

Employee climate survey determines that most GCS employees are happy

BY LINDSEY STADLER
Reporter

Guilford County Schools has designed a Strategic Plan for 2012 that includes several objectives and strategies the district plans on meeting in order to create a more welcoming environment for all of its employees: students, teachers, parents, volunteers, business partners, and other employees within the schools. To ensure everyone feels valued in his workplace, all GCS employees were encouraged to participate in the first district-wide employee climate survey back in November. The survey was anonymous and will be conducted annually.

Created so the district's diverse group of employees would provide their individual responses, the survey included data based upon a set of carefully constructed questions. A committee of GCS employees, along with K-12 insight survey researchers, wrote the 25 questions, which included 22 close-ended questions, two open-ended questions, and one multiple-part demographic question.

Through email, 10,351 full and part-time GCS employees were to complete the questionnaire between November 1-December 2. Printed copies of

the survey were also available at each central office location for employees without access to a computer at work. A total of only 3,328 out of the 10,351 given the survey completed it, for a 31% participation rate.

The majority of the racial demographics of the survey participants came from Caucasians at 66.32%, followed by African Americans at 22.72%, and individuals who did not indicate a race at 5.89%; other racial groups participating in this survey included Asians, Hispanics or Latinos, American Indians, or Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians, or other Pacific Islanders, and multi-racial. Gender demographics were 80.11% female and 16.02% male, and 3.88% did not indicate a gender. Job roles of survey participants were mostly elementary-licensed and high school-licensed employees.

When asked to share what they believed needs to be improved in the GCS system in 25 words, most answers generally included the following: increased pay, better professional development opportunities, better school administration, and more technology for instructional use. While those were the general re-

sponses, they differed within the individual employee groups. Central Office administrators mostly wanted more staff development opportunities, an increase in communication between departments, increased pay, and improved pay between classified and licensed positions. Central Office Employees wanted increased pay/pay raises, increased professional development, and promotion opportunities for classified employees.

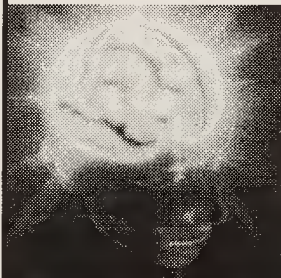
Many of the Central Office employees also expressed dis-

satisfaction with senior leadership because of too many senior level positions, problems caused by site-based management, and the increased need for accountability. This department also desired increased communication and collaboration between departments as well as between parents and schools, and greater input from the staff in the decision-making process.

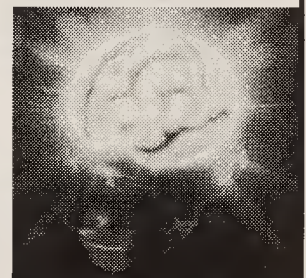
According to the survey results, elementary-based, licensed employees have issues with the excessive paperwork and mandatory meet-

ings because they take energy away from their teaching. Another major issue is the pay being too low for the time and effort that good teaching requires, as well as the lack of time provided for lesson preparations. Middle school-based, licensed employees also have concerns with the lack of students' accountability for their disrespectful/disruptive behavior. The high school-based, licensed employees are mostly disenchanted with the size of their classes and the need for more teachers.

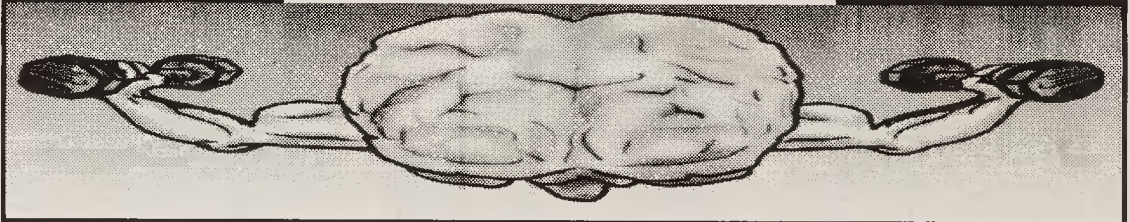
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