

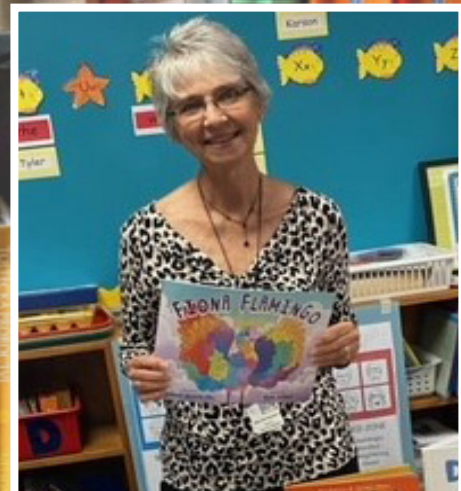


STUDENT SERVICES REPORT

Civitan Grant Recipient

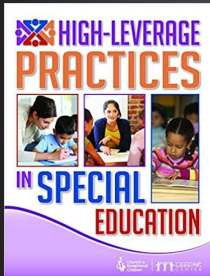
The ZONES of Regulation Book Nook

This school year, the Houston County Civitan Club offered special education teachers an opportunity to apply for a mini grant to use towards a special project or resources for their classroom. Mrs. Dunmon, a teacher at Lake Joy Primary, was awarded \$200 to purchase books focused on introducing and reinforcing concepts from Zones of Regulation. This program is a framework dedicated to helping students of all ages simplify how they think about and manage their feelings. She purchased books from our local Gottwals Book Store and looks forward to continuing to grow her Zones of Regulation Book Nook.

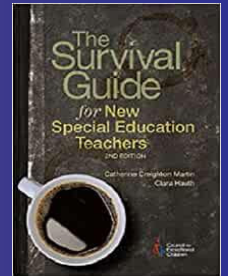


SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER INDUCTION

The Student Services Department is excited to continue its Special Education Teacher Induction Program for the 2021/22 school year. The program is designed to provide high-quality professional learning to enable teachers to best serve Students with Disabilities in Houston County. Nineteen special education teachers will meet monthly to receive professional development on topics that include:



- Classroom Management
- Youth Mental Health
- Co-Teaching
- High Leverage Practices
- Speech and Related Services
- Developing Measurable IEP Goals
- Assistive Technology Solutions
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports



Teachers will use two text resources from the Council for Exceptional Children: “The Survival Guide for New Special Education Teachers” and “High Leverage Practices in Special Education.” Teachers will also access resources via Google Classroom and receive follow-up support from program specialists and coordinators.

STUDENT SERVICES PROFESSIONAL LEARNING



On July 30th, the Student Services Department provided in-person professional learning to all special education teachers and Speech/ Language Pathologists. Veterans High School hosted the elementary teachers and WIN Academy was the site for middle and high school teachers. The professional learning sessions addressed multiple special education processes and IDEA/ special education updates.





School Nutrition Updates



The School Nutrition Summer Feeding Program served meals from June 2 through July 29. We operated 6 main locations with 7 vans that delivered breakfast and lunch to community neighborhoods throughout our county. Approximately 50 school nutrition employees prepped and provided over 772,300 meals during this time. We are proud to provide this service to the families of Houston County!

As so many departments in our school system are feeling the effects of the pandemic, School Nutrition is experiencing issues with food and supply shortages. We are keeping our families updated about menu changes using notifications on our website and social media pages. As we navigate the concerns of supply chain disruption, we remain committed to serve our students healthy and safe meals!

Although meals are served at no cost this school year, it is still important for families to submit the Free and Reduced Priced Meal Application. Information collected from this form is directly related to funding that our school district receives. Other benefits include reduced testing fees for students, decreased internet cost for families, and opportunities related to grants and scholarships. School Nutrition, Title I, and Public Relations are working together to create a campaign to encourage parents to submit this information by the October deadline. Forms only need to be submitted once per household. More information can be found on our board website.



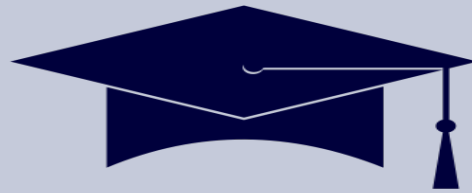
Project AWARE Happenings and Updates



One of the initiatives of Project AWARE is to link our students and their families to appropriate to community mental health services. In collaboration with counselors at our pilot schools. Project AWARE has processed 17 student referrals. The Project AWARE team has completed all 17 clinical assessments with students and/or families. Many of those students have been connected to community providers. Moving forward, the aim of Project AWARE continues to be providing students with appropriate services and linking them to community resources.

Project AWARE collaborated with Georgia Military College (GMC) to host a mental health awareness training for faculty and support staff on Saturday, August 14, 2021. The focus was on communicating with students experiencing emotional difficulties, empathetic responses that reduce stigma, and community mental health resources. The Project AWARE team also reviewed self-care practices for adults.

Project AWARE hosted a Counselor Support Meeting for all counselors in Houston County School District on Thursday, August 26, 2021. Counselors were provided support notebooks that included educational information, worksheets, and activities on a wide range of socio-emotional concerns.



G R A D U A T E TO EMPLOYEE

The Student Services Department would like to highlight two former Houston County students. They went from Houston County Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) Pathway Completers to Houston County Student Services employees.



Destinie Marie completed the Teaching as a Profession pathway in December of 2019. She interviewed and was selected to be a part of the HCBOE Youth Apprenticeship Program (YAP). She began working in January of 2020, at Parkwood Elementary. She worked a total of 294 hours and received great reviews from her teacher. She also worked after school hours at a local daycare. In addition to being a high achieving high school student, Destinie received a perfect 100 in all YAP classes. Since graduating from Northside High School in May of 2021, she has been working at Morningside Elementary as a paraprofessional while she attends college to earn her teaching degree.

Javon Jordan completed the Teaching as a Profession pathway in December of 2019. He continued his teaching experience through participation in the Work Based Learning (WBL) program. As a part of his WBL experience, Javon worked in a kindergarten classroom at CB Watson Primary School. Javon maximized his learning opportunity by assisting in one of the first grade classrooms whenever the kindergarten students were attending art, music, or PE. In addition to his teacher preparation responsibilities, Javon participated as an officer in JROTC at Warner Robins High School and worked at Chick-Fil-A after school. Since graduating from Warner Robins High School in May of 2021, he has been working at Lake Joy Primary School as a paraprofessional. Javon plans to attend college and pursue a degree in teaching.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Our spotlight this month is shining on Laquita Thrower. Mrs. Thrower is an interrelated paraprofessional at Miller Elementary and was nominated because she goes above and beyond for all students. Her willingness to jump in and do whatever is needed is greatly appreciated! This is her second year in her current role, after serving six years as a physical educational paraprofessional. One of her many responsibilities is to lead a social skills class for students. She also checks on them throughout the day to see if they can generalize social skill across settings. Her position can be challenging at times, especially when students become frustrated and are unable to verbalize their needs. It is at these times she reminds herself how important it is to remain patient and loving. She finds it extremely rewarding when a student has an ah-ha moment and helps them celebrate with a high five, elbow bump, or a seat dance. Mrs. Thrower believes the key to success in working with all children is establishing a relationship with them. She stated, "Children instinctively know when people care for them and tend to want to work hard for those that love them." In her free time, she enjoys reading, traveling with family and friends, going to watch present and past students in their extracurricular activities, and riding her motorcycle. She and her partner for life, Joe, are the parents of three, twins MeKhaela and Mekhi, who were graduates of Northside High School, and Jaquari who currently attends Houston County High School. "Over the years they have kept us busy with sports. We were constantly being pulled in different directions to be supportive of all three. It is a joy to be there for both my families, my biological and Miller Elementary." We appreciate you Mrs. Thrower and all you do to help students be successful!

