

2022-
2023



ANNUAL REPORT

Putnam County Board of Education



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District 1



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Mission

The mission of the Putnam County Charter School System (PCCSS) is to provide all students with the knowledge, tools, experiences, and grit necessary to be successful.

On the cover.

Brandy Parham, a PCCSS alumni and Putnam Instructional Endorsement (PIE) educator, teaching sight words to her students at PCPS. Scan the QR Code (right) to hear more about the PIE program from Brandy and her colleagues who have participated in this unique program.



Superintendent's *Message*



As we prepare for the 2023-2024 school year, our system ends our 13th year as a Charter System in the state of Georgia (2010-2023). Our journey has seen our graduation percentage rise from the 50s into the 90s for the last eight years. Our fine arts and humanities offerings have become more robust, and access to college has significantly improved for all students. Amidst our Charter transformation, we remain committed to creating opportunities for exciting innovations in the way teachers and staff educate the next generation of citizens. The foundation of the Putnam County Charter School System (PCCSS) is rooted in the belief that education is about much more than simply scoring well on a standardized test. We believe educators are here to create opportunities for students to be their best selves while engaging in the community to serve others. The Putnam County Charter Schools firmly believe that learning should not be about simply feeding information to students seated in straight rows and then hoping to collect proof at the end of the year that it worked but rather about taking the next generation by the hand and leading them to a future full of possibilities.

The partnerships between the Putnam County Charter Schools and Albany State University, Central Georgia Technical College, George Mason University, Georgia College and State University, Mercer University, Piedmont University, Oxford College of Emory University, and University of Georgia afford our students an opportunity to boost academic skills by learning from professionals who expose students to careers and college majors in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), as well as liberal and performing arts. These bold partnerships between the Putnam County Charter School System, the University System of Georgia, and the Technical College System of Georgia foster the opportunities needed for our students to own their education path and success.

I want to express my appreciation to our Board of Education for their support, wisdom and leadership throughout this journey. I must also express my gratitude and appreciation to our teachers, staff, administrators, parents, community, and most importantly, our students for successfully completing another 180 days of quality instruction.

Also, I offer my sincere thanks for the opportunity to serve the students, staff, system and community for the previous 11 years.

Eric Arena

PCCSS Superintendent

Inspire.

Inspiration abounds within Putnam County Charter School System. From offering numerous pathways to various careers through our Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) program to providing community-based opportunities with our service leadership class at Putnam County High School (PCHS), our students and staff are **INSPIRED** to lead, serve, and thrive at PCCSS!

(Right) Student Seth Harris shows his cow at a local livestock show hosted by PCHS's FFA Chapter.



PCCSS held the inaugural War Eagle Games for the adaptive physical education students. The Games helped our students understand they can do anything they put their minds to. We came together as a War Eagle family and celebrated them for exactly who they are...**EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE!** Scan the QR Code to watch a video of this exciting day.



(Left) Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) cadets tackle another obstacle while completing their military physical training. Our JROTC students earned a Gold Star Rating on their US Army Cadet Command Inspection.

(Right) PCES students dig into new career knowledge while on a visit to the Museum of Arts and Sciences in Macon, Georgia.

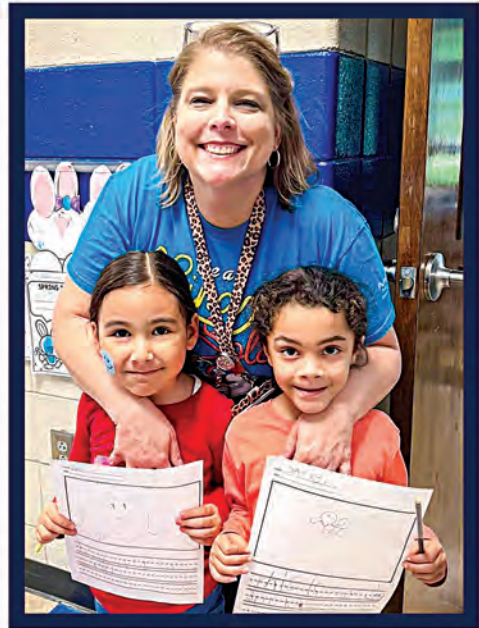




Our students inspire others through acts of service with the ultimate mission of bringing the school system and community together. One unique opportunity is a Service Leadership class at PCHS that nurtures the school culture and develops school spirit throughout Putnam County. In addition, you can find numerous student organizations, athletes and staff members who volunteer their time within our town, school system, and surrounding area.



(Above) PCHS student trains for CPR certification.
 (Left) PCHS construction pathway students working on projects with their instructor.
 (Right) PCPS students inspire with their writings.
 (Below Left) PCMS self-contained students help plant and maintain the Butterflies and Bloom Community Garden.
 (Bottom Right) PCHS Senior Leadership class student volunteering at a community event offering face painting to attendees.



Putnam County *Head Start*

A vast amount of learning takes place between the ages of three and five. During this time, a Head Start program can help a child develop skills that will promote success in kindergarten and beyond!



(Above)
Putnam County Head Start students in their community garden, plant seeds and enjoy the beautiful outdoors. Scan the QR Code to learn more about how Putnam County Head Start is growing young minds.



Accomplishments

• Summer Transition Grant

This grant was awarded to Putnam County Head Start/Pre-K for Rising Kindergartners from the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). The Program was awarded to three rising kindergarten classes and will serve a maximum of 42 students this summer. The Summer Transition Program is a six-week intensive academic program for rising kindergartners.

• Trauma-Responsive Care Grant

Head Start was awarded a Trauma-Responsive Care Grant. The grant has helped build a more trauma-informed responsive community. Our collaborative has expanded to include over 25 mental health organizations that offer mental health services and care.

• Community Transformation Grant

Head Start was awarded a NEW Community Transformation Grant from DECAL. This grant targets children with social-emotional needs ages 0-8. This grant provides five paid Mental Health Endorsement opportunities from UGA for qualified candidates.



(Above) Putnam County Head Start student gets hands-on experiences with one of our community partners, the Eatonton Fire Department. (Right) Students learn about chemical reactions in the classroom.



Congratulations to these Putnam County Head Start Staff Members who successfully completed 15-hours of Circle of Security Training (COS). (Pictured right)

Our program implements the Classroom Professional Learning Series, an intense 12-hour reflective course to strengthen teacher-student relationships in the classroom. Our teachers know that by creating secure relationships with the children in their classroom, optimal learning can truly happen.



At Putnam County Head Start, we believe that all children can succeed and achieve, and we work to empower families to advocate for their children and themselves. In addition to our educational staff, we have family services staff to support families in setting goals and we provide community resources to these families. We work diligently to provide each child and family high-quality learning experiences in a safe and nurturing environment that promotes school readiness and family positive outcomes.

Ms. Christel Nelson
Putnam County Head Start Administrator

Innovate.

In our school system, staff, students, and teachers take advantage of opportunities to **INNOVATE** and learn what it means to think outside of the box.

Incorporating Technology:

Implementing the latest technology makes learning more interactive and engaging for students. PCCSS uses a multitude of educational apps, virtual reality, and online learning platforms to feed students' innovative minds.

Project-Based Learning:

This approach allows students to solve real-world problems and develop critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity skills.

Personalized Learning:

Students at PCCSS have various needs and learning styles. Personalized learning allows teachers to tailor instruction to meet individual student needs.

Community Partnerships:

PCCSS partners with local businesses and organizations to provide students with real-world experiences and opportunities to connect with professionals in a multitude of fields.

STEAM Education:

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) education integrates these subjects to provide students with a well-rounded education that prepares them for the future.

(Top) PCPS student learns how to code in computer science class. (Middle) PCES students shine a light on new and innovative ways to engage in reading. (Bottom) PCMS Technology Student Association (TSA) students program their disc shooting robot in technology class.

To learn more about PCMS's TSA program, scan the QR Code.



Innovative College Experiences

PCCSS' Albany State University (ASU) Program has expanded to two groups this year, including rising 9th graders and upper class PCHS students. Both groups of students are immersed in post-secondary career explorations along with project-based learning experiences with ASU faculty and PCCSS staff. Emphasis on college admissions, scholarships, and financial aid is added for the upper grade students.

The Oxford College Experience is entering its second year. Thirty students from PCCSS and Newton County Schools take classes from Oxford professors. They also explore careers, community service projects, and admissions.



For the first time in history, the 2022 National Humanities Conference allowed high school students to lead a session presenting their personal research and observations. PCCSS' Experiential Learning Program had six students travel to Los Angeles, California to be a part of this conference. The students' presentation revolved around the civil rights movement in Putnam County and included their hands-on research of historical photographs, oral history lessons, archive work, and community interviews.

Our program has received two back-to-back grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) which supports research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities field.

Scan the QR Code to learn about our Experiential Learning Program.



(Top Left) PCHS student participates in college classes through the Oxford College Experience.

(Bottom Left) PCCSS' Experiential Learning Program students visit L.A. for the 2022 National Humanities Conference.



Putnam County *Primary* School

The mission of PCPS is to develop a strong, well-rounded foundation that will lead to an enriched and successful life for our students.

PCPS is a learning community where every student matters and every moment counts!

Community

collaboration spotlights:

- Art Gallery Walk
- Agriculture class and collaboration Ag day with PCHS, GA Farm Bureau and GA Dairy Farming Families
- Garden Club
- Family fun nights, parent engagement opportunities and grade-level showcases
- Summer Inspiration and extended learning opportunities
- Oconee Performing Arts Society (OPAS)/Plaza Arts performances & Columbus State traveling productions
- Field trips and experiential learning opportunities
- Singing Eaglets
- Scribble Squad and Young GA Authors (writing recognition)
- Top Flight Walking Club
- Fluid Learning Plan (individualized instruction)
- Principal's Student of the Month recognition
- SEL awareness nights
- Pre-K Bridging Ceremony and grade-level transition events



(Top Left) PCPS student learns about the attributes of 2D & 3D shapes with a tasty snack activity. (Bottom Left) Second graders perform their end-of-the-year showcase.



I enjoy working with our dedicated staff to provide the best educational program for our students. We are committed to providing each student with an excellent educational foundation. At Putnam County Primary School, all students are valued and important! Our goal is to ensure that our students receive an education that inspires them to be lifelong learners.

Dr. Fanicia Rogers
Principal, PCPS

(Above) Dr. Rogers provides students with one of their favorite treats, Kona Ice!

(Upper Left) One of PCPS' Young Georgia Author winners. (Upper Right) Students enjoying a hands-on learning moment in agriculture. (Above) Budding artist shows off her work at PCPS's art exhibit.

To learn more about PCPS's Ag Education program, scan the QR Code and watch as these students become more knowledgeable about the world around them and prepare for the agriculture pathways available to them at the high school.



Excel.

From academics to athletics and everything in between, our school system emphasizes excellence - and we have the accolades to prove it!

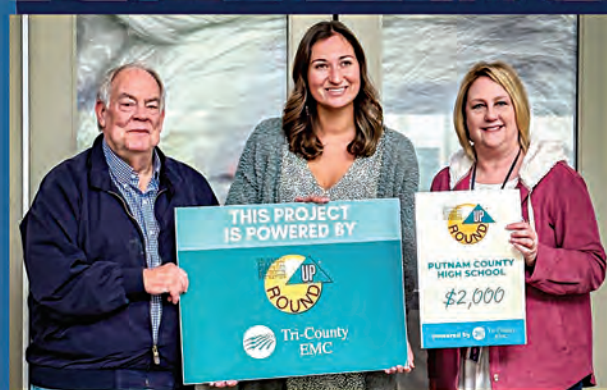
As a part of Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation's commitment to community, the cooperative offers both educational and community grants.

Operation Roundup is a community development program funded by the voluntary contributions of Tri-County EMC's customers to the Tri-County EMC Foundation. This program grants funds to non-profit and civic organizations within the Tri-County service area.

The Bright Ideas Grant Program, sponsored by Tri-County EMC, provides grants to teachers for innovative classroom projects in grades Pre-K through 12.



For the 7th year, PCCSS was recognized by the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) for its successful music education programs. PCHS was honored yet another year for being an Advanced Placement Honor School.





(Above) Assistant Superintendent Derick Austin awards Emily Pressley the recognition of STAR Student this year.

(Below) Marielle Peguero, PCHS Student, is pictured with Amanda Stover, PCHS Chorus Teacher, at the All-National Honor Ensembles. Marielle is one of 250 high school students chosen from around the country to participate in the All-National Chorus and the first EVER from Putnam County High School.



(Left) (L-R): PCCSS Finance Department team members, Nichole Crawford, Suzanne Davis, Coretta Harris & Randy Pate received the highest award for excellence in financial reporting for the

ninth consecutive year!



(Above) The newest class of REACH Scholars at this year's signing ceremony. Scan the QR Code to hear how the REACH Program prepares students for life after high school while providing them with a generous scholarship. Listen to past participants, teachers, and parents discuss the impact of this program!



(Below) Assistant Superintendent Laura Melton and CTAE Director Christina Hinz present Mark Adams, PCHS Counselor (center), with the Counselor of the Year Award given at the Lieutenant Governor's Business and Education Summit by the GA College and Career Academy Network.



Georgia Department of
DOAA
Audits and Accounts



Putnam County *Elementary* School

The mission of Putnam County Elementary School is to educate and inspire all students to be successful lifelong learners.



PCES's tools for student *Success:* Collaboration and Engagement

- *Disney's Frozen Jr.* Musical Production
- Holiday Extravaganza
- Trailblazer Program
- Honor Chorus
- JROTC Reading Program Collaboration
- Makerspace
- Black History Program
- GA Technology Fair
- Pen Pals Program
- Career Day
- Butterfly Garden Partnership
- Dr. Seuss Competitions
- Social Studies Fair
- STEM-Based Projects
- Plaza Art Camp
- Educational Field Trips

(Top) PCHS JROTC cadet and PCES student take part in the collaborative reading program.

(Above) PCES' musical production of *Disney's Frozen Junior*.



(Upper Left) Members of the PCES Technology Team bring home first place trophies for Multimedia Applications for Oconee Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA). (Upper Right) Trailblazer students deliver one of the benches they made for the PCHS Athletic Complex. (Above) Becky Wall wins the Georgia Library Media Association (GLMA) Region 9 Media Specialist of the Year.

To learn more about our Trailblazers program, scan the QR Code and see how it is blazing a trail through the Elementary School and beyond.



Mr. Scott Sauls
Principal, PCES

At Putnam County Elementary School, all teachers and staff are certified according to state and district guidelines. While that is the requirement, our school offers so much more; from caring and dedicated teachers and staff to effective learning environments, to programs and performances that help educate the whole child. We expect our students to enjoy learning and we strive to create academic environments that not only introduce them to the standards of the subject matter, but also entice them to want to know more; to extend the learning. Fine arts are also important to our school and a vast majority of our students participate in programs and performances, including a theatrical play which has become well-known to the community. We also offer a STEM-based learning program, Trailblazers, for specific students to provide experiences and learning outside of the basic subject areas. The staff of PCES is dedicated to providing a safe and enjoyable learning experience for all children and their families.

Putnam by the numbers

Check out these statistics for
the 2022-2023 School Year!

3,155

Students
Enrolled

504

Total Faculty
and Staff

\$43,792,628

2022-2023
Budget

700,000+

Total Meals Served
Free meals offered to all students.

752,860

Miles Driven by
Transportation

428

Advanced Placement and
Dual-Enrolled Students

Advanced placement is 13% and Dual-Enrolled is
35% of the total student population at PCHS.



202 Graduates -
making this the
largest
graduating class
in PCHS history
(which included
54 Honor
Graduates!)

Millage Rates

2019-2020
16.016



2020-2021
15.772



2021-2022
14.9

2022-2023
12.9

Teacher of the Year 2022-2023



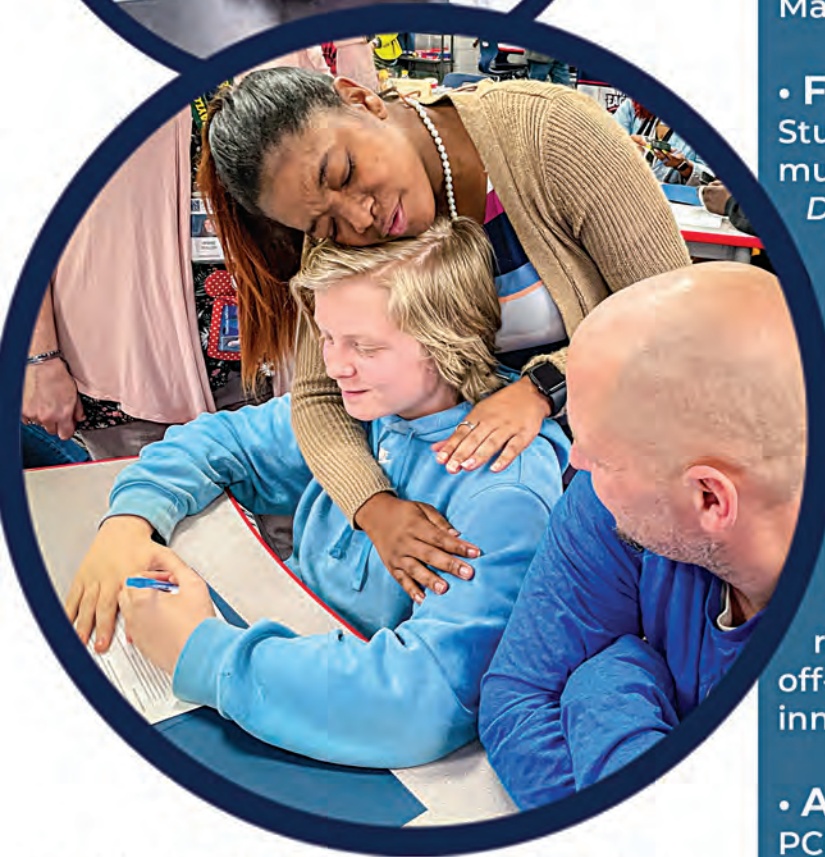
Michael Smith was born and raised in Eatonton, Georgia where he attended Putnam County's Head Start program. He graduated with honors from Putnam County High School in 2015 and began post-secondary education at Georgia Southern University. During the summers in college, Smith would return to Putnam to work at the Summer Inspiration program. This opportunity fostered the passion that Smith has for education. He graduated from Georgia Southern University with his Bachelor of Science in Middle

Grades Education in 2019. Smith went on to earn a Masters of Education in Instructional Technology in May 2022. Receiving this education encouraged him to continue initiating culturally sustaining pedagogy to all students and providing blended learning opportunities for them. Mr. Smith currently teaches 8th grade Physical Science at Putnam County Middle School.

Pictured left to right: Michael Smith (PCMS and District Teacher of the Year), Abby Brame (PCPS Teacher of the Year), Angela Lawson (PCES Teacher of the Year), and Derrick Arrington (PCHS Teacher of the Year).



Putnam County *Middle School*



Ways PCMS encourages students to expand knowledge and develop the tools to be

successful:

- **Lived Experiences**

Field trips extended learning on the colonization of Georgia. Students explored historic sites and spent a day learning about the ecology of the low country at University of Georgia's (UGA) Marine Extension and Aquarium.

- **Fine Arts**

Students performed in not one but two musicals, *The Big Bad Musical* and *Disney's Beauty & the Beast, Jr.* They also participated in chorus concerts and community art shows.

- **Organizations**

Junior Beta Club members competed at the State level with several successful finishes in jewelry entrepreneurship, marketing and engineering projects. TSA students had multiple top ten rankings with their robotics, coding, off-the-grid, and inventions and innovation entries.

- **Athletics**

PCMS student athletes continued to show promise with successful baseball, softball, wrestling, football, basketball, cross country, soccer and cheerleading seasons.

(Top) PCMS student studies and makes observations in science lab. (Above) A REACH Scholar gets a hug from his teacher as he signs his commitment letter for the program.



Henry Kissinger once said, "The task of the leader is to get people from where they are to where they have not been." Our mission is to provide all students with the most authentic learning experiences. Whether it be virtual or world-class excursions, we inspire our students to learn beyond the classroom walls.

Mrs. Monica Macklin
Principal, PCMS



We are *Four* Houses,
One *Family!*



Have you heard about PCMS's House System? It is a unique tool that binds our students and faculty, teaches teamwork, and provides exciting events that challenge their minds. Students earn points for their house through acts of service, academic achievements, and good sportsmanship.

Scan the QR code to catch a peek into a House Celebration as well as hear from the student leaders.



Putnam Proud Podcast

INSPIRE
INNOVATE
EXCEL



Scan the QR Code for the full listing of our Putnam Proud Podcast episodes and start listening today!



(Above) Representatives from the Putnam Development Program chatted with podcast host Steven Miletto (far right). The program began in 2018 and is focused on reaching out to graduates of Putnam County Schools seeking to give them a chance to return to their alma mater as teachers.

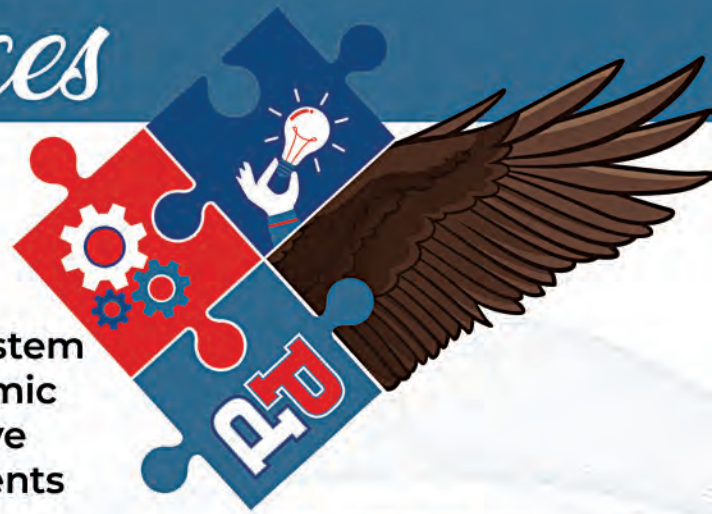
The purpose of the Putnam Proud Podcast is to provide a platform for sharing news, updates, and information about the district with students, parents, staff, and the wider community. Putnam County Charter School System also uses the podcast to showcase student achievements, highlight alumni, present cutting-edge programs and create a sense of community within the district.

Some of this year's episodes highlighted Experiential Learning, the arts, REACH Scholars, the PIE Endorsement program, PCHS's Service Leadership class, a coach, Homegrown Professionals and PCCSS Alumni.

(Left) Students and teachers from PCES's Art and Drama classes who acted and directed in a production of *Disney's Frozen, Jr.*

Putnam Pieces

Videocast



The Putnam Pieces Videocast showcases the different and unique ways Putnam County Charter School System is striving for and achieving both academic and athletic excellence as well as creative projects that continue to keep our students ahead of the rest.

The videocast is continually evolving with hopes for it to eventually be a completely student-run platform. This year featured episodes with content filmed by students with the help of Ed Tech Guru, Brian Buffington, taking the lead on framing shots, interviewing, and creating quality content.

Some of this season's videocast topics included Summer Inspiration camps, adaptive P.E., the Trailblazers program, agriculture, construction and Spanish classes as well as student, teacher and nutrition staff highlights just to name a few.

We even showcased our winner in the Putnam Pieces logo design contest who created artwork that

symbolized all the great parts of PCCSS!



Meet the artist...



Kellsey Ortega

Scan the QR Code and subscribe to our Putnam Pieces Videocast YouTube Channel and start watching today!



Putnam County High School

PCHS was named an AP *Honor* School for the second year in a row by the State School Superintendent with the addition of the following three honors:

- **AP Access and Support School:**
Schools with at least 30% of AP exams taken by students who identified as African American and/or Hispanic and 30% of all AP exams earning scores of 3 or higher.
- **AP Challenge School:**
Schools with enrollments of 900 or fewer students and students testing in English, math, science, and social studies.
- **AP Expansion School:**
AP schools with 25% growth in AP student participation from May 2021 to May 2022 and a minimum of 25 students testing in May 2020.



What is an AP Honor School?

AP Honor Schools are named in eight categories based on the results of yearly AP courses and exams. AP exams are administered by the College Board which also administers the SAT. AP courses are one of several ways Georgia students can access college-level learning at the high school level; students who receive a 3, 4, or 5 on an AP exam may receive college credit.

(Top Right) Brooklyn Scott, is one of several PCHS seniors who received their Certified Nursing Assistant pins presented by high school's CTAE Director, Christina Hinz. (Middle) Three student actors perform during PCHS' production of *Guys and Dolls*. (Bottom Right) Arella Cash with her 1st place plaque from the GA State Beta Club Convention. She and four of her high school classmates will travel to Louisville, KY this summer to compete at the National Beta Club Convention.





At PCCHS, we believe that each student is an individual and strive to make their high school experience as tailored as we can to the individual student and their goals. Whether it is a special certification program that a student will need to be work ready or rigorous academic classes, we make every effort to meet the needs of each student and best prepare them for their post-secondary plans.

Dr. Andrew Cooper
Principal, PCCHS

(Top Left) PCCHS students enjoy their last chorus concert of the school year. (Top Right) Our Boys Varsity Soccer Team made it to the second round of State Playoffs. (Above) Sabrina Carmichael with PCCHS FFA Advisor, Kelly Smith, was named GA State FFA winner for Equine Entrepreneurship proficiency.

Scan the QR Code to learn what makes Rebekah Esau's Service Leadership program (left) so unique and hear how it has impacted her students.





PUTNAM
COUNTY CHARTER SCHOOL SYSTEM
inspire. innovate. excel.

MR. ERIC ARENA
Superintendent

MR. DERICK AUSTIN
Assistant Superintendent

MRS. LAURA MELTON
Assistant Superintendent

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