

Grenada School District  
Education, Training, Dreams

# Communicator

Information for the Grenada School District Community

April 11, 2022

## Something Different



### Superintendent's Message Dr. David Daigneault

There's something different happening in Grenada. We hear it from experts in education around the state, and we hear it from other districts.

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) recently confirmed this when they renewed our status as a District of Innovation.

Grenada was first granted this rare distinction in 2016. It offers our district exemptions from certain state regulations in the pursuit of broadening our academic goals. It also compels us to expand learning choices, to implement rigorous standards, to reduce achievement gaps and student remediation, and to increase student engagement, thereby raising the number of students who are ready for college and/or career.

Only nine other districts in Mississippi are able to claim this distinction, and even among those high-performing school systems, Grenada is doing things differently.

For starters, our plan for innovation — outlined in our proposal, "Walls to Windows" — is comprehensive. It covers all students, Pre-K through 12th grade, and we have proven that our ideas work at every level.

In our revised proposal, we describe how GSD has implemented all of our innovation plans, and we presented data that proves it has been effective. Our programs not only show remarkable improvement in student performance over the past five years, those programs — including the Learning Blocks Pre-K program and our Project Lead the Way classes — have expanded to reach more students.

Our original proposal stated three goals, and the revised plan describes how we achieved these goals and continue to raise the bar.

### Goal # 1 — Reduce achievement gaps

In 2015, we expanded our pre-kindergarten program to broaden early literacy skills for Grenada students. Our Early Learning Collaborative has succeeded beyond expectations. We started with three classes of four-year-olds and have expanded to eight classes, serving over 136 three- and four-year-olds.

The program has far exceeded target scores in Pre-K proficiency over the past several years. Of all collaboratives in the state, our students repeatedly show the highest growth and average scale scores each spring.

So what makes Grenada's Pre-K program different?

See "Different"  
Continued on page 3

## Red Top's 'Twosday' Food Drive



Photo by Michael Sanford

Second-grade students in Tasha Lemley's homeroom were the proud winners of two-dollar bills to celebrate "Twosday" on Feb. 22 — 2/22/22. The class collected the most cans of food in a school-wide effort to support the Grenada Food Pantry. Pictured are (front, l to r) Luke Lindley, Gracelynn Frazier, Jordan Lee, Jacob Greer, Blair McAfee, Jakeel Amos, (back, l to r) teacher Tasha Lemley, Everloren McCain, Alyssa Swims, TyOra Brooks, Emilie Harris, Abrielle Stewart, and Karli McKinney.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

Tuesday, February 22, 2022 — or "Twosday," as this once-in-a-lifetime palindrome date became known — was the deadline for a canned food drive at Grenada Elementary's Red Top school. It was a day to celebrate the number two, but one class of second graders ended up celebrating a lot more than that.

Cole Surrell, Principal at the Red Top, said he and his staff wanted to capitalize on the unique date — 2/22/22 — with a theme day. Students learned about palindromes, which are words or numbers that read the same frontwards and backwards. They were offered the opportunity to dress up in pairs or in other ways to acknowledge the number of the day. Special activities and treats were planned.

Teachers taught students about the two-dollar bill, a denomination that

many had never seen in circulation.

Surrell said he and his team devised a competition for the day's crowning event that would result in the winners receiving their own two-dollar bill.

The idea for a canned food drive seemed like the perfect way to teach a valuable lesson of good service to the community.

"We wanted to have our kids give back and have them be able to see what they were giving," Surrell said. "The community gives so much to the school, so this was an opportunity for the school to give back to the community."

Students were encouraged to bring canned food from home. Over the course of a week, each homeroom amassed cans with the incentive of their special reward for the class that brought the most.

"We collected the cans and stacked them in the commons area each day so the kids could see what they'd done,"

Surrell said. "To see it grow over the course of a week, they thought that was pretty cool."

All 1,400 students at the Red Top were invited to participate in the "Twosday" food drive, and when the mountain of cans was finally assembled, administrators counted more than 5,000.

Surrell said that second-grade math teacher Tasha Lemley's homeroom class brought in the most cans.

Lemley said one student, EverLoren McCain, made all the difference by collecting 400 cans. That number proved to be the difference in the class's win.

Lemley's students each received their own rare two-dollar bill and the satisfaction that their generous work went to help families in need.

## GHS Region VII Science Fair Winners



Photo by Sidney Samples

(front, l to r) Anna Ferguson, Aaron Kinney, Annsley Alldread, Manuel Avila, Chole Casey, Jonathon Hayward, Sierra Ellis, (back, l to r) Mary Clayton Logan, Gabrielle Fedrick, Rhyann Haley, Laken Snyder, Joey Foster, Darshi Kherr, Jerry Beck, Easton Greenwood, and Stephen Bloodworth



# AmeriCorps Recognizes Member of Excellence

By Gwen Woodson  
AmeriCorps Director

Since joining AmeriCorps in September of 2021, Shicorea Ross-Kitt is committed to helping her students achieve academic excellence.

The Grenada School District has hosted AmeriCorps members for the last 13 years in the role of tutors. Placed at Grenada Middle School, Ross-Kitt is currently responsible for tutoring 20-25 students.

“I joined AmeriCorps because of the impact that I see the program has made on our students, and I love to work with students,” Ross-Kitt said. “Serving for AmeriCorps has not only taught me how to better understand how students learn, but it has also helped me provide grace to my students and the ones around me.”

Ross-Kitt said she enjoys hearing feedback from the students, such as when they recognize that tutoring and iReady lessons have paid off. “When they come back to me and let me know that they have passed a test that we were preparing for that week, it brings joy to me,” she said. “I might have to hunt them down to come to tutoring, or they’ll have an attitude during our tutoring sessions, but after a while, they give in and they see that I care about them reaching their full potential.”

Ross-Kitt is engaged to Curtis Ross and is a caring mother for Samaya Ross (6th grade), Lillien Ross (4th grade), and Brandyn Ross (1st grade). Her prior experience includes serving in her church, Brusher Fork M.B. Church, on the Finance Committee. Before she started serving in AmeriCorps, she worked at the Donut Place II for three-and-a-half years. She attended Holmes Community College on the Grenada campus, where she started her pre-nursing degree.

“While serving in AmeriCorps, I have learned that most students just want someone to care about them and their grades — someone that’s going to be firm about learning and staying on track with their schoolwork,” Ross-Kitt said. “I am aware that my students depend on me, and I do what I can to give them the attention that they need. I enjoy seeing my students’ daily progress in the classes they have been struggling with.”

When I think of commitment and dedication, Shicorea is the person that comes to mind. I have watched her grow tremendously in this program during her terms of service. I am so blessed to have her in this program, and she is going to be a great fit in any organization after her service term.

Ross-Kitt loves to cook, clean, spend time outdoors, and help people learn new things. Her motto in life is, “Put God first each and every day and maintain a positive attitude at all times. You never know



who is watching you. Your deliverance to someone could make their day or the people around you better if they’re having a rough day.”

Since becoming a member of the program, Ross-Kitt has been involved in the Jubilee Festival, Food Pantry, MLK Day of Service, and much more.

“My advice to future AmeriCorps members is, join AmeriCorps to help the students,” said Ross-Kitt. “Leave all your personal issues at home, and never let them cross your work zone. Come into service with a positive attitude. The experience that you have serving in AmeriCorps is all up to you.”

In exchange for a year of service, AmeriCorps members earn an education award of \$6,345 that can be used to pay for college or to pay back qualified student loans. Shicorea plans to use her education award to pursue a teaching career.

Since 2008, AmeriCorps members have served over 10,000 students in Grenada and helped at the Grenada Food Pantry, along with many other service organizations. GSD AmeriCorps partners with the Elizabeth Jones Library, Grenada Area Chamber of Commerce, City of Grenada, Grenada County, Grenada Lake Corps of Engineers, Dollar General, Holmes Community College and local civic organizations to achieve our mission.

We are proud to be part of AmeriCorps and grateful for the AmeriCorps members who are getting things done in our community. AmeriCorps members have made a tremendous impact allowing us to provide a broader range of services to our community.

For more information about the Grenada School District AmeriCorps Program, or how you can help, including becoming an AmeriCorps member, contact program director, Gwen Woodson at 662-226-1606 or email [gwoodson@grenadak12.com](mailto:gwoodson@grenadak12.com). For more information about AmeriCorps, visit [www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov).

# GHS Girls Power Lifting



Photo by Sidney Samples

The four members of the GHS Girls Powerlifting team who placed in their weight divisions at the northern regional meet include (l to r) Stanesha Dubard, 3rd place; Micah Samples, 2nd place, Nykia Johnson, 1st place, and Mersie Watkins, 2nd place. Johnson placed 1st and Watkins placed 2nd at North Half. Both competed Fri., April 1 in Jackson at the state meet. Johnson placed 6th in her weight class, and Watkins placed third. The girls powerlifting coach, Loretta Lawson, said both girls excelled physically and academically this season, having both made the GHS Hall of Fame. Lawson commended the team of 12 dedicated young women who meet on campus to train at 6:45 a.m. She said that tryouts for next year’s team will soon be underway. Any girls who would like to learn more should see Coach Lawson in her English class at GHS.

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# GSD Robotics Team Finishes Best Season Yet



(photo left)  
GSD’s robotics team, Pure Imagination, competed at the regional and state levels this spring. Team members include (front row, l to r) Misty Logan, Layla Escobedo, Drew Dalton, team coach Ryan Melton, (back row, l to r) Jozy Foster, Summer Boatman, Leah Oakes, Madeleine Stuvee, Allison Escobedo, and Laken Snyder.

By **Jamie Kornegay**  
GSD Reporter

After six years of building, coding, and competing, the Grenada School District robotics team, Pure Imagination, is wrapping up its most successful season to date.

“We’ve gotten accolades and awards in the past, but they’ve gone above and beyond this year as far as developing their robot,” said the team’s coach, Ryan Melton.

Pure Imagination — named in honor of the movie Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory — is made up of eight girls and one boy from the middle and high schools. Most of the members have been with the team for multiple seasons.

The team redesigns its robot every year based on criteria from FIRST, a team-based robotics program implemented in schools throughout the world. They learn the year’s challenge in September and spend much of the fall developing, building, and programming their robot.

In addition to creating a machine that can meet the competition goals, the robots are built to certain specifications and composed of approved materials.

This year’s challenge explored the future of transportation. FIRST teams were tasked with designing robots capable of maneuvering over rough terrain and obstacles to deliver miniature “freight” from designated warehouses to specific hubs. The teams earned extra points for completing other tasks and improvising techniques in their build.

“This year [the team] stepped up and built a more sophisticated, more complicated robot than any they’ve built in the past,” Melton said. “They made advanced mechanisms and did a lot of 3D-printing to make their own custom parts.”

Pure Imagination put their creation to the test during the fall and winter competition season. They competed virtually in five meets with other schools in the Northern League of Mississippi. They entered the league championships in fifth place and advanced to second during their last regional tournament. “It was great for us,” Melton said. “That’s the highest we’ve ever been in our division.”

In addition to a second-place finish at regionals, the team won numerous awards and distinctions while also qualifying for the state championship meet at

Ole Miss the first week of March.

At the state championship, Pure Imagination competed with 18 other teams from around Mississippi. After a day of competition, they finished in ninth place against the best teams in the state. “They walked away with the Judge’s Award, which is our first true award at the state competition,” Melton said. “That goes to a team that does great in all categories — robots, interview, outreach, and engineering portfolio.”

One team member, GHS junior Leah Oakes, was selected as one of three students in the state to represent Mississippi as an ambassador at the FIRST Championships this summer in Houston, Texas. Oakes will serve as an adviser to other teams at the championships, which is attended by thousands of students from all over the world. She will also have the opportunity to liaison with tech corporations on hand for the event. The companies scout talent for future employment, said Melton, which is a plus for Oakes, who said she is interested in a career in STEM after college.

“[Leah is] the soul of the team,” Melton said. “If something needs to be done, she does it. She’s our head pro-

grammer. All the code that runs the robot comes from Leah. She also helps with building. She’s always with us when we do fundraising and outreach. Leah goes above and beyond with everything she does with our competition.”

Melton commended the team’s ability to work together. “It’s a good dynamic they’ve developed over the years,” he said.

Now in its seventh season, he said the team has also improved their outreach skills. Members collaborated virtually with a team from Texas to design modifications to their robot. They formed alliances with local sponsors Milwaukee Tool, Perma R Products, and the Grenada Chamber of Commerce. They’ve also been working with the Downtown Innovation District for Easter activities downtown and will be showcasing their robot on the Ole Miss campus for Mississippi Day on April 9.

“We’re also looking for mentors from the community,” Melton said. “Any people with a background in engineering or technology who want to help these kids develop, we would appreciate you reaching out.”

## “Different” Continued from Page 1

Unlike other schools in the state, we include three-year-olds in our program. These kids are performing exceptionally well, and this early enrollment puts them ahead of the curve, not only in reading and math skills but in social development as well. Now our youngest students are on track to be proficient readers by the end of the third grade, which increases their chances for great success beyond.

### Goal #2 — Increase learning and participation in programs that inspired achievement

In our ongoing quest to develop a curriculum that stimulates the imaginations of our students, GSD adopted Project Lead the Way (PLTW). This project-based program empowers students to use creative thinking and problem-solving skills in the study of computer science, engineering, and biomedical science. We’ve introduced elements of the program at every level in the district, from simple engineering and computing at Kidz Tech in PreK-3; to hands-on science and problem-solving teams at the Discovery Lab and gifted classes in grades 4-5; to more advanced courses in biomedics, robotics, and engineering at the middle and high school levels.

So how does this make Grenada different?

We are the first and only district in Mississippi to implement PLTW in every school, allowing all students in the district an opportunity to explore these advanced science and technology concepts.

The program has helped create and solidify partnerships with business and industry that have enhanced the classroom experience. Our alliances with Novipax and Entergy helped us create first-rate classroom labs, and an advisory panel of local medical professionals offered a degree of real-world input and evaluation to our biomedical classes. We’ve recently added new engineering classes at the high school, including aerospace engineering, and thanks to a recent grant from Lockheed Martin, we were able to offer a class on cybersecurity in our new computer science pathway. In the future, we hope to make some of these top-level courses eligible for dual credit so that students may begin working toward a degree at one of our state’s top universities while still in high school.

The PLTW organization has recognized our commitment to this program, along with the partnerships we’ve made with local industry, by awarding GSD the PLTW Community Celebration Award as well as granting GES 4-5 its School of Distinction status for three years running.

### Goal #3 — Develop college- and career-ready students

To prepare our students for life after high school, we encourage career exploration by all students, Pre-K through 12. We introduce them to experts and business leaders in the community, and we offer units of study to educate them on college and career paths. In middle and high school, all students meet with a counselor to help guide them in their pursuit of personal goals after graduation.

This year we’re broadening our Middle College program. We’ve teamed with Holmes Community College so that, beginning next year, qualifying students will have the opportunity to pursue an associate’s degree or national certification by the time they graduate high school. This is terrific news for ambitious scholars who can’t wait to earn a college degree, students eager to enter the workforce with accreditation, and first-generation college students with limited means who may be able to achieve an advanced education at a drastically reduced cost.

So how is Grenada’s Middle College different?

We offer both an academic path — in which students can earn a full junior college degree, both on the GHS and Holmes Grenada campuses — and a Career and Technical Education (CTE) path. Initially, our CTE path will offer

advanced certifications in welding, but soon we’ll be expanding into pre-nursing and health sciences.

As the Middle College continues to grow and more pathways toward college and career open up, this will revolutionize education in our district.

MDE knows that we can make it happen, and they continue to endorse our innovative practices.

In fact, after MDE and Mississippi State University’s Research and Curriculum Unit read our innovation plan, they noted aspects that could help other districts.

Earlier this year, they invited me and a team of innovators from GSD to discuss elements of our plan at the Innovative Leadership Summit in Tupelo. The organizers were especially impressed with the way our district handled distance learning through our extensive library of video lessons for grades PreK-12, as well as our partnerships with local industry.

The word is out about the difference in education at Grenada School District. As our community partners help us grow and evolve, our students and families will be surprised at what’s available right here at home.



# Fun and Games at Green Top’s Carnival Math Night



Grenada Elementary School 4-5 hosted Carnival Math Night, an event that made math fun through a series of games and challenges. Students tested their knowledge to earn tickets, which they used to play games at a pop-up carnival in the school gymnasium, with game booths hosted by community sponsors and volunteers. Among more than 100 students, parents and staff who attended Carnival Night were (left) Liam King and his mother, Shanna King; (middle) fifth grader Kysin Craig; and (right) Green Top teacher and dyslexia therapist Kayla Wilkey.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

Grenada Elementary 4-5 hosted Carnival Math Night, a learning event that brought together students, parents and community members on Feb. 28. Sixty fourth and fifth graders, along with family members, enjoyed several rounds of family game night and carnival midway all rolled into one exciting, educational experience.

GES 4-5 Principal Carol Tharpe, working with her staff of teachers and specialists, said they created the carnival-themed event to encourage students’ love of math through play. “Research shows that math games help build fluency skills among elementary students,” Tharpe said.

The principal credited two teachers, Maryan Hopper and Amanda Ferguson, with bringing the event to life, from planning games to creating decorations to coordinating with students and community members.

The event was a triumph of imagination as well as academics. Families entered through the foyer, decorated with a ferris wheel and featuring magic

tricks by Dr. Lyle Williams, the district’s Administrative Academic Officer.

Students were divided into groups and led away by staff members dressed up in animal costumes to their respective classrooms. There they played math games centered around the most important concepts for this age group — multiplication facts, fractions, and place values.

“Some of the parents were more excited than the kids and bragged about how it was fun for them,” said Hopper, who teaches fourth-grade math. “It made my teacher heart happy to see everyone excited about math because it seems to be a scary subject for some.”

Tharpe said students received all materials needed to play the games at home, as well as a book filled with extra activities for home-based game nights.

“Giving parents the resources and confidence to practice fluency at home with their students gives teachers the opportunity to enrich the skills further in the classroom,” Hopper said.

According to Hopper, this type of academic-based play has shown positive results in her classroom. “When games are incorporated in the classroom, stu-

dents forget they are ‘doing work,’ and the learning is so much more meaningful,” she said. “Fluency is the foundation for higher level math skills, so I believe nights like this will help students excel in future math classes.”

During the math game portion of the evening, students earned tickets to use at the community-sponsored carnival in the Green Top gymnasium, which was lavishly transformed into a carnival midway.

Students played traditional carnival games such as the ring toss and balloon darts. There was even a dunk tank, where students took turns trying to hit a target and drop Assistant Principal John Daves into a tank of water. (Tharpe confessed that a certain staff member had added buckets of ice to the tank earlier in the day to make the experience extra memorable for Daves.)

Students also enjoyed popcorn and cotton candy, face painting, and a photo booth. The GHS Jazz Band and color guard provided entertainment, while staff and members of local businesses and organizations volunteered at the booths.

“It’s a lot of work to pull off an event like this, but it’s worth it,” said Tharpe.

“It really meshes the community, the school, and the parents. We love to have them here being part of the activities.”

Local sponsors for the GES 4-5 Carnival Math Night were Greater Powell Chapel A.M.E. Church, Real Tyme Tax Services, Cravens Properties, First United Methodist Church, Cross Country Feed and Seed, Tractor Supply Co., Custom Printing, Universal Fitness, University of Mississippi Teachers of Tomorrow, Allen’s Fine Jewelry-Winona, Moore Than Enough Catering, Sweet Cravings, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority - Kappa Omega Chapter of Greenwood, Greater Faith M.B. Church, R&S Cleaners.

Immersive educational events such as Carnival Math Night are becoming a hallmark of the Green Top’s success, following the well-received Home for the Holidays literacy event last December.

Tharpe said the school intends to host more such events, starting with “Mad Science,” a science-themed event on April 25. Students will roleplay as scientists for a series of fun hands-on projects. Parents can register for the event by calling the school office at 662-226-2818.

# GHS Varsity Baseball



(photo left)

(back, l to r) McCarron Clausel, Jake Yarborough, Will Nisbett, Amari Conley, Ethan Klink, Landon Waters, Hayden Hobbs, (middle, l to r) Luke Westmoreland, R.J. Merriman, Reid Cannon, Thomas Kuhn, Preston Downs, Deandrae Rimmer, Parks Wilbourn, (front, l to r) Jaxon Moore, Jekerious Williams, Jude Westmoreland, Tre Smith, Jahiem Shack, Dylan Black, and Holt Gober

Photo by Sylvia King



# 2022 GHS Hall of Fame



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# GSD Show Choirs Compete Across the South



Photo by Amy Killebrew



(Photo left) Pizzazz, the show choir at GES 4-5, competed for the first time at two state festivals. Choir members included (front row, l to r) Lilly Belle Leggett, Catelyn Neathery, Brooklyn Hardiman, Anna Austin, Jazae Booker, Randi Rae Moak, Helen Liberto, Mia Ferguson, Mary Clayton Horan, Kyleigh Williams, (back row, l to r) Gabe Day, Jonah Clark, Colton Smith, Macy Howell, Zaniah Smith, Addisyn Adams, Levi Owen, and Alex Sartin. The group’s director is Amy Killebrew. (Photo right) Darby Renfro, a performer with GHS’ Visions show choir, was named outstanding soloist at multiple contests, including the group’s national competition in Nashville.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

Show choir competition season has wrapped, and three of Grenada School District’s song and dance performance troupes competed across the state and nation.

One choir — Pizzazz, composed of fourth and fifth graders from Grenada Elementary’s Green Top — competed for the first time.

Director Amy Killebrew made the decision last year to invite fourth graders to perform with the group, traditionally made up exclusively of fifth graders.

“I wanted to get these fourth graders in so I could work with them for two years and build their skills to have them ready for competition,” Killebrew said. “Then I decided to just try and compete this year to see how they’d do. I really had no expectations. And they did great!”

Pizzazz traveled to two in-state show choir competitions, the Jackson Academy Show Choir Invitational and the Madison Central Deep South Classic. In Madison, the choir placed first in their elementary division. Two members were recognized for their performances — Colton Smith won Overall Best Soloist and Kyleigh Williams won Best Performer.

At Jackson Academy, Pizzazz performed in the middle school division, finishing fifth among six middle school choirs. “They were excited about finish-

ing so high among mostly seventh and eighth grade performers,” Killebrew said.

The Pizzazz competition show, “Dream Big,” featured songs on the theme of following your dreams, including “Larger than Life” by Pink Zebra, “The Climb” by Miley Cyrus, and “Fight Song” by Rachel Platten.

In addition to their two competition shows, Killebrew said the choir’s confidence grew from performing in the community. Pizzazz sang at several school shows, including Open House and Veteran’s Day, and performed locally at the Downtown Jubilee, the Green Street Music Festival, and the House of Hope fundraiser in Kosciusko.

Pizzazz members are already looking ahead to next year. Killebrew said all of her fourth graders from this year have tried out again, along with third graders who will be moving up to the Green Top in August.

“I think going to competitions and performing in the community has gotten our name out there,” Killebrew said. “We’re having tryouts now, and over 70 kids want to be in the choir — so many that we’ll be expanding the choir from 18 to 22 members next year.”

In the meantime, the community will get one more chance to see Pizzazz perform their competition show at their spring performance on Thurs., April 21, in the Green Top gymnasium at 6 p.m.

Jenni Winter, director of the three middle school show choirs as well as Visions at GHS, said she was looking forward to working with the talented Pizzazz members as they move up to the sixth grade choir, Ovations. “Depending on their tryouts, we may even bring some of them in to compete with Entertainers,” Winter said.

Entertainers, the premiere middle school group, succeeded with their competition show, “Forever Young.” The show earned first-place trophies in the middle school division at Jackson Academy and Madison Central, where the choir also earned medals for Best Vocals, Best Costumes, and Best Show Design.

“Forever Young” is a retelling of Peter Pan and includes such songs as “Sweet Child O’ Mine” by Guns n’ Roses, “Neverland” by Zendaya, and “Live While We’re Young” by One Direction.

The community will have an opportunity to see “Forever Young,” along with performances from Starz and Ovations, at the spring show in the GHS Auditorium on Fri., April 22.

Winter said she promoted a few of her eighth-grade Entertainers members to perform with the high school choir, Visions. This year’s show, “Romeo + Juliet + Paris,” was taxing and ambitious with relentless demands on the performers’ vocals and choreography.

“Everyone stepped up their game this year, so it was a hard, competitive year,”

Winter said. “But the kids never gave up, and they had fun with this show up to the very end.”

Visions performed at three Mississippi competitions before heading to Nashville to compete at Show Choir Nationals alongside choirs from California, Ohio, and Illinois.

Junior Darby Renfro was named Outstanding Female Soloist at the national competition, an honor she also claimed at Jackson Academy and Madison Central.

“Romeo + Juliet + Paris” reimagines the classic Shakespeare play Romeo and Juliet as a tragic love triangle in which the heroine’s original suitor, Paris, intervenes in the star-crossed lovers’ romance. The choir performed a host of popular and classic songs from such diverse artists as Elton John, the Bee Gees, Alanis Morissette, Britney Spears, and Michael Jackson.

Fans will have two more opportunities to see Visions perform their competition show during performances at the GHS Auditorium on April 28-29.

Winter said the choir is currently planning next year’s competition show and promised “something totally different.”

Singers, dancers, and performers who would like to be part of the stellar show choir program should inquire about tryouts for the various show choirs. Winter said auditions for Visions will be held May 2-5 and Entertainers on May 6.

## When It comes to Strokes, Know Your ABCs

According to the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH), Office of Vital Records 1,948 Mississippians died of a stroke in 2020. A stroke occurs when blood traveling to the brain is blocked or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts.

The ABCs of stroke prevention is a Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention’s educational campaign that encourages people to know which steps to take to reduce the likelihood of having a stroke.

**Aspirin:** Talk to your doctor about whether aspirin is right for you.

**Blood pressure:** Control your blood pressure.

**Cholesterol:** Manage your cholesterol.

**Smoking:** Quit smoking, or don’t ever start.

Amy Winter, the Director of the Office of Tobacco Control at MSDH, reports that smoking is a leading cause of stroke. Smoking lowers your good cholesterol while also making your blood sticky. This deadly combination is perfect for causing strokes.

“Secondhand smoke is also dangerous,” said Sue Mashburne, Director of the Mississippi Tobacco-Free Coalition of Grenada, Yalobusha, and Calhoun Counties. “Nonsmokers who breathe secondhand smoke are 25-30% more likely to have a stroke. Quitting smoking protects your loved ones. MSDH has people and programs to help you quit.”

For information about the dangers of cigarettes, visit [www.healthymys.com/tobacco](http://www.healthymys.com/tobacco). For help with quitting visit [www.quitlinems.com](http://www.quitlinems.com), or call the Mississippi Tobacco Quitline at

1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).



# Watch for Students & Buses



# GES Green Top Principals' Breakfast



Students at Grenada Elementary Green Top were honored for good or improved behavior with an invitation to have breakfast with the principals. Students selected for February include (photo top) (front, l to r) Nolan Harrell, Lyllah Williams, Helen Liberto, Kairi McCammon, Collin Reed, TJ Walton, Jaxon Brown, (back, l to r) Principal Carol Tharpe, Sharneyceah Townsend, Tucker Koonce, Landree Saucier, Zaveon Thurmond, Kenydi Lane, Khloe Jackson, Simarin Eden, Assistant Principal Dr. John Daves, (photo bottom) (front, l to r) Daviona Willis, Avery Moore, Tylonte Cole, Eaden Johnson, Nytaralyn Crowder, (back, l to r) Principal Carol Tharpe, Amina Lodge, Aden Dickerson, Trinity Winfrey, Langston McNeil, Ryland Edwards, and Assistant Principal Dr. John Daves.



Walmart Save money. Live better.						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<div>1</div> <div>GHS: Softball 2nd Round Playoffs</div> <div>May</div>	<div>2</div> <div>Band in Auditorium GHS: Baseball 2nd Round Playoff GHS: Golf State Tournament GHS: Softball 2nd Round Playoffs MS Academic Assessment Program - Alternative Visions: Auditions @ Visions Classroom GHS Academic Reception-GHS Aud. &amp; Cafe. 6:00pm</div>	<div>3</div> <div>Algebra I GHS: Golf State Tournament MAAP Math 6th Grade MS Academic Assessment Program - Alternative Visions: Auditions @ Visions Classroom GHS: Cheer Varsity &amp; JV Practice 5:45pm - 7:45pm @ Armory GHS: Athletic Reception-GHS Aud. &amp; Cafe. 6:00pm</div>	<div>4</div> <div>Band in Auditorium MAAP Math 7th Grade MAAP Math Make Up 6th Grade MS Academic Assessment Program - Alternative Visions: Auditions @ Visions Classroom</div>	<div>5</div> <div>MAAP Math 8th Grade MAAP Math Make Up 6th &amp; 7th Grade MS Academic Assessment Program - Alternative U.S. History Visions: Auditions @ Visions Classroom GHS: Cheer Varsity &amp; JV Practice 3:30pm - 5:30pm @ Armory Band: Booster's Meeting - Elect Officers 6:00pm Band: Pops Concert 7:00pm @ GHS Auditorium</div>	<div>6</div> <div>Band in Auditorium Entertainers: Auditions @ Visions Classroom GHS: Baseball 3rd Round Playoff GHS: Softball 3rd Round Playoffs MAAP Math Make Up 6th, 7th, &amp; 8th Grade MS Academic Assessment Program - Alternative GCTC: Awards Day 8:00am - 9:30am @ GHS Cafeteria Band: High School Award Dinner at TBD 5:30pm - 9:00pm</div>	<div>7</div> <div>GHS: Baseball 3rd Round Playoff GHS: Softball 3rd Round Playoffs</div>
<div>8</div> <div>Mother's Day GHS: Baseball 3rd Round Playoff GHS: Softball 3rd Round Playoffs</div>	<div>9</div> <div>GHS: Softball 3rd Round Playoffs MAAP Make Ups 6th, 7th, &amp; 8th Grade Band: Spring Parent Meeting "Show Reveal" for 8th-11th grade in GHS Auditorium 6:00pm</div>	<div>10</div> <div>3rd Grade Reading Alternative Assessment Retest 1 Biology I MAAP Make Ups 6th, 7th, &amp; 8th Grade GHS: Cheer Varsity &amp; JV Practice 5:45pm - 7:45pm @ Armory School Board Meeting 6:00pm</div>	<div>11</div> <div>3rd Grade Reading Alternative Assessment Retest 1 MAAP Make Ups 6th, 7th, &amp; 8th Grade Senior Exams</div>	<div>12</div> <div>MAAP Make Ups 6th, 7th, &amp; 8th Grade Senior Exams Visions: Parent Meeting @ GHS Auditorium GHS: Cheer Varsity &amp; JV Practice 3:30pm - 5:30pm @ Armory</div>	<div>13</div> <div>GES: Stuffed's Birthday GHS: Baseball North State GHS: Softball North State Senior Exams Tennis: Alumni Tennis Tournament-GHS Tennis Courts</div>	<div>14</div> <div>GHS: Baseball North State GHS: Softball North State Tennis: Alumni Tennis Tournament-GHS Tennis Courts</div>
<div>15</div> <div>GHS: Softball North State</div>	<div>16</div> <div>Exams Week GHS: Baseball North State GHS: Softball North State GMS: Athletic Breakfast 8:00am - 10:00am @ GMS Cafeteria GMS: Academic Awards 6th, 7th, &amp; 8th-GHS Auditorium 10:00am @ GHS Auditorium</div>	<div>17</div> <div>Entertainers: Parent Meeting @ GHS Auditorium Exams Week GHS Seniors: Graduation Practice-GHS Auditorium 1:00pm - 5:00pm GHS: Cheer Varsity &amp; JV Practice 5:45pm - 7:45pm @ Armory</div>	<div>18</div> <div>Exams Week GHS Seniors: Graduation Practice-GHS Stadium (9am &amp; 1pm)</div>	<div>19</div> <div>Exams Week GHS Seniors: Graduation Practice-GHS Stadium (9am &amp; 1pm) GHS: Softball State GHS: Cheer Varsity &amp; JV Practice 3:30pm - 5:30pm @ Armory</div>	<div>20</div> <div>60% Day Exams Week GHS: Softball State Graduation 7:00pm</div>	<div>21</div> <div>GHS: Softball State</div>
<div>22</div>	<div>23</div> <div>ALL Summer Staff will work 7am-5pm Professional Development Development - No Students 8:00am - 3:15pm -GSD Retirement Reception and End of the Year Meeting-GHS Auditorium and Cafe.' 10:00am</div>	<div>24</div> <div>ALL Summer Staff will work 7am-5pm GHS: Baseball Finals Professional Development Development - No Students 8:00am - 3:15pm GMS: Football Cheer Camp 9:00am - 5:00pm @ GMS Gym GLAD: HSE Graduation 6:00pm @ GLAD Auditorium</div>	<div>25</div> <div>ALL Summer Staff will work 7am-5pm GHS: Baseball Finals GMS: Football Cheer Camp 9:00am - 5:00pm @ GMS Gym</div>	<div>26</div> <div>Ascension Day ALL Summer Staff will work 7am-5pm GHS: Baseball Finals GMS: Football Cheer Camp 9:00am - 5:00pm @ GMS Gym</div>	<div>27</div> <div>All GSD offices will be closed. (Only janitors should be in buildings.) GHS: Baseball Finals</div>	<div>28</div> <div>GHS: Baseball Finals</div>
<div>29</div>	<div>30</div> <div>Memorial Day Holiday GHS: Cheer Varsity &amp; JV Practice 8:00am - 10:00am @ Armory</div>	<div>31</div> <div>All summer staff will work 8am-4pm through the end of June GHS: Cheer Varsity &amp; JV Practice 8:00am - 10:00am @ Armory GCTC-Mississippi Safety Services Defensive Driving Course 5:00pm - 9:30pm</div>				



# 21st Century Classes Renewed



Photo by Lisa Holland

Students in the 21st Century culinary arts class — (l to r) Kylee Goad, Jamie Woodson, and Sofia Rinaldi — learn how to make pasta as part of the after-school program.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

The Grenada School District’s after-school skills and tutoring program has been extended, thanks to funding by the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant. The grant provides for Grenada students in PreK-12 to brush up on their classroom lessons and learn new skills, as well as offering educational services to participating families.

Grenada’s exemplary 21st Century program is enjoying its fourth grant-renewal since classes started in 2007. The after-school sessions are divided into skills and tutoring classes. Last year, the classes were extended to include elementary students in PreK-5.

Program Director Lynne Russell said bureaucratic delays at the state level precluded the start of this spring’s programming for middle and high school students, though classes resumed in March at the Grenada Career and Technical School.

“People in the community know this program, and they depend on it,” Russell said. “It helps a lot of parents because it provides a safe place for kids to be after school four days a week.”

Russell said the classes are a help to students as well. “Some students are learning how to cook,” she said. “Others may take welding with us and decide to go on and take it in high school, then get certified and have a job in the industry. A big part of this program is about introducing kids to new options that may help them after school.”

The 21st Century skills classes meet for two hours on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. Russell said the program has added a new class this spring, Robotics and Computer Coding, taught by Ryan Melton.

Other skills classes include perennial favorites: Welding and Brazing with David Robinson; Construction and Building Trades with Lamar Pitcock; Culinary Arts with Lisa Holland; Photoshop and Media Design with Robbie Buchanan;

Podcasting and Music Production with Drew Smiley; Pottery, Ceramics, and Stained Glass with Melissa Taylor; Urban Ag and Archery with Lois Gaskin; and Weightlifting and Law Enforcement with Eric Williams.

Tutoring classes meet Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Middle and high school teachers mentor students who need help in English, algebra, biology, and history, as well as ACT prep. The small class settings provide the extra attention students need to improve their grades and comprehension.

In addition to the skills and tutoring classes, the 21st Century grant helps fund the Parent Resource Center at 423 S. Line St. in the old Lizzie Horn school building. The center provides parents with resources to help kids at home, including supplementary material for home-tutoring, reading and math instruction, and assistance with college submissions.

The 21st Century’s spring session extends until April 28. Russell said both elementary and middle/high school teachers are planning for a summer session, which runs June 2-29.

Students interested in skills classes can request from the list of current middle and high school subjects. At the elementary schools, skills classes include book clubs at various reading levels and a physical fitness class as well as clubs and hands-on activities in science, math, and music. The summer classes will run from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. with breakfast and snacks provided.

Parents interested in enrolling their child in the summer session should contact their school office. Principals will decide which students are eligible to enroll in tutoring classes.

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## GHS Softball

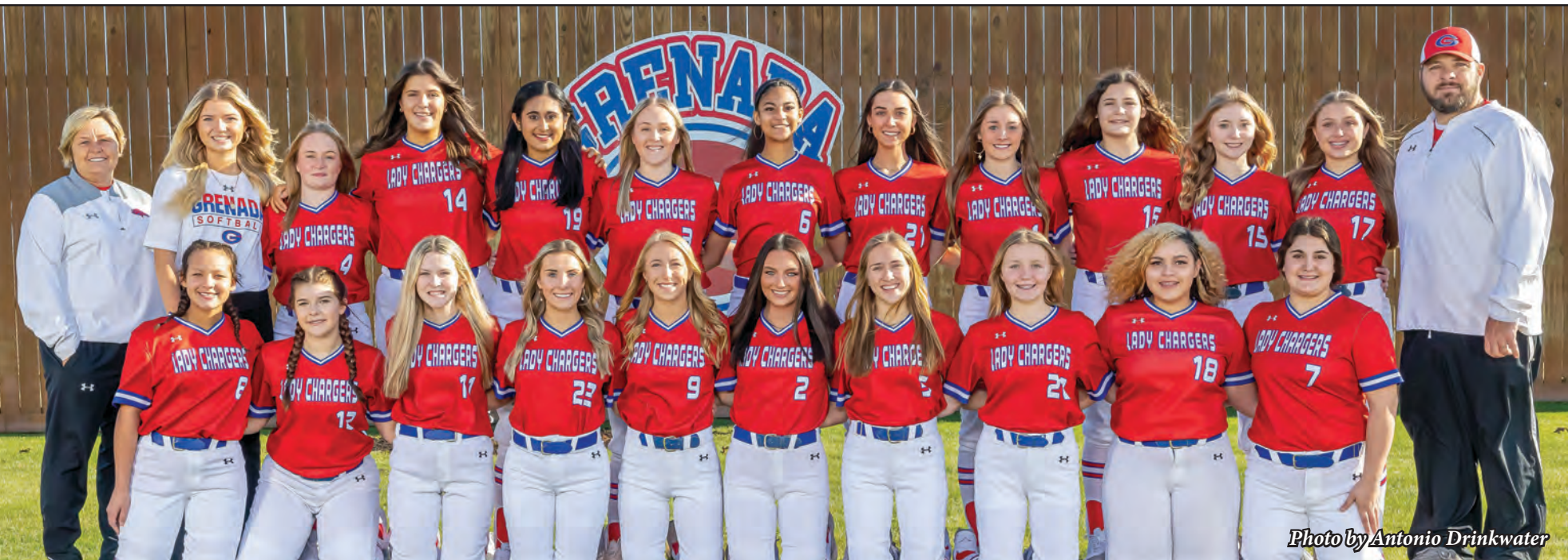


Photo by Antonio Drinkwater

(front, l to r) Olivia Lashley, Jaci Willhite, Alanna Milhollen, Kaylee Whitt, Lauren Dungan, Kate Blankenship, Perrin Jackson, Hannah Knoll, Layla Spires, Belle Belcher, (back, l to r) Coach Leslie Lancaster, Manager Sidney-Claire Brown, Anna Claire Poynor, Mary Taylour Wilbourn, Darshi Kher, Lora Ryals, Chloe Gillis, Greenlee Mosconi, Ashlynn Crosby, Emily Finkley, Kayden Branscome, Leah Lemley, and Coach Collin Ray

