To target working families and encourage their participation in school-sponsored events, Principal Annette M. Ffolkes used a Sharing the Dream grant to host four Saturday morning literacy events called Books and Breakfast, each organized around themes such as multiculturalism, Read Across America and Curious George. A special effort was made to personally invite working parents and families whose children needed extra help in reading.

Books and Breakfast was designed with the entire family in mind, featuring storytellers, read-alouds, hands-on activities, and materials and tips parents could take home to support reading. “We learned that providing a program for the whole family was the best way to draw parents into the building,” said Ffolks. “Parents did not have to arrange for child care for younger siblings and could expose other caretakers, like grandparents, to the school.” Representatives from local health and social service agencies were also in attendance.

Fifty families attended the first Books and Breakfast, with subsequent events attracting upwards of 100 families. The program will be offered twice next year and be funded by the school’s Title 1 Family Involvement Committee.