



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

To: All Media Outlets
From: Gainesville City School System
Subject: Graduation Rate Increase
Date: November 9, 2015

The Gainesville City School System is pleased to announce an increase in graduation rates for the 2014-2015 school year. The overall 4-year cohort graduation rate for the district increased from 68.7% in 2014 to 79.5% in 2015 and surpassed the state average of 78.8%.

Gainesville High School's graduation rate increased significantly from 79.8% in 2014 to 87.9% in 2015, while Woods Mill High School's graduation rate was stable. These rates were the result of an intense focus on ensuring that all students have the opportunity to graduate in four years and a summer. Teachers, counselors, and leaders at both Gainesville High School and Woods Mill High School held individual conferences and provided remediation opportunities throughout the school year. They also worked tirelessly during the summer to ensure that students could complete unfinished coursework. Personalized opportunities for students to review graduation requirements and track individual progress were put into place at Gainesville High School last year, contributing to the focus on graduating on time. In addition, Tonya Sanders, who helped support course completion at Gainesville High School, affirms the role of summer opportunities in increasing graduation rates. "Summer school is an experience offered to seniors to recover courses needed for graduation requirements. It has been a successful program and a learning support opportunity at Gainesville High School." Tom Smith, the new Principal at Gainesville High School, is also pleased with the results. "Improving graduation rates takes a focused effort from so many people. The improved graduation rate for GHS is a result of a focused effort of the staff to support all students. Additionally, our students have worked very hard to put themselves in a position to graduate on time."

Upon receipt of results, Superintendent Dr. Wanda Creel stated, "We are so pleased with the outcomes achieved this past year through our students, teachers, and parents being committed to having our students graduate on time." Increased graduation rates are a focus of the district's strategic plan, as well as the school improvement plans of the high schools.

For additional information, please contact Sarah Bell, Chief Academic Officer, at sarah.bell@gcssk12.net or 770-536-5275.