

# PARTNERS

CCSD - UGA - ACC

Partnership for Community  
Learning Centers

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Collaborating for the Success of all Students

The Partnership for Community Learning Centers is a collaborative effort of the Clarke County School District, the University of Georgia, and the Athens Clarke-County Community working together to meet the intellectual, social and cultural needs of all students.

## The Wheels on the Bus Go Round and Round

On Wednesday, October 23, 2002 the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education (GPEE) stopped it's 10th annual Bus Tour at Chase Street Elementary School. The buses visited 13 schools across the state that are working to educate all students at high levels. The mission of the GPEE is to improve the academic achievement of Georgia students

through research, advocacy and communication. Founded in 1990 by the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and The Georgia Economic Developers Association the GPEE is a non-profit, non-partisan organization working on education reform.

it visited Cedar Shoals High School reviewing the partnership between the UGA College of Education and local CCSD schools around the development of teacher mentoring programs.

For this year's 94 participants, Chase Street Elementary was the first stop on the second day of the tour. Chase was selected from among the 180 school districts around the state. The school was a prime candidate because of the Partnership for Community Learning Centers between CCSD, UGA and Athens-Clarke County. The attendees were treated to breakfast in the cafeteria and serenaded by the fifth grade chorus. Louis Castenell, dean of the UGA College of Education and José Boza, Executive Director of CCSD instructional services addressed the audience about the Partnership's role in improving education in Clarke County. According to Boza, "(Improving Education) cannot be top-down. It has to be bottom-up; it has to be grass roots. It cannot be mandated." The visitors experienced Chase Street classrooms up close and personal with parents, students and representatives of the Partnership as their tour guides. ■

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*Chase, was one of only 13 schools visited on the bus tour.*

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The bus tour has not stopped in Clarke County since 1997 when

## INTERSESSION Collaborating to Build New Horizons

### **INTERSESSION** {Inter-SESSION}

Is the term used to describe the vacation breaks that occur within the school year on a year-round calendar

During October 2002, the Partnership held its very first Intersession. The typical day of intersession began with breakfast at 7:30am and ended in homeroom at 2:00pm with a plethora of activities to fill the day in between. Parents were given the opportunity to send their children to after-school programs as well. All students at both Gaines and Chase Street Elementary schools had the opportunity to register for intersession and approximately 136 elementary students were enrolled. The intersession was held at Gaines Elementary and provided school

teachers with a well-deserved break. The primary goal was to enhance academic achievement through low cost enrichment experiences for students who might not otherwise have constructive activities during the vacation break. UGA students, para-professionals, substitute teachers and Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services staff staffed the program.

The University students worked directly with elementary students, giving them the opportunity to visit campus and to begin building an understanding of college. However, working with UGA students was just one of the activities. They also enjoyed media, music, and leisure studies sessions. Many UGA Colleges, Schools and Departments contributed to the success of intersession by working with elementary students, both in their on-campus locations and at Gaines Elementary. They included the College of Education's departments of Recreation and

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It's a Bird, It's a Plane..No, It's the Partnership!  
Participants are pointed in the right direction during their visit at Chase Street Elementary



## All in The Family...a closer look at a Family Resource Center

*This article was written by Mary Kelly, the Coordinator for the Family Resource Center at Chase Street Elementary School.*

First and foremost a Family Resource Center is a place at the school where families feel welcome and where they can find information and support to help them care for their



Mary Kelly working hard to service the total needs of students.

children. Our Family Resource Center hopes to provide a welcoming place for parents to meet, relax, and have a cup of coffee. Parents are also given access to information and referrals to community services, workshop and training sessions. The Center also has a lending library with parenting books, tapes, and videos as well as informal focus

and parental support groups. Conceptually, a Family Resource Center is a model for family support services designed to promote school-aged children's learning, health and social-emotional development, and to support the welfare of their families. Components of the Center include a year-round school, before and after school enrichment/recreation programming, health and social services, and parent support services.

What makes the difference is that here the focus is very much on building relationships with families. As Chase, we believe it is essential for the school, families and the community to work together to ensure that all children have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Children can not be expected to learn if they do not have enough to eat, have clothes that are dirty or that they are teased about. We always need to take care of the most basic needs first.

Chase Street Family Resource Center has completed some and is planning for many more initiatives. Recently, we started a series of Focus Groups to assess what services and programs families would like to see provided through the Center. Parents voiced concerns requesting special parking places for Parents/

Volunteers. One Guardian suggested honoring the extended family arrangements in which many of our children are living. For example instead of saying to the children "Tell your parents..." say "Tell your family". Yet, another suggested having Student Information Forms including information about significant others in the student's life. According to the focus group, the Center should consider having a "Welcome Place" in the center of schools where you can ask questions, and where programs are geared specifically toward single parents and cultural diversity are offered.

Space is an issue at Chase Street. Therefore, we plan to convert the old Girl Scout Hut into a physical home for the Family Resource Center. A premier Architectural Firm, Jennifer Bloomer Robert Segrest Architecture, has agreed to draw up plans for the renovation. A local plumbing company, a local electrician, many of the teachers, parents and other families associated with Chase have offered their services as well.

The Center provided Thanksgiving assistance to 11 families in cooperation with the Northeast Georgia Foodbank. Christmas assistance was provided to 66 children. This was provided through the generosity of 6 families who sponsored another family, through Toys for Tots, and The Toy Giveaway, with Christ Life Community Church.

We are excited about our Staff Development Day, scheduled for January 2003. All teachers from Gaines, Chase, and 5 teachers from each of the other CCSD Elementary Schools will enjoy a Ruby Payne Workshop focusing on "Fundamentals for Understanding Poverty".

*Mary Kelly is the part-time coordinator of the Family Resource Center. She is available every Monday and Tuesday at Chase Street Elementary School. For more information about Family Resource Center programs or to share your ideas, please contact Mary by phone: (706) 543-1081 or email at [kellym@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:kellym@clarke.k12.ga.us).* ■

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*"We always need to take care of the basic needs first."*

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## PERSPECTIVES

*A teacher from both Chase and Gaines were interviewed to talk about their views of the Partnership and its role in the classroom.*

Tina Favors teaches at Chase Street Elementary. "My dad said I was bossy from the day I was born," because I had a natural penchant for delegating and organizing. Tina started out pursuing a pre-law major at the University of Georgia (UGA). She eventually made a natural progression to teaching. Favors began her experience with the Partnership by serving on the Design Team, a team composed of a diverse group of CCSD and UGA faculty and community leaders who have an on-going commitment to creating, developing, and maintaining the vision and guiding principles of the Partnership. "I got on the Design Team because I wanted to know what was going on!" Now with the Partnership up and running Favors says, "I question things more". As a teacher, she did not have the time to research and now she takes advantage of the resource bank of over 75 UGA faculty who volunteer to work in the partnership schools. In one particular instance she and her students discovered a plant they could not identify. She referred to the resource bank and found a faculty member that explained the plant was actually a fungus. The Partnership has provided benefits in other ways by exposing students to new experiences. The Intersession in particular was helpful in showing children the University of Georgia campus.

Favors said "many had never set foot on campus." Intersession also provided an extended planning period where she could come back refreshed and ready to finish out the year. And much to her surprise "No one said I didn't get time off from school!"

Annette Santana is a teacher at Gaines Elementary School and she is also a doctoral candidate at UGA studying Language Education. Since the age of eight, Annette has believed teaching was "something I always wanted to do". Her intention was to work with children. She is currently, a member of the Self-Governance Team, a team helping to organize the future structure of the Partnership. She became aware of the Partnership through a UGA faculty member. Her first encounter with Gaines and the Partnership was this past summer during a

Partnership Faculty Retreat. She was told that the Partnership would allow her to use different teaching methods. She credits the Partnership for providing progressive research to broaden her teaching methods in Spelling



Tina Favors, taking time out to talk with her students during lunch time!

and homework. Santana is currently incorporating her doctoral work into the classroom by having her students read books with social issues, like "Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry!" Currently, the only thing missing is parent involvement but she is anticipating the Partnership will turn that trend around. ■

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*"I Got on the Design Team because I wanted to know what was going on"*

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A picture says a thousand words Annette Santana doing what she loves best... Teaching!

**(Intersession continued)**

Leisure Services, Physical Education and Sport Studies, Franklin College of Arts and Sciences Dance Department, Department of Drama and Theatre, the Lamar Dodd School of Art, and the Ramsey Center for Student Physical Activity.

The Intersession Committee made up of representatives from the UGA College of Education, the CCSD, and the ACC Department of Leisure Services began its work in March. The Committee went beyond developing Intersession as an academic camp for students to developing an academic camp where students learned in NEW WAYS!

While on campus, the elementary students toured the Georgia Museum of Art. They also worked with a local watercolor artist to create their own "masterpieces". Students were able to experience the behind the scenes work of the stage at the Department of Drama

and Theatre. They learned moves to rival Alvin Alley from university Dance students teaching modern movement. Jackie Chan was not in attendance, but students still had a hands-on experience with a willing karate instructor. The Ropes Course at Lake Herrick on the UGA campus provided students with more opportunities for teambuilding. At the Lamar Dodd School of Art elementary students worked directly with professors and UGA students in creating hands-on art projects. Students learned about symbols by making their own in clay and chalk writings

This process was continued at Gaines Elementary where the students were encouraged to use symbols to document their experience at Intersession. In order for intersession to be successful the Partnership shared responsibilities for planning, implementation and resources. The Partnership will plan its next set of Intersession events for late March and early April of this year.



"Marco"  
"Polo"  
Students take a picture break from learning water areobics during Intersession

**DID YOU KNOW?**

There is more time to learn and less time to forget under the Partnership calendar. The Partnership Schools, Chase Street and Gaines Elementary School operate on an extended 195 day calendar, giving teachers 10 professional development days and 3 weeks additional learning time for students!



Got Questions?  
Want To Get Involved?  
CONTACT US AT  
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**HOW CAN YOU BECOME INVOLVED?**

Join us! For this partnership to be successful, we need the full participation of the Athens-Clarke County Community. You can become involved by serving on an Action Team, participating in focus group discussions, or sharing ideas with someone on the Design Team.

The Partnership provides opportunity for you to share in the responsibility for improving educational experiences, options, and outcomes for all students. Today, everyone has a full schedule, but if working to improve the effectiveness of education in Athens-Clarke County is important to you, we invite you to make time in your schedule for working with other committed community members.

The Partnership for Community Learning Centers is a collaborative effort of the Clarke County School District (CCSD), The University of Georgia (UGA), and the Athens Clarke-County Community (ACC) working together to meet the intellectual, social and cultural needs of all students. The Partnership seeks to establish schools as learning centers where leadership, resources and accountability are shared among all the partners, parents and, most importantly, students. To Find out more about the Partnership for Community Learning Centers please visit our website [www.clarke.12ga.us/ccsduga](http://www.clarke.12ga.us/ccsduga)