

Career Technical Student Organization Rally and College and Career Fair



Georgia Employability Skills Task Force Recommendation No. 1 School Goal 3

- ▶ Formalize relationships and partnerships with postsecondary institutions, advisory boards, and local businesses to coordinate employability skills initiatives and support systems.
- ▶ Implement a public relations campaign to promote employability skills for all students.

Overview

Bibb County Schools' annual Career Technical Student Organization (CTSO) rally invites students from the district's middle and high schools to participate in a day of Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) workshops and a college and career fair. The rally specifically targets students in Grades 6–12 to participate in a CTSO. Officers from each school's CTSO are required to attend, and the event is open to all CTSO members. The theme for the 2017 CTSO rally was "It's in Our DNA. Bibb County CTSOs Do Nothing Average!" The rally's planning committee was composed of nine CTSO faculty advisors and four members of the CTAE administration team.

Skills Development

In the lead up to the CTSO rally, organizers worked to create workshops that aligned with the state's Standard 1: "Demonstrate employability skills required by business and industry" and its various elements. The workshops incorporated the following standards:

- ▶ Standard 1.1: Communicate effectively through writing, speaking, listening, reading, and interpersonal skills.
- ▶ Standard 1.3: Exhibit critical thinking and problem-solving skills to locate, analyze, and apply information in career planning and employment situations.
- ▶ Standard 1.4: Model work readiness traits required for success in the workplace including integrity, honesty, accountability, punctuality, time management, and respect for diversity.
- ▶ Standard 1.6: Present a professional image through appearance, behavior, and language.

These workshops were designed to strengthen employability skills with the goal of increasing the number of students serving as CTSO region, state, and national officers. The workshop covered topics such as the following:

- ▶ "Better than the Average Team Member"
 - o Team dynamics and person-to-person etiquette when interacting with coworkers and supervisors
- ▶ "It's in my DNA to Lead"
 - o Dressing for success, preparing for interviews, and résumé building
- ▶ "Going Beyond the Call of Duty"
 - o Planning and implementing community service projects that align with students' community needs
- ▶ "Standing Out, the Right Way"
 - o Personal branding, the use of social media, and proper networking etiquette

Representatives from national CTSOs; Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda; and Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America; were invited to present at these workshops. In addition, the rally's college and career fair featured representatives from local community and technical colleges, state and private universities, as well as recruiters from the armed forces.

Audience and Initiative Impact

Students from the county's six high schools, six middle schools, and its college and career academy were invited to attend; 198 students and 37 advisors attended the rally. The county reports that through the content and activities presented at each workshop, students walked away with greater understanding of the employability skills they needed to master and develop. By setting high expectations, such as requiring students to adhere to a professional dress code and being punctual for each workshop and event, students immediately practiced crucial employability skills.

School/District: Bibb County Schools

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Georgia Employability Skills Task Force Recommendations

1. Integrate employability skills into curriculum and learning experiences from prekindergarten through postsecondary education.
2. Support educators and other stakeholders in developing employability skills instruction.
3. Develop deeper and stronger relationships between industry and education to enhance teacher and mentor roles in quality work-based learning and career development opportunities.

To learn more about college- and career-readiness work in the southeast states, please contact Beth Howard-Brown (bhoward-brown@air.org), Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) director, or visit the SECC website (southeast-cc.org).