Begin at the Beginning

Presented by Dr. Felicia Lanham Tarason
August 10-11, 2011
Montgomery County Public Schools
Dr. Joshua P. Starr, Superintendent
Our Purpose As Leaders

• Stay focused on the child

• Move in the same direction

• Teach

• Win in the media
Montgomery County Public Schools

- 16th largest school system
- 142,000 PreK-12 students
- 165 countries represented
- 134 languages spoken
- 30% receive federal meal assistance

-Data from 2008-2009
Montgomery County Public Schools

Red Zone
• Elementary school student population: 31,920
• 80 percent minority
• 51 percent eligible for free and reduced-price meals
• 29 percent English language learners

Green Zone
• Elementary school student population: 31,476
• 44 percent minority
• 12 percent eligible for free and reduced-price meals
• 10 percent English language learners
Montgomery County Public Schools

- **90%** - Almost 90 percent of kindergarteners enter first grade with essential literacy skills.

- **88%** - Nearly 88 percent of third graders read proficiently.

- **90%** - About 90 percent of 12th graders graduate from high school.

- **77%** - 77 percent of graduating seniors enroll in college.
“High-quality early education is the first and most important step to improving learning, increasing economic competitiveness and developing a healthier society.”

- Nobel Laureate James Heckman
**In search of**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wanted:</th>
<th>PreK children</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What:</td>
<td>Enter PreK Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When:</td>
<td>August 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why:</td>
<td>Begin at the beginning</td>
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PreK-3 Early Childhood Initiative
Wheaton Woods Elementary School
Percent of Fifth Graders Proficient on State Assessments
1999-2010
<table>
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<tr>
<th>TRACK TEAM</th>
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<td>T each students that they can achieve.</td>
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<td>R each student where they are and set academic goals.</td>
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<td>A ct fast when a student is not successful.</td>
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<td>C onnect with the student’s home.</td>
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<td>K eep on TRACK with each student.</td>
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“No time is as precious or as fleeting as the first years of formal schooling. Research consistently shows that children who get off to a good start in reading, rarely stumble. Those who fall behind tend to stay behind for the rest of their academic lives.”

-Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children’s Reading Success
Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999, p.61
Staff Focus

- Instruction
- Assessment
- Classroom Management
- Professional Development
- Parent Involvement
- Curriculum
- Technology
- Interventions
Principal Focus

• Principal as leader
• Focus on purpose
• Share the vision
• Identify and maximize strengths
• Develop plans for challenges
• Build capacity through training
Passion  Courage

Perseverance