

Summer PIC Spotlight

*Lottie Hayes, Makeba Davis, Pamela Richardson, and Dawn Scott.
Bibb County School District*



Instructors, parents; Bibb County District Superintendent, Curtis Jones; and students alike participate in Bibb County's Cooking Up Academics videos.

Summer 2016 Edition

In this PIC Spotlight we are excited to feature the Family Engagement Program from the Bibb County School District and the incredible efforts of Family Engagement Coordinator, Lottie Hayes and Family Engagement Specialists, Makeba Davis, Pamela Richardson, and Dawn Scott. Makeba and Dawn took time from their summer break to represent the team and talk with us about their numerous efforts to get parents involved in the academic success of their children. As we interviewed Makeba and Dawn, one word came up time and again: collaboration. It seems as though with every new event or program, they are collaborating with students, parents, community volunteers, and professionals alike. Collaboration is at the heart of Family Engagement, whether it's reviewing Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plans (CLIPs) or getting parents directly engaged in teaching fun lessons that are aligned with academic standards.

Parental Involvement Guidebook and Professional Development

The Bibb County Family Engagement team put together all-in-one guidebooks, customized for each school, that include consistently formatted notification letters, compacts, plans and policies. The guidebooks were produced in a collaborative effort with the Migrant Education Program and cover all Title I parent involvement requirements in one convenient place. "Principals – they loved it!" exclaimed Dawn Scott, because it streamlined work for school staff members. It also made the compliance review process a snap for the Family Engagement team. At the end of the school year, the team held a technical assistance webinar for school staff on close-out activities, with instructions for Family Engagement Facilitators on turning in all of their materials.

Summer Academic Fair

Largely planned by the Family Engagement team, Bibb County's district-wide Summer Academic Fair was built around numerous activities to initially attract families to the event. "They couldn't resist it!" said Makeba. Examples of the activities include children hopping in to group exercise activities and taste-testing samples of school menu items provided by the Nutrition Department. A husband and wife team, who had written and illustrated a children's book, held a reading of their new publication. To enhance the experience, while the pages of their book were projected on a screen, they played a djembe drum along with the reading.

The real focus of the Summer Academic Fair, of course, was the academic engagement opportunities. Numerous summer camps were there to advertise their academically-focused activities, including the Boys and Girls Club of Central Georgia and "Gear Up for College," a summer camp run by Mercer University. The parenting organization, "Triple P" offered information about building parents' capacity to educate their children. School district personnel were on hand to provide information about the Georgia Milestones assessment test, and they also offered another opportunity for parents to review the district CLIP, district policy, and hear about the Flexible Learning Program. Parents also had opportunities to learn more about the United Way's academic-focused programs and Mercer University's Upward Bound program. Through the collaboration of all these partners, the fair opened access to numerous academic opportunities. "We were all working toward a common goal," said Dawn.

Cooking up Academics

Bibb's Family Engagement team has also developed an innovative series of videos called "Cooking Up Academics". In the series, parents, educators, and students prepare a culinary treat mixing concepts aligned with academic standards along the way. The Family Engagement team partnered with Dr. Cassandra Washington, Director of the district's CTAE program, who was very supportive of the video productions. She connected the team with CTAE culinary facilities, personnel, and decorations. The CTAE's video broadcasting instructor and students provided video and sound equipment along with production direction, while the Director of School Nutrition, Dr. Cleta Long, provided food. These resources were all made available through grants the CTAE program had received. Makeba said, "Working with them was a plus," adding, "That's why it's so important to know who your resources are and ... to tap into what is already available." The videos are shared online so all may benefit from the fun learning opportunities. This coming year the videos will continue in partnership with the culinary school at Helms College, and plans include developing a more competitive focus by pitting teams against each other.

To see the Gingerbread House video on YouTube, [click here](#).

To see the Summertime Smoothies video on YouTube, [click here](#).