



# STUDENT SERVICES REPORT



## Student Awards

The students in Ms. Cumbie’s class at the Transition Academy received the Friend of School Nutrition Award on Thursday, May 11th. The partnership between the Transition Academy and Warner Robins High School began in 2021, and has been going strong ever since. These students work each morning to pack over 500 grab and go breakfasts for students at Warner Robins High. We estimate they have filled over 90,000 bags this year alone! Food service is hard work, and these students have gained lifelong skills providing a service to both their fellow students and the Warner Robins High staff. We especially appreciate the leadership and initiative of Dr. Campbell, Ms. Cumbie, Mr. Robinson, and Ms. Jones. So many people support the mission of feeding students but when students support other students, that is really something special!



In celebration of Mental Health Awareness Month, Project AWARE held a District-wide art contest. Students were encouraged to enter submissions that represented positivity and inclusivity, as well as promoted mental health. Te’Niyjah Mallard, a 7th grade student from Perry Middle School, won the contest with her submission titled “Be Kind.” Outstanding job Ms. Mallard!







Perry High School is proud to announce Mr. Tony Whitten as the 2023 Teacher of the Year. Mr. Whitten has 13 years of experience in the field of education, and 10 of those years have been in Houston County. He is a constant presence of joy and calm. We see the impact his love for his students has both in and out of the classroom. He works every day to ensure his students learn by providing differentiated instruction for each of his students. Mr. Whitten has demonstrated that even when students don't learn something in the same way or on the same day – they can still learn at high levels. Mr. Whitten meets each of his students at their level of understanding and supports them in successfully preparing for their postsecondary endeavors.



Tucker Elementary School is proud to announce Mrs. Erin Locke as the 2023 Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Locke has 5 years of experience in the field of education, and 3 of those years have been in Houston County. Mrs. Locke stated "There is no greater feeling than making an impact in the lives of my students. I love working with my students and seeing them grow. I love to see how much progress they gain throughout the year, even when it doesn't always feel or seem obvious. My students become my babies the moment they step into my classroom, and the more that each individual relationship is built the more the bond between us continues to grow. Each of my students inspire me every day and that is what makes me love teaching."



Langston Road Elementary School is proud to announce Mrs. Rachel Floyd as the 2023 Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Floyd has 9 years of experience in the field of education. She stands out as a teacher because of her calm spirit, and the expectations she sets for her students. Mrs. Floyd stated "the kids are what inspire me. Their resilience, their grit, determination, and their trust. I love the relationship and bond I am able to build with each student. I make sure each of my students know how loved they are, and my classroom is a safe place for vulnerability allowing them room for failure alongside success. It is an honor watching them overcome so many barriers and obstacles while figuring out how to find strength in their circumstances. I hope each of them know I will always be cheering them on long after they leave my classroom".





Langston Road Elementary School is proud to announce Mrs. Lillian Talton as the 2023 Support Staff of the Year. Mrs. Talton has 10 years of experience in the field of education. She is passionate about pushing all students to reach their highest potential. She is always willing to go the extra mile. Mrs. Talton is always cheering the students on and encouraging them to break through whatever barriers they face. Mrs. Talton stated “I love building relationships with the students, I love to see the ‘aha’ moments when they understand the concept. I am inspired by my students. Each one has a special spot in my heart. They never give up even on the hard days. And no matter what, I hope they all know how much they mean to me and I will always love them BIG!”



Warner Robins High School is proud to announce Mrs. Alfreda Munford as the 2023 Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Munford has 14 years of experience in the field of education and serves as Department Chair. Ms. Munford stands out due to her calm demeanor and ability to work with students who just need that extra hand. She gives selflessly to the students she serves and makes the art of teaching look effortless. Mrs. Munford stated “I enjoy my career because I have the opportunity to share with students the life skills they will need to be successful once they leave high school”.

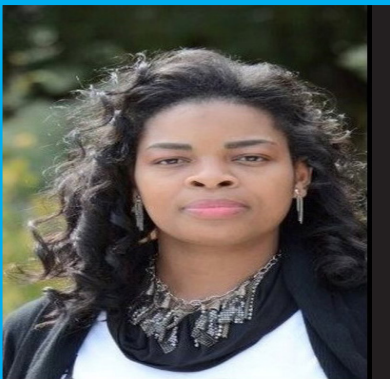


Quail Run Elementary School is proud to announce Mrs. Jan Devoursney as the 2023 Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Devoursney has 8 years of experience in the field of education and serves as Department Chair. She stands out as a teacher due to her strong work ethic and dedication to her students. She works hard to meet all their needs so they can be as successful as possible. Mrs. Devoursney stated “I love so many things about teaching. I love the relationships I get to form with each of my students and love that no day is ever the same! Every day is a new adventure”.





Quail Run Elementary School is proud to announce Mrs. Taylor Carpenter as the 2023 Support Staff of the Year. Mrs. Carpenter has 4 years of experience in the field of education. Mrs. Carpenter stands out for her willingness to do whatever is needed across the building. She has a desire to help students be successful each and everyday. She serves every need with a smile, and her heart for kids shines through everything she does. Mrs. Carpenter stated “I love teaching because seeing the light shine from within a child when they finally get a concept that they’ve struggled with is incredibly fulfilling.”



Westside Elementary School is proud to announce Dr. Regina Littlejohn as the 2023 Teacher of the Year. Dr. Littlejohn has 11 years of experience in the field of education and serves as Department Chair. Her calm demeanor and caring nature makes her stand out among her peers. She loves watching her students grow and succeed. Dr. Littlejohn stated “I am inspired by every child I encounter. I am passionate when it comes to teaching and being able to impact students both academically and with their behavior”.



Perry Middle School is proud to announce Mrs. Jennifer Dykes 2023 as the Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Dykes has 16 years of experience in the field of education. The relationships she creates with her students and colleagues make her stand out. She treats them like family. Mrs. Dykes stated “I am inspired by the possible impact I have on a student’s life. For some of the students I teach, school is the most consistent relationship they have. I work towards instilling core values and confidence in our young people. My hope is they will take these tools and use them to fulfill their dreams and contribute positively to our society in the future. I strive to be a true team player. I think my willingness to help in any capacity is what makes me stand out as a teacher. We are a team and we all play a part in our success”.



# The Houston Home Journal

PERRY, Ga. — When The Journal met Pamela Heesh, a food assistant at Matt Arthur Elementary School, she wore a t-shirt that read “Feeding kids is a work of heart.” Heesh embodies this concept every day. Her efforts have recently been recognized by the non-profit School Nutrition Association (SNA), as she’s been named their Southeast Region Employee of The Year.

According to the SNA, this award is in recognition of valuable contributions from employees who show commitment to their respective school’s nutrition program, and the students by extension. Through Heesh’s contributions and her heart behind her service, her dedication speaks volumes to the program’s success in feeding the students that attend Matt Arthur, with a flair that leaves them delighted as well.

When she learned of her award, she was humbled, and said she believes the SNA saw merit in what she does. “I don’t do what I do for any awards. I do it because I love to do it ... I was shocked, but it was very humbling; it still is,” Heesh said.

As a food assistant, Heesh said her primary focus is feeding the children, as she prepares food before each mealtime, and prepares fresh food during meals. A team player, she also floats around from task to task wherever she is needed. At the start of day, she said she is hitting the ground running: Checking temperatures, dishing out cleaning supplies, booting up the lunchroom’s computer systems, then preparing food carefully. “Pretty much whatever needs to be done, that’s what I do,” Heesh said.

“The minute I walked into Matt Arthur, it felt like home,” Heesh said. “We’re a family here. We take care of each other, and we look out for each other and we have each other’s backs. It feels more like a family than it does a group of coworkers.” Heesh said she likes to do her part to ensure that as well. “I like to be there for my coworkers too. I like to do whatever I can to help anyone that I can,” Heesh said.

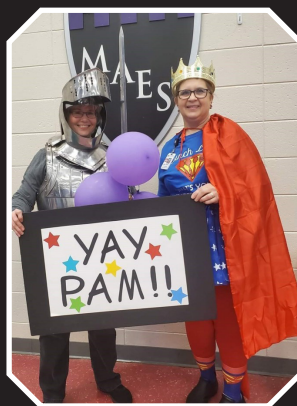
On a school wide level, School Nutrition Director Meredith Potter said employees like Heesh contribute to a warm and inviting culture at “the castle” that radiates to each and every child in the cafeteria.

“One thing that makes Matt Arthur special are people like Pam,” Potter said. “It is a true culture at Matt Arthur that is very hard to replicate. And there’s a special feeling when you go into the cafeteria at Matt Arthur, and it’s because of all the things that we know of, and don’t know of, that goes into Matt Arthur. That to me is what stands out about Pam, she is truly why the culture is the way it is and why the kids look forward to breakfast and lunch.” “We truly work together, and we do what we do because we love it,” Heesh added.

Heesh isn’t going anywhere, but some of the students wish she would move to their middle school.

“I have a couple of babies who are leaving me next year, but I have a couple here who see me every morning, just to get a hug,” Heesh said. The hugs and smiles go deeper than that, as Heesh is hopeful she can be a light to the lunchroom. “These may be their only meals that day, you don’t know,” Heesh said. “That I can play a small part in making their day better, makes me feel better.”

- HHJ News, Sat, May 13, 2023- Brianna Smith





# TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

This month's spotlight is shining on Tiffany Rumell from Houston County High School. Mrs. Rumell grew up in Southern California and moved to Georgia in 1991. Mrs. Rumell received a Bachelor's Degree from Georgia College and a Master's Degree from Georgia Southwestern. Her 27 year teaching career has been dedicated to the students in Houston County Schools. Twenty years were at Warner Robins Middle School, and the last 7 years have been at Houston County High School. Ever since she was a little girl Mrs. Rumell knew she wanted to be a teacher. Mrs. Rumell was diagnosed with a Learning Disability when she was in middle school. She struggled with learning throughout her childhood, until one of her high school teachers, Ms. McCracken, taught her different strategies to try. Because of this teacher, Mrs. Rumell knew she wanted to grow up and make a difference in the lives of others. When asked about teaching, Mrs. Rumell said "I love to see my students' eyes light up when they learn a new task they thought was too hard for them to grasp." It brings her joy to see former students living productive lives and involved in our community. When she isn't teaching, Mrs. Rumell enjoys fostering dogs through a local rescue, spending time with her family, visiting her mom in Florida, and gardening. She loves traveling with her husband and going on adventures in her Jeep. Thank you Mrs. Rumell for all you do to ensure the success of all students!







# New Special Education Teacher Induction

The New Teacher Induction Series for April included multiple presentations on a variety of topics. Student Services Coordinator, Dr. Alicia Campbell shared information on support services offered by our school Social Workers. School Social Workers are advocates for students. They help students by linking home, school, and community in efforts to remove barriers to academic success. Participants learned how to request assistance from their assigned Social Worker through the SWARM module located in Infinite Campus. Student Services Coordinator, Dana Rollins presented on the health related services available to students within Houston County Schools. Program Specialist, Natalie Preston presented on Special Transportation. Transportation services are provided to ensure all children receive the programming needed according to their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Examples of why a student may need special transportation were provided along with how services are documented in the IEP. Teachers also learned about the Individual Transportation Plan (ITP) which is developed to document transportation needs within the IEP. Occupational Therapist, Leigh Ann Allen and Patti Carriker, Physical Therapist, presented on Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physical Therapy (PT) as a related service provided to assist students in accessing educational programs. Students may receive OT and/or PT as a related service as directed by their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or as part of a Section 504 Plan, if an educational need is identified. Teachers also learned about the referral process for OT or PT services. Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), Erin Burks presented on the role of the SLPs and how they collaborate with others to help students achieve success. The presentation included information about the basic areas addressed by SLPs: articulation, language, fluency, and voice. A sound development chart was shared to show the ages at which different sounds typically develop.

The New Teacher Induction Series for May was led by Student Service Coordinators, Monica Smith and Dr. Alicia Campbell. They presented on Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS), explaining the essential components of the data driven framework. MTSS is used to identify students who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes, experience social/emotional needs, or behavioral concerns that impact learning. The participants learned how MTSS work is done through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to meet our goal of producing high achieving students.



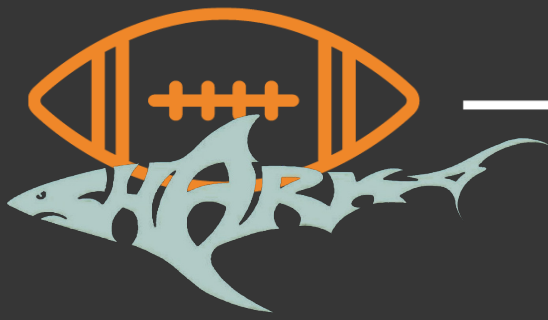


# **BOWL-A-RAMA**

**MAY 8TH, 9TH & 10TH**

**The Bowl-A-Rama returned this year! A total of 511 students from around the county converged on Gold Cup Bowling Center for three days of this extended Adapted P.E. lesson. Elementary & Middle schools were knocking down pins on May 8th & 9th. High schools were swinging for strikes on May 10th. A great time was had by all!**





The Varsity Sharks successfully defended their State Wheelchair Championship title on May 13th. The Sharks faced a veteran West Ga. Wolverines team who defeated the Clayton Eagles to advance to the final game. The Wolverines came at the Sharks with everything they had, and the Sharks stepped up! The defense held the Wolverines on a goal line stand at the end of the 1st half that definitely could have changed the momentum of the game. Anthony Cuti stood out offensively catching the first 3 touchdown passes. Elex Brown and MaCayla Moody both showed great poise and leadership alternating in the quarterback position. Defensively the Sharks kept the pressure on holding the Wolverines to 24 points. The Sharks worked all season on developing a championship mindset, and it paid off! The Varsity Sharks sweep the State Wheelchair Championships for 2022-2023!



## STATE WHEELCHAIR CHAMPIONSHIPS



The Junior Varsity Sharks saved their best game for the State Wheelchair Championship. This was their third meeting with the Gwinnett Heat, and they pushed them up against the wall. They went into double overtime but came up short of a field goal! The defense was spot on all day. Asher Hayes led the defense with four quarterback sacks. Madison Ryan connected with multiple receivers to lead the offense down the floor for several touchdowns. During the first overtime, Cayden Robinson ran a quarterback sneak to score and add seven points to the board. The Heat replied with a hard earned touchdown to push the game into a second overtime. During the second overtime, the Sharks were able to get Grapeville in position for a field goal. Unfortunately the field-goal did not bounce our way, and the Heat quickly took the ball to score the winning field goal. The JV Sharks left everything they had on the field and finished the year with the State Runner-up title. The future is bright for these JV Sharks!







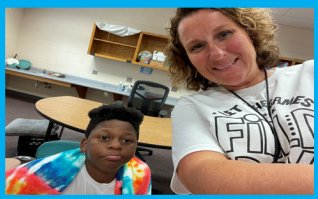
The Houston County Sharks restarted the annual Sharks VS. Guppies fundraiser game on May 2nd at Houston County High School. This much anticipated annual event returned for the first time since 2019 when activities were halted due to COVID. Dr. Scott, along with Bobby Ryals and other Guppy greats, led the charge with high hopes of breaking their losing streak. On the kickoff, the Guppies defense looked good holding the varsity Sharks to a field goal. Northside High Senior, MaCayla Moody, was committed to stopping the Guppy charge. The JV Sharks took over the offense, and Madison Ryan was ready. Madison connected to her twin brother, Champ, for a roll-in touchdown. The Sharks remained on the attack and defeated the Guppies 48-23. Maybe next year Guppies!



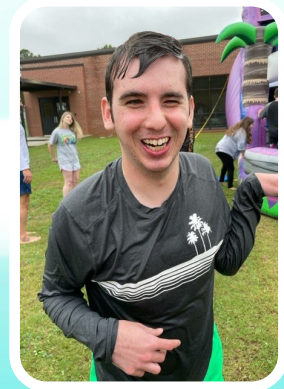




The Lindsey Student Support Center hosted their first field day for students on May 19th! Students competed on the Ninja Warrior Course followed by bouncing through the inflatable obstacle course. The highlight of the day was students learning how to play wheelchair basketball and wheelchair football. A huge THANK YOU to Mrs. Grizzle, Mrs. Brown, Coach Findley, Coach Roberson, and Coach Jones who worked together to pull this off for the students at LSSC. A special THANK YOU to Mrs. Grizzle who tirelessly worked to gather donations for field day t-shirts and food for everyone who attended. We are so grateful for the sponsors that made all of this possible- Striplings, Little Sweeties Cakery, Wilson's Bakery, Pam's Cakes, and Ink Spot!



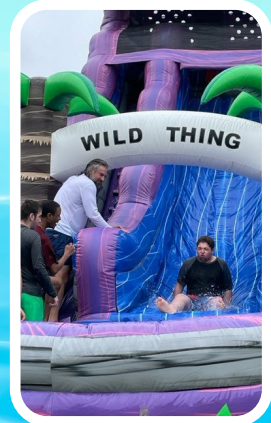
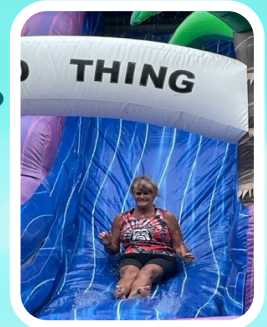




# Welcome Summer

## Transition Academy Style

Students at the Transition Academy worked extremely hard during the school year, both on their community job sites and in our Daily Living Center. The classes continued to expand their very successful casserole and dessert business. This allowed them to learn how to budget and operate a small business while learning essential life skills. The students happily celebrated the end of a successful school year with a water day. The students, and even school staff, enjoyed the giant water slide! Everyone had a fun and relaxing day to celebrate their hard work during the school year!



# SPLASH!