# Partner Meeting

February 21, 2013

Tusculum Elementary School

Family Resource Center (FRC)

1. Introductions
   1. present were:
      1. Deborah Butler, ThriftSmart Marketing Director
      2. Shirley Hyde, Hickory View Community Manager
      3. Jennifer Owensby, Hickory View Assistant Manager
      4. Nicole Hill, Big Brothers Big Sisters Site-based specialist
      5. Pam White, Grandparent representative
      6. Cara Harris, Lipscomb University/SALT Service learning program coordinator
      7. Ruben DePena, MNPS Community Outreach Specialist
      8. Victoria Bethel, Youth Villages Family Intervention Specialist
      9. T-Shaka Coverson, McMurray Middle School Principal
      10. Rebecca Hulse, Tusculum Elementary School Title I Family Engagement Specialist
      11. Jeger Ali, Overton Cluster Family Involvement Specialist
      12. Luisa Hough, Mental Health America of Middle Tennessee Multi-Cultural Coordinator
      13. Tracy Gibson, Tusculum Elementary School Vice Principal
      14. Adrienne Corlew, La Familia Resource Center Volunteer/Outreach Director
      15. Alexis Gunn, Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee Outreach to Underserved
      16. Ann Cover, South End United Methodist Church Pastor
      17. Sarah Carpenter, Tusculum Elementary School Family Resource Center Director
2. Purpose of Partner Meetings
   1. Partner Meetings exist to provide information to all partners on the work of that particular FRC, how partners are currently impacting the FRC, and how they can further work toward the mission of the FRC.
   2. FRC’s exist to build a support system for every student to thrive by linking community organizations, school personnel, and families together to help remove barriers that may hinder academic success and productive adulthood
      1. To be clear: A school based FRC’s primary target is the success of students at that school, but, to accomplish that, FRC Directors work with the entire environment in which a student lives.
      2. FRC’s are apolitical—we do not exist to change policies, but to work within the system in which a student must live.
      3. Partner Meetings exist to further that goal.
3. Update on FRC
   1. These are some of the things happening with the FRC at this time:
      1. ESL Classes- giving parents a necessary skill
      2. Citizenship Classes- creating a stable community for students and families
      3. Coffee and Culture- Parent Engagement/Education events
      4. Parent Volunteers- increase parent engagement; gives resume experience.
      5. Interns/volunteers- Building community involvement
      6. Tutors/Mentors- helping bridge social, economic, and educational gaps for some of our lower performing students
      7. Field Days- in the works—to build engagement with some of our more reticent families and build social skills in children.
   2. All events are open to participation from community members, unless specifically noted as “Tusculum Only” Events.
      1. Strengthening the community as a whole helps our students
      2. How do we promote?
         1. Emails to other schools
         2. Website and Facebook
         3. Fliers in all languages possible
         4. Ruben De Pena has multiple Spanish speaking radio shows—can help promote there.
         5. Where and how else? Most effective method of reaching and engaging families? Can we get radio programs in other languages? **Input needed!!**
   3. Although the FRC and Tusculum Elementary School welcomes donations of needed items (clothing, food, school supplies), raising funds is not the primary goal. Empowerment and interdependence are.
   4. It is our belief that people are the difference—not money.
      1. Mentors/Tutors
      2. Partner engagement
      3. Hands on work and service
4. Nolensville Road Task Force
   1. What is the difference between an “FRC Partner Meeting”, a general “Partner Meeting”, and a “Task Force”? (Thank you to Mrs. Pam White for helping to clarify)
      1. FRC Partner Meetings exist primarily to provide information about what is happening, what is planned by the FRC, and the needs.
         1. Strength—focused, requires least time, easier
         2. Need—Less action oriented. Less benefit to partners
      2. Community Partner Meetings are similar, but reports come from all community partners.
         1. Strength—still focused and requires little time; Potential benefit to everyone involved; good compromise between Task Force and FRC Partner Meeting.
         2. Need—Still not very action oriented; Still does not promote much partnership; Working in cells
      3. Task Forces exist to identify and address specific areas of need. The group works together to determine actual action steps.
         1. Strength—Action oriented. Allows us to identify real goals and target them. Potentially highest impact.
         2. Need-- Highest time and commitment from partners. Requires ability and desire to partner. In addition, the FRC Director has never led a task force before and will need help.
   2. Group discussion occurred around this issue.
      1. Pastor Ann Cover identified that she believes we are all too busy for anything—but this is a need and so we must make time for it.
         1. She gave the example that she is working with local schools and churches to develop a food box program over the summer. But she needs help identifying the best way to accomplish her goals—community involvement and food for children.
      2. Discussion occurred around the purpose of schools and the community and the actual needs of families. Everyone agreed that they are frustrated with the process of identifying the “truly needy” from those who don’t.
         1. At this point, it was identified that a Task Force would help us to look at the real needs of the community and attempt to find real answers.
      3. The majority of the group agreed that a task force is needed. Future proceedings will start with 15-20 minutes of simple partner meeting—updating on FRC events and needs. The rest of the meeting will consist of Task Force. Anyone not interested in being a committed part of the Task Force will not be expected participate.
      4. At this time, Task Force meetings will be held in conjunction with FRC Partner Meetings, which occur approximately every 2 months during the school year. If the amount of Task Force meetings needs to change, this will be determined by the group in the future.
5. Group Discussion as needed—group discussion occurred during Task Force talk.
6. **Next Meeting – Thursday April 25th 9am** in FRC Portable. Do we need a different/bigger location? Ideas?
7. For **Task Force** portion of the meeting, please be prepared with:
   1. Top 3 community strengths
   2. Top 3 community needs
   3. Top 3 strengths you bring to the Task Force
   4. Top 3 needs you/your organization brings to the Task Force

Note: You may notice that I use the word “needs” rather than “weaknesses”. This is due to my training as a family counselor. Needs implies room for growth and an area for enhancement. I have intentionally used this word rather than weakness in an attempt to remain positive and growth focused.