



December 4, 2006

Dear All:

Attached you will find the complete set of recommendations that has been received from the community so far. You have worked very hard to create these solutions to address poverty in our community and to improve the quality of life for all Athenians. Thank you for your work!

There are over 100 recommendations addressing a variety of issues including Education, Early Learning, Dependent Care, the Economy, Housing, Health, Workforce, Mentoring, Service Providers, Transportation, and Adult Education.

Your participation and recommendations have made several things very clear. First, poverty affects all of us. It reflects negatively on our community and limits economic growth. Poverty makes government, education, health care, and social services more expensive not just for the poor, but for everyone.

As a community we have learned that the issues of poverty are interrelated and must be addressed with a holistic approach. High expectations must be maintained not only of our citizens, but also of our institutions. Business as usual is not working. To break the cycle of poverty we need innovation and creativity.

During the next two months we will continue working with the committee chairs and Steering Committee to research and refine the recommendations. The Steering Committee will agree upon the set of PPA recommendations at its retreat in February. These PPA recommendations will be posted on the web and discussed with you at Town Meetings in March prior to them being sent to the Co-Conveners for their approval. Your continued involvement is critical to ultimate success.

Thank you for your commitment to our community!

Sincerely,  
Steve Jones, Chairman  
Partners For A Prosperous Athens

**DRAFT – December 6, 2006**

**Partners for Prosperous Athens Early Care and Learning Work Group**

**Vision:** All young children in Clarke County will be ready to succeed in school and beyond.

**Mission Statement:** To reduce poverty in the next generation of Athenians by ensuring that all young children in Clarke County can experience high quality early care and learning in a safe and caring environment at home and in out-of-home early care and learning programs.

**Objective I:** Increase access to high quality early care and learning programs for children living in poverty and near poverty:

**Recommendations for Objective I:**

1. Educate the community about the need for quality early care and learning programs for all children.
2. Increase financial assistance for child care.
  - a. Advocate for increased federal funding for child care.
  - b. Create "Hope" Scholarships for Babies.
  - c. Seek employer support for child care for their employees (collaborate with the PPA-Work Force Committee regarding employer support for child care, research ways in which employers can do this, support development of child care center at UGA for employees/faculty).
  - d. Seek support from faith communities for child care for children living in poverty or near poverty and/or for children of their parishioners
3. Increase number of high quality private early care and learning centers and homes
  - a. Provide training followed by on-site technical assistance to improve quality.
  - b. Ask UGA and Athens Tech to find faculty and graduate students willing to volunteer free professional development for child care settings serving low income children.
  - c. Encourage civic clubs and faith communities to "adopt" early care and learning centers and homes and provide resources to improve the program/facility and to cover costs of seeking accreditation.
4. Preserve and expand government-funded programs (Early Head Start, Head Start, pre-K) to serve all eligible children in the community.
5. Provide Head Start for 3-year olds
6. Develop an annual agenda for early childhood development in the Athens area. This agenda could include:
  - a. Legislation and/or school policies that need to be addressed
  - b. Funding needs and where the funding can come from
  - c. Invite elected officials to events at early childhood sites and share our agenda with them and ask for their support
  - d. Maintain ongoing contact with our elected officials to help assure their ongoing support

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**Objective II:** Increase the supply of programs that are effective in developing parenting skills and behaviors that promote healthy early child development in all developmental areas to facilitate children's success in school and life.

### **Recommendations for Objective II:**

1. Educate the community about the need for opportunities for parents to enhance their parenting skills and for adult education.
2. Support the continuation and expansion of comprehensive family literacy programs such as Even Start. (See note below for a description of Even Start.)
3. Increase accessibility of effective parent education programs; preserve the best practices of Even Start within these programs
  - a. Expand the adult education, family literacy, and parenting skills components of Early Head Start, Head Start, and other early care and learning programs.
  - b. Write a grant for the new federal Reading First Program and supplement the best practices it excludes by partnering with others in the community to offer adult education and family engagement.
  - c. Build a core of advocates who will work to secure funding for adult education and parenting skills programs.
4. Increase supply of effective programs for addressing challenges to parenting such as lack of education and job skills, homelessness, chemical dependency, teen parenthood, mental illness and domestic violence.
5. Develop a Family Mentoring Program with emphasis on supporting parents from birth.
6. Develop a nurturing environment in Clarke County for young children and their families through provision of mentoring and faith-based initiatives.

Note 1: Programs like Even Start ensure that parents in need of a GED or ESOL instruction who have child care needs would be able to attend classes. High quality Early Learning Classrooms are housed in the same building as Adult Education Classes. Children receive readiness skills to prepare them for school while parents are working on ESOL or GED skills. Parents are also supported as the first and most important teacher through parenting workshops and through ongoing support. The four components of a comprehensive Family Literacy Program are...

- High Quality Early Childhood Education
- High Quality Adult Education (GED and ESOL)
- Parenting Education
- Interactive Parent/Child Literacy Activities

Name:  
Paula Schwanenflugel

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7065424273

Committee/Sub-Committee:  
Dependent Care

List the Learning(s) that this recommendation is addressing:  
Training

Write the Committee Recommendation:  
Ask UGA and Athens Tech to find faculty and graduate students willing to volunteer free professional development for child care settings serving low income children. This could be assistance with the development of family literacy programs or in professional development of the staff.

Identify any research or other kinds of information that was used to craft this recommendation:

Aram, D., & Biron, S. (2004). Joint storybook reading and joint writing interventions among low SES preschoolers: Differential contributions to early literacy. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 19, 588-610.  
Bus, A. G., van Ijzendoorn, M. H., & Pellegrini, A. D. (1995). Joint book reading makes for success in learning to read: A meta-analysis on intergenerational transmission of literacy. *Review of Educational Research*, 65, 1-21.  
Byrne, B., & Fielding-Barnsley, R. F. (1991). Evaluation of a program to teach phonemic awareness to young children: A one-year follow-up. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 85, 104-111.  
Dickinson, D.K., & Tabors, P.O. (2002). Fostering Language and Literacy in Classrooms and Homes. *Supporting Language Learning. Young Children*, 57, 10-18.  
Dunn, L., Beach, S.A., & Kontos, S. (1994). Quality of the literacy environment in day care and children's development. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 9, 24-34.  
Girolametto, L., Weitzman, E., & Greenberg, J. (2003). Training day care staff to facilitate children's language. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 12, 299-311.

etc. etc.

Identify additional research or information that could help clarify this committee recommendation. List potential sources if possible.

Indicate people or groups that we need to talk to help clarify this committee recommendation. List any recommended locations.

Paula Schwanenflugel  
Stacey Neuharth-Pritchett  
Hilary Ruston

Forces that support:

Forces that oppose:  
Child care settings might not want professional development because it may take teachers out of their classrooms for some short period of time.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION WORKSHEET

### I. List the Learning(s) that this recommendation is addressing:

- **WRITE THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION\*\* (limit focus to one subject or action item, more than one recommendation may be needed to address a particular learning ):**

Develop a Family Mentoring Program with an emphasis on supporting parents, with and without disabilities, and their children, with and without disabilities, from birth on.

- **Identify any research, or other kinds of information that was used to craft this recommendation.** (add additional sheets as necessary)
- **Identify additional research or information that could help clarify this committee recommendation. List potential sources if possible.**
- **Indicate people or groups that we need to talk to help clarify this committee recommendation. List any recommended locations.**
- **What kind of action or resources would be necessary to implement the recommendation?**

### II. Indicate what forces and influences are likely to occur that will support or oppose implementation.

**Forces that support (please list):**

**Forces that oppose (please list):**

**\*\*As information is received and/or clarified, these potential recommendations may change or be discarded.**