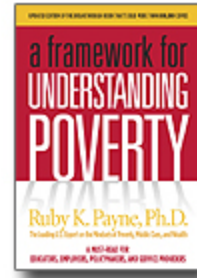


Professional Development for Sandusky City Schools Teachers

On Friday, March 31, 2006, Sandusky City Schools will engage in professional development focused on the diverse population of students served by the district. The presenter for the day is Dr. Cathy Hamilton representing Dr. Ruby Payne, author and international trainer on the topic of poverty and its effects on children. Dr. Hamilton's topic is: *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. Her reference is Dr. Payne's research, published in the Payne book: [A Framework for Understanding Poverty](#). Designed for educators who work with students or adults from poverty, the seminar will put into words what many veteran educators have experienced in their schools. The seminar discusses how individuals from poverty think and act differently than those people in middle and upper economic classes and why. Too often, teachers don't understand why a student from poverty is chronically acting out or is not grasping a concept, even after repeated explanations. Teachers may not understand why that student doesn't understand what he/she is expected to produce and why. Discussed at length are the social cues or "hidden rules" that govern how we all think and interact in society—and the significance of those rules in the classroom. The seminar will also illuminate differences between generational poverty, where families for many generations have suffered the effects of substandard income, and situational poverty, poverty that arises because of temporary conditions such as loss of job, illness, divorce, or death.



The SCS Professional Development team, including teachers and administrators from throughout the district, selected this seminar because it promises to increase teacher sensitivity for different cultures and an appreciation for the diversity of its students. With guidance from Dr. Sally Roth, Director of Curriculum; Dr. Bonnie Pigman, Director of Special Education; and Dr. Marlene Boas, Director of the Safe Schools Healthy Students Grant, Dr. Payne's books have been made available to teachers, principals, board members and non-teaching employees. Educators from other institutions, including Dr. James Preston, Firelands Regional Medical Center, and Sr. Mary Jon at Sandusky St. Mary's Central Catholic Schools will also attend the seminar. In addition, Francine Bergmoser, from the Erie County Family & Children First Council, will present at the Campbell School site a free three hour training opportunity on Friday, April 7, 2006, for professionals and community members interested in this topic.

Poverty occurs in all races and in all countries. According to the 2003 United States census, Caucasian poverty occurs at a rate of 14.3%. African-American poverty, by contrast, is measured at 34.1%. While the number of Caucasian children in poverty is the largest group, the percentage of children in poverty for most minority groups is higher.

In the United States, child poverty is often 2 to 3 times greater than that of most other major Western industrialized nations. In Sandusky, 65% of our students qualify for free or reduced lunches, by Federal standards, which means that over half of our students are acquainted with some level of poverty. Sandusky teachers and all educators, particularly in urban school districts, need to better understand students from poverty. We educators need to better understand ourselves as teachers and as community members who care.