

The Hawk



Holly Springs, Mississippi

October 2023

District Newsletter

District, ICS chosen for Early Learning Collaborative



From left are Eloise McClinton, executive director, ICS; Dr. Irene Turnage, superintendent of education, Holly Springs School District; and Linda Beard, child development director with ICS. Not pictured is Dr. Sherna Jones, pre-K/early childhood coordinator.

This edition of The Hawk highlights some of the great educational partnerships in the district.

Holly Springs School District and the Institute of Community Services (ICS) have a wonderful history of working together to meet the needs of pre-kindergarten students.

This year, the Holly Springs School District obtained a three-year grant from the Mississippi Department of Education to form the Holly Springs Early Learning Collaborative, a partnership between ICS and the district which will serve 4-year old students. The school district and ICS will receive approximately \$200,000–\$250,000 each year for the next three years. Additionally, collaboratives that have received the grant in the past have continued to receive the funding beyond the original three years. There are still openings in the program. Please see the flyer (below) for contact information.

The Holly Springs School District is proud to continue the great work with ICS to ensure students are ready for kindergarten and ultimately, ready for college and careers.

Individuals or corporations who contribute to support the local matching fund of an approved early learning collaborative (ELCs) may be eligible to receive a 1:1 state tax credit for the donated amount of up to \$1 million. The Mississippi Department of Revenue can approve 1:1 tax credits up to the amount the legislature appropriates to the Early Learning Collaborative Act each year. For more information on how to receive the tax credit for contributions, contact Dr. Irene Walton Turnage, superintendent of education for the Holly Springs School District.

Let's Celebrate!

Holly Springs School District achieves historic academic gains - district and three schools ranked high-performing

See page 2



Holly Springs Early Learning Collaborative

**Space Available for 4-Year-Olds!
Register Today!**

(Must have turned 4 prior to Sept. 1, 2023)

To enroll your child, go to ICS Head Start, 210 West Valley Ave., or Holly Springs Primary School, 405 South Maury St. For more information, call Dr. Sherna Jones (Primary School), 662-252-1768 or Angela Lowery (ICS), 662-551-3244.

Reaching new academic heights

School district and three schools attain B-ratings



*Dr. Irene Turnage,
Superintendent*

The Holly Springs School District Board of Trustees, district and school staff, and students were elated to see their hard work paid off when they received their accountability rating from the Mississippi Department of Education this year. For the first time ever, the district received a B-rating, which is considered high-performing.

“The Holly Springs School District Board of Trustees is proud of the accomplishments of our students during the 2022-2023 school year,” said Lemon Phelps, president of the board. “Every year we, as a district, work hard to achieve our district goals and this year we see that hard work paying off for students. However, we are not satisfied and we will continue to strive for greater. Thanks to all the staff, past and present, for their hard work and their dedication to this achievement. Our parents are also to be commended for pushing and working with our students, as well.”

The district’s score is determined from a combined score from all schools in the district. Holly Springs High School moved up a level from a C-rating last year to a high B-rating. Holly Springs Intermediate and Holly Springs Primary moved up two levels from a D-rating to a B-rating this year. Although three of the four schools in the district received a B-rating, Holly Springs Junior High still struggled in academic performance. Holly Springs Junior High received an F-rating.

“We are so proud of them (students and staff) and the work that they have done.”

“We know there is still work to do at all our schools and extra work to get our Junior High School to the high-performing level, but we believe it can be done,” said Dr. Irene Walton Turnage, superintendent of education. “We have added additional leadership and support services to our Junior High and identified strong instructional practices that will hopefully help it to make the same gains as the other schools. The Junior High staff says that we have three Bs and one on the way.”

Now that the district and some schools have reached high-performing levels, they understand that they must work hard to keep those ratings. All schools are identifying strengths and areas of improvements and developing strategic plans that will not only help them maintain the high-performing levels but put all schools on a path for continued gains and improvements.

“We have always known that our students and staff were capable of receiving a high-performing rating. We are so proud of them and the work that they have done,” Turnage said. “We are also thankful for those parents and community supporters that have always believed in us.”



From left are Dr. Robert M. Dixon, Rust College president; Dr. Irene Turnage, Holly Springs School District superintendent of education; and Dr. Louis Cook, Rust College vice president for enrollment management.

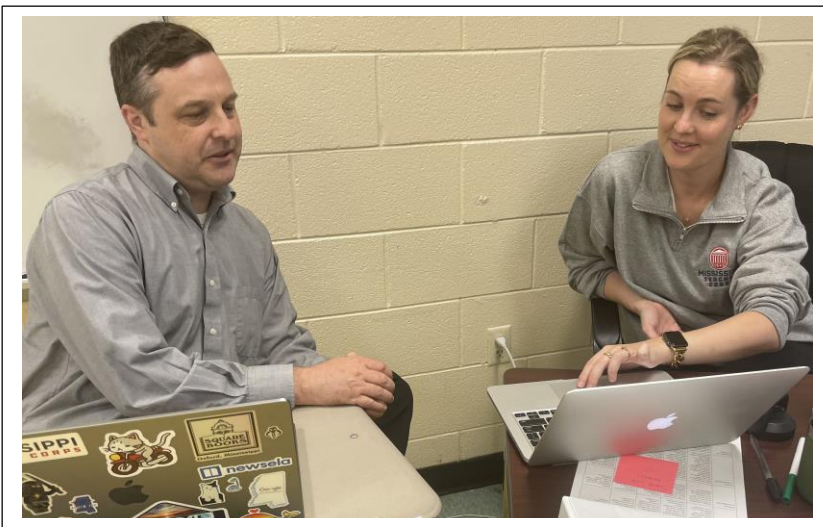
District, Rust work together

Holly Springs School District and Rust College are partnering for the second year to offer dual enrollment courses for students in Holly Springs School District.

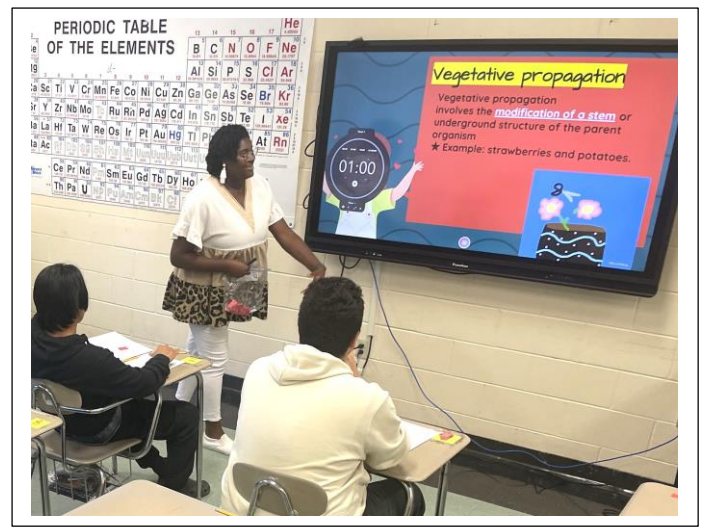
Dual enrollment courses are actual college courses that students can take beginning in their junior year in high school.

The Holly Springs School District is proud to continue the long-standing relationship with its big brother, Rust College, to help prepare students to be college and career ready.

Other higher education partners that provide dual enrollment classes for the district are Mississippi Valley State University and Northwest Community College.



Dr. Joseph Sweeney and Dr. Abby Clark coordinate the MTC program.



MTC participant Dasana Rhoads teaches a science class.

Partnership trains students, supports teachers

A fruitful partnership between Mississippi Teacher Corps and the Holly Springs School District continued to thrive in its 18th summer.

The alternate-route teacher prep program, through the University of Mississippi, is held at Holly Springs High School in June and July with big benefits to both participants and students.

“We want to give our participants a chance to teach over the summer, and we want to help students either get credit recovery or enrichment,” said Dr. Joseph Sweeney, director of MTC. “It is a mutually beneficial partnership. We are glad to have this opportunity, and it’s a lot of fun, too.”

This past summer there were 36 participants honing their teaching skills, including 16 in the first year of the program, 12 in the second year and eight lead teachers. Core subjects being taught include math, English, science and social studies.

“Typically, we have participants from across Mississippi, and all over the United States,” said Sweeney, who came from Michigan, completed the program in 2006 and taught at both H.W. Byers and Byhalia.

Seventy students in the sixth through 12th grades attended MTC summer classes in 2023, with the vast majority coming from the Holly Springs and Marshall County school districts. The two school districts also assist in providing bus transportation for students and teachers, plus breakfast and lunch are provided at the high school.

“It’s a great set-up for us,” Sweeney said. “We appreciate the support and the teamwork involved in making the program a success each summer.”

MTC actually launched in 1989. In its 34th year, there are 678 alumni. Participants come into the two-year program with no teaching experience. They earn a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) and commit to teaching two years at a critical-needs public school in Mississippi. Some who have gone through the program choose to stay at their assigned schools, which include Holly Springs and Marshall County.

“We place teachers at schools throughout Mississippi,” Sweeney said. “Then we encourage them to stay in that district, and we have grants to provide incentives for them to stay.”

Sweeney and Dr. Abby Clark, principal of the summer school, hope the partnership between MTC and Holly Springs continues to flourish.

“We enjoy it, and the benefits are obvious,” Sweeney said. “There are a lot of things going right with this partnership. We are successfully training teachers and helping students stay on track for graduation.”

Dr. Irene Turnage, superintendent of education for the Holly Springs School District, agrees that the partnership has been wonderful.

“For the last 18 summers, we have worked together to provide excellent extended year and summer activities for students in grades six through 12,” Turnage said. “The diverse number of classes and activities through MTC is extremely beneficial because the district is not able to offer as many due to staffing and cost.

“The partnership has been a win-win for MTC and for us. We look forward to the partnership each summer and hope we will be able to offer this great program for many years to come.”



Tanya Smith is the new career coach at Holly Springs High School.

Partnership helps students pick careers

A partnership between Three Rivers Planning and Development District and the Holly Springs School District is helping students determine a career path.

Tanya Smith is the first-year career coach at Holly Springs High School.

“We want to let students go into the community and learn about the different jobs,” she said. “All experience is good experience.”

In August 2022, Accelerate MS announced a \$7.99 million investment in Mississippi high schools to support significant expansion of an innovative career coach program in Mississippi high schools. The program, created through House Bill 1388 and funded through House Bill 1517 of the 2022 Legislative Session, aims to connect and prepare high school students with Mississippi’s most in-demand careers. The almost \$8 million award is funded by money made available through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Smith was hired as career coach by Three Rivers Planning and Development District, one of seven grantee organizations across the state. She previously worked as a Workforce Investment Act coordinator and also as a teacher at Ole Miss, Byhalia and Oxford.

She is just getting started in her new position. A first step was meeting with students in a classroom setting and talking about possible careers. Students then filled out a career intent plan.

A few of those career interests for students at Holly High included business entrepreneur, nursing, trucking, engineering, journalism, military and dermatologist.

Smith is in the process of meeting with students one-on-one and matching them with job shadowing opportunities in the community. Those will include police department, real estate, restaurants, industries, small businesses, industrial development and others.

“We want the students to look at various career options – learning what they might want to do or what they don’t want to do,” she said. “We want to help chart their path.”

Accelerate MS Executive Director Ryan Miller said, “We believe that access to one-on-one career coaching will open the eyes of Mississippi High School students to the kinds of high-tech, high-skill jobs available, right here, at home. We’ve seen this model create a positive impact in communities across the state and believe that, with support from elected officials and members of business and industry, this program will continue to take that impact and grow it exponentially.”

Rotary Club is friend of education



John Sellers, a 2023 graduate of Holly Springs High School, was named a Student of the Year recipient by the Holly Springs Rotary Club. Sellers received the club’s top scholarship award of \$1,000. He is pictured with Bettye Robinzine, Holly Springs High School guidance counselor. Sellers was honored during the May 24 meeting of the Rotary Club.



The Holly Springs Rotary Club recognized its Students of the Month during the club’s September 20 meeting. The recipient for Holly Springs High School was Richard Kirklin, who was honored for his academic achievement, leadership and extracurricular activities. He is pictured with Shirley Byers, club president, and Charlie Farris, committee chairman.

The Holly Springs Rotary Club also sponsors ACT Workshops and buys dictionaries for all third graders.



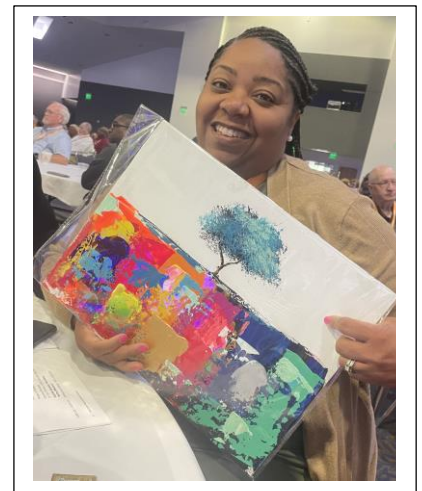
Policy conference

Representatives of the Holly Springs School District attended the Mississippi School Boards Association Policy Conference September 18-19 in Flowood. Sessions included “Let Policy Answer Your Questions: There’s A Policy for That,” “Legal Updates Every School Board Member Needs to Know,” “Ensuring Sound Financial Policies and Practices,” “Cyber Security and Social Engineering,” “Ethics and Open Meetings,” and “Prioritize Safety and Limit Liability.”

Pictured, from left, are school board members Lemon Phelps, Kim Mayfield and Dr. Gemma Beckley, and superintendent of education Dr. Irene Turnage.



From left are school board member Charisse Harris, assistant superintendent of education Eileen Dowsing and school board members Ejeera Dukes and Kim Mayfield. Not pictured is superintendent of education Dr. Irene Turnage.



School board member Charisse Harris shows off the prize she won at the leadership conference.

School district reps attend leadership conference

The Holly Springs School District was well represented at the 2023 Southern Region Leadership Conference hosted by the Arkansas School Boards Association.

Attending the July 16-18 conference in Hot Springs, Ark., were school board members Charisse Harris, Ejeera Dukes and Kim Mayfield, superintendent of education Dr. Irene Turnage and assistant superintendent Eileen Dowsing.

Some of the workshops they attended included:

- Gen Z is here, and they brought AI with them;
- Great on their behalf: Student outcomes don’t change until adult behaviors change;
- Making student learning the priority;
- HR lessons from the world’s best boss;
- Active threat response – a nonlinear approach;
- Making expectations become a reality.



The workshops and vendor information were well received, and Holly Springs attendees were able to meet and mingle with board members from Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi, plus a few from Tennessee.

Charisse Harris was the winner of a beautiful piece of artwork from Sam Glenn, the keynote speaker in the general session, “Be the Difference.” She answered a question (What was the first toy advertised on TV?) correctly. The answer was Mr. Potato Head.



Parent of the Year

LaKeshia Mason was recently recognized as Parent of the Year 2022-2023 for Holly Springs Intermediate School and the Holly Springs School District as a whole. From left are school board members Dr. Gemma Beckley, Kim Mayfield and Charisse Harris, honoree LaKeshia Mason, superintendent of education Dr. Irene Turnage, assistant superintendent Eileen Dowsing and school board member Lemon Phelps. Not pictured are school board member Ejeera Dukes and principal Vikki Marion.



Parent of the Year

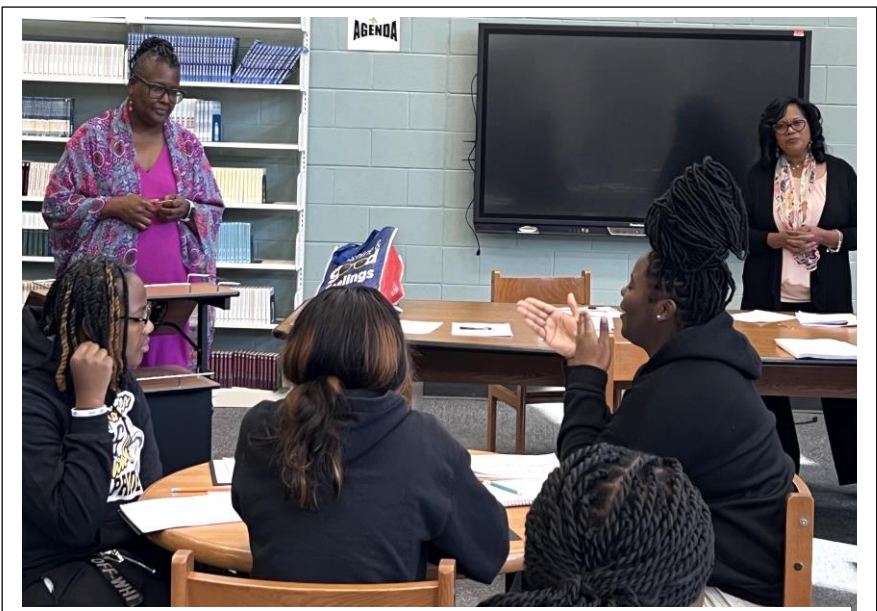
Jeffrey Bohanna was recently recognized as Parent of the Year 2022-2023 for Holly Springs High School. From left are Holly Springs School District board members Dr. Gemma Beckley, Kim Mayfield and Charisse Harris, principal Cravin Turnage, honoree Jeffrey Bohanna, superintendent of education Dr. Irene Turnage, assistant superintendent Eileen Dowsing and school board member Lemon Phelps. Not pictured is school board member Ejeera Dukes.

Not pictured are others who received Parent of the Year recognition – Felicia Jones, Holly Springs Career and Technical Center; Tammy Hampton, Holly Springs Primary School; and Carmeeka Shelton, Holly Springs Junior High School and the school district as a whole.



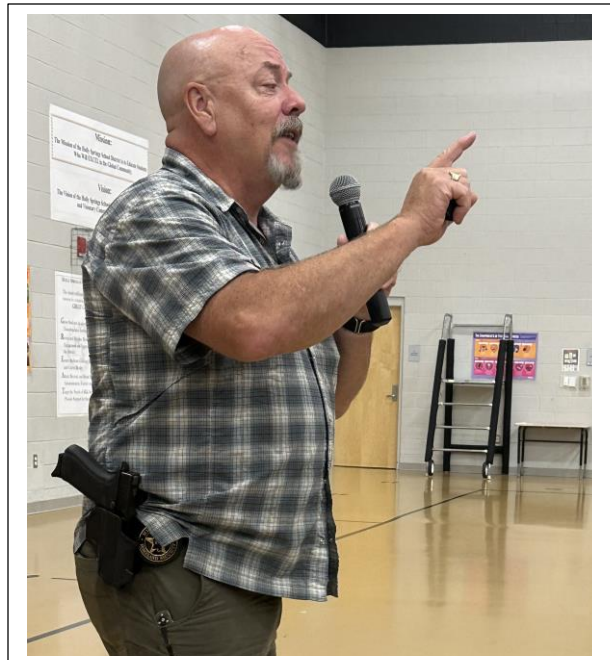
Vaping education program

Lora Austin, with the Mississippi Tobacco-Free Coalition, is presenting the “CATCH My Breath” program to students at Holly Springs Junior High School. CATCH My Breath is an evidence-based youth vaping prevention program that was developed by the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health. Through a series of four lessons, CATCH My Breath provides students with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions about using e-cigarettes. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) cited CATCH My Breath as the only evidence-based youth vaping intervention program in the nation. After going through CATCH My Breath, seven out of eight students have said they are less likely to use e-cigarettes.



Writing workshop

Members of the Mississippi Roses (MS) Chapter of the Links Incorporated make a presentation on writing college essays at Holly Springs High School. This is the second year for the writing workshop.



Active shooter training

Faculty and staff of the Holly Springs School District gathered in early August, as part of District Orientation for the 2023-2024 year, with a focus on school safety. Jim Brown, with the Mississippi Office of Homeland Security, provided active shooter training for school personnel.



Business partner

New Beginnings Beauty and Barber College has been partnering with the Holly Springs School District. Felicia Jeffries, licensed barber instructor and director of education, and team have been working with high school students with careers related to entrepreneurship and the beauty industry. Jeffries, team members and sponsors have also completed community service events like the “Be Your Valentine Beauty Camp.”



New swing set

Students enjoy a new swing set at the City of Holly Springs Park on South Maury Street. The park, which is adjacent to Holly Springs Primary School, is used by students during recess time. The addition of the new swing set is one of several projects in the school district utilizing Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds.



Banners going up across the district

Holly Springs School District banners have been installed on select utility poles at each campus and at the district office. The school district thanks the Holly Springs Utility Department for putting up the new banners – “Hawks Pride.”



School improvements

Several antiquated HVAC units are being replaced in the Holly Springs School District through Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. Workers are pictured installing a new unit at the Primary School Activity Building.



**Holly
Springs
High
School
Homecoming
2023**



Football update

Clifford Brown, head football coach at Holly Springs High School, talks to Rotary Club members in August. The Hawks' regular season is winding down with Senior Night set for Thursday, Oct. 26, at home versus North Panola.



Holly Springs Junior High Hawks Conference Champions and Undefeated 2022-2023 Season



Holly Springs Peewee Hawks Conference Champions 2022-2023 Season



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

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

SEPTEMBER 4, 2023
SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
PROGRESS REPORTS

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

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

NOVEMBER 8, 2023
NOVEMBER 20–24, 2023

PROGRESS REPORTS
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS

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

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

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

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

FEBRUARY 7, 2024
FEBRUARY 19, 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

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)

Strong supporters of education



The men of Kappa Beta and Psi Rho Chapters of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. are strong supporters of education. The Holly Springs School District Board of Trustees honored the group with an award of appreciation. The fraternity, for many years, has donated large amounts of school supplies, incentives to reward students, and many other educational resources to the schools in the district. From left are Robert Curry, Dr. William D. Scott III, Conery DeBerry, superintendent of education Dr. Irene Turnage and Falando Marion.



Back-To-School Nights

All schools in the Holly Springs School District hosted successful Back-To-School Nights in August to kick off the 2023-2024 year.

HOLLY SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT VOLUNTEER FORM

I would like to volunteer for the following area(s)
(Please check all areas of interest):

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT	ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT	FINANCIAL SUPPORT
<input type="checkbox"/> General Tutor	<input type="checkbox"/> School Advisory Committee Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Partner in Education/ Adopt-A-School
<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/> Superintendent's Advisory Committee Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Business Donations
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Coach/ Mentor	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Programs Committee Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic Program Sponsors
<input type="checkbox"/> Testing Monitor	<input type="checkbox"/> Hall/Cafeteria Monitor	<input type="checkbox"/> Uniform Donations
<input type="checkbox"/> Homework Coach/ Tutor	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldtrip Sponsor
	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Resource Person	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Incentives
	<input type="checkbox"/> School Beautification Committee Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher/Staff Incentives
		<input type="checkbox"/> Extracurricular Activities Sponsor

Name: _____ Address: _____

Community Organization _____

Phone Number: _____ Volunteer Times: _____

****PLEASE SEE SCHOOL VISITATION AND VOLUNTEER POLICY AT SCHOOL OR DISTRICT OFFICE.