverse each year. In fact, according to a recent article in the *News & Observer*, 60.1% of our students are white, 26.5% are black, 6.4% are Hispanic, 4.2% are Asian, 2.5% are multiracial, and .03% are American Indian. The richness of diversity in our schools offers a wonderful opportunity for our children to appreciate other cultures and traditions.

In its position statement on Respecting Differences, the National PTA Board of Directors notes the importance of recognizing and teaching to value all individuals. In addition, the statement points out that the most critical component when it comes to children learning to respect people's differences are parents. Furthermore, school involvement from *all* families is necessary in order to assure the success of *all* children—meaning parents, teachers, students, and community members from every socioeconomic and cultural background need to be involved. The *Respecting Differences Resource Guide*, available on the National PTA's website (www.pta.org) offers ideas for promoting the celebration of diversity within your school.

There are important issues facing public education in the next few months, including the implementation of the federal No Child Left Behind law. Please read the article on this initiative in this newsletter. While improving student achievement is the goal of both the North Carolina ABCs of Public Education and the federal No Child Left Behind law, there are many differences between the two measures. We must begin to communicate those differences to our parents so that they will be prepared for the coming challenges.

The Council is working to inform and educate parents about this and other important educational issues by developing a parent information session format. This is a great opportunity for you and your parents to meet administrators face to face and to have questions answered. Please join us for the first program: *Greater Understanding '03*, at Ligon Middle School, February 13, 2003, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Our Superintendent, Bill McNeal, and School System administrators will be there to answer questions and provide information to parents.

Thank you for all you do to improve the educational opportunities for all children in Wake County.

Paula S. Lipford, President

Dates and Events

February

13th — Greater Understanding '03
Parent Education Workshop
Ligon Middle School
6-9 p.m.

March

25th – Reflections Reception
Full Council Meeting
and Election of Officers
time/place TBA

April

22nd – Awards Celebration
Full Council Meeting
time/place TBA

May

2nd-3rd — State PTA Convention
North Raleigh Hilton

31st – Project Graduation
Dorton Arena

June

22nd-24th – National PTA Convention
Charlotte

Awards

PTA County Awards Packets were sent to PTA Presidents in November. Don't forget the deadline is **March 13th** - all entries must be postmarked by this date! Questions: Contact Lucy @ lkucmierz@nc.rr.com

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and more!

From Wake County Public Schools...

Getting Ready for 'No Child Left Behind'

By now, you have probably heard a lot of discussion about "No Child Left Behind." In the months after Bill McNeal became superintendent, he talked about the need to leave no child behind as we move forward towards high achievement standards. The phrase assumed a new meaning January 8, 2002, when President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. It contains the most sweeping changes to federal education law since 1965.

The law's goal is to have all students performing at grade level or above by 2013-2014. It is based on four basic principles: stronger accountability for results, increased flexibility with federal funds, expanded options for parents, and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work.

The law encourages accountability through state testing programs. A school's success will be measured based on the testing performance of the whole student population and nine disaggregated groups according to race, gender and other criteria. Schools must make "adequate yearly progress" with *each* of these groups.

In February, parents will receive a report card for their child's school, the second annual report card issued by the state. The reports have been refined to meet the new federal standards that call for providing parents with more information and more choices.

The law sets new standards for teachers and teacher assistants that are to be met by 2005-2006 requiring school systems to have licensed teachers with content knowledge fitting the instructional needs of their class.

Much in the federal law sounds familiar. In Wake County, we have worked to meet a goal, carefully assessed student performance, used data to meet individual student needs, provided programs to strengthen the academic skills of at-risk students, kept parents informed of student performance, recruited and worked to keep highly qualified teachers in the classroom, and recognized the critical role classroom teachers play in educating all children. As a result of these efforts, we have a head start on other school districts across the country.

There are some parts of the new law that could disrupt the momentum we've built and negatively impact other school systems across the country. Superintendent McNeal has written Governor Mike Easley and is working with his fellow superintendents to convince the state and federal government that the No Child Left Behind Act needs refinements that will help achieve its goal.

In the meantime, the WCPSS administrative staff is working hard to help explain what No Child Left Behind means to students, their families and educators. Administrators are making presentations to school employees, and to business and community leaders. Special media programming is planned for early spring, and parents will receive "A Parent's Guide to No Child Left Behind" in May. The more people understand the details about No Child Left Behind and its implications, the better we will work together as a community to meet the challenge.

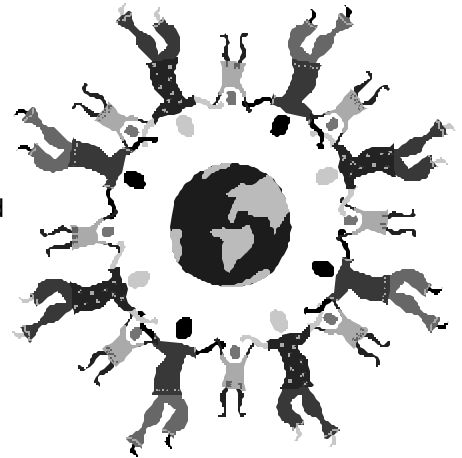
We fully support the ideals behind No Child Left Behind. Indeed, your support has made Wake County a leader in making sure that every child develops his or her skills to the fullest, long before the legislation was passed. We will continue our efforts while implementing these new standards and helping our community understand them. Most importantly, we will all work together for academic excellence for our students.

Tips for Celebrating Diversity at Home and School

In Wake County less than half of the WCPSS students surveyed feel they have knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds (Search Institute 2000).

Raising children to accept those who are different from them can be an easy process if you look for teachable moments. Here are six tips to help parents and educators:

1. Help children to notice similarities, not differences in people.
2. Look for opportunities to demonstrate how stereotypes can be hurtful.
3. Include everyone in activities.
4. Treat others the way you want to be treated.
5. Foster a sense of children's connection to community.
6. Remember that everyone is special with wonderful qualities to add to life.



Recommended book for 4th grade students through 7th grade students: [Deaf Child Crossing](#) by Marlee Matlin.
Recommended book for parents: [Framework for Understanding Poverty](#) by Ruby K. Payne.

Information compiled by Liza Weidle, Wake County PTA Council Character Education Program Coordinator.
Familyfilter@nc.rr.com

Thoughts on School Diversity

"For the first time in 16 years, I have no children in the WCPSS this year. Both sons are in college, far from home, and of course I miss them very much. But I have also found that I miss volunteering in their schools, and what I miss the most is seeing the kids, and I mean ALL the kids -- black kids, white kids, Latino kids, Asian kids, kids whose manners are great and kids who you'd like to send to the woodshed, kids who are thriving and kids who need our help to succeed. I learned a tremendous amount about them and about myself from seeing hundreds of kids every day (yes, I was there every day). I am a much better person for seeing these kids coexist in a way my generation never had a chance to. It has given me hope that our future will not be about color, but about peace, opportunity and good health for everyone."

— Barbara Freedman
Past President
Ligon Middle School PTA

National PTA: *Respect for Differences Position Statement*

National PTA's belief in the democratic ideal was first articulated by our founders who committed the organization to "...respect all childhood, parenthood and homelife, irrespective of color, creed, or condition." That vision has inspired generations of PTA leaders to strive for equality of achievement for all children. Today National PTA remains fully committed to democracy, fairness, and a respect for the individual worth of all people.

Every child must learn to appreciate his or her own uniqueness while learning to respect and value individuals and groups in a diverse society. National PTA believes that the first and most important steps to combat hatred and violence must be made by families and supported by schools who teach tolerance, respect, and sensitivity towards others. National PTA believes that the lessons of respect are best learned when parents, teachers, and other adults model a commitment to tolerance and fairness.

All children have the right to a quality education that allows each child to reach his or her full potential. Schools must eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in materials and activities. They must establish an environment in which staff and students are expected to demonstrate cooperation, acceptance, and respect for differences. They must provide every student the support needed to succeed, and be free from bullying, discrimination, or other forms of harassment.

National PTA opposes discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, language, religion, age, physical and academic ability, and sexual orientation. We oppose discrimination in housing, education, health care, employment, and the justice system. We will work to ensure that tolerance and respect for differences are provided to all children and all families in schools, communities, and public policies.

—Adopted by 2001 National PTA Board of Directors
(Included in the *National PTA Resolutions, Position Statements, and Legislative Directives*, pg. III. 3C)

2003 Wade Edwards Short Fiction Award

Entries sought! The award is given annually to three NC high school juniors who submit the most outstanding original short fiction. The competition rewards excellence in creative writing and encourages contemplation of virtues associated with Wade Edwards: humility, strength of convictions, loyalty, honor, charity, determination, the value of family, and the obligations of friendship and community.

The deadline for submissions is March 1, 2003. Essays should contain 500-10,000 words. Entries can be submitted to Robin French at 502 Florham Drive, High Point, NC 27262.

For more information, contact Mr. French at home (336-886-8025, robinfrench@northstate.net) or at Westchester Academy (336-869-2128); or Steven Killion at (919)856-9355 or skillion@wade.org. You may also find information at the Wade Edwards Learning Lab web site at www.wade.org/shortfic.htm.

FITNESS COUNTS!

The Wake County Council on Fitness & Health, in conjunction with community businesses, is sponsoring **Fitness Counts 1,2,3**, during the month of **April** for all elementary school children.



Each child will get a log sheet to record their daily points for doing the following: 1 pt for drinking 1% milk; 2 pts for watching/playing less than 2 hours video/computer/tv; and 3 pts for 30 minutes of physical activity per day. There are 4 bonus points each day if a child does all three. **Parents** must sign off as their child earns points. There are levels of awards and children will receive awards for their achievement and participation in this program.



We hope that **PTA Presidents** will endorse this program and support the Council by encouraging participation in your school for **Fitness 1,2,3** as we all promote lifestyles for healthier children.

We are excited about the opportunity to partner with you in fulfilling our mission as we strive to promote fitness and health for the children and residents of Wake County!



WELL News

The Wade Edwards Learning Lab (WELL), is an after-school technology and learning center across from Broughton High School. Memberships are offered at no charge to students, teachers, and parents.

FRIDAY FORUMS

Forums take place from 3:30-4:30 on Friday afternoons and are followed by pizza and other refreshments.

February 7: Neesha Mirchandani, Vice President, Afghan Women's Mission, "The Children of Afghanistan, the Women of RAWA"

February 14: Valeska Wittek, Native of Germany, "Adjusting to a New Culture and Home"

February 21, Ron Fodor, NCSU Geologist, "Rock Show"

February 28: Kenneth Cory and friends, Remember Vietnam, Inc.

March 7: Angela Grimes, GlaxoSmithKline, Cellular Genomics-Quantitative Expression and Genomic Histology, "Life as a Scientist"

March 28: Dr. Rachel Wooten, Jungian Analyst, "Analysis of a Fairytale"

TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOPS

Workshops are FREE to WCPSS faculty, staff and students; other community members are asked to volunteer 1 hour at the WELL for every 2 hours of technology training. All workshops take place **7:00-9:00 PM**. To register by phone, dial 856-9355 and select Option 4. To register by e-mail, send a message to Workshops@Wade.org.

February 6: Basic Internet

February 13: Intermediate Internet

February 20: Using the Internet in the Classroom

February 27: Basic PowerPoint

March 6: Intermediate PowerPoint

March 27: Using PowerPoint in the Classroom

The Council Needs You!

If you are reading this newsletter, you are committed to supporting your child's school through your local PTA unit. Have you considered a commitment to the entire Wake County Public School System? By volunteering with the Wake County PTA Council you can help ALL the children in the county and use the advocacy skills developed in your local unit for the good of the entire school system.

The Council's Nominating Committee is looking for volunteers to fill the slate of officers for the 2003-2004 school year. Please consider sharing your time and talents with the Wake County PTA Council. If you are interested in nominating yourself or others for a Council position, please email one or all of the Nominating Committee members listed below:

Julia Lee (jlee1@mindspring.com)
 Lisa Yelmini (soccermomlisa@nc.rr.com)
 Cindy Smith (Cindysmithpta@aol.com)
 Lynn Womble (lynnwomble@mindspring.com)
 Richard Bostic (richardb@ncleg.net)

Wake County PTA Council Presents
Greater Understanding '03

Tuesday, February 13, 2003

6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Ligon GT Magnet Middle School

706 East Lenoir Street, Raleigh

Got a Question?

Ask our school system's commander-in-chief and his troops.

Find out information you've wanted but didn't know how to get.

This parent education conference is where parents get to ask questions and get answers directly from Superintendent Bill McNeal and other School Administrators.



Magnet Applications

The acceptance period for applications to any of the Wake County Magnet programs is February 8- 19. Applications will be available at all schools and through the WCPSS website beginning in February. Contact the Magnet Resource Center for a detailed schedule of Open House sessions at magnet schools or visit the magnet program website at www.wcpss.net/Instructional/Magnet/.

Since 1982, magnet schools have fostered greater achievement, crafted hotbeds of creativity and cultural diversity and produced a rich array of educational choices for all students. Magnets open doors of opportunity and spark the imagination of students, preparing them to become responsible citizens in a global society. Our network of magnet schools offer parents a choice of instructional programs such as Creative Arts and Sciences, Gifted and Talented, International Students and Global Communication, International Baccalaureate, Language Exploration, Classical Studies, Community Model, Leadership, Montessori, Museums, University Connections, Accelerated Studies and Year-Round.

Wake Education Partnership News

Annual Fund Kicks Off With a Bang!

It was a hoppin' good time at the 2003 Annual Fund for Education kick-off at the Sheraton Capital Center on January 16th. Thanks to all who came in support of the Partnership, its mission and this year's theme: *Dream. Lead. Achieve. Celebrating the Past—Building the Future.* Leading the Annual Fund campaign are Barry Eveland, chair; Virginia Parker, vice chair for fund development; Bob Hatley, corporate gifts chair; Walt Sherlin, school-community challenge chair; and Bob and Hannah Poteat, reception co-chairs.

PTA liaisons have received training for the parent gifts portion of the 2003 Annual Fund and parent support is critical to its success. Although the majority of the Partnership's funding comes from the business community, parent support is key because it demonstrates endorsement of the Partnership's mission and sends a powerful message encouraging corporate leaders to support the Partnership! PTAs participating in the parent campaign have an opportunity to win a \$500 grant for their school.

The Partnership's goal this year is to raise \$1 million. You can participate in the 2003 Annual Fund in several ways including joining us for in-community coffee socials (details below). For more information about the 2003 Annual Fund, contact Amanda Haynes at 821-7609, or ahaynes@WakeEdPartnership.org.

Have a Heart for Education Coffee Social

Parents in the western region of Wake County are invited to learn more about Wake Education Partnership and participate in the *Voices and Choices* community feedback project at the Have a Heart for Education Coffee Social.



WHEN: Feb. 11 (Tuesday) 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

WHERE: Cary Chamber of Commerce, 307 North Academy Street, Cary, NC

WHO: Parents with children in Wake County Public Schools

COST: FREE; however, a \$10.00 donation for the Wake Education Partnership Annual Fund is appreciated.

Please RSVP to Liza Weidle, 2003 Parent Campaign Chair at familyfilter@nc.rr.com to reserve a spot.

There will be a drawing for gift certificates including two tickets to Charlie Goodnight's Comedy Club!

There will also be a coffee social in the North Raleigh area on February 20. For more information contact Denise Kirkland at kirkland98@prodigy.net.

If you want to show your "heart for education" by donating to Wake Education Partnership during the Annual Fund but can't make this coffee social, you can find online pledge cards available at http://www.wakeedpartnership.org/Giving/2003_pledgeform.html.

Making Choices: Diversity

As our community considers the student assignment plan released last week, "Making Choices" takes a look at the academic impact of Wake County's choices regarding diversity and student assignment. Community, PTA and Wake County Public School System representatives discuss the issue in February in the third in a series of television programs asking tough questions about this challenging topic.

"Making Choices," a series of three programs sponsored by Wake Education Partnership, Wake County PTA Council, Time Warner Cable and News 14 Carolina, features local leaders and community members in discussion about the economic, academic and political issues of balancing student enrollment in Wake's public schools. The new episode will appear throughout February on Triangle TV, Time Warner Cable Channel 24, on Mondays at noon and 8 p.m., Thursdays at 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.

Voices & Choices

Voices & Choices, a community feedback project, gives Wake County residents the opportunity to voice their opinions about the Wake County Public School System. The goal of the project is to get feedback from many different groups representative of Wake County. Parents can schedule Voices & Choices sessions at PTA meetings, civic organizations, church functions and neighborhood functions.

At a feedback session, participants watch a short video featuring community leaders, complete a three-question survey and participate in a discussion afterwards. Feedback sessions last about 45 minutes, but this timeframe can be tailored to the needs of your group. Data collection will end in early March, so call soon to schedule a session! For more information about Voices & Choices, or to schedule a feedback session, contact Cyndi Soter O'Neil at 821-7609, extension 31, or coneil@WakeEdPartnership.org.

Nominating Committees

The purpose of the Nominating Committee is to nominate a slate of officers for the coming year. How well it does its job will determine the future effectiveness of your PTA.

Creating the Committee

- ★ Your bylaws will state how and when the committee should be elected, the number of members, and when it reports.
- ★ The committee should be an uneven number of no less than 3 members.
- ★ Any member who has a paid, current PTA membership may serve on the committee (except the current president).
- ★ Committee members should be informed, active members who are concerned about the future of the PTA.
- ★ Committee members can be chosen as a nominee, but should excuse him/herself from discussion and voting for that particular office (because of the possibility of this happening, it is best to elect one or two alternates to your Nominating Committee).
- ★ The best way for a principal to be involved in this process, if at all, is in an advisory capacity.
- ★ The committee should be given a copy of the bylaws and membership list.

Committee Duties

- ★ The committee elects its own chairperson.
- ★ A sufficient number of meetings must be held to select the best qualified nominees possible for each office to be filled (not just friends of the current officers or people suggested by the principal).
- ★ Officers should be chosen for their abilities, their knowledge of the PTA, and their willingness to serve.
- ★ Committee meetings are closed except to committee members, and discussions are confidential.
- ★ The chairperson usually contacts nominees to tell them the duties of the office and get their consent to serve if elected. (See Bylaws Article VIII: Duties of Officers.)
- ★ Committee voting is by ballot.
- ★ All members who concur sign the report to submit to the Board.
- ★ If a candidate withdraws before the election, the committee must seek another candidate.
- ★ The committee is discharged when its report is

The Nomination Procedure

- ★ The secretary reads the bylaws section pertaining to election.
- ★ The Nominating Committee chair reads its report.
- ★ The president restates the slate of nominees and calls for nominations from the floor by asking, "Are there further nominations for any of these offices?" Pause. "Hearing none, the chair declares the nominations closed."
- ★ A motion and a majority vote, provided no votes have yet been cast may reopen nominations. *Nominations do not require a second, but do require the consent of the nominee.*

The Election Procedure

- ★ The president restates the list of nominees.
- ★ If there is more than one nominee for an office, or if bylaws require it, the vote must be by ballot.
 - ★ Ballots are given to members only.
 - ★ Tellers, appointed by the president, distribute, collect and count the ballots and prepare a report listing number of votes cast, number of votes necessary for election and number of votes received by each candidate.
 - ★ Each teller signs the report, which is read by the chairperson of the tellers, and given to the president.
 - ★ The president restates the election report and declares those elected.
- ★ When there is but one candidate for an office, the election may be by voice vote, unless

Convention Comes to Town!

Wake County PTA Council will be host for the North Carolina PTA State Convention this year. The convention, May 2nd and 3rd at the North Raleigh Hilton, is a great opportunity to PTAs from across the state to meet, learn, share, and come together in a community of child advocacy.

Mark your calendars now and begin to spread the word at your school! There will be workshops, entertainment by student performers, raffles, and generally a wonderful time for all attendees. Don't forget to register to attend and encourage your board to do the same.

We need for each and every unit to commit to at least one of these activities in support of the convention:

1. **VOLUNTEERS** - 1-2 volunteers from each unit for 2-3 hour shifts.
2. **GIFT BASKET DONATIONS** - We need 30 gift baskets for raffle prizes and encourage each unit to donate one. The gift basket can have any theme and any size. Be creative!!
3. **CENTERPIECE DECORATIONS** - Centerpieces made by children will be used to decorate the dining room and raffled to someone sitting at the table at the conclusion of the meal.
4. **MONETARY DONATION** - If you cannot contribute any of the above, please consider making a monetary donation from your PTA budget.

Respond for your PTA now! Complete the form below and send it via WCPSS courier to "PTA Council Office" or e-mail your information to cindysmithpta@aol.com

PTA UNIT _____

PTA President _____

President's Phone _____

President's E-mail _____

Our school's PTA will provide the following:

_____ VOLUNTEERS

___ Thursday, May 1, afternoon ___ Thursday, May 1, evening

___ Friday, May 2, morning ___ Friday, May 2, afternoon

___ Friday, May 2, evening ___ Saturday, May 3, morning

___ Saturday, May 3, afternoon ___ Saturday, May 3, evening

_____ GIFT BASKET DONATION

_____ CENTERPIECE DECORATION

_____ MONETARY DONATION \$_____

THANKS!