More than 150 school leaders, law enforcement officials and representatives of government and community agencies gathered at UNCW’s Watson College of Education (WCE) on Dec. 11 to hear regional experts including Chief District Court Judge J.H. Corpening II and District Attorney Ben David discuss programs underway to stop the school to prison pipeline.

“Zero-tolerance policies introduced in the 1980s with the War on Drugs led to a rapid escalation of incarcerated youth in the United States,” Corpening said during his keynote address. Of the 10.2 million people incarcerated in the world today, nearly a quarter are in the U.S., “and many of those impacted are school-aged children,” he said.

New Hanover County (NHC) is working to reverse the trend through a collaborative effort involving schools, law enforcement, community agencies and the courts. The goal is to put positive behavioral interventions in place and overhaul the discipline policy in area schools.

“School suspensions and referrals to law enforcement have increased dramatically in recent decades, yet there is no research anywhere that shows that suspensions have a positive impact on behavior,” Corpening said. “Instead, they have led to an increase in high-school dropouts and youth incarceraions.”

The approach underway in New Hanover County is modeled after a highly successful effort initiated a decade ago by Judge Steven Teske in Clayton County, Georgia. Corpening met Teske at a 2012 summit in New York City, an experience that he says changed his life. When Corpening returned to Wilmington, he presented the model to New Hanover Schools Superintendent Tim Markley. Markley immediately agreed to Corpening’s proposal to launch a similar initiative here, Corpening said.

District Attorney Ben David cited the massacre at Columbine High School as the event that triggered a crackdown on youth violence and contributed to what is now called the “School to Prison Pipeline.” It will take a continued concerted effort by school administrators, public officials, mental health experts, law enforcement, the courts and the business and broader community to initiate positive, preventative measures that stop the pipeline, he said.

Other presenters and discussants at the event were Judy Stubblefield, behavior specialist, NHC Schools; Kathy Stoute and Teresa Huffman of NHC Community Justice Services; Robert Smith, professor at WCE; Kayce Smith, Teacher of the Year, Brunswick County Schools; David Hand, social worker at Laney High School; Larry Bonney, an ex-FBI agent and leader in NHC’s Safer Schools and Youth Violence initiatives; Clifford Barnett, pastor of Warner Temple AME Zion Church and a leader in local faith-based initiatives to stop gang warfare and protect youth; and Jana Jones Halls, executive director of the Blue Ribbon Commission.

(See full description link for the rest of this article)

Welcome to the Southeastern North Carolina Dropout Prevention Newsletter. We highlight dropout prevention activities and accomplishments in the region as well as local and national events, resources, funding and research. Please send us your stories, highlights, accomplishments and upcoming events.

‘Stopping the School to Prison Pipeline’ Dropout Prevention Coalition Event Draws Standing Room Only Crowd
Justice Reinvestment in North Carolina: Three Years Later

Though stopping the school to prison pipeline is focused on reducing the incarceration of juveniles, the 2011 Justice Reinvestment Act has been successful in reducing the incarceration of adult offenders. Since 2010, North Carolina has closed 10 prisons, hired 175 more probation officers and seen an 11 percent drop in crime. These changes are expected to save $560 million by 2017.


North Carolina Approves Two Alternative Tests to the GED

Good news! There are two alternative tests students can take in NC for high school equivalency starting this month. The two alternatives available are High School Equivalency Test HiSET®Educational Testing Services and Test Assessing Secondary Completion TASC™CTB/McGraw-Hill. The New GED has been failing the majority of students taking it and costs significantly more. www.npr.org/blogs/ed/2015/01/09/375440666/a-sizable-decrease-in-those-passing-the-ged?utm_source=npr_email_a_friend&utm_medium=email&utm_content=20150112&utm_campaign=storyshare&utm_term

Watson College of Education Speaker Series Presents Kenneth Cushner

The Challenge of Addressing the Intercultural Dimension in International Education

Kenneth Cushner, professor of multicultural and international education at Kent State University, is an author and editor of several books and articles in the field of intercultural education, including: Human Diversity in Education: An Intercultural Approach (8th ed., 2015); Intercultural Student Teaching: A Bridge to Global Competence (2007); Beyond Tourism: A Practical Guide to Meaningful Educational Travel (Rowman Littlefield, 2004); and Intercultural Interactions: A Practical Guide (2nd ed. 1996). Prior to his university appointment, he taught in schools in Switzerland, Australia and the United States, and has traveled with young people and teachers on all seven continents.

A former East-West Center scholar, Cushner is a founding fellow and past-president of the International Academy for Intercultural Research; was a Fulbright Scholar to Sweden; coordinated Semester at Sea’s Teachers at Sea program (2010 and 2011); and twice served as director of COST – the Consortium for Overseas Student Teaching.

LECTURE - Monday, Feb. 16, 2015
- 4:15-4:45 p.m. – Reception in McNeil Hall Lobby
- 5:00-6:30 p.m. – Lecture and Q&A in McNeil Lecture Hall (Room 1005)

DISCUSSION - Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2015
Education Building Room 162
- 9:30-10:30 a.m. – Open Discussion with Faculty/Staff
- 10:50-11:50 a.m. – Open Discussion with Students
North Carolina News

In NC Schools, There’s One Counselor For Every 400 Students

Taken from WUNC REEMA KHRAIS - full article at wunc.org/post/nc-schools-theres-one-counselor-every-400-students

During lunchtime, school counselor Kim Hall takes a break from her desk and roams the hallways of Providence Grove High School. On her five-minute walk, she encourages a senior to apply to UNC, consoles a student dealing with a scratchy throat and reminds a young teenager to see a teacher. “We try to make sure that we’re accessible to students during their free times,” Hall says.

Hall has been a school counselor for 29 years. She says she tries to make more time for students as her clerical duties have grown over the years. When she first started, she was one of four counselors. Today, she is one of two counselors in a school with more than 800 students. That means more work and more school programs to manage. “Not only have they taken away the number of counselors... but then they have added on more programs and then they think, ‘Oh, who’s going to take care of that? Oh we’ll have the counselor do it!’” she says. And it’s not just more programs. Across from her desk, there’s a large stack of folders filled with student test scores. They’ve landed in her office after Randolph County cut its testing coordinators last year. “[They] need to be filed,” she says. “Things they don’t tell you in school counselor school that you get to do.”

Lawmakers did past legislation last year though to make sure that counselors do not coordinate the actual tests, since that eats up hours and hours of their time.

But, still, their role is more demanding than before, according to Cynthia Floyd, student support services consultant for school counseling at the Department of Public Instruction. “Less than 10 years ago, we had 1.3 million students, now we have 1.5 million students in the public schools of North Carolina,” she says. “So, we really don’t see the increase in counselors keeping up with the increase in student body.”

Tutoring Opportunities

- **WE Care Tutoring**: Seeking volunteers. Learn more at [http://wecareafterschool.wix.com/tutoring](http://wecareafterschool.wix.com/tutoring) or email [wecareafterschool@gmail.com](mailto:wecareafterschool@gmail.com). Castle Street and 10th at St. Ephesus Church, Mondays and Wednesday, 3-6 p.m. All ages.

- **Oops Foundation**: Contact Atiba Johnson at [ajohnson@oopsfoundation.net](mailto:ajohnson@oopsfoundation.net). Mondays and Wednesdays, 5:30-8:30 p.m. 4620 Cedar Ave #118 For GED/adult high school math and reading.

- **Youth Enrichment Zone**: Contact Jana Jones at 910. 251.6150 ext. 212 [www.brcyez.org/contact-us](http://www.brcyez.org/contact-us).

- **The Community Boys and Girls Club** in Wilmington has an after-school homework program for elementary school girls. The program is seeking tutors. 1502 Castle Street, 3-6 p.m. every afternoon. Contact Phyllis Leimer at [Phyllis.leimer@att.net](mailto:Phyllis.leimer@att.net) or call 910.399.2809.
Spotlight on Communities In Schools of Brunswick County
Action For Success Dropout Prevention and Successful Student Futures

By Todd Beane

The mission of Communities In Schools (CIS) is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. CIS believes every child deserves a one-on-one relationship with a caring adult, a safe place to learn and grow, a healthy start and a healthy future, a marketable skill to use upon graduation and a chance to give back to peers and the community. CIS has become the nation’s most effective and widely respected community-based organization helping kids succeed in school and prepare for life. CIS of Brunswick County is part of a national network of Communities In Schools affiliates throughout the United States.

Aligned with the mission statement and five basics, CIS of Brunswick County currently offers five core service areas that include: Action For Success Dropout Prevention Program, Before/After School Program, Teen Court and Peer Court, Parenting Education Program, and Adopt A School and Volunteer Partnerships. Providing academic scholarships for students and educating the community about the needs of the schools and children are additional services provided to the community.

Middle school teenage years can be a difficult time of life for students. Some children in middle school are especially in need of guidance with behavioral issues and to improve academic performance. This year a group of boys at Cedar Grove Middle School in Supply were struggling, having problems in school, and with schoolwork. Brian Walker, Communities In Schools (CIS) Success Coach at Cedar Grove Middle School, spent a lot of time with the boys talking to them about choices, peer pressure, consequences, respect, future choices, and how education will impact their future lives. Cheryl Hair, a CIS Action For Success program counselor at Cedar Grove Middle School, also started working with the boys on a weekly basis over eight weeks.

To help the boys understand the seriousness of their behavior and witness consequences that could result if they continued on the current path, Brian reached out to Brunswick County Judge Pauline Hankins, a strong advocate of mentoring kids. She is a native of the Cedar Grove community and knows many of the struggles students and families face. With the help of Hankins and Brunswick County Juvenile Services, a courthouse and jail tour was arranged for the students.

During the courthouse tour the boys first met with Hankins who candidly shared stories about behavior, respect, education, future plans, and ramifications of bad choices including failing to get an education. The students were able to see 17 criminals enter the courtroom in jail jumpsuits and shackles and listened to their arrest charges and sentencing. The boys were then given a tour of the jail, along with Brunswick County sheriff deputies, to see where committing crimes will lead. An inmate shared his story and the consequences of not listening to his parents, what his life is like without an education and how these choices led to a life in jail.

The students returned to the courthouse for a closing discussion with Hankins and newly elected Judge Gore about the experience and the impact that the tour had on the students. One student stated that, “The group I was in helped me a lot. It helped my anger and the way I act.” The tour provided an opportunity to positively influence these students and reinforce the need to stay in school and focus on education. “The court and jail visit helped to reinforce outcomes for negative behavior,” CIS Counselor Cheryl Hair said. “The judges and police officers mentored the kids and focused a lot on what it means to be a leader. They really paid attention and seemed to have a ‘light’ go on. The boys have made a lot of progress throughout the eight weeks and I am proud of them.”

CIS of Brunswick County Action For Success Program counselor Cheryl Hair with Cedar Grove Middle School students.
National News

Majority of U.S. Public Schoolchildren Are in Poverty

For the first time in at least 50 years, a majority of U.S. public school students come from low-income families, according to a new analysis of 2013 federal data, a statistic that has profound implications for the nation states the Washington Post. The Southern Education Foundation reports that 51 percent of students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade in the 2012-2013 school year were eligible for the federal program that provides free and reduced-price lunches. The lunch program is a rough proxy for poverty, but the explosion in the number of needy children in the nation’s public classrooms is a recent phenomenon that has been gaining attention among educators, public officials and researchers. The number of children in poverty in North Carolina is 53 percent.

After-School Opportunities

According to a recent Afterschool Alliance report, America After 3PM, after-school programs are still not numerous enough to meet demands in many states. The 2014 survey was the third wave of data collected by the Afterschool Alliance attempting to estimate by state the percentage of children in after-school programs, the percentage of families who want to enroll their children in an after-school program, and the percentage of children who are unsupervised after school and missing out on the learning opportunities after-school programs have to offer. Prior surveys were conducted in 2004 and 2009.

Expanded Learning Opportunities for high school students can reduce dropout rates and keep older youth on positive academic paths, according to a 2011 National Conference of State Legislatures and Harvard Family Research project brief. Read the brief, “Helping Older Youth Succeed Through Expanded Learning Opportunities.” Read a blog post from U.S. News High School Notes to learn more news about how after-school programs can help teens at risk of dropping out. This article points out that nationally, about two million high school students participate in an after-school program, and these teens are more prone to stay in school. Pointing to federal data, the author points out that the hours between 3-7 p.m. "can be risky for many high school students, as they are often alone and unsupervised," and "violent juvenile crimes occur most frequently in the hours immediately following the end of school on school days."

Local Story: Bridges to Success

Rev. Dr. Clifford D. Barnett and Warner Temple AME Zion Church of Wilmington have teamed up with two area schools (Williston Middle School and New Hanover High School) to help decrease the drop-out rate. "We know that the longer a student is out of school the more likely they are to drop out," says Barnett. Bridges to Success, a program that Barnett has implemented with the assistance of volunteers from his congregation, helps reduce the amount of time students are out of school due to suspension. The program gives students the opportunity to make suggestions on how they can improve their own behavior. It is designed to help ensure students' success in the classroom as well as at home, so parents are included in the conferences. The program is a community partnership between the church and the schools. Referrals are made to outside agencies as needed.
Join us in Myrtle Beach!
“Success Within Reach: Strategies for At-Risk Youth” 2015 At-Risk Youth National Forum
Feb. 15-18, Myrtle Beach S.C.
The Dropout Prevention Coalition is a co-sponsor. The coalition will have several presenters.

Toxic Stress In Young Children
A community discussion on the effects of stress and brain development

GUEST SPEAKER
DR. DAVID TAYLOE
A nationally renowned pediatrician, known for his lasting impact on children across the state of North Carolina.

Monday, February 16, 2015
10:00 am - 12:00 pm
First Baptist Church Activity Center
1939 Independence Blvd
RSVP: 910-815-3731 or 2000DaysWilm@gmail.com
This is a free event.
Child care available - reserve a spot when you RSVP.

Brought to you in part by the Cape Fear Memorial Foundation.

Together, we can change the picture

The Board of Directors of
Communities In Schools of Cape Fear
Invites you to
THE 2015 HEALTHY START BREAKFAST
Thursday, February 26, 2015
7:30AM
First Baptist Activity Center
1939 Independence Boulevard, Wilmington, NC 28403

Please join us and learn about how you can help at-risk youth in our community.

RSVP to Bethany Leighton at Bethany@ciscapefear.org or call 910-343-1901

Juete Sharpless is a second grader at Snipes Academy of Arts and Design. Juete was born in Wilmington and lives with his Mom, Brother, and Uncle. He loves to play basketball and football. He is also a wonderful artist. Juete’s favorite subject at school is Math and he has aspirations of going to college. Mallory Wells is his Site Coordinator at Snipes. When asked what he likes most about having a Site Coordinator he says “earning rewards with Mrs. Wells, she helps me in class and we have fun together.” Juete also says that his Site Coordinator has helped him “to be a good student and learn about respect.” Juete wants to be a Police Officer when he grows up!

The mission of Communities In Schools of Cape Fear is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.
An excellent source for funding information is the Foundation Center. Listings of foundations and guidelines for writing grants are available. Sample proposals and common grant applications are also provided. The Foundation Center provides a variety of other resources and materials, including prospect worksheets that can help you focus on funders whose priorities match those of your project.

Many businesses donate money to the communities in which they are located. You will usually find giving guidelines on corporate websites under headings such as “community” or “corporate citizenship.” Business grants can be found at www.dropoutprevention.org/grant-resources/funding-sources

- Government grants can be found at UCLA Center’s Mental Health in Schools site.
- Grants Alert – A website dedicated to making life a little easier for those who devote their time to searching for education grants.
- Grant Station can help your organization make smarter, better-informed fundraising decisions
- Grant Watch – A free grants listing service that helps teachers find classroom grants for school funding.
- GrantWrangler – A free grants listing service that helps teachers find classroom grants for school funding.
- National Service-Learning Clearinghouse Funding Opportunities
- Youth Today Grants Today – A national source for news, views and important developments in the youth service field from a nonprofit organization.
- Kids in Need Teacher Grants

More grant information is available at Dropout Prevention and Youth Today.

In the News!

Two of our DPC events were in the news!

School to Prison Pipeline Roundtable:
www.starnewsonline.com/article/20141215/ARTICLES/141219833/0/Fast

School Violence Symposium:

Great Dropout Prevention Resources: We are Teachers

We are Teachers has information about the National Guard Youth Challenge and other general resources for teachers to prevent students from dropping out. Check it out! www.weareteachers.com/lessons-resources/national-guard-youth-challenge?utm_source=FB&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=NGYC14

NOTE: Please send any items you would like to see in upcoming newsletters to Janna Robertson. We want to share your news!