



Dorchester County
Public Schools
Every Child A Success!

SUPERINTENDENT'S STAFF BULLETIN

Henry V. Wagner Jr., Superintendent

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This month, we **welcome back** the ten month DCPS staff! One great distinction of our profession is the annual opportunity for summer renewal and a fresh start. I hope that you have been able to take full advantage of this opportunity to experience a change of pace, and to return with a sense of optimism and promise. And to those who are **new to DCPS**, we are thrilled to have you join us as colleagues in our mission on behalf of children!

Our county-wide kickoff event, called “**System-wide Synergy**,” will take place on **Friday, August 20**, at **Cambridge-South Dorchester High School**. Please refer to the ***Back-To-School*** flyer that will be arriving in the mail for details. There will be some new features this year and, happily, the required safety videos will be handled on-line via the internet, so you can complete this required task independent of our kickoff event!

In my letter to the community dated **April 15, 2010**, I pledged to involve the entire Dorchester Community to forge a synergy on behalf of all of our children. I went on to specify the following initiatives:

- **A Superintendent’s Advisory Council** consisting of business, government, community, and faith-based leaders.
- A quarterly **Superintendent’s Community Forum** for the general public.
- A **Superintendent’s Roundtable**, consisting of representatives from schools and central offices, to offer regular opportunities to discuss district issues.

Here is an update on each initiative:

Advisory Council

On July 1, we sent almost forty letters of invitation to individuals with leadership credentials from the above-mentioned groups. We described the **Advisory Council** as a critical mechanism for the free exchange of ideas – along with the acquisition of vital resources to meet the needs of our students. Also, we asked for a commitment to at least three meetings for the first year, which will take place on **September 1, January 5, and April 13**. So far, over thirty recipients have responded, and all but two have been in the affirmative. This is an extremely encouraging response, indicating a high level of support for this concept. We are determined to make these collaborations meaningful and productive, beginning with a frank examination of the challenges we face as a school system.

Community Forum

These meetings will take place at different locations around the county. For the first year, they have been scheduled for **October 6, February 2, and May 11**. We will take the necessary steps to publicize these events, which will have similar “ground rules” to those of the public comments portion of Board of Education meetings. Specifically, we will welcome the general public’s input on matters pertaining to the operation of **DCPS**. However, comments on specific individuals will not be allowed in this public setting. The objective is to recognize the attitudes and perspectives of the community with regard to our school system.

Roundtable

This concept is a macro-version of the **faculty council** concept. For the coming school year, meetings have been scheduled for **November 10, March 9, and June 8**. The Executive Team (Mr. Wagner, Mr. McCabe, and Mr. Hughes) will meet with a representative group to discuss issues of general interest. This group will consist of **the faculty council chairperson of each school (12 persons), the executive officers of Dorchester Educators (2 certificated and 1 classified), an elementary school administrator, a middle school administrator, a high school administrator, a supervisor from the Division of Instructional Services, a supervisor from the Division of Administrative Services, a custodian, and a food service worker**. These meetings will begin at 4:00 PM and we will publish the minutes of these discussions.

Covey Highlight

As many of you are aware, I am an avid believer in the ideas and theories of Dr. Stephen R. Covey, whose most famous work is ***The Seven Habits of Highly-Effective People***. We have conducted book studies using this text with our school-based and central office leadership team, and have also used ***The Speed of Trust*** by Stephen M. R. Covey (his son) as the basis for building a climate of trust in our school system. Additionally, counselor Jamie Willey of North Dorchester Middle School has written a recently-approved curriculum for using ***The Seven Habits of Highly-Effective Teens*** by Sean Covey (another son) in the classroom guidance setting.

There are many reasons why I find these ideas to be both relevant and compelling for public educators. Indeed, I plan to provide a monthly highlight in this bulletin of important aspects of his theories. The bottom line is that his work is a widely-recognized vehicle for principled leadership and decision-making. If you do not have access to a copy of ***The Seven Habits*** but would pledge to read it as we present these monthly highlights, I will provide you with a copy. Just send me an email message to this effect. These books will also be available in your school library.

In Memoriam

Finally, it is with extreme sadness that we report the passing of **Mr. Mike Haring, Energy and Safety Manager**, on August 2, as a result of a traffic accident. We extend our profound sympathies to his family and will miss his valuable services to our school system.