

Pre-K Week Emphasizes Literacy & Learning



First Lady Sandra Deal visits Enota Pre-K classes

Gainesville City School System celebrated Georgia Pre-K Week with week-long activities on October 1st through October 5th. During this celebration, state and local leaders and community partners visited the district's six elementary schools to read to Pre-K classes throughout the week. There are currently 235 children enrolled in the district's Pre-K program.

"What really impacts outcomes for children is exposure to quality early learning," said Donna Allen, GCSS Director of Pre-K Services and Parent & Family Engagement. "We are an LAGA (Literacy for Georgia) District, so we wanted to highlight the importance of literacy and learning; not just on one day, but each day during our week of celebration."

Special guests readers who visited Pre-K classes around the district included Georgia's First Lady Sandra Deal, Gainesville Mayor Danny Dunagan, GCSS Superintendent Dr. Jeremy Williams as well as City Council members and staff, GCSS board members, school district staff and community leaders. "Pre-K week was an exciting time for our students. We had some really special visitors at our school who came to read to the boys and girls in our Pre-K classrooms, including our very own superintendent, Dr. Williams," stated Wesley Roach, Enota Principal. "Mayor Dunagan and Mrs. Sandra Deal were also guest readers for our Pre-K students. It is so important to impress upon our students the



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Important Dates

October 15

GCSS REACH GA
Signing Ceremony
Public Safety Complex
5:30 p.m.

BOE Meeting
Public Safety Complex
6:00 p.m.

October 16

Splst Listening Session
Gainesville Middle
School

importance of reading and to get them hooked on literacy at a young age. Mrs. Deal's visit was an exciting moment for the district, culminating the conclusion of the week-long celebration. "It was a very special opportunity for our school to host Mrs. Deal to read to our Pre-K students," said Mr. Roach. "It's not every day that you have the governor's wife stop by your school! Mrs. Deal was very comfortable in front of our students. She captured their attention with the book she brought to read to the children. The children listened attentively and were quick to respond to [her] questions. It was easy to see that Mrs. Deal is an educator at heart and that she loves children!"

Georgia Pre-K Week is coordinated by Voices for Georgia's Children, a policy and advocacy non-profit organization, and is strongly supported by Governor and First Lady Deal, state commissioners, and state and local elected officials. The goal of Pre-K Week is to emphasize the importance of quality early childhood education by providing opportunities for leaders to engage with Pre-K students in an effort to promote learning and literacy.

6:00 p.m.

October 24

Splost Listening Session
Fair Street Neighborhood
Center
10:00 a.m.

October 30

Splost Listening Session
Gainesville High School
6:00 p.m.

Challenging Minds to Learn & Succeed

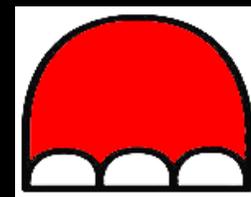


Centennial's Heroes of the Herd: Ashley Dodd and Wendy Ledford

Congratulations to Miss Ashley Dodd and Mrs. Wendy Ledford as the recipients of the Heroes of the Herd award for Centennial Arts Academy. Miss Dodd earned the award in the certified staff category, and Mrs. Ledford received the distinction for the classified staff category.

Employed at GCSS for 8 years, Miss Dodd has been a fifth grade teacher for 7 years, with this current school year being her first year as a fifth grade SPED co-teacher. Prior to becoming a full-time teacher at Centennial, she completed her student teaching at the school through the University of North Georgia. "I chose teaching because of my second grade teacher, Mrs. Wanda Carpenter," said Miss Dodd. "I remember always looking up to her and thinking that I wanted to be like her one day." Mrs. Ledford has also been with the school district for many years, serving seven years as a Special Education paraprofessional at Centennial. "Being a SPED para-pro is very rewarding," stated Mrs. Ledford. "There is a special bond between

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me, my students, and their families."

Both Miss Dodd and Mrs. Ledford are committed to providing the best opportunities to their students, and they have established nurturing, caring relationships with students to enable them to feel safe, secure and confident in being the best that they can possibly be. "My number one goal for my students is that they become confident learners. I want them to feel confident in their learning no matter what achievement level they are currently on," said Miss Dodd. "I want them to see the value in learning new things and WANT to learn." Mrs. Ledford adds, "My goal as an educator is to nurture all students to develop their fullest potential."

Miss Dodd emphasized that supporting students outside the classroom is another way to establish positive relationships with students and parents. "A student told me about a baseball game that he had. I [didn't feel] like getting up early and going to sit in the cold, windy weather to watch him play, but I remembered how excited he was to tell me about his game so I went," shared Miss Dodd. "I will never forget what [I experienced] while there. This was a student who had struggled academically in my class. Well, he most definitely did not struggle when it came to baseball. I got to see him not only pitch an amazing game, but he also hit a homerun in the game. From that moment on, I had a new outlook on him as not only a student but also the great athlete who he was. Later in the school year, I was able to see some of that same confidence that he had on the baseball field within my math and reading classes!"

Something that often comes to mind when Mrs. Ledford is working with her students is a quote from poet Robert John Meehan that states, "Every child has a different learning style and pace. Each child is unique, not only capable of learning but also capable of succeeding". This is how Mrs. Ledford views her students - unique - but with the capabilities to learn and succeed no matter what their obstacles or challenges may be. Miss Dodd is also aware of the challenges that her students face, but she is prepared to push them through their challenges using one simple virtue - grace. She advises, "Always remember to have grace with whomever you encounter in the same way that God has grace with you each day."

Best Practices Leads to State Recognition

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Vision

Our students will think critically, act compassionately, work meaningfully, choose wisely, and live joyfully.

Mission

As *ONE GAINESVILLE*,
we will
INSPIRE,
NURTURE,
CHALLENGE &
PREPARE
our students

Our Schools

Gainesville High

Gainesville Middle

Centennial Arts Academy

Enota MI Academy

Fair Street International
Academy

Gainesville
Exploration Academy

Mundy Mill Academy

New Holland
Knowledge Academy



l to r: GaDOE representative Kathy Peavy, Emily House, Donna Perron, Teresa Wiley and GSNA President Nicole James

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The Georgia Department of Education recently recognized the district's School Nutrition Program with two Best Practices awards at the annual School Nutrition Association Kickoff Luncheon. Emily House, Donna Perron, and Teresa Wiley accepted the awards on behalf of Gainesville City School System. The first award was for the GCSS School Nutrition program's creative, consistent utilization of USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) foods by keeping meal costs down as determined by the cost per meal analysis established by the government. The second award highlighted the district's effective leadership development and training to maintain professional standards. The program's successful implementation of organizational plans consistent with district and school goals, operational program management procedures, and training programs for district and school staff were instrumental in earning state recognition in this category.

"I am very proud and honored to receive these awards," said Penny Fowler, GCSS School Nutrition Director. "It is a continuation of how hard the School Nutrition program works to create best practices for our employees, making sure they are given the most up-to-date training to be efficient in all aspects of our program. Receiving these awards lets us know we are on the right track for reaching goals throughout the year. Being able to share what we do allows other [school] districts to reach their goals for their School Nutrition Programs and staff."

The program's success is mainly attributed to a hands-on leadership style, which strongly emphasizes communication, high expectations, and efficient adaption to an ever-changing school environment. Congratulations to all of our School Nutrition staff for their hard work and dedication in maintaining a superior School Nutrition program for the school district!

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GCSS ESPLOST Listening Sessions



Gainesville City School System will host ESPLOST Listening Sessions for the public. District personnel will discuss previous projects and the district's financial responsibility and will answer questions related to overcrowding and the future growth of the school district. Feedback from the community will help guide the future of the school system. The sessions will be held on the following dates:

- **October 16, 2018** - Gainesville Middle School (1581 Community Way, Gainesville, GA) - 6:00 p.m.
- **October 24, 2018** - Fair Street Neighborhood Center (715 Fair Street, Gainesville, GA) - 10:00 a.m.
- **October 30, 2018** - Gainesville High School (830 Century Place, Gainesville, GA) - 6:00 p.m.

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October 1 - 31, 2018



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**GAINESVILLE CITY
SCHOOL SYSTEM'S
GRADUATION RATE**

MAINTAINS ABOVE
STATE AVERAGE
AT

87.9%



SO PROUD OF OUR STUDENTS & STAFF!

INSPIRE - NURTURE - CHALLENGE - PREPARE

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GCSS EMPLOYEES,

**ARE YOU READY TO BE A
GAME CHANGER?**

**GCSS UNITED WAY
CAMPAIGN DRIVE**
OCTOBER 1 - 31, 2018

GCSS JEAN WEEK
OCTOBER 29 - NOVEMBER 2
*Donations of \$24 or more are eligible
for Jean Week participation.

Please submit pledge forms and donations
to your school's campaign coordinator.

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LIVE United**

CHANGE THE GAME!

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SET...
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