



NEWS RELEASE

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Nesbit ES and Osborne MS:

Two Gwinnett teachers earn top honors from Georgia Art Education Association

Two **Gwinnett County Public Schools** (GCPS) teachers recently were honored by the Georgia Art Education Association (GAEA) for the contributions they both have made to the field of fine arts education. Lauren Phillips, an art teacher at Nesbit Elementary, and Dallas Gillespie, an art teacher at Osborne Middle, were selected as Georgia's top fine arts educators at their respective levels.

GAEA selected **Nesbit Elementary's Lauren Phillips as the 2010 Georgia Art Education Association Elementary Teacher of the Year**. Ms. Phillips, who joined Gwinnett in 1999, is in her first year at Nesbit Elementary. She dedicated her first 11 years educating students at Norcross Elementary. Ms. Phillips holds both a bachelor's degree, and a master's degree, in Art Education, from the University of Georgia. She is currently working on her doctoral degree from Georgia State University.

Osborne Middle's Dallas Gillespie was selected by the GAEA as the **2010 Georgia Art Education Association Middle Teacher of the Year**. Mr. Gillespie started his career with GCPS in 2003 as an art teacher at Dacula Middle. In 2004, he became part of the inaugural staff at Osborne Middle. In addition to teaching art, Mr. Gillespie works with Osborne Middle 8th grade students on the school's annual yearbook. He earned his associate's degree in Education from Floyd College, and a bachelor's degree in Art Education from the University of Georgia.

GCPS Director of Fine Arts Robert Andrews cites this recognition as further evidence of the impact GCPS visual art teachers have on students. He says, "Our teachers provide high quality learning opportunities for their students, giving them a creative and competitive edge. Art education allows students to develop critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, imagination and creativity, discipline, and cross-cultural understanding, all of which supports academic success across the curriculum. Art helps students to form mental images which can be used to solve problems. This helps them today and into the future as this ability is needed for success in school and is used by chemists, engineers, and architects to create models and by inventors who think up new ideas."

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Mr. Andrews shares that Gwinnett fine arts teachers are known to be some of the most forward thinking and innovative art specialists in the country, causing them to be in demand as keynote speakers and presenters at state and national conferences.

Both Gwinnett educators will be recognized by the Gwinnett County Board of Education during the regularly scheduled December School Board meeting, which will be held on December 16, 2010.