

The Hawk

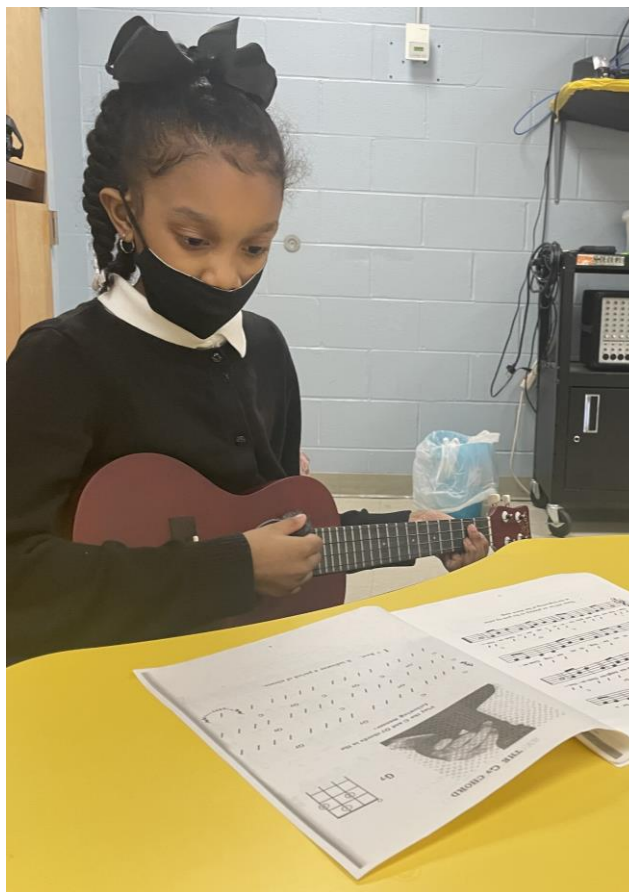


Holly Springs, Mississippi

May 2023

District Newsletter

Students enjoy learning new instrument



Talia Hardy

"It's so important that we use the arts to support academics."

- Principal Sherna Jones
Holly Springs Primary School

Three afternoons a week a group of first through third grade students at Holly Springs Primary School look forward to getting out their ukuleles.

"Everything," they shouted in unison when asked what they like best about the class.

A couple of years ago the school received a grant through the Save the Music Foundation to buy musical instruments. Thirty ukuleles were included in the purchase.

Principal Sherna Jones invited retiree Barbara Anderson to teach the class, as it would complement the good work already being done by Primary School music teacher Deandra Jones.

"We wanted to add the after-school arts component," Sherna Jones said. "We certainly want our students to be more well-rounded. This introduces them to an art form they would not otherwise experience.

"The day is so filled with academics. This gives the students the opportunity to express themselves a different way. It's so important that we use the arts to support academics."

Anderson, a music educator for 41 years before her retirement in 2016, accepted the principal's invitation to teach the ukulele class.

"Every school needs to implement the arts – music, drama, drawing, choir, theater," Anderson said. "An arts program brings out the creativity in students."

She said many studies have been done and results proven on the impact and power of music on children's intellectual, social and personal development. An education rich in music can improve children's cognitive functions and their academic performances.

Research has proven that learning music helps to develop the left side of the brain, which is responsible for language development (words and sentence structure), speech, comprehension, arithmetic, number skills, reasoning, scientific skills, spoken language and right-hand control.

"Music also helps to increase students' confidence," Anderson said.

From 3:30 to 5 p.m. every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, the ukulele students at Holly Springs Primary School are eager to learn new cords and more songs as Anderson walks around the room helping them as a group and individually.

"We just got started in January," she said, "and they are really enjoying it."

Sherna Jones said it's wonderful that the elementary children are getting to experience the instruction of such an accomplished music educator as Anderson.

"She's in her element," the principal said. "One of the students just last week told me, 'Mrs. Anderson is the best ukulele teacher in the world!'"



HOLLY SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT

DISTRICT CALENDAR 2023 – 2024

BOARD APPROVED: February 27, 2023

JULY 26–28, 2023
AUGUST 3, 2023
AUGUST 3–4, 2023
AUGUST 7, 2023

SEPTEMBER 4, 2023
SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

OCTOBER 2–6, 2023
OCTOBER 9, 2023
OCTOBER 10, 2023
OCTOBER 11, 2023
OCTOBER 18, 2023

NOVEMBER 8, 2023
NOVEMBER 20–24, 2023

DECEMBER 14–20, 2023
DECEMBER 20, 2023
DECEMBER 21, 2023–JANUARY 3, 2024

JANUARY 4–5, 2024
JANUARY 8, 2024
JANUARY 15, 2024
JANUARY 17, 2024

FEBRUARY 10, 2024
FEBRUARY 19, 2024

MARCH 4–8, 2024
MARCH 11–15, 2024
MARCH 18, 2024
MARCH 19, 2024
MARCH 27, 2024

MARCH 29, 2024
APRIL 1, 2024
APRIL 17, 2024

MAY 20–24, 2024
MAY 24, 2024
MAY 25, 2024
MAY 27, 2024
MAY 28, 2024

NEW TEACHER ACADEMY
TEACHERS' FIRST DAY
TEACHER ACADEMY
STUDENTS' FIRST DAY

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
PROGRESS REPORTS

FIRST NINE WEEKS EXAMS
FALL BREAK
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY/FALL BREAK STUDENTS
STUDENTS RETURN
PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES (3:30 – 6:30 PM) REPORT CARDS

PROGRESS REPORTS
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS

SECOND NINE WEEKS/FIRST SEMESTER EXAMS
60% DAY
CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAYS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS/STUDENT HOLIDAYS
STUDENTS RETURN
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY
PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES (3:30 – 6:30 PM) REPORT CARDS

PROGRESS REPORTS
PRESIDENTS' DAY HOLIDAY (MAKE-UP DAY)

THIRD NINE WEEKS EXAMS
SPRING BREAK
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY/STUDENT HOLIDAY (MAKE-UP DAY)
STUDENTS RETURN
PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES (3:30 – 6:30 PM) REPORT CARDS

GOOD FRIDAY HOLIDAY
GOOD MONDAY HOLIDAY (MAKE-UP DAY)
PROGRESS REPORTS

4TH NINE WEEKS/SECOND SEMESTER EXAMS
STUDENTS' LAST DAY (60% DAY)
GRADUATION
MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY
TEACHER WORK DAY (MAKE-UP DAY)

FIRST SEMESTER:
STUDENT DAYS – 86
FACULTY DAYS – 89

SECOND SEMESTER:
STUDENT DAYS – 94
FACULTY DAYS – 98

**The above calendar is subject to change for reasons of inclement weather conditions and/or state assessments. **

MAKE-UP DAYS due to inclement weather conditions and/or state assessments will be as follows:

FEBRUARY 19, 2024 (PRESIDENT'S DAY HOLIDAY)
MARCH 18, 2024 (PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY/STUDENT HOLIDAY)
APRIL 1, 2024 (GOOD MONDAY HOLIDAY)
MAY 28–29, 2024 (TEACHER WORK DAY + ONE)

ESSER Fund

Renovation projects start in June



“It has been our goal through this process to use the money very wisely, and these projects will be extremely beneficial for our students and staff.”

- Dr. Irene Turnage,
Superintendent of
Education



New swing sets will be added at the Holly Springs Primary School playground (top photo). “The “White House” behind the high school building (bottom photo) will be completely remodeled to include two isolation classrooms, plus an outdoor classroom added in back.

Much-needed improvements to Holly Springs School District campuses are just around the corner.

The projects, part of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund, include restroom renovations, new heating ventilation and air conditioning units, auditorium renovations, an outdoor classroom, new playground equipment and more.

The ESSER projects will start in June with completion set for the spring of 2024.

“We have a lot of great projects focused on our students – creating a safer and healthier environment and improving the learning process,” said Dr. Irene Turnage, superintendent of education.

Restrooms will be renovated at the primary, junior high and high schools, plus the central office. Improvements will include new mirrors, stall partitions, lighting fixtures, new flooring, freshly-painted walls, and hands-free sinks, dispensers and water closets. Antiquated rooftop and ground HVAC units at the primary school and its activity building will be replaced. The high school building and the high school auditorium will also receive upgraded HVAC units.

The high school auditorium itself will get a major facelift. The work will include the removal of asbestos, installing new tile on the first floor and the balcony area, new audience seating, new lighting fixtures, new wall paint and new acoustical wall and ceiling panels.

“We will be able to space people out more and just create a much nicer, upgraded auditorium not only for our students and faculty but for our community,” Turnage said. “We’re excited about seeing a newly-renovated auditorium, including the balcony which has not been used in a very long time.”

Old and broken window panes at the junior high and high school band hall will be replaced.

The “White House,” located behind the high school building and adjacent to the junior high, will be transformed. The space will include two isolation classrooms, new conference room, and upgraded kitchen and restrooms. The renovation also calls for a new raised wood patio at the back of the building.

An outdoor classroom will be added just behind the “White House.” The additional teaching and learning area for teachers and students will include 25 outdoor student desk/chair combination stations which will face the raised wood patio.

“This will provide a valuable learning space outside in the fresh air,” Turnage said. “It will be a wonderful addition for our students and teachers.”

New playground equipment at the intermediate school will include a large play structure with large translucent shades, plus two swing sets. There will be an observation bench for staff, with a translucent shade for comfort. The equipment will be located just inside the existing black fence adjacent to the gymnasium.

Playground equipment will also be added at the primary school. New swing sets for up to eight students will be constructed at the City of Holly Springs Park, on the north side of the primary school.

New audio/visual door access control devices will be installed at the front/main entrance to all schools. This project will provide a better sense of safety for students and employees.

“We will be able to better monitor who is coming in and out of our school buildings,” Turnage said. “The safety of students is our top priority.”

Also part of the ESSER Fund, four new school buses are already in operation, and learning assistance will be provided in the way of extra summer school sessions and tutors.

The ESSER Fund was established as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security CARES Act.

“It has been our goal through this process to use the money very wisely,” Turnage said, “and these projects will be extremely beneficial for our students and staff.”

Other Holly Springs School District projects scheduled, not a part of the ESSER Fund, include repairs to the campus roads that connect the junior high school, high school gymnasium and Career and Technical Center. This work also includes the installation of new drains which will collect rainwater and carry it offsite.

A roof replacement project at the CTC includes replacement of the roof area over the welding shop, health and sciences classrooms and automotive shop.

Holly Springs School District banners will be installed on select utility poles at each campus and at the district office.

2023 MTC Summer School

To register: <http://mtcsummerschool.weebly.com/>



Mississippi Teacher Corps

is pleased to once again offer their free-of-charge summer school program to all students in grades 6-12.

Summer school will run from June 12th, 2023 to July 18th, 2023, located at Holly Springs High School. With home school approval, students can earn full credit recovery or access summer enrichment opportunities. Our teachers are excited to welcome back a new group of students for summer!

6

WEEK PROGRAM

Full credit recovery* or enrichment opportunities offered.

8

COURSES OFFERED

7th Grade ELA, 8th Grade ELA, Nonfiction English, Middle School Math, Biology, High School English, Algebra, & High School Nonfiction English

4

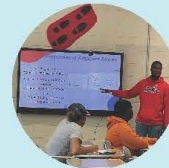
DAILY CLASSES

The school day is a four period day from 8 AM-12:30 PM, Monday-Friday.



Highly Qualified Teachers

Each class is led by a highly qualified mentor teacher.



Creative & Innovative Lessons

Teachers create engaging, rigorous, and differentiated curriculum.



Club Activities

Club activities are offered weekly, including art, sports, and rocket club.

District continues to support students with learning loss

The Holly Springs School District will continue its efforts to support students who experienced learning loss by offering three different types of extended year programs this year.

The district will offer a district-sponsored, extended-year program in grades 1-12 for students who met most promotion goals but may need additional support with standards or missed requirements. The district-sponsored, extended-year program will take place from June 5, 2023, until June 30, 2023.

The district will also continue its 17-year partnership with the University of Mississippi through the Mississippi Teacher Corps (MTC) Summer School Program.

The 2023 MTC Summer Program will allow students to obtain credit recovery for one subject out of eight targeted courses in grades 6-12. The program will take place from June 12, 2023, until July 18, 2023.

For students in grades 7-12 who need support for more than one subject, the district will offer courses through the district's alternative program, Ombudsman, at a cost to parents. The Ombudsman program will take place during the same time as the 2023 MTC Summer Program.

Classes for all programs will begin at 8 a.m. and end at 12 noon each day. Breakfast and lunch will be served daily.

Holly Springs High School Graduation Ceremony

Friday, May 19, 7 p.m.,
At Rust College





Delorise F. Jones assists students with the planting process.

Project promotes healthy living

A group of Holly Springs Intermediate School students enjoyed getting their hands dirty Wednesday, April 12. They planted lettuce, squash, cabbage, spinach, watermelon and more in raised beds outside the intermediate school building.

This is a yearly project of the Mississippi Roses Chapter (MS) of The Links, Incorporated, in conjunction with the Mississippi State University Extension Office in Marshall County. Donating plants and their time were Tony A. and Delorise F. Jones of Chulahoma's Garden.

"The kids love it," said Dr. Irene Turnage, superintendent of education for the Holly Springs School District. "It's all about promoting healthy living."

Representatives of the Mississippi Roses meet with students at the intermediate school once a month to promote exercise and good health. The organization started working with this group when they were in second grade at the primary school and has worked with them for the last five years.

From the Superintendent's Desk Holly Springs School District is rated Successful by MDE



There are many great things going on in the Holly Springs School District! As we publish our inaugural edition of our first district newsletter, The Hawk, I wanted to take this time to share some of those great things with our community, partners and friends.

The Holly Springs School District maintained its Successful rating again for the 2022-2023 school year based on the Mississippi Department of Education's Accountability System for Schools. The district received a C-rating, which is considered Successful under the present state accountability model. The district is humbled that despite some of the most challenging times faced in education in recent years, the district has received a Successful rating each year for the last twelve years with the exception of the 2018 school year. Although there were a lot of positives in the data, the district and school leaders understand there is still a lot of good work to do.

In addition to the district receiving a Successful rating, some of the positives include:

- *Holly Springs High School moving from a D-rating to a C-rating, raising it to a Successful status.*
- *the District's graduation rate increasing to 93 percent from 90 percent.*
- *the District increasing in Acceleration, which is the percentage of students participating in college courses and obtaining national certifications while in high school. The percentage of students taking college courses and obtaining national certifications increased from 66 percent to 79 percent.*
- *the District resuming partnerships and practices impacted by the pandemic and developing services that will be critical to our students and staff getting back on track for long-term success.*

The district has also had many highlights in the areas of athletics, partnerships, and parent and community involvement. As always, parent and community support has been strong.

We would like to thank our community, parents, staff and students for all the work they have done this year. As we say in the district, "Teamwork Makes the Dream Work", and the staff in the Holly Springs School District continues to be so grateful for all who support the district.

We are looking forward to having an even better year in 2023-2024, and we encourage all students, staff, parents and community members to continue the outstanding teamwork.

Together, we can make sure every child learns and grows.

- Dr. Irene Turnage



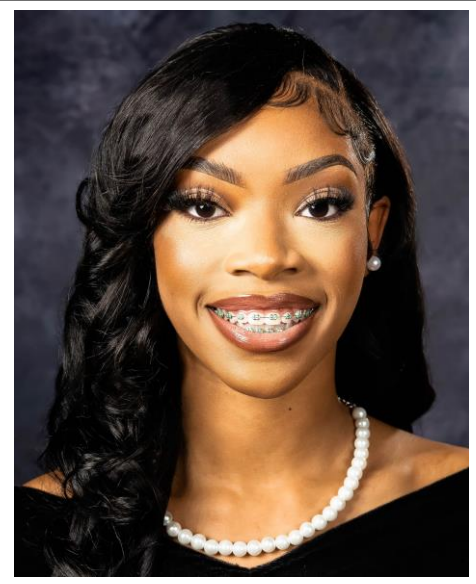
**Holly Springs High School
Valedictorian (Amari Jefferson)**

Amari Jefferson is the proud daughter of Eddie and Sharon Jefferson. She will graduate as the valedictorian of Holly Springs High School Class of 2023. She has a GPA of 3.8 and will be graduating with Distinguished Honors. Amari plans to attend Northwest Mississippi Community College and later move on to Alcorn State University. She plans to receive an associate and bachelor's degree in secondary education. Amari lives by the quote, "Dreams and dedication make a powerful combination." She aims to be the best that she can be, and has made it her mission to never give up. Amari firmly believes that persistence is the key to success. She would like for everyone to know that it is never too late to be who you might have been.



**Holly Springs High School
Salutatorian (Mikayla Cathey)**

Mikayla Cathey is the proud daughter of Natosha Cathey. She will graduate as the salutatorian of Holly Springs High School Class of 2023 with a 3.6 GPA. Her plans are to attend Mississippi University for Women to major in nursing. She plans to use her skills to help and heal others and to start her own practice. Mikayla lives by the motto, "You're the artist of your own life; don't hand the paintbrush to anyone else." She never lets anything get in her way, and even if it's too much weight on her shoulders to bear. Mikayla wants everyone to know - "You don't know what God has planned for you; you have to talk to the one that planned it."



**Holly Springs High School
Historian (Ric'Kayla Whitelaw)**

Ric'Kayla Whitelaw is the proud daughter of Kirbie Malone and Ricardo Whitelaw. She will graduate as the historian of Holly Springs High School Class of 2023 with a 3.5 GPA. Throughout her high school career, she has participated in cheerleading, powerlifting, volleyball, softball, and track and field. Ric'Kayla was recognized as Miss Holly Springs High School. She is a member of the National Honor Society, Hawk Pride Club and the 20+ Act Point Club. Ric'Kayla serves as Student Government treasurer and class president. She will be attending Alabama A&M University and majoring in communications media.

**HSHS
ACT 20+ Club**

Seniors

- Pablo Arce
- Amari Jefferson
- Kealen Jeffries
- Rickayla Whitelaw

**HSHS
ACT 20+ Club**

Juniors

- Jim Garcia
- Oriah Hampton
- Leela Hubbard
- Alicia Moore
- Jamiya Mosley
- Demetria Parks
- Arian Shelton

Holly Springs High School recognizes juniors and seniors with ACT scores of 20 or higher.

HOLLY SPRINGS HIGH SCHOOL
2023 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE
Spring Practice: April 24-May 10
Spring Game at Tishomingo High School May 11, 2023



August 18	High School Jamboree	Thrasher High School
August 25	Mantachie	Home
August 31	H. W. Byers	Home (Thursday)
September 8	Ashland	Away
September 15	South Pontotoc	Home
September 22	Byhalia	Homecoming
September 29	Independence	Away
October 6	Kossuth	Away
October 13	Rosa Fort	Away
October 20	Coahoma County	Home
October 26	North Panola	Home (Senior Night-Thursday)
November 3	Playoffs Round 1	
November 10	Playoffs Round 2	
November 17	Playoffs Round 3	
November 24	Playoffs Round 4	
December 1	State Championship	

Head Coach: Clifford Brown

State powerlifting medalists



Nikiya Burgess (left) of Holly Springs High School is a back-to-back state powerlifting champion in her weight class with a total of 875 pounds lifted (squat, bench press, deadlift). Leela Hubbard (right) placed third in the state in her weight class. The two Holly Springs High School Lady Hawks competed in the Mississippi High School Activities Association Class 3A State Powerlifting Meet March 31 at Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson. Both are juniors.



Track and field medalists at State Meet

Two Holly Springs High School sophomores combined to win five medals at the Mississippi High School Activities Association Class 3A State Track and Field Meet May 10 in Pearl. Tiara Levenson (far left) placed second in the 400 meter dash (1:00.37), third in the 200 meter dash (26.01) and third in the high jump (5-02). Tray Kinkle (middle) took the top prize, the gold medal, in the 200 meter dash (22.14) and finished second in the 400 meter dash (50.13). The Holly Springs High School boys 4x800 relay team, three juniors and one sophomore, also medaled as Jim Garcia-Espino, Jatavis Walker, Jason Jeffries and Jermaine Henderson (right photo) ran their way to a third-place finish (9:19.54) at the State Meet. Track coaches at Holly High are Maxine Tucker and Brandi Woodson (girls) and Clifford Brown (boys). Both the Hawks and Lady Hawks have won back-to-back District 2-3A track and field championships, plus several Holly High athletes advanced to the regional, north and state meets. The boys team finished as both regional and north runner-up and then fifth in the state out of 28 schools competing. The girls team placed third in the regional, fourth in the north and seventh in the state.

‘Don’t sell yourself short; set goals’

● *Smith motivates students*



DaQuan Smith (above) talks to a group of Holly Springs High School students in the auditorium. (Below) Smith is pictured competing on the court for the Radford University Highlanders (photo courtesy of Radford University).



DaQuan Smith delivered a simple but inspiring message to students at his alma mater Friday morning, April 21.

“Don’t sell yourself short; set goals,” said Smith, a 2018 graduate of Holly Springs High School and the Hawks’ all-time leading scorer in basketball. “Get your grades up. Do things the right way. Strive to be an all-around better person.”

Smith led Holly High to four state tournaments, including a Class 3A runner-up finish his senior season. He was a member of the Dandy Dozen, the top 12 players in the state as selected by The Clarion-Ledger newspaper. He averaged 26 points a game as a senior.

Smith signed with Murray State University out of high school and then transferred to Radford University. He was named to the Big South All-Conference Team this past season. He will receive his bachelor’s degree in May but has one year of college basketball eligibility left. He currently plans to return to Radford for one more season while working on a master’s degree. His goal is to play in the NBA.

But Dr. Irene Turnage, superintendent of education for the Holly Springs School District, said even though Smith is a very accomplished athlete, above all else he’s an outstanding, well-rounded young man.

“He is always respectful, always genuine, and those characteristics will take you far in life,” Turnage said. “He also knows the importance of academics. He was a distinguished Honor Student at Holly Springs High School. He handled his business, academics and basketball, and did both of them well. He is the model example that you can be successful in both. He continues to represent Holly Springs well. He’s a young man of high character.”

Smith, never one to reap accolades on himself, again emphasized to the high school students the importance of setting goals.

“Write down your goals – academically, athletically, in life,” he said. “Mine are on my mirror so I see them every morning. Believe it or not, it helps. Be the best person you can be, in all areas.”

Smith was accompanied by his mother, Tiffany Martin.

She urged the high school students to “take her son’s words to heart.”