

DEF forms Delmarva High School Principals Network

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*Delmarva High School Principals Network first meeting
at the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore
Nonprofit Support Center*

The Delmarva Education Foundation (DEF) has established a “Delmarva High School Principals Network,” a new organization that is open to all principals of the high schools in the seven counties of the lower Delmarva Peninsula.

The network is open to all principals of the high schools in Sussex County, Delaware; Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester counties in Maryland; and Accomack and Northampton counties in Virginia.

DEF has long believed that it is very beneficial for our local school systems in our region to work together across state lines, as one educational region because residents in this region have more in common with each other than with those in our respective state capitals or urban centers. Local principals meet on occasion with each other at their own state or district level, but have never before with fellow principals from throughout the lower Delmarva Peninsula.

DEF hosted the initial meeting of these key educators and administrators to offer the group the opportunity to collaborate on a regular basis to discuss common issues and challenges, share strategies, and gain information that would benefit them, their staff and students.

The principals' responses to this endeavor have been overwhelmingly positive. Clarence Davis, principal from Seaford High School said, “This was a fabulous opportunity to share knowledge. I am looking forward to our next meeting.” Those who were able to attend the **first meeting on April 24** agreed that there was immediate and long term value in formalizing as a group.

“This vehicle for communication among our local high school principals has only just begun! It has such potential for increasing the success of students on the lower Delmarva Peninsula,” noted Dr. Sharon Clark, associate executive director of the Delmarva Education Foundation.

The first meeting included plans to continue an open, ongoing dialogue through an online discussion board and regular meetings; confirmation of the value of principals sharing many ideas in various areas of common concern; identification of two major obstacles in efforts to

support student achievement: the isolation of students and transportation for those who need to be in schools outside of normal school hours for additional instruction.

The idea for the “Delmarva High School Principals Network” originally came about in a conversation between Lorenzo Hughes, principal of Wicomico High School and Dr. Donald Harting, DEF executive director and founder. Tom Davis, principal of Snow Hill High School will facilitate the next Network meeting in November.

The Network came to fruition through the efforts of Mr. Hughes, who facilitated the first meeting, and DEF staff, with grant support from the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore. Dr. Michael A. Nugent, director of the DEF College/Career Access Program (DEF-CCAP) was the guest speaker.

The “Delmarva High School Principals Network” project is an extension of DEF-CCAP, started in 2006 with a two-year grant from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, since college and career access is an issue of interest to high school principals.

The DEF-CCAP pilot program is underway in Wicomico High School, Salisbury and Washington High School, Princess Anne. DEF-CCAP advisors work in these high schools to help students learn about, aspire to, prepare for, apply to, finance, and complete college or other post-secondary educational training.

DEF is working on additional funding proposals and welcomes donations from businesses, other organizations, and individuals to continue this important program and plans to expand it to more local high schools as additional support and grants are obtained.

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