



## SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK...COMPASSION IN ACTION

Cobb County School District

Winter

December 2011 -  
January 2012

# W.O.W.- Working on Winning

Acworth Intermediate & McCall Primary

**I**n an effort to increase parental involvement and create a sense of belonging within the schools for parents, Kim Evans, School Social Worker within the North Cobb Cluster has presented several WOW-Parents on Board Workshops at Acworth Intermediate and McCall Primary. WOW, Working on Winning, was designed to engage parents in the academic and social development of their children; simply providing parents with tools needed to impact student achievement. The curriculum used, Parents on Board, will be ongoing throughout the remainder of school year 2011-2012.

The curricu-



lum includes the following three sessions:

### Session I:

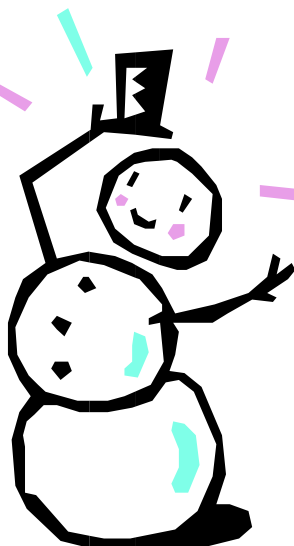
- Children's learning styles
- Providing the right study environment
- Building positive parent-teacher relationships

### Session II

- Promoting positive and cooperative behavior
  - Encouraging and motivating children
  - Supporting teachers and the school discipline plan

### Session III:

- Why parents should help with academics
- Strengthening children's language and reading skills
- Helping with writing, spelling, math and science



## Thank you Lin Harrison!!

Cobb County Board of Education has designated some of its priorities to include stakeholder involvement utilizing the community in decision making; collaboration with available resources to enhance school achievement; and to create sustainable partnerships. With the enactment of No Child Left Behind legislation, family and community partnerships with schools have become central to the success of schools and our communities.

Most of the success of this collaborative effort is due to the hard work and dedication of Pastor Lin Harrison. Lin has been Associate Pastor for Orange Hill Baptist Church for over 20 years and was a Chorus teacher at South Cobb High School for 5 years before joining Orange Hill. Lin has been instrumental in spearheading the outreach to community partnerships between our faith-based organizations and Cobb County Schools. Specifically, Lin has worked tirelessly to establish faith-based community outreach initiatives in areas 1,2,4,6 and had an initial meeting in November to start the process in area 3.

Lin coordinated the initial meeting in area 2 with the help of a hand full of area churches and key stakeholders including social worker Ana Murphy. Today, Area 2 is a strong and thriving collaborative with a model for other initiatives that are being formed. Next came the collaboration in area 1 with faith-based organizations and social workers working to unite the key leaders in this community to bring about healthy change to our schools and neighborhoods. In addition, area 4 and area 6 have begun meeting on a regular basis with the community leaders and faith-based organizations with the same vision of establishing community partnerships.

The areas of focus for each of the collaborative efforts have been formed to turn these relationships and identified needs into action, resulting in the following services: mentoring, food pantries, asset mapping, parenting, ESOL support, job resources, and other outreach initiatives to impact our schools, community, faith-based organizations, and businesses. The process is ongoing with new partnerships being formed with endless possibilities.

Thank you, Lin Harrison, for your continued passion and leadership that has touched all areas of Cobb County Schools.

*Cobb County School Social Workers*



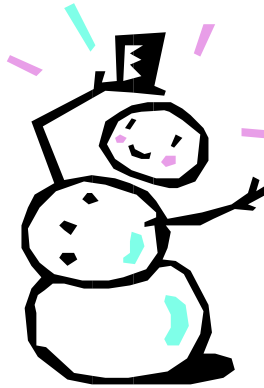
## Six Watch Points to Improve Student Achievement through Parent Involvement

National PTA encourages parents to use the following six points as guidelines to successful involvement:

- 1. Open communication-**  
The exchange of information and ideas between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.
- 2. Parent roles supported-**  
The school respects the role and responsibility, as well as the diversity and culture, of the parent.

- 3. Connection with student learning-**  
Parents are partners in the learning process and are a valuable support system for their child and the school.

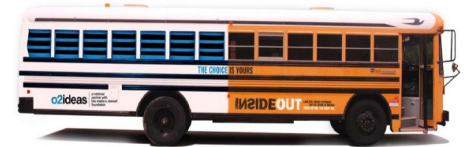
- 4. Volunteers welcome-**  
Parents are offered volunteer opportunities that make best use of their time and talent, at school or at home.



- 5. Partner in school decisions-**  
Parents are included on issues from curriculum selection to discipline policies to safety programs and budget plans.

- 6. Community involvement-**  
The school works with the community to provide families with resources and opportunities for students to serve and learn beyond the classroom.

### *The Choice Bus – a Powerful Dropout Prevention Tool makes a stop at Cooper and Tapp Middle School*



**T**hrough the collaborative efforts of *Communities in Schools* and *Success For All Students*, a \$5000.00 grant was received from State Farm and paid for the cost of **The Choice Bus** visiting two middle schools (Cooper and Tapp). A group of students from both middle schools had an opportunity to tour the bus during the month of October 2011.

**The Choice Bus** is an experience-based learning tool designed to show young people the power of education, as well as the likely consequences of choosing to drop out of school. It contains a full scale replica of a prison cell which

is hidden behind a curtain and flat screen television. On entering the bus, a four-minute movie will quiz the students on the earning potential of a dropout versus a high school and college graduate. The movie also features several powerful testimonials from people who regret dropping out - prison inmates. When the movie is finished the cell is revealed demonstrating the stark reality experienced by many dropouts. Students are then invited into the prison cell to briefly experience the uncomfortable living conditions. As students exit the bus, they receive a pledge card and are asked to make a commitment to finish school and make

For more information about **The Choice Bus** you can visit: [www.mattiestewart.org](http://www.mattiestewart.org)

good choices. **The Choice Bus** experience is approximately twenty minutes long and is designed for grades 6-10 and is sponsored by The Mattie C. Stewart Foundation.

Special thanks to Rebecca Whicker, Resource Specialist and Sabra Dunn, Truancy Specialist from Success for All Students for coordinating the event at Cooper and Tapp Middle. School Social Workers Sarah Howell and Jean F. Pierre and school Principals Dr. Watkins (Cooper) and Dr. Dority (Tapp) assisted with the coordination of this special event and had the opportunity to tour **The Choice Bus** along with the students.