

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

May is Mental Health Awareness month nationwide. The National Alliance on Mental Illness has invited everyone to join their "Take the Moment" Campaign. This campaign hopes to foster open dialogue while cultivating empathy and understanding. The Project Aware team invites you to "Take the Moment" to look at some of the initiatives in the Houston County School District. Our Project Aware Team has carefully researched, selected and implemented interventions and supports to ensure the mental wellness and resiliency of our staff and students. The team has provided training to district and school staff including Youth Mental Health, First Aid, Life Space Crisis Intervention, and Sources of Strength-Suicide Prevention Model. The team also supports the implementation of the Second Step, Social Emotional Learning curriculum in grades K-8 district wide. Along with educating and consulting staff, the team helps connect students and families to reputable therapeutic resources within our community. The AWARE team has built a strong network of providers and continuously serves as liaisons between the school, students, families, and community mental health providers. We are so thankful for this dedicated team of mental health professionals!



STUDENT SERVICES REPORT

Hello May & Hello School Nurses Day!

National School Nurse Day, observed on May 8th, honors the dedicated professionals who serve a crucial role in the educational setting. School nurses are the frontline of student health, providing comprehensive care that includes the detection of infectious diseases, mental health support, and the administration of health screenings and vaccinations. Their expertise not only ensures that students are healthy and secure but also fosters an environment conducive to learning and achievement. School nurses are sometimes the primary healthcare providers for children, especially in under-served communities. The commitment of these professionals in Houston County exemplifies the vital service school nurses provide to safeguard the well-being of students, making them indispensable to the educational infrastructure. Their unwavering dedication to the health and safety of the young minds in their care is truly commendable and worthy of recognition on this special day.

Houston County School District currently employs 10 school nurses: Tania Bartlett RN, Shanelle Bobo RN, Terri Bowen RN, Sonovia Ling LPN, Jesica Gilstrap RN, Heather Roland RN, Cathy Sillence RN, Suzanne Simpson RN, Liz Tosi LPN, and Alexandra Singleton RN. We are thankful for their commitment to the students of Houston County!



CEC AWARDS

The Ellen Maltais Chapter for Exceptional Children's annual awards program is a testament to the power of our community and the collective effort to support the education of exceptional students. Recognizing the contributions of organizations like the Warner Robins Civitan Club and individuals like Krystle Freeman from Stevi B's Pizza highlights the importance of local involvement in educational initiatives. Such awards not only honor the recipients but also inspire others to contribute to the education of students with exceptionalities. The Legacy of Service Award was presented to Dr. Zabrina Cannady. The impact of such a dedicated individual in the field of special education cannot be overstated. Her innovative approaches and tireless advocacy for inclusive education have not only transformed the lives of countless individuals with special needs but also inspired a new generation of educators. Her legacy is a testament to the power of passion and perseverance in creating a more equitable and understanding world. The Houston County School District's acknowledgment of these efforts reflects a community united in its pursuit of excellence and inclusivity in education. Congratulations to all the awardees for their outstanding contributions and for setting a high standard of service and dedication.

ASPIRE Award Winners

Jace Reeves - Russell Elementary
Matthew Ridley - Huntington Middle
Ashley Gorton - Houston County High

Academic Award Winners

Joseph Pittman JR - Bonaire Primary
Jordan Duncan - Northside Middle
Ryan Everhardt - Northside High

Art Award Winners

John Paul Vinson - Kings Chapel Elementary
Nora Schuber - Bonaire Middle
Ernest Stackhouse - Warner Robins High

Athletics Award Winners

Ka'Marcus Harris - Tucker Elementary
Chandler Summers - Bonaire Middle
Anthony Cuti - Houston County High

Technology Award Winners

Dexter Hill - Westside Elementary
Zavion Darby - Mossy Creek Middle
James McNeal - Perry High

Administrator Award Winners

Morgan Aeschlimann - Lake Joy Primary
Matt Topping - Feagin Mill Middle
Dr. DeShazor-Williams - Warner Robins High

General Education Award Winners

Jessica Augsburger - Matt Arthur Elementary
Melinda Askew - Huntington Middle
Craig Johnson - Northside High

Special Education Award Winners

Valerie Riezinger - Hilltop Elementary
Carson Balliew - Thomson Middle
Kevin Robinson - Transition Academy

Support Personnel Award Winners

Emma Dejournett - Langston Road Elementary
Hope Turner - Feagin Mill Middle
Bobbi Valdes - Veterans High



EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN'S WEEK

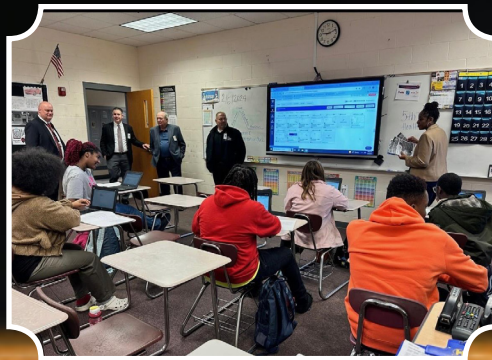
Exceptional Children's Week is an annual celebration of infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. This year Exceptional Children's Week was celebrated April 15-19th. Schools across the District celebrated in a variety of ways. Morning news teams presented information on exceptionalities, interactive daily activities were presented to give all students a better understanding of different impairments, and the importance of inclusion was highlighted throughout the hallways of all our schools. Administrators and teachers demonstrated their Superhero spirit by dressing the part. We take pride in celebrating the unique abilities each one of us portrays!



TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

Our teacher in the spotlight this month is Alfreda Munford from Warner Robins High School. Mrs. Munford moved to Warner Robins after joining the Air National Guard at Robins Air Force Base in 2006. Her journey from serving in the Air National Guard to becoming a cherished educator at Warner Robins High School is a testament to her dedication to education and to her students' futures. Her experience in Iraq highlighted the crucial role of education in shaping lives, fueling her drive to empower young minds. She witnessed the lack of educational opportunity for students in that country and realized how fortunate Americans were to have access to public education. Mrs. Munford received a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood and Special Education at Macon State College in 2009, a Master's degree in Teaching and Learning at Nova Southeastern University in 2011, and a Specialist degree from Piedmont College in Curriculum and Instruction in 2019. Mrs. Munford has 15 years of teaching experience and has dedicated all 15 to being a WRHS Demon. Mrs. Munford has not only imparted knowledge but also fostered a nurturing environment for students to thrive. When talking about her favorite thing, she stated "getting to work and collaborate with dedicated professionals who are ready to share their knowledge. They listen and understand the challenges while supporting and encouraging me."

Mrs. Munford loves to see students succeed and grow into confident, independent, and self-sufficient adults. Her goal is to see them join the workforce and become contributing members of society. One of the ways that Warner Robins High School meets this goal is through career counseling and job exploration. They provide guidance on various job opportunities and help students identify their strengths and interests. Her collaborative spirit and passion for teaching have made a significant impact on the community, making her a true inspiration in Houston County.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS



Spring Special Olympics was held at Perry High School April 11-12th. Twenty-five schools and over 540 athletes participated in Level A events, volleyball, and track & field. Opening ceremonies were held by the Perry High School Chorus who sang the National Anthem and JROTC presented colors. Forty-five seniors from around the district were recognized for their years of participation in the Special Olympics program.

The Special Olympics motto states, "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt". All students were awarded ribbons based on their bravery competing in the events!

The games were competitive and fun! These local events take a lot of time, organization, and volunteers to help make them a success. We are thankful to all the schools and organizations in Houston County who teamed up to provide this opportunity for our athletes!



SEEKING COMMUNITY SITES

PRESS RELEASE

YOU CAN HELP 

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 15, 2024

Release #2023/24 – 065

Contact: Jennifer C. Jones, Director of Community & School Affairs, (478) 988-6390, Jennifer.C.Jones@hcbe.net

Summer Meal Program for Children Seeks Community Sites

HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – The Houston County School Nutrition Program (SNP) will offer its annual summer feeding program in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Education. Meals will be offered free of charge to children ages 18 and under, from Tuesday, May 28 through Friday, July 19, 2024.

Organizations offering summer programs for children may be eligible to participate in this program and receive meals at no charge for participants. Interested organizations must apply and be approved by May 3, 2024. Vacation Bible Schools, athletic practices, scout troops, recreation departments, and tutoring programs are examples of the many summer programs that may be eligible to receive meals free of charge to serve children attending their programs and activities. Huntington Middle School, Northside High School, and Perry High School will be open as the approved sites to pick up meals.

To register as a site to serve meals, visit <https://www.hcbe.net/snpsummermeals> and complete the application. Information pertaining to summer meals for families will be released in May.

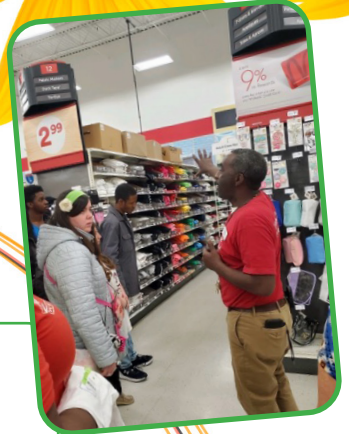




The Houston County JV Sharks were invited to the University of Georgia on April 19th to help raise awareness for Adaptive Sports. Shark coaches and players led field day events for UGA college students and to support the newest adaptive sports team, the Clarke Classic City Dawgs. Players enjoyed partnering up with college students to learn about each adaptive sport, run drills together, and ended the day with a scrimmage!



Hello Michaels



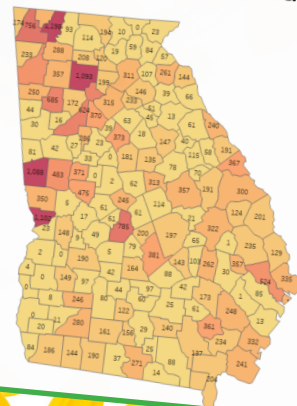
Pre-Employment Transition Services (PreETS) is a specific set of service components funded by Vocational Rehabilitation to provide students work related training opportunities. The Transition Academy has partnered with Waves Autism Center to provide PreETS services to a select group of students. Waves organized a community outing tour of Michaels, a chain retailer carrying art & hobby supplies plus home decor. The purpose of doing community outings is to take skills from the classroom into real-life settings to strengthen the skill, expand upon the skill, and/or promote generalization. Thank you Waves Autism Center & Michaels for this amazing opportunity!



Houston County School District is in the Top 5 for the state of Georgia for providing PreETS services to students.



Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency
Heat Maps – Pre-ETS Provided 3/31/2024



ServSafe Program

The ServSafe Program provides food safety training, personal hygiene, cross-contamination prevention, allergens, time and temperature requirements, and sanitation training methods. The Georgia Department of Health requires every food service establishment to have staff who are ServSafe certified. The Transition Academy teamed up with the University of Georgia's Cooperative Extension program to provide the ServSafe Training Course. Staff and students at the Transition Academy participated in 8 weeks of training which focused on food safety practices. At the end of the 8 weeks, participants took the ServSafe certification test. All staff and 9 students passed the certification exam and are now ServSafe Certified! Way to go!



WAY TO GO!