



**Calhoun  
County**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

**2024-25 Annual Report**

# A Message from the Superintendent

Entering my second year as Superintendent, I am continually inspired by the strength and spirit of our school community—comprised of remarkable families, dedicated educators, and exceptional students. These individuals form the backbone of a district that is truly special.

In Calhoun County, we pursue excellence in every area. Academically, our students consistently achieve at high levels, as reflected in our strong graduation rate and district report card. In the arts, our award-winning programs continue to gain recognition across the state and beyond. On the field and court, our student athletes represent us with talent, grit, and championship success.

More than achievements, however, we take great pride in the values we uphold. Our core principles—Integrity, Excellence, and a Positive Attitude—guide every decision we make and every lesson we teach. These values are at the heart of our mission to empower students for lifelong success.

We are also proud of our partnerships with Jacksonville State University and numerous local industries that help bring real-world opportunities to our students. Through our robust Career Academy, we offer 14 career paths, a growing virtual school, and more than 1,454 dual enrollment classes. These programs are designed to prepare our students for whatever path they choose.

As we look ahead, we are filled with optimism and excitement for the future. Thank you for your support and for being part of this extraordinary district. I am honored to serve as your superintendent, and I look forward to the incredible things we will accomplish together.

With pride and appreciation,

*Tony Willis*

Superintendent, Calhoun County Schools





Board Members (left to right): Mike Almaroad, Tobi Burt, Michael Webb (President), Bobby Tittle (Vice President), Alan Mange, Joe Lathers, and Allen George.

From being newly elected to being among the most veteran board member in the state - this dedicated group of men generously give their time and work together as a unified team. Their shared commitment centers on doing what is best for students, making decisions that empower them for lifelong success. We are truly fortunate to have their leadership.



**Focused on  
Success for ALL**

**Mission: Empowering students for lifelong success**

**In partnership with families and community, the vision of the Calhoun County School District is to focus on the value of learning - ensuring success and maximizing potential as we empower students to be productive citizens.**

## *Beliefs*

- We believe every student deserves a safe, positive learning environment that is conducive to learning.
- We believe all students can be successful.
- We believe positive teacher-student relationships contribute to student success.
- We believe schools lay the foundation of good citizenship and are the heartbeat of a community, where community stakeholders play a vital role in student learning.
- We believe in responsible stewardship of resources.
- We believe every employee is valued and accountable for student learning.
- We believe challenging and rigorous instruction is essential to student success.
- We believe each individual contributes to the larger community.
- We believe in fostering lifelong learning for students, leaders, faculty, and staff.
- We believe in the success of our students beyond their high school years.
- We believe when parents, teachers, and students are collaborative partners, students succeed.

# 2025-2030 Strategic Plan

During the 2024-25 school year, the Calhoun County School District engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning process, bringing together a diverse team of 21 participants including staff, administrators, parents, and community members. To ensure broad input, a county-wide survey was conducted, inviting feedback from all stakeholders. The insights gathered from the survey played a key role in shaping the district's direction. As a result, the Board approved a five-year strategic plan focused on long-term improvement and student success. To move the plan forward, action plan leaders and dedicated teams were appointed to develop and implement initiatives aligned with the five following strategic objectives:

1. Provide educational opportunities that empower students to continuously demonstrate growth and maximize their full potential and engage in lifelong learning.
2. Maximize opportunities to build and enrich stakeholder relationships to collaboratively promote lifelong student success.
3. Recruit, hire, and retain qualified personnel who continuously improve practices to focus on the value of learning and student success.
4. Maintain a sound fiscal structure that supports comprehensive district needs, while focusing on student success.
5. Maintain a multi-tiered system of support that promotes student success.

# Our District



**18**  
SCHOOLS



**7,670**  
STUDENTS



**1,267**  
EMPLOYEES



**99.6**  
AVERAGE CAFETERIA  
HEALTH RATING



**\$110M**  
OPERATING BUDGET



**1,454**  
DUAL ENROLLMENT  
CLASSES TAKEN



**48**  
NATIONALLY STEM  
CERTIFIED TEACHERS

**\$11,000,000**

IN SCHOLARSHIPS  
EARNED BY  
CLASS OF 2025



**16**  
NATIONAL BOARD  
CERTIFIED TEACHERS

# By the Numbers



**115**  
SENIORS WITH  
4.0 GPA



**585**  
CAREER ACADEMY  
STUDENTS



**8,606**  
MEALS SERVED  
PER DAY



**143**  
BUS ROUTES

**217**

FAMILIES BENEFITED  
FROM FOOD  
DISTRIBUTION



**26**  
STATE CHAMPIONS



**96%**  
GRADUATION RATE



**67**  
DEFIBULATORS



**22**  
NURSES

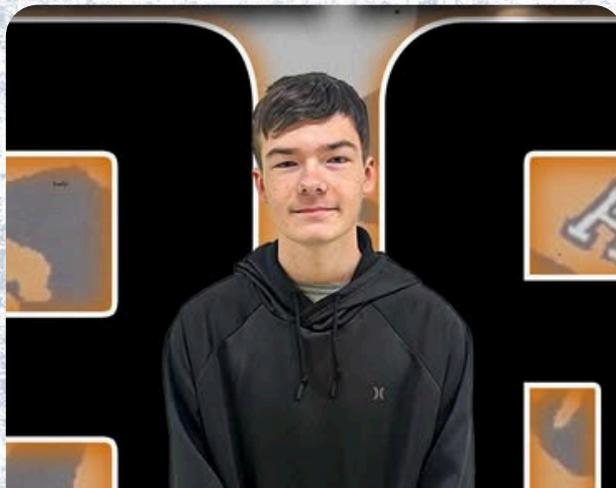
# Excellence in Academics



Calhoun County Schools empowers students with diverse academic opportunities in and out of the classroom that prepare them to lead, innovate, and excel. In 2025, two teams from Alexandria High School qualified for the Vex Robotics World Championship; White Plains Elementary, Middle, and High Schools swept the competition at the Calhoun County Scholars' Bowl; and Weaver Elementary's Greenpower team designed, built, and raced an electric car and ended the season ranked 11<sup>th</sup> nationally.



**Greenlee Orman (Ohatchee High School) earned JSU's first-ever Jax MIX Microcredential and also served as a legislative page for Governor Ivey.**



**Christopher Haynes (Alexandria High School) scored a perfect 36 on the ACT.**



**Bentley Rae Bean (Wellborn High School) was named one of six recipients of the Rising Star Scholarship sponsored by AmFirst Credit Union and WBRC Fox 6.**



**Andrew Thomas (Saks High School) placed fourth in the annual county spelling bee, earning the top spot from our school district.**

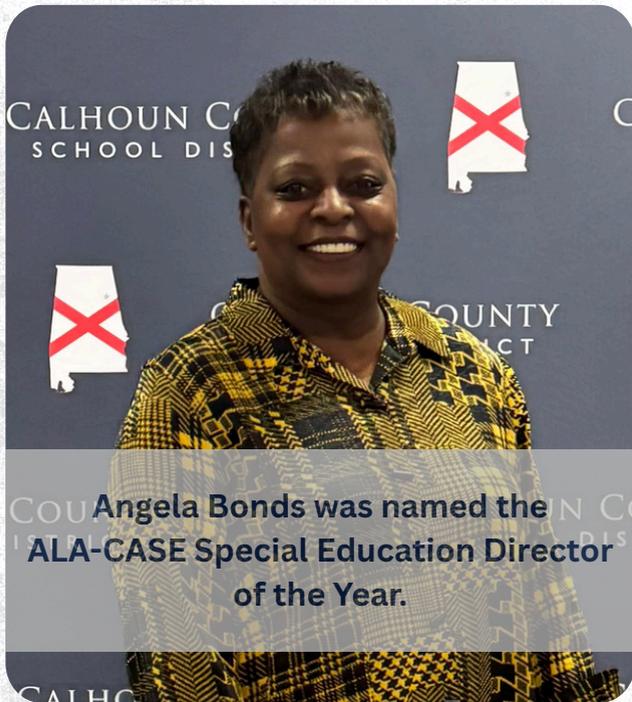
# Teachers of the Year



Julie Kochan and Paige Shaddix are the 2025 Teachers of the Year for Calhoun County Schools.

Julie Kochan is a 6<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher at Pleasant Valley Elementary School with a degree from Jacksonville State University and 24 years of experience. She also serves as a mentor for other teachers in the district and trains for A+ and AMSTI.

Paige Shaddix is the Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher and FCCLA advisor at Alexandria High School with bachelor's and master's degrees from Jacksonville State University and 24 years of experience.



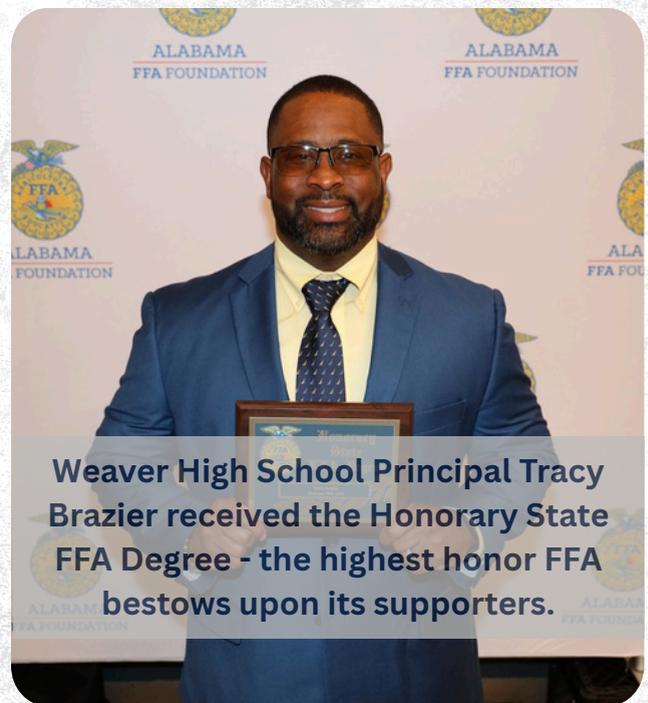
**Angela Bonds was named the ALA-CASE Special Education Director of the Year.**



**Wellborn High EMERGE Teacher Lori Lloyd was recognized as the ARC of Alabama Teacher of the Year.**



**Dr. Shannon Romano was named the ARC of Alabama Education Advocate of the Year.**



**Weaver High School Principal Tracy Brazier received the Honorary State FFA Degree - the highest honor FFA bestows upon its supporters.**





# Grow Our Own



Quinn Fezell, Georgia DeLoach, Savannah DeLoach, and Kensley Jones from White Plains High School won the state-wide “Grow Our Own” contest sponsored by Future Teachers of Alabama. The four students were recognized for their accomplishments by the Alabama Board Of Education.



# Calhoun County Career Academy



CCCA provides the following career technical education courses for students in 10<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup> grades:

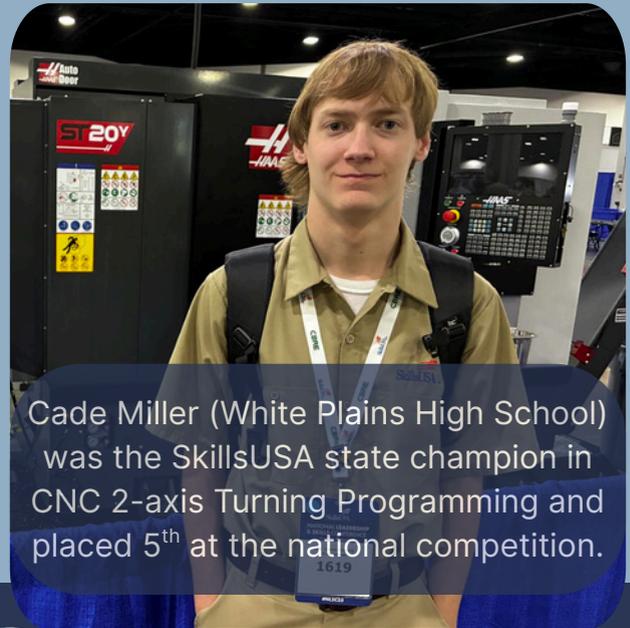
- Additive Manufacturing
- Automotive Service Technology
- Construction Technology
- Collision Repair
- Cosmetology & Barbering
- Culinary Arts
- Diesel Technology
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Fire Management Services
- Health Science
- Mechatronics
- Modern Manufacturing
- Precision Machining
- Welding

During the 2024-25 school year, our students' accomplishments were impressive!

- 101 students applying for dual enrollment credit through Gadsden State Community College
- All-time high enrollment with almost 600 students
- Elementary Career fairs hosted at 6 local elementary schools by CCCA Ambassadors
- 80+ seniors participated in 2nd Annual Job Shadow Day gaining industry experience from our industry partners
- CCCA Culinary students on Management and Production teams won a \$2,000 scholarship for each student
- The Gene Haas Foundation awarded \$15,000 to Precision Machining seniors
- 2nd annual Decision Day to celebrate 75 CCCA Seniors who were Enrolled, Enlisted, or Employed!

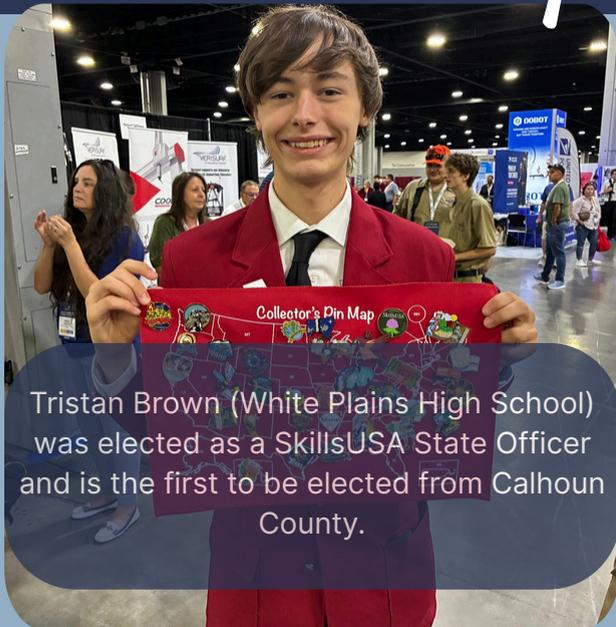


Kyle Griffith (Pleasant Valley High School) was the SkillsUSA state champion in carpentry and qualified for the national competition.



Cade Miller (White Plains High School) was the SkillsUSA state champion in CNC 2-axis Turning Programming and placed 5<sup>th</sup> at the national competition.

# Nationally Recognized



Tristan Brown (White Plains High School) was elected as a SkillsUSA State Officer and is the first to be elected from Calhoun County.



KateLynn Dummar (Weaver High School) was the state champion of the state FFA Creed Speaking Contest and the first ever from the state to advance to the final 16.



Calhoun County Schools provides the opportunity to participate in a variety of career technical organizations. Students from all of our high schools have achieved great success in each of these clubs at the regional, state, and national levels.

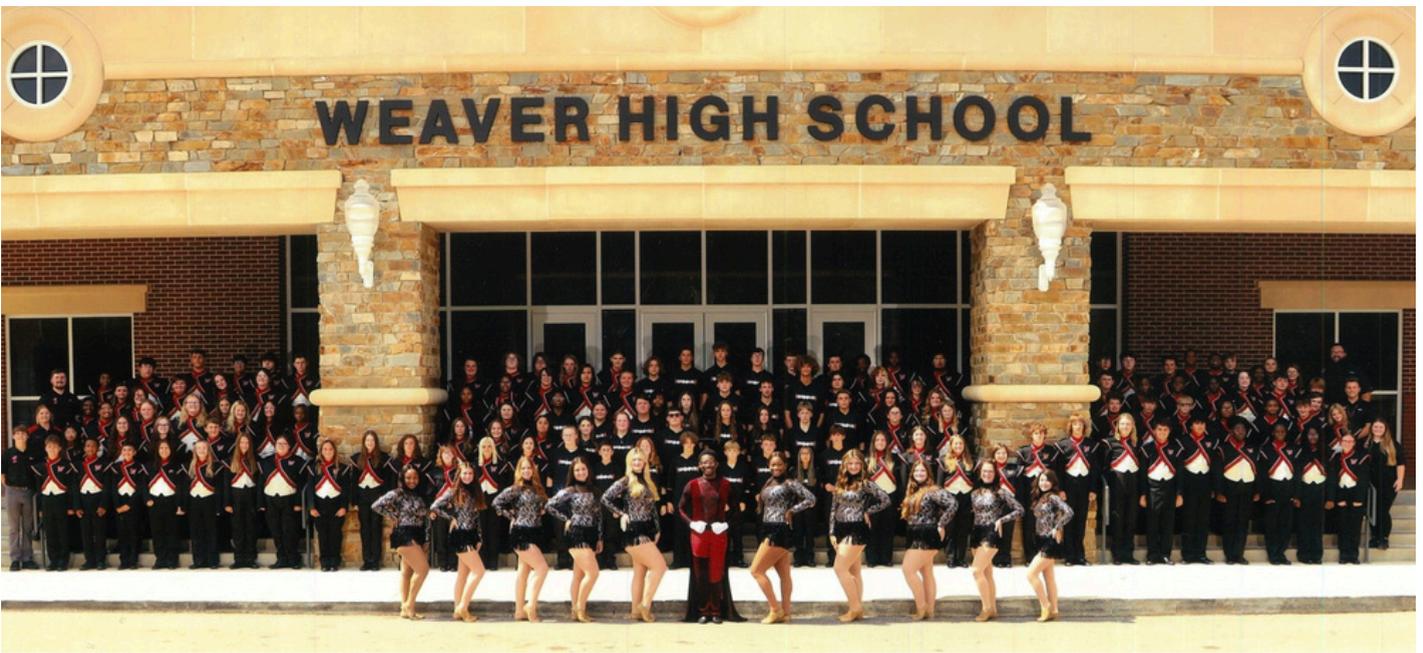




# Excellence in The Arts



Choir students from Alexandria High School and Saks High School performed at Graceland this year and all of our marching bands thrilled their audiences throughout the season with many bands taking superior ratings in all of their competitions across the Southeast.



**Weaver High School's marching band claimed its third consecutive state championship at the 2024 Alabama Marching Band Championships. The Bearcat band swept all categories earning top honors in Color Guard, Percussion, Outstanding Musical Performance, Outstanding Visual Performance, and Outstanding General Effect.**



**More than 200 students from across our district joined together to form the Calhoun County All-Star Marching Band. The group traveled to San Antonio to march in the Flambeau Fiesta Parade - the world's largest nighttime parade with more than 800,000 in attendance. We look forward to seeing where their talents take them next!**



# All-State Band



Alexandria High School: Eldrin Sani, Kiersten White, Sawyer Wills; Ohatchee High School: Haden Bryant; Pleasant Valley High School: Askel Adams, Preston Botsford; Weaver High School: Brody Russell, Keeley Spears, Lauren Wilson; White Plains Middle School: Jordyn Rich

# All-State Choir



Alexandria High School (Director - Kelsey Kent)  
Kyra Brandt, Aubrey Sutherlin, Lilly Copland,  
Jonathan Crawford, Zachary Cooper



Saks High School (Director - Kristin Kilgore)  
Addison Jenkins, Logan Nelson, Adrien Owens,  
Damarion Slocum



White Plains High School (Director - Kelly Lenard)  
Evelyn Flores, Kelsey Green, Zachary Pearson,  
Joseph Browning



White Plains Middle School  
(Director - Kelly Lenard)  
Annabel Blair

The arts play a vital role in K-12 education by fostering creativity, collaboration, and self-expression among students. A variety of arts programs are available at each of our 18 schools including visual arts, beginning music classes, choir, drama, and band. Research continuously shows that involvement in the arts can improve academic performance and increase student engagement. By integrating arts into our curriculum, we are providing an opportunity for our students to explore their creativity and preparing them for lifelong success.

Pictured - Pleasant Valley Elementary's Pre-K art gallery and Ohatchee's 60<sup>th</sup> annual community-wide White Christmas event





Izabell Baxter (Alexandria Elementary) won 1st place in the Jacksonville Arts Council's art contest.



Saks Elementary Students celebrated "Elf Day" with fun crafts and costumes.



Evelyn Wilson (Weaver Elementary) placed 1st in her age group in Gadsden Museum of Art's Student Show.



All of our high schools offer wonderful opportunities to participate in marching band.



Adrien Owens, a member of the National Guard from Saks High School, sang the national anthem beautifully for a large crowd at the school's Veteran's Day Program.



Walter Wellborn High School's drama club presented "The Sisters Grimm" with the Big Bad Wolf portrayed by Kayla Henderson.

# Excellence in Athletics

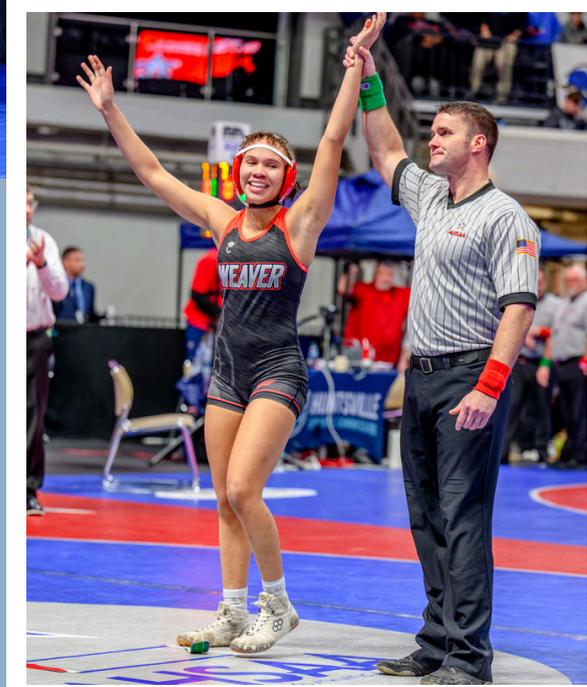


Pleasant Valley High School won their second consecutive state title in 2A Volleyball. Madison Schwabe, Ella Parris, Elise Wheeler, and Lily Henry were named to the All-State Team. Lily Henry was named Player of the Year by AL.com and was also the salutatorian of her senior class.



The Weaver Girls Wrestling Team claimed the first-ever Alabama Class 1A-5A state championship in the first year that the sport was sanctioned by the AHSAA. Lena Johannson won her 5th individual state title and was named the most valuable wrestler for Class 1A-5A. Lena is also a Fargo All-American, the first girl to reach 100 AHSAA wins, and the salutatorian of her graduating class.

Other individual state title winners included: Ali Anderson, Heaven Bishop, Jaylee Carter, Ashlyn Coleman, Baleigh Brown, and Mariah Johannson.





Weaver High School claimed their first state title in Boys 3A Track. The team qualified 11 athletes in seven events for the state tournament and all 11 placed or scored points for the team. Weaver earned the moniker “Hurdle High School” because of their dominating wins in hurdles events throughout the season including the state tournament where KeShawn Allen, Harper Williams, and DJ Marbury swept the 110m hurdles. Allen was the state champion in the 300m Hurdles and Williams won the state title in the 400m. East Alabama Sports Today named Allen and Williams as the Co-Athletes of the Year and named Beau Winn as the Coach of the Year.



Maddyn Conn claimed state titles in 4A Cross Country, 1600m, and 3200m. She won a total of 11 individual state championships during her high school career.

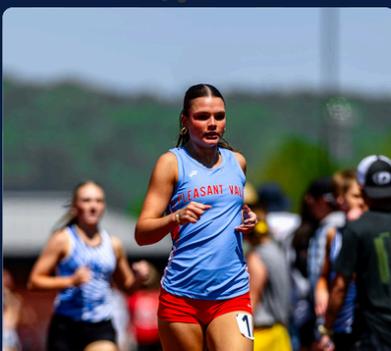


Brandon Joliff won the state heavyweight title in 1-4A wrestling.



Haideen Hise won the state 1-4A wrestling title in the 132 pound weight class.

# State Champions



Ella Paris won gold medals in the 2A 400m and 800m races.



Anna Beth Stewart won the gold medal in the 4A high jump.



Clark Hill won gold medals in 2A indoor and outdoor pole vault events.



## Coaches of the Year

Jonathan Nix from Pleasant Valley High School was named 2A Coach of the Year by the Alabama Football Coaches Association.

Jennifer Mann from Pleasant Valley High School was named 2A Coach of the Year by the Alabama High School Volleyball Association.

Justin Brown from Weaver High School was named Girls Head Coach of the Year by the Alabama Wrestling Coaches Association. Coaches Andy Fulmer and Justin Hise were also named Assistant Staff of the Year by the ALWCA.



White Plains High School and Pleasant Valley High School were recognized by the AHSAA for good sportsmanship during the 2024-25 school year.





## *Bryant-Jordan Scholarship Winners*

Named after two Alabama sports legends – Paul “Bear” Bryant and Ralph “Shug” Jordan – the Bryant-Jordan Scholarship Program brings together the best and brightest high school senior student-athletes from 52 regions in Alabama, awarding college scholarships to celebrate their achievements. The Bryant-Jordan Program honors students who are exceptional academically, as well as those who have overcome major obstacles to succeed.

Three students from Calhoun County Schools were named Bryant-Jordan Scholars and received a \$3,000 scholarship:

Lena Johannson - Weaver High School

Owen Abernathy - Oatchee High School

Eryn Spradley - Alexandria High School

Owen was also named the overall achievement winner for class 3A and received an additional \$3,500 scholarship.

*34 student athletes from the Class of 2025 have earned athletic scholarships and committed to competing at 20 different colleges and universities.*



*State Runners-Up : Alexandria High School - 4A Volleyball,  
Alexandria High School Girls 1-5A Wrestling, Ohatchee High School 3A Volleyball*





*State Runners-Up : Weaver High School - 1-4A Boys Wrestling  
and White Plains High School 4A Boys Cross Country*



# Building Community

Calhoun County Schools depends upon the partnerships with community organizations and businesses to help us fulfill our mission of empowering students for lifelong success.

- The Community Food Bank of Central Alabama ensures that families receive meal distributions on a monthly basis that help meet their essential needs.
- Our students donated \$7,275.22 during their annual Pajama Day Fundraiser to support Sleep in Heavenly Peace and our Career Academy students built 40 beds for the organization to distribute to children in Calhoun County.
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Northeast Alabama provides opportunities for our high school students to be mentors to elementary students in our schools.
- Generous donors like Pine Hill Country Club host fundraisers that help provide gifts for children and families in need.
- The YMCA provides after-school care in many of our schools.
- Our collaborative partnerships with Jacksonville State University and Gadsden State Community College facilitate academic and career opportunities.
- United Way of East Central Alabama supports the Helping Families Initiative, WorkForce Connections, and Success Academy. They are committed to providing youth with services to remain engaged in school as well as building connections for their long-term employment.
- Evelyn Moon Children's Services provides support and preventative services to empower children and their caregivers.

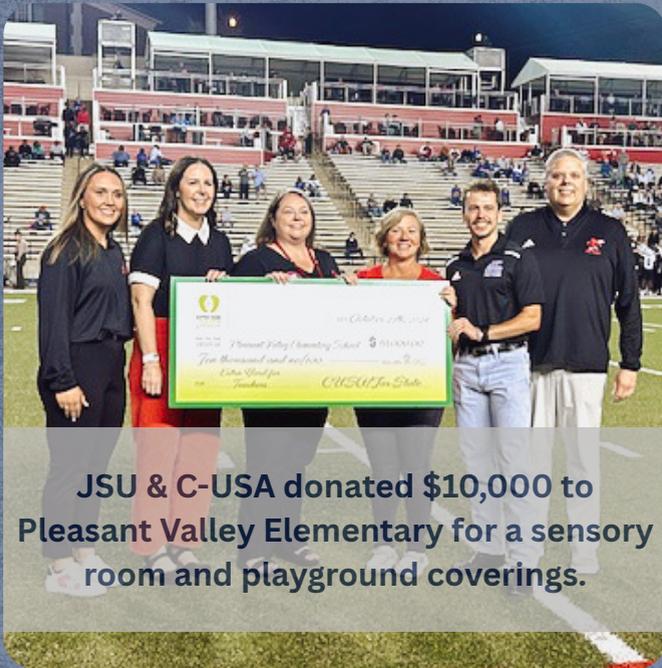


# Feeding the 5,000



Twenty churches from Calhoun County donated their time, resources, and cooking talents to provide every employee in our district with a hot meal to take home to their families on the first day of school! Their kindness was such a blessing, and we couldn't be more thankful for their willingness to serve our staff and teachers.

*Calhoun County is a wonderful place to work and learn!*



**JSU & C-USA donated \$10,000 to Pleasant Valley Elementary for a sensory room and playground coverings.**



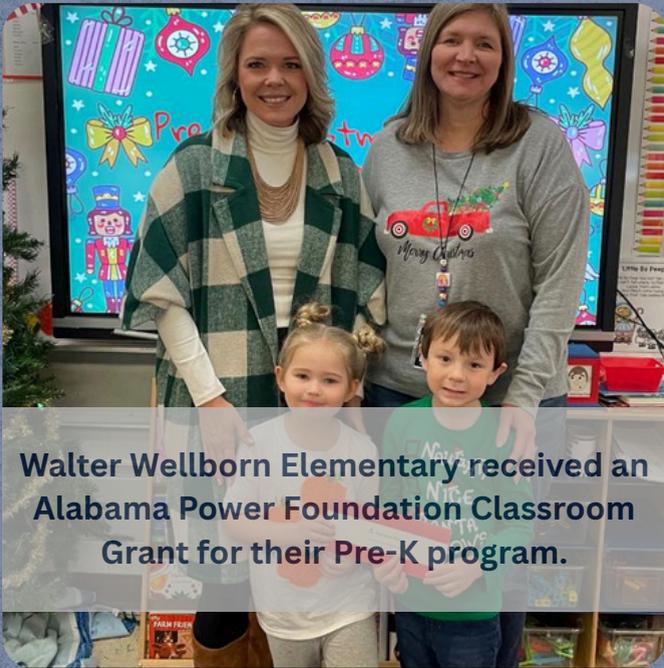
**Calhoun County Career Academy received a \$20,000 Construction in Craft grant.**



**Saks High was a top 16 national finalist in T-Mobile's Friday Night Lights Competition and received \$25,000.**



**Ted's Floors & Beyond donated \$21,226.84 to Saks Elementary from their annual charity golf tournament.**



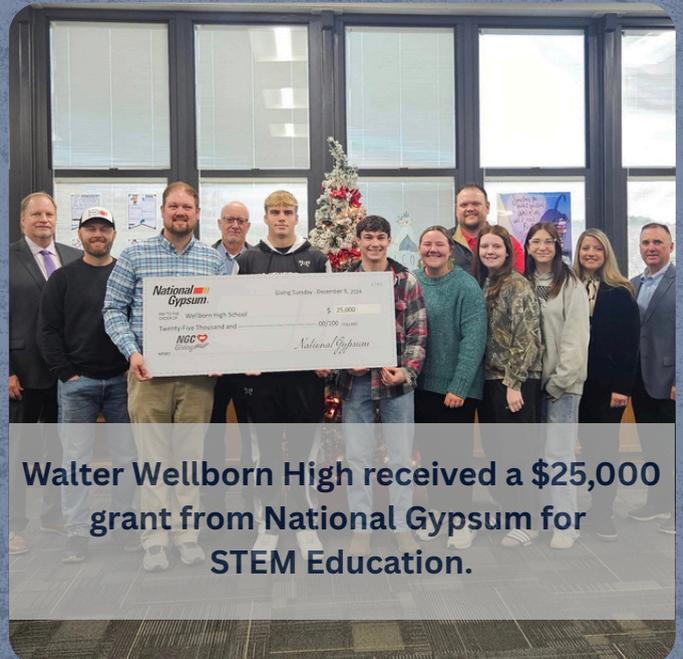
Walter Wellborn Elementary received an Alabama Power Foundation Classroom Grant for their Pre-K program.



Six of our teachers received mini-grants from the Calhoun County Education Association.



White Plains Middle received a donation from Sen. Keith Kelly and Rep. Chad Robertson.



Walter Wellborn High received a \$25,000 grant from National Gypsum for STEM Education.



## Calhoun County Schools appreciates the support of the Calhoun County Commission!

Calhoun County Commissioners (L-R): Danny Shears, Fred  
Wilson, Lee Patterson, Carolyn Henderson, and Terry Howell

Are you an outdoor enthusiast or do you enjoy great food, entertainment, and lodgings?  
Calhoun County has adventures for you and your family!

Come explore our natural attractions from kayaking, biking, hiking, horse-back riding, golfing,  
sports complexes, state parks, historical sites, museums, and MORE! Calhoun County is a haven  
complete with award winning restaurants, craft breweries, wineries, performing arts, and  
comfortable accommodations. The Calhoun County Commission would like to personally invite  
you to plan your next adventure with us.

EAT, STAY, PLAY, and VISIT Calhoun County, Alabama!

