

The Parent Connector

TITLE I NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 2016



WALTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

"In Pursuit of Excellence"

Ways Parents Can Help & Support Teachers

As the school year begins again, it is important to remember how much you matter. Make sure your child has a healthy breakfast and a good night's rest are key components of success, your help and support in their education is just as important. It has been proven time and time again that a parent who takes an active interest in their child's education is one of the biggest contributors to that child reaching their full academic potential. Parents and teachers are truly partners, and when they work in conjunction with one another, they provide the greatest chance of academic success in a child. Here are four things to keep in mind when thinking about how you can support your child's teacher this year.

Educate yourself

Learn about your child's school and curriculum. Ask your child's teacher what the students will be learning this year and familiarize yourself with the subject matter. Find out if there is a class website, blog, or Facebook page that you can join to stay up to date. There are also many free resources available online such as The U.S. Department of Education's 'Helping Your Child Series', which offers free booklets in different subject areas, such as science and mathematics, that are filled with lessons and activities that you can do with your child. To download this series and other helpful resources visit www2.ed.gov/parents.

Be available

One of the biggest ways to support your child's teacher is to simply keep in contact with them. Whether via telephone, e-mail, or face-to-face conversation - teachers appreciate when parents care enough to keep in contact. However, be sure not to overdo it. Your child's teacher often has dozens of students and it may be unrealistic for them to touch base with you every day. Aim to have a conversation with them once a month.

Forget your baggage

Parents can sometimes carry the negative experiences they have had with education, and unknowingly pass these feelings and attitudes onto their children. Regardless of whether you look back at your school experience fondly or look back and cringe, be sure to impress a positive attitude about school onto your child. For example, instead of saying, "Wake up! You have to go to school today," it may be better to say, "**Wake up! You get to go to school today.**" The positive outlook your child has on school and education prompts them to come to school ready and excited to learn.

Encourage learning at home

Whether learning about different cultures at the grocery store, calculating the tip at a restaurant, or discussing what they are working on in school, make learning a constant part of your child's everyday life. The more your child practices these skills at home, the better they will do in school!



COMING SOON: WCS D VIRTUAL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

School-wide Title I Schools in Walton County School System are: Atha Road Elementary, Carver Middle School, Harmony Elementary, Monroe Area High School, Monroe Elementary, Walker Park Elementary, Walnut Grove Elementary, and Youth Middle School.

Targeted Assistance School in Walton County: Bay Creek Elementary and Loganville Middle.

The Walton County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission to its programs, services or activities, in access to them, in treatment of individuals, or in any aspect of their operations. For additional information or referral to the appropriate system coordinator, contact the system coordinator: Dr. Lance Young at 200 Double Springs Church Road, Monroe, GA 30656, or at 770-266-4410.

Si usted necesita ayuda con la traducción de esta carta, por favor comuníquese con la Senora Eleanor Scott en Walton County - escott@walton.k12.ga.us

Calendar

October

- 5-6 8-Week Exams
- 6 End Quarter I
- 7 Teacher Workday/Student Holiday
- 10 - 14 Fall Intersession
- 17 1st Day Quarter II
- 20 Report Cards Issued
- 29 Family Fun Day I | - 2pm
Hammond Park

November

- 10 Progress Reports for Quarter II
- 11 Holiday/Veterans Day
- 21 - 25 Holidays /Thanksgiving

December

- 20-21 Exam Days
- 21 End Quarter II/End Semester
- 22 - 30 Winter Break
- 25 Christmas Day

January

- 1 New Years Day
- 2 - 6 Winter Break
- 9 1st Day Semester II
- 12 Report Cards Issued for Semester I
- 16 Holiday/Martin Luther King, Jr.
- 25 100 Days



PARENT RESOURCE CENTERS!

All Title I schools have a Parent Resource Center which is usually located in the Media Center. You can check out books and other resources to help you engage with your child's education. A free computer is also available for your use. Be sure to check the Parent Resource Bulletin Board and flyers for Title I information, upcoming parent events, parenting and homework tips, as well as community resources.

McKinney – Vento Info

If your family lives in any of the following situations:

1. In a shelter.
2. In a motel or campground due to the lack of an alternative, adequate accommodation.
3. In a car, park or abandoned building or bus or train station.
4. Doubled up with other people due to the loss of housing or economic hardship

.....your school-age children may qualify for certain rights and protections under the federal McKinney- Vento Act. If you believe your children may be eligible, contact *Gina Meadows, Homeless Liaison* at (770) 266-4510 to find out what services and supports may be available.

Title I District Parent Coordinator - Donna M. Hawk 770-266-4530 or donna.hawk@walton.k12.ga.us
Special Education Parent Mentor – Bonnie Morris 770-266-4532 or bonnie.morris@walton.k12.ga.us

Special Needs Database

Parent to Parent's comprehensive resource database contains over 5,000 resources in over 150 categories. The Special Needs Database is a user-friendly, online searchable resource available to individuals with disabilities, their families, and professionals throughout Georgia. You can search online or call them at 1-800-229-2038 and they will search for you! <http://p2pga.org/index.php/database>



WCSD Special Needs Resource Room

Did you know that we have a small lending library of special needs books that you can check out?

We also have brochures and flyers of various resources in the community. Please call Bonnie Morris at 770-266-4532 to schedule a time to visit.



Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren hosts monthly support groups at the Rivers of Mercy Church (714 Davis Street, Monroe, GA) on the 4th Thursday of every month. Support groups are open to all relative caregivers in the community. Speakers from local organizations are invited to present information on resources that will be helpful to the families.

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

**October 27, and November 17, 2016
12 Noon – 1:30 p.m.**

**Rivers of Mercy's Church – 714 Davis Street,
Monroe, GA 30655**

Department of Special Education

My name is Bonnie Morris. I am the new Parent Mentor for Walton County Schools. I would like to tell you a little bit about my family and about what a Parent Mentor does.

Married for 17 years and a resident of Walton County for 12, I grew up in Georgia near Stone Mountain. I have five children in the Youth cluster right now. My daughter Pauli is in a self-contained class at YMS. Pauli has autism and, while being a joy, has thrown many curves my way as I learned how to parent a child with special needs. I also have a daughter in general Ed with ADHD. Before my children were born I was a science teacher in high and middle schools around the perimeter. I have sat on both sides of the IEP table (many, many times!)

A Parent Mentor is an employee of the school system who has a child with a disability. My job is to create a network of support and trust between families of special needs children, schools and the community. I hope to connect everyone with resources to benefit them, ideas to help in varied situations that come up through the year and educate parents and teachers on special needs issues. For instance, if you are new to the world of special education, you might need help understanding the IEP process or how to move through the Katie Beckett application. (Oh, you don't know what that is? See I can help you with that!)

I know there have been times over the last 13 years when I have come to a dead end. I didn't have any friends who were dealing with what I was, or my daughters' doctors and therapists were unsure how to handle a situation or where to turn. A Parent Mentor is there for just such situations. Let me help you find what you need or work through a difficult issue. I am happy to help and I am here for you!

My office is located at Loganville Middle School. I look forward to working with, and meeting you this year.

**My contact information: bonnie.morris@walton.k12.ga.us
or on my office number (770) 266-4532**

