OCTOBER 2026

ACADEMIC SERVICES

Newsletter

OBJECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: FOCUSED WALKTHROUGHS

Submitted By: Allysun Davis, K12 Director

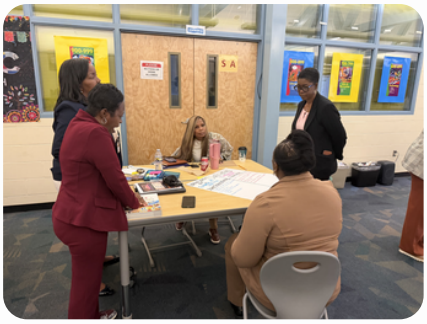
Gadsden County school leaders and district administrators recently participated in a targeted professional development session aimed at expanding administrative capacity and refining instructional leadership across the district.

On September 24th, principals, assistant principals, and district leaders joined specialists from the Florida Department of Education's Bureau of School Improvement (BSI) for a series of intensive, focused classroom walkthroughs. The collaborative session provided administrators with hands on practice in observing instruction and gathering real time classroom data.

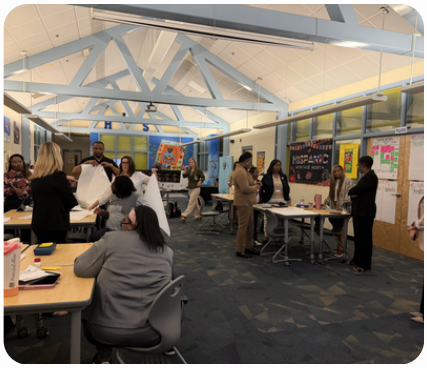
A core focus of the training was developing objective observation techniques. Specialists from BSI guided leaders through techniques for documenting instructional evidence with strict neutrality, eliminating emotional bias or subjective language from feedback statements.

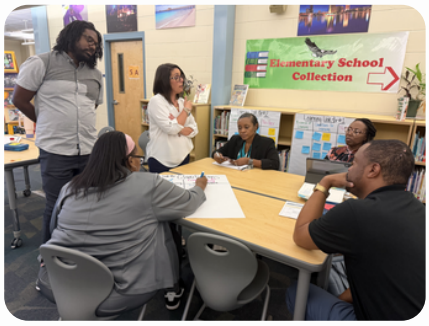
This emphasis on evidence based documentation represents an ongoing, transformative shift in Gadsden County's administrative culture. By focusing on clear, objective data, school leaders can deliver more actionable, constructive feedback to teachers, driving instructional growth and supporting student achievement across all schools.

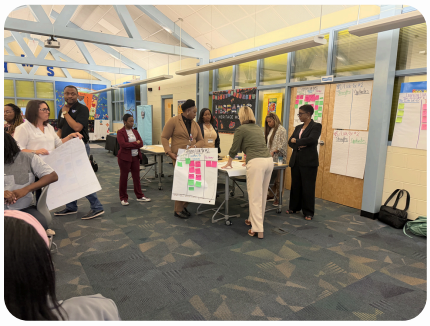
Collaboration in Action











Pictured: Instructional leaders came together for a productive session focused on collaboration, reflection, and continuous improvement. Through teamwork, shared ideas, and meaningful discussions, participants explored strategies to strengthen instructional practices and support student achievement. Together, we remain committed to excellence in teaching and learning!

"ONE TEAM, ONE FOCUS"

Lisa Robinson, Asst. Superintendent, Academic Services

Elijah Key, Superintendent , Gadsden Co. Sch. District

HEADSTART/PREK: ADVANCING SCHOOL READINESS THROUGH COLLABORATION, INSTRUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SUBMITTED BY: VALENCIA DENSON , PREK DIRECTOR

The Head Start/PreK Program has had an eventful and productive month of October, with several important developments focused on program governance, student achievement, classroom support, and professional development.

Policy Council Membership

We welcomed eight new Policy Council members for the 2026-2027 school year. These individuals will play an important role in supporting program governance, ensuring that policies and procedures align with the Head Start Program Performance Standards, and providing oversight of program planning and fiscal management. Their involvement will help ensure that the program remains financially responsible and has the resources necessary to carry out its mission effectively.

Classroom Support and Student Achievement

Based on beginning-of-the-year assessment data, we identified a need for additional instructional support for students in the classroom. Beginning with the second nine-week grading period, all Head Start/PreK staff will provide classroom support through small-group instruction for students identified as Tier 2 and Tier 3. Instruction will focus on letter recognition, letter sounds, and number recognition to strengthen foundational academic skills and support school readiness.
UFLI Training and Implementation

All PreK-4 teachers have completed UFLI training and will begin implementing this supplemental instructional resource in their classrooms on November 9, 2026. UFLI Foundations provides structured, systematic literacy instruction that breaks reading skills into clear, manageable steps. Instruction will focus on phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondences, blending, and segmenting to strengthen students' early literacy development and prepare them for future reading success.

Annual Program Assessment (CLASS)

During the week of October 19-23, 2026, all PreK-4 classrooms participated in the annual Program Assessment conducted by the Early Learning Coalition using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). The observer conducted four 20-minute observations in each classroom. The CLASS assessment is an important component of the program's accountability measures and accounts for 50% of the school's PreK accountability rating. The overall score reflects the combined results of the PreK-4 teachers and provides valuable information about classroom interactions and instructional quality.

Moving Forward

As we move forward, the Head Start/PreK Program remains committed to strengthening classroom instruction, improving student outcomes, supporting effective program governance, and investing in staff development. Through collaboration, data-driven decision-making, and ongoing professional learning, we will continue working toward our goal of providing high-quality early childhood education and comprehensive services to the children and families we serve.

GEORGE W. MUNROE ELEMENTARY LAUNCHES DISTRICT READING CHALLENGE

SUBMITTED BY: ALLYSUN DAVIS, K12 DIRECTOR

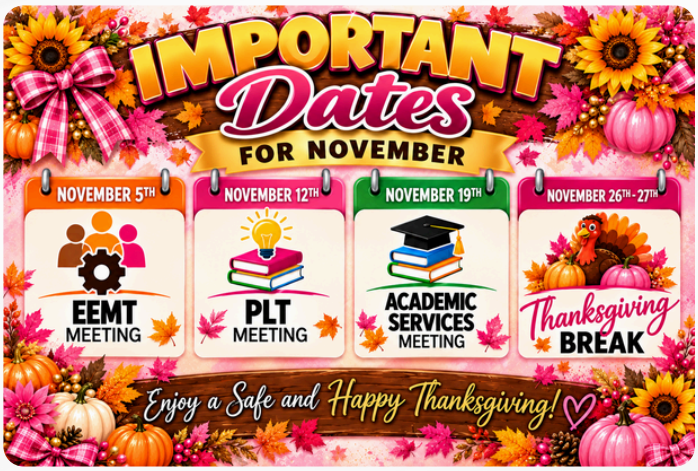
School hallways are buzzing with excitement as students at George Munroe Elementary School immerse themselves in the joy of literature through an engaging campus wide reading challenge.

The initiative is designed to celebrate reading as an adventure rather than a chore. Among the challenge's most enthusiastic participants are George Munroe's 4th graders, who are proudly sharing their favorite titles and inspiring their peers across all grade levels to pick up a new book.



This reading challenge serves as one component of Gadsden County's broader strategic efforts to cultivate a vibrant, lifelong love for reading in every student. By integrating diverse literacy approaches, including interactive challenges, classroom book clubs, guided independent reading, and community involvement, district educators are building classrooms where literacy thrives naturally.

Creating a strong reading culture early equips students with critical thinking skills, enhances vocabulary, and develops foundational tools that support academic achievements across all subject areas.



THE HAPPENINGS IN OPLS

SUBMITTED BY: KYSHA HOPKINS, DIRECTOR

Certification- Fall Tour of Schools is complete. Ms. Chelsea Murphy, Coordinator and Ms. Tenesia Clark, Administrative Assistant, have visited all school campuses, meeting with educators holding a temporary and/or professional certificate. To continue supporting educators with their certification, principals may schedule school visits on Tuesdays and Thursday throughout the month of October. Educators who missed their scheduled appointment during the Tour of Schools may contact Ms. Chelsea Murphy.

Certification-PLCP Program and ToT Pathway- Gadsden School District has begun our in-district PLCP program for the 2026-2027 school year. Participants have received their binders, and we will continue to monitor their progress. We are also in partnership with Teachers of Tomorrow to support our educators who need another pathway to meet certification requirements.

Reading Endorsement Cohort II- Participants will complete Competencies 1 and 2 on October 29, 2026. Competency 3 will begin on November 12, 2026. Participants will continue to build knowledge and skills to support literacy instruction and student achievement across the district.

New Teacher Induction Academy Program- Mrs. Latasha Pride is doing an awesome job working with our mentees and mentors. Participants engaged in a session with Cheryl Moody, F.A.C.E. Coordinator, titled "Parental Communication and Engagement" on October 6, 2026. Dr. Maria Pouncey provided "Best Practices for English Language Learners" on October 13, 2026. Both sessions were from 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm virtually.

Program Specialists are working with our schools, providing instructional support as needed. They continue to attend Edmentum, UFLI, and Acaletics training. Reading Specialists are very active in RAISE school visits with Kara Washington, State Regional Literacy Director, visiting George Munroe and Greensboro Elementary School. Program Specialists are providing ongoing HMH, UFLI, Edmentum, and Acaletics support. They have also provided PLC, coaching, and data review support for ELA and Math.

Professional Learning

-K-2 educators from Crossroad Academy, Chattahoochee Elementary, Greensboro Elementary, Stewart Street Elementary, George Munroe Elementary, along with Pre-K Headstart participated in a "UFLI Refresher", facilitated by Mrs. LaTasha Pride, on October 12, 2026, from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm held at Havana Magnet School. Thank you, Principal Germany, for opening your campus to host this event.

-OPLS, along with Mr. Matthew Bryant, Transportation Director, Dr. Sonya Jackson, Human Resources Director, and Ms. Darlean Youmans, IT Coordinator, are working together to roll out courses in Vector by November 1, 2026, to all district staff.

- We have three participants working towards UF Lastinger Math Micro-Credentials: Daryl Wymes, Shaneil Fearon, and Patricia Vickers.

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. Thank you, Principal Wilson-Lewis, for hosting this event on your school campus.



PERFECT SCORES, OUTSTANDING SCHOLARS: CELEBRATING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE ACROSS GADSDEN COUNTY!

SUBMITTED BY: CAROLINE MCKINNON, COORDINATOR

Even though spring statewide testing is over, there's still time to celebrate scholars who made a perfect score on at least one of their assessments!

Gadsden County High had three students—Travis Herring, Cu'Riyah Sweet, and Char'Lesya Yon—make a perfect score on their U.S. History EOC Assessments!

West Gadsden Middle had one student, Mireya Molina Gabriel, make a perfect score on the Civics EOC Assessment, and one student, Damian Martinez, make a perfect score on the Grade 8 FAST Mathematics Assessment!

Havana Magnet School had one student, Daylin Hernandez, make a perfect score on the Grade 4 FAST Mathematics Assessment, and one student, Jennebith Perez, make a perfect score on the Grade 7 FAST ELA Reading Assessment! Also, Darianna McGriff made a perfect score on the Florida Alternate Assessment: Grade 8 Mathematics Assessment!

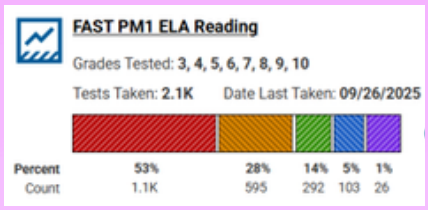
James A. Shanks Middle student Jaikob'e Young made a perfect score on both the Civics EOC Assessment and the Grade 7 FAST Mathematics Assessment!

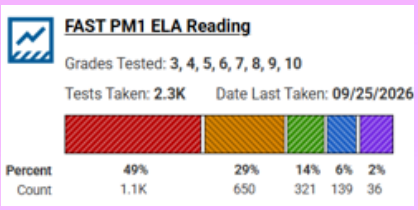
We are extremely proud of all the students who scored proficiency on their spring statewide assessments, especially those who made a perfect score on at least one assessment!

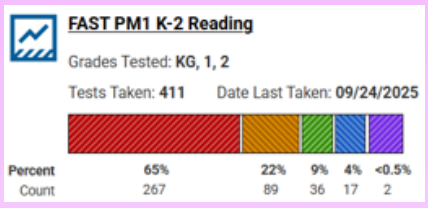
THE DATA SPEAKS

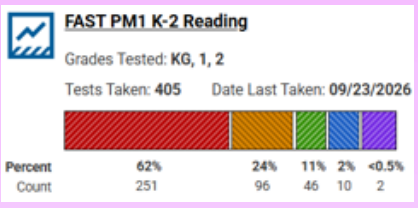
SUBMITTED BY: KIMBERLY CUMMINGS, COORDINATOR

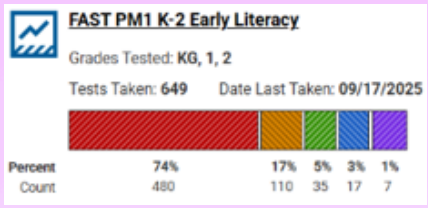
READING

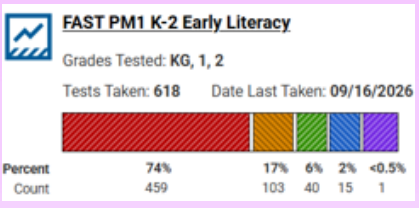


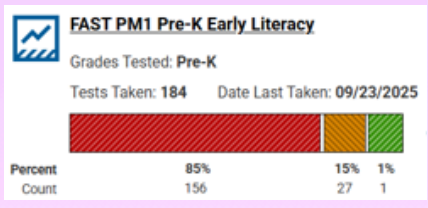


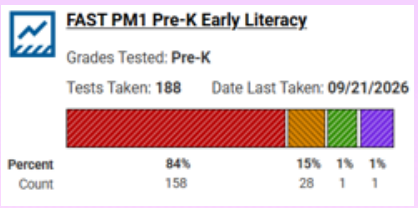




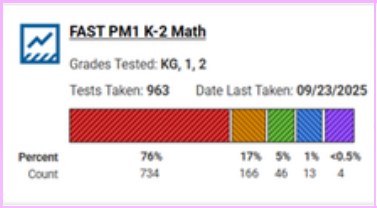


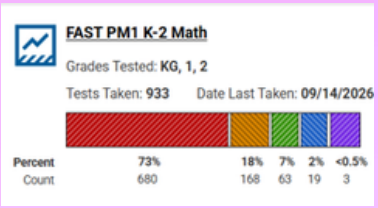


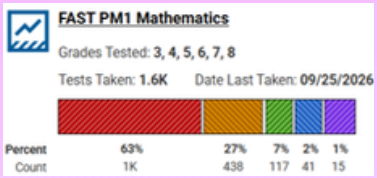


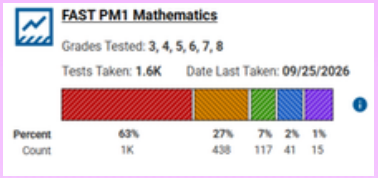


MATH











Baseline assessments (PM1) for the 2026-2027 school year have been completed. The side-by-side data charts indicate that students are starting this school year ahead of where they were at the beginning of the previous school year in both reading and mathematics.

It is important to note that these assessments measure students at a grade level above the one they completed last year, with very limited instruction provided prior to testing. Additionally, summer learning loss may have influenced scores, as students are transitioning back into academic routines after the summer break.

Despite these factors, the baseline data provides an encouraging starting point and valuable insight into students' current academic needs. This information will help teachers identify learning gaps, prioritize targeted interventions, and develop more streamlined, data-driven instructional plans to support student growth and achievement throughout the 2026-2027 school year.

Academic Services team members have taken a look at each school's data. Schools have been identified and ranked according to independent needs. Progress Monitoring Cycles have been created for our targeted schools alongside the Bureau of School Improvement and RAISE.

District Level meetings are held with administrators twice monthly and walk-throughs are conducted with immediate feedback. Performance trends and instructional needs are reviewed to determine the next steps and additional needs to support teachers and students.