



### **Winter PIC Spotlight**

*Brenda Harvey*

*Title I Parent Involvement Coordinator/ESOL  
Appling County School District*

When Brenda Harvey began her role as Title I Parent Involvement Coordinator in Appling County Schools two years ago, she was excited to jump start parent engagement activities at the school and district level. In working with the schools over these past two years, they proved to be eager, as well, to embrace these family events. Some of the school level events offered to Appling parents and students are Donuts for Dads, Techno Math Night (when parents visit the school and their children show off technology in use in the classroom), Family Bingo Night, “Monster Mania” night, and Georgia Milestones night (when parents learn about Georgia’s new student state assessment). Brenda also spearheaded a week of activities revolving around Georgia’s Parent Engagement Month in November to inspire parents, students, the community, and the schools to become more involved, as a district community, with engagement for all.

During the week, Brenda created an activity for each day. On Monday, she encouraged all staff, parents, and students to team together to produce a video for the Georgia Department of Education’s Parent Engagement Month video contest. Each of the school-produced videos depicted parents engaging in their children’s academic success. On Tuesday, the schools held a writing contest during which students wrote on the topic: “My Parents Help Me at School by...” The winners from each school were honored with trophies at the local Board of Education meeting. On Wednesday, the schools nominated outstanding parent leaders for recognition by the district. Of the parents nominated for the Parent Leader Award, the district chose a parent from each school and honored them at the Board of Education offices. Following the celebration, Brenda wrote an article in a district-wide publication that featured the winners and honorees. Thursday was “Dress-Up” day, where students dressed up like a family member they admire. Students also had the option of dressing up in orange to honor school volunteers, asking the question “‘Orange’ you glad you got involved in school?” On Friday, the district held a

culminating celebration that reemphasized the value, importance, and meaning behind the week's parent engagement activities.

The Georgia Department of Education's Parent Engagement Program became aware of Brenda's efforts because of the overwhelming participation in the statewide video contest. All five of Appling County's Title I schools participated: Appling Elementary, Altamaha Elementary, Fourth District Elementary, Appling County Primary, and Appling County Middle. After contacting Brenda, we found that she did far more to promote the contest than simply announcing it during her district's Parent Involvement Week. When she learned about the contest, she met with the Parent Advisory Councils of each school and met with leadership teams (principals and parent liaisons) to spread the word. It was this personal touch that ensured a fantastic showing from Appling County.