

SEPTEMBER 2026

ACADEMIC SERVICES Newsletter

Supporting Students. Strengthening Staff. Creating Pathways.

Submitted By: Kesandra Brown, ESE Director

The ESE & Student Services Department has been hard at work supporting students, families, schools and staff throughout Gadsden County. From helping students transition to college to strengthening instruction and expanding services, our team is committed to ensuring students receive the support they need to succeed.

Supporting Our Seniors Beyond Graduation

Our department had the privilege of helping two of our seniors move into college and attending student orientation alongside them! We are proud to have supported Amber Smith at Troy University and Shamar Williams at Alabama State University as they began this exciting new chapter. Our commitment to our students extends beyond graduation ... we want to see them successfully transition into college, careers and adulthood.



We don't just provide services—we provide SUPPORT, SOLUTIONS and PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS!

**PREK STAR EARLY LITERACY:
A STRONG START TO THE SCHOOL YEAR**
SUBMITTED BY: VALENCIA DENSON, PREK Director

2026–2027 Fall Progress Monitoring 1

Gadsden County School District PreK students are off to a positive start in early literacy. Fall Progress Monitoring 1 (PM1) assessed 154 students, with an overall average score of 613.0. Sixty-six students (43%) are On Level (612+), and 13 students (8%) have already reached the 707+ kindergarten-readiness benchmark.

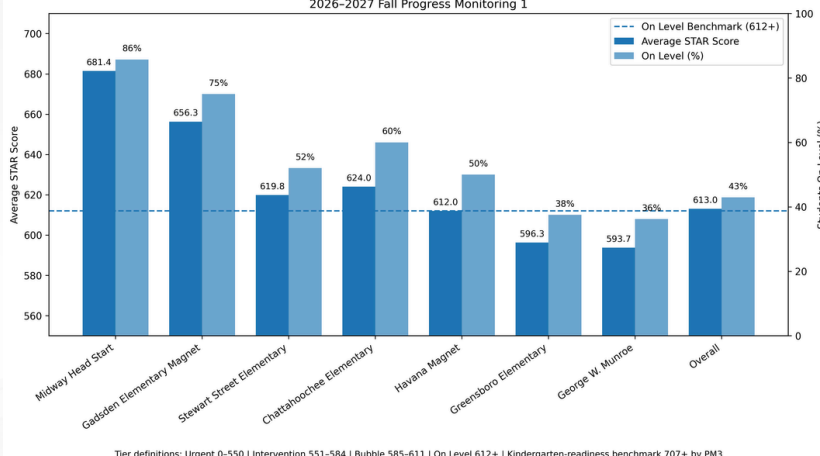
Fall PM1 results show encouraging performance across several schools and classrooms. Midway Head Start recorded the highest average at 681.4, with 86% of students On Level. The Landrum/Moore classroom also showed strong results, with 6 of 7 students On Level.

Gadsden Elementary Magnet averaged 656.3, with 75% On Level, while the Critelli/Mills classroom matched the school average. Chattahoochee Elementary averaged 624.0, with 60% On Level, and Stewart Street Elementary averaged 619.8, with 52% On Level. The House/Clayton classroom averaged 630.3.

Havana Magnet averaged 612.0, with 50% On Level. Greensboro Elementary averaged 596.3, while George W. Munroe, the largest PreK group with 47 students, averaged 593.7.

Classroom data helps identify where additional support is needed, with Ash/Paz, Martin/Wright, Lewis/Richardson, Riggins/Gilyard, and Carter/Kincy identified as priority classrooms for targeted literacy support.

PreK STAR Early Literacy — School Summary
2026–2027 Fall Progress Monitoring 1



Looking Ahead

Fall PM1 scores provide a starting point for growth—not a final determination of kindergarten readiness. Teachers will use the results to provide targeted instruction, strengthen foundational literacy skills, and monitor student progress toward the 707+ PM3 benchmark.

**PARTNERING FOR LITERACY SUCCESS:
COLLABORATIVE PLANNING VISITS ACROSS THE DISTRICT**
SUBMITTED BY: ALLYSUN DAVIS, K12 DIRECTOR

Our district is taking proactive steps to strengthen reading instruction through a series of collaborative planning visits hosted in partnership with the Just Read, Florida! office. Representatives from Just Read, Florida! are meeting directly with educators across every school in the district to align instructional strategies, refine classroom practices, and ensure every student receives targeted, high-quality reading instruction. These collaborative sessions focus on three core areas:

- **Whole Group Instruction:** Designing explicit, standards-aligned lessons that build foundational reading skills and complex comprehension for all learners.
- **Small Group Activities:** Structuring differentiated instruction to meet students at their individual learning levels, addressing specific skill gaps, and extending learning opportunities.
- **Curriculum Optimization:** Guiding teachers on how to maximize adoption of district-approved curriculum materials, ensuring resources are utilized efficiently to boost student engagement and academic growth.



The picture above shows this plan in action at Chattahoochee Elementary School, where educators and state specialists worked side-by-side to craft engaging lesson plans.

By bringing state literacy expertise directly into our school buildings, we are empowering teachers with actionable tools and shared strategies. We look forward to seeing the positive impact of these collaborative sessions reflected in our classrooms and student achievements throughout the school year.

IMPORTANT DATES

OCTOBER 1ST
EEMT Meeting

OCTOBER 8TH
PLTM Meeting

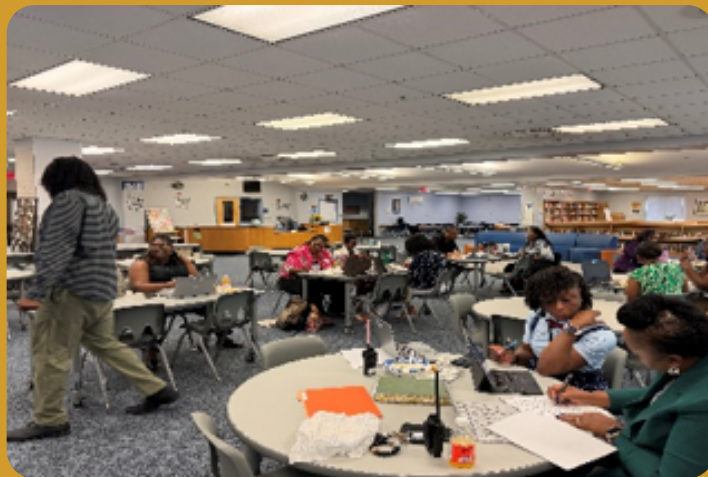
OCTOBER 15TH
Academic Services Meeting

OCTOBER 22ND
Principals Professional Development

THE HAPPENINGS IN OPLS

SUBMITTED BY: KYSHA HOPKINS, DIRECTOR

School Administrators participated in a professional learning titled “Know Your Student’s Worth” at Gadsden County High School Media Center. Mr. Dominique Dantley, District Reading Specialist, facilitated this event. The session was very interactive as school leaders engaged with their students’ data to know the value of each student for intentional classroom instruction that would improve teaching and learning at their school site.



Certification Fall Tour of Schools is underway. Ms. Chelsea Murphy, Coordinator and Ms. Tenesia Clark, Administrative Assistant, have visited Stewart Street Elementary, West Gadsden Middle School, Chattahoochee Elementary School, and George Munroe, meeting with educators holding a temporary and/or professional certificate. This fall tour will continue throughout the month of September with visits to Gadsden County High School-September 17th, Greensboro Elementary-September 22nd, Havana Magnet-September 24th, and Crossroad Academy Charter School-October 1st.

Reading Endorsement Cohort II- Introductory session on September 10, 2026, with Ms. Chelsea Murphy facilitating. There were 8 participants in attendance for this face-to-face professional learning opportunity. The next session will take place on September 24, 2026, virtually.

New Teacher Induction Academy Program- Mentor/Mentee Orientation was a great SUCCESS!! Ms. LaTasha Pride, Reading Program Specialist, along with Ms. Chelsea Murphy, Coordinator, have scheduled sessions that are aligned to the new Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAPs). The next session will take place on September 15, 2026, titled, “Classroom Management”. This event will be virtual from 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm with 8 mentees and 7 mentors

Program Specialists are working with our schools, providing instructional support as needed. They have attended all Edmentum trainings so that they have a great working knowledge of the program. The Specialists will be able to assist with full and consistent implementation. Reading Specialists are active in RAISE school visits with Kara Washington, State Regional Literacy Director, visiting George Munroe and Greensboro Elementary School. Reading Specialists are providing ongoing HMH and UFLI support. Math Specialist has been supporting schools with Acaletics and Edmentum. Mini-professional learning was provided at Gadsden County High School on “Instructional Routines, Pacing, and Retrieval”. We want to ensure we are providing the best support possible based on each school’s needs.

Professional Learning- OPLS, along with Mr. Matthew Bryant, Transportation Director, Dr. Sonya Jackson, Human Resources Director, and Ms. Darlean Youmans, IT Coordinator, have worked together to create pilot training courses through Vector Solutions for all Gadsden County School staff. We will pilot training courses with Gadsden County High School with plans of roll out to all staff by November 1, 2026.

Upcoming Professional Learning- October 22, 2026, with Franklin Covey Education titled, “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” from 8:30 am – 3:30 pm at Stewart Street Elementary School, targeting School and District Leaders.

ASSESSMENT INSIGHTS

SUBMITTED BY: CAROLINE MCKINNON, COORDINATOR

Our students in grades KG-10 have been busy completing their Reading Progress Monitoring and students in grades KG-8 are almost done completing their Math Progress Monitoring. The data will allow educators to see what they need to teach, how fast or how slow they need to teach it, and how to provide support to students who are having difficulty mastering standards.

The data below displays our district's summary of results for Star Early Literacy, Star Reading, Star Math, grades 3-10 Reading and grades 3-8 Math.

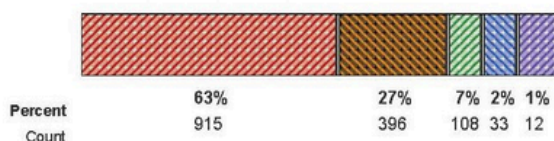
Remember, PM1 is designed to provide a baseline score so teachers can track student progress in learning the B.E.S.T. Standards from PM1 to PM2 (December 1st-17th).

Red: Level 1 (Well below Grade Level)
 Orange: Level 2 (Below Grade Level)
 Green: Level 3 (On Grade Level)
 Blue: Level 4 (Proficient)
 Purple: Level 5 (Exemplary; likely to excel in the next grade)

FAST PM1 Mathematics

Grades Tested: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

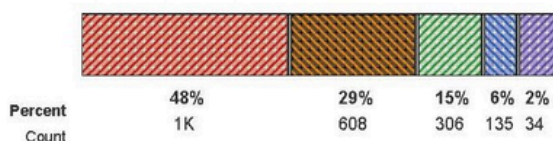
Tests Taken: 1.5K Date Last Taken: 09/14/2026



FAST PM1 ELA Reading

Grades Tested: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

Tests Taken: 2.1K Date Last Taken: 09/14/2026



FAST Retake ELA Reading

Grades Tested: 10

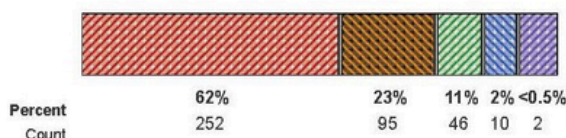
Tests Taken: 5 Date Last Taken: 09/14/2026



FAST PM1 K-2 Reading

Grades Tested: KG, 1, 2

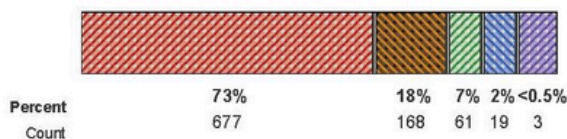
Tests Taken: 405 Date Last Taken: 09/11/2026



FAST PM1 K-2 Math

Grades Tested: KG, 1, 2

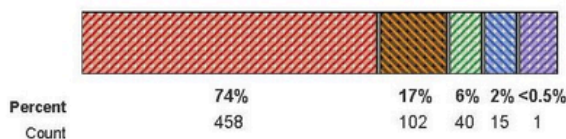
Tests Taken: 928 Date Last Taken: 09/10/2026



FAST PM1 K-2 Early Literacy

Grades Tested: KG, 1, 2

Tests Taken: 616 Date Last Taken: 09/10/2026



B.E.S.T. EOC Mathematics

Grades Tested: Algebra 1

Tests Taken: 45 Date Last Taken: 09/10/2026



FAST PM1 Pre-K Early Literacy

Grades Tested: Pre-K

Tests Taken: 65 Date Last Taken: 08/26/2026

