



Muscofee County School District

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For Immediate Release

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NEWS RELEASE

Cornerstone and the Muscofee County Schools Winter Meeting

Literacy Theme: Rigor-Relevance-Results
“Real World, My World”
January 14-16, 2009

(Columbus, GA)-How do you make rigorous learning the essential classroom dimension? Public school educators from across the district will gather for three days, Wednesday, January 14, - Friday, January 16, 2009, to consider how the “outside world” as well as the “world of their individual schools” can merge to broaden and build the vision for student achievement.

On day one, teachers, principals, and district leaders will examine onsite classrooms, explore research, and observe lessons to increase their understanding of how environment and leadership play major roles in the development of educational rigor, relevance, and results. With much of the three days spent in classrooms with children, participants will hear Ray Suarez, a Washington based senior-correspondent for *The NewsHour*, challenge the audience when they gather early for the conference. In his warm and engaging style, Suarez will consider how social dynamics, economy and culture, politics and technology, and even global environmental threats become “drivers” that shape our cultural landscape and education.

Active adult learning opportunities will be a centerpiece when the author of *“Mosaic of Thought”* and professional developer Ellin Keene shows what it “feels like” to experience the outcomes and dimensions of rigorous literacy learning. Taking learning to higher levels, Ellin will spark imaginations by showing how to make student thinking “visible.”

On the final day, the lesson study will play out in observed classrooms as students inquire into important topics and share their learning. Effective schools use “lesson study” (studying the impact of a lesson on student learning and improving the lesson potential through a collaborative process). This develops a collective attitude of “we can do this” among the adults in the school. School teams will then go behind the scenes of these elegant classroom lessons to learn how they were developed. Later in the day, differentiated opportunities for replicating these classroom environments and lessons will be provided. School teams will plan their own inquiry lesson or an entire unit based upon their standards. Every aspect of the conference experience will demonstrate the goal and build the vision of “you can do this” in every school to build rigor, create relevance, and reap results.

Cornerstone is a national literacy initiative of The New York Institute for Special Education with offices in Philadelphia, PA. Since its inception in 2000, Cornerstone has worked in 66 schools in 14 different school districts, primarily in the South and Northeast. Cornerstone began its partnership with the Muscogee County School District in 2004.

For more information during the conference, call Valerie Fuller, Director of Communications, 706-527-9962, or Janet Cumbee, 256-872-8888, or e-mail communications@mcsdga.net.

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