



# GCPS SCENE

*School-to-Community Education News, Etc.*

February 2013

## Board attends to annual business at first meeting

At the January School Board meeting, the Gwinnett County Board of Education elected Carole Boyce (District I) and Daniel Seckinger (District II) as 2013 Board chairman and vice chairman, respectively. The Board also set meeting dates for the rest of the calendar year: Feb. 28, March 21, April 18, May 16, June 20, July 18, Aug. 15, Sept. 19, Oct. 17, Nov. 21, and Dec. 19, as well as Jan. 16, 2014. In other annual business, the Board designated the *Gwinnett Daily Post* as the school system's official media organ, and the law firm of Thompson & Sweeny will continue as the Board's legal counsel.

## Georgia leads nation in efforts to connect education to work world

An annual review from *Education Week* and the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center shows that Georgia is #1 in the country in connecting the state's K-12 system with early childhood education, higher ed, and the transition to the workplace. In the annual "Quality Counts" report, Georgia scored a perfect 100 in the Transitions and Alignment category, jumping to 1st (with a grade of A) in the nation compared to 6th (B+) the previous year. The category measures early childhood education, college readiness, and economy and the workforce. State initiatives such as lottery-funded pre-K, P-16 curriculum alignment, and policies tied to college- and career-readiness all supported the high marks given in the report. Overall, Georgia earned a B- (81.0 average) for all measures, ranking 7th in the U.S.

## Donations accepted for Jim Maran Scholarship for STEM studies

The School Board and the Board of Directors of the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce are joining forces to establish a scholarship to honor longtime Chamber President Jim Maran (2003-12). The Jim Maran Scholarship for STEM Studies will be awarded to a GCPS student who plans to enroll in a full-time undergraduate program in one of the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields. Donate to the scholarship through the GCPS Foundation ([www.gcps-foundation.org](http://www.gcps-foundation.org)).

## Refinance could save millions



Just as homeowners can benefit from refinancing their home loan, so can the district benefit from refunding or refinancing construction bonds previously issued. The School Board authorized a 2013 general obligation bond refunding, as warranted. Current market conditions are favorable for refinancing the remaining General Obligation Series 2008 bonds, possibly affecting \$236 million in outstanding bond principal maturing in 2029-2036. If the current market conditions hold true until the refunding can be completed, this move could result in potential future debt service payment savings of approximately \$15 million.

## Georgia Partnership identifies top education issues to watch

Each year, the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education (GPEE) identifies 10 important issues in education. For 2013, the report looks at a number of key issues, including reform efforts, education funding, early childhood education, technology, college- and career-readiness, STEM fields, and changing demographics. The ninth annual edition of the "Top Ten Issues to Watch" from GPEE urges policymakers, educators, and community and business leaders to "continue to work together to ask the tough questions that focus on the continual improvement of Georgia's educational system." Learn more at [www.gpee.org](http://www.gpee.org).

A Publication of Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS)

Questions? Call GCPS Department of Communication & Media Relations at (678) 301-6020.



**eCLASS**  
*Innovators*  
demonstrate effective  
tech use

*eCLASS Innovators* is a new online publication that focuses on how educators are using technology to enhance teaching and learning. This interactive publication serves as a window into the 21st century classroom for parents and community members.

**GCPS works with community on review of instructional materials**

GCPS invites parents and the community to join staff members in a review of proposed curriculum materials. Before adopting materials for classroom use, materials submitted by publishers are reviewed by teachers, administrators, and parents for alignment with the school system's Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) curriculum. During the review— scheduled to run through Feb. 23— GCPS staff and members of the Gwinnett community will review mathematics materials for grades 6–12 and non-fiction books for grades K–5. Reviews are scheduled at the Instructional Support Center located at 437 Old Peachtree Road NW in Suwanee— Monday-Friday, Feb. 11–22, 8 a.m.– 4 p.m.; Thursday, Feb. 21, 5–8 p.m.; and Saturday, Feb. 23, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

**Schedule set for summer classes**

High school students can use the **summer session** to make up a failed class or to get ahead. Some rising 9th graders choose to take PE and health during the summer to make more room in their schedules for fine arts, technical education, or other electives. Summer learning options for 2013 include **face-to-face summer classes** offered at three locations— Archer High, Lanier High, and Meadowcreek High. Students may register for face-to-face classes online through June 3, or in person on May 30 at Meadowcreek High. Morning and afternoon sessions are offered for face-to-face students during the summer term, set for June 11–July 10. Students also may register for **online summer classes** through Gwinnett Online Campus (GOC), starting March 1. Offered online only, GOC summer registration runs through June 3. Online classes run June 10–July 8. Both programs will follow a Monday-to-Thursday schedule for the 17-day session. The cost for each one-semester class is \$225. Summer graduation is set for July 11. Watch for more on Gwinnett's Academic Summer School for grades 3–8 in a future issue.

**Key GCPS dates**



- Feb. 15** Student/Staff Holiday
- Feb. 18** Student/Staff Holiday
- Feb. 21** Maxwell High School of Technology winter open house, 5–7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 22** 2013 Gwinnett Regional Science & Engineering Fair, 9 a.m. at the Gwinnett Center, open house at 3:30 p.m., awards ceremony at 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 25 & 26** Early Release for ES and MS schools for parent-teacher conferences
- Feb. 26** Gwinnett Online Campus info session, 7 p.m.
- Feb. 28** School Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Instructional Support Center (ISC)
- March 2** Read Across America (activities during week before)
- March 7** GEMS Oversight Committee meeting
- March 11** Student Holiday and Staff Furlough Day

**GCPS Leaders named**

- Clifton Alexander** Simonton Elementary, principal
- Dr. Michelle Smith** Suwanee Elementary, principal
- Ruth Westbrooks** Puckett's Mill Elementary, principal

**Champions Tour golf tournament to benefit GCPS Foundation**

The Greater Gwinnett Championship, the county's new Champions Tour golf tourney, is scheduled for April 15–21 at the TPC Sugarloaf in Duluth. The tournament will benefit a number of local charities, including the Gwinnett County Public Schools Foundation Fund. To purchase tickets or volunteer for the Greater Gwinnett Championship, visit <http://www.greatergwinnettchampionship.com>.



## Mentoring program presents Career Summit

NFL player and GCPS graduate Rennie Curran and the GCPS Community-Based Mentoring Program present a Career Summit for Youth, a program for young men in grades 6–12. The program is scheduled for Feb. 23 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Brookwood High. Students will learn about careers in medicine, the legal field, law enforcement, business, technology, and entrepreneurship. Representatives from colleges, business, and community organizations will be in attendance. To register, visit [www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/mentoring](http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/mentoring), call 678–301–7286, or email [terry\\_reonas@gwinnett.k12.ga.us](mailto:terry_reonas@gwinnett.k12.ga.us).

## Registration continues

Registration for full-time students interested in attending Gwinnett Online Campus (GOC) will be open through Feb. 28. GCPS’ diploma-granting, virtual charter school will serve grades 4–12 next school year.

## Portal enhancements announced

On Feb. 20, GCPS will roll out several enhancements to the student portal. Responding to the most-requested feature enhancement, GCPS will add student access to grades and drill-down specifics on assignments in a new “My Grades” tab on the MYeCLASS student portal. Parents also are encouraged to sign up for the go2 Parent Portal, which serves as a valuable online resource for information about their child and his or her academic career, safely and securely, anytime from anyplace. Learn more about both portals on the GCPS website.

## Good news from GCPS

- A Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology student earned 4th place at the Samsung Mobile Boot Camp for students interested in STEM education.
- Dr. Scott Roberts, GCPS social studies program specialist, received the “2012 Gwen Hutchenson Outstanding Social Studies Educator Award” from the Georgia Council for the Social Studies.
- Duluth High’s Dr. Peter Lemonds has been named Georgia-American String Teachers Association Educator of the Year.
- The College Board has placed GCPS on the 3rd Annual Advanced Placement (AP) District honor roll for improvement in performance and participation.
- A North Gwinnett High student earned 1st place at the Carolina Trumpet Festival.
- A South Gwinnett High student is a finalist in the Honors Choir for the 2013 American High School Honors Performance Series at Carnegie Hall.
- A Moore Middle student is one of only eight students nationally to earn a perfect score in the WordMasters Challenge Blue Division.
- A Mill Creek High student is the Grand Prize winner in the DREAM@50 Art Competition and a North Gwinnett High student was 1st runner up.
- The Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia PTA honored a Partee Elementary parent with a 2013 Georgia Parent Leadership Award for outstanding leadership at the school.
- The 2013 GCPS counseling honorees are Jennifer Diaz, White Oak Elementary, Elementary School Counselor of the Year; Andrea Hodgin, Lanier Middle, Middle School Counselor of the Year; William Blair, Meadowcreek High, Secondary School Counselor of the Year; and Principal Dana Pugh, Bay Creek Middle, Gwinnett County Mary Joe Hannaford Counseling Advocate of the Year.
- District III Board Member Dr. Mary Kay Murphy and Governmental Liaison/Community Ombudsman David McCleskey were honored at the Gwinnett Chamber’s 65th Annual Dinner with 2012 Public Service Awards.
- Maxwell High School of Technology’s Auto Collision Program received a welder valued at \$7,000 from I-Car, the Inter-Industry conference on auto collision repair.
- Rockbridge Elementary community partner Gloria Watson asked friends and family to donate playground balls to the school in honor of her birthday. This is the third year she has asked friends to make Rockbridge a beneficiary of her birthday celebration.
- Starling Elementary is the recipient of a Lowe’s Toolbox for Education grant of \$5,000 for the construction of an outdoor classroom.
- A student at Crews Middle won the GCPS spelling bee. His brother, a student at Brookwood Elementary, won second place.

### Duluth High to host Junior Varsity state tournament

Duluth High will host the Junior Varsity (JV) AAASP State Wheelchair Basketball Tournament.

On March 2, the JV semi-final game begins at 11 a.m. and the final JV game begins at 3 p.m. A Varsity semi-final game will be played as the 2nd of three games at this location. The varsity championship game will be held at the Macon Coliseum on March 8, prior to the GHSA state basketball finals.