ISSUE 6 JUNE 2023

The MakeWaves Monthly

We develop students to become the best versions of themselves, so they can transform the world.



Superintendents' Message

We hope you are having a wondering summer break spending time with family and friends! While the traditional school day is not in session right now, our campuses remain filled with students enjoying the numerous summer camps offered by Gulf Shores City Schools. Students are participating in: EcoTourism, eSports, Fine Arts, Dolphin Pride 21st CCLC, Scuba Diving Certification and Camp Invention.

During the summer, school offices remain open Monday-Friday from 7:30am-4:30pm. If you have any questions about summer assignments or registration for the upcoming 2023-2024 school year, please contact your child's school.

We look forward to seeing our students on August 8th. If you did not have the opportunity to complete the stakeholder input survey in May, please take a moment. We plan to use this information to continue to improve our schools. **COMPLETE THE SURVEY**

Dr. Matt Akin - Superintendent makin@gsboe.org
Dr. Stephanie Harrison - Assistant Superintendent sharrison@gsboe.org



Green Ribbon



EcoCamp



NCBT



Scuba Diving

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL

HIGH SCHOOL

VIRTUAL ACADEMY

GSCS receives Green Ribbon School District Award

"This was one of the most exciting days of the school year — today, we honored Gulf Shores City Schools for receiving a Green Ribbon School District award from the U.S. Department of Education Gulf Shores City Schools is one of only 11 districts in the nation to receive this prestigious award. Community involvement and continued support truly makes a difference in our schools — we appreciate Mayor Craft and City of Gulf Shores - Municipal Government for their ongoing support and commitment to the district", announced Dr. Eric Mackey.
GSCS had several special guests speak at The GSCS US Department of Education Green Ribbon District Award Ceremony! Speakers included School Board President Kevin Corcoran, Mayor Robert Craft, Famous Marine Ecologist Dr. Richard Murphy, Superintendent Dr. Matt Akin, and State School Superintendent Dr. Eric Mackey! We also heard from Ms. Angela Martin, Dr. Melissa Shields, Dr. Michal Robinson, Mr. Jonathan Thompson, and Ms. Toni Bruner (Legacy) and were presented with the Green Ribbon Award! Thank you to our speakers and guests who joined us at the ceremony!



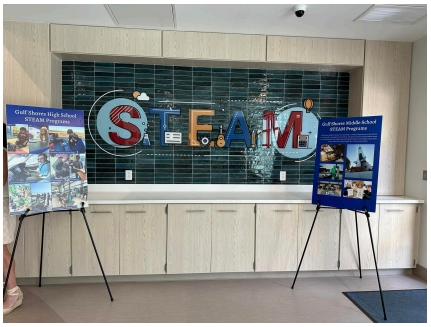


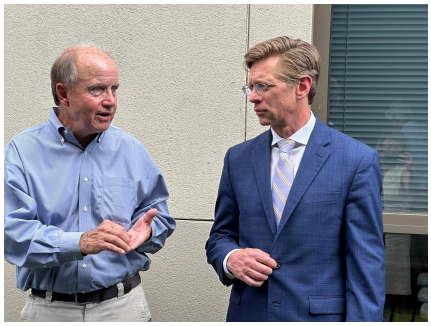




















State School Superintendent, Dr. Eric Mackey and Others Visit GSES

Mrs. Oglebsy's class had some very special leaders visit today. Dr. Mackey, Dr. Akin, and several other state and district leaders enjoyed getting to know the students and listening to how much they have grown throughout the year.



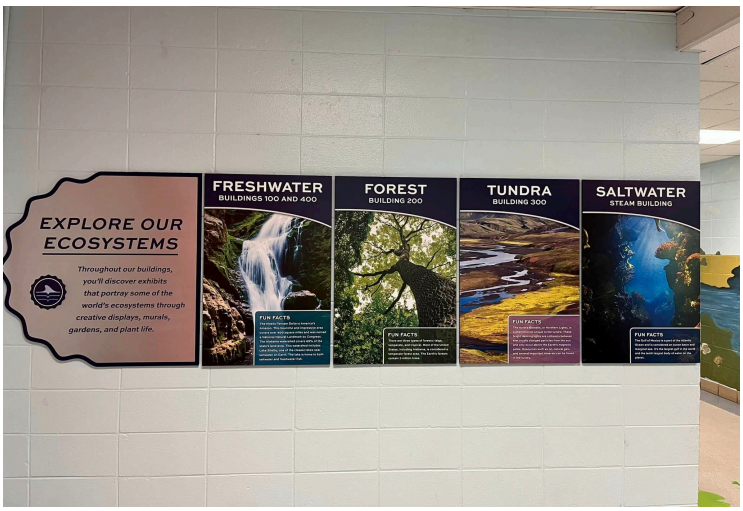








Celebrating & exploring our ecosystems across the GSES campus!





National Board Certification Process For Teachers

National Board certification is a rigorous and comprehensive process designed to recognize and support accomplished teachers. This week, 22 teachers submitted 35 components towards certification. The process involves four components, including content knowledge, differentiation in instruction, teaching practice and learning environment, and effective and reflective practitioner.

Each component is designed to ensure that teachers meet high professional standards and have the knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to improve student learning. The process involves a rigorous assessment of each component, which includes a portfolio of work, analysis, and reflection on practice, and a classroom-based performance assessment.

The National Board certification process is designed to recognize highly accomplished teachers who demonstrate a deep understanding of their content areas, use research-based instructional strategies, and are committed to ongoing learning and improvement. Overall, the National Board certification process has a significant impact on improving teaching and learning in classrooms across the country. Congratulations to our teachers for their demonstrating their dedication to their students and their profession.

Special thank you to Dolphin Foundation for Education & Arts for their continued support!







2023-2024 GSHS Student Ambassadors & GSES 5th Graders

2023-2024 student ambassadors had a great day of service helping build a pollinator garden and tunnel with Gulf Shores Elementary School 5th grade teachers and students and our partner, Jones Valley Teaching Farm! We planted several types of native plants that will attract a variety of pollinators. Students learned how to hammer t-posts and use other tools to connect the fencing panels to create a grow tunnel for the 5th grade garden. The garden and orchard will be maintained by future 5th graders for years to come! Special thanks to Alan from JVTF and Jeff Gay with City of Gulf Shores - Municipal Government for figuring out a great irrigation system that will make managing the garden easier throughout the summer and school year and to Leah from JVTF for all her help with plant placement and facilitating students.











Thanks to: Coastal Alabama Business Chamber and The Miss Shrimp Festival Pageant

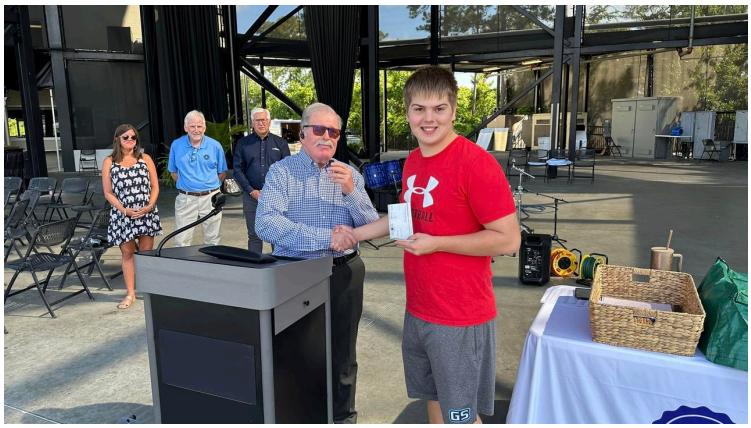
Thank you Coastal Alabama Business Chamber and The Miss Shrimp Festival Pageant for supporting GSES!!!! This year the pageant raised over $11,000 for local schools & scholarships!!



Thank You To The Dolphin Foundation for Education & Arts

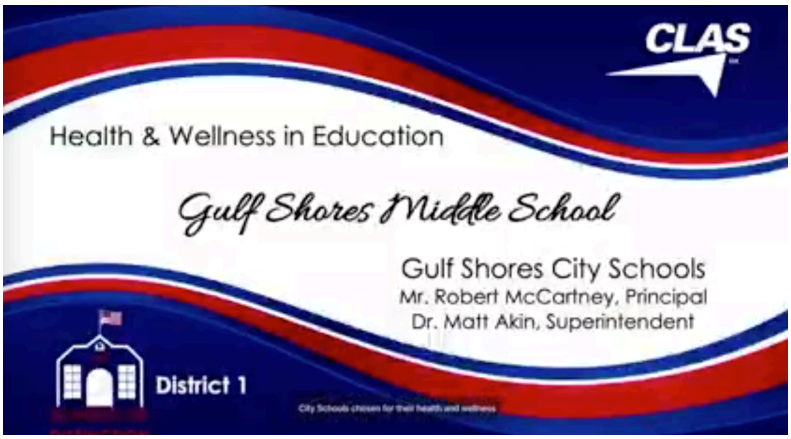
Congratulations to Our Jason J Stephenson Impact Scholarship Recipients! There were some great entrants and it was a tough decision! Congratulations Maura Hawkins and Ethan Everett!
Jason Stephenson was a key leader in the movement to form Gulf Shores City Schools. Along with his family, he hosted the first in-home meeting to discuss the need for a city school system. As an avid supporter of Gulf Shores City Schools, Jason founded the Dolphin Dads and co-founded The Dolphin Foundation for Education and Arts. He was deeply committed to the success of Gulf Shores Schools and never shied away from expressing his enthusiasm for teachers, academic programs, and extracurricular activities. During his tenure as Chairman of The Dolphin Foundation, he was involved in the development of The Hangout Music Lab, The Center for Applied Design Powered by Volkert, the Waves of Steel Band, the Barr Group Mortgage Financial Literacy Program, and many other initiatives.
Jason was not only dedicated to education in Gulf Shores, but he was a loyal friend to many. Throughout the community, he was widely known for his energy, enthusiasm, and infectious smile. He made an incredible impact on those who knew him. In honor of the lasting impact that Jason had on Gulf Shores City Schools, the Jason Stephenson Impact Scholarship of $1,500.00 will be awarded to 2 Gulf Shores High School graduating seniors who are continuing their studies in college or a post-secondary technical program!





GSMS CLAS District 1 Banner School for Health & Wellness in Education

Gulf Shores Middle School has been named the CLAS District 1 Banner School in recognition of our Health & Wellness in Education, thanks to their unique, student-centered programs that focus on promoting health and wellness among students! We believe in promoting physical and mental health activities in our everyday routine. Our students have the opportunity to cycle, move frequently, and gardening programs that have helped students improve their physical and mental health, as well as their overall well-being . We have stationary desk bikes in classrooms and active breaks to keep students moving and focused. Our Aerogardens allow students to grow their own food and learn about hydroponics in many classrooms throughout the building. Our programs focus on the whole-child, improving attendance and behavior.

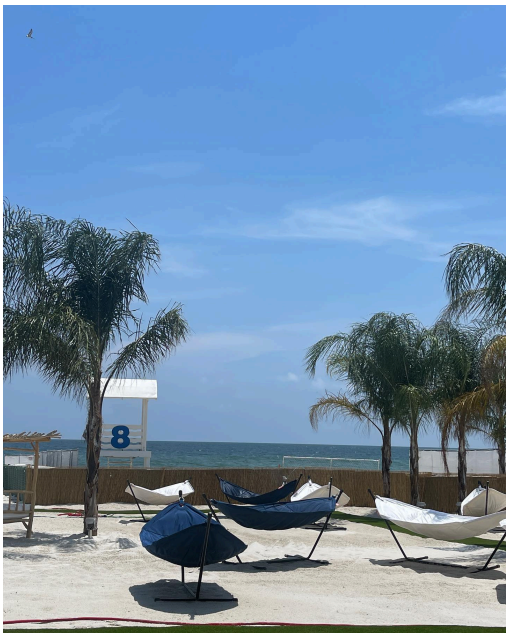


GSHS Hangout Festival Interns

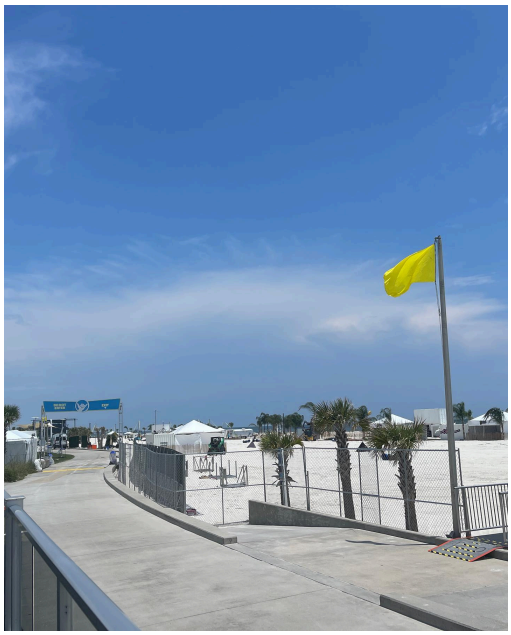
Our @hangoutfest interns had an awesome day of behind-the-scenes tours and learning! Thank you for setting up such an amazing experience for our students! @thehangoutgs @aegpresents @aegworldwide @sigfest

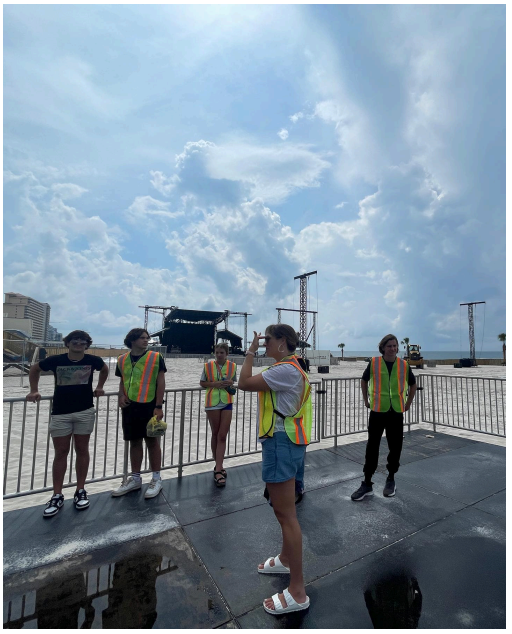












GSMS Space Camp Field Trip Announced

We are thrilled to announce and congratulate the exceptional students who have been selected to attend the highly anticipated GSMS Space Camp Field Trip, scheduled for September 2023. After a rigorous application process, these students have showcased their passion for space exploration and their commitment to personal growth.

The selection process was highly competitive, with an overwhelming number of applicants vying for the opportunity to attend the US Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, AL. Students were required to submit two thought-provoking essays, demonstrating their creativity and dedication to the future of space exploration.

During the rigorous application process, students were tasked with designing careers that will be crucial in the expanding field of space exploration, showcasing exceptional imagination and envisioning roles that will shape humanity's future in space. Additionally, their thoughtful articulation of how they plan to apply the knowledge gained at space camp demonstrated a deep understanding of its transformative impact on personal growth and future aspirations. Their reflections revealed a resolute determination to utilize their newfound knowledge to make a positive difference in the world.

GSMS would like to express its heartfelt appreciation to all students who participated in the application process. The dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment exhibited by each applicant were truly inspiring, and we commend them for their exceptional efforts.

During the GSMS Space Camp Field Trip, they will engage in immersive activities, interactive simulations, and hands-on experiences designed to cultivate their passion for space exploration. They will have the opportunity to learn from esteemed experts in the field, collaborate with like-minded peers, and discover the wonders of our universe. This incredible opportunity not only serves as a reward for their hard work and dedication but also ignites a spark of curiosity and fosters a lifelong love for STEM education.

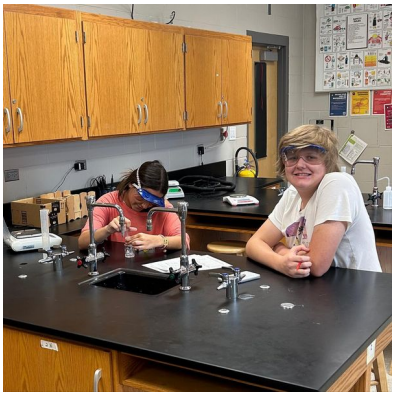
GSMS extends its warmest congratulations to the selected students, who have earned their place at the GSMS Space Camp Field Trip. Their exceptional achievements and unwavering determination exemplify the spirit of exploration and innovation that GSMS strives to cultivate in its students.



Summer School Opportunities at GSHS

Summer Wave Chemistry of Food





Chemistry Lab #1 in Summer WAVE Chemistry of Food! Studying how mass and volume are related to density in calculating the slope of best fit lines. Graphical analysis of liquids!
1. stages of sugar
2. Buttermilk
3. Ranch with homemade mayonnaise and buttermilk
4. Four different brines for chicken thighs
5. Pickling of veggies

This is just one of our collaborative co-taught classes being taught this summer. Coach Jason Hill and Chef Jonathan Kastner have some great projects, lessons, and experiences planned for our Summer WAVE students! Students will also have internships at Jesse's on the Bay, Fisher's Upstairs and Southern Grace Dinners, and Southern Chili Lab.

GSHS Summer Driver Education



Sgt. Lambert of the GSPD took time to speak with Coach Harrelson's summer Driver's Ed class. He spoke to them about texting and driving, road safety, and best practices if they are ever pulled over by an officer. At the conclusion, Sgt. Lambert did a traffic-stop simulation of what they should expect should they ever get put into that situation. Thank you, Sgt. Lambert, for investing in our students!



Registration is Open for 2023-2024 School Year



Registration is now open for new and returning students to Gulf Shores City Schools. The following link will get you started in the process. If you have never attended GSCS, you will need to complete the enrollment process before you register. MakeWaves and become a Dolphin!

Enrollment and Registration

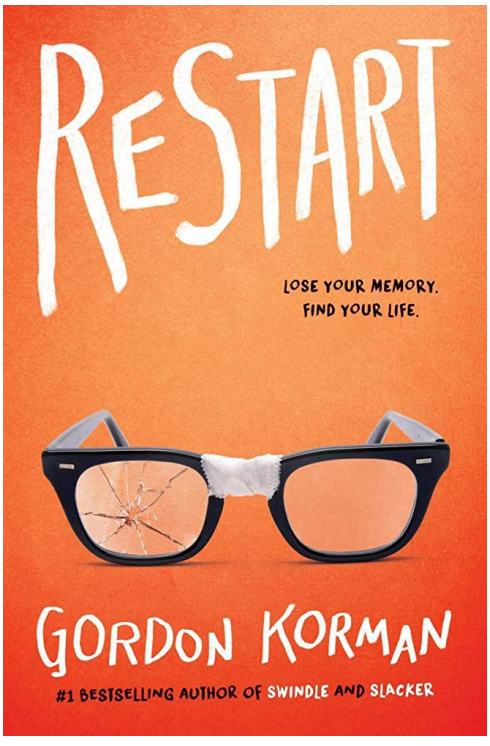


Summer Assignments for Students at GSCS

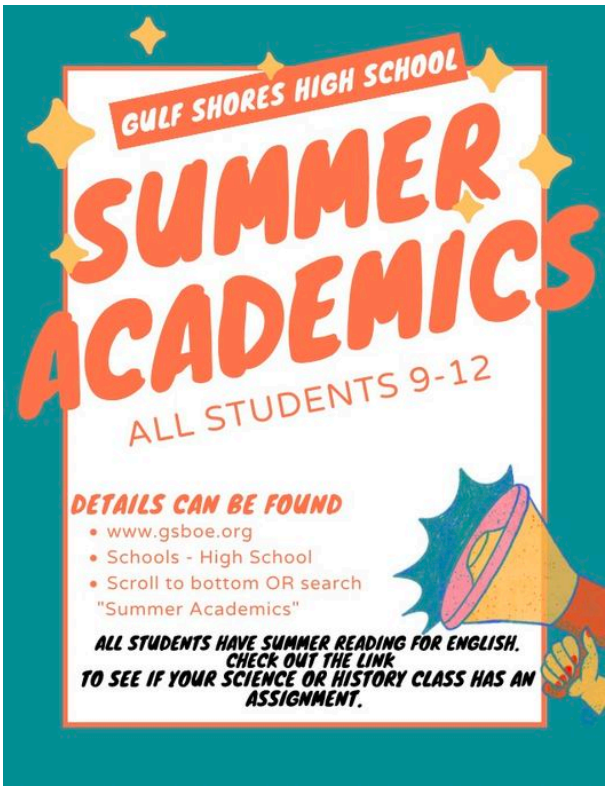
Gulf Shores Elementary School
(Reading assignments for grades 2-5). Click on the picture below for more information.



Gulf Shores Middle School
(Reading assignments for grades 6-8.) Click on the picture below for more information.



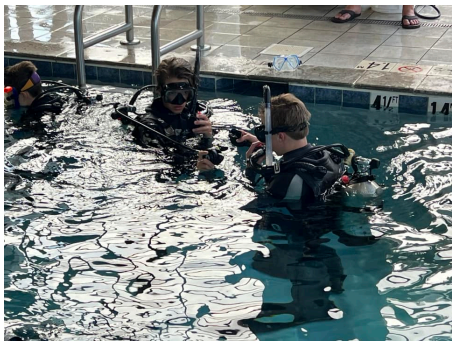
Gulf Shores High School
(Assignments for grades 9-12) Click on the picture below for more information.



Open Water Scuba Diving Certification Continues

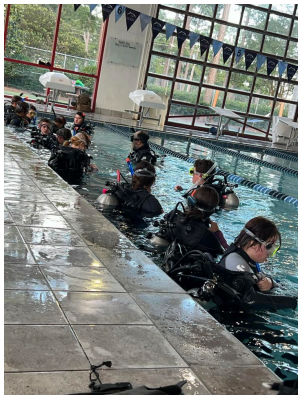
Our second round of students just earned their PADI open water scuba certification! Students ages 12 and up from GSMS and 2 GSHS students successfully completed their open water dives over the weekend at Vortex Springs and Perdido Pass! Special thanks, once again, to the Down Under Dive Shop for this amazing partnership! We are also so grateful for the Sustainability: Full STEAM Ahead project grant funds that we received so that we can provide this and many other innovative opportunities to our students. 5th & 6th grade students from GSES and GSMS started scuba training this week with master divers from Down Under Dive Shop in Gulf Shores. 6 students and 2 teachers will become PADI scuba certified over 2 weeks. Thank you to Gulf Shores City Schools and Ms. Sampley for providing this opportunity for our teachers and students through our Career Tech and STEAM programs! Our final scuba class for this school year completed their first hands-on skills at the Bodenhamer Pool last night! This class consists of our 10-11 year-olds from GSES, as well as Gulf Shores Middle School teacher, JT Gosnell, and Gulf Shores Elementary School teacher, Hilary McKinney. Way to go, Dolphins! In just a couple of weeks, we will have students and faculty from all three district schools who have earned their PADI open water scuba certification through this awesome partnership with Down Under Dive Shop! We are excited to plan future field experiences for this awesome group of students!

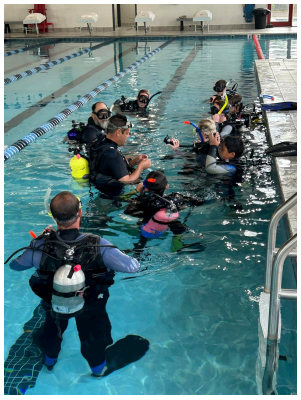


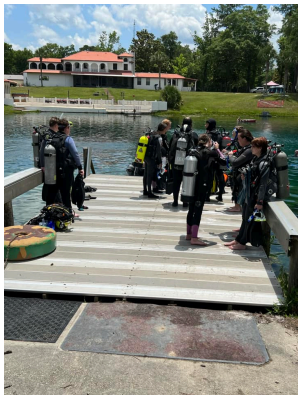


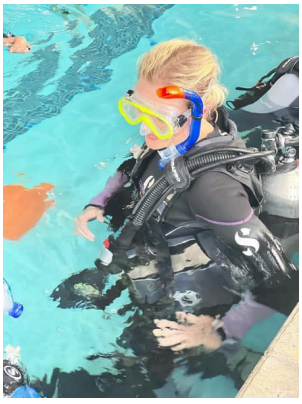


















GSCS - National Board Certified Teachers

We are so proud of all of the Gulf Shores City Schools National Board Certified Teacher candidates. What a great way to celebrate their dedication!























GSMS eSports Camp

What an incredible first day we had at the GSMS eSports Camp! The excitement was palpable as our 6th - 8th graders gathered to dive into the world of eSports, with a special focus on Overwatch! As we embark on this exciting journey, let's take a moment to celebrate the educational benefits of eSports and the fantastic opportunities that lie ahead.
Here's why eSports is more than just a game:

*Critical Thinking: Engaging in eSports challenges students to think critically, make split-second decisions, and strategize effectively. They learn to analyze situations, adapt their gameplay, and evaluate their performance—an essential skill set in the modern world.

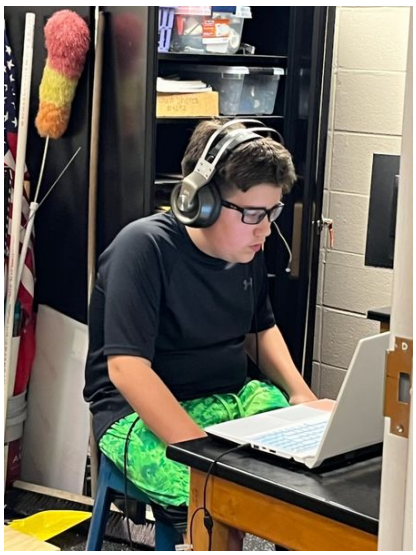
*Teamwork and Collaboration: eSports is all about teamwork. Our camp fosters a collaborative environment where students develop their communication skills, build trust, and work together to achieve common goals. These qualities will serve them well in future group projects and professional settings.

*Future Career Prospects: The world of eSports is booming, opening up a plethora of career opportunities. From professional players to coaches, content creators, event organizers, and analysts, the eSports industry is full of exciting paths. Our camp helps students explore their passion for gaming and provides a foundation for potential careers in this rapidly growing field.
We can't contain our excitement for the upcoming Fall 2023 season! It's going to be bigger and better than ever as we prepare to form official teams. Stay tuned for team sign-up announcements in the Fall, where you can showcase your skills, teamwork, and passion for eSports!
We are thrilled to witness the talent, enthusiasm, and growth of our students throughout this eSports camp. Each day brings us closer to unlocking their potential and paving the way for a bright future in the world of competitive gaming.









GSES Dolphin Pride 21st CCLC Program

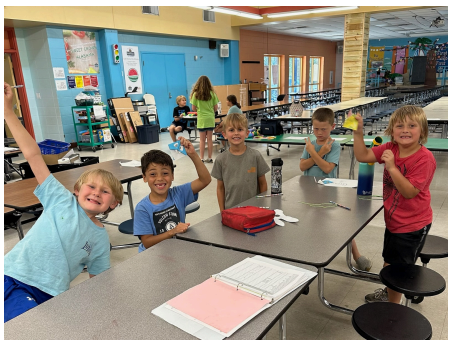
What an amazing start to camp today! We're thrilled and bursting with excitement for all the adventures that lie ahead this summer. In our math sessions, each group explored the fascinating world of measuring and graphing. We dove deep into numbers and shapes, unlocking the secrets of data visualization together. Our younger grades began crafting their very own "All About Me" books, allowing their creativity to soar as they shared their unique personalities, interests, and dreams. Meanwhile, our older grades embarked on a thrilling literary journey, delving into the pages of "Whoosh!" The captivating tale sparked our imaginations and took us on an exhilarating ride through the wonders of flight. We also had the pleasure of exploring our Learning Campus, where we met the incredible staff of our Eco partner. Their inspiring stories and experiences in environmental conservation left us awestruck and ignited our passion to make a positive impact on our planet. But that's not all! We kicked off our coding adventures with code.org, learning the basics of computer programming and unleashing our inner tech wizards. And to enhance our nature expeditions, we created our very own binoculars! With these trusty tools in hand, we'll be able to scope out breathtaking scenes during our upcoming hikes. Of course, we couldn't forget the joy of playing games together! We laughed, cheered, and bonded as we competed in classic favorites like red light green light and sharks and minnows. Now, as we eagerly await tomorrow's adventures, we can't help but feel the anticipation building up. There's so much more fun in store for us, and we can't wait to create lifelong memories together.



















GSMS EcoCamp

What an incredible day at GSMS EcoCamp! Our students immersed themselves in a whirlwind of nature and creativity, creating memories that will last a lifetime. Here's a glimpse of our amazing activities:

We took an exhilarating hike in the breathtaking Gulf State Park. The sights, sounds, and fresh air filled our hearts with awe and appreciation for the beauty around us.

We tapped into our artistic side as we tie-dyed towels using natural dyes. It was a hands-on experience where our campers embraced their creativity, making unique patterns that celebrated both art and sustainability.

Our exploration of plants continued as we learned about air plants and how they thrive in unique environments. Our campers got their hands dirty while tending to these fascinating plants, discovering the wonder of nature's resilience and adaptation.

We also dove into the world of cyanotype printing and stamping. Using sunlight and special materials, our campers created beautiful blue and white prints that captured the essence of nature's intricate patterns. It was a truly magical experience!

Our GSMS EcoCamp is all about connecting with our environment, fostering creativity, and inspiring a sense of wonder. We are incredibly proud of our students for their enthusiasm, curiosity, and willingness to explore new horizons.

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue this incredible journey together! Let's embrace the beauty of nature, unleash our creativity, and become stewards of our planet. Together, we can make a difference!











Meet Our Board: Kelly Walker



Kelly Walker is a Student Support Specialist for the Georgia Department of Education online school, Georgia Virtual Learning. Mrs. Walker serves as a liaison between schools, parents, and online instructors to accommodate middle and high school students with special needs in order to give the best chance at success in the online classroom. She provides supports to special needs students and online instructors to help raise student achievement. She also creates and administers regular professional development for online instructors regarding special needs students and best teaching practices. Prior to this administrative role, she taught high school science for Georgia Virtual School.

In her fifteen years as an educator, she has also taught in a traditional classroom. She taught for nine years in the face-to-face classroom working with at-risk students. Some of her roles included leading a team of teachers on a Freshman/Career Academy, mentoring new teachers, coaching volleyball, and developing county-wide science curriculum based on State Standards.

Kelly Walker received her Bachelor of Science from the University of Georgia, and her Master of Arts in Special Education from Piedmont College.

Happening at GSCS:

District
Elementary School
Middle School
High School
Virtual Academy



GSES - Dolphin Pride 21st CCLC Program beings on May 31
GSMS - Ecotourism Summer Program begins on May 31
GSMS - eSports Summer Camp begins on June 5
GSES GSMS— Fine Arts Camp begins on June 5
GSCS - BOE Work Session & Regular Board Meeting June 8
GSES - GSMS - Camp Invention begins on June 19

Connect With Us:

Matt Akin - Superintendent
Stephanie Harrison - Assistant Superintendent
Sandi Harris - Office Manager
Chad Green - CSFO
Marcelina Parrish - Human Resource Manager
Chezley Neth - Data Management & Reporting Analyst
Paul Wilson - Athletic Director
Joey Drews - Director of Educational Technology & Student Support Services
Beau Roode - Director of Operations
TBA - Director of Exceptional Education
Carrie Barragan - English Second Language
Tanya Hill - Child Nutrition Program Coordinator
TBA - Student Engagement, Transportation and Safety Coordinator
Jessica Sampley - Career Tech Coordinator
Karen Pearson - District Testing Coordinator
Sara Parker - Mental Health Coordinator

MAKE WAVES!

Do you have a suggestion or comment you would like to share with us?

Connect with GSCS

Joe McAleer-Social Media