



STUDENT SERVICES BOARD REPORT



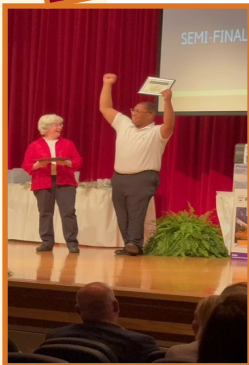
Celebrating Minds of All Kinds

Hilltop Elementary celebrated Exceptional Children's Week with a joyful event called Celebrating Minds of All Kinds, honoring students in special education and promoting inclusion. The day featured a lively schoolwide parade, water play activities, and shared classroom learning experiences. Families joined in the celebration, expressing appreciation for the recognition of their children's strengths. The event fostered a strong sense of unity and reinforced the message that every student contributes meaningfully to the school community.



Congratulations

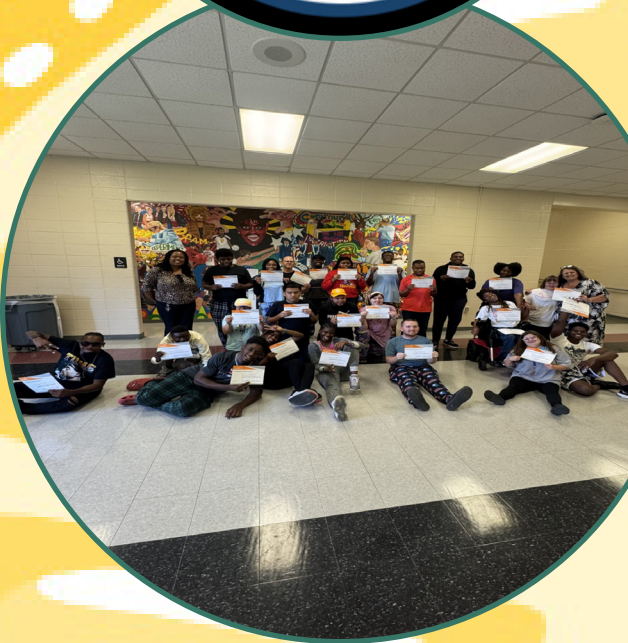
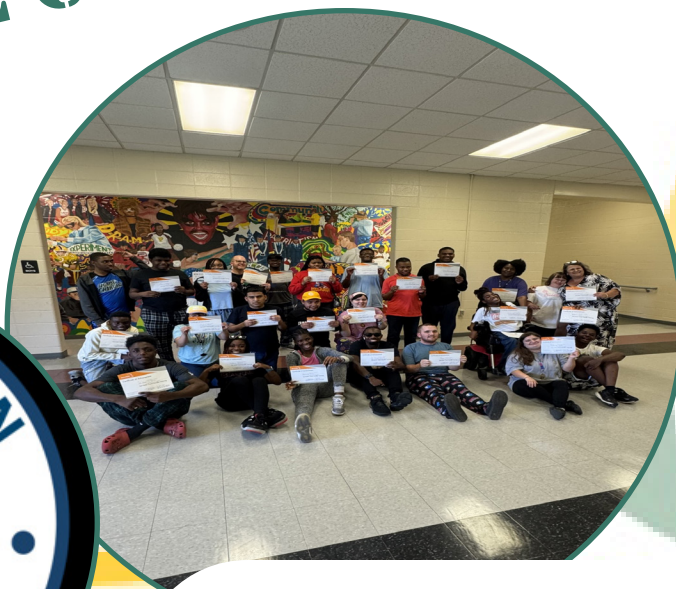
Transition Academy Students



On Thursday, May 8th, two outstanding students from the Transition Academy were honored for their nominations for Employee of the Year at the School Nutrition Banquet. Sean Young from Veterans High School and Decorrin Tyson from Northside Elementary were nominated by their kitchen managers for this prestigious recognition. The Transition Academy and the Houston County School Nutrition Department have teamed up to offer a job coaching program that provides students with valuable hands-on experience in food safety, culinary skills, and work-based learning. This partnership has ignited a passion for foodservice and paved the way for four Transition Academy students to launch successful careers in the field. Sean and Decorrin are among those recognized for their exceptional work, with Sean now in his second year working in the School Nutrition Program at VHS, and Decorrin completing his first year at NES. We are incredibly proud of these young men and their well-deserved recognition. The collaboration between the Transition Academy and School Nutrition is a true success, as the students not only fill a critical need in an area with labor shortages, but also take great pride in their work. We are deeply grateful for the continued partnership with the Houston County School Nutrition Department.



TRANSITION ACADEMY STUDENTS: SERVSAFE CERTIFIED



Students at the Transition Academy recently completed food safety training in partnership with the UGA Cooperative Extension. Over the course of eight weeks, they participated in the ServSafe Food Handler program, gaining valuable knowledge in safe food handling practices. This training reinforces essential life skills and promotes safe kitchen habits—both at home and within our student-run business. We're proud to share that more than 20 of our 30 students successfully passed the final exam and earned their official Food Handler certificates.

Emergency Preparedness in the Home

The Houston County Sheriff's Office met with parents of students with disabilities to discuss effective communication during emergencies and best practices for law enforcement when interacting with individuals with special needs. The session emphasized community collaboration to improve and tailor emergency services for the special needs population.



LSSC News

Eyes of Hope Mobile Vision Clinic

The California-based VSP Eyes of Hope Mobile Vision Clinic will be set up at the LSSC on June 9th and 10th. This opportunity will provide qualified participants with free eye exams and glasses, all done on-site. This much-needed resource will connect HCSD students and community members to vision services they might not otherwise be able to afford.

Back-to-School Vaccine Clinic

The Houston County Health Department will host two vaccine clinics this summer. On July 16th, a mobile drive-through clinic will be available for students zoned for PHS, VHS, HCHS, PMS, BMS, FMMS, MCMS, and WRMS. On July 17th, they will be on-site at the LSSC to serve students from NHS, WRHS, NMS, TMS, and HMS. This is a great opportunity for students to receive the vaccines they need—free of charge.

Read With Me Literacy Event and Book Fair

The final installment of the five-month literacy initiative concluded successfully with a vibrant book fair celebration. Parents participated in their final instructional coaching session, gaining valuable tools to support their children's reading development at home. Meanwhile, children enjoyed a lively reading circle and created a themed craft activity connected to the story they read. Families had the opportunity to explore the book fair and take home free books, helping to encourage continued reading throughout the summer. The book fair was also open to the community, extending the celebration and access to literacy resources to the broader public.





School Nutrition Annual Awards Ceremony

On May 8, School Nutrition hosted its highly anticipated annual awards ceremony—an unforgettable evening brimming with delicious food, laughter, and heartfelt recognition. This event shines a well-deserved spotlight on the unwavering dedication of our employees and managers, who work tirelessly throughout the year to ensure that students are served with healthy, nutritious meals. A heartfelt congratulations to all our honorees and award winners! We are immensely proud of the remarkable work you do in serving our schools, students, and community.

Several outstanding achievements were recognized at the event:

Northside Elementary and Northside Middle were honored for their collaboration in the Transition Academy Job Coaching Pilot Program.

Tricia Nicolsi and Brandi Smith were celebrated for completing the Georgia School Nutrition Association Leadership Academy.

The Warehouse Team received a heartfelt shoutout for their essential behind-the-scenes work, showcasing positivity, reliability, and dedication.

Award presentations included:

Rookie of the Year: Brittany McCollum, manager at Quail Run Elementary

Employee of the Year: Jeanette Rivera from Perry High School

System Manager of the Year: Norma Hernandez, manager at Kings Chapel Elementary



MENTAL HEALTH MONTH 2025



The Student Services and Project AWARE teams invited everyone to join in Mental Health Awareness Month under the theme Feel, Heal, Grow: Promoting compassion, understanding, and resilience.



Highlights:

Launch of the “478 Wellness” campaign featuring the 4-7-8 breathing technique, shared via websites, ClassDojo, and campus displays.

May 7 – Wear Green Day:
Students and staff wear green to show support for mental health awareness.

May 9 – Mental Health Awareness Summit:
Held at the Cary Martin Center with sessions on advocacy, resources, and community support.

May 21 – Summer Wellness Guide:
Release of a helpful guide with wellness tips and resources for families over summer break.





Mental Health Summit

On May 9, 2025, local educators and administrators attended a Mental Health Summit held at the Cary Martin Center. The summit was a call to action for local law enforcement, city council members, judicial stakeholders, community members, and educators to discuss the mental health challenges facing our community.

The goal was to educate, empower, and engage key leaders across sectors in a shared mission: to improve mental health outcomes for all. From justice and education to healthcare, faith communities, and family systems, mental health intersects with everything we do—and every voice at the table matters.

The summit also encouraged community members to foster solutions by learning from one another and connecting across disciplines to build a more supportive, responsive, and resilient community.

