

Lake Braddock Certified as Parent Involvement School of Excellence

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BURKE, VA, March 31, 2005—More than 3,900 students at **Lake Braddock Secondary School** in Burke, Virginia, have one more reason to take pride in their school. National PTA has certified **Lake Braddock Secondary School** as a Parent Involvement School of Excellence. National PTA's Parent Involvement Schools of Excellence certification recognizes schools that uphold the highest standards in parent involvement, based on six national standards endorsed by the National PTA: (1) Communicating; (2) Parenting; (3) Student Learning; (4) Volunteering; (5) School Decision Making and Advocacy; and, (6) Collaborating with Community. Only two other high schools in Fairfax County have achieved this certification.

As part of the certification process, Lake Braddock formed a team consisting of the principal, Linda Burke, assistant principal, Dave Thomas, a middle school and high school teacher, parents, a high school student, and a representative from the community; completed a self-assessment; and applied for one of two distinctions—Certification of Excellence or Recognition of Commitment—based on the results of their self-assessment. One significant component of the application process involved the development of a Parent/Family Involvement Policy and detailed Plan that document LBSS' demonstrable commitment to actively engaging parents in all aspect of the children's lives as an integral component of LBSS' educational mission. According to team members, the certification is a symbol of parents, staff, and community members working together for the common goal of helping children succeed.

Some of the notable parent involvement activities at Lake Braddock include school and PTSA websites that feature reciprocal links, PTSA newsletters available online, weekly e-newsletters, parent education sessions, minority parent liaisons, and cultural ambassadors to translate at school functions. Special programs for

students include: MentorWorks, an award-winning program promoting a supportive relationship between adult volunteers and students; the highly successful Middle School After-School Program, a partnership between the LBSS PTSA and the Fairfax County Office of Safe and Drug Free Youth that provides supervised after-school recreational and academic support activities for seventh and eighth graders at no cost to parents; and AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), an academic support program aimed at preparing students for college eligibility and success. A welcoming school administration that encourages volunteerism and parent involvement enables the myriad booster clubs, after school events and special activities in addition to the highly rated music and athletic programs that the school staff supports. Collaboration with the community culminates in popular events such as the annual Craft Fair and the All-Night Graduation Party sponsored through the Safe and Drug Free Youth Coalition.

“Every child deserves to attend a school of excellence,” said National PTA President Linda Hodge. “The certification program is an unprecedented opportunity for all schools to achieve excellence and be recognized for their dedication to parent involvement.” According to Trenda Jacocks, LBSS PTSA President, "Greater yet that we are ‘Bruins Under Construction’ and to attain this in the midst of transition, change and a major school renovation speaks volumes for our students, parents teachers and administrators. Never doubt--Great things are happening at Lake Braddock Secondary." A special celebration featuring dignitaries and local press will be held on Wednesday, September 7, 2005 at 3:00 p.m. in the new Lake Braddock Secondary School Media Center to kick-off the school year.

For more information about LBSS’ achievement in receiving certification as a National School of Excellence in Parent Involvement, contact Trenda Jacocks, President of the Lake Braddock Secondary School PTSA at 703-440-1088 or visit the LBSS PTSA website at www.lbspspta.org. Press Release No. 2004-2005-001

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Education Association, and National School Public Relations Association joined National PTA in the development and implementation of the certification program. For more information about National PTA’s Parent Involvement Schools of Excellence certification, visit www.pta.org or call (800) 307-4PTA (4782).

With 6 million members, National PTA is the largest volunteer child advocacy organization in the United States. A not-for-profit association of parents, educators, students, and other citizens active in their schools and communities, PTA is a leader in reminding our nation of its obligations to children. Since its founding in 1897, National PTA has prided itself in being a powerful voice for children, a relevant resource for parents, and a strong advocate for public education. Membership in National PTA is open to anyone who is concerned with the education, health, and welfare of children and youth.