

Education First

April/May 2005



June Board Meeting School Construction and Renovations

At the May Executive Committee Board Meeting, Bibb County Public Schools Superintendent Sharon Patterson made a presentation on the proposed plans for building several new schools as well as renovating several others. Included in the plans were rebuilding Central and Southwest High Schools as well as building two new middle schools.

For the upcoming June board meeting, Patterson will lead us on a tour of school sites and possible enhancement projects that would be funded through a Local Option Sales Tax for Education.

June Board Meeting

June 28, 2005

Convene at: Hutchings Career Center
2011 Riverside Drive

GEICO donates money to Education First to continue supporting the community.

In a Check Presentation Ceremony at GEICO on May 2, Education First, along with five other organizations, were presented with donations to help them continue to serve the community and its needs. Education First received a generous \$5,000.

"GEICO has been a great community partner, not only to us, but to many other organizations in the area," said Education First Executive Director Julie Pennybacker. "Their support has helped make the difference for so many people, and we look forward to working with GEICO in the future."

SmartStart Chair Robert Brown speaks to Board and Community Members

At Education First's April Board Meeting, the topic of discussion was focused on early childhood education. The 0-5 Committee spoke to the group about the many daycare centers in Macon which do not meet standard compliance and praised the two that recently achieved 100% compliance. According to Chair Cyndey Busbee, the early years for a child are some of the most important in laying the foundation for a good education experience.

The Committee also invited the SmartStart Georgia Chair, Robert Brown, to speak on what his group is doing in Bibb County and around Georgia. He began by mentioning his own early childhood education at the knees of parents, church members, teachers, and community members and how it affected his education later in life. Comparing early education to the wiring of a house, he said we turn on the lights in kindergarten, and if they're not properly wired, the lights won't come on.

He then outlined the plans of SmartStart Georgia to improve early education across the state. Noting low retention rates among childcare center workers as a significant problem, Mr. Brown mentioned initiatives that include incentive programs, opportunities to improve personal education goals (scholarships), and a graduated pay scale.

A consistent rating system must be used and published so parents will have the ability to know the best places to enroll their children. Currently, the daycare licensing can be found at www.reportcard.gaosa.org

Early childhood education affects all members of the community. Citing his time working with the Georgia prison system, he said many prisoners never graduated high school, and studies show students who have a proper early education are more likely to graduate. A community that focuses on early education is working to improve their future workforce.

Brown sees the future of early childhood education as a bright one as more communities and states recognize it as the foundation for all other learning. In Bibb County alone, SmartStart has donated \$276,000 toward incentives.



Robert Brown speaks on the goals and initiatives of SmartStart Georgia.

The Learning Curve

Your weekly guide to students, schools, teachers and triumphs in Bibb County's Public Schools

This page was written and designed by Education First in cooperation with the Bibb County Board of Education, the Peyton Anderson Foundation, and The Telegraph.

The Telegraph Publisher, PJ Browning has agreed to extend the contract for *The Learning Curve* another two years.