

Partners in Education



Worth County Schools

103 Eldridge Street
Sylvester, GA 31791

Mission: To ensure a quality education for all students leading to graduation and productive citizenship.

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Mission

To establish and support partnerships between the Worth County School System and area businesses, industries and community groups that will utilize community resources to enrich and extend the educational opportunities for Worth County students.

Goals

- ❖ Strengthen Worth County's commitment to education
- ❖ Foster relationships between businesses and community groups and or educational systems
- ❖ Stimulate academic achievement and life-long learning

Two Levels of Participation

➤ Partner in Education

A Partner in Education (PIE) is a business or an organization that partners with one to three schools and commits to participate in at least one activity per quarter with that school.

➤ Partner at Large

A Partner at Large (PAL) is a business or an organization that desires to form partnerships with the Worth County School System. The purpose of such a partnership is to allow a business or an organization to offer its resources for the benefit of the Worth County School System in its entirety.

Program Benefits

Schools

- Assistance in meeting school needs beyond available resources, and in light of budget constraints
- Collaboration from the community in accomplishing the goals of annual school improvement plans
- Business expertise and technical support, providing a more complete education

Business

- Presenting first-hand the requirements and expectations of the business world
- Heightening awareness of present and future job needs
- Understanding the quality and needs of the public school systems, whose health is vital to the community's economic well-being
- Building support for schools among employees and simultaneously boosting company morale
- Being recognized as a community-involved company, which adds to your public relations efforts
- Improved education of future employees and customers

Students

- Higher self esteem
- Association with successful role models and mentors from the community
- Increased motivation to achieve success in the areas of academics, attendance, and character
- Enriched Curriculum
- Individualized help with subjects outside of the classroom
- Education of the types of jobs in the workplace and how their academic skills apply

Teachers

- Instructional support
- Improved morale
- Recognition for achievement
- Assistance in the classroom, allowing more time for planning and instructional activities
- Additional resources not provided for in the budget
- More contact with community members

Community

- Increased communication among citizens and stakeholders
- Strengthened school systems
- Educated citizenry

- Enhanced opportunities to become a Work Ready Community
- Improved economic development (lower dropout rates are tied to lower crime rates, less unemployment)
- Ability to draw new businesses to the community

General Partnership Activities

Support Student Achievement

- Volunteer for tutoring, reading or mentoring
- Award good attendance, character, academic or extracurricular achievement with recognition, prizes, scholarships, etc.
- Provide food and refreshments for school events and programs
- Donate “Honor Student” bumper stickers

School to Career

- Share a special skill with a class
- Share information specific to your vocation
- Speak at Career Day
- Create a mock business in a classroom
- Review applications and resumes, and conduct mock interviews
- Employ students in summer months or on a part-time basis

Encourage Student Performance and Learning

- Display student artwork at your facility
- Display listings of student accomplishments at your facility (example: Reader of the Month)
- Host motivational programs and activities
- Invite students to perform for employees and customers
- Provide age appropriate snacks to students during testing periods
- Offer demonstrations and presentations on various topics (examples: drug awareness, health and nutrition, understanding of money and how to handle it, self-esteem, goal setting, problem solving, interviewing techniques, resume writing, backpack safety, etc.)

Donate Supplies and Resources

- Basic School Supplies
- Books for the school library
- Books for students to take home and keep to promote reading outside the classroom
- Copying equipment and paper for large projects
- Use of your facility for staff/PTO meetings, student activities
- Use of your facility for school nights and donate a portion of proceeds to school
- Funding for transportation (money for gas, to pay drivers)
- Departmental supplies
- Printing services
- Supply a classroom with newspapers (AJC News for Kids) or relevant trade publications
- Funding for a homework center at the school, to benefit students

Support Teachers and Faculty

- Recognize and thank teachers during appreciation week
- Donate teacher incentives, such as gift certificates, coupons for product and services
- Donate to the Teacher of the Year account
- Supply food and refreshments for appreciation events, meeting and in-service workdays
- Offer teacher scholarships
- Provide staff development opportunities
- Host a best practices luncheon where they can discuss challenges they are facing and collaborate to find solutions

How Partnerships are Formed

1. Schedule an in-person meeting with the school in which you are interested. The contact person is as follows:
Worth County Primary School.....Tonya Singletary,
Parent Involvement Coordinator, 229-776-8660

Worth County Elementary School.....Marilyn Herring,
School Improvement Coordinator, 229-776-8605

Worth County Middle School.....Maria Fletcher,
School Improvement Specialist, 229-776-8620

Worth County High School.....Kathy Conger,
Parent Involvement Coordinator, 229-776-8625
2. Request and review the school's/system's "wish list" to determine whether the school needs coincide with the resources that you can offer. Should the school not be a good match for your business/organization, please consider another school.
3. Formulate a list of the time, resources and donations that you can commit to the school. Partners are encouraged to engage in at least one activity per quarter (August-September, October-December, January-March, April-May)
4. Attend the meeting with the school. The school should have an agenda for the meeting, and a copy of the Partnership Commitment that will be completed together during the meeting. You will be given a copy of the completed plan by the school contact person, who will also fax a copy to the BOE Public Relations Director.
5. The school will schedule a "Signing Ceremony" with you. This should be well-planned, and occur during a time mutually agreed upon by the community partner and the school. The school should invite the Superintendent, BOE Director of Public Relations, and the media.

How PAL Partnerships Are Formed

1. A business or an organization contacts the Board of Education's Public Relations Director, sharing a desire to be involved in the school system.
Heather Greene, Public Relations Director, 229-776-8600
2. The BOE Public Relations Director supplies the business/organization or individual with a Partnership Plan to be completed by the business/organization or individual. A prospective PAL fills out the same Partnership Plan as the PIE, denoting "Partner at Large" above the activity section of the form.
3. Request and review the school's/system's "wish list" to determine whether the school needs coincide with the resources that you can offer. Should the school not be a good match for your business/organization, please consider another school.
4. The Public Relations Director will schedule a "Signing Ceremony" with you. This should be well-planned, and occur during a time mutually agreed upon by the community partner and the school. The BOE Public Relations Director should invite the Superintendent and the media.

Making The Partnership Work

- Establish a relationship with your partners. Visit your school and attend events.
- Invite school staff to participate in company or organization activities.
- Post partner activities and events in the staff break room.
- Schedule regular meeting dates with your partner.

The Importance of Formalizing Partnerships

- To have a point of contact at each school and the BOE to call with program questions, to discuss any concerns or challenges with the partnership and receive feedback on solutions, and to share partnership success stories for potential publication.
- To participate in a signing ceremony to publicize your partnership. The Signing Ceremony is an opportunity to be introduced to the school faculty, students and parents, and make them aware of your participation in the school.
- To receive a Declaration of Partnership Certificate to display at your place of work to inform your staff, clients, members of the community at large of your commitment to your partner school.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can participate in the PIE program?

Businesses (small and large), civic groups, governmental agencies, churches, colleges and university organizations, non-profit agencies

Is there a minimum financial investment for partners?

There is no cost associated with establishing a partnership. Financial and in-kind donations are made at the discretion of the community partner.

What are the requirements for becoming an official Partner in Education (PIE)?

Every PIE should complete a Partnership Commitment with their partner school and commit to a minimum of one activity per quarter to their partner school(s). Quarterly interaction helps build a relationship and contributes to sustainability, thus enhancing the quality of partnership. Partnership activities range from volunteering to donating goods and services.

Is there a bad time of year to enter into a partnership?

No; in fact, partnerships that begin late in the school year get the advantage of a “test drive” before planning their activities for the next year.

Can partners join more than one school in partnership?

Partners may partner with up to three schools within one calendar year as long as they meet the one activity per quarter requirement.

How long do partnerships last?

Most partnerships continue for as long as the relationship is beneficial and effective for all involved. We encourage community partners and schools to reevaluate their partnerships at the end of two school years.

How can small businesses participate in the program?

Many small businesses have successful partnerships with schools. The key is to know your limitations going into the relationship and committing to attainable activities that support student achievement. Partnership activities need to help students reach higher levels of achievement whether you provide volunteer time or financial (cash or in-kind) support. Many activities do not require an inordinate amount of time or, if time intensive, don't require many people. For example, programs requiring little time on the part of the community partner include: donating prizes to school incentive programs, participating in Career Day, judging. Other activities may require time, but don't necessary require many people to which one volunteer is welcome. Many schools have an active mentoring program. While the program asks for a commitment of one hour per week for the school year, there are no requirements on the number of employees participating. Some partners engage in job shadows at their work sites. Employees who might not otherwise be able to leave work to volunteer are often able to host students at their office and provide them with a unique exposure to the business world.

What should I do if my partner won't complete the Recommitment Partnership Plan?

We hope the schools and partners recommit to one another every two years. If partners are reluctant to complete the plan, we encourage you to read the “Importance of Formalizing Partnerships” section of the handbook and use the talking points to motivate them to recommitment. If your partner(s) do not want to complete the plan for a reason other than time constraints, then we respect their decision and are sorry that they cannot be recognized through the PIE Program.

The Worth County Schools Partners in Education (WCSPIE) is a program of the Worth County School System and the Sylvester-Worth County Chamber of Commerce. These relationships create a support system designed to meet the needs of the school through the resources of the community partners to the benefit of both.



