

Dennis Elementary School is located in the heart of Bishopville, South Carolina. Dennis Elementary serves students from the surrounding small communities in Lee County. Dennis Elementary currently has an enrollment of 456 students and is identified as a Title 1 school. All students receive free lunch because our district is participating in the Community Eligibility Provision. The beginning of the year marked the celebration of renaming the school from Bishopville Primary to Dennis Elementary.

Dennis Elementary School is a place that is dedicated to providing a first-class educational experience for all learners. This school year, we continued our work to maintain a positive and inviting learning environment. This is reflected in our school motto of “Everyone Counts, Every Moment Matters” which is posted around the school and on all agendas. The entire staff participated in training on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) which is a proactive approach to establishing the behavioral supports and social culture with our PBIS Coordinator. ‘

Academically, we continued with changes that were made to make an impact on instruction and teacher effectiveness. In addition to their daily planning sessions, our teachers met for 90-minute sessions twice a month to receive professional learning, engage in data talks and receive support from our administration team and reading coach. This year, we continued our tiered intervention program schoolwide using ReadWorks lessons and progress monitoring to target instruction.

The school district hosted events to provide opportunities for learners to demonstrate mastery of content areas across the curriculum. Dennis Elementary participated in many of these district events. These events included the Young Author’s Tea, the Spelling Bee, MLK Oratorical Contest, and Science Fair. Dennis Elementary had four winners from the Oratorical Contest. Through the 21st Century Learning grant, approximately 100 learners were provided with an opportunity to participate in an afterschool program. This program was designed to provide enrichment and academic support for students in grades 2-5. Teachers and support staff utilized our one-to-one Chromebooks as students participated in USA TestPrep and Imagine Learning. Dennis Elementary provided students with authentic learning experiences through field studies to Washington D.C., Orlando, FL, and several destinations across South Carolina.

By equipping staff through professional learning and coaching, collaborating with the community and parents, and the implementation of leadership practices, our learners will continue to receive a quality education. Structures that were put in place to support school transformation include:

Restructuring common planning to establish times for data meetings, book study, and collaborative planning

Targeting school culture as well as literacy and mathematics through the implementation of the workshop model

Completing a schoolwide book study on the “Next Steps to Guided Reading” to support a balanced literacy approach

Implementing Imagine Learning as an intervention tool for reading and mathematics

Introducing mentoring programming with fourth and fifth-grade boys to offer college tours and other opportunities

Hosting PBIS Celebrations to recognize students with outstanding behavior

Creating a Media Literacy Team provided learning opportunities for students on digital literacy

Having a Book Fair that was a big success and supported by the community and families of the school  
Graduating twelve families from the Strengthening Families program which is an evidence-based family skills training program found to significantly improve family skills and relationships and reduce problem behaviors

Partnering with First Steps to support 4K students and issue free books to students as well as provide literacy lessons

Inviting community partners to parent university meetings to inform parents of local resources and services

Hiring a STEM math instructional coach to support teachers with implementing math workshop  
Providing learning opportunities to teachers and staff to support their professional growth