



# NEWSLETTER

## GCSD Jr. Division Spelling Bee 2026

We take great pride in announcing our district winners: Meekah Posey from HMS secured 1st place, followed by Ja'Mier Jones from JASMS in 2nd place, and Jean Alexis from GWM in 3rd place. Congratulations are extended to all contestants for exhibiting not only talent but also the bravery to participate.

We express our gratitude to the judges, Ms. Kesandra Brown, Ms. Kysha Hopkins, and Dr. Sonya Jackson, for their crucial role in ensuring the contest was successful. A special appreciation is also due to Dr. Sylvia Jackson for her excellent work as the word announcer. Thank you for your support.



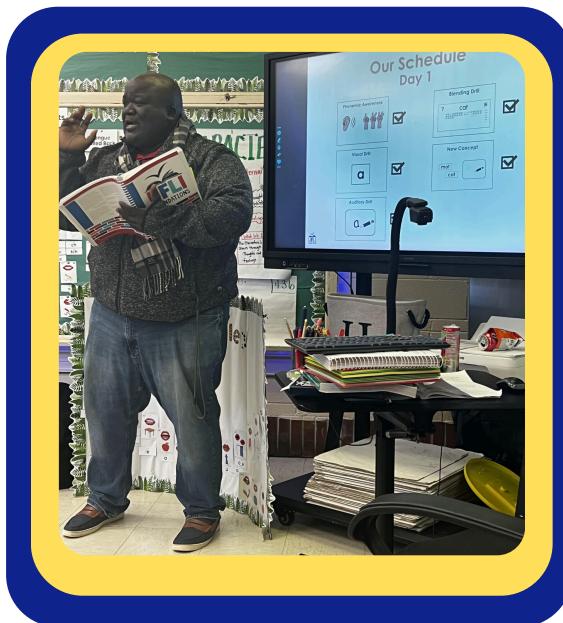
### UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

February 13: Early Release  
February 16: President's Day, No School

Elijah Key, Superintendent  
Lisa Robinson, Asst. Superintendent,  
Academic Services

**Updates from Elementary/Secondary Education**

George Munroe Elementary and Greensboro Elementary recently had the pleasure of hosting site visits from our partners at the University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI). During the visits, observers were thoroughly impressed by the high level of instructional rigor, strong administrative immersion, and the enthusiasm demonstrated by students as they engaged with the UFLI curriculum. Administrators from each elementary school actively participated in learning walks and engaged in rich discussions centered on instructional strengths, opportunities for growth, and strategic next steps to ensure continued excellence in implementation.

**GWM****UFLI****GREENSBORO****ACCELERATED READER****CES****HMS****JASMS****STUDY ISLAND****GEMS****WGMS****SSES**

In addition to the UFLI initiative, our Accelerated Reader data also reflects strong literacy engagement across the district. The top five schools based on the number of quizzes passed are George Munroe Elementary (9,058), Greensboro Elementary (3,627), Chattahoochee Elementary (2,450), West Gadsden Middle (1,399) and Havana Magnet (1,193). These results highlight a continued commitment to fostering independent reading and comprehension.

Our Fifth & Eighth grade students are also working diligently on the Study Island platform to strengthen science proficiency. At the fifth grade level, Gadsden Elementary Magnet demonstrates frequent exposure to 100% of the science skills, followed by West Gadsden School with frequent exposure to 65% of the science skills, and Stewart Street Elementary with frequent exposure to 57% of the science skills. At the eighth grade level, both West Gadsden and Shanks Middle show 100% exposure to science skills, with each school maintaining an average performance of 70% or higher.

As we move forward, we anticipate increased usage and engagement across the Study Island platform for students in grades 3-8, further strengthening instructional outcomes districtwide.

**Updates from PreK/Headstart**

The program has secured a Notice of Award totaling \$2.6 million. A professional development session on January 6 focused on Data-Driven Instructional Planning using the Star Early Literacy Diagnostic Report, emphasizing a comparative analysis of PM1 and PM2 data to inform instructional strategies ahead of the PM3 assessment. Additionally, the Male Involvement Team conducted a Zoom meeting on January 8 featuring Dr. Camron Browning, discussing the essentials of entrepreneurship. Upcoming events include Head Start/PreK Popup Registration from February 2-4, 2026, at the PreK Office, the Head Start Rocks the Runway & Community Resource Expo on February 7, 2026, at GCHS, and Head Start Governance Training via Zoom on February 19, 2026.

**Updates from School Counseling**

The School Counselors' Professional Development session was held on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Carter Parramore Academy. During the training, counselors engaged in discussions focused on the implementation and facilitation of Section 504 meetings. Ms. Kesandra Brown, ESE Director, provided hands-on training on "How to Complete Section 504 Meetings in PEER."

Additionally, National School Counseling Month, presented by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), will be observed from Monday, February 2, through Friday, February 6, 2026. This year's theme, "School Counselors Amplify Student Success," celebrates the vital role school counselors play in students' academic, career, and social-emotional development. The purpose of this observance is to highlight and recognize school counselors' contributions to student achievement and future planning.

**Updates from Office of Professional Learning Services (OPLS)**

On January 6, 2026, a New Teacher Academy offered sessions on effective strategies for students with disabilities (SWD) and English Language Learners (ELL), led by facilitators Ms. Kesandra Brown and Dr. Maria Pouncey. Additionally, Gadsden County High School educators conducted professional development on explicit instruction at their location.

On January 10, 2026 OPLS Program Specialists provided "Planning with the B.E.S.T. in Mind" sessions for educators. Three sessions were offered:

- Data-Driven Instruction
- Retrieval Practices
- Test-Taking Strategies

Focus Group Visits are taking place on our campuses as the OPLS plan for the 2026 Gadsden Education Summit, which will take place July 13-15, 2026. 2nd Semester Tour of Schools is also taking place as we strive for all educators to become certified. It is our mission to do everything with "EXCELLENCE".



## Updates from the Assessment & Accountability Office

Gadsden's graduation rate increased from 73.9% during the 2023-2024 school year to 80.9% during the 2024-25 school year! Let's continue moving onward and upward!

After completing PM2 Reading, 30% of our students in grades 3-10 scored proficiency compared to 20% of students who scored proficiency at the beginning of the school year for PM1! 24% of students scored proficiency in Math for PM2 compared to 8% of students scoring proficiency at the beginning of the school year for PM1! Our students are moving onward and upward! With less than sixty-five days left before statewide testing begins, schools are working hard to make sure students are prepared to score proficiency!

### FAST PM1 ELA Reading

Grades Tested: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

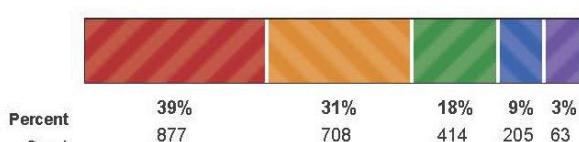
Tests Taken: 2.3K Date Last Taken: 09/26/2025



### FAST PM2 ELA Reading

Grades Tested: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

Tests Taken: 2.3K Date Last Taken: 01/13/2026



### The Data Speaks

PM2 testing was completed prior to winter break. Analysis of the reporting data indicates significant growth across all grade levels. For grades K-2, the percentage of students performing at Level 3 or above increased from 6.5% to 32%. Similarly, in grades 3-8, the percentage of students at Level 3 or above rose from 8.5% to 24%. Additionally, the percentage of students scoring at Level 1 decreased notably: K-2 students dropped from 76% to 40%, and grades 3-8 decreased from 68% to 43%. These results suggest a strong correlation between improved student performance and teachers' consistent use of instructional resources and adherence to teaching with fidelity.



### FAST PM1 K-2 Math

Grades Tested: KG, 1, 2

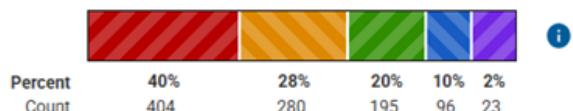
Tests Taken: 974 Date Last Taken: 09/23/2025



### FAST PM2 K-2 Math

Grades Tested: KG, 1, 2

Tests Taken: 998 Date Last Taken: 12/18/2025



### FAST PM1 Mathematics

Grades Tested: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Tests Taken: 1.6K Date Last Taken: 09/23/2025



### FAST PM2 Mathematics

Grades Tested: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Tests Taken: 1.6K Date Last Taken: 01/08/2026



### Next Steps

District staff have increased their presence on campuses, providing academic support and collaborating with administrators to disaggregate and analyze data. Ongoing progress monitoring ensures that schools continue to utilize resources aligned with their specific academic goals. The data, which reflect steady improvement, highlights the need to maintain a sense of urgency in accelerating student learning. This focused and collaborative approach is designed to address the individual needs of students and drive continued improvement in overall academic performance.

**#Graduation**