THE REBEL REPORT

Strom Thurmond High School

Pride
Class
Courage
Will To Win

August 30, 2025

Vol. 3 Issue 1

Special Back to School Issue

STHS welcomes principal Kristin Risher

By Shelby Waters

As the 2025-2026 school years beings Strom Thurmond High School welcomes a new principal, Mrs.Kristin Richer.

Mrs. Richer begins her second year as a principal; however, prior to that she spent six years as assistant principal in Aiken County.

As far as her inspiration to become a principal, she " was fortunate to have many great administrators that have inspired me to become a principal, but the first person to suggest that I could be a principal and be successful was Mrs.Altringer!" Ms.Richer said. She actually got her start in education as a band director. " I knew before I left middle school that I wanted to go into education, specifically to be a band director. "After I began teaching, my career morphed into administration and now being a principal," Mrs. Richer said.

Mrs.Richer has had many great memories and experiences throughout her career. "I think my favorite memories in my career have all centered around students and building relationships with students and their families, understanding how I can best support them in their endeavors." Mrs.Richer said.

As a new principal to STHS, Mrs.Richer has many goals for this school year. Mrs.Richer said, "I would like to spend this school year building relationships with students, faculty, staff and families to build trust so that we can all thrive together.".



Ms. Kristin Risher

She feels there are many great aspects about being involved in the school system. "I enjoy being able to have a direct impact on all facets of the school experience, whether that is positively impacting instructional programming for students, removing barriers for teachers to provide great instruction, or ensuring that we have a multitude of activities and fun events for students to become involved in and enjoy in their high school years," Mrs. Richer said.

Principals play a crucial role in the school's atmosphere and Mrs.Richer has already fallen in love with the STHS atmosphere. "I love STHS! I think this school and community are so unique and special! It reminds me of my high school that I attended, which is why it feels like home!".

Although Mrs.Richer is very devoted to her career, there are many activities she enjoys outside of school. " I play tennis, love watching sports, especially any Carolina games! I also enjoy reading and finding fun things to do with my children and family."

Welcome to Strom Thurmond High School Mrs. Richer!

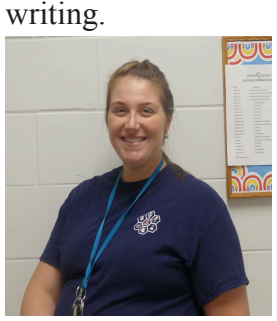
New faculty join STHS

By Nathaniel Gagnon, Chandler Gagnon, Ray Richardson, and Kevin Palma

Many Teachers have joined STHS this year, representing various departments.

Among them are those in the English department including Ms. Chatfield and Ms. Hammond. Ms. Chatfield initially wanted to be a nurse but after volunteering for years and having amazing teachers she decided to become a teacher. From the start she knew teaching English would be right for her, leading to her teaching English 2 now.

After graduating from Lander University, Mrs. Chatfield taught 6th-12th grade English for seven years. Her major in college was English (Secondary Education Certificate) with a minor in professional writing.



Ms. Chatfield



Ms. Hammond

Ms. Chatfield's last school, Merriweather Middle, "is great and still in the Edgefield County School District." But she was "ready to get back to the heart of why I started teaching, at the high school level," Ms. Chatfield said.

Her favorite teacher growing up was Kris Turner at T.L. Hanna High School, who taught Mrs. Chatfield English 3 (American Literature). To this day, American Literature is her favorite genre to teach. Her favorite novel is The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

See page page 2 new Faculty

Continued from new faculty page 1

She also says her favorite thing about teaching is being able to watch her students grow not just academically but in character as well. Lastly, what Mrs.Chatfield likes about Strom Thurmond is that it's a welcoming and caring environment, and she's enjoyed having students who are eager to learn.



Ms. Edwards

Another new teacher this year is Mrs. Edwards. Ms. Edwards became a teacher to make a difference in students' lives the way her teachers made a difference in her life. She was inspired to become a teacher by her high school English teacher, Ms. Thompson who believed in Ms. Edwards even when she didn't believe in herself.

Ms. Edwards' favorite teacher was her 7th grade science teacher Mr. Garcia. He made class fun and always connected his lessons to real life.

Originally, Mrs. Edwards wanted to teach English because she loves storytelling and writing, but instead she teaches Fundamentals of Computing. She loves how Fundamentals of Computing challenges her students to think critically and to solve problems creatively.

This is Ms. Edwards first year of teaching. She chose Strom Thurmond High School because of the strong sense of community and how the school truly supported students and staff.

Ms. Edwards went to college at Southern New Hampshire University and majored in Business Administration which gave her a solid foundation for teaching.

Ms. Edwards' favorite part of teaching is watching students grow and build confidence in a skill they didn't think they could master. Ms. Edwards loves how Strom Thurmond feels like a family, the school spirit, how the community supports the school, and the school's effort to help every student succeed.



Ms. Sharp-Miner

The Career Center welcomes Ms. Sharp-Miner who teaches animal care science. Ms. Sharp-Miner has a Bachelor's of Science in Ecology, and a Master's of Natural Resources in Fire Ecology. "I went to Augusta University for my undergraduate degree, and the University of Idaho for my master's degree," Ms. Sharp-Miner said. She later worked in environmental education which advanced to full-time teaching.

Originally, she wanted to teach middle school science but moved to animal science after an offer she received from STHS. She chose Strom Thurmond because "I think Strom Thurmond chose me. I was teaching at JET Middle School last year when the superintendent and the director of the Career Center presented me with the possibility of teaching animal/pre-veterinary sciences. It was the perfect career position for someone with my knowledge and interests, and I jumped at the chance!" This will now be her second year teaching, and while Strom Thurmond may be larger than her last school (JET) she has received plenty of support.

So far teaching has been fun as she loves sharing her interests and passions with the younger generation. And high school students have "a unique sense of humor," Ms. Sharp-Miner said. Additionally, her favorite part is seeing the exact moment when her students make a connection and learn something new, seeing their eyes light up.

Ms. Sharp-Miner does have a tight schedule as she goes between schools with live animals for her classes which can get chaotic as she doesn't want to leave anything, object or animal, behind.

Clare Henry, Chorus and Musical Theater teacher, wasn't planning on becoming a teacher at first. She was encouraged by one of her professors in college. One of Ms. Henry's favorite teachers was her voice teacher, Diane Haslam, who had a colleague who taught voice at Lander. Haslam sent Ms. Henry to audition for the university. Ms. Henry originally wanted to major in Biology, but she always loved to sing. After auditioning at Lander, Ms. Henry was encouraged to major in music, because she had the ability to make a career for herself in music. Ms. Henry decided to go to Lander University after her audition there. Ms. Henry started teaching after she graduated from Lander with a Bachelors in Music Education. She taught elementary music for seven years and taught most recently at Merriwether Elementary. She loved MES, but she was excited about the new opportunities at Strom Thurmond.What Ms. Henry loves about Strom Thurmond is creating stronger relationships with the students.



Ms. Henry

Strom Thurmond High School welcomes two new instructors to the NJROTC program, Lieutenant Colonel Tommie Williams and 1st Sergeant Jessie Ontiveros. They are both retired marines who exhibit qualities of leadership and responsibility that are crucial for the program.

LtCol Williams was born and raised in Johnston, SC and joined the Marine Corps in February 2002. "I joined the Marines after the events on 9/11; it was the reason why I joined the military." He retired from the Marines after 22 years of active duty and a total of 24 years of military service. "I was able to attain the rank of lieutenant colonel through many logistical mission accomplishments and perseverance.

See page 6 new faculty

New students share first impressions

By Ray Richardson and Isabella Mora

The halls of Strom Thurmond High School are buzzing with new energy as the Class of 2029 settles into their first year. Coming from different middle schools, these freshmen are already noticing changes, making goals, and figuring out their place in the Rebel family.

Joshua Homes came from Jet Middle School and says the "biggest differences are the stricter dress code and looser bathroom rules," Joshua said. His favorite class so far is Geometry with Statistics, and his goals include making the soccer team and passing all his classes. "I think I'll like Strom Thurmond a lot," he said. The hardest part of the transition is, "the work."

Tyasia Johnson, from Merriweter Middle School, already feels at home. "All my family works here, so I'm familiar with the school," she said. She loves the performing arts programs and participates in symphonic band and choir. Her favorite class is Modern World History Honors, and she hopes to keep her A average and make more friends from other schools. The biggest challenge has been finding her classes in the larger building.

Frederick Tyler, also from Merriwether, says "the teachers here are more strict," but he likes the atmosphere and the people. His favorite class is also Modern World History Honors, and he is aiming for A or A/B honor roll while helping the football team win this season. He enjoys meeting new people and learning new things but admits the school's size was an adjustment.

Aaron Faye, from JET, says "the biggest rule change is not having assigned seats at lunch." English is his favorite class so far, and his goal is simply to pass the year. He likes his variety of classes but finds the school's size to be the hardest part of the transition.

Rykeem Rouse came from another middle school and noticed a change in the phone policy. He enjoys hanging out with his friends and is interested in basketball, football, and track. His main goals are to pass and improve his grades, and he says the hardest adjustment was the longer drive to school.



Freshmen enjoy class

Jesús Garcia Santos, from JET, says "not much has changed except for a stricter phone policy and a bit more freedom." He doesn't have a favorite class, yet, but hopes to join the soccer team. His goal is to pass and stay out of trouble, and his favorite part of Thurmond so far is the extra freedom students have compared to middle school.

From adjusting to a bigger campus to setting new goals, these freshmen are ready to take on high school. One thing is for sure, Rebel spirit is alive and well in the Class of 2029.

Returning to STHS

By: Taylor Mealing and Nia Mack

As Faculty and students return to Strom Thurmond High School, they share varying experiences.

For English teacher Ms. Savannah Carter coming back to school means she gets to teach her favorite subject. "Reading makes life interesting and introduces you into another world," Ms. Carter said.

New Digital Media teacher Mr.Keith Andrews found his "students are amazing and I enjoy having them every day," Mr.Andrews said.

Students, however, may have different perspectives about school than teachers. Junior Demarkus Gordon doesn't "like school because it's boring and strict," Demarkus said. Instead, Demarkus loved his summer because "I went back-to-school shopping and spent time with my family and friends," Demarkus said.

Senior Jalaysha Edmond has improved her focus because she is "getting more work done and paying attention," Jalaysha said.

Besides academics, students also have the opportunity to explore extracurricular activities.

Rebel Football player Bralen Searles loves playing football. "It's a great discipline sport; it gets you ready for the real world," Bralen said.

Another activity available at Strom Thurmond High School is FCA, Fellowship of Christion Athletes. Junior Adriyanna Johnson participates in FCA. "FCA is about students finding themselves and finding their way to Christ along with my peers," Adriyanna said.

At STHS, these varying experiences continue giving students different academic and extracurricular opportunities throughout the year.



Demarkus Gordon



Adriyanna Johnson



Bralen Searles



Ms. Carter



Mr. Andrews

Senior football Rebels take the field

By: Bryanna Jackson

The Strom Thurmond High School football team is fortunate to have experienced seniors who will add to the success of the 2025 Rebel football season.

Senior, Trenquilis Mathis has played football since freshman year. He likes football because, “ It’s fun to take the field every Friday night,” Trenquilis said.

On the football team his positions are running back and corner. For Trenquilis, going to State would be very meaningful because it has been several years since the Rebels went to State.

STHS coaches have taught him many football skills as well as approaches to life. One important lesson he has learned is that everything is not going to go his way. This year he is ready to compete against Saluda, Batesburg-Leesville and North Augusta.

Senior, Kobe Windless plays football, as well as track and field. “ Going to State would mean everything. It’s the 20th anniversary of the ‘05 team winning it,” Kobe said.

Some seniors have offers to play college football. Kobe Windless has one offer from Tri-County in Chester, South Carolina. Kaleb Simpkins has offers from Ivy League Schools, as well as others, but he hasn’t chosen where he wants to go just yet.

Jalin Collins plans on going to college and play football; he has received an offer.

When viewing the upcoming season, Jalin Collins looks forward to playing against North Augusta.

The 2025 football season also includes games against Silver Bluff, Emerald, Pelion, Niety Six and more. The Rebls already beat McCormick High School 52-6.



Senior Jalin Collins



Senior Trenquilis Mathis



Senior Kobe Windless

In addition to the players, Strom Thurmond High School coaches are ready for the season. Heading up the coaching staff is Coach Webb.

Head Coach Webb became a coach because his mother was a coach and he loved being around the coaches at her school. “ Growing up I played football, basketball, and baseball, " Coach Webb said.

He always tells the players “ focus, effort and discipline is what wins the games.” Coach Webb’s experience includes in 2005 he, “ Coached at Clinton High School. We lost to Strom Thurmond in the State championship. Strom Thurmond was always a special place to me.”

As far as the 2025 season, the Rebels, and especially the seniors, are ready to take on all the teams they will face.



Head Football Coach - Coach Webb

Varsity Football Gamne Schedule



FRI
Aug 22 2025
7:30 PM
Home
FOOTBALL
Boys Varsity
vs TBA
FRI
Aug 29 2025
7:30 PM
Home
FOOTBALL
Boys Varsity
vs Silver Bluff High School
FRI
Sep 12 2025
7:30 PM
Away
FOOTBALL
Boys Varsity
at North Augusta High School
North Augusta High School (North Augusta, SC)
FRI
Sep 19 2025
7:30 PM
Away
FOOTBALL
Boys Varsity
at Emerald High School
Emerald High School (Greenwood, SC)
FRI
Sep 26 2025
7:30 PM
Away
FOOTBALL
Boys Varsity
at Lincoln County High...
Lincoln County HS - Larry Campbell Stadium (Lincoln, GA)
FRI
Oct 3 2025
7:30 PM
Away
FOOTBALL
Boys Varsity
at Batesburg-Leesville High...
Batesburg-Leesville High School (Batesburg, SC)
FRI
Oct 10 2025
7:30 PM
Home
FOOTBALL
Boys Varsity
vs TBA
Strom Thurmond High School (Johnston, SC)
FRI
Oct 17 2025
7:30 PM
Home
FOOTBALL
Boys Varsity
vs Pelion High School
Strom Thurmond High School (Johnston, SC)
FRI
Oct 24 2025
7:30 PM
Home
FOOTBALL
Boys Varsity
vs Saluda High School
Strom Thurmond High School (Johnston, SC)
FRI
Oct 31 2025
7:30 PM
Away
FOOTBALL
Boys Varsity
at Ninety Six High School

Juniors welcome support and challenges

By Trinity Brown

Strom Thurmond upperclassmen juniors are excited for the start of their junior year. As the school year progresses, Autumn Wingard feels, "good so far, but I know it's going to be harder.” Olivia O’ Gorman also understands the school year will get difficult but, “right now I feel great," Olvia said.

Another junior Kristian Brown considers, “Right now I feel pretty good about it, but I also feel, in the same way, that it is going to be harder in the process." X’avier Macdoo says, “I feel awesome about it.”

Juniors have mixed feelings about whether they are ready for their junior year. Autumn dosen't feel that ready, but Oliva said, “ I think so, but most of my classes are kinda hard, but I know I'll get through it.”

Junior year is traditionally one of the most difficult years. Kristian Brown knows that, "the classes I'm taking are pretty challenging, but I got this.”

The journey wouldn’t be the same without important people, and students rely on friends and family to get through tough times. Autumn’s people are, “mostly my friends." Olvia depends on her "friends, but mainly Shelby Waters.” “ My friends," Kristian said. 'With God and my team’ Xavier said.’

Autumn is expecting “a higher GPA and hopefully to get into more colleges. Olivia said, "I hope I learn about the college application process and get a good grade on my SAT, and also I hope I get more information about what colleges I want to go to." Kristian and X'avier have the same focus on college and grades. "All I care about is a higher GPA because I care about my grades so much; I'm trying to go to college and go wherever this year takes me”.

This year's juniors look up to graduating seniors. "Yes a lot of my friends are seniors and I'm going to miss them so badly,” Autumn said. "I am going to really miss my friend Molly,” Olivia said. And Kristain will miss, "Trinity Brown, and Jayden."



Autumn Wingard



Kristian Brown



X'avier Macadoo



Olivia O'Gorman

"I am for sure going to miss my team because most of my team are seniors; I can't name them all, but yes, I will miss them a lot because we came this long ride together as a team and we became like a family," X'avier said.

Each Junior has someone who motivates them. Autumn says, "my parents because they also taught me the good things in life and always said to me nothing can stop me from what I want to be in life." Olivia said, "some of my friends and Shelby Waters and myself." Kristain said, "my parents and God.” For Xavier it’s "my parents, my friends and my coaches have really taught me really big things in life and been there for me on my ups and downs."

With a challenging year ahead, Juniors will experience their year with friends, family and coaches to support them.

Sophomore year represents change

By Ivey Coleman

As 10th graders, Sophomores have a different perspective than they had their freshman year.They have already experienced new classes and teachers, but each student feels differently about the year so far.

Sophomore Madisyn Preston feels like starting back to school in July is too early. "It's horrible; too much drama," Madisyn said. This summer Madisyn prepared for the year and worked on her cosmetology business. She also worked on skills to improve her behavior such as to "stay quiet and stay out of drama,” Madisyn said. Being a sophomore to her feels better than a freshman because of less drama. Madisyn isn't excited about new subjects because sometimes "it's way too much work to do,¨ Madisyn said.

To make school more enjoyable, students often have favorite school supplies and snacks. Sophomore Christian Pierce’s favorite school supply is a pencil because I like writing. Christian's go-to-snack for school is hot fries because “theyŕe spicy, " Christian said. One of his favorite teachers this year is Ms. Padgett because he likes the way she teaches. Christian studies for hard classes and may or may not try out for a sport. "I might consider doing one," he said.



Name



Name

See page 6 Sophomores

continued from new teachers page 2



LtCol Williams

He became a NJROTC instructor on March 4th, 2025 because “I believe I possess a unique combination of education, experience, and relativity to impact the lives of young adults who are striving to do better and be better. All in an effort to help students accomplish my sixth grade teacher, Ms. Davenport's classroom goal: "To become a competent, concerned citizen."

He plans to form a closer relationship between NJ Alumni and Cadets to foster relationships and lasting connections. The program intends to take Cadets on outings that will enhance their leadership skills, core knowledge about the Navy, and military choices beyond high school. This year instructors have structured NJ to improve critical thinking skills.

For his first year as an instructor, LtCol Williams states ‘I'm optimistic about the trajectory of the program's future! Cadets are showing their desire to grow, reach, and learn in areas to build resilience and leadership.”

He believes that being in a position to shape the minds of students is a great responsibility.



1stSgt Ontiveros

1stSgt Ontiveros was born and raised in Kerrville, Texas and joined the Marine Corps in October, 2005. He joined to serve his country and retired after 20 years of service. He became an instructor in June, 2025 so he could “be a person of positive influence to younger generations,” 1stSgt Ontiveros said.

His plan this year is to compete and win competitions against other high schools and to take his students to military bases and ships.

With being new to the program, 1stSgt Ontiveros states, “I'm learning something new every day.” So far, the transition into an instructor has been smooth for him. He is optimistic about NJROTC as well, “I'm excited to see the students grow and get promoted through the ranks,” 1stSgt Ontiveros said.



Ms. Bell

Additionally, STHS welcomes new staff as well as faculty. Ms. Bell is new to attendance but volunteered and substitute taught for nine years at other schools.

Working in the front office and on attendance may not have been her first choice, but it works well with her children's school schedule which is why she chose it. Her first school was Garrett Elementary School in Augusta, GA. So far her biggest difficulty is not knowing all the students and parents, but Ms. Bell hopes to change this throughout the year.

Look for more new staff news in the next issue of The Rebel Report on September 26.



continued from sophomores page 5



Lana Boyd

Most students have something they are excited to learn. Sophomore Lana Boyd is excited about Spanish. It's a different language. A memory from last year Lana enjoyed and hopes to have again this year was spirit week because, ¨I got dressed up."

Going back to school can be stressful and Lana feels like ¨its too early but it's ok,¨ she said. Lana didn't do anything this summer, but she did go to parties. Some people have family traditions, but she doesn't.

Now that sophomores are well into the year, they will have new experiences in academics and extra curricular activities.

Sophomores see school differently than they did as freshmen. They’ve already been through the “first year” experience with new teachers, new classes, and new routines.

Now, as tenth graders, they’re adjusting in their own way.

Policies are not always popular

By LaKhia Norris

At Strom Thurmond High School, some school policies have changed and some have stayed the same. As for me, and some students, I am most concerned about the phone, tardies, dress code, and car policies.

When considering the dress code, Senior Jalaysha Edmond feels like “we should be able to wear whatever we want as long as it's school appropriate.” Jalaysha isn’t very fond of the phone policy either. “We should be able to have them at lunch and put them away after."

Another senior, Vincent Weaver, thinks, “Seniors should have more privileges.” I agree. Maybe seniors need more freedom walking into the adult world. Today all I hear is adults complaining about how we shouldn’t rush our time but maybe if we had more freedom we could learn better to actually understand adulting more. Vincent believes that some policies are necessary like “no hats, and hoods, because you need to be identified for safety reasons. You don't want to be walking around with a hood and an intruder has on a hood also.”

As far as the cell phone policy goes, some seniors admit to getting around it. Senior Bryston Coleman has violated it. “I never get caught; let’s hope the admin doesn’t hear about that lol.” Bryston does obey the tardy policies, “ because you just need to be on time to be where you need to be.” I agree with Bryston because, in the real world, being late to work means you lose money.

At Strom Thurmond High School opinions vary about the new and old school policies; however, I feel some of these policies are necessary and some aren’t. Some policies that I feel are unnecessary are the car policy, and the tardies policy. When you wake up in the morning and drive to school you just want to sit in the car and wake up all the way before you go into a building full of loud people feeling really exhausted.

Another policy is the tardies policy, because some days you walk through the hallway others are moving slowly, so maybe just a little time could help. Although some of these policies I feel are unnecessary, one policy that I feel is necessary is the dress code. When getting out of school and going to do bigger things sometimes it’s best to look presentable and like you want to do big things with life.

Another policy I agree with at Strom Thurmond High School is the phone policy. At school students should be focused on work and not be distracted; however, some may need their headphones and music to actually focus better.

Overall, students disagree with some policies here at Strom Thurmond, and there are pros and cons to all of them.