

FEBRUARY 2025

ACADEMIC SERVICES



NEWSLETTER



Embracing and Celebrating Leadership

Carter-Parramore Academy hosted its annual Black History Program, Thursday, February 20 and like always, it was a phenomenal event! Mrs. Mandela lead the audience in a “remembrance of members” from our community whose contributions had positive impact. Then scholars shared facts about significant figures in Black History, followed by a lesson in leadership by Pastor Terrance Milton of Bear Creek Bethel MB Church. School Board members, elected officials and guests then enjoyed a scrumptious lunch. Hats off to Administrator Russ and team!

#MrBarkleyLewis

Updates from Head Start/Prekindergarten

On Saturday, February 8, 2025, the Parent and Male Involvement Department of Gadsden County Head Start/Pre-K hosted their 2nd All Pro Dad-Valentine’s Breakfast meeting. The topic of discussion was “Gratitude”. The thirty-five fathers or father figures along with their child(ren) were engaged and there was great dialogue among the fathers. The highlight of the event was the Grateful Hands activity. This activity was a way for fathers to express 10 ways they are grateful for their children).

The next All Pro Dad - March Madness event will take place Saturday, March 29, 2025 from 10:00-12:00pm at the PreK Office.

*Elijah Key, Superintendent
Tammy McGriff, Asst. Superintendent,
Academic Services*

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

March 25-27: Head Start/PreK Annual Registration (9:00 - 2:00) Joe Ferolito Recreation Center

Updates from Elementary Education

Throughout February, Ms. Robinson collaborated closely with principals at our Bureau of School Improvement (BSI) elementary schools, actively monitoring progress and providing targeted support to help them achieve their improvement goals. In addition, she worked to ensure that all purchases remained aligned with the approved UniSIG budget, reinforcing school improvement efforts and optimizing resource allocation.

A key initiative this month is the pilot implementation of the Florida Virtual School (FLVS) Lastinger Tutoring Program at Stewart Street Elementary School, designed to enhance reading instruction for students in grades K-5. This program offers highly qualified, well-trained tutors who deliver virtual, instructor-led tutoring sessions customized to address individual student learning needs. The sessions are structured to meet designated frequency and duration targets, utilizing audio and video-based instruction for an interactive and engaging learning experience. Furthermore, all tutoring materials are aligned with Florida's B.E.S.T. Standards, ensuring consistency with state academic benchmarks and maximizing student success.

These ongoing efforts reflect a commitment to school improvement, instructional excellence, and student achievement across the district.

Accolades

District Partner, National Hook-up of Black Women, Inc - Gadsden Chapter for hosting over 500+ students at the recent Teens Overcoming Pressure Summit (TOPS).

Updates from Secondary Education

Throughout February 2025, several key visits and meetings took place to support educational initiatives and district-wide improvements. On February 5th, AVID Site Team Visits were conducted with the AVID Implementation Specialist and Executive Director, recognizing all sites for their commitment, staff support, and shared leadership. On February 7th, a support visit to James A. Shanks with BSI provided an opportunity to observe classrooms and analyze data, with a follow-up visit scheduled for February 28th. Later that day, a meeting with Gallopade Social Studies curriculum helped deepen understanding of its components to better support teachers. On February 10th and 12th, collaborative calls with Varsity Tutors focused on progress monitoring data and preparations for a March re-launch. On February 18th, a collaboration meeting with Mr. Bradbury reviewed strengths and areas for growth in Civics instruction at the district level. On February 19th, participation in the Florida AVID District Directors meeting provided opportunities for engagement and strategic planning. Additionally, on February 20th and 21st, support was provided to GCHS in response to a recent incident, assisting with easing parent concerns regarding student safety and addressing the situation effectively.

#Graduation

Updates from the Office of Professional Learning Services

This month the Office of Professional Learning Services is in full swing planning and preparing for the annual Summer Leadership and Educator Summit. A meeting was held with each school principal to gather information about session offerings that would be beneficial to school leaders and educators. The educators survey will be released by the end of the month. We will continue to offer "Virtual Office Hours" to provide support to those educators whose temporary or professional certificates expire on June 30, 2025.

Updates from School Counseling

National School Counseling Week was celebrated on February 3 - 7, 2025. This year's theme was - School Counseling: Helping Students Thrive. The primary objective was to focus on the unique contribution that each counselor makes within our school district. School counselors are licensed educators with a minimum of a master's degree in school counseling, making them qualified to tend to all students' academic, career/personal, and social life needs by guiding and evaluating a school program that promotes the success of every student. More importantly, school counselors help students with their social, emotional, academic, and career needs. It takes a special person to be a school counselor.

We take this opportunity to recognize Mrs. Jeanne Gunn, School Counselor at Carter-Parramore Academy. She exemplifies the "Spirit of Excellence" as she works tirelessly as a school counselor. After graduating from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University with a bachelor's degree in nursing and a master's degree in guidance, she began her career as a school counselor in the Gadsden County School District in 1994 under Superintendent Dr. Harold Henderson. She became a school counselor because she felt this career was perfect for her and wanted to make a difference in people's lives.



"School counseling is the best profession in the world! We can watch students grow, develop, graduate, and pursue their dreams! I'm all in for school counseling because counselors help to activate students' dreams, care for students in need, and open doors for each student to achieve future success."

**Helping students
turn their "can'ts"
into "cans" and
their dreams into
plans!**

Updates on School Improvement Efforts

This month's focus is on executing and tracking the next steps identified through the most recent data from the FAST Progress Monitoring Assessment. District Instructional Coaches are supporting teachers by assisting with the planning and delivery of standards-based instruction. In addition, there is an increased emphasis on small group and targeted individualized instruction, with instructional specialists working directly with students. These initiatives are designed to address areas for improvement, refine teaching strategies, and ensure alignment with student needs, all with the goal of promoting student growth and academic success.

To promote student growth and academic success, we are strengthening partnerships with schools and community organizations to enhance literacy efforts. Collaborations with local entities, such as the Chattahoochee Rotary Club, aim to provide additional resources and support, fostering a more comprehensive approach to literacy development. These partnerships are integral to creating a literacy-focused community that engages students, staff, and the wider community through various opportunities that promote literacy.

Updates from Assessment and Accountability

Data Drives Instruction!

The Office of Assessment & Accountability is offering support to schools who are administering the STAR Reading and Math assessments to students in grades K-10 during the first two weeks in February.

FLORIDA ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

The test administration of the Florida Alternate Assessment begins February 24th for students in grades 3-8.

What are Florida's value-added models?

Value-added models (VAM) are used to measure a specific impact or influence on a performance outcome. VAM measures represent the amount the teacher contributed to student learning growth, on average, among the students that they taught. The models control the factors that impact student learning growth.

Who receives VAM data?

Currently, VAM measures are produced for teachers of the following grades and subjects:

- English Language Arts (grades 4-10)
- Mathematics (grades 4-8)
- Algebra 1 (grades 8 and 9 only)

In Gadsden, we've opted to use the data that's submitted for Survey 2 (October) and Survey 3 (February). Schools are instructed to share class rosters with teachers to verify that the data is accurate prior to submission to the FLDOE. Data Entry Personnel are required to correct any errors received from teachers. The FLDOE uses data from Surveys 2 and 3 and matches it with the students' assessment data. As a result, VAM scores are calculated by the FLDOE.

DISTRICT GOALS

ACADEMICS

- Increase the % of students who are kindergarten ready; proficient in core areas & graduation ready

BEHAVIOR

- Reduce % of OSS incidents; student absences; teacher absences

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Increase # of community partnerships; # of parents engaged in school community