

Report of Principal and School Improvement Council

Whale Branch Elementary School has had an outstanding school year. The merger of Whale Branch Elementary and James J Davis Elementary has been complete.

We continued our extended school year with the addition of twenty days of instruction designed to increase student achievement. James J Davis Early Learning Center and Whale Branch Elementary achieved AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) in the 2009-2010 school year. MAP scores continue to be up on each grade level and the level of rigor has also been increased school-wide. We are above national MAP averages in several areas. Our wonderful staff worked with parents to focus instruction on pinpointed areas of need for our students based on the MAP test. Weekly planning meetings, a 200 day calendar, after school activities, Saturday Academy, parent sessions, Parent University, Student Celebrations for Academic Improvement on MAP tests and active involvement from PTO and SIC served to promote our school mission and goals.

The teacher and parent members of the School Improvement Council engaged in the development of our strategic plan which focused on raising academic achievement in the area of social studies and science.

As a Red Carpet Award winner, Whale Branch Elementary School and James J. Davis Early Learning Center have made customer service a top priority. Students, parents and community members have begun to feel that our school is truly a community school and that it belongs to each stakeholder.

All students and staff were involved in community service projects during the 2010-2011 school year learning about the importance of citizenship and contributing to the community at large. Students raised funds for American Cancer Society and CAPA. With the support of the Kiwanis Club, we were able to continue our K-kids program that supports school wide service efforts. Students and Staff were involved in Relay for Life. Our Students completed studies about Fire Safety, readers' theatre, habitats, and mining. The school enjoyed grant funding for an after-school program.

All students received books at Christmas time provided through Title I funding. Students in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten received additional books through Reading is Fundamental (RIF) and parents received tips on how to work and read with their children at home. Students were also able to select books a different times during the school year to increase their personal libraries at home.

Whale Branch Elementary School continued working with the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) with ongoing professional development in the areas of effective teaching strategies and best practices. Staff development was provided in balanced literacy, guided reading, differentiation, and Every Day Math. Professional development will continue during the 2011-12 school year with focus on small group reading, curriculum mapping, and formative assessments.

Don D. Doggett, Principal

Latoya Scott, SIC Chairperson

