

Growth is King



Superintendent's Message

Dr. David Daigneault

Early in the fall school semester, the Mississippi State Board of Education will confirm our letter grade for the state's accountability system. The score, based on several criteria, reflects our success educating the children of Grenada County.

Last year we landed in the top 18% of school districts in the state, and while it will be several weeks until this year's results are announced, we feel good about our performance during the 2018-2019 school year.

Kicking off the new school year at our recent district faculty meeting, I told our assembled teachers and staff that "growth is king." Not only is growth the most important factor in determining our accountability score, it's a critical measure that shows Grenada is a district on the move.

If you're a regular reader of these pages, you know that we have a lot going on at GSD. We're consistently implementing new programs and gathering better resources to teach Grenada's children. But is it working? We believe it is, and the upward trend of our accountability scores reflect it.

Two-thirds of the accountability model is based on how much growth our students have shown. One of the most useful ways we have to measure student growth is our iReady assessments in K-8 and our CASE Benchmark Assessments in 3-8 (as well as advanced and tested subjects in high school).

Our i-Ready assessments aren't your typical quizzes but an online learning environment that presents lesson wrapped in games and stories. The math and reading lessons are adaptive, which means they vary by student. It individualizes lessons based on the student's performance and then quizzes them on what they've learned. On the classroom level, teachers are able to access the data and then cater their lessons to fit the class's needs.

The CASE assessments are practice tests similar to the state MAAP tests, which students take each spring. The CASE tests are a good way to practice state standards learned in class. Like the iReady data, the CASE assessments deliver valuable feedback for teachers, but they also provide a useful drill to familiarize students with the routine so it's not as stressful on test day.

In high school, the accountability model measures more than growth in tested areas. The model also factors in dual credit and AP scores, graduation rates, and ACT scores. We're excelling in these three areas too.

Last spring, the GHS Class of 2019 graduated 268 seniors. That was the second-highest graduating class in the history of Grenada Schools. The 82.7% graduation rate last year marked a 35.2% increase since 2005. That's an impressive trend!

See "Growth"
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New Principals at GSD

(Photo right, l to r) Charles Washington, Grenada Enrichment and Transition Center; Cole Surrell, Grenada Elementary PreK - 3; Emily Tindall, Grenada High School; Ezzard Beane, GHS Ninth Grade



Photo by Lisa Holland

By Jamie Kornegay
GSD Reporter

Grenada School District opens the 2019-2020 school year under the leadership of four new principals.

At Grenada High School, Emily Tindall has been promoted to principal. Tindall has served in the district for 12 years, including her role as assistant principal at GHS since 2012.

Tindall brings her passion for education to the new job. She said her focus at GHS will be educating "the whole child," promoting students' academic, emotional and social development.

She hopes to be involved with students, especially freshmen and sophomores, as they plot their course through high school and beyond. She plans an intense focus on ACT preparation to help more students earn scholarships and will encourage them to join extracurricular pursuits. "When they feel ownership in

their education," she said, "then academics, pride, and their personal feelings about the school improve."

Tindall has already spearheaded the launch of a new GHS Facebook page and is looking at multiple ways to spread the word to parents and the community about the many things going on at the high school. "We want to keep everyone informed while focusing on the students," she said.

Tindall describes herself as a "life-long learner" and hopes to pass on that enthusiasm for learning. She is currently pursuing her doctorate in educational leadership at William Carey University, which she anticipates completing next year.

She admits she has high expectations for students at GHS. "People will reach those expectations when they know you care about them and love them," Tindall said.

Ezzard Beane also moves up from

his assistant principal role at GHS to serve as ninth grade principal. Beane previously held principal positions at Colonial Middle in Memphis, Claudine Brown Elementary in Greenwood, and Davidson Elementary in Water Valley.

Beane echoes Tindall, saying he hopes to get more students involved in school activities, especially those who don't participate in band, show choir, or athletics. He also plans to institute a ninth grade leadership council to get student input and investment.

"Research shows that the more they're involved and have an advocate at school, the more likely students are to thrive and graduate," Beane said.

Beane succeeds the previous ninth grade principal, Charles Washington, who has taken over as principal at the Grenada Enrichment and Transition Center (GETC).

See "Principals"
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GHS Band Prepares Halftime Historical Epic



Color guard members (l to r) Aaliyah Momon, Tori Wilson, Edi Rose Blaylock, Allie Grace Holland, Serina Tompkins, Jaslyn Forrest and Anna James learn choreography for the GHS Marching Band's 2019 halftime show.

By Jamie Kornegay
GSD Reporter

Members of the Grenada High School Marching Band cut their summer break short to attend their annual band camp. Students spent the last week of July learning the intricate music and field drill for an anticipated new halftime show.

This fall's production, entitled *Princess Eréndira - The Warrior Princess*, is a 180-degree turn from last year's high-concept meditation on technology and social media.

It tells the story of an indigenous teenager from the Purépecha tribe who leads a revolt against Spanish conquistadors in sixteenth-century Mexico. This obscure historical account uses genuine ethnic

details and a fresh heroine to deliver a message of empowerment.

"Our kids really like to tell stories," says assistant band director Kim Presley.

Her cohort, Chris Sumrall, adds, "And this story is relatable to them. They learn about a young girl, who, when she was their age, essentially saved her tribe from being wiped out."

Traditionally, Presley and Sumrall have written the music and field drill for the Grenada Band's halftime show. This year, they chose a different route and hired a professional team, John Fannin Music, to design the show.

According to Presley, most competitive marching bands hire out their shows. And while she and Sumrall have always relished the freedom and creativity of crafting their own productions

from scratch, partnering with the Fannin team gives the directors a chance to concentrate on the band's performance.

"It also forces us out of our comfort zone," Presley says. "Maybe it will open our eyes to some different ways of doing things and freshen up what the program is offering."

The directors still have significant influence on the final show. They shared their ideas, notes, and source materials — everything from symphonic band literature to Cirque de Soleil performance to scores from films like *Gladiator* and *Apocalypto* — with the design team to create the new production.

See "Band"
Continued on page 6

Alumni Spotlight Paul King



By Jamie Kornegay
GSD Reporter

Grenada native Paul King (GHS Class of 1990) retired from the U.S. Army earlier this year at the rank of Command Sergeant Major. King spent his illustrious 30-year career climbing the military ranks, a feat he'd been perfecting since joining the Boy Scouts in sixth grade.

Earning the rank of Eagle Scout, says King, was one of the proudest moments in his life. He credits his scout master, Dustin Harbin, for instilling a sense of pride in the troop.

King says his ambitious nature is due largely to his sister, Hazel Turner, and her ex-husband, Jimmy Turner, who raised him after he lost both parents at the age of 11.

In high school, he was nominated to represent the American Legion at Boys State, a summer leadership program in which young men organize and perform the duties of municipal officials. King was elected mayor his junior year.

King carried that spirit of excellence with him to the sports program at GHS. He lettered in football and track all four years, receiving district honors in both sports. He qualified in the 400-meter dash his junior and senior years, which allowed him to compete in the class 5A state track meet in Jackson.

Through it all, he held a job at Sunflower Grocery Store in Grenada, which was owned by Arnold Stanford. "He instilled a pride for working at the store," King says. "He would come into the store and talk to the employees about working hard."

With a desire to travel and to serve his country, King enlisted in the Army the fall of his senior year. He graduated in May and reported for basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, in July. "It was tough," he recalls, "but playing sports all those years in high school prepared me mentally and physically for

basic training and the hot summer of Fort Jackson."

His first military position was in logistics, which spurred his interest in business. After his enlistment, King earned his BA in business at Columbia College and a master's degree in human resource development and management and leadership at Webster University.

During college, King continued to serve in the Army, managing and training recruits. He continued to scale the ranks and ended his military career in a leadership role at 3rd Chemical Brigade, a training unit at Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri.

King says his time in the military fulfilled his need for service and his desire to see the world. He was stationed throughout the continental U.S. as well as Korea, Hawaii, Kuwait, and Iraq. He received numerous awards, including the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the Air Assault Badge. Additionally, he was proud to be inducted into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club in 2002 while serving as an Army Recruiter in Greenwood, Mississippi.

Even with all the honors, King said the pinnacle of his Army career was giving his son, 2nd Lt. Zachrian T. King, the Silver Dollar salute at his Army ROTC Commissioning Ceremony at the Univer-

sity of Missouri, S & T in 2018.

King and his wife, Cynthia King, originally of Holcomb, live in Madison, Ms, and have been married for 27 years. They have another son, Creighton, a sophomore at Madison Central High School, and one granddaughter, Gabriella R. King.

After his recent retirement from the Army, King participated in a transitioning VA and Department of Defense program, the Warrior Training Advancement Course (WARTAC), at Fort Hood, Texas. He graduated from the course in March and currently works as a veterans service representative at the VA in Jackson.

"The military has given me an enormous amount of character enrichment over the years, which I have had the opportunity to pass on to other young American citizens who chose to serve our great country," King says.

His advice to current students at Grenada is to always listen to parents, pastors, teachers, coaches, role models and positive friends who are striving for success in everything they do.

"Lastly, keep God first in everything that you do, and remember it takes a lot of hard work and determination to be successful by doing it the right way," he says. "Always be wary of the naysayers."

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GHS Livestream Kicks Off New Season

By **Jamie Kornegay**
GSD Reporter

Live play-by-play of Grenada Chargers football games continues this season with both radio and online streaming options for fans who enjoy following the team.

All 12 of last season’s games, both home and away, were successfully transmitted on Vimeo, though not without a few bumps and hiccups along the way.

“Just like us, Vimeo was new to livestreaming last year, and even though it mostly worked fine, a few times we had difficulty establishing a reliable connection,” admits Robbie Buchanan, one of the livestream producers. “A lot of the kinks have been worked out on both ends, and we anticipate that viewers will have an easier time finding the broadcast this year.”

Buchanan says each game is archived for one week on the Chargers’ Vimeo site — vimeo.com/gsdlive — so viewers can watch live on Friday nights or any time until the following week’s match-up. In addition, each episode of the Chargers Coach’s Show, which airs at 6:30 p.m. before the game, is archived and accessible to viewers throughout year.

The coach’s show, sponsored by Grenada Nissan, features an in-depth interview each week with Chargers’ head coach Ashley Kuhn, along with features from around the school district.

Rodney Murphy, the school district’s business manager and one of the Chargers’ radio commentators, hosts the 20-minute show. He says the production expands the football experience and shows these hard-working players and coaches in their school setting. “We all want to make the programming better and better as we present our students and school district to the public,” Murphy says.

Chargers fans who prefer listening to the game on the radio can still tune in to local station B100 FM at 6:30 p.m. on Friday game nights. Listeners will hear everything the livestream viewers are seeing, including the coach’s show and the Kirk Auto Halftime Show, which features the GHS Marching Band’s halftime show as well as mid-game highlights, video features, and interviews.

“Last year’s livestream and radio programs were a learning experience for everyone involved,” says Murphy. “We started from scratch. Everything from selecting the video and audio equipment to deciding the format and content of the coach’s show to learning how to commentate on each week’s game was brand new to us all.”

As for this year’s broadcast, Murphy says viewers and listeners can expect more data and stats from the game and even on-field commentary.

“The year of experience that our team has under its belt should help us to hit the ground running as we start our second year.”

Murphy co-hosts the radio and livestream broadcast with Kevin Carnathan, a Grenada School Board member, and Mike Smith, a Grenada Schools football parent. Smith will join the Chargers Coach’s Show with behind-the-scenes reports and player interviews.

“We had a blast last year, and I can’t wait until the new season begins,” Smith says. “I got a chance to meet a lot of interesting people and learned a lot about the programs offered at Grenada School District.”

The livestream event will premiere this season on Fri., Aug. 23, as the Chargers head to Neshoba Central. The broadcast starts at 6:30 p.m.



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September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Labor Day Holiday!!!	3 Band: Full Band Rehearsal 3:40-5:15 GHS: 9th & JV Football vs. South Panola (Home) (9th Grade - 5:30; JV Immediately following) GLAD-Americorps Orientation-GLAD Cafe 7:30am - 4:30pm SPED: Professional Development 3:30pm - 4:30pm GHS: V Slowpitch vs. South Panola (GES Teacher Appreciation Night) 4:00pm	4 GLAD-Americorps Orientation-GLAD Cafe 7:30am - 4:30pm	5 Band: Front Ensemble 3:40-5:15; Beginner Parent Meeting with AMRO Music 5:00-7:00 at Band Hall GMS: Football vs. South Panola (Away) 7th Grade - 5:30; 8th Grade Immediately after GHS: Cheer Practice at Armory 3:30pm - 4:30pm Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 4:00pm - 8:00pm GHS: V Slowpitch at Starkville 4:30pm GMS: Softball Blaze vs. Hyperactive 5:00pm	6 GHS: Football at Oxford 7:00pm	7
8	9 Band: Beat the Heat Full Band rehearsal 6:00-8:30 GHS: 9th & JV Football at Oxford (9th Grade - 5:30; JV Immediately following) GMS: Softball Camp Defense Position Work/Pitcher/Catcher 5:00pm - 7:00pm	10 Band: Sectionals 3:40-5:15; Battery Percussion 3:40-5:15 Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 4:00pm - 7:00pm GMS: Softball Blaze vs. Rebelettes 5:00pm GCTC-Mississippi Safety Services Defensive Driving Course 5:30pm - 9:30pm School Board Meeting-Central Office 6:00pm	11 Band: Full Band Rehearsal 3:40-5:15	12 Band: Front Ensemble 3:40-5:15 GMS: Football vs. Oxford (Home) - 7th Grade - 5:30; 8th Grade Immediately after GHS: Cheer Practice at Armory 3:30pm - 4:30pm Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 4:00pm - 8:00pm GHS: V Slowpitch vs. Holmes (Grandparents Night) 4:30pm	13 GHS: Football vs. Kosciusko (Homecoming) 7:00pm	14 MAPQSL Class - "B" Building, Room 23A 7:30am - 5:00pm
15	16 Band: Beat the Heat Full Band rehearsal 6:00-8:30 GMS: Softball Blaze vs. Hyperactive (5:00); Hyperactive vs. Rebelettes (6:20) Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm GHS: 9th Football vs. Tupelo (Home) 5:30pm GHS: JV Football at Clarksdale 6:00pm	17 Band: Sectionals 3:40-5:15; Battery Percussion 3:40-5:15 GMS: Softball Hyperactive vs. Rebelettes (5:00); Blaze vs. Rebelettes (6:20) Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 4:00pm - 8:00pm GHS: V Slowpitch at Cleveland 5:00pm GES 4-5: Open House 5:30pm	18 Band: Full Band Rehearsal 3:40-5:15 Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm	19 Band: Front Ensemble 3:40-5:15 GMS: Football vs. Tupelo (Away) 7th Grade - 5:30; 8th Grade Immediately after Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm GHS: Cheer Practice at Armory 3:30pm - 4:30pm Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 4:00pm - 8:00pm GHS: V Slowpitch at Greenville 4:30pm	20 GHS: Football Open Date Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm	21 Band: Full Band Camp 9:00-12:00 (Possible move to 9/20 at 3:30-6:30) GHS: Mini Cheer Camp at GES Gym 8:00am - 11:00am Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm
22 Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm	23 Band: Beat the Heat Full Band rehearsal 6:00-8:30 Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm GMS: Softball Camp Hitting/Base Running/Fun Day 5:00pm - 7:00pm GHS: 9th Football at New Albany 5:30pm GHS: JV Football vs. Charleston (Home) 6:00pm Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 6:00pm - 8:00pm	24 Band: Sectionals 3:40-5:15; Battery Percussion 3:40-5:15 GMS: Football vs. Senatobia (Away) 7th Grade - 5:30; 8th Grade Immediately after GMS: Softball Blaze vs. Hyperactive (5:00); Hyperactive vs. Rebelettes (6:20) Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm GHS: V Slowpitch at South Panola 4:00pm Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 4:00pm - 8:00pm	25 Band: Full Band Rehearsal 3:40-5:15 Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 5:30pm - 8:00pm	26 Band: Front Ensemble 3:40-5:15 Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm GHS: Cheer Practice at Armory 3:30pm - 4:30pm Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 4:00pm - 8:00pm GHS: V Slowpitch at Holmes 4:30pm	27 Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm GHS: Football at Saitillo 7:00pm	28 Band: Full Band Camp 9:00-12:00 Downtown Jubilee Visions Rehearsal in GHS Auditorium 8:00am - 2:00pm Visions at Downtown Jubilee 9:00am - 10:00am GHS Baseball: Baseball Alumni Game-GHS Baseball Stadium 10:00pm
29	30 Band: Beat the Heat Full Band rehearsal 6:00-8:30 GHS: 9th & JV Football at South Panola (9th Grade - 5:30; JV Immediately following) GHS: V Slowpitch vs. Starkville (High School Teacher Appreciation Night) 4:30pm					

GSD Meet the Teacher



Kristian Bell and Melanie Hopper



(l to r) Bertha Beckum, Ashanti Beckum, and Sloan Garner



Martha Reyes and Camden Cox



Leah Clark and Kylee Goad



Jessica Baker and Decklen Hancock



Alaya Moss and Leslie Holland



(front, l to r) Drake Neathery, Sophia Woodall, (back) Tracy Armstrong



(l to r) Layne Gillon, Lindsey Leggett, Aniya Hosey



Brittany Conley and Logan Conner



Cindy Ahonen and Alona Ezelle



Photo left Anna James and Shann Worsham


Photos by Lisa Holland



Photo left (l to r) Alina Harges, April Lee, and Kimble Harges



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"Band"

Continued from page 1



Photo by Lisa Holland

Tuba players (l to r) Jarrell Strickland, Archie Daves, Carl Dalton, and Caleb Franklin learn field drill for the GHS Marching Band's fall halftime show, *Princess Eréndira - The Warrior Princess*.

"We created the storyline and segmented it into parts, like chapters in a book," Presley says. "We basically provided the emotional quality, and then the writer gives us his interpretation."

She says the music for *Princess Eréndira* is different from the programs Gre-

nada has performed in the past. Consisting of three movements, the show opens with sounds of peaceful Purépechan village life before revealing to the threat of invaders and preparation for battle. The performance culminates with a rousing battle sequence full of intensity, hope,

and victory.

"We've been wanting to do something ethnic because we have a good drum section and we've wanted to experiment with different colors in our front ensemble," says Sumrall.

Unique instrumentation for this production includes tribal percussion, multiple flute solos, and a sound-effects package that uses dozens of different sounds — from bass drops and vocal chants to didgeridoos and a chilling Aztec death whistle — to add textures to the band's performance.

"There won't be dialogue, so in terms of the storytelling, it's gonna have to come from the kids and the way they communicate through the musical lines and through the emotional quality of their character," says Presley.

The central character of *Eréndira* will be portrayed by the band's color guard. They will dress in colorful costumes, inspired by traditional Aztec attire, and swirl flags adorned with native symbols. Their choreography, inspired by traditional dance, will move the heroine's story along.

In the past, the band has incorporated

large props and set pieces into their design. Sumrall says they'll only have one set piece this year, a large tiered stage that represents the pyramid-shaped temples of the period. The climactic battle sequence, he assures, will provide a visual spectacle to conclude a high-energy show.

But it's not all about entertaining football crowds and winning trophies at the marching competitions they'll be attending throughout this southeast this fall. It's also about introducing students to new cultures and providing new experiences.

"In terms of cross disciplinary teaching, these kids are learning not only a different genre of music but learning about the instruments that contribute to it," says Presley. "Last week at camp, some of the visual nature of the choreography is inspired by these cultures. They would never have heard about these things if we hadn't ventured down this path."

Presley adds, "When we look at our seniors, we hope we've given them four unique experiences. Every year it's a challenge because we really do try and push and pull them in different directions."

The public will get its first opportunity to see a preview of the marching band's show during halftime at Grenada's first home football game, Friday, August 30.

GMS Basketball Cheer Squad Attends Summer Camp



Photo by Stacia Jackson

The Grenada Middle School 2019-20 Basketball Cheerleader squad attended a UCA (Universal Cheerleaders Association) summer camp at the University of Mississippi. The GMS squad competed against many prestigious programs and brought home the overall trophy with superior ratings. They won numerous other blue ribbons and spirit sticks for their performances throughout the week. In addition, four members of the squad — Chloe Williams, Markiya McNeal, Jayla Beechem, and Naima Reed — were selected to try out for the UCA All-American Cheerleader Squad, while Kimble Harges received an award for demonstrating leadership skills. The GMS basketball cheerleaders include (l to r) Mallory Willis, Daisjah Brown, Memrie Cox, Chloe Williams, Leasiah Taylor, Akera Jones, Sarah Trotter, Cheyenne Tidwell, Mariyah Owens, Chloe Wright, Naima Reed, Kimble Harges, Jayla Beechem, Markiya McNeal, Caitlyn Avery and Zakiyah Hargrove.

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GHS Students Welcomed Back with Improved Cafeteria



The GSD maintenance crew completed renovations on the high school cafeteria ahead of the Aug. 6 start date. The updated design includes new LED lighting, ceiling clouds, multiple television screens, and new water fountains. New seating options include pub-style tables with stools and high benches as well as round tables with chairs.

“Principals”

Continued from page 1

A GHS graduate, Washington resided as ninth grade principal for 11 years before assuming his new position.

Washington said he has come full circle in alternative education. Before returning to Grenada, he served as an administrator for the Kankakee School District in Illinois, where he helped establish the school’s alternative program.

GETC provides a GED-track education for students who have fallen behind and prepares them to earn their graduation equivalency certificate. GETC also offers an alternative to traditional classroom instruction that gives students smaller class size while focusing on academics and behavior.

For his first year as GETC principal, Washington plans to pilot a peer mediation group that will help students resolve conflicts among classmates. The new program would provide a designated time and space to talk through issues with students with a counselor or professional mediator present.

“Disagreements that quickly deteriorate into altercations is a problem in the wider community,” Washington said. He hopes that by teaching students how to deal with differing opinions, it will help teach them how to “agree to disagree.”

Washington said, “We want them to leave this school with a better understanding of how to get along with others, respect different opinions, and communicate without resorting to confrontation.”

Washington looks forward to starting the school year with a smaller group of kids, which gives him the chance to get to know them and establish a rapport.

As GETC principal, Washington succeeds Dr. Tina Herrington, who has moved to the district’s central office to take on federal programs, discipline, and district testing.

Finally, Cole Surrell has assumed the role of principal at the Grenada Elementary School’s PreK-3 building, following last spring’s retirement of former principal Raleigh Wood.

Surrell previously taught at GHS before becoming athletic director and assistant principal in the Winona School District. He returned to GSD and served as assistant principal at GHS before moving to the elementary school last year.

Working a year at the Red Top building has helped him in his new leadership role, said Surrell. “The goal is to get better at what we already started. We’ll continue to push the Accelerated Reader program and put a focus on kindergarten and first grade reading. It starts in those two grades, so it’s important that we give students a solid foundation.”

Surrell said he is also excited for students and parents to meet the new teachers on staff, who will enhance the elementary school.

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GSD Pre-K Earns Top Scores

Pre K students (l to r) Tatum Caves, Jaida Redditt, and Holden Bennett cooling down after recess.



By Jamie Kornegay
GSD Reporter

Grenada School District’s Pre-K program, Learning Blocks, started its fourth year in August with outstanding news from the Mississippi Department of Education.

The Grenada Early Learning Collaborative, a partnership between GSD and Grenada Head Start, has earned the highest scores in the state on the 2018-2019 Pre-Kindergarten Readiness Assessments.

The assessments, designed to gauge a Pre-K student’s development over the course of the school year, are administered in the fall and spring. A score of 498 is recommended at the end of the Pre-K year, indicating that a student is on track in his or her reading development.

The Grenada collaborative scored 672, showing both the highest year-end scores and highest point-gain from fall to spring (225 points) among all 14 of the state’s other kindergarten collaboratives.

Learning Blocks director Pauly Oakes said kindergarten teachers have noticed the remarkable change in students who have been through the Pre-K program.

“Most children entering kindergarten can recognize their name, identify their colors, and can sit and listen to a story,” Oakes said. “These kids know all of that, plus they’re able to write their names, count to 20, perform simple addition and

“Growth”

Continued from page 1

GHS continues to offer dual credit, dual enrollment, and online classes through GHS and Holmes Community College. Over the past few years, we’ve seen an increase in student interest and participation. Last year, we enrolled 112 students in dual credit classes. Students received a combined 698 hours of college credit hours.

ACT continues to be a priority at GHS. This fall we’re offering a prep class with 80 juniors and seniors. A new focus on ACT prep is paying off not only in better scholarships for GHS graduates but also in our school’s scores. Last year we had 11 students score in the illustrious 30-36 range, 42 students score in the 25-29 range, and 163 students score in the 20-24 range.

The average ACT score in Mississippi is 17.8. The average ACT score in Grenada is 18.2. We’re growing that number and feel confident it will keep rising!

A successful school district works to advance all students, and so our focus on growth is critical. This includes numerous programs to help bring under-performing students up to speed.

We believe these efforts will be reflected in our upcoming accountability scores. As soon as the final scores come in, we’ll break down the data and share the information with you.

subtraction. They know class behavior and self control too.”

This year, Learning Blocks has expanded to eight classes of three- and four-year-olds. Grenada’s collaborative is the only one in the state to offer three-year-old classes. Oakes said that even those children exhibit a distinct advantage when they move up to the four-year-old class.

“They’re not only ahead developmentally but also in maturity,” she said. “They understand what’s acceptable behavior and they can adapt better to school routines. This will help them tremendously down the road.”

The first class of Learning Blocks students enters third grade this year, and Oakes said that with their early start as well as the new emphasis on reading at the Red Top, she is curious to see how reading comprehension among older grades will rise.

And as a first-grade teacher, she is certainly happy to see such well-behaved students coming up from the Pre-K.

“It’s as much about kids believing in themselves,” she said. “And these kids aren’t afraid to try new things because they have a strong foundation, not only academically but socially and personally too. They’re ready to take off.”

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2019 GHS Slow Pitch



(front, l to r) Layla Spires, Olivia Fulgham, AshLynn Crosby, Aikema Spencer, Brooke Little, Kate Blankenship, Lauren Dungan, (back, l to r) Coach Leslie Lancaster, Lora Ryals, Greenlee Mosconi, Rylee Murphree, Leah Kinard, Hannah Grace Jacks, and Sydney Allbritton

Excellence in Music Performance



These students mastered all benchmarks contained in the sixth-grade band curriculum. Students achieving this award were the very top musicians in the Grenada beginner band. (front, l to r) Layla Taylor, Seth Dorroh, Jack Leslie, Faith Arbuckle, Abby Presley, (back, l to r) Shasta Jones, Mallory Willis, Darshi Kher, Jane Wicker, and Drew Dalton

Not pictured: Caslyn Trost

Superior Performance In Music



These students mastered all technical benchmarks contained in the band curriculum. Students achieving this award were the very top musicians in the entire Grenada Middle School Band. (front, l to r) Kimaria Reed, Joeley Beckwith, Shelbie Woodall, Chloe Casey, Piper Langham, (back, l to r) Arianna Hughes, Maddie Ingram, James Darren McRee, Nate Lawson, Bryce Stegall, and Calyx Spencer

Correction

Lynne Russell’s years of service were reported incorrectly in the July Communicator. Lynne retired from GSD with 30 years of service.

