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Update

JANUARY 2006

From The President



I hope the holidays were restful for you and your families. I look forward to the year of work toward the goal and am anxious to hear about your work! Do you have a plan for the goal? Many of you attended the National Staff Development Council Conference in December in Philadelphia and signed the "Declaration of Professional Learning". That Declaration is now posted on the NSDC website (www.nsd.org) for all to review and sign as we move to change the face of professional learning in Georgia and in our country.

At our state conference in March, we will welcome Dr. Stephen Barkley as our keynote speaker on Thursday the 16th. Not only is he expert in coaching, Steve is an energizing and motivated presenter. Take time to read his book, Quality Teaching in a Culture of Coaching, as part of YOUR professional learning, then bring a team and attend the spring conference. As we work toward our goal that all teachers in all schools will experience high quality professional learning as part of their daily work, you will find that coaching is one means of meeting that goal. By the way, all full conference registrants will receive a copy of Steve's book as part of the registration. And 1-day registrants can purchase his book when registering.

DOE's *Teachers as Leaders: Instructional Coaching for School Improvement* professional learning sessions continue to be offered throughout the state RESAs. GSDC and DOE have worked together to make coaching a reality in Georgia and we continue to support this work that ultimately improves student learning. On Wednesday, March 15, DOE and the PSC will join us at GSDC, providing sessions of interest as we move to provide high quality professional learning that is results-driven, standards-based and job embedded. Are you using the Resource Guide that was provided by the State Department of Education to every school in Georgia? Do you have and use your SAI data from spring and/or fall to guide your work? Has your PL Advisory Council met this year? Have YOU had YOUR professional learning today?

I challenge each of you to contact a colleague from another part of the state, discuss these topics in an e-mail or two, and plan to network at the spring conference. We will honor our Academy graduates and celebrate their new learning. I look forward to seeing all of you there!

Lea

STEVE BARKLEY TO KEYNOTE SPRING CONFERENCE

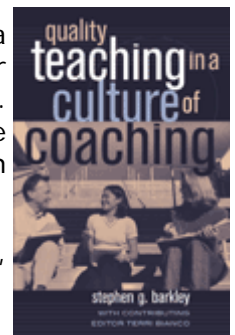


Steve Barkley, a master teacher-of-teachers, will keynote the Georgia Staff Development Council's 2006 spring conference. Steve's expertise is designing programs that meet state, federal, or local requirements. His repertoire includes such diverse programs as school board retreats, reading coach training, and leadership development sessions for principals.

Steve will spend the day examining both the role of coaching in teacher growth that is focused on student achievement and the role of leadership in creating a culture of coaching. Strategies that promote teacher collaboration for continuous improvement will be explored. Steve will present and model the key verbal skills of coaching and then provide opportunities for you to practice these verbal skills. There will be ample opportunity for your specific questions so consider having some key leaders join you for the day and work on your system's next steps. Steve would love to receive your questions and issue requests prior to the program. You can email him at sbarkley@plsweb.com.

All full conference registrants will receive a copy of Steve's book, "Quality Teaching in a Culture of Coaching", as part of spring conference registration. Those registering for Steve's session only will have an opportunity to purchase his book when registering. Steve wrote this book with the hope that it would both inspire you to continue or initiate a coaching program, and serve as a resource as you implement and build your own coaching program.

Don't miss this dynamic speaker and program. Register today on the GSDC web site, <www.gasdc.org>, under "events".



The next time someone makes a crack about teachers or whenever you are feeling low about your profession, remember this:

The dinner guests were sitting around the table discussing life. One man, a CEO, decided to explain the problem with education.

He argued, "What's a kid going to learn from someone who decided his best option in life was to become a teacher?" He reminded the other dinner guests what they say about teachers: "Those who can, do. Those who can't, teach." To stress his point he said to another guest, "You're a teacher, Susan. Be honest. What do you make?"

Susan, who had a reputation for honesty and frankness replied, "You want to know what I make? I make kids work harder than they ever thought they could. I make a C+ feel like the winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor. I make kids sit through 40 minutes of study hall in absolute silence".

"You want to know what I make? I make kids wonder. I make them question. I make them criticize. I make them apologize and mean it. I make them write. I make them read, read, read. I make them show all their work in math and perfect their final drafts in English. I make them understand that, if you have the brains and follow your heart, and if someone ever tries to judge you by what you make, you must pay no attention because they just didn't learn."

Susan paused and then continued, "You want to know what I make? I MAKE A DIFFERENCE. What do you make?"

THE ACADEMY

The Georgia Staff Development Council's Academy is structured to:

- Provide participants with knowledge of the research supporting effective professional learning practices and programs;
- Assist participants in gaining knowledge of effective professional learning practices to use in designing, managing, and evaluating a local professional learning program;
- Provide participants with a network of supportive colleagues;
- Provide participants with the planning and facilitation skills to support school-focused professional learning;
- Enhance skills for efficient and effective planning and implementation of professional education;
- Increase awareness of the relationship between professional learning and school improvement; and
- Provide participants with skills to coordinate involvement of teachers and administrators in planning and evaluating the local plan.

The participants of the 2005-06 Academy will complete their Academy at this year's spring conference.

Academy I participants have been learning about *Providing Focused and Sustained Professional Development* - a goal for all professional learners. Academy I participants have been engaging in High Quality Professional Learning with peer aspiring leaders. Eric Hoffer offers *"In times of drastic change, it is the learners who inherit the future. The learned usually find themselves beautifully equipped to live in a world that no longer exists"*. Through the learning in Academy I, participants are learning to embrace change and gain strategies to create strong learning cultures that focus on student achievement. Mike Bergquist, the Social Studies Coordinator for the Douglas County Schools, offers the following about his Academy I experience: *"The training materials enables me to an effective teacher of teachers. The powerful speakers gave cause for deep reflection on the practice of teaching and leading."*

Academy II participants are learning that *Using Data to Lead Change* will certainly bring about increased student performance. Victoria Bernhardt offers *"Data provides power to ... make good decisions, work intelligently, work effectively and efficiently, change things in better ways, know the impact of our hard work and how it benefits children, and help us prepare for the future"*. Academy II participants are learning about balanced data analysis to improve student achievement through the research of Victoria Bernhardt. Explored strategies focus on being data informed instead of data driven, how to collect data that will lead to improved student performance, and a process for sustained system/school improvement.

All educators are invited and encouraged to participate in the 2006-07 GSDC Academy which will form this fall. The learning experienced will impact student performance at your school or system. The Academy meets six sessions during a school year where long range and short range goals are developed and implemented through learned strategies. The strategies learned will help teams of educators effectively impact identified student achievement goals.

PROGRAM HELPS TEACHERS LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER

A pilot program called Professional Development Classrooms was created to instruct teachers in a peer-observation format and aims to improve professional development skills among Columbia's (MO) educators. Now, the district is able to make more of its expertise ... The chosen teachers were nominated

(PROGRAM continued on page 4)

SPRING CONFERENCE

The GSDC 2006 Spring Conference is being held March 15 & 16, 2006, at the Marriott Gwinnett Place, Duluth, Georgia. Registrations have been brisk because registration is on line and you can use a credit card. As in the past, the "early bird catches . . .", and the end of that period is fast approaching.

Registration:

Early Bird [MUST COMPLETE REGISTRATION BEFORE FEBRUARY 1]. Member of GSDC - \$200.00; Member One Day - \$150.00; Non-Members – \$230.00; Non-Member One Day - \$180.00

Regular [February 1 to March 3]. Member of GSDC - \$225.00; Member One Day - \$175.00; Non-Members – \$255.00; Non-Member One Day - \$205.00

Late [ANY REGISTRATION AFTER MARCH 4]. Member of GSDC - \$250.00; Member One Day - \$200.00; Non-Member – \$280.00; Non-Member One Day - \$230.00

FULL Registration includes Steve Barkley's book, "Quality Teaching in a Culture of Coaching", a \$28.95 value; Continental breakfast March 16th; Lunch March 15th & 16th; and Registration materials.

Cancellation Policy. Cancellation requests **must be in writing** and received by GSDC no later than March 3, 2006 to receive a refund. **NO REFUNDS AFTER Friday, March 3, 2006.** All requests for cancellation are subject to a \$50.00 processing fee.

Hotel Accommodations at the Marriott Gwinnett Place is at the GSDC special rate of \$129 plus tax. Registrants can reserve at

<<http://marriott.com/property/propertypage.mi?marshaCode=atlgp&groupCode=gsdgsda>>

Or by calling either 800/246-0370, or the hotel directly at 770/923-1775. Registrants must reserve by February 21, 2006, to receive the "GSDC Spring Conference" discount rate.

Don't delay, register today!

(PROGRAM continued from page 3)

according to specified criteria such as evidence of exemplary teaching, involvement in high-quality professional development, presenting professional workshops, ability to be a reflective practitioner and at least five years of teaching experience. The teachers work in elementary, middle, junior high and high schools. The program, which began November 28, 2005, allows teachers in any Columbia public school to visit and observe the classrooms of the professional development teachers. The goals are to cultivate teacher expertise within Columbia's public schools, learn new teaching methods and practices, and increase student achievement. "Faculty members from 30 buildings will have an opportunity to read biographical information that identifies each teacher of expertise," said the district's director of school improvement. "So when they want to schedule a visit through our office, they will be able to find a professional development teacher that aligns with what they want to learn more about." Immediately after each classroom observation, the professional development teacher and the observer sit down to reflect and discuss the practices and methods demonstrated in the classroom. One teacher said the process helps her to continue improving as a teacher, too. She said that when an observer asks questions about her teaching practices, it makes her think. The state sets aside funding for high-quality professional development, as long as it is used in an effective way. The Professional Development Classrooms meet the required state criteria.