



# Panther Press

A publication of the Georgia Academy for the Blind

**Thursday, December 14, 2023**

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider*

Dr. Cindy Gibson, Superintendent

2895 Vineville Ave. Macon, GA



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Georgia Academy for the Blind

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## Mark your Calendar

**12/14** - Art Sale at 9:00AM in the Foyer of the Auditorium

**12/14** - Holiday Concert at 10:30AM in Auditorium

**12/15 through 1/3** - Holiday Break

**1/15** - Holiday for Martin Luther King

**1/25 through 1/28** - SCASB trip to Jackson, Mississippi School for the Blind & Deaf—Wrestling, Cheer, and Performing Arts.

**2/16 & 2/19** - Holidays for Presidents' Day



Lots of Holiday celebrations at GAB this week, please follow us on Facebook to see more pictures from our student party and tree contest. Minutes from the 2 School Council meetings of 2023 are in this week's newsletter. Please plan to join us in February for the first School Council meeting of 2024. Wishing you joyful Holiday season and a relaxing Break with family & friends.  
**Tis the Season...**



**SWEET FUN.....It was a Christmas Celebration  
Dinner of joy and happiness for Cottage 4  
girls ! The Residential Advisors are  
appreciative to be a part of their lives!**









**The Panther Pro's demonstrated their holiday cheer by volunteering with the Salvation Army as bell ringers at Kroger on Forsyth. What an awesome way to serve and give back to their community!**







**Holiday gathering for girls  
in Cottage 5 (C5).**



# School Council Minutes 9/29/23

## GEORGIA ACADEMY FOR THE BLIND SCHOOL COUNCIL MISSION

The Georgia Academy for the Blind provides quality education services to Georgia's students with visual impairments and/or visual impairments in conjunction with other disabilities to prepare them to achieve their highest level of independence in transition to college and career readiness.

**Friday, September 29, 2023**

Georgia Academy for the Blind  
2895 Vineville Avenue  
Macon, Georgia 31204

**1. Call to Order** Donna West

**2. Recognition of Members**

Donna West  
Dr. Cindy Gibson  
Shirley Wingfield  
Linda Smith  
Catherine Holloway  
Michael Collins  
Tyrene Neil  
Dawn Day  
Jennifer Minter  
Lauren Eckman  
Cheryl Parsons  
Jacinda Boudle  
Peyton Prowse

**3. Recognition of Visitors**

**4. Approval of Agenda** Yes

**5. New Business:**

- **Recap of Short Course weekend** Eighteen students attended. U.S. Tennis Association for the Blind members lead a coaches' workshop on Friday followed by student seminar on

Saturday. Ms. McDavid will lead the tennis program at GAB, and we will evolve to into Planning events for other schools.

- **New Playground Equipment-** We are happy to say we are finally getting our new wheelchair accessible equipment installed on the first of October. The equipment will be adjacent to the A-1 building because it is the only space on campus that is the right size and acceptable for digging to install posts.
- **APH Trip to Kentucky-**Kristen Applebee and Keith Blackwell will take four students to APH for the Art exhibit and honors recognition banquet.
- **SCASB Trips-** Next Trips are in January and April 2024.
- **Veterans Day Program-** November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 @ 10:30 am
- **Cottage Renovations** – Cottage renovations are completing the design phase and are on track for groundbreaking fall 2024. Each cottage will take approximately 6 months to complete. C – 4 will be the first cottage to be renovated because it is the largest and has a generator.
- **Parents’ Right to Know and 20 Day Letters** – Parents’ Right to Know Letters were sent to all parents informing them that they have a right to know teachers’ certifications and qualifications for teaching their student the assigned class. Parents of students who are in classes with teachers who are not fully certified to teach that individual class were also sent letters outlining the teachers qualifications and next steps. Because Georgia has a Waiver of Content, teachers can be assigned to teach classes for which they are not fully certified for this 2023-2024 year.
- **Block that Chat!!!** – Please be aware of phone use with your child in chats. Some of the chats are unhealthy, abusive, and involve illegal content. Please advise your child to block inappropriate chats.

- **Cognia School Accreditation 2024-2025** Every Georgia Public School undergoes a self-study, reaccreditation process with external evaluators of Cognia every 6 years. GAB's last reaccreditation was spring 2019. The process involves several surveys and committees comprised of our stakeholders and their feedback. More information will be disseminated this spring.

## **6. Standing Reports**

**Family Engagement Coordinator/Parent Mentor:** Goalball team travels to Nashville for competition. Students left for space camp today. You can see Space Camp on Facebook. Look at the new calendar with upcoming events.

s

**Teacher Reports:** Today is the last day of the first nine weeks. Students need to work on their computer skills, in addition to their tablets and braille devices, to be job site ready.

**Parent Reports:** Donna West asked about why her child is not receiving O and M instruction at this time and what plans are. Tyrene Neil explained that we are awaiting the hire of an additional O and M specialist and will then utilize the IEP process to determine services. Update: As of publication of these minutes- Greg Hudgins, COMS, joined the GAB faculty 11.01.2023.

**Cottage Reports:** Everything is good.

**Superintendent Report:** Information on construction projects and current events has been shared.

**Next School Council Meeting December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 1:00 p.m.**



## School Council Minutes 12/8/23

Staff Attendance: Gibson, Neil, Thomas, Jackson, Milam, Eckman, Minter, Applebee, Smith, Bennett, Reynolds

Other Attendance: Donna West, Linda Smith, Cheryl Parsons, Adrienne Wright, Shirley Wingfield

- Agenda was approved and adopted.
- Members were recognized and introduced.
- Dr. Gibson updated the group on the construction project. GAB is exploring options, as all cottages can be renovated in 12 months or 6 months each. Either option will require alternative arrangements for students.
- The holiday program will be next Thursday. Student artwork is on display at the Museum of Arts and Sciences.
- New hires: A new night nurse has been hired. GAB is still looking for a high school math teacher.
- Dr. Bennett shared the BST minutes for 11/30/23.
  - The BST decided to move the historical items in the conference room to the auditorium for renovation. This will allow visitors to view the items.
  - Students have been disrupting class by knocking on the outside doors. They will come to the front and get buzzed in by the office staff.
  - A teacher requested a shampoo bowl to help kids with grooming.
  - Cornhole Tournament will be 3/2/24.
  - Prom will be 5/16/24.
- Milam announced the dental clinic visit. She needs 20 forms returned for the organization to schedule a visit. We are halfway to that goal.
- Minter reviewed the newsletter, especially the art showcase and holiday program. It also includes the calendar for holiday attire for those who wish to participate.
- Teacher Reports
  - Eckman reported that high school students have been engaged in final papers and projects for the semester. They will have midterms next week.
  - Thomas reported that Middle Schools have participated in several field trips, including the arboretum in Milledgeville.
- Parent Reports
  - Ms. Smith offered a drum set to the school. She will send a picture of the set to Milam, Minter, or Holloway.
- Cottage Report
  - Students are planning for holidays. They will have holiday events, like a meal, in the cottage.
- Superintendent Report
  - Dr. Gibson shared that cottage 7 has beautiful decorations for the holidays. The children in the EECC had an event in which all the children were involved in a musical activity. She wanted to praise the RAs for their work to celebrate our students' unique talents.
- Proposed Next Meeting Date: 2/9/24 at 2:00.

# BRaille CHALLENGE



**DATE:** March 7, 2024



**TIME:** 8:30 - 3:00



**PLACE:** Georgia Academy for the Blind

2895 Vineville Ave.

Macon, GA 31204

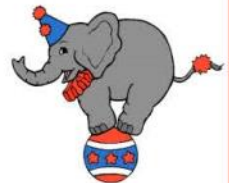


**Contact For Parents:** Jennifer Minter

478 - 751- 6083 ext. 1140

**Contact For TVI's and Students:** Dawn Day

[mday@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:mday@doe.k12.ga.us)





# December

# Birthdays

D'Shawun 12/1

Micah 12/11

Joshua 12/5

Caden 12/17

Ja'Khari 12/7

DJ 12/19

Will 12/7

Kalena 12/23

Nick 12/10

Zariyah 12/25

Svet 12/27

Jermaine 12/29

James 12/31

