

A BLUEPRINT FOR **ADOPTING** A SCHOOL

IMPACTING A SCHOOL THROUGH SERVICE

Created by the Staff and Volunteers of Second Presbyterian Church,
Memphis, Tennessee

“Thank you so much for your recent acts of love to those who will never be able to pay you back... These acts contribute directly to the morale of our school...”

Sam Shaw, Berclair Elementary Principal, Memphis Tennessee

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THE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Adopt-A-School program is to impact the lives of children and the communities in which they live by enhancing the quality of public education in partners with an area school to establish positive relationships through Second Presbyterian Church's resources of people, time and money.

WHAT IS THE ADOPT-A-SCHOOL PROGRAM?

In 1979, the national Adopt-a-School Partnership Program was founded. The Memphis City School's Adopt-a-School program is one of the oldest programs in the United States. The national program was established to encourage businesses and community organizations to help improve student achievement. Frequently businesses and organizations "adopting" a school will provide minimal support, such as donating school supplies. In Memphis, currently 650 businesses and community organizations partner with schools in varying levels of involvement. The national Adopt-a-School program provides an open door for local organizations to leverage the talents and resources of a host of volunteers to assist schools that are often severely under-resourced.

WHY ADOPT-A-SCHOOL?

The Adopt-A-School program represents a tremendous opportunity to positively affect the lives of students, teachers, and volunteers. Across the nation, public schools struggle to provide adequate education with inadequate funding. The average Memphis city school budget in 2008 was \$18,000. Nationwide, approximately 70% of students graduate from high school (62% in Memphis in 2009). Graduation rates for minorities and low-income students hover just above 50%. By leveraging human resources, an organization, church, or business can have a significant impact on a school, filling the gaps left by small budgets.

However, having a positive impact on the community is only part of the reason for an



Tennessee ranks 46th in the nation in per-pupil spending for K-12 education.

organization to adopt a school. Equally exciting is the opportunity to mobilize an army of volunteers who will be inspired by their ability to make a difference. The Adopt-A-School program offers the opportunity to engage hundreds of volunteers in dozens of different service roles. In most—if not all—schools, those volunteers will see an immediate, measurable difference in the appearance of the school, the morale of the students and teachers, and the grades of the students and in the state proficiency scores.



Approximately 71% of MCS students are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

WHAT SHOULD YOU CONSIDER BEFORE ADOPTING A SCHOOL?

As mentioned above, there are 650 organizations in Memphis that have adopted schools. But for most of these, this means only purchasing school supplies, and providing a class holiday party or two. While this is certainly a positive effort, this is not the level of commitment that will raise morale, improve grades, or involve and inspire volunteers. In this manual, we'll explore a model or "best practice" for greater involvement and deeper impact. Before your organization moves forward with a plan for a high-impact adoption, consider the following:

- Do we have a person with a passion for education and kids who will lead and coordinate the adoption?
- Do we have leaders who are committed to this project?
- Do we have volunteers who are seeking a project?
- How many volunteers can we gather?
- How much time can we commit?
- Are we willing to provide some training?
- What financial resources can we commit?

WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE ADOPTED A SCHOOL:

Second Presbyterian Church (2PC) is a large, multi-generational, suburban church located in Memphis, Tennessee. It is a church that is committed to serving the city, supporting almost 50 local ministries through its MissionMemphis fund. When choosing a school to support through the Adopt-A-School program, the 2PC Leadership Team examined two schools, and selected Berclair Elementary School. The MissionMemphis fund seeded the Berclair adoption with a \$5,000 grant. Berclair was chosen based on the following factors:

- **Proximity and ease of access:** accessible to Second Presbyterian church members; major roads lead directly to the school
- **Leadership:** Dr. Sam Shaw, Principal, open to partnering with a church
- **Demographics:** 93% of student body on reduced lunch program; 49% 1st generation Hispanic, 25% White, 23% African American (bused) and 3% other. 90% of families live below the poverty line.
- **Level:** an elementary school was best suited to the volunteer base.

Your organization may be smaller or larger than 2PC. The school that you select may have different needs, and your volunteer base may have different skills and interests. The following steps are suggestions. Improve on them to meet the needs of your chosen school, and to fit the resources of your organization.

“Throughout the process, remember to be sensitive to the needs of your school, and to always listen carefully and respond respectfully.”

ADOPTING A SCHOOL: FIRST STEPS

While each of these steps will probably need to occur during the planning of your program, the order may differ. Throughout the process, remember to be sensitive to the needs of your school, and to always listen carefully and respond respectfully.

- Form Leadership Team and work through the questions listed on the previous page.

Contact your district for information about their Adopt-A-School program.

In Memphis: Adopt-A-School Partnership Program: call (901) 416-5622 or log on to www.mcsk12.net/community_adoptaschool.asp

- Evaluate multiple schools that are accessible to your volunteer base. Assess the following:
 - **Need: Demographics.** Is this school in need of help? What percentage of the students are on a reduced lunch program?
 - **Need: Academic.** Will your volunteers be able to help address academic needs? Go to your state's Department of Education website and find the NCLB and/or AYP Reports. Look for schools that are labeled "Not in Good Standing" and focus on these.
 - **Leadership.** Will the school principal facilitate your work, and help open doors?
- Choose a school and complete formal adoption process. Work with the school district, the school administration, and your volunteers to organize an adoption ceremony.
- Designate Teams and Team Leaders.
- Begin getting to know your school, and the school's community. Start by asking, "How can we help?" and listening carefully to the answers.
- Write a "Letter of Commitment" that describes the basic activities that your organization will carry out during the first semester or year of service. (See Appendix H, page 22 for an example).
- Training your volunteers (see Appendix H)



One 2PC volunteer serves pizza at a class room party.

GETTING STARTED: PLANNING THE FIRST SEMESTER OF SERVICE

Many schools have vast needs, and no organization could adequately fill all of these needs in their first year of service. In order to be sensitive to the leadership of a school, it is better to begin with projects that allow your volunteers to get to know the school, and to show their willingness to listen and serve. A list of possible service opportunities is included (Appendix A, **How to Serve**). However, as mentioned above, remember to *ask* how you can help. Consider your volunteer capacity and your school's needs and find the best starting point.

When your Leadership Team and the school's administrators have agreed upon the best service opportunities, you can then set goals for your first semester of involvement, and write a Letter of Commitment that outlines the activities that you'll complete. Based on this letter, develop an Action Plan with a calendar of events, activities, and programs.

Remember not to overextend your volunteers or financial resources. Write an Action Plan that is well within your capacity. Let the principal and/or school contact review and approve your plan of action.

GETTING STARTED: ADOPTING CLASSROOMS

We began with a basic model of dividing into Teams.

It is important to identify teams of people that already exist and need to engage in some form of outreach project or on-going service project. At 2PC, outside of our Sunday Morning Services the next most important form of engagement for our members is our Congregational Communities (Sunday Schools). It is through this network of twenty four CC's that we encourage our people to participate in community. It is within the environment of the CC we ask people to

- Reach out to others
- Help assimilate new people into the church
- Take in and receive good biblical teaching/instruction
- Serve others in our community
- Our people are shepherded by our elders, deacons and other mature leaders.

Of central importance to school adoption is, like Nehemiah, we assign different groups with affinity to adopt a classroom and a teacher.

Assign each Team an adopted teacher and classroom, offering teachers the following:

- **Tutoring:** Math and Reading tutors available each week.
- **Parties:** 2 parties per semester for the kids.
- **Reading:** A volunteer came to the class once each week to read to the kids.
- **Administrative Help:** 2 hours per week of administrative help: copying, filing, etc.

Remember that in order for your organization to truly make a difference, you must gain the trust of your school—particularly the teachers. Keep in mind that you're assisting professionals in their place of work, and honor that professionalism with respect, and by completing the tasks you set for your group.



Providing honor roll or holiday parties—and craft time—is a great way to support students and teachers.

WHICH CLASSROOMS TO ADOPT

There are several factors that will affect the number of classrooms that your group can adopt:

- Number of volunteers you have.
- Number of volunteer groups you have (departments, Sunday School classes, etc.).
- Number of teachers who would like volunteer help (It's a good idea to encourage good will by making participation optional. Your principal will make this decision).
- Number of classrooms that have a great need for help.

Chances are good that you won't be able to adopt every classroom in the school at first. You can set this as a goal to work towards. At Berclair, 2PC has adopted all classrooms in grades K-3. In the mean time, as with all other aspects of Adopt-A-School, defer to the school administrator's wishes when choosing the classrooms that you'll adopt. In most cases, it's a good idea to start with the youngest classes, for the following reasons:

- Most adults find it easier to relate to younger children.
- Younger children are often more accepting of a stranger's help.
- Because adults find it easier to relate, and children are more accepting of help, your volunteers are more likely to have good experiences, stay involved, and recruit others.

REMEMBER that even though you may not be able to adopt the older classes, you can still serve those students by providing volunteer TCAP tutors in the second semester.

GETTING STARTED: ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS

Show Them the Need:

Every organization should decide upon the best timetable for establishing relationships with the adopted school, and motivating your volunteer base. One option is motivating volunteers with short term activities before diving into more serious time commitments (see **Adopting Teachers**, below). Whether you decide to plan these activities at the beginning of your adoption, or later in the process, you'll find that new volunteers are engaged by entry-level activities such as the following examples. These allow potential volunteers to see the needs of the school, without first making a long term commitment.

- **School Supply Drive:** Give your volunteer base a list of specific items needed at the school. Encourage competition between your organization's departments or Teams, or a group goal to be met. Further engage volunteers by sending several volunteers to deliver the supplies.
- **Spring Clean Up:** Divide into groups according to tasks, and clean up and repair your school in a single day. If possible, invite teachers and students to join you. Remember to be respectful, and don't make teacher or student involvement mandatory.
- **Summer Reading Book Collection:** For our school, this was a specific need mentioned by teachers. Find out what level books are needed by your teachers/students. Again, be specific when asking your volunteer base to collect items, and give them a goal.

Keep Involvement Simple:

Some of your potential volunteers may be reluctant to join you for any number of simple reasons that can be easily overcome through communication.

- **Help people understand their roles!** Some people may feel ill equipped, or not realize what a difference their involvement can make. Provide a simple written "job" description that Team Leaders can review with new volunteers.
- **Help people understand time commitments!** As mentioned above, there are many different roles for volunteers to play when a school is adopted. Let your volunteer base know that there are positions that require different amounts of time, so that they understand that whether they have one hour a month, one hour a week, or one weekend a year, they can be involved.
- **Help people get to the school!** Many people aren't comfortable venturing into parts of the city that are not familiar. This is one reason to carefully consider choosing a school close to your organization that is relatively easy to access on major roads. Some volunteers can carpool, or seasoned volunteers can provide rides to new volunteers.

Continuing to Grow Your Volunteer Base

Broad "recruiting" announcements over time net a low point of interest. The best way to initially involve new volunteers is to have your committed volunteers "invite" a friend and potential volunteer from your organization to join them on a trip to the school. While recruiting announcements have little success, a friend inviting a friend works just about every time. By giving volunteers an easy way to begin their involvement (see **Show Them the Need** above), and by reporting back to them (e.g., photos, emails, newsletter) regarding the positive impact of their efforts, you'll encourage your current volunteer base, and inspire new volunteers to join the cause.

"The best way to initially involve new volunteers is to have your committed volunteers *invite* a friend..."

GETTING STARTED: MOBILIZING VOLUNTEERS

The following organizational strategy has been effective for 2PC and is a model that could easily be effective with other groups. In this model, the Leadership Team designates one Coordinator. This Coordinator serves as the primary liaison between the school and your organization. The Coordinator designates the Teams (e.g., business departments, Sunday School classes) and assigns each of these an adopted classroom. Each Team has a Team Leader who coordinates service for that classroom and mobilizes the volunteers in the Team.

Coordinator:

- Works with Leadership Team to outline service goals.
- Assigns classrooms to Teams.
- Communicates service goals to Team Leaders.
- Work with Team Leaders to organize introductory meeting (e.g., breakfast, lunch), so that teachers and staff can begin to get to know the volunteers.
- Organizes and oversees Teams in accomplishing tasks that have been outlined by the Leadership Team.
- Communicates with administration at the school, with the Leadership Team at your organization, and with Team Leaders.

Team Leaders

- Identify the ways their Team members can serve at the school. (See Appendix B)

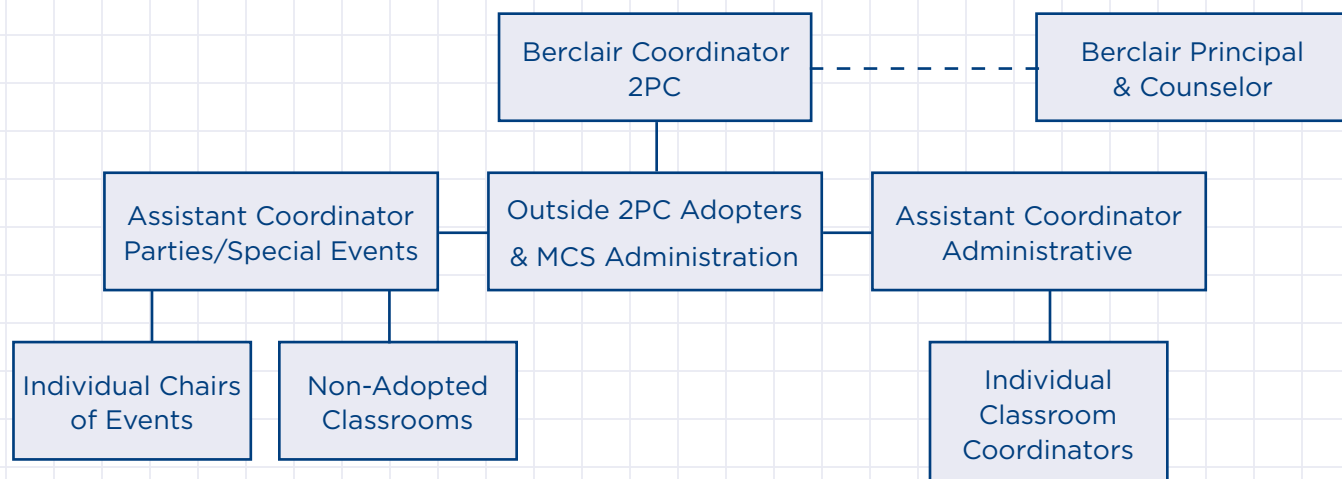
- Train Team members.
- Ensure that Team members submit appropriate forms for volunteer eligibility.
- Establish a relationship with his/her adopted teacher and touch base with the teacher at least twice a month.
- Gather ideas about how to support the teacher—listen!

Team Members

Provide the agreed upon services which may include:

- Reading to the class
- Tutoring one-on-one
- Organizing class parties
- Providing supplies for parties or other activities
- Providing administrative help for the teacher

As in most jobs, your volunteers will be most effective and excited about their positions when you empower them to be creative and to make decisions on their own. While it may be necessary to “hold the reins” during the first semester of the project, encourage independence as your volunteers learn the ropes. By encouraging creativity among your teams and coordinators, your volunteers will grow to develop real relationships with teachers and students—and they’ll also be more likely to become long-term volunteers



CONTINUING TO SERVE: IMPACTING SCORES

After your organization establishes clear lines of communication and is effectively serving your adopted school, you may consider stepping up your involvement in order to help impact student scores. While many services can affect scores, there are two proven methods for significant impact:

Involve parents. It is a fact that parental involvement positively impacts scores.

- Provide a catered family dinner meeting at the beginning of the school year for “Meet the Teacher” night. We have seen our numbers go the first year from around twenty-five parents to hundreds.
- Assist the school with parent communication, providing volunteers to make phone calls or distribute fliers about upcoming events or meetings.
- Provide health workshops or fairs at the school to provide an opportunity for parents to visit the school.
- Provide health or dental care can help gain the trust and interest of parents. (2PC purchased shares in a mobile dental facility to come quarterly to the school and used our own volunteer dentists to clean and care for kid’s teeth.)
- Ask teachers and administrators how they could reach out to parents, if they had more time and resources.

Provide tutoring. One-on-one tutoring helps most students make great strides.

- Have Team Leaders ask teachers for a list of students who he/she thinks are capable of making great strides with additional assistance.
- Provide tutor training for volunteers, or team with local literacy organization.

Provide TCAP (Tennessee state proficiency test) tutoring. Specific test-based tutoring for older children can help increase TCAP scores.

- As mentioned above, you may only be able to adopt the younger classrooms. But you can still serve the older children, and have a

great effect on test scores, by providing TCAP tutoring.

- This is a second semester commitment, in the weeks leading up to the TCAP, so it may be a good short-term commitment option for some volunteers.

See Appendix C for **Results of Serving**, detailing results of state proficiency test scores of Berclair Elementary students subsequent to 2PC’s adoption of the school.

CONTINUING TO SERVE: TIPS FOR ONGOING SUCCESS

- Set realistic boundaries on your time commitments and share them with the principal, teacher and students.
- Develop an understanding and appreciation of the school culture.
- Remember that you’re there to offer assistance, not run the school.
- Ask questions whenever you are unclear about school policies and procedures.
- Train volunteers to sign-in at the school office each time you arrive at school, and before entering classrooms or school facilities.
- Don’t donate or bring items to school without checking with teachers/administrators first.
- Don’t proselytize students regarding any religious doctrine, political ideology or philosophy.



CONTINUING TO SERVE: HIGH-IMPACT OPPORTUNITIES

The more time you spend around a school, needs other than directly helping the teachers and their students will become apparent. Often such needs appeal to individual volunteers who are more project oriented. Or, it could be an opportunity to mentor kids in a different way after school, like starting a Boy Scout troop. Here are a few examples of needs met either through a project team or by people with a passion to start something:

- **School Library (see Appendix D)** – A team of six ladies over a year and a half rebuilt the library.
- **Refurbished the Teacher's/Employee's Lounge (see Appendix E)** – six month project with two volunteers.
- **Exterior Beautification (see Appendix G)** – One Saturday annually, over 100 volunteers, teachers and some students.
- **Boy Scout Troop** – Four men who never grew of scouting and who adopted some boys and dads to join the newly formed troop.
- **Health Fairs** – Involving volunteers who are medical professionals annually.
- **Dental Care** – For kids and their families twice a year.

CONTINUING TO SERVE: THE COST

You may be surprised: It does not take a lot of money to adopt a school. It takes having a big heart. Our initial funding was for \$5,000, but we did not spend this money all at once. It was, instead, used over a year or more, as needs arose and events occurred.

Adopting a school really does not call for any upfront investment. The average school in MCS receives \$18k annually in an operating budget: not a lot of money to meet even the essentials like paper. Needs arise that the school or district just cannot pay for such as: a new copy machine since the old copy machine broke, kids who do not have jackets for winter temperatures, kids with soiled and worn out clothes or special shampoo needed to treat heads of hair infested with lice. Needs such as these are met through our members in the form of little acts of kindness (through the proper channels, see Appendix H). For example, Berclair runs out of copy paper about mid-year. We ask our members to bring and we collect hundreds of reams of paper to church to drop off in a box that we deliver to Berclair twice a year. We assign each of our twenty-five congregational communities (small groups of Sunday school classes) to bring school supplies such as pencils, markers, construction paper, glue sticks and more.

LOOKING BACK: THE IMPACT

Of all the externally focused outreaches of 2PC, our Adopt-A-School Program is the one initiative that has sustained a large segment of our membership year after year. Why? Our volunteers love their kids and the kids respond in love to our volunteers. From an initial nine volunteers our first year to over 300 volunteers today, people of all ages love to be involved where they can make a difference. Besides the tangible outcome of years sustaining the school's state proficiency test scores, our volunteers have hundreds of little success and human needs stories from their one-on-one work with the kids. Reporting the activities and results of our volunteer efforts annually to our church leadership is a real treat (Appendix I).

APPENDIX A: HOW TO SERVE

Assign each department or other group from your organization to a classroom and provide:

- Administrative help to the teacher, on a weekly schedule
- 1-2 parties for the children, per semester
- A guest reader every week
- One-on-one tutoring, on a weekly schedule

Your organization as a whole can work to provide some of the following:

- Mentoring
- Training for teachers (e.g., Spanish language lessons)
- Providing food and clothing for those below the poverty line
- Providing medical education and aid
- Physically cleaning the school building and campus grounds
- Providing Christmas gifts for each child at the school
- Supplying and restocking school supplies
- Supplying classroom libraries
- Supplying classroom dictionaries
- Providing chaperones for events and field trips
- Providing honor roll parties
- Providing uniforms
- Providing test proctors
- Providing assistance with purchase or funding of copy machines (large percentage of school budgets)
- Lunch or breakfast for teachers at the start of each semester
- Helping with sports teams, or organizing after-school, extracurricular activities



One way to serve your adopted classroom is by providing a guest reader every week.

APPENDIX B: WHO CAN SERVE?

Just about anyone! One of the most exciting aspects of school adoption is the great variety of opportunities that can be offered to your volunteer base.

Opportunities, According to Time Investment:

Multiple Days Per Week

- Role of Coordinator
- Role of Team Leader

One Day Per Week

- One-on-one tutoring
- Mentoring
- Administrative help
- Help with sports teams or extracurricular activities

One Day Per Semester

- Physically cleaning the school building and grounds
- Provide chaperones for events and field trips
- Assist with honor roll parties
- Assist with holiday parties
- Assist with back-to-school events honoring teachers
- Providing medical education
- Providing training (eg, Spanish language)
- Act as test proctor

Absentee Volunteer

- Providing food and clothing for those below the poverty line
- Supplying and restocking school supplies
- Supply books for classroom and school libraries
- Supply classroom dictionaries
- Provide uniforms
- Buying Christmas gifts for kids

Opportunities, According to Skill or Interest:

- Tutoring: special skills in specific subject area
- Language: train teachers
- Medical: provide education to students, or aid to families
- Dentist
- Dental Hygienist
- Event Planning: organize parties for students and/or teachers, or PTO
- Organizational: Coordinator or Team Leader
- Relationships: mentor
- Landscaping and Handy-Man/Woman: Provide leadership on clean-up days
- Coaching
- Scout Master
- Carpentry
- Painting
- Crafts
- Prepping kid's games

APPENDIX C: RESULTS OF SERVING

Berclair Elementary Scores Following Adoption by 2PC in 2005-2006

TCAP Test Results

Year	R/LA	Math	Pass/Fail
02-03	75.5 (77)	70.2 (72)	Fail
03-04	85 (77)	77 (72)	Pass
04-05	86 (83)	85 (79)	Pass
05-06	86 (83)	85 (79)	Pass
06-07	91 (83)	95 (79)	Pass
07-08	93.7 (89)	91.7 (86)	Pass
08-09	89.9* (89)	93 (86)	Pass

Number in parentheses is required score.

* In today's world of shrinking tax bases and tightening budgets, school closures are a common place. Macon Elementary was a neighboring school that was merged into Berclair Elementary. Merging kids from a school that was not performing academically means these kids must be tutored up to the standard of our Berclair kids.

APPENDIX D: REBUILDING THE LIBRARY

Traditionally school libraries are understaffed with very few books on its shelves. School libraries often are the only library the student ever sees. Rarely does a student visit or use the city public library, so the school book collection serves a desperate need. Churches can lend a hand in so many ways to enhance reading and motivate children to read.

1. Donate books, new and/or used. Assign Sunday School classes to collect books annually.
2. Process books that are given to the library-stamp, catalogue, code with advanced reader, barcode, laminate book jackets, etc.
3. Read to the children
4. Shelf returned books
5. Check out books for students
6. Repair books
7. Sign pre-schoolers under the age of five up for Imagination Library
8. Create bookmarks for the children
9. Organize student Library Assistants Club
10. Donate a new book to each child at Christmas

APPENDIX E: REFURBISHING THE EMPLOYEES' LOUNGE

This is the true hub of the school! If the teachers/employees are able to meet, eat, rest, and take care of personal business in a pleasant, comfortable atmosphere, then they will be more relaxed and productive in the classroom. This should be the most inviting area of the school. Yet, it is often run down and neglected by the school district.

Here are some practical suggestions for school partners that could make a huge difference for our teachers:

1. Fresh paint - cheery, yet subdued colors
2. Clean, manageable work surface for food preparation for lunch, snacks
3. Large clean eating area with tables and comfortable chairs
4. Working microwave, refrigerator, coffee pots
5. Attractive waste containers - several needed
6. Attractive pictures/wall hangings - perhaps a local artist would contribute
7. Furniture that is comfortable, clean, perhaps a small sofa, several upholstered chairs
8. A secluded area, walled off with cubicle dividers, where personnel can rest if feeling bad, or make personal phone calls
9. Small area rug to section off this area adds so much to homey feel
10. Small decorative swags or curtains (check fire codes on this)
11. Decorative plants, kitchen utensils, mugs, paper goods, towels, soap, etc.
12. Soft drink, snack machines that carry items that teachers actually eat and want (survey needed to determine this.) Machines can be a money-maker for school teacher parties.
13. Fresh drinking water- can be donated from water supply company
14. Access to ice - Most refrigerators do not supply enough for entire personnel, so additional needed
15. Quick, easy access to mailboxes with neatly labeled names on each

APPENDIX F: REFURBISHING THE EMPLOYEE BATHROOM

This area (often adjacent to the Employee Lounge), is used only by school personnel. In many schools it may be very neglected, with un-working sink faucets, no hot water, broken towel racks, etc.

1. Fresh paint
2. Working sink with working faucets, cold and hot water
3. Toilet seat that is attached and clean
4. Hand towel dispenser
5. Toilet paper dispensers
6. Hand sanitizer, soap
7. Mirror
8. Basic feminine hygiene needs
9. Trash container

APPENDIX G: EXTERIOR BEAUTIFICATION

Schools in low income neighborhoods are often neglected, devoid of flowers or trimmed landscape, shade trees, grass, or any seasonal color. The exterior of the local school could provide beauty in an otherwise drab atmosphere for our students. With planning, and the planting of perennials and low-maintenance shrubs, a much improved exterior will enhance the learning environment, and create community pride.

We hold Clean-up days where we invite our volunteers, teacher & parents to come clean up and beautify the school. Clean-up days are sometimes the only day that appeals to some of our volunteers. It is also a great opportunity to spend time working along side of the teacher, kids and parents on a common-cause day long project.

This could include:

1. Semi-annual clean-up raking leaves, trim shrubs, collect sticks, trash on grounds
2. Purchase attractive benches, trash receptacles, if needed
3. Purchase playground equipment, if needed, plan for repair or upkeep
4. Plant grass when school is out for the summer, on-going need for this
5. Plant seasonal perennial color
6. Purchase school sign, if needed, for parent communication



Clean-up days offer an opportunity for those not able to volunteer during the work week to participate in 2pc's Adopt-A-School program.

APPENDIX H: VOLUNTEER TRAINING MANUAL

Training Manual for Adopt-A-Classroom CC Coordinators and Volunteers at Second Presbyterian Church

Our Mission Statement

The mission of Adopt-A-School is to impact the lives of children and the communities in which they live by enhancing the quality of public education in partnering with an area school to establish positive relationships through Second Presbyterian Church's resources of people, time and money.

Scripture for Reflection

The question may arise “Why are we, a church in which many of our children attend private schools, partnering with a public city school?” The answer is implied from the following passages of scripture, given for your reflection.

We have a scriptural obligation to our city and our neighbor. We come as servants to bring hope and healing. The children of the city are also our children.

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear (*in the n.i.v., gentleness and respect*)” 1 Peter 3:15

“...but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Mark 10:43b-45

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2:3-11

“And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace you will have peace.” Jeremiah 29:7

Contact Information for 2PC Leaders

Insert contact info for your organization's
Adopt-A-School leaders

List of Adopt-A-School Team Leaders

List your Team Leaders, with contact info.

Berclair Elementary School

810 North Perkins
Memphis, TN 38122
416-8800
Dr. Sam Shaw, Principal

School Hours

8:15am-3:15

Key Personnel at Berclair

Ms. Alyce King, Facilitator
Ms. Shannon Redmon, Guidance Counselor

Other Memphis City School Contacts

Dr. Kriner Cash, Superintendent
Ms. Miska Bibbs, Adopt-A-School Director

**Memphis City School Board
Representatives for Berclair**

Dr. Jeff Warren
Wanda M. Halbert
Sara L. Lewis

Fact Sheet about Berclair Elementary School

- 2PC has decided to adopt-a-school through the Memphis City Schools. That school is Berclair Elementary School, located on North Perkins, just north of Summer Avenue, about 5-10 minutes from 2PC.
- This school has approximately 500 students in grades K4-6. There are 26 classrooms of students and approximately 60-70 overall staff members.
- Dr. Sam Shaw, the principal, is a member of 2PC and currently serves on the diaconate at 2PC.
- The school serves children from the immediate Berclair neighborhood (38122 zip code) and from the Binghampton neighborhood.
- The school is racially and ethnically mixed: 40% African-American, 30% Hispanic, 25% Caucasian, and 5% Other.
- 93% of the children are on the free or reduced lunch—which means their income is below the poverty rate.
- Over 50% of the kindergarten age children come from homes where Spanish is the primary language.

The CC Coordinator's Responsibilities with Adopt-A-Classroom

The overall job of the CC Adopt-A Classroom Coordinator with Berclair will oversee one's CC accomplishing all tasks that were agreed upon in the Letter of Commitment as well as communicate effectively with all involved persons and the CC. The job will involve the following responsibilities.

- Train and communicate necessary information with all of your CC volunteers. You are welcome to use this Training Manual with your volunteers to assist in the process.
- Contact your adopted classroom teacher to find a mutually agreed upon time for you and perhaps a few, key CC volunteers to meet the teacher for lunch at Berclair. Use this lunch as a "Getting to Know You, Your Classroom, and Your Needs" time as well as to begin forging a good relationship with the teacher. Establish the best means for communicating with the teacher.

Suggestions:

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- After meeting with your teacher, you and a small team of your CC volunteers might want to sit down and develop an "Action Plan/Time Line" for the semester based on your conversation with your teacher and on the Letter of Commitment. Please refer to the Letter of Commitment as you plan for the semester as well as the suggested Time Line that has been provided.
 - Make sure ALL volunteers from your CC have completed and turned in a Memphis City School Background Check Form to the Mission Memphis Office BEFORE they serve at Berclair in any way.

The Mission Memphis Office will make copies and keep one copy at 2PC and take the original form to Berclair.

- Maintain regular contact with the adopted classroom teacher for discovering needs, prayer requests and developing relationships. (Suggested: talk with your teacher by phone at least twice a month.)
- Communicate with the Berclair chairperson, as needed, and meet with them as needed.
- Communicate regularly in your CC about what is going on at Berclair, your CC's involvement, and the opportunities to serve and love your adopted teachers and students.
- Enlist 2-4 people in your CC who will pray for the adopted students and teacher by name.
- Direct all requests through the appropriate channels:
 - Teachers make all of their requests to Dr. Shaw.
 - 2PC members make all of their Adopt-A-Classroom requests to Kim Blankenship.
- Direct concerns, problems, or questions of your CC volunteers through the proper channels (as listed above).
- **THINK LONG TERM! Relationships take time. You will not be able to respond to all needs or solve all problems. You are there to bring light through your presence. Do not burn out.**

Adopt-A-Class Partnership Letter of Commitment for Congregational Communities

Our Congregational Community agrees to be involved as an Adoptive Class for Berclair Elementary for the 2nd semester of 2006, as well as the entire 2006-2007 school year. We understand that at the very least, we are committing to the following:

- **Adults in class a minimum of 2 hours a month helping with administrative duties such as filing papers, checking papers, making copies, hanging bulletin boards, etc.** The teacher might like help up to one hour per week, but this can be arranged through your CC Coordinator.
- **Organize and throw 2 parties per semester.** To include providing snacks and drinks, 1 or 2 age appropriate games, and a simple craft related to the theme.
- **A minimum of 1 adult reader in class 1 time per month.** The guest reader will read a teacher-selected book for 10 to 20 minutes, based on time allowed by teacher. This assignment would be perfect for professionals who have some extra time on their lunch break.
- **Assist in connecting child with a math or reading helper.** The math or reading helper would work a minimum of 1 time per week for 30 minutes on whatever class work the teacher feels the student needs extra assistance with.

School Policies and Procedures

Check In

- Ring the bell to notify the front desk that you need to be let in. (The exterior doors of the school are locked at all times.)
- Sign in at the front desk of the school every time you go to work or volunteer.

Check Out

- Report back to the front desk and let them know that you are leaving.

Working with Teachers

- Exchange phone numbers with your adopted teacher.
- Be respectful of his or her time when talking with your teacher on the phone or in person at school.
- Be on time for your commitments; if you are going to be delayed, or unable to come, call your teacher or the school to inform them.
- Never show up without first notifying the teacher (at least one days notice, or by a mutually agreed upon time.)

Working with Students

- NEVER BE ALONE WITH A STUDENT!
- Do not bring gifts to the children, or give a specific item to a needy child personally.
- If you notice a particular need for a child, speak privately with the teacher and Dr. Shaw and see about meeting that need anonymously after receiving their input.

Requests

All requests or ideas for Adopt-A-School from 2PC members need to be given to Kim Blankenship. All teacher requests/needs must be given by the teacher to Dr. Shaw. If a teacher asks you for something, please have the teacher communicate that request with Dr. Shaw personally or in written form. Kim Blankenship and Dr. Shaw will be the predominant communicators for requests, needs, etc. for the two organizations.

Monetary Gifts

Since our primary involvement at Berclair is relational rather than financial, the MissionUSA Committee will approve funding from its budget to be directed toward purposes broadly benefiting the school.

No monetary gifts are to be made by Adopt-A-Classroom participants from our CCs to individual teachers, students, or families of students. Any financial need of the classroom should be brought to the attention of Kim Blankenship or Eddie Foster.

Practical Suggestions: The Do's and the Don'ts

DO...

- pray for your adopted teacher and for the children who are in your adopted class.
- Seek to serve the teacher and the classroom in love, in truth, and with grace and respect at all times. Be an imitator of Christ.
- Build a positive, healthy, respectful relationship with your adopted teacher and classroom. This is not about what you give, but it is about the relationships that you develop with everyone you come into contact with at the school.
- Call your teacher at least one day before you come to the school.
- Arrange for specific dates and times for you to come to the classroom and assist the teacher.
- Set a plan for the semester with the CC team and the teacher for approximate dates and times of when your CC will come to the school.
- Be flexible.
- Sign in each time you volunteer at the school in the main office.
- Wear your 2PC volunteer badge while you are on school property.
- Return your 2PC volunteer badge to the office after you are through serving each time.
- Compliment and honor the children for positive character displayed. This type of praise needs to be warranted and genuine. "Catch 'em being good!"
- Ask the children what they want to be when they grow up. Engage their minds to think past their current circumstances in

life. Talk about college, encourage them to consider various professional career fields. Help them have vision!

- Let the children know that you care about them personally. An old saying says, “They don’t care about how much you know until they know how much you care.”
- Speak in Spanish, if possible, to the children/families who know Spanish. They appreciate your willingness to communicate with them in their primary language.
- Thank the secretaries, the cleaning staff, the maintenance crew, the cafeteria workers, etc., for their work and for their efforts to make Berclair the best school in the city. This group of people often get overlooked in a school, and we want to treat them the same way we would treat Dr. Shaw, or Dr. Carol Johnson.
- Listen very carefully to what the teacher shares with you. Watch carefully. Sometimes, these conversations and the privilege of being in the classroom will give you insight into the class’s overall needs, the students’ individual needs, and the teacher’s professional and/or personal needs without having to outright ask the teacher. Then, let these things “inform” your prayer life and your CC’s response.
- Be ready to “give a reason for the hope within you.” A teacher may wonder, “Why on earth are you all doing this?” Be ready to give an answer. Be respectful of the teacher and his/her questions. Share your story with the person asking. We encourage you to do this away from the school campus/grounds. Ask the teacher to have coffee or lunch, or better yet, invite him/her and the spouse over for dinner at your home where you can share your story and your answer to their question.
- Build an established, positive relationship with your classroom teacher BEFORE you *initiate* a conversation about spiritual matters. Always ask permission from the person before you step into this type of conversation. If you initiate this type of conversation, please do not do this on school grounds.

- Answer children's questions honestly and lovingly if they initiate a spiritual conversation with you. Again, the most important thing here is to model God's love in an authentic, gracious, practical way to the children. It is crucial that we build trust, respect, and a healthy relationship with every child that we come into contact with.
- Invite them to church functions that might be interesting to your adopted teacher – Issues Forum Series, music events, Divorce Recovery, etc.

DON'T...

- EVER BE LEFT ALONE WITH A STUDENT BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. ALWAYS be in the observable presence of others (in the cafeteria, in the hallway, etc.).
- Give cash or checks directly to a teacher or child.
- Give gifts to children or to a child that you are tutoring.
- Ask teachers or children, "Do you know Jesus as your Lord and Savior?" or "What religion are you?"
- Belittle, use sarcasm, or make negative comments about city leaders/officials or about the city school system.
- Talk about divisive issues—politics, legal system, abortion, etc.
- "Evangelize" or "proselytize" teachers or students on school grounds or at school functions.
- Until that person seeks you out and asks you questions, do not seek to share the gospel with others until a positive, respectful relationship has been established. Do this off school property.

We want to respect the nature of our relationship with a public school by maintaining healthy boundaries. Our mission statement intentionally does not include evangelism. We are there to bring light and hope out of our desire to obey God and His word. We are there to develop relationships. Because of this, people may come to Christ. We want to be careful not to jeopardize a good respectful relationship with the school.

Important Target Dates for Adopt-a-Classroom (First Year Example)

- February 12:** Date by which CC volunteers are trained and ready to work in classrooms.
- February 17:** Date by which all CC Adopt-a-Classroom Coordinators have established initial contact with adopted teacher.
- February 21:** Training Session for all tutors in room C-310 from 7:00-8:00.
- March 6:** Date by which tutoring should begin.
- Mid-March:** One classroom party has been thrown. (Ideas for possible celebrations: St. Patrick's Day, Good Behavior, It's Friday!, Welcome Spring, etc.).
- Week of May 22:** End of Year Party (Last day of school at Berclair is Friday, May 26th.)

TRAINING MANUAL APPENDIX

“Getting to Know You” Questions and Prompts

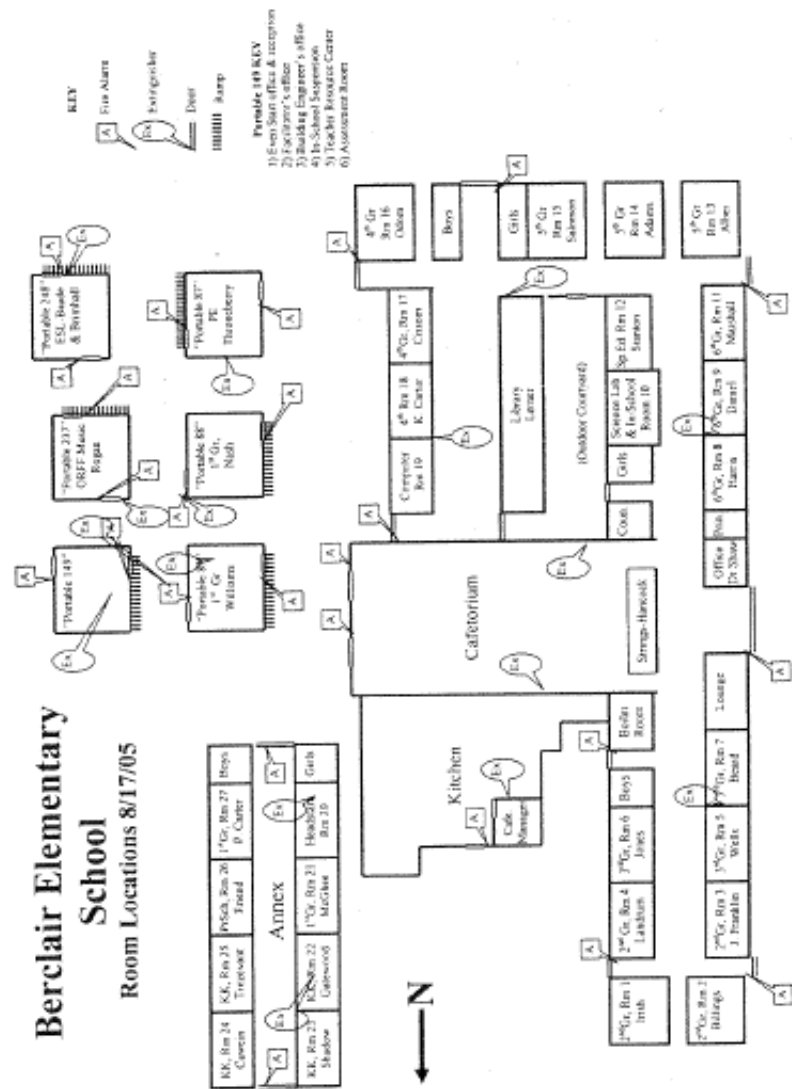
Professional Questions

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. How long have you been at Berclair?
3. How long have you taught in Memphis City Schools?
4. When did you know that you wanted to be a teacher?
5. What was your favorite teacher like?
6. Who impacted you the most or inspired you the most to become a teacher?
7. What is the greatest challenge today for you as a teacher?
8. What grades have you taught before?
9. What is your favorite grade to teach and why?
10. What is your favorite subject to teach and why?
11. What do you see as the best way that we can assist you and the children of your classroom?
12. What do your children in your classroom need the most?
13. What academic areas are your classroom children strong in?
14. What academic areas do they need the most help in?

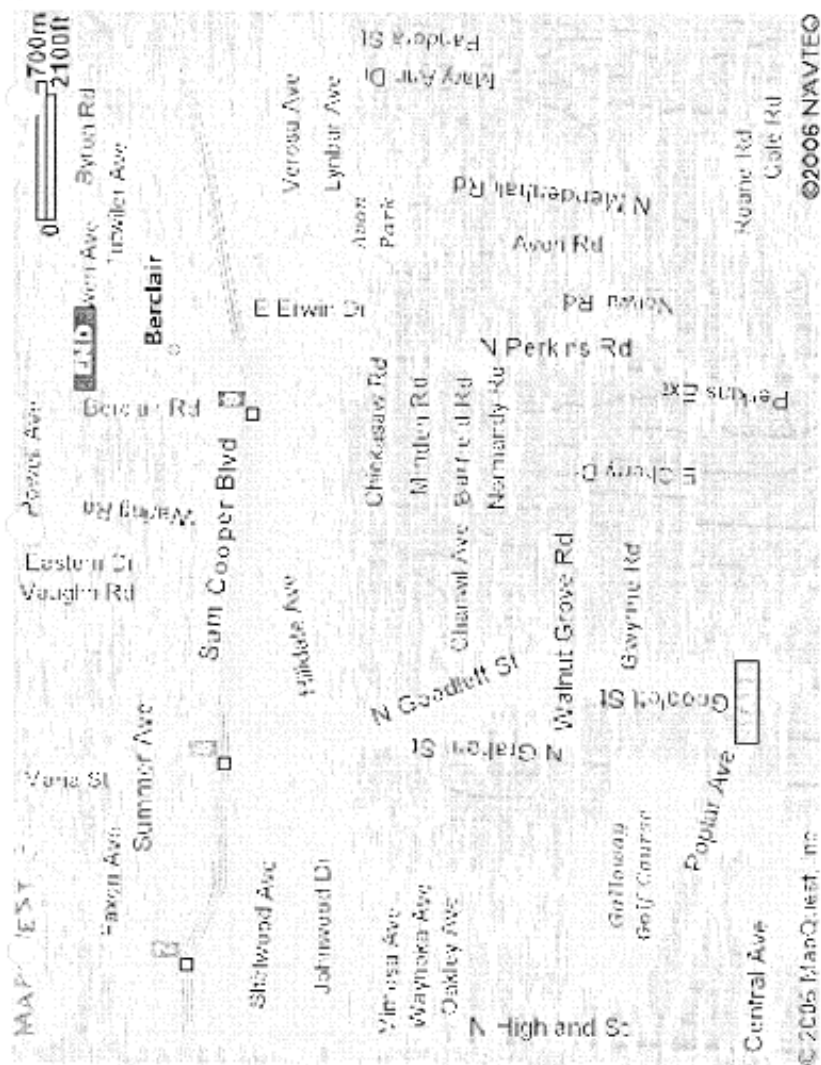
Personal Questions

1. Did you grow up here in Memphis?
2. What cities have you lived in?
3. Tell me about your family.
4. Do you have family members here in Memphis?
5. Where did you go to school?
6. Have you ever done anything else professionally other than taught?
7. What are your hobbies? What do you like to do in your “spare” time?
8. What are your favorite restaurants here in Memphis?
9. Where is your favorite vacation spot? What was your best vacation?
10. Do you like music? What kind of music do you like?
11. What sports do you keep up with and follow?

BERCLAIR LAYOUT



MAP SHOWING BERCLAIR ELEMENTARY



APPENDIX I: SUMMARY REPORT FOR YEAR 1

**Adopt-A School
Summary Report for Year One: 2005-2006**

**Second Presbyterian Church
MissionUSA
Submitted by:
The Berclair Planning Team**

**Written by:
Heather Davis,
Volunteer Coordinator of AAS**

**August 21, 2006
Joint Meeting of the
Elders and Deacons**

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The Berclair Planning Team

The Berclair Planning Team (BPT) met for the first time on June 27, 2005, and met five other times during the 2005-2006 school year. The BPT consisted of the following people at one time or another during the year: Tricia Aiken, Melanie Alexander, Johnny Allen, Susan Batchelor, Kim Blankenship, Lee Burns, Heather Davis, Eddie Foster, Molly Gore, Mike Harris, Sandy Hazelwood, Jason Hood, Melissa Jardina, Jilly Kauffman, Kathy Kontrim, Susan Nash, Peggy Riggins, Rachel Samoska, Lauren Sheehan, Sarah Stegall Haygood (Berclair coordinator for PDS), and Stephen Steiner. Natasha Briscoe was our administrative assistant at 2PC in the MissionUSA Office. Preparations were made for the school year expecting that the formal adoption ceremony would take place sometime in the fall. The mission statement was developed and written by the BPT.

The Formal Adoption of Berclair Elementary School

Berclair Elementary School was officially adopted by Second Presbyterian Church and by Presbyterian Day School on Tuesday, November 29, 2005. Adoption papers were signed by Sandy Willson (2PC) and Lee Burns (PDS). This ceremony was attended by many leaders of the Memphis City Schools including Dr. Carol Johnson, Superintendent of the Memphis City Schools as well as many community members from Second and PDS. Dr. Sam Shaw, principal of Berclair Elementary School, was our gracious host.

The Mission Statement

The mission of Adopt-A-School is to impact the lives of children and the communities in which they live by enhancing the quality of public education in partnering with an area school to establish positive relationships through Second Presbyterian Church's resources of people, time and money.

Five Primary Ministry Initiatives for Year One

As the planning progressed, the BPT agreed on the mission statement and decided that in the first year we would carry out five primary church-wide initiatives that would establish a positive relationship with the Berclair community and begin to build trust. These initiatives were: School Supply Drive, Adopt-A-Classroom, Tutoring, Spring Clean-Up, and the Summer Reading Book Drive.

1. **School Supply Drive – Collection Days: August 28 and September 4**

In two Sundays over 18,000 school supplies (such as crayons, pencils, tissue, hand sanitizer, copy paper) were donated to Berclair. Every congregational community participated in this collection as well as the Children's Ministry. Coordinators were Susan Batchelor, Molly Gore, and Mike Harris.

2. **Adopt-A-Classroom – Goal Date: February 17**

The coordinator for this ministry initiative was Melissa Jardina. Based on this past semester's experience, we are discussing the possibility of rewriting the Letter of Commitment this new year and simply use it as a guideline. We want to encourage our CCs to base their ministry on what best serves the teacher/classroom needs.

November 28 – We invited all CC presidents, service leaders, and people who had shown an interest in the Berclair ministry during the MissionUSA Conference to attend an informational meeting and asked them to return to their respective CCs to consider “adopting” a teacher. In the previous year, Berclair had one room mother.

January 30 – By this date, eight CCs proceeded to sign “The Letter of Commitment” (see attached) and agreed to adopt 13 of the 26 teachers at Berclair (50%). In total, all teachers in Pre-Kindergarten to Second Grade were adopted. On this evening, the CC Coordinators were trained. Sandy Willson spoke and addressed what our role as Christians is in a secular partnership as well as the manner and attitude that we are to have in this ministry. Heather Davis spoke and addressed what the mission of AAS is and what the role of a CC is. Melissa Jardina spoke and addressed the specifics of the Letter of Commitment and provided details about procedures. Susan Nash moderated and Eddie Foster closed in prayer.

February 17 – The date in which all CC Coordinators established initial contact with their adopted teacher and the CC members began to work in the classrooms.

3. Tutoring – February 21

Training for tutors took place on Tuesday evening, February 21. Melanie Alexander served as the coordinator for this ministry initiative. Melanie presented “Ten Tips for Tutoring” and discussed policies and procedures. Approximately 35 people came that evening for training.

PLEASE NOTE: WE HAD 193 MEMBERS WHO FILLED OUT A MCS VOLUNTEER FORM AND WORKED AT BERCLAIR THIS YEAR IN SOME CAPACITY THROUGH ADOPT-A-CLASSROOM OR THROUGH TUTORING!

4. Spring Clean-Up – Saturday, April 22

This year we canceled the scheduled clean-up due to the forecast for rain. As a result, we moved the clean-up to the following Saturday. Second Presbyterian had approximately 20 members that attended this event, but Berclair had a larger showing of the parental community than in the past year. Overall, there were approximately 40 students, teachers, parents, 2PC volunteers, Boy Scouts, etc., that helped clean up the grounds. Mike Harris and Eddie Foster were the coordinators for this initiative.

5. Summer Reading Book Collection – April 30, May 7, May 14

In three Sundays, PDS and 2PC’s communities collected over 4,000 reading books for the children at Berclair. The children were sent home with 6-9 reading books for the summer, and teachers were able to select books for their personal libraries in their rooms. Lauren Sheehan was the coordinator for this collection, and Crossroads assisted greatly in the organization, administration, and delivery of the books.

Serving Based on the Needs of Berclair

Like any healthy relationship, there must be a desire to meet the needs that are perceived, as well as declared. Given this was our first year, we sought to be flexible as needs of the school were communicated/perceived without a great deal of time on our part to prepare for various events. We sought to meet these needs to the best of our God-given ability and for His glory in order to love and serve the Berclair community. Therefore, in addition to these five major ministry initiatives, the following opportunities emerged and assisted 2PC in advancing the mission of AAS.

General Service

- Provided the Berclair staff with three luncheons (August, February, May)
- Delivered a Christmas gift to each staff member personally by a 2PC member.
- Gave a Teacher Appreciation gift to each staff member in May.
- Hosted three honor roll parties (as a result of the Berclair Leadership Council's input) for the students with good attendance and/or good grades.
- Assisted in the Fall Carnival by a few members assisting with this event (as a result of the Leadership Council's input).
- Delivered 120 Christmas baskets to the Berclair community members through NCC and the leadership of Ralph Braden and Larry Jensen. Approximately 35 members came to Berclair to assist with delivery.
- Gave every child a homemade angel and a candy cane from Second Presbyterian Church at Christmas.
- Provided the fall RhythmU concert in which several of the Berclair music students and their parents attended at 2PC. Our members also assisted with transportation.
- Enjoyed multi-ethnic holiday music Berclair students presented in December to the 2PC staff and then served the children cookies and juice: Susan Nash toured this group of students around our campus including our sanctuary and gym.
- Provided 2,000 healthy snacks for the children taking TCAP to have in the morning during TCAP week.
- Sent approximately 15 volunteers to the school during TCAP week to help proctor tests.
- Assisted with Field Day by providing 15 members to help with events from 9 a.m. to 12 noon on the last day of school, May 26.

Service by Congregational Communities at Second

- *SoJourners* provided nineteen of the neediest families at Berclair with Christmas gifts and clothes for the entire family.
- *Growing in Grace* provided a barbeque dinner for the families attending Open House in the fall as well as provided pumpkins for the children to decorate. Berclair's attendance that evening quadrupled as compared to the fall of 2004.
- 2:42 gave each of its CC members a magnet with a picture of a student in their adopted class along with the child's first name, and sixteen couples adopted a child for prayer. The seventeenth child was adopted and prayed for by the recreation staff at 2PC.
- *BASiC* provided small encouragement gifts and/or notes to the staff throughout the school year.
- *The Fellowship Class* arranged for 2PC to provide the Salmon Room and tablecloths for a retirement party for the three teachers who were retiring this year (one of whom was their adopted teacher.) The Fellowship Class provided desserts for the event.
- *Crossroads* assisted with organization and delivery of the summer reading books.
- SAS and the *Women's Class* provided many of the snacks for TCAP week.

Personal Service

- One of our members, a dentist, has offered his/her services to one teacher at Berclair each quarter free of charge.
- One of our Boy Scouts at 2PC painted lockers at Berclair in order to earn a merit badge toward his Eagle Scout.
- Heather Davis attended three Berclair Leadership Council meetings as a community representative.

**Summary of Congregational Communities
Involvement with Berclair
2005-2006**

Congregational Community	CC Coordinator	Teacher Adopted	Grade Adopted
Jeb Russell	Joan Fox	Connie Friend	PreK
Growing in Grace	Carol Overcast	Katie Shadow	K
Honeymooners for Life	David Jorgensen	Patricia Williams	1 st
2:42	Jennifer Thomson	Rebecca Nash	1 st
Fellowship Class	Judith Oliver	Marie Billings	2 nd
Walking by Faith	Lucy Beckham	Jeanette Franklin	2 nd
Faith Works	Joe Davis	Teleka Trezevant	K
Faith Works	Joe Davis	Lashunda Gatewood	K
Sojourners	Joyce Munn	Elizabeth Cawein	K
Sojourners	Kim Blankenship	Paula Carter	1 st
Sojourners	La Brubaker	Mary McGhee	1 st
Sojourners	Amy Johnston	Patricia Irish	2 nd
Sojourners	Beth Kaye	Freda Landrum	2 nd

Non-Adoptive Congregational Communities' Involvement

Congregational Community	Type of Involvement Over and Above Supply Drive or Book Drive
SAS (Singles at Second)	Donated a significant number of snacks for TCAP week
The Women's Bible Study Class	Donated a significant number of snacks for TCAP week
Crossroads	Helped with organization, administration, and collection for book drive
BASIC (Brothers and Sisters in Christ)	Provided small notes/gifts of encouragement to the entire staff all year

Congregational Communities with Less Involvement with Berclair*

*Please note that all CCs participated in the school supply drive in August, 2005, and many CCs participated in the summer reading book drive in May, 2006. We are very appreciative of the service these CCs were able to give in 2005-2006.

1. Adult Bible Study Class
2. Chapel Class
3. College Class
4. Community for Christ
5. Covenant Keepers
6. Curry Gillespie Class
7. International Class
8. Marriage 101 (Please note that they have already indicated that they are planning on adopting a teacher for the 2006-2007 School Year).

GOAL FOR 2006-2007: WE ARE PRAYING FOR ALL 20 TEACHERS AT BERCLAIR TO BE ADOPTED BY MEMBERS OF 2PC. PLEASE PRAY FOR THIS TO OCCUR THIS YEAR! WE NEED 6 MORE GROUPS OF PEOPLE (PREFERABLY CCs) TO ADOPT TEACHERS, AND EVERYONE WILL BE ADOPTED THIS NEXT YEAR!

This could be done by new CCs adopting this year, or by CCs who have the volunteers to take on another class to adopt (like Faith Works and Sojourners did this past year!). We are considering small Bible study groups or community groups adopting as well.

Interesting Facts About Berclair Ministry – Year One

- 100% of the congregational communities including the children participated in the supply drive and the summer reading book drive.
- 2PC donated over 18,000 school supplies to Berclair.
- 2PC and PDS donated over 4,000 summer reading books to Berclair.
- We had 193+ 2PC members who participated this past year as a volunteer.
- We had 35 tutors who were trained to tutor at Berclair.
- 8 out of 20 congregational communities adopted a teacher at Berclair.
- 11 out of 20 congregational communities participated in some significant way beyond the church-wide drives.
- 13 Berclair teachers were adopted out of 26 (50% of the teachers were adopted) where as the year before, the school had only one room mother.
- 120 Christmas baskets from the NCC were delivered to needy Berclair families.
- Over 2,000 healthy snacks were provided for the TCAP week.
- 15 volunteers helped to proctor TCAP tests with the teachers.
- 15 volunteers helped with Field Day, the last day of school.
- 19 of the neediest families at Berclair had their entire Christmas provided for by the SoJourners.
- Growing in Grace provided dinner and people support for the school's Open House night in the Fall, and the attendance at the school quadrupled compared to the previous year.
- 17 of the first graders were prayed for regularly by 2:42 couples who "adopted" one child by prayer.
- 8 homemade meals were provided to a teacher who had just become a new mother and was struggling with the demands of motherhood and working full-time as a teacher and a husband who works the night shift.
- BASIC provided over 210 "encouragement bags" (homemade goodies, supplies, etc.) to the staff members throughout the year.

Testimonies of God Working through His People

Carolyn Russell told Joan Fox, the CC Coordinator for the Jeb Russell Class, that she and her circle maintains the clothes closet at church for missionaries and for those who need clothing and offered to Joan to be aware of this resource if there was ever a need in this way at the school. The Lord laid this information on Joan's heart, and Joan shared this information with Mrs. Franklin, the guidance counselor at Berclair. Shortly thereafter, a Berclair family lost everything they owned in a house fire. Mrs. Franklin sought Joan out for help. This Hispanic family has a father, mother, and three children – two of which are in the Even Start program (a federally funded program for children/parents who are seeking to be bilingual). Two teachers from the Even Start program (they both speak fluent Spanish) drove the family to our church, and Carolyn, Joan, and these two teachers were able to outfit the entire family for all seasons due to our clothes closet. It was reported that the mother was so moved by this kindness there were tears flowing by the end of the visit.

Joe and Gladys Restivo tutored two children this past semester, one of which was a second grade boy. They were able to develop a very good relationship with this particular child. The Walking by Faith class prayed specifically and regularly for this boy. Over time, this boy made dramatic improvements academically. Joe and his wife have faithfully continued to work with and spend time with this young man this summer with the parent's knowledge and support. They have now had the privilege of meeting and talking with his parents. Mrs. Franklin, his teacher, said that she had never seen such a positive change in a child.

The following testimony was written by Jennifer Thompson, the CC Coordinator of the 2:42 class: *In all honesty, it was somewhat difficult to "connect" with Ms. Nash in the beginning. She had her baby the first week that our adoption was official, and while we did establish a relationship with the sub, we basically had to start over when Ms. Nash returned from maternity leave. Upon our initial contact with her, she thought we were providing only financial assistance to her classroom...and she seemed a bit disappointed that we were providing service hours/manpower. In an effort to show her how much we wanted to serve her, our leadership team decided to offer to make "main entrée" meals for Ms. Nash after she returned from maternity leave. She willingly agreed to let us "serve" her in this way, and later confided in me to tell me that her husband works nights, and she is home alone with her newborn and her step-daughter many nights. She was so appreciative of the meals. We provided two meals per week for her for four weeks. She was so thankful, not only to me, but to readers who came to read...and many other teachers stopped me in the halls to tell me how much she appreciated us. By our end of the year party, she was much more "warm" and "welcoming" – and she let us completely run with the party...she got to sit back and relax! I truly feel like we earned her trust this year, and I truly feel we showed Ms. Nash how much we want to serve her. And, by the last day of school, she was even talking about "next year." Seeds were planted.*

Tentative Plans for 2006-2007

Please note: Berclair has lost approximately 100 students this coming year due to the opening of the new Binghampton Elementary School. As a result, there will be 60 staff members this coming year (as opposed to 70 last year), and the student population will be approximately 400 students. The majority of the African-American population last year came from Binghampton, so this year's demographics will change. We are expecting a significant percentage increase in the Hispanic community as a result. Last year, there were 26 classrooms; this year, there will be 20 classrooms. All of these changes in demographics and population are expected to change significantly again next year, if the School Board votes to close Macon Elementary School and to send most of these children to Berclair.

In addition to the major ministry initiatives above, the following are “extensions” or “new events” we are considering for the second year. The Berclair Planning Team will be meeting in July to discuss these possibilities and their feasibility for this year. Heather is in the process of seeking leaders for each of the ministry initiatives at this time.

1. Forming and communicating with a “formal” prayer team for Berclair that will be informed by e-mail primarily.
2. Adopting every teacher in the school (last year we adopted 50% of the teachers; this year our goal is 100% - which means we need SEVEN more groups to adopt a teacher). PLEASE PRAY FOR THIS TO OCCUR THIS YEAR!
3. Have a Sunday worship service on August 20 in which we invite Dr. Carol Johnson, pray for all teachers, and commission our volunteers at Berclair. It is being discussed to invite the teachers at Berclair to join us that particular Sunday.
4. Provide four honor roll parties (last year we did three).
5. Provide Spanish training in the fall for all interested volunteers/coordinators (as requested by CC Coordinators at the appreciation brunch).
6. Develop a ministry that seeks to encourage and remember the office staff at Berclair specifically.
7. Invite 2PC members to speak at newly instituted Career Week (April 30-May 4) and “train” them on the presentation.
8. Invite all 400 children and their families to 2PC for the RhythmU concert in February – we will then use that time to invite everyone to the Spring Clean-Up; transportation will be needed for the Berclair families that sign-up to attend.
9. Spring Clean-Up with a Cookout – this will be aimed to be a “major” community event; current plans are to invite these families/children to VBS; Dr. Shaw is planning on asking Kroger to donate the hotdogs/buns to the school. This might be a good time for a 2PC “music” event – patriotic music or a little gospel music. We would also like to have two “fun events” (moon bounce, etc.) available for the children to help encourage the children/parents to sign-up for VBS.
10. VBS week preparation and plan for transportation for Berclair children.
11. Provide spring soccer opportunities with 2PC.

12. If we find 5-6 men to help with Boy Scouts, we would like to offer a Boy Scout troop to the 5th and 6th grade boys beginning this fall.
13. Secure a TCAP Coordinator and prepare better for TCAP week.
14. Secure a Teacher Appreciation Coordinator and prepare better for Teacher Appreciation Week.
15. Secure someone to video all major events at Berclair as well as find someone who is willing to take pictures all year of all “smaller” events in order to be able to compile a video of the entire year for the year-end celebration.
16. A Year End Celebration with Berclair perhaps with PDS – including Berclair teachers, PDS teachers, PDS volunteers, 2PC volunteers/coordinators

Challenges and Areas for Improvement for 2006-2007

1. We need to develop a comprehensive calendar with Berclair's input and use that calendar as our agenda for the year so we can eliminate as many "spur of the moment" requests as we can. This calendar would be shared with all the congregational communities as soon as possible.
2. We need to be careful to not overtax our members with constant requests and needs in light of all the other 2PC supported organizations we support. We want to limit the amount of "volunteer fatigue" that can set in if we are not wise in this area.
3. We need to help our volunteers with the language barrier.
4. We need to find a way to include the congregational communities that have not adopted classrooms and to discover a way that they could serve Berclair that would work with their particular stations in life and their gifts.
5. We need to solidify our policy about giving financial support to a classroom teacher and communicate that effectively at the beginning of the year to all volunteers and CC coordinators.
6. We need to be loving and communicate honestly our few concerns to Dr. Shaw and the Berclair staff.
 - a. Teachers need to be prepared for volunteers (we had a few situations where they were not ready for volunteers).
 - b. The school needs to follow up with parents who qualify for Christmas baskets.
 - c. Heather, as a representative of 2PC, might need to go in and talk briefly with the teachers about our desire and goals in this relationship with them – that we are there predominantly as "people support" and that we want to serve them in a way that will not overwhelm them or burden them. She could share the "Letter of Commitment" that suggests guidelines for service, but she could emphasize that we want to do what helps them most.

Key Contacts for Berclair Ministry for 2006-2007

Area of Ministry	Date(s)	Key Contacts	Others
Prayer	All year	Heather Davis	
Commissioning and Prayer	8/20	Susan Nash	Dr. Carol Johnson Lee Burns Dr. Sam Shaw
Adopt-A-School: Berclair	All year	Heather Davis	Sarah Haygood (PDS) Lauren Keras (PDS)
Adopt-A-Classroom	All year	Melissa Jardina	Melanie Alexander
Tutoring	All year	Melanie Alexander	Melissa Jardina
Academic Parties	10/13; 11/17; 1/19; 3/2; 4/27	Annie Billions	
Career Week	4/30-5/4	Melanie Alexander	
Clean-Up and Cookout on Grounds	3/31 Raindate#1: 4/14, #2: 4/28	Mike Harris	
Conference MissionUSA	9/15-9/17	Heather Davis	
Encouragement to Office Staff	All year	Kathy Kontrim	BASIC
Encouragement to Teachers/Educational Staff	All year	CCs who Adopt	
NCC Christmas Baskets	Tentative Prep: 12/9 Tentative Delivery: 12/16	Ralph Braden – NCC	Mrs. Myrna Franklin Guidance Counselor
Open House Events	October 5 th	Jay and Laura Cofield	Growing in Grace
RhythmU Concert in February and Transportation	2/9 or 2/16	Elizabeth Wall	John Hodges
School Supply Drive	Announce: 7/30, 8/6, 8/13 Collect: 8/6, 8/13, 8/20	Tricia Aiken	Susan Batchelor
Scouts for Boys	Fall	Rob Liddon	Lewis Williamson, Jeff Dillon, Rick Trehame
Spanish Training of Volunteers	Fall		?s Gilvia Brown, Pam Cleveland, Paige Housholder, Dianne Champlen, Connie Friend
Spring Soccer	Spring	Rachel Samoska	
Summer Reading Book Drive	Collect: 4/29, 5/6, 5/13 Deliver: 5/14	Lauren Sheehan	Crossroads?
TCAP Week	4/16-4/20	Ginny Nearn Tom Hunt Gail Stevens	SAS?
Teacher Appreciation Week	2/12-2/16	Martha Hester	Jean McSwain
Teachers Gifts/Luncheons	Friday, August 11 + various times during the year	Marjorie Bowman	
VBS Week Prep	Flyers to go out at Community Service Day at Berclair: March 31 st		
Video/Photograph "Diary"	All year	Howard Hazelwood Bill Quinlan	
Year End Celebration with PDS			

Letter of Commitment for Congregational Communities

Our Congregational Community agrees to be involved as an Adoptive Class for Berclair Elementary for the 2nd semester of 2006, as well as the entire 2006-2007 school year. We understand that at the very least, we are committing to the following:

- **Adults in class a minimum of 2 hours a month helping with administrative duties such as filing papers, checking papers, making copies, hanging bulletin boards, etc.** The teacher might like help up to one hour per week, but this can be arranged through your CC Coordinator.
- **Organize and throw 2 parties per semester.** To include providing snacks and drinks, 1 or 2 age appropriate games, and a simple craft related to the theme. For those who would like help with games and craft ideas, Melissa Jardina will provide assistance.
- **A minimum of 1 adult reader in class 1 time per month.** The guest reader will read a teacher-selected book for 10 to 20 minutes, based on time allowed by teacher. This assignment would be perfect for professionals who have some extra time on their lunch break.
- **Assist in connecting child with a math or reading helper.** The math or reading helper would work a minimum of 1 time per week for 30 minutes on whatever class work the teacher feels the student needs extra assistance.

The leadership team from our CC for this project is:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Name of Congregational Community: _____

Signature of President: _____

Please return this form in your class's Sunday folder by December 12.

GALLERY









“Thank you so much for your recent acts of love to those who will never be able to pay you back... These acts contribute directly to the morale of our school...”

Sam Shaw, Berclair Elementary Principal,
Memphis Tennessee



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