

## **The Recommended Solution**

Currently, the best solution, based on analysis, would be for New Hanover County to implement a paid summer development program, focusing on improving teacher skills in providing individualized and differentiated instruction for the variety of students in the classroom.

Teachers at Lakeside have already begun the process of learning. Many are participating in an information study group reviewing a book by Carol A. Tomlinson entitled, *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners*. Differentiated instruction requires teachers to adapt their instruction based on student differences in reading, learning preferences and interests. However, in order to teach to the required individual needs, individual needs must first be properly assessed. Not only is proper assessment required at the beginning of instruction, but it must be continually monitored throughout instruction. All of these teacher skills are needed to access student skills, and will be addressed within the summer program.

The program would need to be instructor led and support materials can be provided either in print base and/or through Internet activities. First we would need to identify the major components of the program to be established. These components may include but are not limited to, learning styles inventory, assessment skills and individualized instruction. For each section we will need to develop an instructor's and student manual, along with exercises promoting hands on activities within core subjects. As low reading skills have been identified as a major problem with Lakeside students, an emphasis should be placed on instructional activities within each core subject that not only address the learning objectives but also focuses on reading within the activity.

Lakeside High School has a certified reading specialist on the faculty who should be actively involved with presenting the materials and also be a source of further information and advice to teachers as they incorporate the material into their lessons.

The development system would be the Professional Development office of New Hanover County Schools and the program would be delivered by instructional design personal within the county. All materials developed that are not included in the student manual, should be kept in the library or teachers lounge for further reference. (See the organization chart located at the beginning of this document for placement of the Professional Development Office with the New Hanover County School System.)

Poor reading skills have been identified as a major cause of low performance for Lakeside students. In his statement before the House Subcommittee on Education Reform, Dr. G. Reid Lyon stated, "...the development of reading skills serves as *the* major foundational academic ability for all

school-based learning. Without the ability to read, the opportunities for academic and occupational success are limited indeed. Moreover, because of its importance, difficulty in learning to read crushes the excitement and love for learning, which most children have when they enter school.”

([http://www.nrrf.org/lyon\\_statement3-01.htm](http://www.nrrf.org/lyon_statement3-01.htm)) New Hanover County has the tools to improve reading skills of their students through assessment and identification of individual needs in conjunction with the implementation of differentiated teaching styles. These changes, if successfully implemented, can improve student reading skills and lead to a more productive life.