

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BRIDGE TO EXCELLENCE MASTER PLAN STAKEHOLDER MEETING

DISTRICT 4 INPUT
Oxon Hill High School
June 16, 2009

BACKGROUND

The Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education of Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) are committed to graduating students "college and workforce ready." Work has been initiated to develop a plan for secondary school reform. A series of stakeholder meetings were held to elicit input from Prince George's County stakeholders about what college and workforce readiness means. Stakeholders included administrators, teachers, parents, students, civic and business leaders, and representatives from local colleges and universities. Stakeholder input will guide the system's work in secondary school reform.

This report summarizes responses from the District 4 meeting, which has held on June 16, 2009, at Oxon Hill High School. Just under 200 stakeholders attended the meeting. Following presentations from Dr. Sheila Gray (*Director, Strategic Planning and Grants Development*) and Mr. David Eagle, (*Coordinating Supervisor America's Choice/SLC High School Consortium*) and greetings from Mr. Geno Flores (*Chief Academic Officer*), participants were organized into nine small discussion groups to provide feedback on two questions pertaining to "college readiness and workforce readiness."

QUESTIONS

- What are the six most important skills that PGCPS students should have upon graduation?
- What four changes should PGCPS make to better prepare students for college and the workplace?

RESULTS

What are the six most important skills that PGCPS students should have upon graduation?

The most frequent responses to the question regarding the most important skills that students should have upon graduation were:

- Critical thinking skills;
- Written communication skills;
- Advanced reading skills;
- Advanced math skills;
- Organizational skills; and
- Study skills.

Other skills that received significant attention were: 1) *social skills*; 2) *leadership skills*; and 3) *basic financial skills*.

TOP TWO RESPONSES

The two responses most frequently identified by stakeholders as skills students need upon graduation were *critical thinking skills* and *written communication skills*.

What four changes should PGCPS make to better prepare students for college and the workplace?

Stakeholders recommended that the district improve communication between schools and parents in an effort to involve parents in college/career activities and other initiatives. Teacher morale and professional development are vital to effective student preparation; stakeholders felt that significant improvements need to occur in these 2 areas. Stakeholders also suggested that creating more intimate learning environments and increasing the number of school counselors will result in more engaged and effective teaching and learning.

TOP TWO RESPONSES

Increased parent participation and communication between schools and stakeholders and *increased professional development for teachers* were the most frequently noted recommendations for change.

SUMMARY

PGCPS gained invaluable input from District 4 stakeholders regarding “college and workforce readiness.” Participants want the district to provide a teaching and learning environment that equips students with critical thinking skills and advanced content knowledge. Stakeholder comments also revealed a deep concern about teacher quality and morale. Many stakeholders share the belief that parent participation in the education process will improve college and workplace readiness and address many of the school district’s shortcomings. Future sessions will continue to engage system officials and stakeholders in further defining college and workforce readiness in PGCPS and identifying the most effective ways to ensure that students attain readiness.