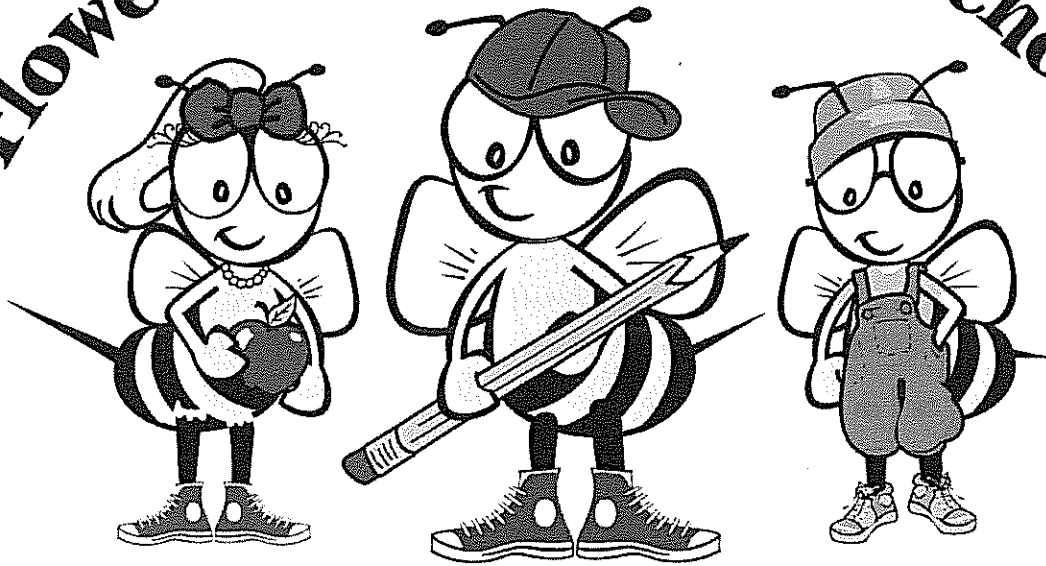


Flowertown Elementary School



Flowertown Elementary School

20 King Charles Circle

Summerville, SC 29483

SC- SIC

2020 Riley Award

Level 2 Application

2020 Riley Award Application

School Information

Flowertown Elementary School
20 King Charles Circle
Summerville, SC 29485

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School District

Dorchester County School District 2

Case Statement

SIC Summary

The Flowertown Elementary School ("FES") SIC is a dynamic and engaged group of parents, teachers, and community members who have a strong commitment to improving FES in meaningful ways. The FES SIC works towards its targeted goals throughout the year and acts as a sounding board for the Administration, teachers, and PTA to offer new ideas and improvements to existing programs. It is always our goal to reach all parents and give them the support and information they need to feel empowered in their child's education. Demographically, FES has approximately 1000 "busy bees". FES is 54% free and reduced lunch students. As a Title I school, SIC recognized parent involvement and communication was an area of need. Accordingly, SIC works each year to increase our communication with families and to encourage parents to be more engaged with their children and the programs FES has to offer. We want families to feel connected to their school as an extension of their own families and neighborhood. Further, SIC strives for each child to feel championed and valued. SIC sets goals to help open their eyes to what is possible for their future as citizens in their community.

2018-2019 SIC Goals

At the start of the school year our SIC set goals to address areas of need to supplement other programs already in place. We identified three major areas: (1) improving parent involvement and communication, (2) promoting career readiness and awareness among students with a focus on STEAM career options and the Dorchester County District Two Career and Technology Education ("CATE") program, and (3) increasing awareness of SIC.

Improving Parent Involvement and Communication

SIC wanted to encourage FES parents to engage with their children and with FES. Our goal was to improve communication with parents about FES events and programs and to encourage parent feedback as well as encouraging parent involvement. Because of these efforts and a strong PTA partner, FES has seen an impressive increase in logged Volunteer Hours from 4,300 hours in 2016-2017 to 5,000 hours in 2017-2018 and 7581 hours in 2018-2019.

SIC continued and strengthened its strong partnership with FES PTA in 2018-2019. SIC partnered with the FES PTA to host two Family Movie Night programs where families were invited to come to FES on Friday evenings to watch an age appropriate movie. These movie nights were very successful with good attendance. SIC also partnered with PTA to host the Family Valentine's Dance. The dance was also very well attended and is unique from similar events at other schools because it is intentionally inclusive of all family members. SIC members volunteered in all aspects of the dance from concessions to clean up.

In 2019, SIC also committed to educating its members about education reform legislation so SIC could help parents decipher the available information and encourage parent involvement in discussions. SIC members attended District PTA events, Tri-County community information forums, and Dorchester County meetings to learn more. SIC, through its PTA partnership,

provided FES parents with information about education reform and legislative information. SIC encouraged parent involvement and engagement and offered support for FES teachers and administration.

In May 2019, SIC promoted and led its “What to Expect Night”, which is a program initially created by the 2015-2016 SIC to fill a need for parents to get information about the next grade level from a parent’s perspective. The program is designed to give parents information during the current school year about what their child will be learning in the next grade level. “What to Expect Night” is hosted by a SIC member and a volunteer teacher for each grade level. It is an informal, “real-talk” question and answer session. Parents and students were given summer learning workbooks for the upcoming grade level as well as handouts on online summer learning programs. Childcare was provided during the program so parents could attend without distractions. This program had good attendance and survey feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

SIC recommended and promoted Title I parent education workshops throughout the school year on topics such as literacy, helpful technology tools, and information about state testing to increase understanding and reduce test anxiety for parents and students. SIC also assisted with promoting FES events, announcements, and achievements through social media.

Increase Student Awareness of Career Options with a STEAM focus and CATE Program

SIC wanted to provide FES students with information about a wide variety of career options in our community. During the 2017-2018 year, SIC chose to focus awareness on careers in areas of Science Technology Engineering Art and Math (“STEAM”). SIC continued that goal in 2018-2019 with the introduction of the CATE program to students through its annual Career Panel for the 4th and 5th grade classes. Students in the CATE program from area high schools were panelists in two 45 minutes sessions with 4th and 5th graders. They discussed their chosen CATE pathways and how these pathways can lead to a number of careers. FES students were given information about the CATE pathways and submitted questions in advance to the panel. Members of the 2018-2019 Career Panel included local high school students from Engineering, BioMed, Culinary Arts, and Agriculture pathways. The FES students were engaged throughout the session and asked thoughtful questions. Each speaker explained their chosen pathway and what they do on a day to day basis to meet its requirements. They discussed the types of careers they were interested in pursuing and what subjects they enjoyed as elementary school students. The FES students were extremely engaged hearing from young people about the opportunities for them in these different areas right in their community at their future high school. They enjoyed hearing about raising farm animals, learning to develop vaccines and medicines, cooking farm to table meals and baking for large groups, and all different types of engineering.

SIC assisted with planning and hosted an information table for STEAM Night. SIC members offered information about SIC. STEAM Night hosted many community partners with hands on activities in all areas of STEAM for families. Additionally, teachers offered activities appropriate for all ages in areas of STEAM throughout the school campus.

In addition to the Career Panel, SIC offered assistance to FES Guidance with coordinating a Career Vehicle Day for younger students to meet law enforcement, fire and rescue, and EMS personnel and tour the vehicles.

SIC assisted with planning and coordination of the FES Career Night. Students were encouraged to dress up as their future career and teachers developed and offered hands on activities appropriate for all ages in several career areas such as construction and engineering, health and wellness, science, and literary arts. SIC hosted an information table about SIC at Career Night.

Increase Awareness and Membership of SIC

While SIC assisted with many events and activities, we observed that many parents were not familiar with what SIC is and how it is working for them and for their children. SIC set a goal to increase parent awareness of SIC's presence at FES and to promote membership. To achieve that goal, SIC offered an information table and opportunities to nominate members for SIC before the school year began at Facts and Fees and again at Parent Information Night. Information tables included SIC membership information, a Frequently Asked Questions handout, and information about the events SIC hosted or partnered in with PTA. SIC hosted information tables at STEAM Night in the Fall and at Career Night in the Spring. SIC members were introduced at school-wide events including performances and family nights. SIC meetings were published in the school calendar, on the school website, and promoted on weekly email updates to parents.

SIC sponsored Coffee and Characters during the FES annual Book Character Parade in October 2018, an event always heavily attended by parents and extended family. SIC members hosted a free coffee table for attendees to increase awareness of SIC and open discussion about what SIC is and how parents can get involved. Left over coffee was provided to teachers and staff which was much appreciated. Coffee and Characters was very well received by families and will become a new annual event from SIC due to its inaugural success.

Conclusion

FES has an active and hands-on SIC that serves to provide guidance to the Administration and partners with staff and PTA to promote a positive and welcoming school environment for "busy bees" and their families.

Sincerely,



Ashley S. Heslop
SIC Chairperson

Level Two - Goals Narrative

The 2018-2019 Flowertown Elementary School (FES) SIC set its goals targeting three major areas: (1) improving parent involvement and communication, (2) promoting career readiness and awareness among students with a focus on STEAM career options and the Dorchester County District Two Career and Technology Education ("CATE") program, and (3) increasing awareness of SIC.

Improving Parent Involvement and Communication

In 2018-2019, SIC partnered with PTA for several events to encourage parent involvement. We hosted two Family Movie Nights, Family Game Night, and the Valentine's Family Dance. Each of these events is designed to include entire families. Family Movie Night and the Family Dance are held on Friday evenings to accommodate working parents and extracurricular activity conflicts during weekdays. Volunteer Hours increased from 5,000 hours in 2017-2018 to 7581 hours in 2018-2019. In May 2019, SIC led its signature event, "What to Expect Night", which provides parents with information about the next grade level from a parent's perspective. Each grade level is hosted by a SIC member and a volunteer teacher for an informal, question and answer session. Childcare was provided. This program had excellent attendance and survey feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Students were provided with Summer enrichment materials to take home after the event.

In Spring 2019, SIC members attended District PTA events, Tri-County community information forums, and Dorchester County meetings to learn about proposed education reforms. SIC, through its PTA partnership, provided FES parents with information sheets regarding how existing and proposed legislation impacted FES and Dorchester District 2 schools.

In 2019-2020 SIC again partnered with PTA to host an outdoor Family Movie Night with approximately 200 in attendance. Free concessions were provided. SIC also hosted a table at STEAM Night in September 2019 to ask parents and students for feedback on how FES communicates with parents and how we can improve. The response was overwhelmingly positive. SIC will partner with PTA to host the Family Dance on February 7, 2020.

In 2018-2019 SIC member and Summerville Fire and Rescue Maintenance Coordinator, Roger Wnek, helped SIC develop a strong partnership with our community Fire Station. The program began with Engine 302 firefighters greeting parents and students during morning drop-off in the car rider line and bus loop. SIC invited Captain J. Lee, community liaison with Summerville Fire and Rescue, to speak to its members about more opportunities for volunteers in October 2019. This partnership has bloomed into a weekly mentoring program where firemen from Engine 302 and Ladder 302 provide one on one reading help and play board games with at risk male students. SIC feels that by engaging our community in our school we can further engage our students, and their parents, to feel part of the FES family.

Promote Career Readiness and Awareness

In 2018-2019, SIC continued its goal to provide students with information about available STEAM careers in our community with its annual Career Panel for the 4th and 5th grade classes. Students in the CATE program from area high schools were panelists in two 45 minutes sessions. They discussed their chosen CATE pathways and how these pathways can lead to a host of careers. The panel included students from Engineering, BioMed, Culinary Arts, and Agriculture pathways. The FES students were extremely engaged hearing from young people from their future high school. SIC also hosted an information table and provided volunteer support at STEAM night and continued its support of the new FES STEAM Lab, envisioned and created by SIC member, Janet Dangerfield.

Due to the successful engagement of students with the high school panelists last year, SIC has invited all area high school CATE programs to send representatives to its Career Panel scheduled for February 19, 2020. The 4th and 5th grade students will prepare questions in advance for the panelists about their CATE pathways and their career plans.

Increase Awareness of SIC

SIC continued its goal to increase parent awareness of SIC's presence at FES. SIC hosted information tables at Parent Information Night and at STEAM Night. In October 2018, SIC hosted a table with coffee for guests and teachers before and during Book Character Parade. This event was a huge success and was repeated in October 2019 with additional offerings for younger siblings attending the parade. SIC members greeted families and gave information about SIC.