

NH Citizens Voice Project
Lincoln Woodstock Community Forum

On April 29, 2003, a Citizens Voice Forum was held in the Lin-Wood Public School to discuss components of a quality education. This information will be shared with the School Board and will in turn be forwarded to our policy makers at the state and federal level so that they understand what our community values in education. Twenty-four members of the community participated representing parents, local elected officials, senior citizens and interested community members.

Breaking into two small groups, each was asked what results they wanted from our schools. The top ten priorities in group one were:

1. Challenging Curriculum
2. Curriculum committee on-going
3. Schools need partnerships with agencies need to work together to support families
4. Parents understand and are part of educational process, their student's education and how it relates
5. Instructional methods for all students
6. Physical space one we are proud of and is conducive to learning
7. Teachers to be up to date on latest education information and apply that to their teaching
8. Success for all students
9. Exposed to cultural diversity
10. Children are prepared for best fitting future more secondary education and job training

In group two the top 10 priorities were:

1. Inspire desire for lifelong learning
2. Ability to meet individual and social needs
3. Students with positive self-image
4. Provide pleasant and safe environment for learning
5. Challenge and motivate students
6. Cover basics in education
7. Public participation, being an effective community member
8. Teach decision-making and communication skills
9. Meet needs of advanced students
10. Opportunities to develop and identify individual talents

Both groups focused on the knowledge and skills that students will need when they graduate from the Lin-Wood Public School to assure their readiness to meet the challenges of their adult lives. In addition, they discussed the importance of professional development for teachers and the link to the quality of teaching and learning.

After reviewing the top ten priorities of what the results are that we want from our school, the follow-up question was "What component or building blocks do we need to achieve the priorities?"

Group I Components:

1. Don't let any student fall through the cracks

2. Staff has skills to implement the curriculum
3. Curriculum committee on-going
4. Maintain challenge at all levels
5. Devise ways/strategies to keep parent involved as kids get older
6. Technology
7. Professional development/all different learning styles
8. Curriculum has to include higher order thinking skills
9. Parent participation and support
10. Involve students giving them a sense of ownership in the school facilities

Group II Components:

1. Excellent teachers
2. Financial resources
3. Excellent administration
4. Discipline and order
5. Parent participation
6. Culture of respect
7. Professional development
8. Good communication
9. Community that supports and values education
10. Tools, books, computers, teaching materials

Both groups talked about the importance of parental involvement starting in kindergarten and continuing until graduation. High quality teachers and professional development to assure this high quality was also emphasized in each group. Another important point that was discussed was the on-going need to have the resources available to our school to implement our educational programs; i.e.: textbooks, supplies and technology.

The input gathered from this Citizens Voice Forum will be shared with the School Board as they are setting forth their vision for the next five years, and will also be shared with our school improvement team and of course our entire staff. Families will receive this information in the first newsletter next fall, which is mailed home each month.