

*Partnership for Community Learning Centers*  
**Design Team Meeting**  
**Summary Notes for March 20, 2006**  
*Athens Area Chamber of Commerce*

**Present:**

JoBeth Allen, Jose Boza, Don Carver, Lori Ragsdale, Suzanne Kennedy, Monica Knight, Amy McElveen, Jenny Penney Oliver, Bridget Robbins, Phyllis Stewart, Janie Voss, Tim Johnson, Tad McMillan, EJ Carter, Adam Kurtz, Pam Paisley, and Laura Workman.  
Dr. James Lloyd - guest

**Executive Summary:**

- A colleague / longtime educator from LA who has relocated to Atlanta visited us to learn more about the Partnership.
- JoBeth Allen was contacted by Jerry Lynn Williams. Former Chase Street Elementary principal who is now working as a superintendent in a school district outside of Flint, Michigan. She hopes to connect with JoBeth & Jose at AERA about beginning a partnership with the university of Michigan–Flint.
- Tim Johnson talked with us about *Partnering for a Prosperous Athens*. He gave some startling facts about the dismal situation in Clarke County. For example Clarke County is the fifth poorest county in the United States with a population of over 100,000. He encouraged everyone to attend a meeting on March 27 from 7-9pm at Cedar Shoals High School to learn how we can all take action against persistent poverty.
- Jose Boza led us in a “Back to the Future” exercise – a conversation about the past, present, and future of the Partnership.
- Monica Knight expressed the importance of members of the design team getting involved with the district wide continuous improvement team.

Our agenda for the meeting:

*Partnership for Community Learning Centers*  
**DESIGN TEAM AGENDA**  
**March 20, 2006**

On our agenda today:

- Welcome and Updates
- Introduction of guest - Dr. James Lloyd
- Tim Johnson –Partners for a Prosperous Athens
- Re-visioning the Partnership– Past, Present, Future

### **Tim Johnson – Partnering for a Prosperous Athens**

- Tim Johnson talked with us about Partnering for a Prosperous Athens. He gave some startling facts about the dismal situation in Clarke County. For example:
  - Clarke County is the fifth poorest county in the United States with a population of over 100,000.
  - 27.9% living under poverty rate
  - Clarke County has been persistently poor over several decades.
  - UGA, CCSD, Clarke County Government, Families, Community, & Athens Area Chamber of Commerce are all partnering together. Representatives from each group are on the steering committee which is working on the process for the community to devise its own plan.
  - 2 – day long retreat
  - He encouraged everyone to attend a meeting on March 27 from 7-9pm to take action against persistent poverty.
  - Meetings will take place every month until there is a plan.

### **Announcements, updates, things to brag about or ponder...**

- Soup Dinner @ Chase Street Elementary next Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. Adult tickets are \$5.00 and child tickets are \$3.00.

### **Back to the Future**

Jose Boza led the Design Team through an exercise for remembering and revising the Partnership. Following are the notes reflecting the rich and energetic conversation that one Design Team member suggested would be valuable to air on the local news channel! All members and partners are encouraged to review the notes and make comments, additions and suggestions. Follow up conversation on this topic will be on the agenda for the next meeting on April 24, 2006.

### ***Partnership for Community Learning Centers*** **“Back to the Future” exercise with the Design Team** **March 20, 2006**

### **FUTURE – Spring 2009**

***Project the future of the Partnership. What would a “systemic” Partnership look like in 2009?***

- Not in school buildings – students out in the community – service learning
- Business people in schools
- Public school people in the University
- New schools of study at the University that link with the Partnership
- Many different faces of the Partnership – more like the PLC- smaller

- A place where students who have been suspended from schools go to
- Greater sense of unity across the district where the Partnership affects the district as a whole versus just a few schools
- Extension of out-of-hour opportunities for students – multi-funded
- Expanded GED (Adult Ed) classes
- GED participants see how education is the key to getting out of poverty
- Interdisciplinary/thematic units are used
- More interactive, collaborative, hands-on classrooms
- Children learning is connected and seen as a service to the community
- Design Team meetings are on Tuesday night and seen on cable like the County Commissioner’s meeting are seen
- Mayor’s Office, Transportation, Fire Department, Police Department are connected to Partnership
- Dental Clinics, nurses, mental health, and physical services on site or easy access if not on site
- Transportation for all families
- All decision-making processes take into account what it means to be Partners and to share responsibility for the decisions and the outcomes
- More job blending
- Collaborative action research
- Real support from all employers so families can access and be engaged in the education process
- No “out flight” to other counties because of a school’s performance
- “In flight” is happening
- Everyone is committed – We are communicating and collaborating (two-way) with our families in order to help students
- Community views our schools as community hubs
- Mutual respect between teachers and business people
- Everyone (CCSD, UGA, ACC) shares (commitment) the responsibility for educating students including community and parents
- We are upset because we have a 95% graduation rate and 100% completion rate
- We recognize students who graduate regardless of the time it takes them
- We have developed the political will and strategies to serve all students and families in the district
- Intersession and a balanced extended calendar exist to serve all students
- More celebration of students’, schools’, community’s, accomplishments
- Alternatives to school suspension are being used
- There is a community-wide culture on the importance of education and hope
- Preventative behavior strategies are being used – Marshall Rosenberg, NVC, Non-violent communication (e.g. behavior specialist)
- Promoting healthy development of students through the support of developmental assets
- Foreign Language is taught at the Elementary schools
- PE is taught daily in the Elementary schools

## **PAST**

***Look “back” from your future and describe how the Partnership looked in 2001.***

- Calendar – lots of questions
- Ambiguity
- Challenging & exciting
- Two Schools
- Funds were available to/for
  - Travel
  - Extended calendar
  - Learn together at the retreat
  - Have UGA faculty time dedicated to Partnership
- Struggle with district understanding that Chase & Gaines were on a different calendar – still struggling
- Lots of process questions
- Great leadership at Nuts & Bolts
- Recognized that we were going to do better
- Clear, simple, and difficult role to close the achievement gap
- For schools to do better. The community had to do better – Community Learning Center
- Restructuring of faculty, time, and commitment resources
- A real feeling of commitment from Superintendent, Dean, and BOE
- Struggles with what family literacy would look like
- Commitment to comprehensive school reform
- Apprehension on part of the school
- A time of compromise between people - a desire for radical change and incremental progress

### ***PRESENT***

***What are we doing or what have we done to move from the past to the future we envision for the Partnership?***

- Working together to accomplish where we are now
- Persistence in our beliefs
- Constantly assessing what we have done & where we are
- Consistent and stable Design Team
- Commitment from Nuts and Bolts to go through the Nitty Gritty
- Constant collaboration and compromising
- Conversations about expansion and district level partnerships
- Re-commitment of the two existing partnerships
- Pride of accomplishments with regard to achievement, family engagement, etc...
- Failure of accomplishments – lots has not been sustained – e.g. extended calendar (15 days), balanced calendar, Intersession
- Opportunity to visit family resource centers and attend conference - we could develop our own
- Found the funds and resources to realize the new projects (e.g. counseling clinics)

- Bringing new people to Design Team – *stable but not stagnant*
- Extraordinary work done by all – UGA folks (COE, Recreation & Leisure, Art Education), ACC Leisure Services, the teachers, etc.
- Resources were increased to sustain a systematic approach
- More business people
- Investment of time – HUGE!

**Next meeting April 24, 2006 at 3pm Chamber of Commerce**

*Meeting adjourned at 4:30*