



GULF SHORES
CITY SCHOOLS

For Immediate Release
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Gulf Shores City Schools Announces First Flight

GULF SHORES, AL – Gulf Shores City Schools’ Superintendent, Dr. Matt Akin, announced that students in the Gulf Shores High School Aviation Academy have completed building their first airplane, and it has received FAA approval. Students and school officials will celebrate the first public flight of the student-built airplane on **Wednesday, May 1, at 10:00 AM** at Gulf Shores International Airport at Jack Edwards Field.

During the event, Dr. Eric Mackey, Alabama State Superintendent of Education, is expected to take the first flight.

The Gulf Shores High School Aviation Academy is open to all high school students and includes courses in the mechanics of flight, aerospace engineering, and aircraft maintenance. Students in the academy have the opportunity to earn their drone pilot certification and prepare for the written exam of the FAA private pilot license.

Aviation Academy Instructor Haley Kellogg is a former Gulf Shores High School student who went on to become a commercial pilot. Upon returning to Gulf Shores, Haley joined the Gulf Shores High School faculty with a passion for inspiring students, particularly young women, to pursue a career in aviation. Most of the courses that Haley teaches meet at the hangar labs at Gulf Shores International Airport at Jack Edwards Field. She immerses students in hands-on learning activities ensuring that academic content is seamlessly connected to real-world career experiences.

Gulf Shores Aviation Academy partners and mentors provide generous and ongoing support for students and the aviation program. Partners and mentors include local expert residents who are passionate about aviation as well as organizations including Gulf Air Center, Gulf Shores International Airport, Aeropro, and Tango Flight.

The First Flight event at **10:00 AM on Wednesday, May 1, 2024**, will include special presentations by teachers and students as well as remarks from Dr. Eric Mackey. Students, partners, administrators, mentors, and teachers will be on site to showcase the aircraft and student learning, offer tours of the hangar labs, discuss the program, and answer questions.

For more information, contact Jessica Sampley, Academies and Career Tech Director, at jsampley@gsboe.org.

Location: Gulf Shores International Airport at Jack Edwards Field, Hangars 1 and 2. GSPD will be on site to direct visitors to approved parking areas.