

The MakeWaves Monthly

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



Superintendents’ Message

Welcome back to school! As we conclude the first week of the new school year, we wanted to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude for your dedication, enthusiasm, and hard work as parents and teachers. It has been incredibly energizing to witness our schools come alive once again with the smiling and excited faces of our exceptional faculty, staff, eager students and parents. Our commitment to creating a positive, engaging and personalized learning environment is truly inspiring, and it sets the tone for what promises to be an exciting and fulfilling year ahead. We also want to extend our appreciation for your patience and flexibility as we navigate through ongoing construction and renovation projects. We understand that these temporary inconveniences can sometimes be challenging, but your understanding and adaptability make all the difference in ensuring a smooth transition. As we embark on this journey together, we are genuinely looking forward to the rest of the school year and the countless opportunities for growth, learning, and shared accomplishments that lie ahead. Let's continue to work hand in hand to provide our students with the best possible education and support, fostering an environment where they can thrive and reach their full potential. Here's to a fantastic school year filled with achievements, laughter, and memorable moments!

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



ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL



MIDDLE SCHOOL



HIGH SCHOOL



VIRTUAL
ACADEMY



RCA



Sustainability
Team



GSHS Football
Season



U.S. Green Ribbon
Schools

Our Teachers Learning Over the Summer

Mrs. Wendy Jones is spending a week of her summer at A+ College Board training. She is participating in one of the first group of educators being trained to teach AP Precalculus! Lifelong Learners!



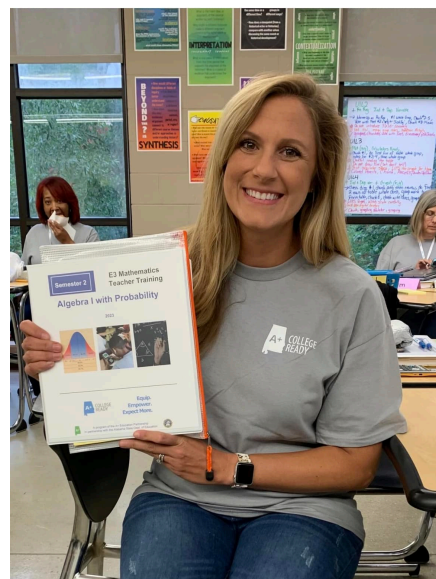
Mrs. Watley spent a week of her summer at E3 training and had this to say about it: "The E3-1 conference for Government and Economics was one of the most beneficial conferences I've been to in a long time. They provided so many valuable resources I will actually be able to use in the classroom! It made me excited to go back to school and incorporate them into my classroom! Instructors were so much fun and made it engaging. Also, lots of friendships were made! I will definitely go back for E3-2!"



Two of our GSHS English Language Arts teachers, Ms. Burleson and Mrs. Smith are in Trussville at E3 training this week! Our teachers are continually working on to improve their skills and pass it along to our students!



Mrs. Cagle spent the week at Hewitt-Trussville High School for E3 Math Training. She is excited to implement the high-quality lessons, research-based teaching strategies, and technology tools in her classroom this year! Let's go Dolphins!



Spotlight On Students Over the Summer

We are thrilled to share that our very own Wyatt Wilson from Gulf Shores High School had an incredible experience at Auburn University's Rising Seniors Engineering Camp last week! Out of hundreds of applicants from all over the country, Wyatt was among the 29 talented seniors selected to attend this prestigious program.

During the camp, Wyatt got hands-on experience exploring various engineering disciplines, including mechanical, civil, aerospace, electrical, computer, chemical, and more! The camp's interactive workshops, challenging projects, and lectures from Auburn's top-notch engineering faculty gave Wyatt a glimpse into the exciting world of engineering and real-world problem-solving. Not only did Wyatt gain invaluable knowledge, but the camp also provided a taste of college life at Auburn University, allowing him to connect with other aspiring engineers and professionals in the field. Congratulations, Wyatt, on this outstanding achievement! We can't wait to see how this experience shapes your future and sets you on a path towards engineering excellence.



Congratulations to Talan Galvan for being selected as the South MVP in this week's AHSAA Soccer All-Star competition.



Congratulations to Tia Titi, for competing in the Alabama North South All Star game.



New Faces at GSHS for 23-24 School Year



James Salvant



Laura Burke



Anna Lynn Lauderdale



Mark Mitchell & Heather Mitchell



Anna Kate Burleson



Jay Todd



Dr. Caroline Hamilton

New Faces at GSHS for 23-24 School Year



Karen Wallace



Damon Howe



Erica Elrod



Caleb Landrum



Darius Curry

New Faces at GSES and GSMS for 23-24



Beth Pearce - GSES
New Position



Jessica Schreier- GSES



Amberlee Christian - GSMS



Carolyn Moser - GSMS



James Stacey - GSES
New Position



Gage Payne - GSES



Kathy Brown - GSES



Molly Sparkman - GSES
New Position

National Beach Championship and Macey Moore

Congrats to rising sophomore Macey Moore! She recently competed in the 16U AAU National Beach Championships in Santa Monica, California, where she placed third in the 16U gold bracket! We are so proud!



Class of 2024 Seniors Make Waves!



EdCamp PD model Held at GSMS

Gulf Shores Middle School hosted a remarkable event in July - the EdCamp PD model! It was an incredible opportunity for educators and professionals to come together and engage in a variety of strong, productive conversations.

The EdCamp PD model encourages collaboration, self-directed learning, and idea sharing among educators. Unlike traditional conferences, it is participant-driven, enabling attendees to select and lead discussions on relevant topics. This format promotes active participation, networking, and the exchange of practical classroom strategies. The model's benefits include fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional growth, empowering educators to share knowledge and experiences, and creating a vibrant learning community. Additionally, EdCamp supports personalized learning by allowing participants to choose sessions based on their interests and needs, resulting in a more relevant and tailored learning experience.

We want to thank Melissa Ryall, who organized and led the 2023 Gulf Shores EdCamp. Melissa's dedication and commitment to professional development have made a significant impact on our educational community. Her efforts in bringing together passionate educators and facilitating meaningful discussions are truly commendable!



Mark your calendars choir students! It will be a fun weekend kicking off the school year and learning more about choir. More information to come! High school FRIDAY night; middle school SATURDAY.



Training The Next Generation of Trainers

GSHS Sports Medicine Program in a magazine!!! @gcmsportsal (Micah Green & Cole McNanna) put together a feature on the GSHS Sports Medicine Program to spotlight in their BEACHIN' Magazine!! This program continues to grow because of them and their hard work! They show up every day ready to work and learn. Thank you so much @gulfshorescityschools for supporting the growth of this program year after year! And thank you to the peers, mentors, administrators, and students for helping to make this program happen! Thank you, @gcmsportsal !!



Parenting Conference 2023 For GSCS Parents

No matter the age or stage, kids are... hard. But understanding their wiring might change the way you look at (and speak to) every child that crosses your path from this day forward.

Join Kathleen Edelman, the author of A Grown Up's Guide to Kid's Wiring and I Said This, You Heard That, as we level up our parenting and communication skills at Parenting Conference 2023!

Saturday, August 26, 2023 8:30 am - 3:00 pm

[Gulf Shores Cultural Center](#)

19470 Oak Rd W
Gulf Shores, AL 36542

[Sign Up Today](#)



GSHS Athletic Hall of Fame Inductees

Congratulations to this year's Hall of Fame inductees! The Hall of Fame induction ceremony will take place on Thursday, August 24th during the High School Pep Rally. Inductees will also be recognized that evening during halftime at the home opener vs. St. Michael. Kickoff is at 7:00 at Mickey Miller Blackwell Stadium.



Announcing the Gulf Shores High School Athletic Hall of Fame 2023

Melissa (Plash) Knight – Class of 2005
Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer

Justin Smith – Class of 2003
Baseball

Boys Golf State Championship Teams – (2001-2002)

Cole Baas
Rian Baas
Alex Huffman
Brandon Ellis
Austin Tucker
Chris Wells
Coach Andy Kelley



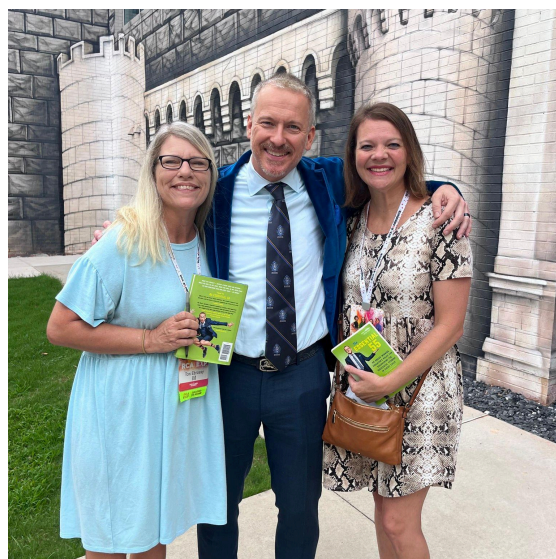
Youth Ambassador - Tenor Howard

Tenor Howard, representing GSMS, will be traveling to Japan as a Youth Ambassador for Mobile.



GSMS Teachers attend Conference at Ron Clark Academy

GSMS sent nine of our teachers to Ron Clarke Academy over the summer. Attending this conference has been an incredibly eye-opening experience that has deepened our understanding of student engagement and the power of community. The school's commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive environment has left an indelible mark on us. Witnessing the ways in which students are actively involved in their own learning journey, taking ownership of their education, and collaborating with peers has inspired us greatly. It has motivated us to bring these invaluable lessons back to our own school and implement innovative ideas that promote student engagement, foster a supportive community, and empower each student to unlock their full potential. Stay tuned for the exciting things coming from GSMS this year!



GSHS Environmental Club

Gulf Shores High School Environmental Club built a specialized net to help rescue sea turtles accidentally hooked by anglers at the Gulf State Park Pier. After being introduced by Melissa Vinson ([Orange Beach Wildlife Center and Management Program](#)), students worked with Ralph Agnew of [Navarre Beach Sea Turtle Conservation Center](#) to build the net modeled after the ones on Navarre, Pensacola Beach, and Okaloosa Piers. This net has a wider opening than the one previously housed at Gulf State Park pier. This design allows the net to slide under a hooked sea turtle making it more efficient, resulting in less stress on the turtle. In addition, those responding will no longer have to enter the water to attempt to safely guide the turtle to shore. This project was funded by [Senator Chris Elliott](#) and we are grateful for his support. We are also appreciative of [Reefmaker](#) for welding the frame together!



Registration is Open for 2023-2024 School Year

WELCOME NEW & RETURNING STUDENTS

Let the
learning
journey
begin!

Registration is 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

Open House For GSMS Parents



GS Student Athletic Passes

\$50 cash/check  **\$50 cash/check**

2023 - 2024

GS Student Athletic Passes

Grades 6-12

ALLOWS ENTRANCE INTO ALL **GSHS HOME** GAMES EXCLUDING PLAY OFFS AND TOURNAMENTS

On sale during Camp Dolphin (8/2), Senior Parent night (8/3), and FOCUS August 8 - 18 **ONLY**. One pass per GS student. Not open to non-GS students nor adults. Contact Athletic Director, Paul Wilson at pwilson@gsboe.org for more information.

Dr. Tim Webb: Principal at GSMS

Dr. Tim Webb has been a school administrator for over 20 years. He has served as a principal, superintendent, and Commissioner of Education for the state of Tennessee. Most recently, he was an assistant principal at Gulf Shores Elementary School!



Sonya Price: Director of Exceptional Education



Welcome
SONYA
PRICE

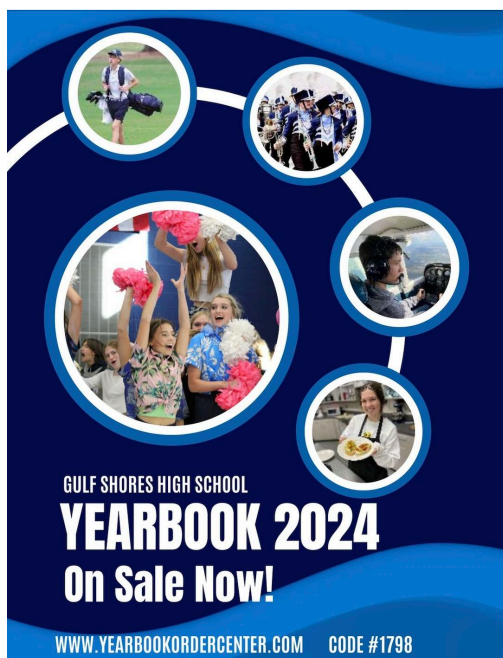
.....
Director of Exceptional
Education!



GULF SHORES
CITY SCHOOLS

Mrs. Sonya Price has been a school administrator, instructional coach, and special education teacher for over 20 years. Most recently, she was an assistant principal at Gulf Shores Elementary School!

GSHS 2023-2024 Yearbook Available



GSCS 2023-2024 Breakfast Available



Got School Breakfast?

Does your child miss breakfast - no time or simply isn't hungry first thing in the morning?

Here's a solution:
School Breakfast

School breakfast provides 1/4 of your child's daily nutrition needs and research shows breakfast provides fuel for school and boosts brain power. Breakfast at school is affordable, too. It's available for all students and if you qualify for free or reduced price lunch, you also qualify for the free or reduced price breakfast.

Encourage your child to join us every day for school breakfast.

Elementary School Price \$1.75
Middle School Price \$1.75
High School Price \$1.75

Free and Reduced Price for Families Who Qualify \$.0 - \$.30

Times Served: 7:20am - 7:55am

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

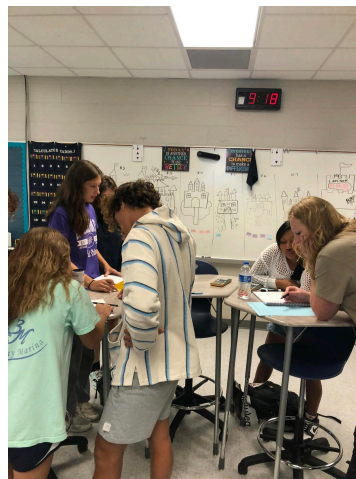


The Walking School Bus



Great way to start the school year, The Walking School Bus! Thank you to [RE/MAX Paradise](#) and The [Dolphin Foundation for Education & Arts](#)!

First Week of School at Gulf Shores City Schools



Courtney Creel: Assistant Principal at GSES

Welcome to Mrs. Creel - our new Assistant Principal!

Hi! My name is Courtney Creel and I am so excited to be one of your Assistant Principals at Gulf Shores Elementary. I have been teaching for twelve years with the majority of my educational career being right here at Gulf Shores Elementary. I received my Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Auburn University in Montgomery and my Master's degree in Educational Leadership from Auburn University.



Rebecca Grogan: Assistant Principal at GSES

Welcome to our new Assistant Principal, Rebecca Grogan!

Rebecca Grogan has been in education for 23 years. She worked in Calhoun County, AL for 15 years and the last 8 years in Jefferson, GA. She's taught 1st, 4th, and 5th grade and has been an administrator the last 12 years. She has been married to Matt Grogan for 23 years and has two teenagers who will be attending GSMS and GSHS. She's excited to be joining the GSES family.



GSCS Sustainability Team Travels to North Alabama

Several members of the GSCS Sustainability Team traveled to North Alabama last week to be inspired and to collaborate, learn, team-build, and grow together while working on vertical alignment of our district-wide sustainability initiative. The team brainstormed and collaborated constantly on the trip— they held structured meetings twice a day, but the conversations and planning continued nonstop. The days were filled with reflection on the past year and our growth as a city school system, big ideas, goal setting, event planning, growth opportunities, action items, sharing resources, and more! They participated in several hands-on, immersive learning opportunities—they toured and learned at Camp McDowell's Farm School; hiked to Little Natural Bridge in Bankhead National Forest; kayaked, paddle boarded, and swam at Smith Lake; and prepared and cooked meals together, all the while creating a cohesive team that is energized and ready to provide even more learning opportunities for our students during the upcoming school year.

Feedback from some participating teachers:

"Teaching is unique because unlike many other professions, teachers are the only adult in the room for most of the day. When it comes to planning and reflecting, it can feel like working in a silo. Being able to spend a few days talking shop from dawn til dusk was exhilarating. I can't wait to implement what we've planned for this year to come. I hope all of our teachers get to experience this kind of professional development." —Anthony Schaff, 7th grade Life Science at GSMS

"The diversity in discipline of this district-wide team (members from all three schools and cross-curricular) facilitates an approach beneficial to all students and our community." —Caroline Hamilton, Business and Marketing Academy at GSHS

"This was one of the most unique and effective professional development opportunities I have had in my teaching career. We created our own space for reflection and planning for our future. I was inspired by all the great teachers on the sustainability team. Through our joint efforts, our values on sustainability are becoming a reality. It's an incredible vision, not just for our school, but our community as a whole." —Amanda Talantis, Hospitality and Ecotourism at GSHS



GSHS Football Season is Almost Here!

#BallAtTheBeach



VARSITY FOOTBALL 2023

COME SHOW YOUR DOLPHIN SPIRIT!

| DATE | OPPONENT | LOCATION | THEME |
|-------|---------------|----------|--|
| 8/24 | St. Michael | HOME | Make the Cardinals Disappear (Magical) Ex: magicians/unicorns/fairies |
| 9/1 | Citronelle | HOME | White out the Wildcats (White Out) |
| 9/8 | Faith Academy | AWAY | Put the Rams to Rest (Pajamas) |
| 9/15 | UMS- Wright | HOME | Black Out the Bulldogs (Black out) |
| 9/22 | LeFlore | AWAY | Wrangle the Rattlers (Western) |
| 9/28 | Murphy | AWAY | Walk the Plank Panthers (Pirates) |
| 10/6 | Williamson | HOME | Tame the Lions (Circus) |
| 10/13 | Elberta | AWAY | Pink Out the Warriors (Pink Out) |
| 10/27 | Vigor | HOME | Wolves Homecoming- SGA |
| 11/3 | B.C. Rain | HOME | Lights Out Raiders (Neon) |

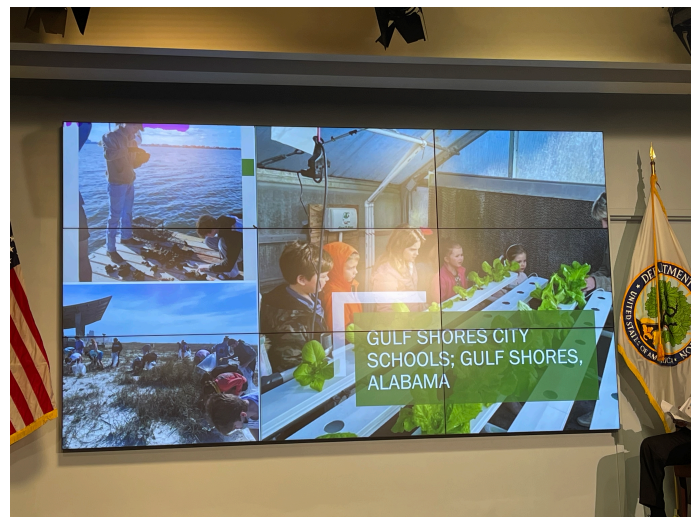
Dolphin Walk at 5:00!
ALL GAMES START AT 7:00!
SEE YOU THERE!



U.S. Green Ribbon Award

This week, at a ceremony in Washington DC, Gulf Shores City Schools was recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a Green Ribbon School District. Only 11 school districts in the country received this honor. **This award represents the dedication and spirit of innovation that is prevalent in every area of our school system including our school buses, facilities, cafeterias, outdoor spaces, counseling, healthcare, technology, and instruction. We appreciate all the work that our employees have done and continue to do to make our school system one of the best in the country!**

The following is a link to a video that was part of the application and showcases some of the outstanding accomplishments: <https://youtu.be/fkgbC57yrEU>. Thank you to Sonya Price, Jessica Sampley, Anthony Schaff, the Sustainability Committee, and our three principals for leading the application process.



Save The Dates!

Zoonami IV - 10/20/23 - 7pm!
 ONE Club Golf Tournament
 10/21/23 - 11am!
 Haunted Hustle - 10/21/23 - 6pm!



Happening at GSCS:

District
Elementary School
Middle School
High School
Virtual Academy



GSCS - Employees back to school 8/2
 GSES - Pre-K Orientation 8/2
 GSHS - Camp Dolphin - Freshman Orientation 8/2
 GSCS - BOE - Work Session 8/3
 GSHS - Senior Parent Meeting 8/3
 GSES - Meet The Teacher 8/4
 GSCS - Students back to school 8/8
 GSCS - BOE - Board Meeting 8/10
 GSMS - Open House 8/15
 GSHS - Choir Back To School Boot Camp 8/18
 GSMS - Choir Back To School Boot Camp 8/19
 GSCS - Parenting Conference 2023 8/26

Connect With Us:

Matt Akin - Superintendent
Stephanie Harrison - Assistant Superintendent
Sandi Harris - Office Manager
Chad Green - CSFO
Marcelina Parrish - Human Resource Coordinator
Chezley Neth - Data Management & Reporting Analyst
Paul Wilson - Athletic Director
Joey Drews - Director of Educational Technology & Student Support Services
Beau Roode - Director of School Operations
Sonya Price - 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

