



THE **WAVE**

GULF SHORES

CITY SCHOOLS

FALL 2026

GULF SHORES
HIGH SCHOOL

CONNECTING WITH US

GULF SHORES CITY SCHOOLS



Dr. Matt Akin
Superintendent



Dr. Stephanie Harrison
Assistant Superintendent



Chad Green
Chief School Financial Officer

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Kevin Corcoran President

Dr. Nicky Gotschall Vice President

Dale Jernigan

Frank Malone

Kelly Walker



CONTACT US

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Website : www.gsboe.org

Location : 300 East 16th Ave., Gulf Shores, AL 36542
PO Box 3908, Gulf Shores, AL 36547

CORE VALUES

1. Promoting rigorous, comprehensive, and relevant curriculum that prepares students to become productive citizens and lifelong learners.
2. Developing self-reliance by incorporating the student's physical, mental, emotional and social well-being into the teaching/learning environment.
3. Fostering inclusive, engaging members of society, and encouraging critical and creative thinking.
4. Recruiting and emboldening the best and the brightest faculty and staff, and rewarding innovation and collaboration.
5. Instilling a sense of pride in our schools by engaging the Gulf Shores community in the educational experience.

GET INVOLVED

- Attend a School Board Meeting in person or online.
- Work Sessions typically occur on the first Thursday of every month at 4:00 PM at the Wave Center for Learning located at East 3rd Street, Gulf Shores, AL 36542.
- Regular Board Meetings typically occur on the second Thursday of every month at 5:00 PM at the Wave Center for Learning.
- Work Sessions and Regular Board Meetings are streamed live through Gulf Shores City Schools' Facebook page.
- Too busy to attend school board meetings, but still want to know more? Visit www.gsboe.org for episodes of "Board Shorts" to stay up-to-date.



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Professional photographs provided by Joe McAleer, Tyla Hudspeth, & Ford Photographs.

OUR SCHOOLS

Gulf Shores Elementary School

1600 East 3rd Street
Gulf Shores, AL 36542

Phone: 251.968.7375

Principal:

Mrs. Courtney Creel - ccreel@gsboe.org

Assistant Principals:

Rebecca Grogan - rgrogan@gsboe.org

Allison Klatt - aklatt@gsboe.org

Molly Sparkman - msparkman@gsboe.org



Gulf Shores Middle School

600 East 15th Ave.
Gulf Shores, AL 36542

Phone: 251.968.8719

Principal:

Mr. Jamie Hill - jhill1@gsboe.org

Assistant Principals:

Miranda Bolden - mbolden@gsboe.org

Ram Talantis - rtalantis@gsboe.org



Gulf Shores High School

21656 Coastal Gateway Blvd.
Gulf Shores, AL 36542

Phone: 251.968.4747

Principal:

Dr. Tim Webb - twebb@gsboe.org

Assistant Principals:

Melisa Everett - meverett@gsboe.org

Cameron Koehler - ckoehler@gsboe.org

Athletic Director:

Jason Watts - jwatts@gsboe.org



Gulf Shores Virtual Academy

19470 Oak Road West
Gulf Shores, AL 36542

Phone: 251.968.9873

Coordinator:

Dr. Susan Nelson - snelson@gsboe.org



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MAKE WAVES



Gulf Shores Board of Education President Kevin Corcoran

LEGOS TO LEGACY

Building a Facility to Match the Mission

Six years ago, there were no blueprints, no renderings, and no construction cranes. There were only ideas.

Gathered around tables, community members, educators, students, city leaders, parents, architects, and school board members worked together using simple building blocks to imagine what the future of education in Gulf Shores could look like. Those early visioning sessions challenged participants to think beyond traditional school design and focus instead on how students would learn, collaborate, create, and grow in the decades ahead.

What began as a collection of conversations, sketches, and tabletop exercises would ultimately become one of the most ambitious and transformative projects in the history of Gulf Shores. Under the leadership of Superintendent Dr. Matt Akin and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Stephanie Harrison, and through a remarkable partnership with the City of Gulf Shores, a bold vision for the future of education began to take shape.

Today, as we celebrate the opening of the new Gulf Shores High School, we reflect on a journey nearly six years in the making—a journey defined by collaboration, innovation, community partnership, and a shared commitment to providing exceptional opportunities for future generations.



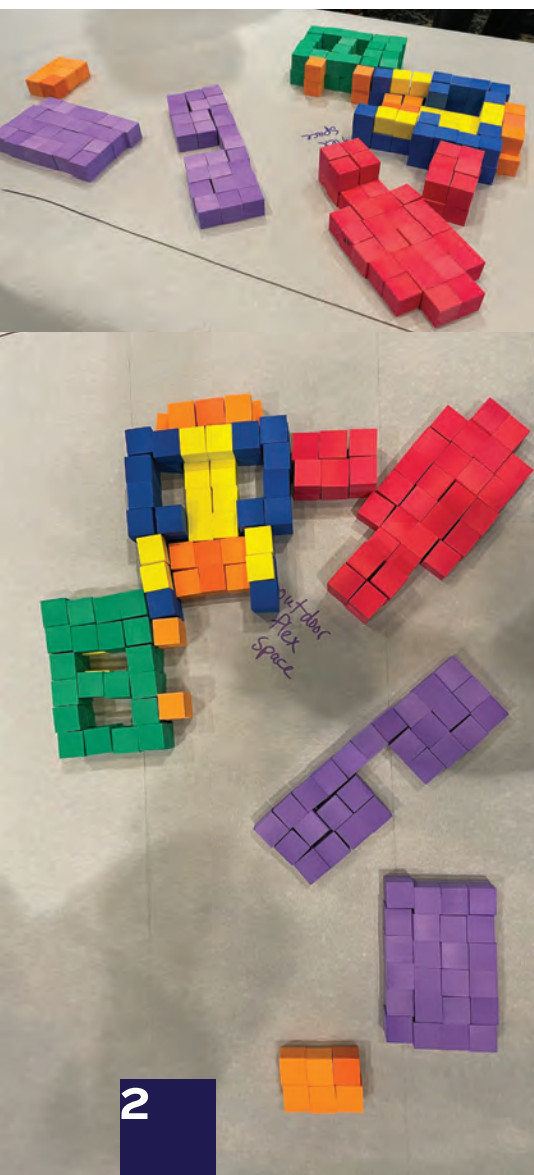
Designing Through Collaboration

From the outset, it was clear that the new Gulf Shores High School should reflect the aspirations of the entire community. To ensure that a broad range of perspectives informed the process, strategic stakeholder groups were established to provide input throughout planning and design.

These groups included members of the Board of Education, city leadership, school administrators, faculty, students, parents, and community members. Each brought a unique perspective and helped shape the vision for what the new high school could become.

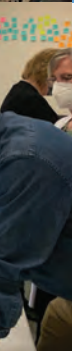
Faculty members offered insight into instructional practices and emerging educational trends. Students shared their experiences and expectations for learning environments that would support both academic achievement and student life. Parents and community members provided valuable feedback regarding safety, accessibility, campus amenities, and the school's role as a community asset.

Through workshops, planning sessions, design charrettes, and collaborative discussions, stakeholders helped evaluate ideas, establish priorities, and refine the evolving vision. The result is a school that was not designed for the community, but with the community.





Noel Hand - City of Gulf Shores Public Works Director



Learning from the Best

The commitment to excellence required looking beyond our own community for inspiration.

Throughout the planning process, representatives from Gulf Shores City Schools and the project team traveled across the country to study some of the nation's most innovative educational facilities. These visits included schools in Phoenix, Arizona; Joplin and Kansas City, Missouri; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and Alabaster, Alabama.

Each campus offered valuable lessons. We observed flexible learning environments, collaborative student spaces, innovative career and technical education programs, performing arts venues, athletic facilities, safety features, and campus circulation strategies. More importantly, we had the opportunity to speak directly with educators, administrators, and students about what was working and what could be improved.

Rather than replicating any one school, the team carefully evaluated the best ideas from each visit and adapted them to fit the unique needs, culture, and vision of Gulf Shores. The result is a facility that reflects national best practices while remaining distinctly our own.

A Partnership Built on Vision

No project of this magnitude succeeds without strong leadership and a shared commitment to the future.

Under the leadership of Dr. Matt Akin and Dr. Stephanie Harrison, Gulf Shores City Schools embarked on a comprehensive process to envision a facility capable of supporting the district's mission for generations to come. Their commitment to engaging stakeholders, studying innovative educational environments, and maintaining a relentless focus on student success helped guide the project from concept to completion.



Gulf Shores Mayor and City Council

From the earliest planning discussions, the City of Gulf Shores became an indispensable partner in this endeavor. Under the leadership of Mayor Robert Craft, city leaders worked closely with Gulf Shores City Schools to transform a bold vision into reality.

Together, school and city leaders recognized that prioritizing education is one of the most important investments a community can make. Through

their leadership, commitment, and support, the financing necessary to bring this project to life was secured, ensuring that future generations of students would have access to world-class educational opportunities.

The partnership between the City and the School System extended far beyond funding. It was a true collaboration built on a shared belief that Gulf Shores students deserve learning environments that inspire excellence, innovation, and opportunity.

The new Gulf Shores High School stands today as a testament to what can be accomplished when a community's leaders have the vision to invest boldly in its future.



“The new Gulf Shores High School reflects our commitment to innovative education. Its intentional design promotes collaboration, cross-curricular learning, and authentic experiences that will empower our students to confidently meet the opportunities and challenges of the future.”

Dr. Tim Webb, Principal
Gulf Shores High School



Waves”—to lead, innovate, and create positive change. The new Gulf Shores High School stands as a powerful example of what it means to Make Waves.

The willingness to envision something greater, to travel the country in search of ideas, to engage stakeholders from every corner of the community, and to invest in a facility designed for future generations required courage, collaboration, and determination. In every sense, this project was an opportunity to Make Waves.

As we celebrate the opening of the new Gulf Shores High School, we extend our gratitude to the countless individuals who contributed to this journey. Educators, students, parents, community members, city leaders, school leaders, architects, engineers, contractors, and construction professionals provided the vision and dedication that made this project possible.

Six years ago, we gathered around tables with building blocks and ideas. Today, we stand in a facility designed to match our mission and support our vision.

What began with Legos has become a legacy.

A facility to match the mission.

A community united by purpose.

A place where future generations will learn, lead, and Make Waves.

Kevin S. Corcoran

President, Gulf Shores City Schools
Board of Education

More Than a High School

While the new Gulf Shores High School serves students in grades 9 through 12, its impact reaches far beyond a single campus.

As Gulf Shores continues to experience significant growth, enrollment pressures have been felt across the district. The construction of the new high school creates opportunities throughout Gulf Shores City Schools and helps address capacity needs from Pre-K through twelfth grade.

With the opening of the new facility, the former high school campus will become the new Gulf Shores Middle School, providing expanded opportunities and tremendous growth potential for middle-grade students. Likewise, the former middle school facility will be incorporated into the adjacent elementary school campus, helping relieve overcrowding and create additional capacity for the district's youngest learners.

What began as a project to build a new high school evolved into a comprehensive investment in the future of Gulf Shores City Schools. The result is a district-wide transformation that will benefit students at every stage of their educational journey.

From Vision to Reality

Turning a vision into reality required years of planning, design, coordination, and commitment. Following extensive stakeholder engagement, research, and design development, the project moved from paper to construction.

Over the course of more than two years, countless individuals worked tirelessly to bring the vision to life. Architects, engineers, contractors, city officials, school leaders, and construction professionals collaborated to create a campus designed to serve generations of students.

Every classroom, gathering space, athletic venue, and learning environment reflects the careful planning and thoughtful decision-making that guided the project from its earliest days.

The completed campus represents far more than a new building. It represents the collective vision, determination, and investment of an entire community.

A Legacy Built to Make Waves

Throughout this journey, one idea consistently guided the work of everyone involved: a commitment to creating opportunities for students to dream bigger, achieve more, and make a meaningful impact on the world around them.

The rallying cry of Gulf Shores City Schools has long been to “Make





“As we enter our new home at Gulf Shores Middle School, we aren’t simply preparing for the future, we are living it. Every classroom, every opportunity, every relationship, and every achievement begins now.

My challenge to our students is to take the next step every day. Students don’t have to wait to become leaders, scholars, and contributors, they can start today at GSMS!”

Jamie Hill, Principal
Gulf Shores Middle School



NEW SPACES, NEW OPPORTUNITIES:



Gulf Shores Elementary School



Gulf Shores Middle School



“Every new classroom, every new hallway, and every new opportunity at Gulf School Elementary School reflect our belief that our students deserve room to dream, discover, and succeed. This new building is more than an expansion of our campus; it is an investment in their future and in the continued growth of our school community. It represents our commitment to creating spaces where curiosity is encouraged, talents are nurtured, and meaningful connections are built. As we grow, so do the possibilities for every student who walks through our doors. Together, we are building more than a facility; we are building a stronger foundation for learning, achievement, and a future filled with opportunity.”

Courtney Creel, Principal
Gulf Shores Elementary School



GULF SHORES VIRTUAL ACADEMY:

A MODERN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO EDUCATION

In an era where digital innovation is reshaping education, Gulf Shores Virtual Academy (GSVA) stands at the forefront, offering a flexible and comprehensive online learning experience. GSVA provides an alternative to traditional classroom settings while maintaining high academic standards and student engagement.

Customized Learning for Every Student

GSVA's virtual learning environment caters to different learning styles by offering a variety of instructional methods. Visual learners benefit from interactive videos and graphical representations, auditory learners engage with recorded lectures and discussions, and kinesthetic learners can take advantage of hands-on projects and simulations. This adaptability ensures that each student can learn in the way that best suits their individual needs. GSVA is dedicated to personalized learning, allowing students to progress at their own pace while receiving guidance from experienced educators.

Comprehensive Curriculum

The academy offers a robust curriculum that aligns with state and national education standards. Students have access to a wide range of subjects, including core courses in mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies, as well as elective courses in arts, technology, foreign languages, and career and technical education.

Blended Learning

GSVA also offers a blended learning model, allowing students to take classes both online and in person. This hybrid approach enables students to experience the flexibility of virtual education while benefiting from face-to-face instruction on one of the school campuses. Blended learning provides opportunities for hands-on activities, peer collaboration, and direct teacher support, creating a well-rounded educational experience.

Elementary age virtual students who choose to be in the blended virtual program can explore all the enrichment classes offered at the elementary school. These classes include music, art, STEM lab, and Spanish.

Elementary school virtual academy students have virtual lessons with their primary teachers. This allows the students time to interact with their teacher and other classmates. In addition to academic zoom meetings students are encouraged to attend optional zoom activities daily. These include show and tell, Kahoot, step-by-step drawing, and word games to name a few.

GSVA enhances the virtual learning experience by offering in-person field trips, guest speaker sessions, and school parties. These events provide students with opportunities to engage with their peers, gain real-world knowledge, and participate in social and educational activities. GSVA students have taken part in Alabama Technology in Motion lessons and environmental and sustainability activities. Students meet for in person field trips throughout the year. Students have visited the planetarium and attended yearly plays performed by Sunny Side Children's Theater of Mobile. Additionally, school parties and gatherings foster a sense of community, ensuring that students feel connected and



Flexibility and Accessibility

One of GSVA's key advantages is its flexibility. Students can complete coursework at times that best suit their schedules, making this an excellent option for families who like to travel. The online platform is designed to be user-friendly and accessible, providing students with the necessary tools to succeed in a virtual classroom setting.





engaged despite the virtual nature of their studies. Students participate in service projects for Gulf Shores Gives Back Day, yearly Christmas caroling at The Haven Memory Care Assisted Living Facility, and Coastal Clean Up.

Last year the elementary GSVA added a classroom garden. Virtual students have not only planted herbs, flowers, and vegetables, but also planned and prepared meals with the vegetables that were grown. Flowers grown were used to create bouquets for Gulf Shores Elementary staff members. The classroom garden has taught students valuable lessons regarding how to maintain a garden, the importance of native plants, nutrition, sustainability, and preservation. The classroom garden continues to spread awareness about the



importance of protecting nature.

GSVA middle school students who choose to take the blended learning approach have the option of taking either their core classes such as Math, English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science in person at GSMS or they can choose to take elective classes. Gulf Shores Middle School offers Choir, STEM, Business Marketing,



Computer Science, First Aid, and Sustainability.

Blended options get even more exciting at the high school level for GSVA students. High School students have the option of choices from core classes and any of the Career Academy, Fine Arts, or World Language electives that are offered at GSHS. Gulf Shores High

School offers the following Career Academy pathways: Hospitality and Tourism, Marketing, Health Science, Engineering, Computer Science, Agriscience, and Aviation. Art electives include Visual Arts, Band, Chorus, and Theater. Blended GSVA students can also choose to take part in Dual Enrollment classes offered at Coastal Alabama Community College, University of South Alabama, University of Alabama, and Auburn University. The blended learning option allows the flexibility for students to attend in person classes on the high school campus as well as the Coastal Alabama Community College campus.

The virtual academy allows students in middle and high school to choose from additional classes offered solely online. These classes include additional foreign language options such as German, French, Latin and Mandarin Chinese.



Family Involvement

GSVA recognizes the importance of family involvement in a student's educational journey. Parents and guardians are encouraged to actively participate in their child's learning experience by monitoring progress, communicating with teachers, and providing a structured home learning environment. The academy offers resources and workshops to help families support student success effectively. GSVA

is committed to fostering a supportive educational experience. Certified teachers provide individualized instruction and regular check-ins, ensuring that students stay on track with their studies. Students have access to counseling services, tutoring, and extracurricular activities, creating a well-rounded educational experience that extends beyond academics.



Enrollment and Admission

GSVA welcomes students from grades K-12. The enrollment process is straightforward, with dedicated staff available to guide families through the application process. Whether transitioning from a traditional school setting or starting fresh with online learning, students will find a seamless integration into the program. Enrollment opens in the Spring for the upcoming school year.

Gulf Shores Virtual Academy is revolutionizing education by combining flexibility, academic rigor, and personalized learning. As online education continues to grow in popularity, GSVA remains a top choice for families seeking an innovative and effective alternative to traditional schooling. With a commitment to student success and a vision for the future of education, GSVA is shaping the next generation of learners.

VIRTUAL ACADEMY FAMILY SPOTLIGHT:

THE WHATLEY FAMILY



We were drawn to the Gulf Shores school system because of the state-of-the-art programs and facilities but most importantly the flexibility and willingness to meet students where they are and allow them to flourish and move at their own pace. For Benjamin, that was an accelerated pace. We live in Fairhope and coming to Gulf Shores meant an hour's drive, so we did not take the decision lightly. We met with Dr. Harrison who laid out the possibilities and Dr. Nelson formed a plan and put it into action. She was there with Ben every step of the way. The support we got was incredible. Dr. Nelson and the entire staff wanted Benjamin to thrive, not for their scores and ratings, but because they cared. It was refreshing. Benjamin's education included both on-line and in-person classes, honors, AP and dual enrollment courses. He graduated at age 16 (skipping 2 grades) and was able to obtain 49 college credit hours by the time he graduated from GSHS.

One of his best experiences was taking classes in coding and robotics at GSHS Center of Applied Design with James Salvant. Mr. Salvant was that special teacher that every student should encounter during their high school experience. The one that inspires, motivates, and mentors. Ben really loved these classes, and it became a hobby and passion. He conceptualized, designed, created, tested and reworked projects of all sorts using 3D printers and programming to make projects from a timed feeder for his turtles and cat that included a spray deterrent for pesky raccoons to more meaningful applications such as adapting a mobility bumper cart for a child suffering from a rare genetic condition in the community. The flexibility of the Virtual Academy also enabled Benjamin to be involved in the Mobile Math Circle and do independent study in Graph Theory with Dr. Pavelescu in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of South Alabama.

Gulf Shores High School also provided free ACT study classes. Ben took advantage of these leading to a 1430 on the SAT and a 32 on the ACT earning him Presidential Scholarships at University of Mobile, Springhill, and USA. Benjamin decided to attend USA where he received the prestigious Mitchell Scholarship for elite business students which includes faculty mentorship, full tuition, a computer, study abroad stipend and a faculty-led research project. Benjamin plans to double major in Business Accounting and Mathematics.

His experience in the Gulf Shores school system has been incredible and the move was the best decision we could have made.

Victor and Maria Whatley
Ben Whatley

AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE NEW GULF SHORES HIGH SCHOOL



BEYOND THE BOOKS:

SUPPORTING THE WHOLE CHILD

GULF SHORES CITY SCHOOLS EXPANDS COUNSELING, MENTAL WELLNESS SERVICES, AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

At Gulf Shores City Schools, student success is about more than grades, test scores, and extra-curricular achievements. It is about ensuring every student feels supported, connected, and equipped to thrive both in and out of the classroom.

Through comprehensive counseling programs, school-based mental health, a dedicated Mental Health Advisory Committee, and the district's Gulf Shores Gives Back initiative, Gulf Shores City Schools has created a culture of care that supports the academic, social, emotional, and personal development of every student.

Counseling Services That Support Student Success

School counselors play a vital role in helping students navigate the challenges and opportunities they encounter throughout their educational journey. Across the district, counselors provide academic guidance, social-emotional support, college and career planning, and crisis intervention when needed.

From helping elementary students develop healthy friendships and emotional regulation skills to assisting high school students with graduation plans, college admissions, scholarships, internships, and future career pathways, counselors serve as trusted advocates who help students build confidence and resilience.

By working closely with teachers, administrators, and families, counselors help ensure that students receive the support they need to succeed both academically and personally.

Expanding Access to Mental Health Resources

Recognizing the growing need for student mental health support, Gulf Shores City Schools has made a significant investment in expanding access to school-based mental health services for students and families.

The district's approach focuses on providing multiple levels of support so students can receive help when challenges arise, whether the challenges involve anxiety, depression, grief, family transitions, stress, behavioral concerns, or other mental health needs that may impact learning and well-being.

To increase access to therapeutic services, Gulf Shores City Schools has hired a part-time licensed therapist who works directly with students. In addition, the district has established a partnership with AltaPointe Health, one of the region's leading behavioral health providers, to place a full-time therapist within the school system. This partnership allows students and families to access professional mental health services

“At Gulf Shores City Schools, supporting students means more than helping them reach academic goals. It means helping them discover purpose, build resilience, care for others, and become productive citizens who make our community stronger. Through counseling services, mental health support, and meaningful opportunities to serve, Gulf Shores City Schools is creating an environment where every student can thrive.”

Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Stephanie Harrison



GSBOE MEMBER DALE JERNIGAN SERVES ON THE MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE THAT IS CHAIRED BY DR. LAURA GOULDEN AND DR. STEPHANIE HARRISON .

in a familiar school setting, reducing barriers to care and increasing opportunities for early intervention.

The district has also expanded its leadership and coordination of mental health services through the addition of Clinical Psychologist Dr. Laura Goulden who serves as the district's Mental Health Coordinator. In this role, Dr. Goulden works collaboratively with school counselors, administrators, teachers, families, and community partners to strengthen the district's overall mental health framework. In addition to coordinating services and supporting prevention efforts, Dr. Goulden also provides school-based therapy for students who need more intensive support.

Together, these services create a comprehensive network of care that allows students to receive support at multiple levels. School counselors provide preventive and developmental services for all students, while licensed therapists and the district psychologist offer more specialized interventions when needed.

By embedding mental health professionals directly within schools, Gulf Shores City Schools is helping ensure that students have timely access to support while reducing the stigma often associated with seeking mental health services. This proactive approach reflects the district's belief that emotional wellness is fundamental to academic success and that every student deserves access to the resources necessary to thrive.

**A Community-Wide Commitment:
The Mental Health Advisory
Committee**

The district's Mental Health Advisory Committee brings together educators, parents, mental health professionals, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders to strengthen support systems for students and families.

The committee serves as a collaborative forum for identifying emerging needs, reviewing best practices, developing partnerships, and exploring ways to improve mental health awareness and support throughout the school community.

The committee's work extends beyond traditional mental health services. Members continually seek opportunities to create meaningful connections between students and their community, recognizing that a sense of belonging and purpose plays a critical role in overall well-being. A significant example of this work is the Kids Hope Mentor Program which connects students to trained community members who provide ongoing support for students.

By engaging a broad network of community partners, Gulf Shores City Schools ensures that supporting student wellness remains a shared responsibility rather than the work of schools alone.



"By investing in mental health, fostering meaningful relationships, and creating opportunities for service and leadership, Gulf Shores City Schools is helping students develop not only as scholars, but also as compassionate citizens and future community leaders."

School Board Member
Dale Jernigan

PHIN: GULF SHORES CITY SCHOOLS' COMFORT DOG

GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY MAYOR ROBERT AND MRS. TRUDY CRAFT
WITH VETERINARIAN CARE PROVIDED BY DR. LANGSTON



Gulf Shores Gives Back: Service as a Pathway to Connection and Well-Being

One of the most visible examples of the district's commitment to student wellness is Gulf Shores Gives Back, a community-wide day of service organized by the Mental Health Advisory Committee.

What began as an effort to strengthen connections between students and their community has grown into one of the largest service-learning events on the Alabama Gulf Coast. Each year, more than 3,000 students, educators, parents, community members, and local partners come together to complete projects that improve the city while teaching students the value of compassion, responsibility, and civic engagement. More than 100 projects are completed annually, creating a visible impact throughout Gulf Shores.

The projects reflect the diverse needs of the community and allow students of all ages to contribute in meaningful ways. Students have planted sea oats to help preserve Gulf Shores' beaches, removed invasive species from natural areas, cleaned parks and beaches, enhanced walking trails, built bluebird houses, created pollinator gardens, and supported turtle conservation efforts. These environmental stewardship projects allow students to learn about sustainability while caring for the natural resources that make Gulf Shores unique.

Students also participate in projects that directly support community members. They create and deliver cards to nursing home residents, prepare activity bags for children who are in the hospital, stock blessing boxes, create fidget devices for memory care residents, perform at retirement communities, support veterans, organize blood drives, and

partner with local organizations such as Family Promise and the Foster Closet. Other projects have included cleaning and organizing spaces used by displaced families, landscaping community facilities, washing city vehicles and equipment, and preparing meals for those in need.

The initiative is intentionally tied to student mental health and wellness. Research consistently shows that service and community involvement help foster a sense of belonging, purpose, and connection. School Board Member Dale Jernigan states, "Through Gulf Shores Gives Back, students understand they can make a difference in the lives of others while developing empathy, leadership skills, and a lifelong commitment to service."

As Assistant Superintendent Dr. Stephanie Harrison has noted, the goal is for students who participate in Gulf Shores Gives Back from



ANNUAL KIDS HOPE MENTOR APPRECIATION BREAKFAST

pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade to develop a lifelong habit of service. By combining community engagement with student wellness, Gulf Shores Gives Back has become a signature example of how Gulf Shores City Schools supports the whole child while strengthening the entire community.

Building Stronger Students and a Stronger Community

Together, counseling services, mental wellness resources, the Mental Health Advisory Committee, and Gulf Shores Gives Back reflect Gulf Shores City Schools' commitment to educating the whole child.

These programs recognize that academic achievement and student well-being are deeply connected. When students feel supported, valued, and connected to their community, they are better prepared to learn, lead, and succeed.





A Community-Wide Day of Service





**GSBOE MEMBER
KELLY WALKER
SERVES AS CO-CHAIR
OF THE NUTRITION
AND WELLNESS
COMMITTEE ALONG
WITH ASSISTANT
SUPERINTENDENT
DR. STEPHANIE
HARRISON, CHILD
NUTRITION PROGRAM
DIRECTOR TANYA
HILL, CITY COUNCIL
MEMBER JENNIFER
GUTHRIE, AND
TEACHER AMANDA
TALANTIS.**



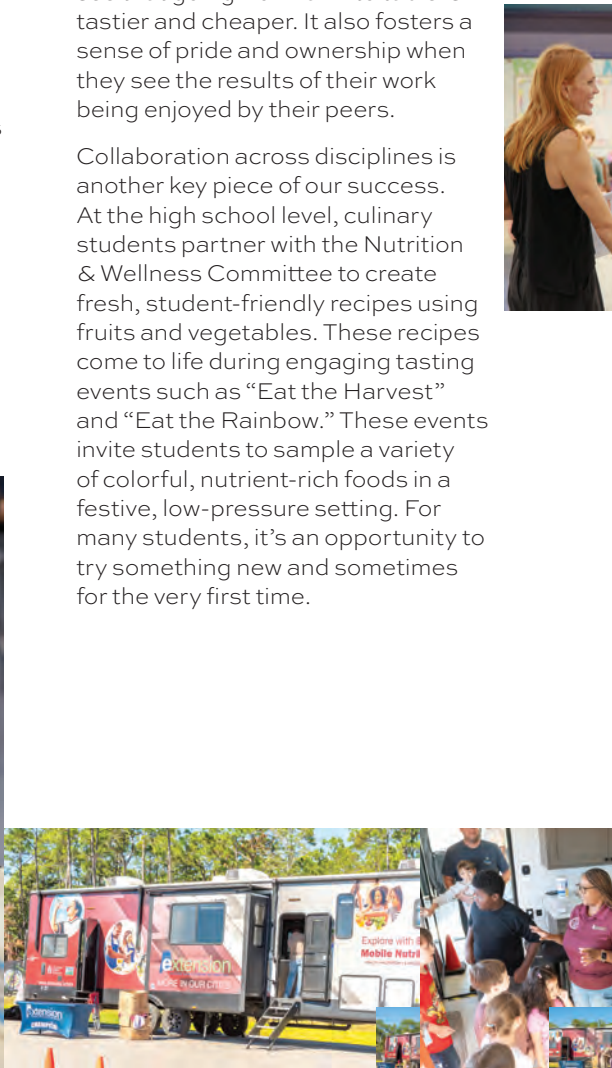
GROWING HEALTHY STUDENTS: FROM FARM TO TRAY IN OUR SCHOOLS

As a School Board member, Nutrition & Wellness Committee member, and Parent, I'm proud to see how our district is creating meaningful connections between nutrition, education, and student wellbeing. Through innovative programs and strong community partnerships, we are helping students develop healthier habits while engaging them in hands-on learning that extends beyond the classroom and, hopefully, beyond graduation.

One of the most impactful initiatives is our partnership with local farmers to bring a "Harvest of the Month" to our menu. Each month, students are introduced to a featured fruit/vegetable sourced locally. This item is highlighted across cafeteria menus in various ways to give students multiple opportunities to experience the featured fruit/vegetable. Whether it's fresh, roasted, or blended into a dish, students are encouraged to explore new flavors and build familiarity with these nutritious foods.

The District's commitment to fresh, local food is further strengthened by the work happening in our Greenhouses and Sustainability courses. Students are actively involved in growing fresh produce, most notably lettuce. This lettuce is then used daily in school salads, providing a fresh, cold alternative to the hot meal provided each day. Additionally, growing lettuce hands-on allows students to see the full journey of food, from seed to plate, while learning valuable lessons about agriculture, sustainability, and responsibility. They can taste and see that going from farm to table is tastier and cheaper. It also fosters a sense of pride and ownership when they see the results of their work being enjoyed by their peers.

Collaboration across disciplines is another key piece of our success. At the high school level, culinary students partner with the Nutrition & Wellness Committee to create fresh, student-friendly recipes using fruits and vegetables. These recipes come to life during engaging tasting events such as "Eat the Harvest" and "Eat the Rainbow." These events invite students to sample a variety of colorful, nutrient-rich foods in a festive, low-pressure setting. For many students, it's an opportunity to try something new and sometimes for the very first time.





GSHS New Kitchen



In summary, I am proud of these programs and see many wonderful benefits such as:

- Students being exposed to a wider variety of local fruits & vegetables, helping to expand their palates and build lifelong healthy habits.
- Culinary and Sustainability students gaining real world, hands-on learning experiences that connect directly to potential career paths.
- Teachers and staff collaborating to create cross-curricular and cross-grade level opportunities that make for impactful learning moments.
- All students, from preschool to seniors, benefiting from increased access to fresh, high-quality options in the cafeteria.



As you can see, these efforts reflect our district's commitment to caring for and educating the whole child. By integrating nutrition, hands-on learning, community partnerships, and student engagement, we are not only nourishing bodies, but we are cultivating curiosity, confidence, and a lifelong appreciation for fresh fruits & vegetables. In my opinion, this is what it looks like when a school district truly invests in the wellbeing and success of every single student.

Kelly Walker
GSBOE Member

Walk to School



International Food Fest





GSBOE VICE-PRESIDENT DR. NICKY GOTSCHALL CO-CHAIRS THE MAKE WAVES OF KINDNESS COMMITTEE ALONG WITH DR. SONYA PRICE, SIMONE WYATT, AND ERIN CHANDLER.

MAKE WAVES OF KINDNESS:

CREATING RIPPLES OF INCLUSION ACROSS GULF SHORES CITY SCHOOLS

At Gulf Shores City Schools, kindness is more than a character trait—it is a movement that helps shape school culture, strengthen community connections, and support students across every campus.

Through the Gulf Shores City Schools Department of Exceptional Education's annual Make Waves of Kindness initiative, students, educators, families, businesses, and community members come together to demonstrate how small acts of kindness can create lasting ripples throughout an entire community. Originally launched by a group of Gulf Shores parents who shared a vision of fostering understanding, compassion, and support for all students, the initiative has grown from a grassroots awareness campaign into a district-wide celebration of inclusion, acceptance, and belonging. Anchored within the Department of Exceptional Education and led by Dr. Sonya Price, Director of Exceptional Education, Make Waves of Kindness now serves as a community-wide awareness effort and a fundraising initiative that directly benefits students and teachers across the district.

One of the initiative's most visible and lasting impacts can be found in the sensory-support spaces located throughout Gulf Shores City Schools. These thoughtfully designed environments provide students with opportunities to reset, self-regulate, and return to learning ready to engage and succeed. Equipped with sensory swings, tactile materials, calming tools, and movement-based activities, the spaces offer individualized support for students who may become overwhelmed by the demands of a traditional classroom setting.

At Gulf Shores Elementary School, sensory pathways and classroom supports encourage movement and self-regulation throughout the day. Gulf Shores Middle School's sensory garden offers a peaceful outdoor setting where students can relax, reflect, and recharge. At Gulf Shores High School, the sensory room provides older students with a calm, structured environment where they can independently manage stress, regulate emotions, and reset when needed. Designed with age-appropriate tools and flexible supports, the space reinforces self-advocacy skills and helps prepare students for post-secondary environments that require increasing independence and emotional regulation.

These sensory-support environments represent more than physical spaces—they reflect a commitment to meeting the needs of the whole child. Under Dr. Price's leadership, the Department of Exceptional Education has championed innovative resources and learning environments that help students build confidence, develop self-awareness, and strengthen the skills needed to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

The impact of Make Waves of Kindness extends well beyond sensory-support resources. Funds raised through the initiative have supported educator grants, innovative classroom projects, professional development opportunities, social-emotional learning resources, communication tools, and specialized instructional materials that help address the diverse needs of students throughout the district.



Each year, Gulf Shores City Schools celebrates Make Waves of Kindness Day on November 13, a date officially recognized by the City of Gulf Shores. Observed in conjunction with World Kindness Day, the event brings students and staff together across all campuses for activities that promote empathy, compassion, and inclusion. These shared experiences reinforce the belief that every individual deserves to feel valued, respected, and connected, helping establish kindness as a daily practice rather than a single-day event.

At its heart, Make Waves of Kindness is about creating a sense of belonging. The initiative encourages students to recognize and celebrate the strengths of others while embracing the differences that make each individual unique. In doing so, it helps foster meaningful relationships, build confidence, and create opportunities for students to succeed both inside and outside the classroom.

The success of Make Waves of Kindness is made possible through the support of families, educators, local businesses, and community members who believe in the power of inclusion and compassion. As November 13 approaches each year, Gulf Shores City Schools invites the

community to join the movement through acts of kindness, increased awareness, and support for programs that directly benefit students throughout the district.

Community contributions help fund sensory resources, educator grants, student-centered initiatives, and innovative projects that strengthen the work of Gulf Shores City Schools and the Department of Exceptional Education. Every gift expands opportunities for students and helps ensure that resources remain available to support their academic, social, and emotional growth.

As Gulf Shores City Schools continues to grow and innovate, Make Waves of Kindness serves as a powerful reminder that meaningful change often begins with a simple act of kindness. Together, those acts create waves that extend far beyond the classroom, shaping a culture where students feel supported, achievements are celebrated, and every child has the opportunity to thrive.

In Gulf Shores, those waves continue to grow—one act of kindness at a time.



Dr. Sonya Price, Director of Exceptional Education



GSBOE MEMBER FRANK MALONE HAS BEEN ON THE BOARD OF THE DOLPHIN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION AND ARTS SINCE ITS INCEPTION. HE CURRENTLY SERVES AS THE SECRETARY.

NATIONAL BOARD-CERTIFIED TEACHER PROGRAM



COMMUNITY SUPPORT:

THE DOLPHIN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION AND ARTS



DOLPHIN FOUNDATION

FOR EDUCATION AND ARTS

The Dolphin Foundation for Education and Arts (DFEA) was co-founded by Gulf Shores community members Jason J. Stephenson and Gary Gilpin. The inaugural board of directors' meeting for the DFEA was held on October 16, 2018, prior to the Gulf Shores City School's (GSCS) first year of operation which began June 1, 2019. On December 6, 2018, the IRS first recognized the DFEA as a tax-exempt 501(c)3 entity.



Our Vision

We are a community partner committed to making educational excellence a reality for every student and educator, every day.

From the beginning, the DFEA has been busy raising funds and accepting donations to support the GSCS' Education and Arts programs. A short list of some DFEA supported programs are:

- National Board-Certified Teachers (NBCT) - 100% of teacher tuition for this voluntary, advanced credential that proves a teacher has met the profession's highest standards. To date, GSCS has 24 NBCT certified teachers and 49 enrolled to become NBCT certified.
- The Volkert Center for Applied Design (via Volkert Engineering donation)

TURBO DOLPHINS



- Hang-Out Music Lab (via Hang Out donation)
- Lulu's Steel Drum Band, The Waves of Steel (via Lulu's donation)
- Kids Hope USA Mentor Program
- Barr Group Mortgage Financial Literacy Program
- Annual Jason J. Stephenson Impact Scholarship
- Annual Marjorie Ryals Floriculture and Mariculture Scholarship
- Turbo Dolphins Racing
- Collaborative Learning Area Furniture (all 3 campuses)

- Re/Max Paradise Walking School Bus
- Band Room Projection System
- Middle School Gym Sound System
- Choir Uniforms
- Virtual Reality Headsets
- Farm to Table Event
- Dolphin Sound Costumes
- Supplement for Band Instruments

To date, the DFEA has provided over \$600,000 to support education and art programs at GSCS. Our funding has mainly been sourced from the generosity of the Gulf Shores community. DFEA has also held some exciting annual fundraising events such as:

- Make Waves Benefit (formerly known as Zoonami)
- Ladies' Bingo Night
- Haunted Hustle food & beverage sales
- 2026 Inaugural Draw Down

Just announced, the State of Alabama has approved a custom, DFEA branded license plate. When the DFEA reaches 1000 plates ordered by the community, the DFEA will receive annual donations exceeding \$40,000 per year. **Search <https://thegsdf.org/license-plates> to see the license plate rendering and to order yours (Fleet sales are eligible.).**

The Dolphin Foundation for Education and Arts is excited as GSCS expands into the new high school building. DFEA is always open to new fund-raising initiatives to enhance our impact on the educational experience of the GSCS students. **To join the DFEA, go to <https://thegsdf.org/membership-1>.** Help us make Gulf Shores City Schools the best school system in the United States!

CELEBRATING SUCCESS



Cognia Accreditation

U.S. Department of Education Green
Ribbon School District

Apple Distinguished School District

CLAS Banner Schools and Schools of
Distinction

Best of Baldwin Award Winners

Lighthouse School

Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



STATE AND NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED TEACHERS AND STAFF

- Whitney Boggus - GenAi ISTE Selection
- Randy Carlisle- Alabama Transportation Supervisor of the Year
- Krista Fleming – Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators; Presidential Award of Excellence for Mathematics and Science Teaching; NOAA Teacher at Sea; Alabama Science Teacher of the Year; Alabama Teacher of the Year Finalist
- Kristen Madsen – ProStart Educator of the Year; Sweet 16 Alabama Teacher of the Year
- Jamie McClung - Conchita Marbury State Technology Award; Samsung Innovation Challenge Preliminary Award
- Cinthia Moore- National Outstanding Earth Science Teacher
- Brandi Owens – Alabama State Bus Driver of the Year
- Scott Prince- Peggy McDonald Innovative Stem Award
- Anthony Schaff - Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educator
- Carson Schaff – Samsung Innovation Challenge Preliminary Award
- Amanda Talantis – Best of Green Schools National K-12 Educator of the Year; Sweet 16 Alabama Teacher of the Year; Alabama Ag in the Classroom Excellence in Teaching about Agriculture

NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHERS

Misty Balster
Tera Cagle
Jaclyn Clanton
Kathy Corlew
Sandra Dempsey
Krista Fleming
Lindsay Grant
Jason Hill
Donna Holderfield
Wendy Jones
Angela Kirby
Hilary McKinney
Martha Morales
Mary Margaret Phillips
Sonya Price

Roger Reetz
Megan Rogers
Anthony Schaff
Lindsay Scogin
Sara Shaw
Lindsay Taylor
Deborah Whetstone



PATHWAYS TO THE FUTURE

WHERE DREAMS TAKE FLIGHT:

GULF SHORES HIGH SCHOOL AVIATION ACADEMY



By: Dr. Matt Akin – Superintendent

Every transformational school program begins with a dream.

For Gulf Shores City Schools, one of those dreams was to create an Aviation Academy where high school students could do more than learn about airplanes from a textbook. We envisioned a program where students could build an aircraft, learn from experienced aviation professionals, earn industry certifications and even begin flight training before graduating from high school.

It was an ambitious idea. Public high schools do not typically own airplanes, employ commercial pilots or provide students with a pathway toward earning a private pilot certificate. Through the generosity of community partners, the commitment of our instructors and the determination of our students, that dream has become a reality.

Today, Gulf Shores High School students study aerodynamics, aircraft systems, avionics, navigation, flight operations and aviation safety. They can prepare for the FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot Knowledge Test and the private pilot written examination. They have built an FAA-approved airplane,

Dr Mackey, Alabama State Superintendent



Haley Kellogg, GSHS Flight Instructor

participated in aviation internships and gained hands-on experience that would be difficult to duplicate in a traditional classroom.

The program reached another remarkable milestone when Gulf Shores High School became one of only a small number of public high schools in the country to offer flight instruction to students. This opportunity was made possible by Vince and Lynn Boothe, who donated a 2016 TL Sting S4 aircraft for student training.

For me, however, the Aviation Academy is more than an innovative school program. It is deeply personal.

Long before Gulf Shores City Schools dreamed of creating an aviation program, a third-grade boy came home from a school field trip with an aviation dream of his own.



Captain Dylan Akin

That boy was my son, Dylan.

After visiting the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Dylan announced that he was going to attend the United States Air Force Academy and become an Air Force pilot. It was an unusually specific goal for a child his age, but for Dylan, it was not simply a passing childhood phase.

From that point forward, aviation became part of our family's life. Dylan, his younger brother Brett and I traveled to air shows in Chattanooga, Birmingham and anywhere else we could reasonably reach. If airplanes were involved, Dylan wanted to be there. While other children's plans for the future changed from year to year, his remained remarkably consistent.

By middle school, Dylan was already researching what it would take to earn an appointment to the Air Force Academy. He understood that admission would require more than good grades. He needed to challenge himself academically, demonstrate leadership, participate in extracurricular activities and earn a congressional nomination.

again and again. After the third consecutive call, I finally stepped out and answered.

Dylan could hardly contain his excitement. Congressman Mike Rogers had personally called to tell him that he had received a nomination to the United States Air Force Academy.

On August 30, 2025, Dylan's life tragically ended at the age of 29.

In the days and weeks that followed, our family began hearing stories we had never heard before. Friends told us how Dylan encouraged them to finish their college degrees. Enlisted members of his squadron shared how he supported them as they considered applying for



He participated in athletics, even though sports were not always his favorite activity. He joined the Civil Air Patrol in high school. At 16, he began taking flight lessons and eventually earned his private pilot certificate before graduating from high school.

One of my favorite memories occurred while I was sitting in one of my doctoral classes. My phone rang, and I saw that Dylan was calling. I did not answer because I was in class. Then he called

The dream he had announced as a third grader was becoming a reality.

Dylan earned his way through the Academy and received one of the highly competitive opportunities to attend Pilot Training at Laughlin Air Force Base in Texas. After completing the demanding yearlong program, he learned that he would fly the C-146A Wolfhound and serve with Air Force Special Operations Command at Hurlburt Field in Northwest Florida.

His assignments and missions took him throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, North America and South America. The little boy who once stood in awe of airplanes at air shows was now piloting one around the world in service to his country.

But flying was only part of Dylan's story.

To his nieces and nephews, he was "Uncle Dyl." To his family, friends and fellow Airmen, he was one of the kindest and most generous people they knew. Dylan cared deeply about others, and he wanted the people around him to recognize the possibilities in their own lives.

flight training or pursuing other opportunities. Others spoke about how he encouraged them to take that first flight lesson or begin working toward a pilot certificate.

Dylan did not just pursue his own dream. He helped other people believe in theirs.

That same spirit can be seen in the Gulf Shores High School Aviation Academy. The program provides students with opportunities that can change the direction of their lives, but those opportunities do not happen simply because the school system owns an airplane or offers aviation courses.

They happen because dedicated people are willing to invest their knowledge, time and hearts in our students.

The boots on the ground making this dream a reality are Haley Kellogg, Rod Kellogg, Brock Harris, Cody Rhoades, and Chance English.



- Haley Kellogg, an Aviation Academy instructor and commercial pilot, provides the daily instruction and guidance that bring the program to life. She teaches students the technical knowledge required in aviation while also helping them understand the discipline, responsibility and attention to detail that flying demands. Working alongside Haley is her husband, Rod Kellogg, a commercial pilot who volunteers his time and expertise to support the academy and mentor its students. Rod's willingness to share his aviation experience gives our students access to knowledge that most young people could receive only through private flight training. This program simply would not happen without the extraordinary commitment of Haley and Rod. Their investment goes far beyond the hours they spend at school or at the airport. They believe in our students and in the possibilities this program can create for them.

- Brock Harris, one of our flight instructors and a former Gulf Shores student, brings another meaningful dimension to the program. His return to help train the next generation of Gulf Shores aviators shows students that the pathway before them is real. Brock once sat where they sit, and he now uses his training and experience to help students begin their own aviation journeys.





- Cody Rhoades is also a former Gulf Shores student who has returned to invest in the next generation. He assists with flight instruction and introduces elementary and middle school students to aviation through flight simulators. By helping younger students experience the excitement of flight, Cody is planting the same kind of dream that inspired Dylan as a third grader.
- Chance English, an Aviation Academy instructor and retired United States Air Force officer, brings valuable military aviation and leadership experience to the classroom. During his Air Force career, he held leadership responsibilities supporting the maintenance and mission readiness of advanced military aircraft, including the F-22 Raptor. He helps students understand that success in aviation depends not only on technical ability, but also on teamwork, precision, accountability and a commitment to excellence.

Together, Haley, Rod, Brock, Cody, and Chance have created something truly special. With the support of the Gulf Shores City Board of Education, community partners, Gulf Shores International Airport, former Career Academies and Technical Education Coordinator Jessica Sampley, and generous donors such as Vince and Lynn Boothe, they are helping young people see that a career in aviation is not simply something they have to admire from a distance; it is something they can pursue.

Lift Off: The Dylan Akin Memorial Flight Training Fund

For a student who dreams of becoming a pilot, a first flight can change everything. However, flight training is expensive. Even with the extraordinary opportunities provided through Gulf Shores High School, the costs associated with instruction, flight hours, examinations and earning a private pilot certificate can create a significant barrier for students and their families.

In Dylan's memory, our family is establishing Lift Off: The Dylan Akin Memorial Flight Training Fund, a designated fund administered through the Dolphin Foundation for Education and Arts. The fund will assist Gulf Shores High School Aviation Academy students with the expenses associated with flight training and earning their private pilot certificates.

Our hope is simple. We want more students to have the opportunity to experience what Dylan experienced, to sit in the pilot's seat, take control of an airplane and realize that a dream that once seemed distant is within their reach.

Dylan's story began with a third-grade field trip. It continued through years of preparation, the United States Air Force Academy, pilot training and service around the world. Although his life ended far too soon, his influence continues through the people he encouraged, supported and inspired.

Through this fund, that influence will extend to a new generation of young aviators.

Every time a Gulf Shores student takes a first flight, completes another hour of training or earns a private pilot certificate with assistance from this fund, a part of Dylan's spirit will be there, helping someone else soar.

If you would like to donate to the Flight Training Fund, please send a check payable to:

The Dolphin Foundation for Education and Arts

Re: Flight Training Fund
P.O. Box 3908
Gulf Shores, AL 36547

or visit <https://thegsdf.org> and Click Donate Now.





EXPLORING CAREERS - FINDING A PASSION



Service and Citizenship: Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps

Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) is a voluntary elective program designed to help students become better citizens by developing leadership skills. The course will boost students' confidence, discipline, and direction in a welcoming environment that encourages teamwork with peers and participation in our community. There is no requirement to join the military for any student that is enrolled in the NJROTC Program. Our students (called "cadets") earn one academic credit for each successfully completed semester. After three semesters, if a cadet were to enlist in the military after high school, they would enter the military with higher rank and pay. NJROTC also counts as a physical education (PE) credit. Thus, after taking NJROTC, a cadet will have met that requirement for graduation.

Life as a Cadet:

There are approximately 60 cadets enrolled in GSHS NJROTC with an even split between boys and girls. All grades are welcome, and the program is offered during all four blocks of the school day.



GSHS NJROTC takes anyone and everyone who wishes to join the program...all are welcome! After school and weekend commitments are infrequent and planned well in advance. Cadets may leave at any time, but most cadets remain in the program for four years. The unit espouses a "Once a Cadet, Always a Cadet" philosophy, and NJROTC as a resource for cadets does not just stop when they graduate. Petty Officer Theodoro and Lieutenant Colonel Meehan frequently provide advice and guidance to cadets that have already graduated as they are profoundly invested in the success of their cadets and intend to remain a resource as long as necessary.



Learning Objectives & Activities:

Life Skills: Citizenship, Wellbeing and Fitness, First Aid, Suicide/Bullying/Drug Abuse Prevention, Communication Skills, Career Opportunities, Current Events, Personal Finance and Responsibility and Professional Conduct/Workplace Expectations

Extracurricular Activities: Community Service, Academic Competitions, Color Guard, Military Ball ("NJROTC Prom"), National Leadership Challenge at the University of North Georgia (multi-day trip). Local Travel: NAS Pensacola Orientation, Barrancas Cemetery, Wreath-Laying, University Visits.

Instructors:

NJROTC is taught by two Instructors who work closely with one another to provide the best possible outcomes for all cadets. The "Naval Science Instructor" is Petty Officer 1st Class (PO1) Theodoro. PO Theodoro is a retired United States Navy Sailor. He specializes in aircraft carrier operations as well as Navy recruiting and is well-versed in enlisted opportunities within the Navy for cadets wishing to explore that career path.

The "Senior Naval Science Instructor" is Lieutenant Colonel (LtCol) Meehan. LtCol Meehan is a retired United States Marine. LtCol Meehan is a light attack helicopter pilot who also specializes in strategic planning and operations. Colonel Meehan shares his expertise regarding military officer pathways; he and Petty Officer Theodoro have successfully guided many students (NJROTC and non-NJROTC) towards rewarding careers as enlisted personnel and

ROTC scholarships to colleges and universities with follow-on employment as a military officer.

The instructors advocate for cadets to participate in other opportunities after graduation such as apprenticeships, trade-schools, and higher education. Both Instructors work as a team to ensure all cadets are ready for what comes next once they walk across the stage at graduation. To that end, the GSHS NJROTC hashtag is #GraduateWithAPlan.

Unit Recognition:

The GSHS NJROTC Program is a two-time "Best of Baldwin" winner. GSHS NJROTC has also earned the Unit Achievement Award for the 2025-26 School Year. Furthermore, each Cadet in GSHS NJROTC was personally recognized by Lieutenant General Anderson of the United States Marine Corps for their exceptional contribution to the 2025 Toys for Tots Campaign, and the unit received the Outstanding Contribution Award for 2025.



PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE

\$706,758

Average Tuition Saved



**ALEXANDRINA
VODI**



212
QUALIFYING
SCORES
ON 273
AP
EXAMS



57
AP
SCHOLARS,
AP SCHOLARS
WITH HONORS,
& AP SCHOLARS
WITH
DISTINCTION



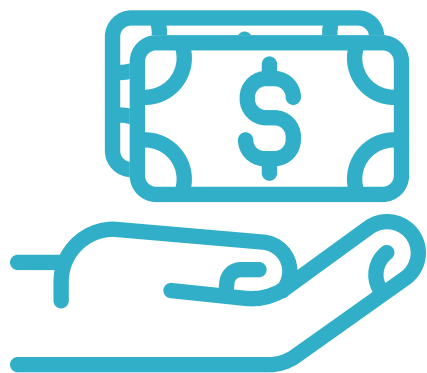
275
DUAL
ENROLLMENT
COURSES
COMPLETED

THIRTY-ONE
STUDENTS
SCORED

30
OR HIGHER
ON THE
ACT



100%
STATE
GRADUATION
RATE



MORE THAN

61

**MILLION
DOLLARS
EARNED**

CLASS OF

2026

SCHOLARSHIPS

75%

COLLEGE-BOUND



100%

EARNED
A COLLEGE/
CAREER
READINESS
CREDENTIAL

▼
**ADVANCED
PLACEMENT**

▼
**DUAL
ENROLLMENT**

▼
**ACT
BENCHMARK**

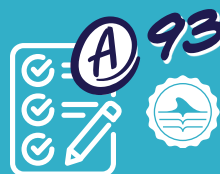
▼
**TECHNICAL/
VOCATIONAL
CERTIFICATE**

**SEVEN
MILITARY**

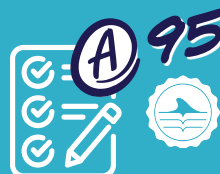
FOUR
APPRENTICESHIPS



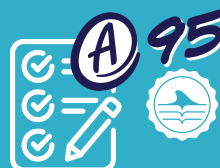
**STRAIGHT
SCHOOL
DISTRICT
ON THE
ALABAMA
STATE REPORT CARD
FOR THE THIRD YEAR IN A ROW!**



**GULF SHORES
HIGH SCHOOL**



**GULF SHORES
MIDDLE SCHOOL**



**GULF SHORES
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**



**GULF SHORES
CITY SCHOOLS**

CREATIVE HORIZONS

GULF SHORES CITY SCHOOLS FINE ARTS

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2025-2026)

VISUAL ARTS HIGH SCHOOL

- Submitted 93 student artworks to six local, state, and national competitions.
- Earned numerous competitive awards, including 2 Best of Show, 3 First Place, 5 Second Place, 2 Third Place, and 5 Honorable Mentions.
- 10 students were selected for the Gulf Shores Invitational Art Exhibition.
- 26 students were inducted into the National Art Honor Society, and one student earned a full art scholarship.

VISUAL ARTS MIDDLE SCHOOL

- 75 students received blue ribbons in the Baldwin County Fair Art Exhibition.
- 5 students published in a national art contest.
- 1st, 2nd and 3rd place as well as a district level winner in local Peace Poster Contest.
- 1st place and Judges Choice award in Baldwin Humane Society Art Contest.
- 3 honorable mentions in a national art contest.
- 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in Ballyhoo Contest.
- 1 honorable mention in the Color the Concepts State Contest.
- 9 winners in the American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Poster Contest.





BAND

- Middle School Band enrollment reached a record 130 students, with 85 fifth-grade students enrolling for the 2026–2027 Beginning Band program and the launch of audition-based 7th and 8th grade bands.
- Students earned numerous honor band recognitions, including multiple High School District Honor Band and All-State Band selections, along with 5 Middle School All-State and 8 Middle School District Honor Band members.
- High School Concert Band and Middle School Advanced Band earned straight Superior ratings at the Alabama Music Performance Assessment, while the Middle School Intermediate Band earned an Overall Excellent rating.
- The Gulf Shores High School Marching Band competed at numerous regional competitions, earning all Superior ratings and multiple Best-in-Class awards.
- 25 eighth-grade students performed with the Gulf Shores High School Marching Band, strengthening the district's band pathway.

CHOIR

- Presented three combined Middle and High School concerts and performed for numerous community events, including the Veterans Day Assembly, City Christmas Tree Lighting, and High School Graduation.
- Middle School choir enrollment increased by 64%, while 12 students (4 Middle School, 8 High School) were selected for All-State Choir—the largest All-State Choir group in district history.
- Students earned outstanding ratings at Solo & Ensemble Festival, receiving 14 Superior and 4 Excellent ratings across 18 events.
- Middle School Choir earned Overall Superior ratings in Performance and Sight Reading at the State Choral Performance Assessment.



THEATRE

- 34 students competed at District Trumbauer Competition, with 19 advancing to State Competition.
- Earned 2nd Place in Dramatic Musical Theatre and 3rd Place in Duet Musical Theatre at the State Competition.
- 60 students auditioned for Into the Woods—the largest audition pool in program history—with 35 students cast.
- 15 students were inducted into the International Thespian Society.

GENERAL FINE ARTS

- Received over \$90,000 in external grant funding, including a \$40,000 grant from the Morgan Wallen Foundation through the Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation and \$50,000 in Alabama Arts Alliance Education Grants supporting instrumental music, visual arts, and theatre.
- Hosted the Kemp Jernigan and Friends Classical Music Outreach Program at all three schools.



ATHLETIC EXCELLENCE

2025-2026 HIGHLIGHTS



State Champions



Indoor Track

Carter Davis - 60 M Sprint State Champion

Matthew Howe - Pole Vault State Champion



Outdoor Track

Matthew Howe - Pole Vault State Champion



Tennis

Tereza Mojs - Singles State Champion

-2X State Champion



Wrestling

Khloe Henshaw - Individual State Champion (235 lb.)

-2X State Champion

State Runner-Up



Outdoor Track

Daniel Foster - Shot Put State Runner-Up



Wrestling

Men's Team Dual Format State Runner-Up

State Top 10



Golf

Evelyn Lamar - Women's Individual Sub-State 3rd Place

-Tied for 4th lowest score in AHSA history with a score of 63



Swimming

Men's 200m Freestyle Relay 10th place

Men's 400m Freestyle Relay 7th place



Wrestling

Men's Team 7th Place

Joaquin Salas (175lb) 3rd place

Rhys Coulter (126lb) 4th place

Hayden Cook (144lb) 4th place

Gabriel Goodwin (157lb) 5th place

State Tournament Qualifiers



Baseball - 3rd round play-offs



Women's Basketball



Men's Basketball



Bowling - Advanced to the Regional Tournament



Men's Cross Country- 3 athletes



Football



Men's Golf - Advanced to the Sub-State Tournament



Men's Soccer - 1st round play-offs



Women's Soccer - 1st round play-offs



Softball - Area Champions, Regional Tournament



Swimming- 10 swimmers



Indoor Track - 6 athletes



Volleyball



Wrestling- 10 wrestlers





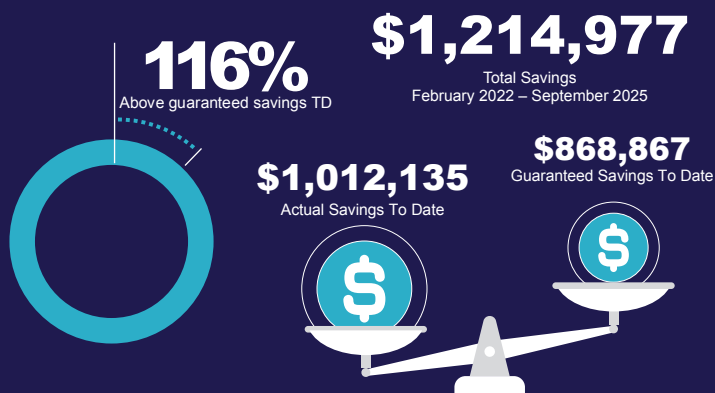
FINANCIAL UPDATE

ENERGY SAVING INITIATIVES

In 2020, GSCS partnered with Schneider Electric to upgrade aging roofs and HVAC systems. The project also included adding LED lighting, building automation, one-of-a-kind solar energy installations, and custom STEAM engagement platforms and learning exhibits. These updates will reduce our energy and operational costs by 33% or \$6.4 million over the next 20 years.

Energy Savings Update

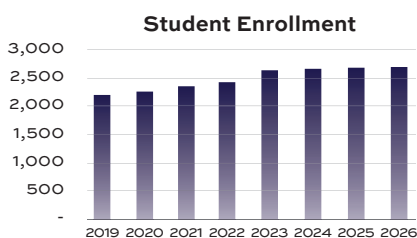
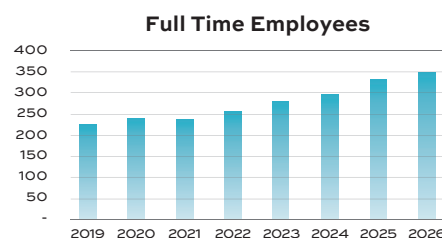
November 2023 – October 2025



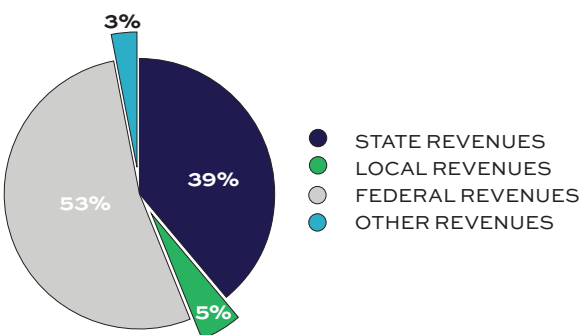
“Fiscal responsibility is about more than balancing today’s budget—it’s about making thoughtful decisions that position Gulf Shores City Schools to serve students for decades to come. Every investment we make is guided by careful planning, transparency, and a commitment to supporting the responsible growth of our community while protecting the trust taxpayers have placed in us.”

Chad Green, SFO
Chief School Financial Officer
Gulf Shores City Schools

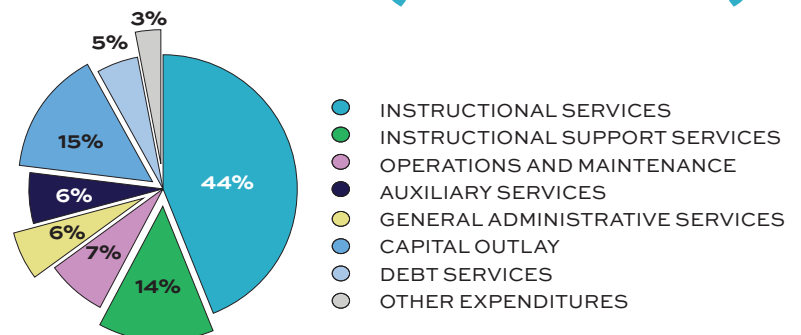
EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT GROWTH 2019-2026



FISCAL YEAR 2025 REVENUES



FISCAL YEAR 2025 EXPENDITURES



Find additional financial information at www.gsboe.org/departments/finance/.



GULF SHORES CITY SCHOOLS
300 E 16TH AVE
GULF SHORES, AL 36542

WWW.GSBOE.ORG

