

GCPS PARENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY CURRICULUM

Level 2

Orientation: Team Building – Learning and Growing Together

The goal of the Parent Leadership Academy is to develop “Parent Leaders” who will become advocates for their children and their children’s education. As participants gain new knowledge they will grow as leaders and begin to support and guide their community through hardships, decision making, and personal growth, becoming Ambassadors for other parents. In this session, PLA participants are given an opportunity to meet and talk to new Level 1 and returning Level 3 PLA members, hear presentations made by PLA graduates, present, and ask questions.

**Other topics discussed: meeting nights, length of meetings, expectations, etc*

Class 1: Digging Deeper into NCLB/Title I, Local, State, and Community Funding

Part 1) PLA members gain a better understanding of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) by breaking out various parts of the bill and discussing the pros and cons of those parts. Each focus group will present their findings to the others for discussion. In addition, the reaffirmation of NCLB will be discussed and debated.

Part 2) How does a school get Title I funds? Who sets the spending guidelines? What are the rules? When is the funds released to the school?

Class 2: Understanding Poverty (Ruby Payne)/Talking Community Dialogue

Part 1) Each Level 2 member receives Ruby Payne’s, *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* (book study). PLA members work in groups on assigned section (key points to understanding poverty). Groups will present assigned section to class in order to better understand human behavior.

Part 2) The way we speak depends on the group we are with, or the situation in which we find ourselves. We use different forms of speech called “registers” when trying to communicate that include, frozen, formal, consultative, casual, or intimate. Often, those living in poverty will only use and understand a casual register, so how does this fact impact learning at school?

Class 3: Understanding Poverty (Ruby Payne)/Hidden Rules/Building Relationships

Part 1) A class discussion is facilitated on the rules that govern people in poverty, middle class, and upper class. Then, members will break into groups and discuss the affects the hidden rules have on all students. Finally, the groups will come back together and share their thoughts. ***Homework book study**

Part 2) It all comes to “Building Relationships”! We all know that every relationship looks different, but what we do not realize is the most important motivator for kids is relationships. In this class we talk about how formal institutions (schools) create relationships with children of poverty.

Class 4: Special Needs Children and the Law

During this class participants have an opportunity to listen to a mother tell her story. Followed by important information about the laws that governs and protect students with disabilities: IDEA, American’s with Disabilities Act, and Section 504. Finally, participants learn why children with special needs must have active parent involvement throughout their education.

Class 5: ESOL Students and the Law/Gifted Students and the Law

PLA members learn about the laws that support both second language learners (ELL) and Gifted students. Additionally, information regarding government support educating ELL students is discussed. A guest from the ISC will speak on the local support provided by the counties International Newcomers Center (INC) and how that information is used at the local school level for student placement.

GCPS PARENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY CURRICULUM

Level 2

Class 6: A Deeper Understanding about Gangs and Gang Violence

Special guest Investigator Marco Silva of the Gwinnett County Gang Task Force gives an in depth presentation on criminal street gangs in and around the Gwinnett County area. He speaks on gang symbolism, colors, rivalries, and the proactive enforcement against gang activity by police as well as educators. Discussion and question time is allotted for the participants following the presentation. Further book study on Ruby Payne's "A Framework for Understanding Poverty" is discussed.

Class 7: School Discipline: Discipline by the Book

Parents are taught the policies and procedures used by GCPS administrators when dealing with student discipline. When parents understand policies and procedures used by school personnel, they are more likely to work, in partnership, with school personnel toward a solution. Additionally, parents who have a clear understanding of school policies and procedures possess the tools to support other parents who experience issues with their child(ren).

Class 8: Field Trip: What about the Family in Crises?

PLA members will participate in a field trip to the Gwinnett Intervention Education Center (GIVE West), one of Gwinnett's public alternative schools, and the Gwinnett Regional Youth Detention Center (Gwinnett RYDC). Members will use this information and experience to help support those parents whose child may, at some point have to experience either, or both facilities.

Graduation

In the last class all PLA members (Lv 1, 2, & 3) participate in focus group discussions. They are asked to share one piece of information they learned during their time in the academy that had the greatest impact on them and one piece that had little to no impact. Participants share the benefits of the academy, as well as the challenges. In addition, the participants are encouraged to discuss any ideas and/or changes they would like to see added, and/or removed from the curriculum. Finally, participants are asked to complete an evaluation and share their own ideas about parent leadership on the evaluation.

All PLA Level 1 and Level 2 participants receive a plaque with a Certificate of Completion.

All PLA Level 3 participants receive a plaque with a Certificate of Achievement.

All guest speakers receive a plaque with a Certificate of Appreciation