

LEON COUNTY SCHOOLS TITLE I

DECEMBER 2024

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 3



WHAT'S IN THIS QUARTER'S ISSUE:

- Director's Message
- Fall 2024 Parent and Family Engagement Survey Results
- Character Counts
- Forensics Breakout Room Edition
- Becoming a Homeowner
- Family Fitness Night
- Fathers in Education Day
- Family STEM Night
- Parent Corner
- Upcoming Events
- School Spotlights
- Title I District Recognitions

WELCOME

Greetings,

We hope each of you have celebrated many accomplishments from the first semester! The main goal of the Title I Office is to increase student achievement. Using Title I funds, many schools have started afterschool programs such as tutoring and robotics clubs, hosted parent workshops, provided educational field-trips, and professional learning for teachers.



Overall, our Title I schools have shown significant academic growth. You are an important part in making that happen! Help us to keep the momentum going by participating in school and district activities, making sure your child is at school each day, and understanding academic expectations. Together, we can enhance educational experiences and make a positive impact.

As we close out the first semester, mark your calendar for semester II Parent Events:

1/14 Family STEM Night @ Sabal Palm, 6PM
2/6 Family STEM Night @ Fort Braden, 6PM
3/6 Math of Cooking: Culinary Adventures @ Godby, 6PM
3/25 Family STEM Night @ Oak Ridge, 6PM
4/03 Financial Literacy Workshop @ Sealey, 6PM

All Title I Families are Invited to Attend Events!

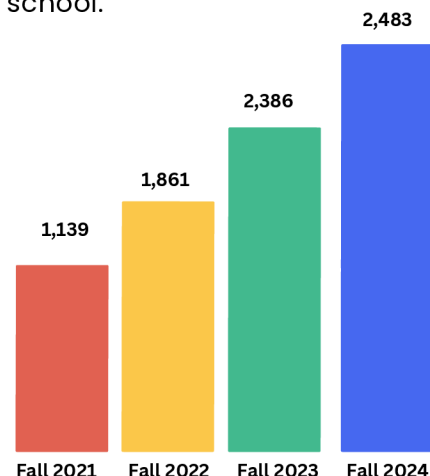
Wishing you a safe and enjoyable holiday season,

April Knight, Director
Title I Program

PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY RESULTS



Thank you for taking the time to complete the Title I Fall 2024 Parent and Family Engagement Survey. We value the perspectives of our parents to assist in evaluating program implementation. Your feedback is essential in helping us develop and enhance our parent and family engagement program to support increased student achievement. When compared to Fall 2023, there was a 4% increase in submitted surveys for Fall 2024. Our goal is to see at least 95% participation at each school.

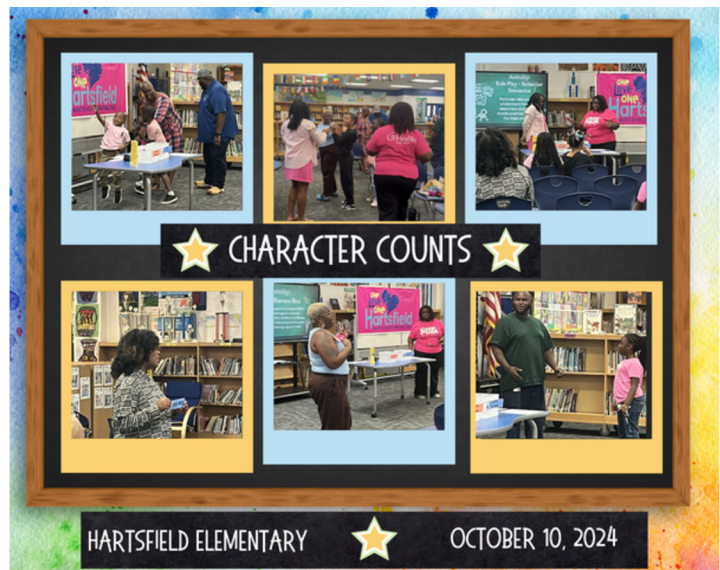


CHARACTER COUNTS

The Title I Character Counts workshop supported parents in implementing strategies to increase positive behavior at home. Communication and decision-making strategies are important to student achievement and relationships.

Hartsfield teachers, Vernisha Howard and Erica Reynolds, hosted an engaging workshop focused on understanding how to make positive choices. The workshop allowed parents and students to role play, discuss, and apply new strategies learned throughout the evening.

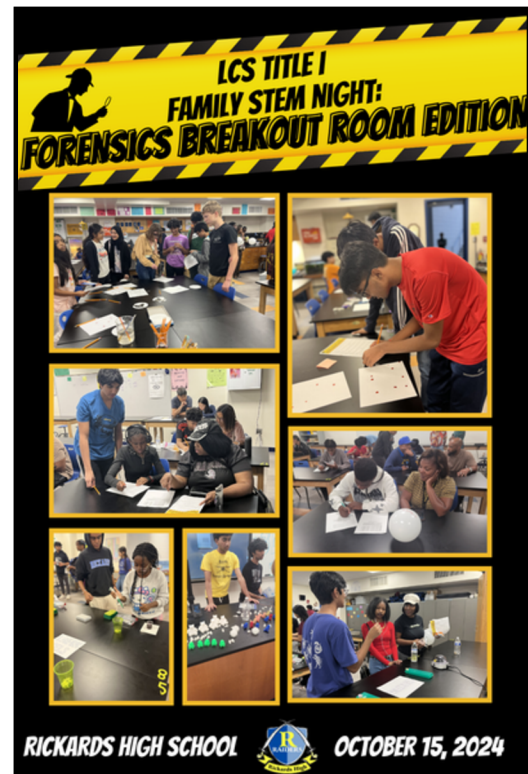
Participants now have strategies that they can implement right away. This workshop provided strategies that can be implemented at home to help sustain positive behavior at school. When everyone is speaking the same language, students have an increased chance of successful outcomes. All parents received a copy of the book used during the workshop.



FAMILY STEM NIGHT: FORENSICS BREAKOUT ROOM EDITION

The Rickards Raiders took on the role of detectives at the Family STEM Night: Forensics Breakout Room Edition. Before going to different workstations, families were provided with information about forensic science, how it is used in various careers, and what it looks like in real-world situations. Participants learned to recognize various types of fingerprints and created their own fingerprint cards. They crafted secret messages using invisible ink, examined blood splatter patterns created from different angles and heights with simulated blood, and discovered the fundamentals of 3D printing.

Additionally, participants explored how to separate human DNA using a method known as gel electrophoresis and analyzed various types of codes along with the process of code breaking. Over 200 participants representing grades K-12 engaged in these hands-on activities. A heartfelt thank you goes out to the Rickards High School Science Department and the students responsible for designing and facilitating each exciting activity! Parents were able to see how their student is progressing in their science classes.



BECOMING A HOMEOWNER

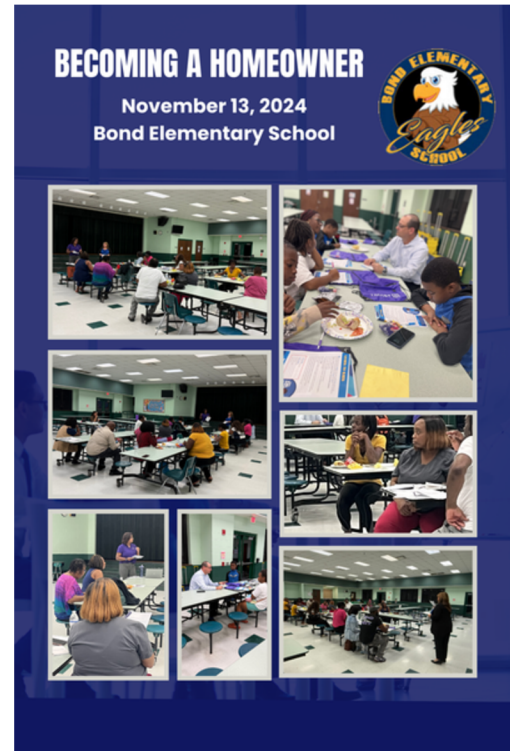
Each school year, Title I parents provide feedback through surveys administered in the fall and spring. The Title I Office uses that feedback to develop a calendar of parent and family engagement events. Homeownership was one of the most requested workshops!

Hosted at Bond Elementary, the Title I Office partnered with Truist Bank to provide a class for parents and students. Students learned about good spending habits. The mortgage team walked parents through topics such as credit scores, types of loans, interest rates, spending, grants for first-time homebuyers, home repairs, and the best time to buy a house. Parents learned a lot about the process of buying a home as well as what to consider once the home is purchased. Truist Bank was able to answer the number one question of the evening:

Question: When is the best time to buy a home?

Answer: The best time to buy a home is when you are ready!

We encourage our participants to follow their goal of homeownership!



FAMILY FITNESS NIGHT

The Title I Office hosted a Family Fitness Night. The event was held at Smith-Williams Service Center and lead by our very own Leon County School Board Chair Laurie Lawson-Cox. Mrs. Cox is a former physical education teacher who literally jumped at the chance to engage with families! She was joined by special guests, Dr. Michelle Gayle, Deputy Superintendent and Sylvia Williams, Principal of Springwood Elementary School.

The event was filled with lots of physical activity! Mrs. Cox gave tips on nutrition and taught the group exercises that can be done at home and get the heart rate up. She emphasized the importance of being mindful of what we put into our bodies - eat more protein and vegetables and limit sugary drinks. Dr. Gayle and Ms. Williams shared their wellness journeys and how important wellness is to perform your best.

Our favorite activity was four corners- we were able to move, talk, and be competitive with our partners.



FAMILY FITNESS NIGHT TIPS

- EAT FIVE (5) OR MORE SERVINGS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES PER DAY!
- LIMIT SCREEN TIME TO TWO (2) HOURS OR LESS PER DAY.
- ENGAGE IN ONE (1) HOUR OR MORE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PER DAY.

FATHERS IN EDUCATION DAY

The Title I Office hosted its annual Fathers in Education Day (formally known as Dads Take Your Child to School Day) at Ruediger Elementary School. This year's partnership with Mr. Bo Walker, Team Captain for All Pro Dads, provided an engaging learning opportunity for all families. This event highlighted the important role fathers and father figures play in the lives of children. School Board Member Dr. Marcus Nicholas shared what fatherhood meant to him, and discussed how fathers play a critical role in shaping children into adults. Mr. Walker led a mini lesson on "Empathy." The lesson helped families understand the importance of connecting with and understanding someone else's feelings. With a pair of sneakers, he illustrated that empathy is like "walking in someone else's shoes."

Families participated in "Table Wars." These competitions included trivia, dad karaoke, and a cup stacking challenge. FSU's Rising Spear helped with Table Wars - adding to the fun, teamwork, and learning experience. Each family received free books, dinner sponsored by Uncle Maddio's Pizza, Momma P's Ice Cream, and literacy resources from the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR). Every family created new memories and a better understanding of the power of empathy.



FAMILY STEM NIGHT: WIGGLE-BOT CREATIONS

The Title I Office hosted one of several Family STEM Nights. Through partnership with FAMU's College of Agriculture and Food Science, we are able to provide hands-on learning experiences that show families how STEM fits into the real world. Additionally, parents and students are able to practice science, technology, and math skills learned during the session. Schools are encouraged to incorporate hands-on science or STEM activities through science classes.

Family Wiggle-bot Creations was hosted at Astoria Park Elementary School. Families used cups, batteries, markers, copy paper, wires, tape, and a motor to create a scribbly robot. The wiggle-bot is a fun little robot designed to spin, wiggle, and move around. After watching their wiggle-bots in action, families received markers to transform their bots into "scribble-bots." Once the leads were connected, the scribble-bots created random, unique art patterns as they moved. Join us for the remaining Wiggle-bot Family STEM sessions:

- 1/14 Family STEM Night @ Sabal Palm, 6PM
- 2/6 Family STEM Night @ Oakridge, 6PM



WINTER BREAK FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Parental engagement plays a vital role in a child's academic success. Studies show that when parents are actively involved in their children's education, it can lead to better school performance, improved behavior, consistent attendance, and higher graduation rates. Here are some ways parents can become more engaged:

Holiday Journal

Start a holiday journal where children can write about their daily experiences, holiday traditions, or what they are grateful for. They can also draw pictures to go along with their entries. This encourages learners to think, write, and reflect.



Budgeting and Shopping

If you are out shopping, involve your child in creating a simple budget. They can help compare prices, calculate discounts, and learn about saving money in a real-world context.



STEM Challenges

Have fun with simple science and engineering challenges! Try building a spaghetti bridge, designing your own volcano, whipping up some homemade slime, or even launching a DIY rocket using baking soda and vinegar.



12 Days of Fitness Challenge

Create a "12 Days of Fitness" challenge, where each day you do a different exercise (e.g., jumping jacks, squats, push-ups, etc.). Each day, add one more activity to the list, just like the song "The 12 Days of Christmas." You can make it festive by calling them "Santa squats," "reindeer jumps," and so on.



Create a Holiday Reading Challenge

Encourage your child to read a certain number of books during the break. Offer small incentives, like a "holiday reading certificate" or a special treat.



<https://fitnessista.com/winter-break-activities-with-kids/>

REPORT CARDS



We made it! Friday, December 20th, marks the last day of the first semester grading period. Report cards will be available through the Focus Portal on January 15th. Families need a Focus Portal account to access student's grades and attendance. Contact your child's school for the parent portal letter which includes your **child's name, student ID, and parent portal pin**.

Then visit:

<https://leon.focusschoolsoftware.com/focus/auth/>
and follow the directions that are included on the letter.

STAY CONNECTED



Make sure that your contact information is current! Sign up for the teacher's Remind messaging system, the district Focus communication platform, and pledge to attend at least one school event by March 7th. Strong communication between home and school is important! A child's academic success is enhanced by positive interactions between parents and teachers. Remember to reach out to your child's teacher to arrange a parent-teacher conference. We are all here to support you! Do not hesitate to ask for suggestions on how to support your child's learning at home.

PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

UPCOMING EVENTS



LCS TITLE I
presents
Family STEM Night

SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY ENGINEERING MATHEMATICS

Sabal Palm Elementary School
January 14th @ 6:00 p.m.

Door prizes
Light refreshments

RSVP Today

Scan Me

*Students must be accompanied by a parent and/or a guardian.

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

- Family STEM Night
@ Sabal Palm Elementary School

LCS TITLE I
presents
Family STEM Night

SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY ENGINEERING MATHEMATICS

Fort Braden School
February 6th @ 6:00 p.m.

Door prizes
Light refreshments

RSVP Today

Scan Me

*Students must be accompanied by a parent and/or a guardian.

Thursday, February 6, 2025

- Family STEM Night
@ Fort Braden School

ASTORIA PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Driven by the dedication of students, staff, and administrators, Astoria Park Elementary School is thriving and is proud of its positive school culture. The schoolwide initiative came with a new logo. The new logo displays a panther and the words "Astoria Park Panthers" and "Est. 1969" enclosed within a sphere. The logo symbolizes Astoria Park's motivation to grow students academically and personally. Teachers and staff are wholeheartedly committed to fostering an environment where every child can excel by embracing innovative strategies to create a supportive learning atmosphere. This has included science related field trips, a Veteran's Day parade and program, grades 3-5 honor roll celebration, math challenges, reading celebrations, teachers receiving innovation grants, and a schoolwide Positive Behavior program that allows students to spend their "paw bucks." Paw Bucks may be used to purchase creative experiences like an ice cream social and lunch off campus with four friends. All of this occurred within the first semester of school! Astoria Park continues to build bright futures where academic success and a strong school community go hand in hand.

FAIRVIEW MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fairview Middle School describes themselves as the hidden gem on the southside of Tallahassee. Teachers and students are working hard and accomplishing amazing things! Fairview continues to rank in math competitions, Science Olympiad, sports, and other areas of academics. The girls' volleyball team won their division title! The school hosted a math competition for grades 3 through 6 and the Science Olympiad Team competed against 334 other teams over 28 states and placed in all six categories! The health class was able to apply learning by observing a spaying with a local veterinarian's office. Student life is moving swiftly!

Fairview has implemented new programs, including outside lunch where students can read, increased library visits through Language Arts, and incentives for positive behavior and attendance. Fairview hosted its first Falcon Fun Day! In order to attend, students must have no office referrals for the two weeks prior and less than five unexcused absences. Performing Arts students had the joy of attending the Kingdom Choir performance at Ruby Diamond Auditorium hosted by FSU's Opening Nights.

Upcoming events include IB Prep students annual Lock-In, and the 7th grade "Courtroom to Classroom" field trip. Students will see civics in action at a Leon County Courthouse.

We are enjoying seeing the growth in our Falcons thus far!
We know they will finish the year FALCON Strong!



OAK RIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Adventure #1- Dads Take Your Child to School Day

The adventures have begun for the Oak Ridge Eagles. Oak Ridge welcomed over 100 Dads and male community members to their Dads Take Your Child to School event held in October. Community members from various organizations, including the Tallahassee Fire Department, FSU basketball, FSU baseball, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and FAMU Police Department, greeted students as they were dropped off to school. Others were escorted on to campus by their fathers, grandfathers, or other significant male members of their family. Students enjoyed a light breakfast and were able to complete a woodwork project with their dad or father figure. The school highlighted males and reminded them of the important role they play in students' lives.

Adventure #2- Fire Safety

Second grade students learned all about fire safety during National Fire Prevention Week. Students participated in virtual experiences and learned the importance of how to prevent fires. After completing the activities, students were awarded their very own fireman hat!



TITLE I SHINES: CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR DISTRICT WINNERS!
2024-2025

**Glenn-Howell Distinguished
Educator of the Year**

District Winner



Vernisha Howard
Hartsfield Elementary School



**School-Related
Employee of the Year**

District Winner



Alphonso "Zoe" Dorsey
Fairview Middle School

TITLE I SHINES: CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR DISTRICT FINALISTS!
2024-2025

**Glenn-Howell Distinguished
Educator of the Year**

District Finalist



Amon Rwito
Ruediger Elementary School



Teacher of the Year

District Finalist



Ryan Williams
Bond Elementary School