



Mrs. Bettye F. Williams (Ms. Bettye as she is affectionately known) is an award educator inside and outside of the classroom. She is the eldest daughter of the late James and Central Farrow, mother of Tevita L. Williams-Dumas, and grandmother of Shedrick Allen Dumas. Ms. Bettye was the History Department Chair at H. W. Byers High School in Marshall County, MS where she had been teaching since 1969. She began her quest for education in a one-room school in Waterford, MS where she was a top competitor in academic, oratorical, and drama contests. After elementary, she attended Hamilton School (4th thru 8th grades) where she continued to thrive in academics and the arts. Upon finishing middle school, she entered high school at the historical W. T. Sims in Holly springs, MS. While in high school, she was invited to choreograph for the school's choir. Some of her fondest memories were setting choreography to Blue Moon, Hey Hoe, Moon River, and Let's Go on A Hay Ride. After graduating high school in 1962, Ms. Bettye continued her education at Mississippi Industrial College (M. I. C.) in Holly springs, MS. During her tenure, she was known as an excellent student and earned several honors such as: Miss Senior (1965), Miss Homecoming (1965), and the coveted, Miss M. I. C. (1965). Her love for academics and the arts compelled her to complete her undergraduate studies in three years, graduating in 1965 with a Bachelor of Science in Social Studies degree. After college, she began teaching at her alma mater, W. T. Sims High School. Ms. Bettye's guidance and collaboration with the band directors, Mr. Albert Gaskin and Mr. Don Williams, helped earn the band and majorettes superior and outstanding rating at the state level in marching maneuvers, baton twirling, and dance choreography for band and majorettes. In 1968, she transitioned to Rosa Fort High School in Tunica, MS where she continued the same excellence in academics and the arts until finally arriving at H. W. Byers High School, formerly Sand Flat High School.

Ms. Bettye has continued to enjoy a wonderful teaching career at H. W. Byers through several administrations and thousands of eager students. She is known for challenging history lessons that are filled with information to unlock the past with a special touch that only Ms. Bettye can give her, "Sweet Peas", which she lovingly calls her students. She has also served as director/chair/co-chair for majorettes, cheerleaders, beauty pageants, homecoming, senior and junior classes, and most definitely, H. W. Byers Student Government Association. In her usual fashion, Ms. Bettye continued her quest for education through Trevecca Nazarene College, earning a Master's Degree in Secondary Administration. She has been nominated and won several awards such as: H. W. Byers Teacher of the Year (Mr. John Chase, principal), Who's Who Among American Teachers, H. W. Byers Teacher of the Year (Mr. Gary Hannah, principal), Dance Teacher Achievement Plaque at Showstopper American Dance Championships (2000), and either leading the district or among the top scores for the Mississippi Subject Area Test in U. S. History.

After the bell has sounded for the end of the day at H. W. Byers High School, Ms. Bettye is still on the move as the Assistant Director of T. L. Williams Academy of Dance, LLC & River City Dance Company. Ms. Bettye has taught dance, baton, as well as history in the Marshall County Schools System for over 45 years and in the Memphis Park Commission for over 20 years. She is an award-winning choreographer with superior ratings in Field and Parade Corps for the State of Mississippi. Certifications: Marshall County District Workshop Training in Field and Parade Corps, New York City Dance Alliance Regional Workshop, Dance Educators of America Regional Workshop, Showstopper American Dance Championships Regionals and Nationals, Memphis Park Commission Dance Workshops, & Baton Twirling Workshop by Mary Molder (Millington, TN). Choreography Experiences: Memphis Park Commission Majorette, Cheerleader, & Dance Competitions, AXA Memphis Liberty Bowl Parade, Millington, TN Christmas Parade, Memphis Police Department "Drug Free Parade", Holly Springs, MS Christmas Parade, Rust College Founders Day Parade, Memphis Park Commission Toys for Tots, City Wide Jamborees, Various Community Center Annual Closing Shows, Running Across America (With Rochelle Stevens) Opening Kick-off, Memphis Park Commission Annual Beale St. Shows, & Baptist East Hospital Annual Kids Count Celebration.

Ms. Bettye gives credit for her success and life's journey to God, her parents, and educators who have instilled a work ethic that she has strived to pass on to her students over the years. As a veteran teacher, she has seen educational trends come and go. However, as a special honor and treat for such an outstanding and motivating educator, Time Magazine selected Mrs. Bettye F. Williams as one of the teachers to be featured in their August 25, 2014 publication. H. W. Byers High School was the only school selected in North Mississippi to be interviewed on the "New Common Core Initiative." She shared with the journalist a simple goal, "Show up every day and teach the best we can."