

# THE LEARNING Curve

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.

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

## Taking the Extra Step Towards a Better Future

### Rice Elementary School Partners with Central Georgia Technical College to offer GED Diploma Assistance

"I needed a better education and most jobs these days are about a high school diploma or GED," says class-member Jegotto Morris.

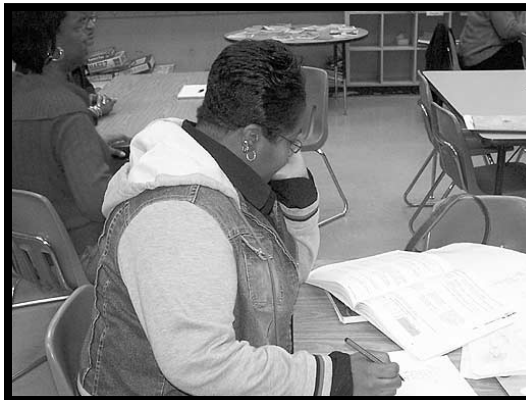
"I quit school, and I wanted more; I needed to better myself," says Christina Stover, adding she wants "to make something of myself: to go to college, to get a job."

In its second year, Rice Elementary has once again partnered with Central Georgia Technical College's Office of Adult Literacy to offer a class at the school focused on helping people in the community earn their GED (the first time the program was offered, it was cancelled due to a lack of participation). "We have a lot of people who are struggling in the community," says Sallie Devero, Director of the Adult Literacy Program. Of the students assessed (not just at Rice, but at the college as well), 80% at or below a ninth grade level and 50% of those are at or below a fifth grade level. "They're raising their families, and now they're going back and doing something for themselves."

Morris says she already has her Certified Nursing Assistant License, but it's not what she wants to do for the rest of her life. Her cousin finished the GED program at CGTC, and that encouraged her to try something else. "I want to be a teacher's assistant or teacher."

For Stover, it's not just about becoming a computer technician; it has a lot to do with her family. She is currently expecting her first child and knows a degree will go a long way in supporting her growing family. Not only that, her brother and niece both attend Rice, and she likes to provide that positive role model. "I keep him out of trouble; he's acting a lot better," she says. "My mom's also real proud of me [for doing this]."

Taught on Monday and Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., students will drop in whenever they can, doing as much as they can or want while they are there. "This is self-paced because everyone here works on different areas," says Avice Marshall, who began



Jegotto Marshall became interested in her GED when she realized she wanted to become a teacher.

teaching the course this year.

Students, however, just can't drop in and start taking the class. They must sign up at CGTC, attend a three-day orientation of three hours each, and take an assessment test to determine their abilities in language, math, and spelling. "That way, the student knows, and my staff knows, where they need to start working," says Devero.

During the class itself, they study the material they will be tested on and take several practice tests before moving to the next level. Before taking the practice GED, they go through a post-testing assessment to see if ample progress has been made in their studies, and then they must score a 500 on the practice GED to be allowed to take the real thing.

"Acquiring a GED diploma is not an easy task, but it is most definitely a goal worth attaining," says Brenda Richard, who taught the class in its first year and is now

the Media Specialist at Barden Elementary. "You must be dedicated and committed to working hard and making the necessary sacrifices to attend class."

With 11 students currently enrolled and showing up to class regularly, Marshall credits Rice Elementary Home School Coordinator Jeanelle Frye with spearheading the effort. "She wanted to support parents to better help their children by helping themselves," praises Marshall. "She and the Administration were so motivated to build a program."

"When we're educating our children, we have to look at their support system," says Principal Dr. Jackie Walden. "Our role models help us to be the best we can be."

"My son sees I'm trying, and that will make him stay in school," says Morris, adding it's a joy now to help her children with their homework. "I learn more with them than they think I do."

The class is open to people 16 and older, though the Adult Learning Center will work on every opportunity to keep a child that young from dropping out of school. "We believe the best place for a teenager to finish school is at *their* school," says Devero. "We discourage underage children from dropping out of school."

The help for these dedicated individuals doesn't stop with just the test: they also work in groups to practice interviewing skills and are helped in looking for a job or applying to school after passing the test. Frye credits the teachers in the classroom with doing the best job possible for these students. "To come into a classroom and be welcomed...is so important on the part of the teacher."

She may have gotten the ball rolling on this community partnership, but she passes the buck on to Richard for making it work and keeping the students interested. "She was so much a part of making this work; she championed [the students]."



Christina Stover knows the best way to support her family is by continuing her education.

"The first process was a mental one for me," Richard says, since she had spent her life educating elementary-aged children, "in that I had to rethink communicating and relating to older students and adults."

The more she worked with these students and the program itself, she realized the commitment it took and how much dedication these students were showing by just being there. Of course, she encourages everyone to take an interest in bettering themselves and moving forward with their education, despite the hard work. "The rewards of obtaining a GED diploma is without a doubt worth the time and the effort!"

For more information on the GED diploma program offered - either at the CGTC campus or Rice Elementary - contact the Adult Learning Center at CGTC at (478) 757-6669.

## May in Bibb County Schools

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<b>1</b> Porter Elementary 1 <sup>st</sup> grade field trip to the Atlanta Aquarium  Porter Elementary 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade field trip to the Fernbank Museum	<b>2</b> Central High School Fine Arts Showcase	<b>3</b> Burke Elementary Career Day 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.	<b>4</b> "Summertime Adventures in Macon" Information Session Hutchings High Annex 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	<b>5</b> Porter Elementary Field Day	<b>6</b> School-Wide Yard Sale Vineville Academy 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
<b>7</b> Vineville Methodist Church's Art Series featuring Vineville Academy Singers - 4:00 p.m.  Teacher Appreciation Week Begins May 7-13	<b>8</b> Porter Elementary Million Minute Finale  Reception for Superintendent Sharon Patterson Capitol Theater, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.	<b>9</b> Teacher Appreciation Week	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Annual Volunteer Breakfast Weaver Middle - 9:00 a.m.  Porter Elementary Chorus Performance	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Teacher Appreciation Week Ends
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> School Board Meeting Lane Elementary 6:00 p.m.	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Porter Elementary Kindergarten Celebration 9:15 a.m.	<b>23</b> • Porter Elementary 1 <sup>st</sup> grade Awards Ceremony - 9:15 a.m. • Porter Elementary 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade Awards Ceremony - 10:30a.m. • Porter Elementary 1 <sup>st</sup> grade Awards Ceremony - 9:15 a.m. • Porter Elementary 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade Awards Ceremony - 10:30 a.m.	<b>24</b> • Porter Elementary 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade Awards Ceremony - 9:15 a.m.  • Porter Elementary 4 <sup>th</sup> grade Awards Ceremony - 10:30 a.m.	<b>25</b> School Board Meeting Lane Elementary 6:00 p.m.  Last Day of School Porter Elementary 5 <sup>th</sup> grade Promotion Ceremony - 9:30 a.m.	<b>26</b> 6:00 - 7:30 Westside High School Graduation - Macon Centreplex  8:00 - 9:30 Hutchings High School Graduation - Macon Centreplex	<b>27</b> • Central High School Graduation 10:00 - 11:30 Macon Centreplex • Northeast High School Graduation 1:00 - 2:30 Macon Centreplex • Renaissance High School Graduation 3:00 - 4:30 Macon Centreplex • Rutland High School Graduation 5:00 - 6:30 Macon Centreplex • Southwest High School Graduation 7:30 - 9:00 Macon Centreplex
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Holiday - System Closed	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			