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Schools conduct quality survey

From news release

Perquimans County Schools will conduct a total quality measurement survey of district stakeholders: students, parents, teachers, and staff. The survey is being conducted to better understand the areas that need to be addressed by the district in the coming year with the main goal of improving district-wide educational services.

The district has commissioned the Gordon S. Black Corporation of Rochester, N.Y. to assist with the data collection and analysis. Using the firm's CSMpact for Schools program, the district will collect data using a set of standardized survey instruments.

The entire student body, teachers, and staff will be surveyed on March 23. Parents will be mailed a survey and asked to respond via mail. All responses to the survey questions are confidential and anonymous.

Each stakeholder group will provide their input regarding a number of key service areas important to district performance. Results from the survey will focus on three key pieces of information.

- Levels of satisfaction for major areas such as atmosphere, equipment and facilities, communications, administration and principal/superintendent.

- The frequency of occurrence of specific events within the district, such as availability of extra help during the school year, parent involvement, etc.

- The effect specific events have on stakeholder satisfaction, and a prioritized list of issues that should be addressed to improve satisfaction.

"This comprehensive survey will provide detailed, unambiguous, and accurate feedback about our performance," said Perquimans County Schools Superintendent Gregory Todd. "This sort of feedback, based on factual data, will give our district, its parents, and teachers, a much better idea of our constituents' opinion about the job we are doing."

The Gordon S. Black Corporation has over 15 years of experience in the design and management of customer-based satisfaction measurement systems. It has designed similar systems for major American companies such as Xerox Corporation, and KPMG Peat Marwick. The firm has been awarded the 1995 New York State Governor's Excelsior Award for Quality. The Award is an annual recognition, similar to the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, of New York State organizations that excel in quality management. The award promotes awareness of excellence, recognizes quality achievements, and publicizes successful quality strategies.

Student alleges slap by driver

Grandmother of fourth grader said bus driver left hand print on child's face

By SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Someone slapped a fourth grader on a Perquimans County Schools bus, according to her grandmother. But no one has admitted hitting her or seeing what happened that afternoon to the child's family, even though they've tried to find out.

Emily King said her granddaughter was extremely upset on the afternoon of Feb. 23, the day she allegedly got off the bus with a flaming red handprint across her face. King said her granddaughter was taken to the Chowan Hospital to document the injury.

"There is no doubt in my mind (that the driver slapped her)," King said. "This child was slapped and she was slapped by an adult."

King said the driver, Colleen Proctor, denied hitting the child. Proctor said one of the children with whom her granddaughter admits to fighting with on the bus must have slapped her. King said in conversations between family members and the children involved in the fight, the other children deny slapping her granddaughter.

There is no doubt that there was a fight on the bus that afternoon, according to King. She said her granddaughter admitted to having used profane language to Proctor and to her fellow students in addition to kicking at least one other student. King said the other riders were teasing her granddaughter about being poor and making disparaging comments about her family. The alleged victim told her grandmother that she cursed at the students and kicked at least one other child in retaliation, King said.

That is where the stories of what happened seem to part ways. The fourth grader told her grandmother and parents, Tony and Denise King, that Proctor picked her up by the

front of her shirt, slapped her and then let her go so that she fell down the bus steps. Proctor then helped her up, the child told her grandmother.

King said Proctor alleges she was helping the child up because the child fell down the steps.

When the teasing started on the day of the fight, the young girl told her grandmother she raised her hand to let Proctor know, but was ignored. Once she used profane language, however, the child alleged that the Proctor heard her and told her she was going to write her up and have her removed from the bus.

The child's parents spoke with Hertford Grammar School principal Ed Williams after the incident, King said. King said they also tried to take out warrants against Proctor through Perquimans County Magistrate Todd Tilley, but Tilley would not issue a warrant.

What the child's family wants, according to King, is a full-scale investigation.

"We're not going to stop at this until we have an investi-

gation," King said. "There's a lot of kids that this bus driver picks on and abuses. Every child on there has had problems with this woman on the bus."

King said her granddaughter and grandson were immediately assigned to another bus after the incident.

The Kings met in closed session with the Board of Education Monday night at the start of the Board's regular meeting. King said her granddaughter told the same story to the board, administrators and board attorney John Matthews she has been telling for three weeks.

"Her story has not changed. If she was lying, her story would have changed," King said. "She admitted what she did (using profanity and kicking another child) to her parents."

King said schools officials said they will review the situation and the information presented to them during the closed session and will let the Kings know what they conclude.

In the meantime, King said her son and daughter-in-law

have contacted an attorney to get information on filing a civil suit against the school system and Proctor. King said there is liability involved even if another child and not Proctor slapped the child because the child was under the care of Proctor at the time of the incident.

Schools superintendent Gregory Todd verified that the board met in closed session to discuss a personnel issue, although he said he was not at liberty to divulge specific information about the session.

He did say that a recent incident on a school bus was brought to his attention and that a careful investigation followed. No bus drivers have been relieved of their duties over the past three weeks, he added, although some have resigned.

In any case brought to his attention involving allegations that an employee acted inappropriately, Todd said a thorough investigation is performed to determine exactly what happened. From there, appropriate action is taken at the administrative or school board level per policy.



PARK GROWTH

The Town of Hertford completed another phase of its waterfront development/public access plan with the renovation of an old boathouse into a covered pavilion and rebuilding a delapidated pier at the east end of Missing Mill Park. The newly-renovated areas connect to the boardwalk that meanders through the wetlands. A cement path takes walkers from the parking lot to the waterfront areas. The geese seem to like the expansion, also. The work was completed with financial support from grant funds.

PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

DSS does away with handicapped line at distribution

By SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Past abuses of the handicapped line at the county's USDA commodities distribution site have led social services officials to do away with the service for the March 31 distribution.

According to Carlyn Chambers with the Perquimans County Department of Social Services, offering a special handicapped line at the site has become unmanageable.

Up until the March distribution, commodities recipients meeting the handicapped criteria were not required to take a number and wait their turn to be served. A growing recipient population meeting the technical definition of handicapped has led to problems at the site,

Chambers said.

There will be relief available for those physically unable to stand in line for long periods of time, as well as for those who are unable to pick up their commodities during the 9-11 a.m. time period. Provided that the commodities card or application is signed in the correct places, a representative may pick up the commodities on behalf of the handicapped individual or other recipient. The representative may be an individual who is also picking up his or her own commodities; however, no one will be allowed to pick up food for more than two households.

There will be one line at the distribution site. Everyone must get a number when they arrive and wait to be served. Those qualified to receive commodities may arrive as

early as 5 a.m. Chambers said there will be someone one site to begin giving out numbers. All recipients must complete an application and be determined eligible before receiving the food products.

Cars will not be allowed in the distribution area. Cars should be parked only in authorized areas. The Hertford Police Department will be patrolling.

The Commodities Distribution Program is available to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, handicap or political beliefs. There are income criteria that must be met in order to qualify.

Information about regulations against discrimination and how to file a complaint may be secured from the N.C.

Division of Social Services, 325 N. Salisbury St., Raleigh, NC or from the Perquimans County Department of Social Services.

Applications are available

beginning Friday at the department of social services, health department and senior center. On the day of the distribution, applications should be picked up at social services.

Weekend Weather

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
High 70s	High 60s	High 60s
Low 40s	Low 40s	Low 40s
Fair Skies	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy