



THE **WAVE**

GULF SHORES

CITY SCHOOLS

FALL 2024



CONNECTING WITH US

INTRODUCTION & CONTACTS

GULF SHORES CITY SCHOOLS



Dr. Matt Akin
Superintendent



Dr. Stephanie Harrison
Assistant Superintendent



Chad Green
Chief School Financial Officer

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Kevin Corcoran President

Dr. Nicky Gotschall Vice President

Dale Jernigan

Frank Malone

Kelly Walker



CONTACT US

Phone : 251.968.9873

Website : www.gsboe.org

Location : 300 East 16th Ave., Gulf Shores, AL 36542
PO Box 3908, Gulf Shores, AL 36547

CORE VALUES

1. Promoting rigorous, comprehensive, and relevant curriculum that prepares students to become productive citizens and lifelong learners.
2. Developing self-reliance by incorporating the student's physical, mental, emotional and social well-being into the teaching/learning environment.
3. Fostering inclusive, engaging members of society, and encouraging critical and creative thinking.
4. Recruiting and emboldening the best and the brightest faculty and staff and rewarding innovation and collaboration.
5. Instilling a sense of pride in our schools by engaging the Gulf Shores community in the educational experience.

GET INVOLVED

- Attend a School Board Meeting in person or online.
- Work Sessions typically occur on the first Thursday of every month at 4:00 PM at the City Council Chambers located at 1905 West First St., Gulf Shores, AL 36542.
- Regular Board Meetings typically occur on the second Thursday of every month at 5:00 PM at the City Council Chambers.
- Work Sessions and Regular Board Meetings are streamed live through Gulf Shores City Schools' Facebook page.
- Too busy to attend school board meetings, but still want to know more? Visit www.gsboe.org for episodes of "Board Shorts" to stay up-to-date.

 **@gulfshorescityschools**

 **@gulfshorescityschools**

 **@GulfShoresBOE**

 **@gscityschools**

OUR SCHOOLS

Gulf Shores Elementary School

1600 East 3rd St.
Gulf Shores, AL 36542

Phone: 251.968.7375

Principal:

Dr. Alicia Early – aeearly@gsboe.org

Assistant Principals:

Courtney Creel – ccreel@gsboe.org

Rebecca Grogan – rgrogan@gsboe.org

Molly Sparkman – msparkman@gsboe.org



Gulf Shores Middle School

450 East 15th Ave.
Gulf Shores, AL 36542

Phone: 251.968.8719

Principal:

Dr. Tim Webb – twebb@gsboe.org

Assistant Principals:

Whitney Boggus – wboggus@gsboe.org

Ram Talantis – rtalantis@gsboe.org



Gulf Shores High School

600 East 15th Ave.
Gulf Shores, AL 36542

Phone: 251.968.4747

Principal:

Mrs. Cindy Veazey

Assistant Principals:

Melisa Everett – meverett@gsboe.org

Cameron Koehler – ckoehler@gsboe.org

Athletic Director:

Jason Watts – jwatts@gsboe.org



Gulf Shores Virtual Academy

19470 Oak Road West
Gulf Shores, AL 36542

Phone: 251.968.9873

Coordinator:

Dr. Susan Nelson – snelson@gsboe.org



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BEFORE

AFTER



MAKING WAVES: CELEBRATING SIX YEARS OF GULF SHORES CITY SCHOOLS



A Letter from
Kevin Corcoran
Gulf Shores School Board
President

Greetings Dolphin family! As a founding member of the Gulf Shores City Schools Board of Education and the current president, it's hard for me to believe we're entering our 6th year as Gulf Shores City Schools. What an incredible journey! The success our administration, faculty, and staff have achieved in such a short time is truly remarkable.

When Dr. Harrison asked me to reflect on the journey that began nearly nine years ago, I gladly accepted.

In June 2015, mayors from the 9 major cities in Baldwin County were asked to appoint members to a Community Advisory Task Force for education. Mayor Craft appointed Doug Warren and me, and I was honored to serve as chairman.

By October, we presented 19 recommendations to the Baldwin County Board of Education (BCBE).

Later that year, Mayor Craft asked us to narrow our focus to the island's education concerns. We worked hard to develop a plan to improve education from Fort Morgan to Ono Island. After months of hard work, we realized forming a multi-municipal school system wasn't feasible due to Alabama's state constitution.

During this time, BCBE projected island high school enrollment would drop to 739 by 2026, which pushed us to take ownership of the future of education for our children. Today, Gulf Shores High School's enrollment is over 900.



In 2017, we held eight meetings across the city with over 200 Gulf Shores residents, presenting the facts. A survey revealed that 95% were dissatisfied with academic standards, and 97.5% rated our facilities as below average or unacceptable. Action was needed.

That summer, concerned citizens packed city hall, urging the Mayor and City Council to explore forming Gulf Shores City Schools. A petition with 200+ signatures and \$12,000 for a feasibility study was presented. Mayor Craft and the council listened and took action! They engaged the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama (PARCA) to conduct an economic feasibility study. The results suggested that with current funding levels, the city could form and operate an independent city school district.

On October 9, 2017, the City of Gulf Shores mayor and council adopted and approved resolution #5876-17 thus establishing Gulf Shores City Schools! In November of 2017, the inaugural Gulf Shores City Board of Education was formed and appointed.

Then began the hard work! A team of consultants was formed to perform the arduous task of the first ever city school separation in Baldwin County. Let's just say the process was lengthy, complicated and frustrating. After 15 months of deliberation, an 18-page Separation Agreement was executed by both parties on March 21, 2019. It ordered the official start date of Gulf Shores City Schools to be June 1, 2019. Oh boy was the end result worth it!



STEAM Collaborative Learning Center New Construction



On June 1, 2019 at 4:00 AM under the direction of Noel Hand, the Public Works Director for the City of Gulf Shores, the REALLY hard work began; we had to get these schools ready to accept students in August for the *first* “First Day!” A dedicated team of city employees, architects, engineers, and contractors completed over \$8,000,000 in city-funded repairs, upgrades, and improvements in just over two months. As evidenced by the accompanying photos, the results were outstanding. That investment has grown to over \$30 million in improvements to our existing campuses!

I am going to leave the “look where we are now” portion of the story to others. Just know if you love Gulf Shores City Schools as much as we do, you are forever indebted to Mayor Robert Craft, Mayor Pro-Tem Philip Harris, Dr. Jason Dyken, Steve Jones, Joe Garriss and Gary

Sinak for their unwavering support of Gulf Shores City Schools. Without this city leadership, we would still just be dreaming about what could be!

We, the Gulf Shores City Board of Education, are proud to help direct this fabulous school district into the future.

Make Waves!

Handwritten signature of Kevin S. Corcoran

Kevin S. Corcoran
President
Gulf Shores City Schools
Board of Education

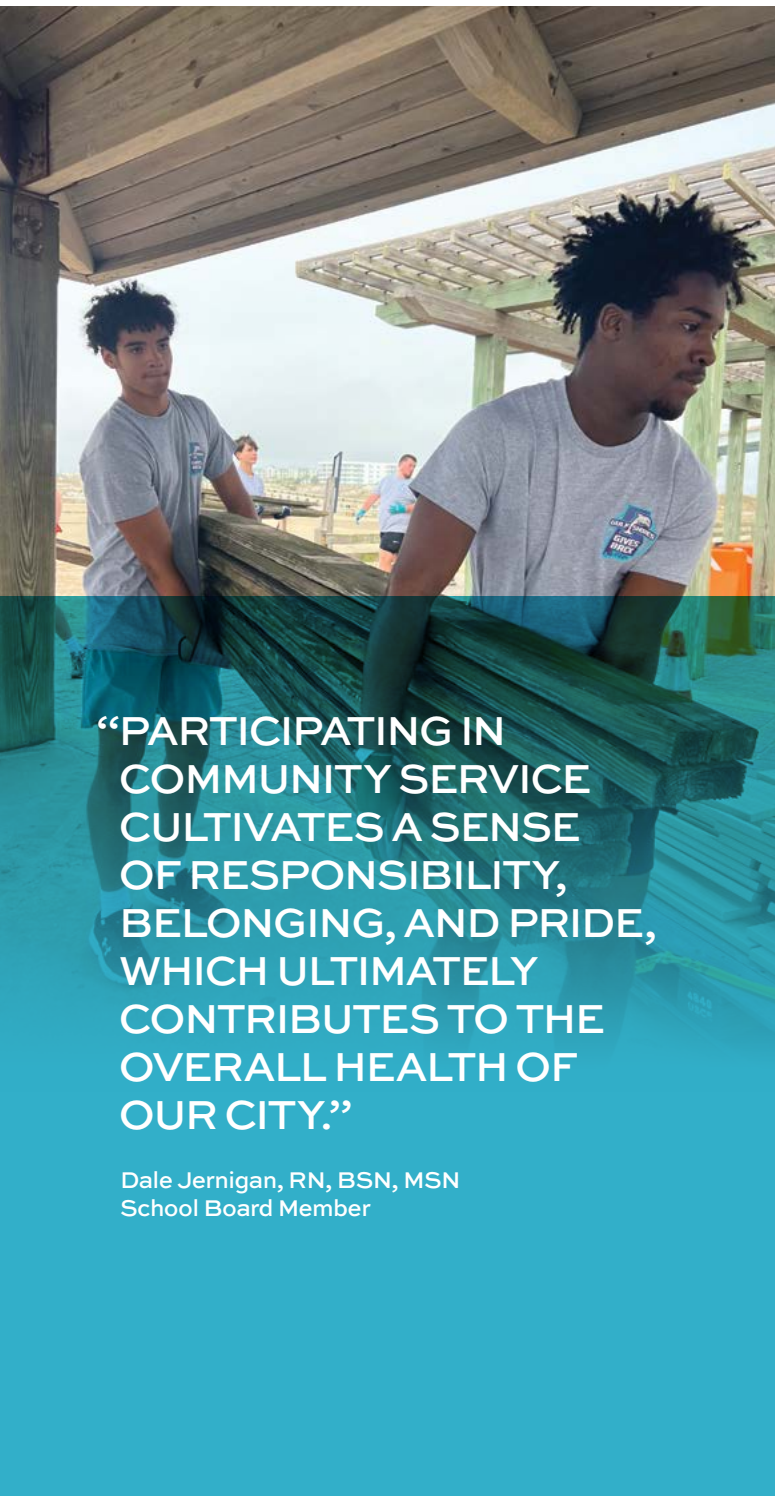
“You can gain perspective by looking backwards, but you can only gain ground by looking forward!”

Board President Kevin Corcoran



Gulf Shores Mayor and City Council

GULF SHORES GIVES BACK: A COMMUNITY-WIDE WAVE OF SERVICE!



On March 14, 2024, Gulf Shores City Schools launched “Gulf Shores Gives Back,” a brand-new community-wide service day. This inaugural event was all about uniting our students, teachers, and community members in a collective effort to strengthen the heart of our beautiful city.

This exciting event was introduced to the Mental Health Advisory Committee by Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Stephanie Harrison, and the committee immediately adopted Gulf Shores Gives Back as their signature project.

The day of service began with a rousing pep rally at the middle school practice field – a chance for everyone to get pumped and show their school spirit. Then, students in preK-12th grade, school and city staff, as well as community members were off to various project sites throughout the city, where the real magic happened. Together, they tackled a variety of meaningful projects across the city, ranging from beach cleanup and park revitalization to delivering meals to those in need and spreading cheer at local nursing homes.

Gulf Shores Gives Back is more than just a day of service; it’s about fostering a culture of giving back, building connections, and celebrating the spirit of our beautiful city. This spring, we hope you will participate in Gulf Shores Gives Back to help us make a lasting impact on our community. Follow our website for more information on how you can help us make a splash by serving others.

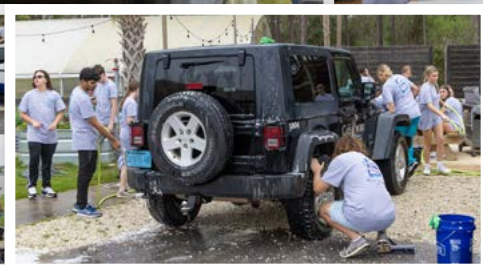
**“PARTICIPATING IN
COMMUNITY SERVICE
CULTIVATES A SENSE
OF RESPONSIBILITY,
BELONGING, AND PRIDE,
WHICH ULTIMATELY
CONTRIBUTES TO THE
OVERALL HEALTH OF
OUR CITY.”**

Dale Jernigan, RN, BSN, MSN
School Board Member



Join us for
Gulf Shores Gives Back
A Community-Wide Day of Service
February 27, 2025





CELEBRATING SUCCESS

AWARDS & RECOGNITION



U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION NAMES GULF SHORES CITY SCHOOLS A U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GREEN RIBBON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Enthusiasm was buzzing in Gulf Shores during the 2023-2024 school year when the U.S. Department of Education announced that Gulf Shores City Schools was 1 of 11 school districts in the country to be named a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District. Gulf Shores City Schools was the only school district in the southeastern United States to win the district award.

The U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Award recognizes schools, districts, and higher education institutions that nurture and promote environmental, health, and sustainability education and practices. This includes demonstrating responsible stewardship of natural resources, promoting the safety and wellness of children and adults, and encouraging an appreciation of our natural heritage. Assistant Superintendent Dr. Stephanie Harrison said, "Our outdoor science education program, Science by the Shore, as well as our innovative STEAM programs provide opportunities for students to engage with the environment so that they are equipped to appreciate and care for our rich natural resources."

The award focuses on the following pillars:

- **Pillar I:**
Reducing environmental impact and costs
- **Pillar II:**
Improving the health and wellness of students and staff
- **Pillar III:**
Providing effective environmental and sustainability education, incorporating STEM, civic skills, and green career pathways

From its inception, Gulf Shores City Schools established a set of core values that correlates with the standards of U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools: "to provide engaging learning environments, rigorous academics, and to incorporate unique resources of our community to empower all students to achieve success." School Board President Kevin Corcoran said, "The district's Core Values will shape the future of our environment, our commitment to innovation, and our local community for generations to come."



Notable environmental sustainability education projects completed by Gulf Shores City Schools include:

- Schneider Electric partnership to replace lighting and air conditioning systems and improve air quality, as well as the installation of solar features that are tied into the power grid to help reduce energy use.
- New STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) building at Gulf Shores Elementary School that includes multiple aquariums and a rain barrel to irrigate the nearby garden, as well as space for robotics and drone flight lessons.
- Gulf Shores High School Farm-to-Table Program.
- Upgraded transportation program with half of the school bus fleet replaced with ultra-low sulfur, clean diesel engine models, reducing carbon emissions by 89.5%.
- Developed and implemented Science by the Shore, a system-wide outdoor, place-based science education program.
- Students have access to bicycles throughout the day to support outdoor learning and physical activity.
- All schools have gardening programs and outdoor classrooms.
- Comprehensive recycling efforts, composting, and water conservation.
- Partnership with Center for Ecotourism, including a school visit from Jean-Michel Cousteau.
- Active wellness, nutrition, and mental health committees to support physical and mental health of students and staff.

Gulf Shores City Schools Superintendent, Dr. Matt Akin says, "Being acknowledged as a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District is a testament to our district's commitment to our core values and providing a learning atmosphere that is innovative and environmentally friendly." Dr. Harrison adds, "This award is evidence of the innovative and caring teachers and staff we have in Gulf Shores. They strive to provide our students with a well-rounded education that is reflective of our values."



PATHWAYS TO THE FUTURE

CAREER ACADEMIES

FIRST FLIGHT

For the last two years, students in the Gulf Shores High School Aviation Academy have been building a two-seater Van's RV-7 airplane, and during the spring, it received FAA approval. School officials and students celebrated this unique accomplishment by hosting a "First Flight" event with Alabama State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Eric Mackey, taking the first public flight in the newly built plane.

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 can also 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, Mrs. Kellogg 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

Mrs. Kellogg 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.

Local expert residents who are passionate about aviation as well as organizations including Gulf Air Center, Gulf Shores International Airport, and Aeropro provide generous and ongoing support for students and the aviation program.



AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

2023-2024

Gulf Shores Elementary named a
Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.



Gulf Shores Elementary named a Lighthouse School.

Gulf Shores Middle School named
a CLAS School of Distinction.

Gulf Shores Middle School teacher
Cynthia Moore named National Outstanding
Earth Science Teacher.

Gulf Shores Middle School teacher
Scott Prince received the Peggy McDonald
Innovative STEM Award.

Gulf Shores High School teacher Amanda Talantis
named Best of Green Schools K-12 Educator.

Gulf Shores High School named
a 2023 CLAS Banner School.

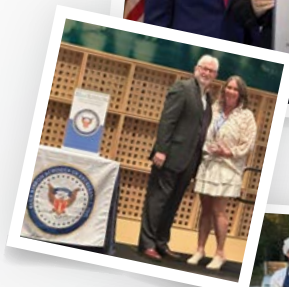
Gulf Shores High School teacher Krista Fleming
received the Presidential Innovation Award for
Environmental Educators.

Gulf Shores High School culinary students won
first place in the Alabama ProStart competition and
advanced to the National ProStart Invitational.

Gulf Shores City Schools earned the US Department
of Education Green Ribbon Award.

Gulf Shores City Schools has
11 National Board Certified Teachers.

Currently, 32 additional teachers are pursuing
National Board Teacher Certification.



PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

\$170,820
Average Tuition Saved



99%
STATE
GRADUATION
RATE



**EARNED A
COLLEGE/
CAREER
READINESS
CREDENTIAL**

(Advanced Placement/
Technical/Vocational, etc.)



**28
AP
SCHOLARS**

**146
DUAL
ENROLLMENT
COURSES
COMPLETED**

STUDENTS EARNED
QUALIFYING SCORES ON

**119 AP
EXAMS**
\$139,230.00
AVERAGE TUITION
SAVED



> 8

**MILLION
DOLLARS
EARNED**

CLASS OF

2024

SCHOLARSHIPS

TWENTY
FOUR



SCORED

30

OR HIGHER

ON THE
ACT



STRAIGHT
SCHOOL
DISTRICT
ON THE
ALABAMA
STATE REPORT CARD



GULF SHORES
HIGH SCHOOL



GULF SHORES
MIDDLE SCHOOL



GULF SHORES
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

CREATIVE HORIZONS

THE ARTS

Visual Arts



3 Gold Key Winners



1 Honorable Mention



1 Student Placed in National Art Competition

1 2nd Place District Award



2 1st Place District Winners



1 3rd Place State Winner



1 1st Place State Winner



Performing Arts

**MS and HS Bands Receive
All Superior Ratings
at State Assessment**

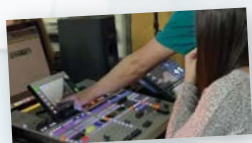
**3 MS and HS Choir
Students Advanced to
All State Choir**

**5 Students
Advanced to
All State Theatre**

**4 Students
Selected for
All State Band**

**15 Choir Students
Advanced to Solo
and Ensemble**

**Marching Band Receives
All Superior Ratings
at Multiple Competitions**



ATHLETIC EXCELLENCE

2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS



2 State Champion Teams



Football



Boys Soccer

5 Individual State Champions



Swim (*Liam Bickham – Two State Championships*)



Tennis (*Tereza Mojs*)



Wrestling (*Keesheinna Titi & Landon Everett*)



2 State Runner-Ups



Boys Swim



Girls Soccer

11 Final Four Appearances



Girls Basketball

Girls Bowling

Girls Golf

Girls Soccer

Girls Swim

Volleyball



Boys Golf

Boys Soccer

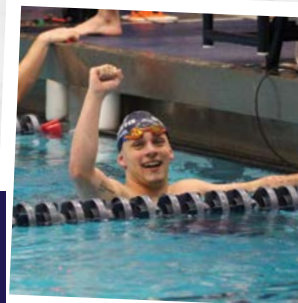
Boys Swim

Football

Wrestling Duals

500+

Student-Athletes
Competed In State
Playoffs



13 Area/Sectional Champs

100% Girls Teams



Qualified for State Playoffs

85% Boys Teams



Qualified for State Playoffs





BUILDING THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

The future of education in Gulf Shores is exciting, and it's evident that the new Gulf Shores High school is not just about constructing a new building but about creating an environment that fosters innovation, collaboration, and hands-on learning experiences for students. The emphasis on leading-edge technology labs for various disciplines like engineering, bio-medical, marine biology, culinary, music production, broadcasting, and finance highlights a commitment to preparing students for the demands of the modern workforce. Additionally, the inclusion of maker spaces, greenhouses, and outdoor learning centers demonstrates a holistic approach to education that extends beyond the traditional classroom setting.

The dedication to the arts is also commendable. Band, choral, art, and theatre students will hone their skills in dedicated spaces connected to an advanced visual and performing arts center including a costume design lab, a set production workshop, a greenroom, and an auditorium. These facilities will not only enhance students' creative abilities but also serve as venues for school and community events, fostering a sense of community engagement and pride.





“The new Gulf Shores High School will be a cornerstone of pride for our community, a place where our young people can thrive and prepare for bright futures.”

Gulf Shores Mayor Robert Craft



Furthermore, the provision of a Dolphin athletics center equipped with advanced training facilities, two gymnasiums, tiered meeting rooms, and a covered practice pavilion underscores the importance of physical health and extracurricular activities in a well-rounded education. By offering top-notch amenities for athletes, the school ensures that students have opportunities to excel both academically and athletically.

The new Gulf Shores High School will accommodate 1,000 students with the opportunity for future expansion. Construction of the 287,000 square foot building is already underway in anticipation of welcoming students to the new campus in the 2026-2027 school year. The project is being led by an award-winning project team that includes architects Goodwyn Mills Cawood (GMC) and DLR Group as well as Rabren General Contractors for construction and Volkert, Inc. as the program manager. With such expertise involved, there's confidence that the new Gulf Shores High School will meet and exceed expectations, providing a transformative educational experience for generations to come.



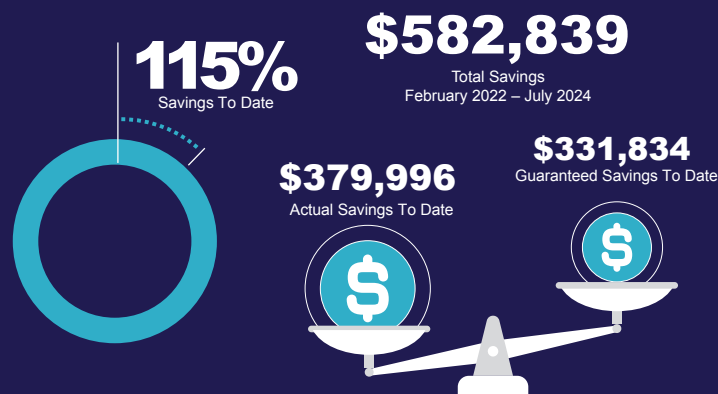
FINANCIAL UPDATE

ENERGY SAVING INITIATIVES

In 2020, GSCS partnered with Schneider Electric to replace aging lighting and air conditioning systems and to install solar features. Reducing energy consumption has resulted in a significant energy savings, providing more funds for learning.

Energy Savings Update

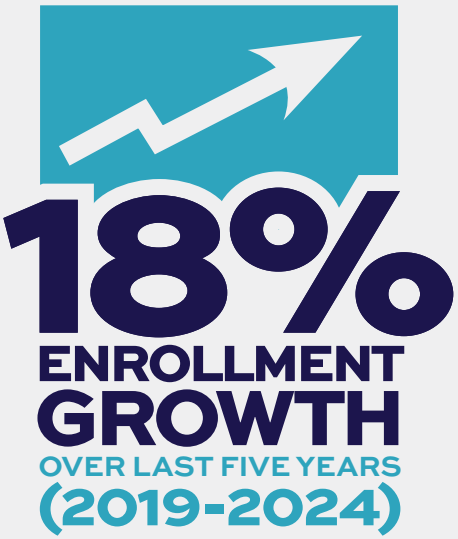
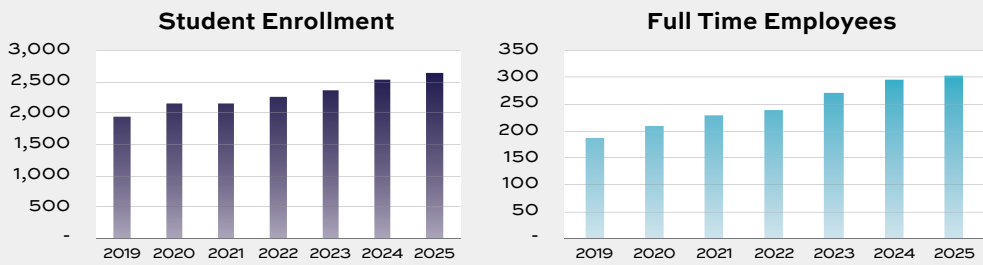
November 2023 – July 2024



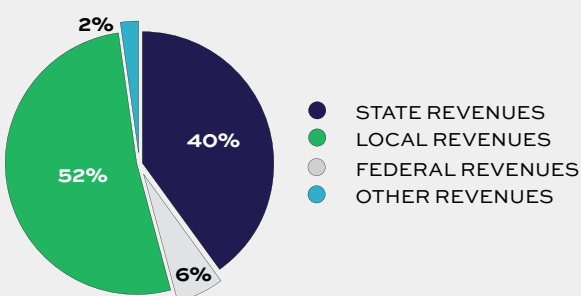
“Financial transparency in schools not only enhances accountability but also ensures that every dollar is a step toward enriching student learning and community trust.”

Chad Green, SFO
Chief School Financial Officer
Gulf Shores City Schools

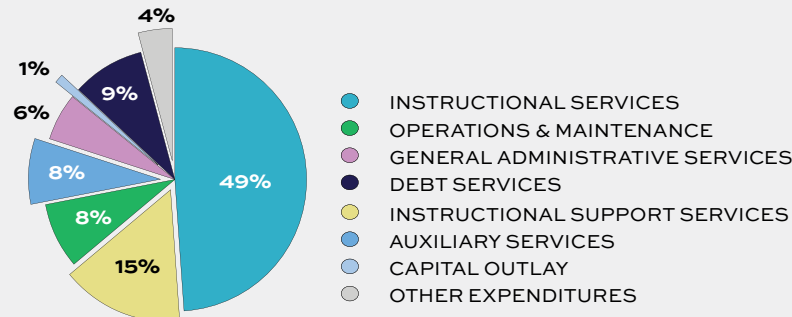
EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT GROWTH 2019-2025



FISCAL YEAR 2024 REVENUES



FISCAL YEAR 2024 EXPENDITURES



Find additional financial information at www.gsboe.org/departments/finance/.



GULF SHORES CITY SCHOOLS
300 E 16TH AVE
GULF SHORES, AL 36542



DOLPHIN FOUNDATION
FOR EDUCATION AND ARTS

PAST & PRESENT PROJECTS!

- Adopt A Teacher Program - National Board Certification
- Band Room Projection System
- Barr Group Mortgage Financial Lab
- Barr Group Mortgage Ramsey Financial Program
- Bike Barn
- Cheer Uniforms for the Mighty Fins
- Chorale Risers
- Collaborative Learning Area Furniture
- Culinary Competition Travel, Uniforms, Lodging
- Dolphin Sound Costumes
- Eco Learning Summer Camp
- Fine Arts Audio Cart
- GSHS/GSMS/GSES Media Center Furniture
- GSCS Choir Music/Uniforms
- GSMS Gym Sound System
- Gulf Shores Kids Hope USA Mentor Program
- Hangout Music Lab
- Jason J Stephenson Scholarships
- Lab Microscopes
- LuLu's Steel Drum Band
- Paradise Remax Walking School Bus
- Scholars' Bowl
- Spanish Immersion Summer Camp
- Stage Construction and Lighting
- STEAM Aquariums
- Turbo Dolphins Racing
- Volkert Center For Applied Design
- Virtual Reality Headsets

**MORE THAN \$500K HAS
BEEN CONTRIBUTED TO
GULF SHORES CITY SCHOOLS.**

For more information or to become a member visit:
WWW.THEGSDF.ORG

