

Robert L. Merritt Junior High School

THE MERRITT GAZETTE

Glen Newson, Principal
Timothy Holmes Assistant Principal
Julia Harrington, Academic Coach
Naomi Fant-Ivory, Counselor

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April 2023

Glen Newson Principal's Message

Greetings Parents!

We hope that everyone enjoyed Spring Break and stayed safe in the process. We are in the 4th quarter of this school year and our students and teachers are working hard every day to be overachievers in the classroom. We will continue to provide solid instructions to students for the remainder of this year. Please continue to assist us in making sure that your child/children have the resources they need for school, be on their very best behavior, and strive to perform to their highest potential. Attendance plays a major role in educating our students, so please try to get students to school and on time. With these things in mind, there is no doubt about whether or not we will be a successful school. Remember, our goal is to educate all of our students. As always, we thank you for your continued support for your children and Robert L. Merritt Jr. High School!

Parent Center Corner, Geraldine Ray

Greetings to our wonderful parents and students of RLMJH. It is with a heavy, yet happy heart that I bid farewell to you. It has been a great journey thus far working with and for you. To say it was challenging sometimes, yes, but worth it. However, I have reached an anticipated millstone in my life that takes me from your presence but not from your reach. I will forever hold you dear to my heart. It's never goodbye, I will see you later. Much Love! G. Ray, Parent Liaison.



Timothy Holmes, Assistant Principal

We have accomplished many challenges this school year, but I want to challenge students to attend school daily and master daily assignments. Our expectations include excelling academically and improving emotionally and socially. If you are facing any hardships that may be causing you to not be successful in attending school or completing assignments, please contact an administrator or the counselor. Educating students as well as keeping students safe are key concerns of ours. Thank you, parents, for helping us accomplish so many goals. We need your continued support in ensuring your children are attending classes, completing assignments, and engaged in learning. **Help us to continue to be successful!**

Honoring March Parent of the Month Lisa Boatwright



Keeping Up With the Librarians

More than just a voice saying "shhhhhh!"
as we have a seat to read
more than just a recorder of books as they leave
more than one who wonders why the books aren't returned
While also wondering "when will they learn?"
On no, since books are doors this is a protector of portals
that takes imaginations to places
where legends are immortal
this is one who has surveyed different places through
pages
and seeks to pass on a love of hearts and minds travelling
through the ages
the keeper of this haven
the sentinel of this safe space is
One who knows this is a sanctuary
not just where they're awaiting
books to be checked out and checked back in
this is a guide for those
who want to be tapped in
to that ancient art of reading
in this age of misinformation
next time you see one know
they open hearts and minds to destinations
that brings joy and wonder
that can be breathtaking
this guardian of this garden is always cultivating
and watering interests
wishing more of us would read
they know being captivated by tales
are like when Jack had those magic beans.

Karl Nova



Happy School Library Month!!!!



April is National Poetry Month, 30 days of celebrating the joy, expressiveness, and pure delight of poetry.

Author of the Month

Mitali Perkins



© Bethany Carnes

Mitali
Perkins'
Birthday
is on
April 2nd



"One of life's greatest joys is to create spaces where young people feel safe, welcome, and beloved. Stories are one such space."

Mitali Perkins spent most of her early life moving, frequently crossing borders, and leaned on books as her rock and safe place. Born in Kolkata (Calcutta), India, she lived in Ghana, Cameroon, London, Thailand, New York, and Mexico, before eventually settling in California by middle school.

She studied political science at Stanford University and public policy at the University of California, Berkeley, spending her junior year in Vienna and Russia. She then taught middle school, high school, and college. The author of many fiction novels for young readers, her protagonists are often strong characters crossing borders, promoting justice, and seeking community. "My own fictional niche is to represent and champion the marginalized child."

Selected as a "Literary Light for Children" by the Associates of the Boston Public Library, Mitali's other honors include serving as a judge for the National Book Award and the Kirkus Prize.

She and her husband, a Presbyterian minister, have grown twin sons and live in California. Mitali loves to hike trails with her Labrador Retrievers, play tennis, and spend time in libraries and bookstores.

Dr. Jessica James, Library Media Specialist

Counselor's Corner, Naomi Fant-Ivory

April showers bring May flowers and the fourth nine weeks bring state tests. As we enter the last phase of the school year, let's stay focused on the tasks at hand: (1) to support our students academically and (2) to motivate them to do their very best under demanding circumstances. Students must apply strategies taught during the school year to solve problems, read with endurance, answer text-dependent questions, and write to the text. Students **MUST** be in attendance **EACH** day, on time, well-behaved, and in good health to receive quality instruction. All stakeholders should concentrate on student data and proceed accordingly. **INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION IS THE FOCUS AND GROWTH IS THE KEY TO OUR SUCCESS.**



As we proceed into the final stretch of the 2022-2023 school year, we are excited to see all of our hard work pay off. With a projection of a strong B rating and with aspirations of achieving an A rating, the RL Merritt faculty and staff have shown that the strategies for which were put into place throughout the school year have proven to be effective. The last strategy for which we are utilizing is the use of our individual standards calendars, focusing on those power standards that need revisiting prior to the MAAP testing period. RL Merritt teachers are resilient and up for the challenge. I am so very thankful for the teachers at RL Merritt; they are truly dedicated to the students and have one goal in mind – that RL Merritt will maintain its “Successful” status and lead the Sunflower County Consolidated School District. RL Merritt is truly soaring to success!

Julia Harrington, Academic Coach

Attendance Officer's Information

Attendance Matters

“Every Day Counts!”

Pamelia Foster, School Attendance Officer for:

A.W. James Elementary
Ruleville Central Elementary
Drew Hunter Middle
Ruleville Central Middle
Thomas E. Edwards, Sr. High

Tel (662) 887-8107 | Fax (662) 887-7306

Pamelia Foster, School Attendance Officer for:

Lockard Elementary
Carver Elementary
Moorhead Central
Robert L. Merritt Junior High
Gentry High

Tel (662) 887-8107 | Fax (662) 887-7306

If you have any questions or concerns about attendance, please feel free to call or fax the Attendance Officer assigned to your child/children school.

The McKinney-Vento Act

When a family becomes homeless, there are two issues that usually occur with the affected children, 1) student attendance decreases and 2. financial situations destroy students' interest in school. The SCCSD recognizes the importance of education for all children and has adopted the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act that addresses the needs of homeless children. This policy aids with homeless students so that they can continue to be educated despite the challenges they face. If you know of families with children who are homeless, please contact the Homeless Liaison at RLMJH, Geraldine Ray at (662) 884-1270 ext. 317. Your call could be of great assistance to a family in need. For more information visit Website: <http://www.serve.org/nche> or E-mail homeless@serve.org

Happy Easter!

