



Dear Parents:

I hope that you enjoyed a long weekend with your child. We were pretty busy here on Friday afternoon and Monday. Among other tasks, we began working on our School Improvement Plan (SIP). All NC schools submit a 3-year plan for improvement and 2008 is our renewal year.

Writing an effective SIP requires a lot of reflection. I have been reflecting on what many educational leaders call *the age of accountability*. It is important to ask, “What is it that we want teachers and schools to do?” As a public organization, we work to maintain the public trust. Yet, we also face many political challenges that strain our efforts to do what, for us is most important: focusing on teaching and learning. In their day, teachers must be classroom managers and masters of curriculum (what we teach) and instruction (how we teach it). They are caregivers and child advocates, and they must perform administrative and management tasks. They also must remain attentive to the latest theory on teaching practices that work for students. Most importantly, they must build trusting relationships with students. It is not possible for all of their tasks to occur within the school day and it is not possible for them to carry out these responsibilities without flaw. In our profession, we rely heavily on reflection so that we can build upon our past performances. As we write our SIP, we look to the past to help us answer some challenging questions:

- *How do we sustain a strong arts education program when political processes in the name of accountability strictly emphasize reading and math?*
- *When we teach each child at his/her level, what do we do if that level is below or above the tested level?*
- *How do we organize classrooms for authentic learning when state assessments use a multiple-choice, bubble-sheet, all-or-nothing system—not because it’s a better assessment tool, but because it’s the least expensive to grade?*
- *How do we stay focused on “the big picture” so that we are doing what’s best for all of our students—the academically gifted, the learning disabled, the athlete, the musician, the scientist, etc.?*

We are advised to use data when we write our SIP goals. In our discussions, we identify that “data” is not just found in test scores. It is found in our observations of and conversations with our students at Fuller, and our goals

that we will focus on over the next three years will hopefully extend far beyond the limits of a reading/math score. We will elaborate on this topic more at the upcoming Fuller Family Nights. Please make an effort to attend.

No Child Left Behind Regulations

As part of NCLB, you must be afforded the option of requesting the qualifications of your child's teacher. Since we receive Title 1 funding, Wake County assures that each teacher I hire for Fuller is, as defined by the NCLB policy, highly qualified. All of our teachers are licensed in their teaching area and many have master's degrees in education. If you would like to request verification of this information by Human Resources, please contact me via the contact information on this attached form.

Open House

Thank you to those parents who made time to attend last week's Open House. Hopefully, you had an opportunity to speak with your child's classroom and elective teachers. We received a lot of positive feedback about the structure and time of the event. We also understand that the time did present challenges for some families. It is really difficult to create a schedule that accommodates all families. For our teachers, some of whom arrive to school as early as 7:30 AM, it is a priority to conclude the event as early as possible.

Interim Reports

Students in grades 2-5 should receive interim reports this week. It marks the mid-point of the first quarter of school. If your child is working at or above grade level, the teachers will note that. If your child is struggling in a certain subject area, please contact your child's teacher to find out how you can support your child at home.

Dates to Remember

October 5 th	Early Release Day
October 19 th	Fuller Family Night
October 19 th	School Pictures
October 26 th	End of 1 st Quarter
October 29 th	Teacher Workday
November 3 rd	Magnet Fair/Fuller Fall Festival