How Do I Get Started?

There are many different services your local church or group of churches can provide to schools in your community. Your church may choose to partner with other churches in the same community around the schools located there. These activities do not require direct interaction with students, but can effectively provide assistance to the school that will be appreciated by the administration, staff, teachers, students, and their families and will enhance the learning environment.

1. Create and maintain a clothes bank for children that need additional clothes or need a change of clothes during the school day.

2. Coordinate and schedule group readings for classes or groups of students.

3. Provide speakers and/or music for assembly programs, special days, or events that will support the school and community.

4. Establish a team that can provide a presence at the school to monitor hallways and playgrounds.

5. Determine with the principal other areas where your team can support the school's learning environment.

These activities can be implemented without requiring a background check for persons on your team. They begin the process of developing a co-operative, working relationship between your church and schools in your neighborhood.

Where Can I Get Help?

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ADOPT-A-SCHOOL
An Initiative to Improve the Outcome of the Learning Environment

NATIONAL BAPTIST LAYMEN'S MOVEMENT
AUXILLIARY TO THE
NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION, USA Inc.

Harold Simmons, President
Thad Jones, General Secretary
Charles Ewing, Coordinator
Adopt-A-School

This Initiative Demonstrates Solidarity with the Savior
Why Should I Get Involved?
For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others
Matthew 20:28(a) (NLT)

Jesus spent His time on earth doing things that improved the lives of the people He encountered. He was led to heal, save and set free the captives because of His love and compassion for people and their circumstance. As His disciples, we must follow His example of helping and encouraging those we encounter. Getting involved in the lives of our young people and their social and learning environment will change some of the following statistics.

- **50%** of all children in America will live with a single parent before reaching age 18
- **75%** of all crimes in America are committed by high school dropouts
- **53%** of African American males dropped out of high school for the 2007-2008 school year
- **60%** of high school dropouts earn only half the income of high school graduates

The effects of these statistics have seriously impacted our society in ways that are easy to see all around us. Local churches, as well as other Christian organizations, are positioned to effect positive change in the lives of the young people in the schools of their communities.

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What Should I Do?

1. **Speak with your pastor about the Initiative**
   a. Obtaining the pastor’s support will stimulate the church as a whole to join in this effort.

2. **Find a school you wish to adopt**
   a. We suggest a school that is in the community where the church is located.
   b. Decide early in your process the level of school (elementary, middle or high) that your church will approach.
   c. A Title 1 school may benefit from your assistance more than schools not in this category.

3. **Find out what the needs of your school are**
   a. Meet with the chosen school’s principal and staff to determine the needs of the school.
   b. Prioritize the list of needs in collaboration with school’s staff to develop the details of the approach that will be taken by your church.

4. **Assemble a team to meet the needs identified in the meeting**
   a. Match team members with assignments consistent with their gifts and talents.

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When You Are Ready For The Next Level

At some point you may want to move into direct mentoring of students. Mentoring requires a more significant commitment from the team members who will engage in this very beneficial effort, and will require more collaboration with the school’s principal, staff, and parents, and will take more time, effort, prayer and patience.

1. **Recruit Team Members:**
   a. Select consistent, dependable, Christian men and women who are sensitive to ethnicity and gender

2. **Background checks (An absolute requirement)**

3. **Orientation/Training:**
   a. The approach of the mentor, supportive friendships, active listeners, and mutual trust and respect
   b. Contact the Adopt-A-School team for assistance with materials and guidance to implement this portion of the initiative.

4. **Get signed permission slips from parents**
   a. Some schools require active permission while others require passive permission
   b. Check it out

5. **Don’t be overwhelmed – this will take time!!**