



Minute with Miller Back to School Edition



WELCOME BACK PANTHER FAMILIES!



It's hard to believe summer is already winding down, but we are so excited to welcome you back for the 2025-2026 school year! With a week until our school doors reopen, our teachers, school leaders, and administrative staff are working diligently to plan for the return of our students. This special Back-to-School issue aims to provide GCSS updates and reminders to assist you in preparing for another great school year!

This year, we will continue to use our Strategic Plan as a roadmap, refocusing our work on literacy, student achievement, and improving attendance. As part of our ongoing Leader in Me journey, we are encouraging every student and adult in our system to live by our shared commitments:

- **Be Here** - Show up, be present, and give your best effort
- **Be Kind** - Treat others with respect, patience, and understanding
- **Be Your Best** - Take ownership of your learning and lead by example

We are committed to ensuring that every Panther has the tools, support, and encouragement they need to thrive--in school and in life. Together, we are **Preparing Panthers for their Highest Potential!**

As we open the doors to a new school year, I want to thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. Whether your child is entering Pre-K or preparing to graduate, we are here to walk beside you every step of the way. This is going to be a strong year filled with meaningful learning, lasting relationships, and Panther pride.

I look forward to seeing you at Open House and working together throughout the year.

Let's have a great year, Panthers!

Sincerely,
Jessica Miller



Preparing Panthers for their Highest Potential



► UPCOMING EVENTS

- Open House, Thursday, July 31st (4:00 - 7:00)
 - Visit the gym first for free supplies, schedules, and much more!
- Special Sessions @ Open House with Jesse Hambrick
- First day of School, August 4th



Jesse Hambrick

Jesse Hambrick, a recognized speaker and expert in school safety and student well-being will be presenting two timely and critical sessions during Open House:

Topics will include the new Distraction Free Education Legislation, Social Media Awareness, and Vaping

Sessions will be held in the cafeteria at 5:00 and 6:00. Be sure to visit!



DID YOU KNOW???

Glascock County Middle-High School was recognized last school year as a Mathematics Leader in Georgia for outstanding growth on 8th Grade and High School assessments and a Literacy Leader for outstanding growth on 6th grade assessments!

These honors reflect the hard work of our students, teachers, and families working together. Let's keep the momentum going into this new year!



▶ NEW FACES AT GC



Shayna Welch
2nd Grade Teacher



Alannah Sammons
Special Education
Teacher

**WELCOME
TO THE TEAM!**

We are thrilled to welcome two new faces to our Panther team this year!

DISTRACTION FREE SCHOOLS ACT

This past legislative session, Georgia legislators passed the Distraction Free Schools Act to be fully implemented by the 2026-2027 school year.

What's Already in Place:

At Glascock County Schools, cell phones and personal electronic devices have not been allowed during the school day for many years, and we will continue to enforce our existing rules throughout the 2025–2026 school year. These practices already align with much of the Distraction-Free Schools Act, and we are proud to be ahead of the curve.

What This Means for Students:

- Personal phones, earbuds (unless permitted for instructional purposes by the teacher) , and smartwatches may not be used during the instructional day.
- Devices must be turned off and stored in a phone locker during the school day.
- Repeated violations will result in disciplinary action.

Why This Matters:

Research shows that even the presence of a smartphone can reduce students' ability to concentrate, retain information, and engage in meaningful learning. This law also supports student mental health by encouraging face-to-face interaction and limiting access to social media during school hours.

Planning Ahead:

As we prepare to meet the additional requirements of the law that go into effect in the 2026–2027 school year, we will be holding parent and student input meetings throughout the year. These sessions will help shape our local implementation plan and ensure our policies reflect the needs and voices of our school community.

We appreciate your continued support in helping our students stay focused, connected, and successful!



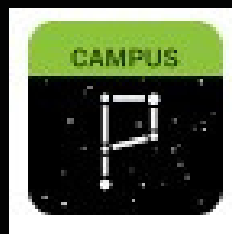
NEW & IMPROVED COMMUNICATION TOOLS

We're making it easier than ever to stay connected with everything happening in the Glascock County School System. This year, we're excited to roll out new and simplified platforms to help families stay informed and engaged:

Infinite Campus – Campus Parent & Campus Student Apps

Available for both parents and students, these apps provide instant access to:

-  Attendance
-  Grades & Assignments
-  Online Fee Payments
-  School Notifications



Coming Soon!



Glascock County School System App!

Our new district-wide mobile app is launching in the coming weeks! It will serve as a one-stop shop for all things school-related – perfect for families who don't use Facebook. All school news, events, and updates will populate from Facebook and our school website directly into the app feed.

One Messaging Platform – Districtwide!

We've heard your feedback and we are streamlining our communication! All school messages from teachers, coaches, administrators, and clubs will now come through one unified system. That means:

-  No more switching between Remind, Dojo, Band, or other apps
-  One consistent, easy-to-use communication experience for all families

You'll be able to access lunch menus, calendars, and more in one convenient place. Stay tuned for launch instructions and a step-by-step guide to getting started! We're confident these changes will help keep you better informed and connected throughout the school year!



Preparing Panthers for their Highest Potential



▶ ATTENDANCE, TARDINESS, AND EARLY CHECKOUT UPDATES

NEW

As a result of new legislation and growing accountability measures, Glascock County School System will implement updated attendance, tardy, and early checkout protocols beginning this school year.

While our focus remains on supporting families and keeping students engaged, the changes include a more structured response to repeated unexcused absences and tardies—especially those that interrupt instructional time.

- ◆ Progressive intervention steps now include parent meetings, seat time recovery, and limitations on extracurricular participation.
- ◆ For older students, driving privileges may be impacted.
- ◆ Repeated issues may result in referrals to DFCS and Department of Juvenile Justice.
- ◆ Tardies and early checkouts will reset each semester, giving students a fresh start.

More details will be shared at Open House, including grade-level specifics and how families can stay informed through our Parent Campus app.

▶ NEW GRADING POLICY: CLEARER FOCUS ON STUDENT MASTERY

This year, GCSS is adopting a refined grading policy designed to better reflect what students know and are able to do independently. The goal is to emphasize academic mastery.

Grades K-5

- Formative Assessments – 40%
- Summative Assessments – 60%

Grades 6-12

- Formative Assessments – 30%
- Summative Assessments – 50%
- Nine Weeks Exam – 20%

This new structure is intended to help teachers and parents identify student strengths and learning needs more accurately, while promoting independent performance on grade-level standards.

If you have questions about the grading updates, teachers and administrators will be available during Open House!

▶ COMMUNITY PARTNERS SUPPORTING PANTHER FAMILIES

We are grateful for our ongoing partnership with Family Connection and Communities In Schools (FCCIS) of Glascock County, who work alongside our staff to support students and families year-round.

During Open House, this organization will be set up in the gym to share information and assist with the following:

✦ After School Program Registration

Sign your child up for a safe, structured after-school environment that supports academic and social growth.

✦ CIS Support Services

Meet the CIS Site Coordinator, Katherine Perry, and learn how she can support your child with school success planning, behavior check-ins, and connections to family resources.

Communities In Schools
Glascock County

Welcome
BACK TO SCHOOL

SURROUNDING STUDENTS WITH A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT
Communities In Schools (CIS) works inside schools to remove barriers so every student can succeed. We provide support to help students stay in school, stay engaged, and achieve in life.

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOL SITE COORDINATOR
I'm here to help students overcome obstacles, whether that's in the classroom, at home, or in the community. From check-ins to crisis support, I'm part of your student's support system.

CONTACT
Katherine Perry
(706) 607-2278
kperry@glascock.k12.ga.us

MENU OF SUPPORT SERVICES
ACADEMIC SUPPORT
Encouragement to attend, engage, and succeed
• Motivation for learning
• Help with attendance & follow-through
MENTORING
A steady, trusted adult to connect with & talk to
• One-on-one check-ins
• Positive relationships & trust-building
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING
Tools for managing emotions & behavior
• Conflict resolution
• Coping skills
• Behavior coaching
BASIC NEEDS SUPPORT
Bridges to meet everyday needs
• Referrals for food, clothing, housing
• Hygiene & seasonal assistance
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
Connection to community and school
• Resource navigation
• Support during transitions or crises

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
Want to make a difference?
• Donate school supplies or clothing
• Partner for events or services
• Volunteer or mentor a student
• Help us build stronger community support
Get in touch to learn more!

Other ongoing opportunities through FCCIS include:

👕 Clothes Closet – Back-to-school shopping with most items just \$0.50! Open Saturdays & Wednesdays from 9 AM to 12 PM

💬 Behavior Support Groups

💡 Financial Literacy Workshops

🔧 Heating & A/C Assistance Programs

🥫 Food Pantry & Diaper Pantry

💪 Resilient Teen Program – Focused on building coping skills and confidence

Be sure to stop by their table in the gym during Open House to learn more or get connected with support services for your family!