



Upcoming Testing



Superintendent's Message

Dr. David Daigneault

As we enter the final stretch of the school year in the Grenada School District, there is a palpable sense of urgency and purpose across all of our campuses.

From our youngest learners in third grade to our high school students preparing for graduation, everyone is focused and working diligently as we approach the administration of the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP), our state's required assessment for our students.

This time of year brings a heightened level of intensity. Classrooms are fully engaged, schedules are carefully coordinated, and our teachers, administrators, and support staff are working in unison to ensure a smooth and successful testing experience. While this season can be stressful for students and educators alike, it is also a time that reflects the culmination of months of preparation, dedication, and growth.

In Grenada, preparation for state assessments does not begin weeks before testing—it begins on the very first day of school. Our educators are committed to equipping students not only with the academic knowledge needed to perform well on assessments, but also with the critical thinking skills and resilience necessary for success in the next grade level and in life beyond the classroom. Because of this sustained effort, we are confident that our students are well prepared and ready to demonstrate what they have learned.

State testing is about more than mastering content; it is about creating an environment where students feel supported, encouraged, and confident in their abilities. This is truly a community effort. The partnership between our schools and families plays a vital role in student success. We encourage parents to support their children during this important time by ensuring they get a good night's rest, eat a healthy breakfast—whether at home or at school—arrive on time, and begin each day with a positive attitude and words of encouragement.

The Grenada School District has much to be proud of. For several consecutive years, our district has maintained an "A" rating, a reflection of the hard work and commitment of our students, educators, families, and community stakeholders.

This achievement speaks to a shared understanding of what it takes to prepare students for academic success, and it reinforces our confidence in the systems and practices we have in place.

2026 GHS Star Student



Photo by Sylvia King

By Ben Leatherman
GSD Reporter

GHS senior Anne Adams has been named Grenada's STAR Student for the 2025–26 school year by the M.B. Swayze Foundation, sponsor of the Student Teacher Achievement Recognition (STAR) program.

Anne earned the distinction with a composite ACT score of 32, achieved through both superscoring and single-test performance. As part of the recognition, STAR students designate a teacher who has made the greatest impact on their academic journey. For Anne, that decision was immediate.

"It was never a question of who I would pick," Anne said. "The second I had her... she really allowed me to thrive in her class."

(Photo left)

Grenada High School senior Anne Adams (right) was named STAR Student after earning the highest ACT score in her graduating class. Anne selected chemistry teacher Mrs. Cragen King (left) as her STAR Teacher.

Anne took honors chemistry with Mrs. King during her sophomore year, an experience that shaped both her academic interests and future career goals. In a letter to Mrs. King, Anne wrote that her teacher "changed the trajectory of everything" and helped her discover a passion for science she had never felt before. Mrs. King's classroom approach proved transformational. She allowed Anne to work ahead, ask questions freely, and explore concepts independently.

"She would even pause class to answer my questions," Anne said. "I really felt like a priority."

That support extended beyond the classroom, as Mrs. King provided additional resources over the summer to help Anne continue developing her understanding of chemistry.

The impact was lasting. Anne, who

once felt indifferent toward science, now plans to pursue a career in the field. She intends to attend Millsaps College after graduation, with long-term goals of attending medical school or working as a chemist.

"I want to be a scientist and learn things, truly learn them at my own pace," Anne wrote in her letter. "I wasn't like that before your class."

Mrs. King said Anne stood out from the first day she entered the classroom.

"She came in every day excited to learn," Mrs. King said. "You could see that drive immediately. She reminded me of myself as a student."

Anne moved to Grenada during her sophomore year and credits her teachers and the school environment for helping her succeed. "I've always thrived in my classes here," she said. "I felt like I was rewarded for the work I was putting in."

As she prepares to leave high school, Anne plans to continue her education and hopes to one day return to a rural community to serve others through science or medicine.

For Mrs. King, the recognition is a reminder of the lasting impact teachers can have on their students. "I want my students to see success in their future, and Anne is a perfect example of that."

Anne expressed deep gratitude for her teacher. "I would not love science the way I do without Mrs. King, and I will forever be grateful."

Elementary Archery Earns North State Title



Photo by Lois Gaskin

The Grenada Elementary Archery team won the title of North State Champions. The team members are (front left to right) Braxton Procella, Hayes Kennington, Levi Carpenter (placed first in the male division with a score of 247), Ce'Riyah Wiggins, Hagan Nichols, Noah Jones, (middle, left to right) Chevy Langham, Joseph Fred Ward (placed seventh with a score of 219), Justin Hudson, Kate Weaver, Hadley Caldwell, Noah Bratcher, Tom Doolittle (placed fourth with a score of 234) Eli Self, Luke Gray, (back left to right) Canyon Johnson (placed third with a score of 239), Braxton Alexander, Maggie Koonce (placed second with a score of 246), Jason Akins (placed fifth with a score of 233), Brysen Surrell (placed eighth with a score of 207) and Mary Grace Wolfe (placed sixth with a score of 222).

See "Testing"
Continued on page 7

GHS Class of 2026



Anne Adams Jakayla Anderson Moriah Barnes Clifton Barton Carley Bassie Madison Bell Keelin Bender Bryan Berry



Akeelah Bishop Mattias Blackmon Chloe Blakely Quanterriion Bland Will Blaylock Amery Bloodworth Ja'tya Boclair Ericka Boone



Landon Bowden Amija Brinson MarKayla Brooks Carlei Brown Mary-Caylor Brown William Bryant Traveon Bullen Marshayla Bullins



Mikayla Burchfield Tamyra Burns Shawna Burt Colt Butler Jackson Byford Angilique Campbell Tyler Campbell Chloe Cannon



Braley Carnathan Alexa Carollo Natalee Carpenter Haylee Carter Otis Cashaw Ray Chapman Jr. Garret Clayton Morgan Clayton



Kathryn Cobb Aaliyah Cobbs Sydney-Cate Cockrum Auria Collins Javorrious Collins Zac Cook Logan Costilow Lazia Cotton



Xavier Cotton Zayion Cotton Jermearion Cotton-Harris Autumn Crocker Rylin Crosby Jaeden Curry Hayden Dale Will Dale



Janna Daniels Justiz Davis Lilybeth Dennis Jordyn Donley Alyssa Dorris Lawson Dotson Chloe Downs Caselyn Earnest



Jiaquasia Edwards



Kristen Edwards



Tyler Edwards



Addyson Elliott



Emmory Elliott



Chloe Ellison



Kardaishuanna
Eskridge



Ashton Evans



Andrew Fair



Jude Farmer



Emily Finkley



An'Traveyon
Fleming



Deandre Fray



Gabrielle Gammage



Keyshylan Gaston



Ina Gentry



Joseph Gentry



Kylar Gibson



Jatavious Goldman



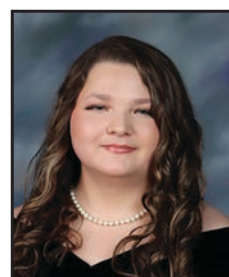
Anna
Goldwater-Deussen



Emerie Golliday



Jatavious Green



Anna Haile



Seth Hardenburgh



Braydon Hardiman



Xiavion Hardiman



Kaylin Hardin



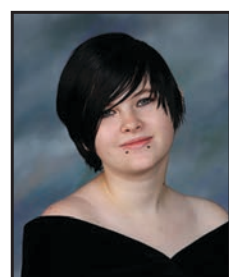
Darion Harris



Corsala Hayes



Omarionna Hayes



Taylor Hayward



Lamarion
Henderson



Olivia Herring



Peyton Herrod



Brianna Hicks



Ethan Hobson



Madeline Holiday



Taylor Hoop



Nathan Howell



Jamaya Hubbard



Jayden Hudgins



Shirtara Hudson



Theodore Hudson



McKenzie Ingle



Bailey Jackson



Brayden Jackson



Douglas Jackson



Ivan Jackson



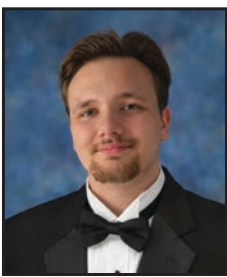
Jakeria Jackson



Mar'Quan Jackson



Mary Pinson
Jackson



Christian Jarrett



Frederick
Jefferson Jr.



Harlee Johnson



Tristan Johnson



Kmari Kennedy



Ladarius Kennedy



Kaitlynn Kerr



Shanvi Kher



Tyler Kimble



Savanna King



Blakely Kirk



Andrew Klinck



Jordin Knox



James Kornegay



Olivia Lashley



Hayden Lee



Livontae Liddell



Elle Lucius



Cristian Lumas



Lillian Mattox



Katie Mayhan



Ty'Orayah McClain



Gracea McCrary



Stephanie McCrary



Eleana McCullough



Zion McDaniel



Tamara McGlothin



Haley Melton



Brayden Milam



Alivia Mills



Landon Mills



Julez Moore



Alexis Moorman



Presley Morgan



Keagan Moss



Bailey Murphey



Alayna Murphree



Jeremiah Murry



Brayden Neathery



Asia Nevitt



Corey Nixon



Crystiana Noel



Katherine Orear



Noah Oswalt



Harlee Painter



Eli Palmer



Addison Parker



Kyler Pittman



Jaihla Pollard



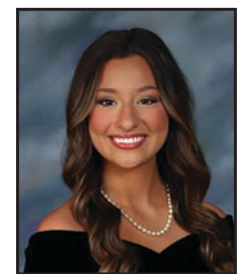
Natalie Pyron



Jayden Ray



Ka'Mora Ray



Michaela Raymond



Jereon Reed



Gabe Reyna



TeNasia Reynolds



Ashlyn Rice



Juli-Anna Riley



Emma Roberts



Ashlyn Robinson



Xzavier Robinson



Destiny Rodgers



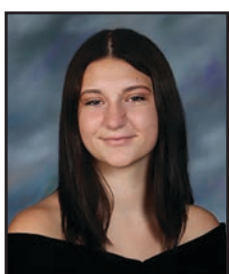
Cali Rupp



Rylee Ryals



Rhianna Sanders



Kendall Scallions



Vashyla Seeden



Marquise Shaw



Sunniya Shelton



Brihanna Simpson



Emma Grace
Simpson



DaMareon Sims



Cordarrion Small



Mya Small



Anna Smith



Eddiezion Smith



Hannah Smith



Tristan Smith



Zachary Snyder



Dunterius Spearman



Ryan Spencer



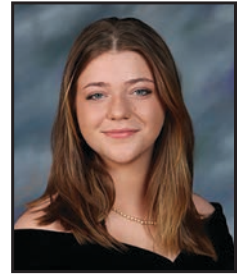
Sadie Starnes



Rowdy Staten



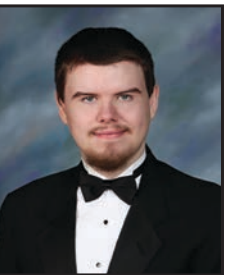
Jackson Stokes



Madeleine Stuvee



Madison Sumner



Jessie Switzer



Joshua Taylor



Antonio Terry



Samantha Thomas



Jeremiah Tillmon



Brayden Trusty



Kendall Tyner



Beau Vance



Melissa Varnell



Christian Vaughn



Tekenya Walton



Hunter Watson



Mykel Watson



Bryson Waugh



Zon'Taeveon Weekly



Caroline Welch



R'Tiyanna West



Adrienna Westbrook



Arianna Westbrook



Zayedon Whaley



Houston Whittemore



Ca'Mayah Wiggins



Marcus Wiggins



Mary Taylour Wilbourn



Gwenyth Williams



Jaylen Williams



Marcus Williams



Ryan Williams



Evan Williamson



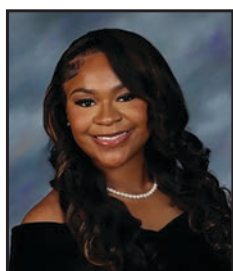
Catearnye Willis



Jaylan Willis



Kaitlin Willis



Ma'Kaiya Wilson



Sariah Winfrey



Madison Woodard



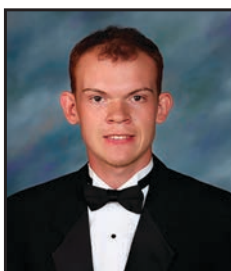
Nathan Woods



Jalijah Wright



Aleisa Yankee



Jaden Yates



Madeline Yawn



GCTC Students Gain Experience at Competition



Photo by Meg Newcomb

GCTC Culinary student Brandon Jones earns 2nd place at state competition.

**By Ben Leatherman
GSD Reporter**

The kitchen at the Grenada Career and Technical Center (GCTC) doesn't look the way many people might expect a high school classroom to look. It's deliberate and increasingly reflective of the real-world environments students may enter after graduation.

For Culinary Arts instructor Chef Andrew Gordon, that shift is intentional. "Now it feels like a galley," Gordon said, describing recent changes to the classroom layout. "In a kitchen you're supposed to constantly be aware of where others are. 'Behind, right side, hot, sharp' should always be on the tip of your tongue."

That emphasis on realism carried directly into one of the program's biggest milestones to date: competing for the first time at the state-level SkillsUSA competition held at Clinton High School.

This was the first time GCTC's Culinary Arts program participated in the statewide SkillsUSA competition. Students traveled to compete alongside programs from across Mississippi, many of which are located in larger districts with more established culinary pipelines.

This competition spanned multiple disciplines, including knife skills, baking and pastry, culinary arts, and cupcake decorating. Each category tested not only creativity, but—more importantly—precision, efficiency, and technical execution.

It wasn't anything like the shows on tv. It was about fundamentals. The simplest dish won. The most deliberate technical skills were rewarded, and running out of time for being flashy was frowned upon.

Despite being newcomers to the event, Grenada students quickly proved they could compete at a high level.

Brandon Jones Earns State Recognition

Among the standout performances was that of Brandon Jones, who placed second overall in the knife skills competition.

His task was cutting small dice, medium dice, large dice, julienne, batonnet,

and slice an onion, showing the technical skills. He spent weeks preparing, and when his time came, he finished 15 minutes into his 45-minute test. He was confident in his product.

The knife skills category is one of the most technically demanding events in culinary competition. Students are judged not just on speed, but on consistency, accuracy, and control. Uniformity is critical. Each cut must be consistent in size and shape, with clean edges and precise angles.

"It's not really the size as much as it's the uniformity of the cut," Gordon said. "You want to make sure your cuts are parallel and perpendicular... squared off really well."

That performance earned Brandon second place in the state—an outcome that caught even his own team by surprise. "When Brandon won, we were all so shocked... we kind of just sat there for a minute," a classmate said.

Training through Real Work

Jones' success was not accidental. His preparation reflected the same repetitive, skill-focused training that defines professional kitchens.

Much of the two weeks leading up to the event was spent practicing foundational cuts over and over again. That type of work mirrors the role of a prep cook in a professional kitchen, where consistency and efficiency are essential.

Students practiced in a way that connected directly to real applications. The vegetables Jones prepared were often used by other students in class projects.

In a real kitchen you may have a dish that requires four quarts of sliced vegetables every day, so the class made a lot of curry and other vegetarian-heavy dishes. His cuts would also go to another student to practice stock-making as part of the culinary-arts event at the competition. This collaborative approach ensured that every student benefited from the preparation process, even if they were not competing.

While knife skills focus on precision, other categories tested broader culinary abilities. In the culinary arts competition, students were required to complete a multi-step process under strict time constraints.

Breaking down a chicken into an airline breast, knife cuts, salad, stock, clear soup and an entrée... Each step built on the last, requiring both technical knowledge and time management.

Similarly, the baking and pastry competition required students to complete multiple items within a four-hour window. They made cookies, a quiche, and a decorated two-layer cake.

These events are designed to simulate real kitchen conditions, where multiple tasks must be executed simultaneously and under pressure.

**See "Culinary"
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One Skill at a Time: Building Toward What Comes Next



Did You Know?

- **Modine Manufacturing, with two major plants in Grenada, relies on welders to build the heat transfer systems used in commercial HVAC units worldwide.**
- **ADP (Advanced Distributor Products) hires welders to support its fast-paced assembly lines, where even minor errors can cause costly delays.**
- **Local shops like Kirk Auto use welding to repair structural frame damage, build custom exhaust systems, and reinforce service equipment.**
- **Mississippi State University’s Building Construction Science program includes steel fabrication and welding concepts in multiple studio courses.**

Students in Grenada’s CTC Welding Program or the new Metal Works Lab will get hands-on experience with MIG welders, grinders, bandsaws, and safety gear - before they even leave high school.

By Sherry Worsham
Director of Community Partnerships
In Grenada, welding is more than a skill. It’s a legacy. It’s what built the plants, reinforced the bridges, and kept the machines running in auto shops and industrial bays for generations. Today, that same skill is being taught in college programs across the state and right here at home, too.

At Mississippi State University, students in engineering and building construction science programs study structural steel, fabrication, and welding systems as part of their professional preparation. It’s not just textbook learning. Students work on real construction projects, model steel frame assemblies, and learn to problem-solve under pressure—because those are the expectations on real job sites. At Holmes Community College, welding technology is one of the fastest-growing training programs. Students practice MIG, TIG, and stick welding, gain OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) certifications, and prepare for careers in manufacturing, infrastructure, and heavy equipment repair.

These programs expect students to arrive with more than curiosity. They need grit, focus, safety awareness, and a basic working knowledge of how welding works. That’s exactly what Grenada students have when they train in the CTC (Career Technical Center) Welding program or learn the skill at the new Metal Works Lab at the Entrepreneurial & Innovation Center. “These are skills students can use for life, whether they go straight to work, college, or start their own business one day,” said GCTC welding instructor Landon Hentz.

In this program, students will do more

than practice welds. They’ll learn how to prepare surfaces, follow shop drawings, measure accurately, and safely operate abrasive saws and grinders. They’ll work on real tasks, like fabricating brackets for a school project, fixing a trailer gate, or constructing a framework that another lab will use. Every spark matters - and every cut is a chance to learn. Both the CTC Welding Program and the new Metal Works Lab also introduces students to design-based fabrication, a bridge between trades and creativity. A student who welds a sign bracket in this lab may go on to design structural supports or custom automotive parts. That ability to move from blueprint to product, from idea to steel, is exactly what manufacturing plants and technical colleges are looking for. “Our goal is for students to leave here understanding that welding is more than striking an arc. It’s discipline, safety, precision, and pride in doing something the right way,” commented Hentz. Grenada’s local industries - like Modine, ADP, and Kirk Auto - rely on welding every day. Whether it’s assembling HVAC systems, repairing service fleets, or maintaining production machinery, the region’s economy still runs on metal. By building a strong foundation now, students will graduate with the confidence and skills to step directly into internships, training programs, or jobs where their work is immediately valued. Welding has always been about connection: metal to metal, line to line, person to purpose. In Grenada, it’s also about future to opportunity. One skill at a time, our students are learning to build what’s next.

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“Testing”

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However, as we look ahead, it is important to recognize that the landscape of accountability in Mississippi is evolving. Beginning with the 2025–2026 school year, the state has implemented significant changes to its accountability model. These changes include raising the standards required to achieve each letter grade and establishing a new, more rigorous baseline for measuring school and district performance. While the

MAAP assessment itself will remain largely the same, the expectations tied to student performance have increased.

As a result, schools and districts across the state may see changes in their accountability ratings, even if student performance remains steady or improves. This year will serve as a reset point, marking the beginning of a new standard by which future progress will be measured.

Accountability grades, which will be released in the fall of 2026, will reflect this shift and should not be directly compared to those from previous years.

GHS Class of 2026

Graduation

May 21, 2026

7:00 p.m. Charger Stadium

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“Culinary”

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A Focus on Fundamentals Over Flash

One of the most important lessons Gordon took from the competition was the value of mastering fundamentals rather than attempting overly complex dishes.

“The student who won first overall went with tried-and-true recipes. Everything was basic, but it was done exceptionally well.

In contrast, some competitors attempted advanced techniques that were difficult to execute within the time limits. That realization will shape how the program prepares students moving forward.

Selecting students for the competition was based on more than just grades. Participation, leadership, and consistency throughout the year all played a role.

“The ones that I picked were the ones who participated the most.”

Group competitions held during the school year helped identify students who consistently demonstrated both skill and engagement. Gordon said, “We’ve had many competitions, and certain kids stood out all year long.”

Going forward, he plans to formalize that process even further. At the state level, Grenada competed against programs with significantly larger student populations and more resources.

“They’ve got... 96 or 98 students... we’ve got 46,” Gordon said. Despite that disparity, Grenada held its own.

The experience reinforced the belief that Grenada has the talent and potential to compete at a high level. And after spending four hours in competition conditions, students gained a clearer understanding of what a career in culinary arts requires.

“That’s a half day... you just spent half a day in the kitchen,” Gordon said. It’s a profession that demands commitment, endurance, and passion.

For Grenada Career and Technical Center, this first trip to the state competition represents more than a single result. It marks the beginning of a program that is evolving—one that emphasizes real-world skills, hands-on learning, and competitive excellence.

And for students like Brandon Jones, it offers proof that dedication to the fundamentals can lead to meaningful success.

In a competition defined by precision and discipline, a second-place finish in knife skills is more than an award. It’s a validation of the work being done inside the classroom every day and as the program continues to grow, that foundation may prove to be its greatest strength.

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