ISSUE 5 MAY 2025

The MakeWaves Monthly

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



Superintendents' Message

Congratulations to the Class of 2025! As we close out the 2024-2025 school year, we want parents to know how much we appreciate you entrusting Gulf Shores City Schools with the education and care of your children. We strive to help all of our students explore their interest, achieve their potential, and develop lifelong healthy habits. We hope everyone has had a wonderful year and will have a fantastic summer. We close out the year with many exciting activities that have taken place: our middle school students surfing on their own created surfboards, our bike to school day, our high school student's artwork selected to hang at the new GSIA-Allegiant Terminal, and our spring sports excelling. GSCS offers various summer camps for students. Please take the opportunity to see what is available throughout the summer to get your child involved in fun and learning activities. We look forward to seeing our returning students on August 7th. If you have not registered your child(ren) for the 25-26 school year, please do so as soon as possible as schedules are being created. Choose To Be Greater: Become A Dolphin!

MakeWaves!

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

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL

HIGH SCHOOL

VIRTUAL ACADEMY



Health & Wellness



Athletics



Arts Education



Teaching & Learning

Meet Our Student WaveMakers of the Month

Elementary School
Roman de Armas



Grade - 4th Grade

Area of Recognition - Leadership

I'm a WaveMaker because...

Roman is a great example for our Dolphins! Moving from Texas and starting with brand new people this school year, Roman has stepped up in all of his classes as a leader. He is considerate of others, works hard to learn as much as he can, and never gives up in challenging times. Roman is also very dependable, never forgetting his classroom job of 'greeter' each morning and afternoon, reminding Ms. Newsom of tasks that need to be completed in the classroom, and working the coffee cart with Mrs. Oglesby. Our school is so lucky to have Roman!
~Nominated by Jennifer Newsom, 4th Grade Teacher~

Middle School
Michael Sink



Grade - 7th Grade

Area of Recognition - Leadership

I'm a WaveMaker because...

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I nominate Michael Sink for the prestigious WaveMaker Award. As a dedicated student-athlete at Gulf Shores Middle School, Michael represents the very best of our school community. His exceptional work ethic, sportsmanship, and leadership both on and off the field make him an exemplary role model for his peers. Michael's commitment to excellence is evident in all that he does. Whether he's competing in athletic events or working on his studies, he brings the same level of passion, discipline, and perseverance. His positive attitude and respect for others inspire those around him, and he consistently sets a high standard for what it means to be a student-athlete.
In addition to his athletic achievements, Michael is a compassionate and kind individual who goes out of his way to support and encourage his teammates and classmates. His leadership qualities shine through, and he has earned the respect of both coaches and peers alike.
Michael truly exemplifies the spirit of a WaveMaker by embodying the values of hard work, integrity, and community spirit. I can think of no better candidate for this honor, and I wholeheartedly recommend him for the WaveMaker Award.
~Nominated by Larry Craig Shoemaker, Student Services~

High School
Reagan Back



Grade - 11th Grade

Area of Recognition - Yearbook contributor & awesome student

I'm a WaveMaker because...

Reagan has become one of my favorite people! I met Reagan initially when she walked into Yearbook class on the first day of school. I quickly learned that she had a great eye for the yearbook and made great points that I hadn't yet thought about when it comes to the design, layout, fonts, and all of those other little details that the regular person may not notice. Reagan has also shown that her wit is on another level, which is always helpful for me as a teacher at 8am! She is also one of those students who I frequently call on to assist me with organizing and planning events. She's super dependable and one of those rare teenagers you can really count on to get something done if I'm out one day, to double check a list I've made, or to find out information we need for the yearbook. Reagan is also a very talented actor in our theater department. She did an amazing job playing Sandy in the SpongeBob Musical recently; she made everyone laugh and she had an exceptional voice! I have really enjoyed having Reagan this year, and the student body can only hope she will still be in Yearbook next year.
~Nominated by Leah Cooper, Media/STEM~

What is a WaveMaker? Someone who incites action or activity.

Meet Our Staff WaveMakers of the Month



Elementary School
Jamie Smith

I'm a WaveMaker because...

I am voting for Jamie Smith because she is all around awesome! She is a team player and will help you even on her busiest day. If she doesn't have a way to help you with your issue, she will kindly do her best to guide you in the right direction. Mrs. Smith is kind to her students and her colleagues. I am very thankful to have the opportunity to work with Mrs. Jamie Smith.

Jamie is one of the most dependable people you will ever meet. She is a quiet leader and encourager. There have been many days over the last four years when she has shared an encouraging word, email, or prayer with me, and some of those very things are what carried me through that day. She exudes goodness and patience, which is especially important when teaching kindergarten. We are going to miss her in retirement but wish her so much happiness and joy in the days to come! We love you, Jamie!

~Nominated by Kristin Nolan and Admin Team~



Middle School
Ashley Arnold

I'm a WaveMaker because...

I nominate Ashley Arnold for Wave Maker of the Month. Ashley gives our students so many opportunities to learn skills that will benefit them in the real world.
Ashley excels as a Career Exploration and Business/Marketing teacher. Her ability to make complex subjects engaging and accessible is unparalleled. She goes above and beyond to connect with her students, guiding them through valuable lessons that prepare them for the future, whether they are interested in pursuing business careers or exploring other fields. Ashley's passion for teaching is contagious, and she creates a learning environment that encourages curiosity, critical thinking, and collaboration.
This year, her students have designed, created, and sold buttons for different sporting events—learning about marketing, design, budgeting, and sales along the way. She also brought the Global Reach and Teach project to GSMS, where students planned and hosted a school-wide concert from start to finish. From organizing logistics to promoting the event, students were in charge of every detail. Watching them take ownership and light up with pride as their projects were shared with the school and community is what makes teaching so rewarding.
Ashley is always looking for the next creative, meaningful way to engage her students, teach them skills for the real world, find their passions, and help them shine! For all this and more, she is truly a WaveMaker!!
~Nominated by Kristen Weaver~



High School
Leta Stephens

I'm a WaveMaker because...

Mrs. Leta Stephens is an absolute rockstar! I've known Leta on a personal level for a few years, but didn't know much about her as an educator until this year. Leta was swamped for several months preparing for our juniors to take the ACT in March. Not only is she teaching ACT prep throughout the school day, but she also put in so much work to make sure our students, and junior teachers, had everything they needed during our ACT bootcamp that lasted several weeks. Her effort was not only seen, but proven, after our students made significant gains with this year's test! While she was in the middle of the ACT push, she was also in charge of all of the prom decorating! She was constantly placing orders, working with the junior class officers, unpacking boxes and enlisting students to assist in building decor in her classroom. And of course, prom went off without a hitch! Mrs. Stephens is a huge asset to our students, but an even better coworker. I know it's cliche, but she truly is a joy (and quite comical) to be around on a daily basis!
~Nominated by Leah Cooper~

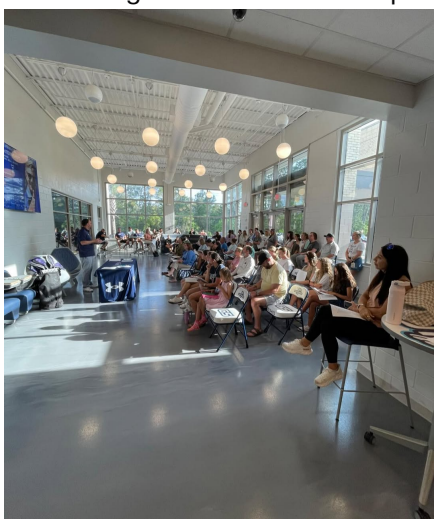
What is a WaveMaker? Someone who incites action or activity.



Thrilled to share that Serenity at GSMS received an Honorable Mention for the 68 Ventures Bowl Mobile Art competition! So proud of her talent and hard work!



Another packed parent meeting for 7-12th grade girls basketball! Looking forward to a great Summer. Go Dolphins!



Special Thanks to Dr. Nelson, Mrs. Green, Mrs. Altmyer and Gulf Shores Virtual Academy for coordinating Earth Day 2025 for Gulf Shores Elementary School and Gulf Shores Middle School!



Field trip day for these amazing GSES K-Kids! They spent the day blessing the community with good deeds! They visited Angie's Doghouse to drop off a heafty donation of supplies to help all of the rescue animals and got to meet & spend time with lots of new friends.





Tucker King signed with Segers Aero Corp today.
He will earn his Associate degree at Coastal AL Community College, tuition free, and graduate with over 2,000 hours of paid work experience.
We are so proud of Tucker and wish him much success in the future!



Thank you to Tambo from Tambo's Surf and Skate Shop! He gave our 8th graders some tips and tricks during their ongoing "glassing" process in Mr.Prince's Makerspace class.
Surfs Up and Make Waves!







Congratulations to Luna Collum! Luna won first place in the 20th Annual Youth Poetry Contest for her age group!



It's official #24 Keyona Royal will be missed greatly, but we are so proud of the student and athlete she has become. She has left a lasting mark on our program and SMCC is getting a great one! Go Bears! And as always, Go Dolphins!



It's that time of year again! Gulf Shores City Schools is excited to offer a Theatre Camp to students rising into 5th through 8th grade. The camp will take place June 10-12 and 16-18. Camp runs from 9:00AM to 3:00PM each day and lunch is included. Students will work alongside high school theatre students and staff exploring the various aspects of theatre. This includes acting, lighting, and prop designing.
To register, please follow this link:
Theatre Summer Camp
Any questions can be sent to William Mixon at wmixon@gsboe.org.



GSMS placed 1st and 2nd place in Intermediate Modified Race Division and 2nd place in Intermediate Stock Race Division! We are so proud of this team! What a wonderful way to end such an amazing weekend!



Congratulations to the **@clasleaders** District 1 Schools of Distinction and to **@clasleaders** Banner School Winner Gulf Shores Middle School pictured with **#ALBOE** Member Jackie Zeigler.





Congratulations to the 11 Gulf Shores Middle School art students selected for publication in the Spring 2025 edition of the national Celebrating Art Contest! This prestigious achievement highlights their exceptional creativity, as only the finest artwork is chosen from thousands of entries nationwide. Well done!





Signing Day for our golfers!





Students at GSMS worked incredibly hard designing and creating stunning fashion pieces made entirely from recycled materials—including pizza boxes, trash bags, and playing cards. Their imaginative designs turned everyday waste into runway-worthy art.











GULF CAMP will be at the NEW Gulf Coast Eco Center! Ages 7-13. Activities can include kayaking, biking, beach exploration, swimming, nature, arts and crafts, outdoor cooking, ropes course* (ages 10+), and more.



Congratulations to Franklin Weston Reed and Marija Turkic for graduating with an Associate's Degree from Coastal Alabama Community College last week! They were able to earn their degrees by taking advantage of the dual enrollment opportunities offered at GSHS. Monday, they will join their Class of 2025 classmates at The Wharf and receive their high school diplomas!



We're so proud of our Gulf Shores High School Health Science Academy Senior Patient Care Technicians!
We celebrated their achievements at a special pinning ceremony, where each PCT received a pin representing their dedication to compassionate, high-quality care.
This year's class made history — 100% pass rate on the National Certification exam!
From just 3 students in 2021 to our biggest group yet with 15 future healthcare heroes, this program keeps growing strong.
Several have already landed PCT jobs after graduation — a testament to their hard work and bright futures.
Congratulations to the Class of 2025 — the future of healthcare is in great hands!





#alboe Members were all present for our incredible night honoring Alabama's State and District Teachers of the Year — congratulations to each of these talented educators and thank you for all that you do!
2025-2026 District Teachers of theYear
District I — **#alboe** Member Jackie Zeigler
Angela Kirby, Gulf Shores City School System – Gulf Shores Middle School, District I Elementary Teacher of the Year
Kristen Madsen, Gulf Shores City School System – Gulf Shores High School, District I Secondary Teacher of the Year



The Gulf Shores Middle School Peer Helpers were invited to Gulf Shores Elementary School to talk to the rising fourth and fifth grade students regarding applying for Peer Helpers for next school year! It is one of the only clubs that the students can do in elementary, middle and high school!







Our Kiwanis Club helped the Gulf Shores Elementary School K Kids celebrate a successful school year at their end of the year party! We had the opportunity to share more about the Kiwanis Club and what we did as well as hear about all of their service projects throughout the year. We are so proud of these students and wish them the best in Middle School!











Congratulations to the 17 talented GSMS art students who have advanced to the next round of judging in the American Legion National Poppy Poster Contest!



Karagrace Harmon Earns Sirens of Sea Scholarship

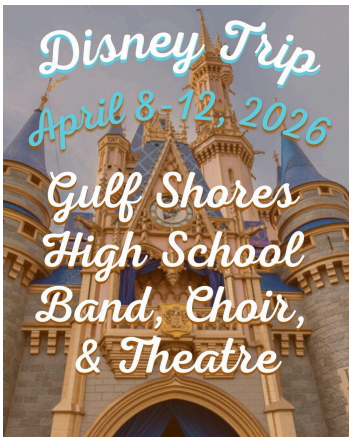
The Sirens of the Sea Mardi Gras krewe award senior female students in local high schools every year with a scholarship. This year's winner for Gulf Shores High School was Karagrace Harmon who will be attending Auburn University in the Fall.



Rising high school band, choir, and theatre students have the opportunity to travel to Disney for workshops and time in the Disney parks! This trip is optional and at the expense of the individual students. Parents are welcome to secure their own arrangements with the travel agency, however due to space limitations, the school trip is limited to students. Payments are monthly and the initial deposit of $175 is due June 2nd.

Find more details at the link below!

https://www.travelleadersstudenttours.com/gshs-disney.../



GSMS celebrated the end of the school year and our awesome students with a little game of golf! Students who qualified through behavior, grades, and attendance got to attend a field trip to Top Golf in Mobile. They had a blast hanging out with friends and working on their golf swing!











Congratulations to the Class of 2025 Seal of Biliteracy recipients!
To receive this distinction, these students demonstrated proficiency in English and a world language. They will be able to share this accomplishment with colleges and employers as a tangible way to highlight their proficiency in a world language.



The GSES and GSMS summer camp staff spent the day touring the ECOtourism Center and getting things ready to kick off summer camp.



A BIG thank you to PTO, Yabba's Wacky Snack Shack, and Papa Rocco's for sponsoring the summer camp staff lunch! It was a very nice treat as teachers geared up to welcome students back for camp!



GlenLakes member, Lillian Kent, won the 11-12, Girls "B" Division, on the Jimmy Green Junior Golf tour at GlenLakes/Dunes on Thursday.
Lillian fired a (46) in rainy conditions to win her division.
This is Lillian's first junior golf victory! Way to go, Lillian!



Big thanks to Mr. Jesse for getting all the tech together for our summer programs!



As graduation approaches for the Class of 2025, we thought we would share of few photos from Senior Awards Day that you might have missed.
https://photos.app.goo.gl/PYMSfbxYRtSRo7XS9
Thanks to Ms. Cooper and her yearbook staff for taking these.

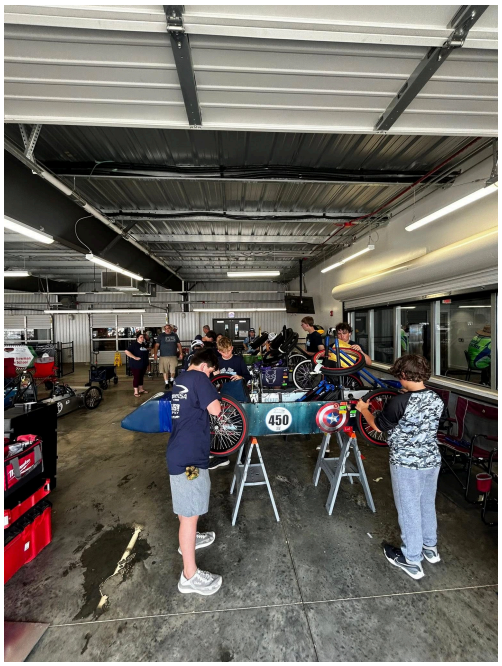


Gulf Shores Turbo Dolphins

The Turbo Dolphins are getting ready to race in the National Championship at **Talladega Superspeedway**

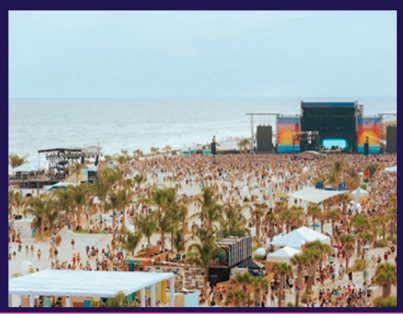








CONGRATULATIONS!
GSHS - SAND IN MY BOOTS FESTIVAL INTERNS 2025



LAURA GARCIA
WARREN WATES
ASHTON SANDERS
MOLLY HENRY
OLIVIA PLYS
MAX WATERS
ANA VO

SADIE HOLLAND
GERALD WOODARD
JADELYNN PETITJEAN
CAROLINA MONTES
SHERLYN TELLEZ
MICHELLE LAWRENCE

Sand In My Boots Interns





GESE: Get Ready For School Fall 2025

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Olensky Brothers
OFFICE PRODUCTS & SCHOOL SUPPLIES

2025 BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPLY PACKS

Gulf Shores Elementary

★ AVOID SHOPPING HASSLES
★ SAVE TIME & MONEY
★ GET THE BRANDS REQUESTED BY TEACHERS
★ PRE-PACKED FOR EACH STUDENT

GRADE LEVEL	COST PER PACK
PreK (optional)	$104
K	$121
1ST	$106
2ND	$100
3RD	$106
4TH	$94
5TH	$96

DEADLINE TO ORDER:
FRIDAY, JULY 11, 2025

☆☆☆

PACKS WILL BE DELIVERED TO THE SCHOOL!

To see list of supplies when ordering click "more options" under the grade you would like to view.

ONLINE ORDERING: WWW.OLENSKYBROTHERS.COM

Click on the "School Supply Packs" tab...find your school on the left-hand side, choose your grade(s) and pay online! Please fill out the bill to and ship to information even though your pack will be delivered to school.

Please email courtney@olenskybrothers.com or call us at (251) 438-2851 if you have any questions!

Bike To School Day Was A Success!















Junior City Council

The City Council recognized the hardworking members of our very first Junior City Council for successfully completing their 2024-2025 term. Over the past year, these thirteen students committed their time and energy to learning how local government works, meeting with department heads, and taking part in community events. Their big project—a spring market with over 20 vendors—showcased their teamwork and leadership in action. We're proud of these future leaders for their dedication to civic engagement and for setting such a strong example for Gulf Shores youth!

This year's Junior City Council members:

- Julianna Achimon
- Baylen Byrd
- Claire Colvin
- Skylar Gant
- Mylah Howard
- Ashley Jennings
- Carleigh Jurkiewicz
- Amelia Kozyuk
- Nora Malone
- Carson McKee
- Ella Sanders
- Haven Spruiell
- Amelie Walker









Congratulations to our 2025-2026 Gulf Shores High School Marching Band

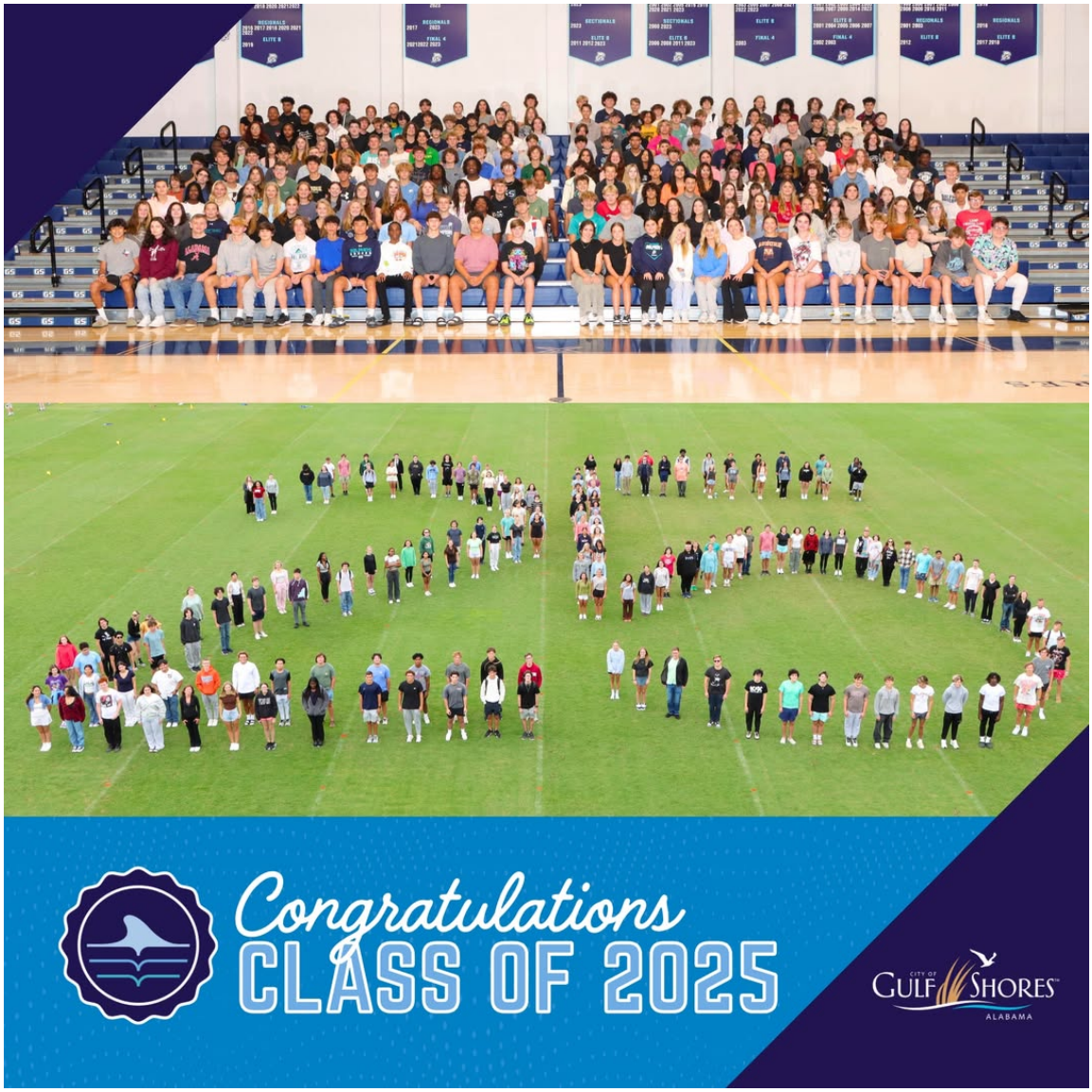








Congratulations to the Gulf Shores High School Class of 2025!





GSHS Boys & Girls State

Congratulations to the following students who were selected to represent Gulf Shores High School as Girls State and Boys State representatives!



Logan McMahon
The reason I'm excited for Boys State is that I get to meet lots of new people from all over Alabama. Later in life I plan on going to college at the University of South Alabama to study and get a degree in Pharmacy where I will continue this practice in the Army National Guard as a Pharmacy Specialist.



Satchel Kornegay
I'm excited to learn leadership skills and learn in-depth information about our State Government at Alabama Boys State. I plan on majoring in Political Science and am undecided on where I will be going to college.



David Graham Stewart
The thing I am most excited about Boys State is the ability to connect with other. After high school, I plan to attend college and pursue a degree in accounting.



William Wallace Russell
One reason I am excited for Boys State is the connections I will make for my future development in academics. Connecting with both staff members and fellow students will both be beneficial for my academic career. My future plans include going to a good college, likely for a mathematics related degree, and getting into said college for decent money.



Anna Leigh Price
I am thrilled to attend Girl's State this June. I am eager to participate in civic activities and enhance my leadership skills, which will undoubtedly motivate me more to pursue a master's degree in administration.



Portia Hollis
I'm excited to meet new people, enhance my public speaking skills, and have intellectual conversations at Girls State! In the future, I hope to attend college with a major in corporate communications and public relations with a minor in theater.

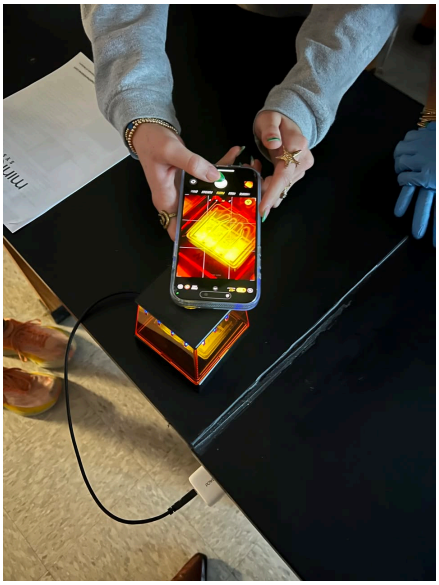
Thank You to the Dolphin Foundation for Education & Arts

We are incredibly grateful to the Dolphin Foundation for their generous support in helping us bring new science equipment into our classrooms. Thanks to their donation, students in Biology, Honors Biology, AP Biology, Marine Science, and Environmental Science now have access to the MiniOne Gel Electrophoresis and PCR system from Embi Tec.

These tools are making it possible for our students to explore advanced molecular biology techniques in a hands-on, approachable way. Teachers are able to use simple kits that make complex processes — like DNA analysis — more accessible and engaging.

The photos feature our AP Biology students using the system to investigate bacterial transformation — a great example of how this equipment is already enhancing student learning in real time.

We're excited to continue expanding opportunities for meaningful, real-world science experiences in the classroom. Thank you again to the Dolphin Foundation for Education & Arts for making this possible!







New Volleyball Head Coach!

Gulf Shores Athletics is excited to announce Laura Davis as our new Head Coach for volleyball.
Let's go, Dolphins!

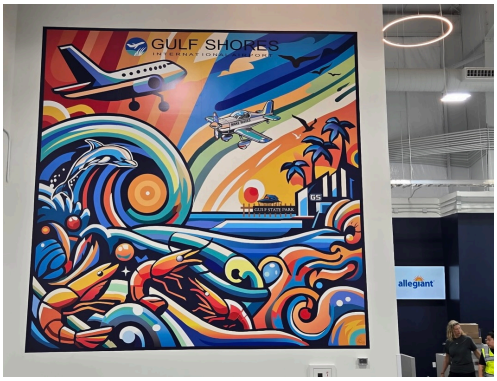


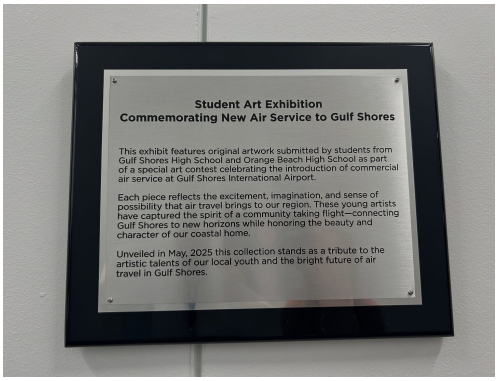
LAURA DAVIS

HEAD COACH
GULF SHORES VOLLEYBALL

NEW GSIA-Allegiant Terminal

What an Honor! GSHS & OBHS Creatives and GSHS Art teacher (Austin Boyd - Mural Design) were blessed to have artwork displayed in the NEW GSIA-Allegiant Terminal! Big thanks to Jesse Fosnaugh (GSIA), Dr. Akin, Cindy Veazey & Sandi Harris (GSCS), City of Gulf Shores and Randy Ford-Vinyl Sign Solutions (Mural Installation) and our students: Ethan Carias, Finn Owen, Alyssa Goff, Tessa Madsen, Rea Derstine, Ryker Ullerich, Phoenix Wallace and Sierra Rayfield (OBHS). Congrats!













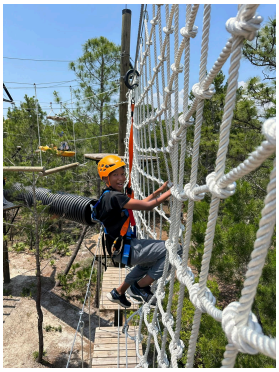


Gulf Coast Center for Tourism

These stellar students climbed to new heights on the ropes course at the Gulf Coast Center for Ecotourism!

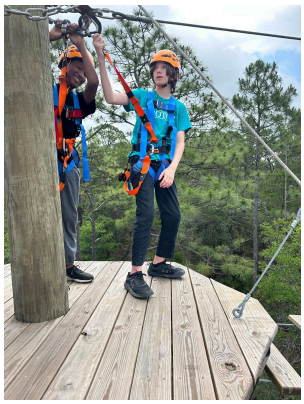















Surfboards Ready to MakeWaves in the Gulf

Mr. Prince's GSMS 8th graders have been working all year to make surfboards. The students completed every step of the process. Yesterday, they got to take their surfboards to the water to test them out!
A huge thanks to **Tambo's Surf Shack** and Roy Wetson for their help along the way and for surf training! Jeremy Fields from Frontline Ministries also helped us out by loaning us surfboard fins and leashes. Thank you to Nurse Jill for making the trip to the beach to make sure everyone stayed safe and so our students could test out their boards!















Happy Retirement from GSCS!

Congratulations to Mrs. Weems, Mrs. Smith, and Mrs. Altmyer who will all be retiring this year, each with 25+ years in education!



We are sad to say goodbye to six of our staff members because they are off to enjoy their well-earned retirement! Our hallways won't be the same without them, but they have all earned some rest, relaxation, and some quiet time! Mrs. McClung's class made each of them a poster to send them off with reminders of the impact they made over their years at GSMS.



We celebrated some of the best of the best who spent their final educational days with us! Happy Retirement to Chesley Bowling, Denise Harrison, Wil Tuggle, Lynn Lowell, Tara Smith, Amy McKenzie, and Leanne Colvin. You all have made a lady impact on the lives that have ventured through this place! Always a Dolphin!





ECO Tourism Camp for GSES & GSMS











































GSCS: Returning Students Registration





SAVE the DATE!

5/29-6/27 GSES & GSMS: Summer Camp
6/5 GSCS: Active Shooter Training
6/5 BOE: Work Session 4:00pm
6/10,11,12,16,17,18 GSCS: Theatre Camp Grades 5th-8th at GSHS
6/12 BOE: Regular Board Meeting 5:00pm

Enjoy these new GSCS commercials!

We Believe…

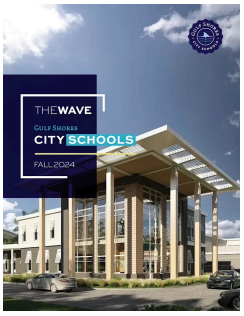
What If…

GSCS Board Meeting Round Up: Too busy to attend school board meetings, but still wanna know more? Check out the episodes of **"Board Shorts"** to stay up-to-date.

Happening at GSCS:

District
Elementary School
Middle School
High School
Virtual Academy

Gulf Shores City Schools has a new magazine - The Wave! Extra copies are available in school offices, most city offices, the visitors center, and the Chamber of Commerce! Please pick up a copy!



Gulf Shores City Schools have a new GSCS Mobile App! Available in IOS and Android Stores, the GSCS mobile app will give you immediate information! Download yours today!

Connect With Us:

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