

BSF NEWSLETTER
May 2012

The Brookwood Schools Foundation began in 2002 and was re-formed in 2010 by a group of sincere, dedicated families looking to improve the status and reputation of our community. We have a strong belief that the success of every community is driven by the achievements of the local public school system, the local business environment, and the ability of the local residents to join together for the good of the community. When all three segments work together, a synergy is created that is self-perpetuating. The net result, when all three work together, is a successful school cluster, a thriving business environment, and a well maintained residential community whose property values out-perform other communities.

If you ask any realtor, “what is the single most important factor people look for when moving to a new community”, they will, without hesitation, answer “The reputation of the local public schools”. Why is that? Well, when the local school cluster outperforms other clusters, it attracts a more motivated homeowner; one that is deeply involved with their children’s education and that cares deeply about the safety and success of the local community. These homeowners are driven by a culture that dictates that “education” is the most important aspect of a child’s upbringing and, as a result, they build the culture of the community around education and activities associated with education.

As the reputations of the schools improve, the value of local residential property improves. This brings in a more stable group of homeowners with more disposable income. As the homeowners spend this income within the community, businesses prosper.

Our mission for the Foundation is to raise money through a variety of methods. This money is given to the schools via a grant procedure to provide funding for innovative programs, equipment / technology, and creative teaching methods to enhance the learning opportunities for the students of the Brookwood Cluster Schools.

Since 2002, over \$145,000 has been provided in grant monies to assist educators with innovative projects, equipment, technology, and teaching methods that would not have been funded through the county or state. These programs have helped our Brookwood Cluster students rise to the high levels of excellence our School Cluster has attained.

Examples that are readily seen include equipment and technology such as Smart Boards, Mimeo’s, Elmo’s, Overhead Projectors, and Hand Held Technology. Computer programs and software enhancements are prevalent. If you came from another school cluster, visit another school cluster, or speak with someone from another cluster; ask about the technology in their classrooms. You will find that the classrooms in the Brookwood Cluster have many times more the amount of learning equipment, software, and technology.

We recently hosted our Second Annual Awards Dinner. It was held at Summit Chase Country Club and we had about 70 representatives from local businesses, schools, and government. We were appreciative to have our guests include Dr. Robert McClure (GCPS Board Member), Mike Beaudreau (Gwinnett County Commissioner), and David Casas (Georgia State House of Representatives). The dinner served several purposes:

Most importantly, the event provided the platform to honor several of our teachers from within the Cluster. Grants were submitted, reviewed, selected, and approved. Over \$21,000 was awarded to the seven schools to further the academic progress of our outstanding students.

As we continue to “get the word out” throughout the community about the Foundation, the

attendance of local influential business owners/operators helps to create ambassadors within our Cluster. Many voices are now helping to tell the tale of our organization.

We are pleased to announce that we received over \$20,000 in pledges during the dinner to help provide funds for next year's grants.

Now the bad news..... For the fifth year in a row the GCPS will be forced to cut back on the money allocated to each school. Schools are funded by our property taxes and, as we all know, property values have fallen. Consequently the taxes collected have also fallen. Our School Board must operate with a balanced budget, therefore each school must find ways to "tighten their belts". Class sizes have increased, teachers have been reassigned, and many of the extras we have grown accustomed to have been eliminated. While GCPS still has found ways to keep our District as one of the best in the country, more cuts are coming.

The Brookwood Schools Foundation is trying to do our part to help offset these budget cuts by offering grants to the schools to fund purchases for items and programs that couldn't be purchased otherwise. It's our small contribution to the schools and the community.

If you wish to help your schools and your community, donations can be made:

- **Via Pay Pal on our website (BSFpride.org), or**
- **Via check sent to the following address:**

**Brookwood Schools Foundation
P.O. Box 472
Snellville, Georgia 30078**

Lastly, we ask that you look for our logo in the window of local businesses and support them with your patronage. They are working to support your children and your community; please give them the opportunity to take care of your needs.