



WILSON NEWS

March 2008

Wilson Senior High School Quality School Review Report of Findings

The goal of the Quality School Review (QSR) is to Wilson Senior High School's strengths and areas for improvement relative to the following three elements: Teaching and Learning, Safe and Effective Learning Environment, and Parent and Community Involvement. These three elements are taken from the *QSR Benchmarks & School Quality Rubric* developed by the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) based on effective schools research. An external QSR team gathered information from teachers, students, parents, community members, and administrators. The methods of inquiry included classroom observations, gathering school documentation, and convening focus groups with key stakeholders. All questions were developed to draw-out data targeted to the three primary elements and the *School Quality Rubric*. The data was utilized by the review team to make determinations in relation to the final scores assigned to each of the Quality Statements. This report summarizes the key findings in the three primary elements.

Teaching and Learning

Rating: 2 = Partially meets standards

The school received an overall score of 2 for Teaching and Learning. The AP program at the school provided some evidence of high quality instructional programs for students. It was clear from the visit that the AP program is a central focus of the school. Student data, focus groups, and classroom observations, however, revealed a need for more effective instruction for all groups of students. Notably, there was a clear distinction between the quality of education received by white students and students of color. Student achievement data and focus groups highlighted inconsistent educational opportunities for students of color. The school should pay specific attention to the implementation of a school-wide initiative aligning classroom instruction to specific expectations, the school has significant potential to create an instructional program that effectively serves all students in the school.

Strengths 1. Academies within the school provide small learning communities for students. 2. The school has worked to implement specific strategies aimed at increasing student achievement such as the reading apprenticeship model. 3. Some departments use data to identify students achieving below grade level and make modifications to classroom instruction to support struggling students. 4. There is a robust and highly regarded AP program on campus.

Areas for Improvement Quality Instruction 1. Students did not consistently feel challenged at Wilson. Although students in AP courses expressed feeling challenged, students in courses that were not AP reported not feeling challenged. 2. The use of differentiated instructional strategies was inconsistent. Observations revealed that differentiation was infrequently used in

Continued on page 4

Wilson Book Fair @ P&P

Heartfelt thanks to the many people who came together to make the 2008 Wilson Book Fair at Politics and Prose a success! Wilson's proceeds from sales were **\$1,896**. In addition, you purchased **111 books**, valued at **\$1,562**, for Wilson's library and classrooms.

Thanks to all of you who shopped that weekend! You're the reason P&P makes Wilson one of its few exceptions. While their policy allows for one-day book fairs, public schools with strong community support are given two days. Twenty percent of your sales are given to the Wilson PTSA.

Thanks also go to the Wilson teachers and librarians for developing "wish lists," lists of books they would like to add to their classrooms and the library. It was a pleasure to deliver those books!

Volunteers staffed the Wilson table at P&P, helped guide shoppers in the selection of books from the wish lists, and shopped as well. Many thanks to Olivia Baker, Arlene Balkansky, Wendy Bogart, Jon Bush, Ruth Cohen, Jane Feller, Sharon Gillooly, Cary Griffin, Diz Hormel, Bill Jordan, Joy Kassett, Julie Koczela, Lynn Kamarck, Fran McCarthy, Jim Menderson, Mai Abdul Rahman, Penny Ray, and Sarah Whitener. **Special thanks are due to Politics and Prose, which donates tens of thousands of dollars to our local schools through book fairs.**

Book Fair Co-Chairs Kimla McDonald and Anna Marie Cirino



WILSON PHONATHON 2008 A GREAT SUCCESS – REMEMBER TO FOLLOWTHROUGH AND SEND IN YOUR PLEDGE COMMITMENT !!!

Thanks to the generosity of our many wonderful parent and guardian volunteers, Wilson staff, and our Wilson families, we have already raised over \$27,000 in donations during this year's Phonathon!!!

The Wilson PTSA and our children need every dime of the pledges made. Last year's contributions helped our school fund so many of the academic, arts and athletic activities that would otherwise be difficult to come by. So, please take a moment to write your pledge check and send it in! Here's all you do: make out your pledge check to the "Wilson PTSA" and please write "Phonathon" on the memo line of your check. Then, mail your check to: Wilson High School PTSA, 3950 Chesapeake St, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016. That's it! You can also drop your pledge check off in the Wilson PTSA mailbox in the Wilson office. If you can't remember the amount of your pledge, don't worry! Send in whatever you can, and be as generous as you can. If you have any questions whatsoever, call or e-mail your friendly Phonathon co-chairs, Carmen Carrera (363-1497; ccarrera@unitehere.org), Mary Ann Castillo (364-6718; Mac4700@verizon.net) or Mike Zoeller (244-2338; michael.zoeller@verizon.net).



Parents Weigh in on Principal Selection

Many of the 60 parents attending the February PTSA meeting provided suggestions regarding the principal selection process and also about the kinds of questions they wanted the selection committee to use in candidate interviews. It is hoped that interviews will take place in the April/May time period.

Following an update provided by members of the Principal Selection Panel (Co-presidents Mary Giffin and Columbus Spruell, and also Chuck Samuels) a number of issues were discussed such as how competitive the DCPS principal salary structure was, and how the panel was reaching out to identify potential candidates.

Attendees were also provided with two documents – a 2-page list of principal selection criteria that parents and other members of the Wilson community identified in a special community meeting last summer; and a list of possible interview questions that the selection panel has developed. A number of suggestions were made about additional questions that should be considered and about how questions might be revised. The selection panel members who were present said they would share these suggestions with the full panel and incorporate them.

DCCAS Testing in April – 10th Graders Unite!

As many of you may know one of the reasons that Wilson has not achieved targets prescribed by the No Child Left Behind Law (NCLB) is attendance at the test – in selected prior years, not enough 10th grade students attended school to take the test on test days. It is critical for Wilson that all 10th graders come to school and participate in the testing. Wilson's administration, the Student Government Association, the LSRT and the PTSA are all working together to encourage all students to attend, including a variety of incentives for students.

Parents of 10th graders – please help Wilson achieve the national goals for our students by ensuring that your child attends school on April 22-May 3, arrives on time, has a good breakfast and a good night's sleep the night before. Thank you!

Seeking Nominations For PTSA Officers

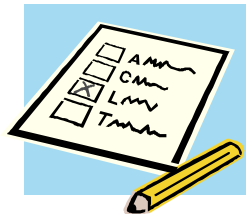
A nominating committee has been formed to identify and accept nominations for PTSA Executive Board Officers for the 2008-2009 School Year. If you have any interest in working with the PTSA Executive Board next year, please contact one of the individuals listed below. We encourage both self-nominations as well as recommendations of others who you think would like to participate! Positions include: co-presidents, treasurers, recording and corresponding secretary, and several vice president positions. Members of the nominating committee include:

Carmen Carrera (ccarrera@unitehere.org, 202-393-4373 Ext 345)

Erica Ling (ehling@aya.yale.edu, 202-966-2554)

Jude Landis (jude_landis@fanniemae.com, 202-752-4961)

Susan Carter (Susanc373@aol.com, 240-542-1960 ext 3031)



Wilson ESL Teacher Publishes Book

Nancy Wadsworth Duncan, who teaches international studies and ESL (English as a second language) at Wilson has recently published [The Nail That Sticks Up, An American Woman in Asia and Africa](#) (published by Publish America in Baltimore). It looks like a great read! According to the book cover: "Since 1982 Nancy has been traveling the globe, with backpack and unflagging curiosity about non-Western cultures. This book is her tale of adventures on two continents – Asia and Africa – and her portrayal of the people she's met along the way. Equal parts vivid description, anthropological observation, and ironic commentary, this book is an amusing, insightful depiction of everyday life in places that are simultaneously very different and surprisingly similar, from Japanese after-hours debauchery to Central African sorcery to an Afro-Japanese wedding in a Shinto shrine."



Restructuring Proposal Submitted to DCPS

After months of hard work, a proposal for improving Wilson under the NCLB Restructuring requirements has been completed. This proposal is meant to be the beginning of discussions with Michelle Rhee about moving forward. The proposal was reviewed by the LSRT, which had no objections and received a favorability rating of 91.4% from the WTU staff. A copy of the proposal will be posted on the www.wilsonhs.org. Principal Williams will provide a copy of the proposal to key DCPS staff including Tracy Martin, Chancellor Rhee and Pat Tucker. Many thanks to those parents, faculty, staff and students for all of the hours expended to produce this important document.



Giant A+ Bonus Bucks

Giant would like to sincerely thank all of the schools and loyal customers who have helped make the A+ BonusBucks Program a great success!

March marks the final month of the 2007-2008 A+ BonusBucks program, which officially concludes on April 3, 2008. To date, we have raised \$1036.07. The final calculation will be made at the end of the month and we will receive a check in that amount to use for our school's educational needs.

Facility Update (3/11/08)

MODERNIZATION OF WILSON HIGH SCHOOL:

The Architectural Firm of Grimm + Parker have begun the survey portion of the modernization of Wilson High School. They started with an enthusiastic meeting with faculty and staff on Feb. 19th and are continuing the process. Tentatively they are scheduled for the April 9th PTSA meeting to talk to interested parents, and receive their input into the future design of our school. Parents and students can also access the survey at www.gparch.com/links/wwhs/index.html.

EMERGENCY EXIT DOOR UPGRADE:

With a few minor exceptions (replacement of faulty electrical connections) the work on the emergency door exits has been completed, and it is tied into the new security monitoring system. The remaining two doors with electrical problems should be completed by Friday the 14th if not sooner. We are also working with DCPS security personnel to evaluate enhancing the existing security cameras to adequately increase coverage throughout the building.

AIR CONDITIONING OF ALL WILSON CLASS-ROOMS:

The electrical surveys have been completed, and the target date for completion is by sometime around the 1st to the 15th of May.

WALL PLASTERING:

We are about 30% completed with the plastering work needed to repair walls and window areas from years of water leaks from the roof and eaves. This work should be completed by the end of May and we will commence with painting the repaired halls, offices, classrooms.

WILSON'S COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL:

The official groundbreaking ceremony for the swimming pool is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 13th between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. The target date for completion should be the start of school year 2009-2010.

Wilson Wins 3rd Metro Championship in a Row!

At Metro Championships this March 7th and 8th, Wilson took 1st place in the Metro Region for Policy Debate for the third year in a row!

Standouts were the team of Joe Berman and Frank Morison, taking 2nd place in varsity, Charles Pulliam-Moore and Zoe Walpole taking 2nd place in JV, Clara Maeder and Nell Koring, 7th place in JV and the team of Ben Horkley and Dylan Oliver taking 8th place in JV. Joe and Frank will represent DC at the National Championships over Memorial Day weekend. Thanks to everyone for the terrific effort this year and to the parents for their continued support.
Mrs. Anderson



Student Government News

Every second Saturday, the Student Government Association (SGA) makes their way to downtown O and 71st street to be among the many volunteers for an organization called So Others Might Eat (SOME) that provides breakfast and lunch for the homeless and hungry. The SGA gets up bright and early on these Saturday mornings to serve breakfast. "It was a great experience. The people were so nice. All you had to do was wear a smile, a funky baseball cap, and serve. I'll definitely be going back," said Alexis Chaney, SGA Vice President and a senior at Wilson. In order to tag along and serve, students have to tie their hair back into a baseball cap, wear pants, closed-toed shoes, and long-sleeved shirts. These requirements are simply for safety and hygiene. The employees there give you a task. You could be doing anything from handing a plateful of food to every customer to actually making the pancakes. The process of feeding the room full of people has to go by quickly in order for everyone to be served. Clean-up after every group of people leaves is also important. After you serve during the full breakfast time slot, which has the duration of something between an hour to an hour and a half, you are invited to eat with the employees there. And the food is really good. Promise. You do have to get up really early and be there at around seven in the morning, but you're done within the next two hours and you can go home and sleep! "It does not take up that much of your Saturday at all," exclaimed Angelica Gregory, SGA President and also a senior at Wilson. I think I speak for all of the SGA when I say that we hope to encourage all Wilson students to come and join us every second Saturday morning of the month! Feeding the homeless is really not as scary as it sounds. It's actually very rewarding and it is worth around five community service hours every time. Contact Ms. Gibson in room 219 to sign up!



Other SGA concerns at the moment include plans for the Spring Disco Dance, scheduled for late April. It will be held at Wilson, probably in the gym. SGA members are working on organizing security, concessions, decorations, advertising and tickets, and clean-up. We want several groups and organizations to sell food during the dance so as to not put this responsibility on any one club. Please contact Ms. Bess if your club or organization is interested in selling concessions during the spring dance. We do not want anyone to go hungry. We are also looking for a DJ who will play a variety of music genres. Even better, if you or your club would like to attend our weekly meetings on Tuesdays during lunch in Ms. Bess room 111, you can get more involved in all of these interesting events that are going on. This way, you would definitely have a say in what we do next. (Sometimes we even serve pizza!) Hope to see you there!

~Natalie Plumb, senior (SGA Secretary)

PTSA Hospitality served a hot lunch to the teachers and staff on parent teacher conference day, February 29th. The lunch was catered by New Course Catering, which teaches homeless individuals cooking as a career. Our volunteers were Pat Ogunyale, Venecia White, Juanita Blassingame, and Sarah Whitener. The Wilson custodians helped out, too. Thanks!

We served cake and punch to more than 50 Wilson students and their families on February 20th. The students had just been inducted into the National Honor Society. Mary Ann Castillo, Lucrella Laudi, and Anna Cirino were our volunteers at the reception. Many other parents stopped by and helped at these events, as well. Thanks to them, too. And thanks to Ms. Gardner for sharing the library with us. Thanks also to the Wilson students on staff at Giant who helped make the wonderful cakes. If you would like to volunteer at upcoming hospitality events, send Ellen an e-mail at ellenleander@starpower.net.
Melissa Friedland and Ellen Leander



Continued from page 1

classes with students that needed it the most.

Advanced classes more consistently employed differentiation and higher order questioning.

Instructional Expectations-There was little evidence of clear expectations for classroom teachers in regards to classroom instruction. Although there is a general expectation to meet AYP, teachers reported not having a clearly defined set of expectations for classroom instruction.

Instructional Leadership - Instructional leadership is fragmented as it relies on department chairs to create and maintain school vision. Instructional leadership comes from within each department, which has led to a fragmented approach to school leadership.

Professional Development -Professional Development for teachers is limited and not aligned to a specific school-wide focus. Although staff felt generally supported in obtaining professional development opportunities off campus and at national conferences, the school would benefit from on-campus professional development on campus and aligned to the specific initiatives of the school.

Student Support and Data - Students reported that support was dependent on individual teachers and voluntary after school support programs. Data is not used systematically school-wide to identify and support struggling students. Student support is provided by individual departments.

Teacher Collaboration - Collaboration time is honored but not effectively utilized. The collaboration time lacks expectations, structures to support collaboration, and systems of accountability. Teachers reported that collaboration time does not work.

Teacher Evaluation System - Although teachers are formally evaluated by administrators, feedback from administration is infrequent and invaluable. Teachers reported getting the most valuable feedback from students, parents, and occasionally colleagues.

Safe and Effective Learning Environment

Rating: 2 = Partially meets standards

The school received an overall score of 2 for Safe and Effective Learning Environment. The school provides a generally clean and safe environment for students. However, inconsistent enforcement of school policies impacted staff, student, and parent feelings about the school environment. Additionally, all stakeholder groups reported having very different experiences at the school, which could be attributed to a lack of unified and consistent leadership.

Strengths

School is clean and safe. Hallways were orderly and quiet during class.

Areas for Improvement

School Management and Leadership - Leadership at the school is fragmented and considered by many to be ineffective. Departments were reported to provide the most specific leadership for teachers, which left the staff with unclear expectations, and a general lack of confidence in the school leadership. According to both staff and students, school administrators are inconsistent in their enforcement of school rules.

Student Discipline- The school community does not appear to adhere to a consistent discipline policy.

Parent and Community Involvement

Rating: 3 = Partially meets standards

The school received an overall score of 3 for Parent and Community Involvement. Parents play a significant role at the school and provide extensive leadership. It was clear that the community of parents have taken responsibility for improving communication to parents, planning school-wide activities, reaching out to other families. Additionally, there appears to have been a recent push to ensure that Latino and African-American families are included in the school community. The school would benefit from a structured process for parent involvement implemented by the school administration. Additionally, there was little evidence of community partnerships.

Strengths There is extensive parent involvement.

Areas for Improvement **Parent Involvement** - There should be an increase in outreach and support for parents of minority students by the school leadership. There is inconsistent communications to the home. Parents unanimously said they are not satisfied with communication from the school. Although parents are actively involved at the school, they did not feel as if the school was open to parent involvement.

Community Collaboration The school does not have community partners as a support for students and the school community.



Woodrow Wilson High School

WASHINGTON, DC

**Open Houses
For
Prospective Parents and Students
2008-2009 School Year**

**Only two Fridays remaining
Friday, April 4, 2008 & Friday April 18, 2008**

9:00 am - 11:00 am

**Room 124
3950 Chesapeake Street, NW
Washington, DC 20016
(Tenleytown Metro Stop– Red Line)**

**For more information, contact:
Main Office
Wilson Senior High School**

Feedback on New Security Procedures

A number of students and parents have been sending information to Wilson and DCPS administrators regarding their experience with the new morning entry system. Wilson administration is continuing to monitor how the new system works. Please send any observations you may have to giffinM@gao.gov.

Woodrow Wilson Senior High School PTSA
3950 Chesapeake ST. NW
Washington, DC 20016
Phone: 202 282-0120

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 8056
Washington, DC



On April 4 - 5th, Wilson will for the second consecutive year put on 24 hour plays for which Wilson students write, direct and perform a series of short plays. On Friday afternoon, April 4th,(a half day) students will participate in acting, directing or play-writing workshops followed by a general meeting of all participants. Students playwrights will write plays on Friday afternoon and evening. The plays rehearse all day Saturday and will be performed at 7:30 pm on Saturday, April 5th.

Dates To Remember

March

12-13 DC-BAS Benchmark Testing
13 National French Exam
14 Open House
19 PTSA/ Mtg 7:00 pm Auditorium
20 End of 3rd Advisory
21-28 Spring Break

April

4 Juice & Tea for Parents with Ms. Williams
4 Open House
4 Students Dismissed at 12:15 pm Grades Due
9 PTSA/ Meeting 7:00 pm Library
11 3rd Advisory Report Cards Issued
11 Mixed Dance Group
16 Emancipation Day (Holiday)
18 Open House
21-25 DC-CASS Testing
21 4th Advisory Progress Reports Issued for Seniors
24-26 Wilson Players Spring Play
29 4th Advisory Progress Reports Due (Grades 9-

DC CAS TESTING April 22 -

May 3rd

Students must

**arrive on
time!**



Wilson Senior High School
Jacqueline Williams, Interim Principal

PTSA Co-Presidents
Mary Giffin Columbus Spruell

Newsletter Editor
Toni Hughes
Newsletter Translation
Vilma Williams
Newsletter Distribution
Lory Yudin

Don't Miss them: A Musical and a Play at Wilson in April!!



The Wiz, will be performed on Thursday, April 10 (7:00 pm) and Saturday, April 12th (6:00 p.m.) in the Wilson Auditorium. Tickets can be purchased at the door. Come and enjoy the music and performances! (Note - the audience will sit in the auditorium.)

The Phantom Tollbooth
April 24, 25 and 26th, 7:30 pm, Wilson Pool Entrance, Tickets purchased at the door. (Audience seating on stage - limited tickets available each night) Don't miss this wonderful retelling of a favorite book about Milo, Tock and the many interesting encounters they have in an unusual world.!

