

Parents In Action Will Ask School System To Implement New Approach

BY DORI COSGROVE GURGANUS
Brunswick County Schools may be in for some changes in the way classes are conducted, if a new parents' action group succeeds in selling its goals to local educators.

Parents In Action, formed to promote new teaching and scheduling methods, gathered at South Brunswick High School in its second meeting to discuss ways to foster implementation of a "comprehensive concept management system" at local high schools and middle schools.

The group, headed by Dorothy Essey of Yaupon Beach, plans to ask the Brunswick County Board of Education to consider adopting the new program, already implemented in over 140 statewide schools, at the board's next meeting.

The program involves creating flexible schedules for students as well as teachers. Students would choose their own classes, and receive tutorial help after school if needed.

Teachers would be given not one, but two planning sessions and more time to brainstorm with other instructors.

Stricter rules regarding discipline would be enforced, giving teachers

more control over the learning process, speakers said Monday.

PIA members reported Monday night to a group of more than 100 parents, teachers, school board members, administrators and students on visits last week to schools that use the program.

"We saw evidence that it's effective," said Mrs. Essey.

Over the past several weeks, Ms. Essey, a local businesswoman, parent and former Brunswick County school teacher, took small groups of parents and teachers on tours of demonstration schools, South Lenoir, Scotland and Lancy high schools.

"It's beautiful to see what's happening there," she said Monday night, urging parents to join her in support of the plan.

Teachers have regained control of their classrooms and students learn at levels geared to their own abilities.

And, she said the team was told by an administrator at South Lenoir High School that discipline problems have decreased by 80 percent.

"They know the rules and they know they'll receive punishment for it," Ms. Essey said.

Honor students often graduate with several hours of college credit



STAFF PHOTO BY DORI C. GURGANUS
CHAIRPERSON DOROTHY ESSEY of Parents In Action explains the group's goals to a crowd of parents, teachers, administrators and students Monday night.

already out of the way, she said.

Ms. Essey said West Brunswick High School appears to be the only local school already implementing some of the ideas encompassed by the comprehensive concept management system. West Brunswick has

established an outcome-based education project for ninth grades, with intentions to expand it over the next several years to include all grades.

Mike Occhipinti, special projects coordinator with the state Department of Public Instruction, spoke to the crowd about the need for communities to support such a project in the schools.

The comprehensive concept has been developed and implemented in North Carolina by Occhipinti over the past 10 years. However, he said Monday that none of the participating schools has taken the program to its fullest potential.

"Students must be treated with respect, with dignity, and with love," he said, "and none of our schools are there yet. We have such a long way to go."

Occhipinti outlined the basic elements needed to start the program:

- A student service management team, or a group of personal advisers, hired and trained to work one-on-one with students.
- Case classes scheduled to provide students time to meet with personal advisers. Occhipinti referred to this as "nurturing time," available to give students a consistent message

to build self-esteem.

■ Learning centers established after school to help students perform better in difficult classes, offering tutors, make-up work and intense remedial help.

"We won't allow a young person to fail," Occhipinti said, "and students who are punished for discipline problems don't mind those policies because they know they'll get a helping hand."

Brunswick County Schools Superintendent P.R. Hankins endorsed the plan, stating that "effective schools are our quest."

"Change is inevitable," Hankins added, "and we are the change agents."

Ms. Essey urged parents and teachers to attend the next meeting of the Brunswick County Board of Education Monday, March 2, at 6:30 p.m. at South Brunswick Middle School in Boiling Spring Lakes.

"We all have the same goals, the very same mission," she said, "to make Brunswick County schools the best they can be."

Under the school system's current move toward site-based decision making and accountability, individual schools will determine their own

goals and approaches for reaching those goals. The school's goals and standards for performance can exceed those set by the county system, but cannot be less than the county's.

Schools Prepared For Tornado Drill

Brunswick County Schools are expected to participate in a statewide tornado drill Friday, which was postponed from Wednesday due to the chance of severe weather.

Local emergency management officials will notify the schools when the drill begins, and schools will take precautions as if there was a tornado watch or warning issued, said administrative assistant Douglas Deitz.

The National Weather Service decided Tuesday to postpone the drill due to the possibility of heavy thunderstorms and rain over parts of North Carolina on Wednesday.

"This action is necessary to avoid the possibility of confusion should a real tornado watch or warning occur," said Graham Wilson, public affairs director with the N.C. Department of Crime Control and Public Safety.

School Improvement Team Conducts Weekend Retreat

Thirty-three county educators "retreated" last weekend to the North Carolina Baptist Assembly at Fort Caswell to learn more about school improvement.

The retreat brought together contact persons and principals from each of the county's schools with the central office school improvement team and administrators to share what they've learned to date about school improvement, said Gloria Yount, public information and staff development coordinator.

"They in turn will go back to their schools and will start assessing where their school is," said Ms. Yount. "They will start preparing

mission and vision statements and begin putting things in place to start the journey of school improvement."

Participants reviewed the county school systems' mission and goals, discussed how to function effectively as a team, heard success stories from the school system and an overview of research on effective schools, the agenda also included a session on goal-setting and planning and a closing challenge by Mose Lewis, assistant superintendent for instructional services.

Participants from the central office in addition to Lewis and Ms. Yount included P.R. Hankins, superintendent; Liz Young, math/science

supervisor; Diana Mintz, elementary supervisor; Wendy Milligan, dropout prevention specialist; and James McAdams, middle grades/social studies supervisor.

Attending from the schools were teachers Gracie McLarty and Velma McKinnon, Assistant Principal Bob Rhyne and Principal Christine Hall, Leland Middle; Principal Joe Butler, teacher Faye Nelson, Lincoln Primary; teacher Mary Griffith, Assistant Principal Terry Chestnut, Principal Bill Shoemaker, Waccamaw; Assistant Principal Latty Stanley, Southport Primary; Principal Sue Sellers, teacher Bill Hargrove, South Brunswick High; teacher

Rose Terry, Principal Bob Harris, North Brunswick High; teachers Warren Fenton and Phyllis James, West Brunswick; Counselor Sue Chapman, Principal Zephia Grissett, Union Primary; Counselor Phil Tate, Principal Les Tubb, South Brunswick Middle; Principal Dave Corley, Bolivia; teacher Pat Fenton, Principal Mark Owens, Shallotte Middle; Carolyn Williams, Supply Elementary.

Also attending were Donna Baxter, chairman, Brunswick County Board of Education, and Evelyn Johnson of the State Department of Public Instruction.

Brunswick County Set To Rename Roads

Brunswick County Commissioners will hold a public hearing Monday, March 2, at 6:15 p.m., to consider names for 32 county roads.

Proposed names have been chosen for new and existing roads both to avoid duplication and to accommodate property owners' requests.

Brunswick County Planning Department policy prohibits duplication of road names within a postal zone to avoid confusion under the county's 911 emergency communications program, which begins in April.

The public hearing will be in the commissioners' chambers in the administration building at the Brunswick County Government Center in Bolivia. The board will hold its regular meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Some streets that did not have names before will be getting names.

Those proposed are: Alice Court in the Alice Culpepper subdivision; Bertha Court at the end of Duck Pond Road, Ocean Isle; Deerfield Drive and Magnolia Court in Bricklanding Plantation; Island View Place at Ocean Isle; Lexington Place across from Somerset Landing; Lock 1 in Sea Village; Mill Pond

Drive in Sea Trails; and Rest Row off of Beach Drive, Ocean Isle.

Name changes to avoid duplication include: Canalview Street from Canal Street in J.E. Fulford subdivision; Coastal Pine Street from Pine Street in Pine Acres; Oakland Drive from Hale's Trail in the Oakland subdivision; Ocean Isle Beach Road from Ocean Isle Entrance Road (known as Four Mile Road); and Randy Drive from Ocean View Drive in Waterway Acres.

Changes proposed at the property owners' requests include: Colonist Square from Landing Blvd., Landing Blvd. from Britton Drive, and Oakbrook Drive from Colonist Square, all in Bricklanding Plantation; Crystal Court from Larry Court, Farmers Court from Benny Court, Leisure Court from Hite Court and Rainbow Court from Yearata Court, all in Leisure Acres; Eastbrook Avenue from Brooks Avenue at Seaside; Georgetown Dock from Pine Bluff in Sea Village;

Also Hewett-Burton Road from Phelps Road off of Goodman Road; Horse Branch Road from Horse Barn Road in Twin Village; Lina

Trail from Raven Drive in Shallotte; Ricefield Branch Street from Timber Lane and Timber Lane from Pickett Road in Pickett Ridge, Leland; Robinson Street from Brooks Avenue in Pine Acres; Swain Creek Trail from Carpenter Way in Supply; Virginia Road from Warren Road in Ash; and Westbrook Avenue from Brooks Avenue at Ocean Isle.

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