



# Panther Press

A publication of the Georgia Academy for the Blind

Friday, September 10th, 2021

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider*

**Dr. Cindy Gibson, Superintendent**

2895 Vineville Avenue

Macon, GA 31204

478-751-6083



**Georgia Academy for  
the Blind - GAB**



Follow our library:

@gablibrary

**Mission Statement: 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.**

## *Mark your Calendars*

**9/13 through 9/17 - Housekeeper appreciation week!**

**9/17 - School Council Meeting at 1:00pm.**

**9/26 through 10/1 - Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama**



## Remembering the 9/11 Terrorist Attacks, 20 Years Later!



**Across the United States on Saturday, memorial events and observances will be held to honor the victims and remember the legacy of the Sept. 11th terror attacks.**

# **A message from our Superintendent**

**Dear students, parents/guardians/ and staff,**

**It hardly seems possible that we have come to the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> week of school. Thanks to our teamwork, we are navigating COVID responsibilities and staying open for business as usual. Thank you to everyone for understanding, compliance, and responsibly doing all that is possible to maintain as much “normal” and safety as possible. Morale takes a hit in these times, so let us all share encouragement, inspiration, and diligence in hardship.**

**Good news is that the roofing of the dining hall/kitchen is scheduled to being Monday, September 13. Jon Smith will advise safe travel plans for the staging of this actually very short project. If the weather cooperates, we will be back to our wonderful School Nutrition Staff’s cooking within two weeks! The delay in the roofing was caused by industry shortages and challenges related to the pandemic. Be assured that all contractors that come on campus are held to even higher standards of COVID mitigation than schools and the general public. We have extremely limited any outsiders’ coming on campus to support GAB safety.**

**The GAB School Improvement Plan is posted to the website for your joy reading! An initiative that our stakeholders indicate is needed for school effectiveness and student achievement is autism support campus-wide and specific awareness and strategies for understanding and implementing instructional and behavioral interventions and supports for students, instructors, and caregivers. Our consultant Dr. Haylie Miller will be on campus next week to begin addressing our need. Her biography notice follows. She will be sending surveys to families and will reach out through a virtual chat this week. I believe that this professional learning and guidance will be a great boon to GAB’s commitment to serving the whole child as our School Improvement Plan states. Dr. Miller will work directly with students, parents/guardians, GAB instructional staff and residential advisers.**

**This is the information parents can use to join the "Fireside Chat" virtually at 7:00 PM on the 16th:**

**Join Zoom Meeting: <https://umich.zoom.us/j/93560421166>**

**Meeting ID: 935 6042 1166**

**Tap to Join by Phone: +13126266799,,93560421166#**

***Dr. Haylie L. Miller*** is an Assistant Professor in the School of Kinesiology at the University of Michigan, where she is Director of the Motor & Visual Development Lab.

***Dr. Miller*** graduated from Vanderbilt University in 2006 with a B.A., double-majoring in Psychology and Music. She completed graduate studies in Experimental Psychology at the University of Texas at Arlington, earning an M.S. in 2009, and a Ph.D. in 2012. She completed postdoctoral fellowships focused on sensorimotor functioning in autism at the Center for Autism & Developmental Disabilities at University of Texas Southwestern.

***Medical Center, and in the Human Movement Performance Lab at the University of North Texas Health Science Center. Prior to joining the University of Michigan, she was an Assistant Professor at the University of North Texas Health Science Center in the Department of Physical Therapy, where she led the Autism & Developmental Disorders Research team and the Autism Education & Advocacy Group for 5 years.***

***Dr. Miller studies visual and motor skills across the lifespan in typical development, autism, and other neurodevelopmental conditions. To do this, she uses theories and methods from the fields of psychology, child development, movement science, implementation science, and engineering. Her research has been supported by the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, and other foundation and institutional awards.***

***Dr. Miller is passionate about partnering with the autism community to increase awareness, acceptance, inclusion, and representation. She has served on multiple local, state, and national boards related to autism, and has a special interest in facilitating the development of inclusive programming in arts and cultural organizations.***

**Finally, thank you to all who joined our first 2021-2022 School Council meeting on August 20. Jennifer Minter will include the minutes in the newsletter. Our next meeting will be Friday, September 17, 2021, at 1:00 p.m., and Jennifer will send the Zoom link. Thank you for hanging with us through our previous technical glitches. Zoom is much better for us for this meeting.**

**If there is anything we can do for you, please let us know.**

*As ever,*

*Cindy*

## **Better Seeking Team (BST)**

### **Meeting Agenda and Minutes for August 27, 2021**

Welcome to BST Barfield and who do we ask to represent Parapro's? (Bennett) **Reach out to Ms Little and have the parapro group chose a representative.**

Friday September 3<sup>rd</sup> Holiday Clarification. Some think school is closed Friday (Bennett) **Not a holiday for teachers; DOE will allow employees to have 8 hours administrative leave; You may split up the hours – don't have to take all 8 hours at once. Must use them during the month of September.**

Seizure / Sickness / Emergency protocol when both nurses are absent that day or cannot be reached? Can teachers be informed those days and who to contact? (Thompson, K. Smith, & Company) **Contact Mr. Reynolds – if you call the clinic and don't get an answer – call Mr. Reynolds**

Quarantined Students.

How can all teachers know when students should return so we know to mark them present or absent?

Should only case manager know? Or should case manager obtain information from parent to share with the rest of the teachers? (K. Smith & Company) **Teachers mark students absent any time a student is not in the classroom. Brittany Jackson enters a code if the student is under quarantine. The office is responsible to make sure the absent code is changed if needed.**

**Teachers need to know so they can send work. Ideally, the case manager will contact the other teachers to send work for a work or two for students. We don't want to send information through email. Case managers need to remember to let related service teachers know.**

Clarification on why we take temperatures for daily bus/ car riders and not cottage students? **The cottage students are here. If we suspect that a residential student is sick, we will go ahead and take their temperature. We don't know if a day student is sick or not when they arrive. The residential student's temperatures are checked on Sunday when they arrive.**

When is the next Active shooter / Fire / Tornado Drill? (Eckman & Class) **We have regular fire drills; Tornado drills are done as assigned; The faculty will be trained again with the Active Shooter and Stop the Bleed. After that, we will decide how to train the students. Maybe in a large gathering in the auditorium like when we went over the handbook.**

Review School Improvement Goals (Day) **Reviewed School Improvement Goals – First Data Collection from teachers due September 20<sup>th</sup>, Data Dig – September 29<sup>th</sup>; Dual Enrollment and O & M Training Center; ECC activities; Dr. Gibson – total school focus on Autism; we are including families, parents, siblings, and any others who know children with Autism on-site and off-site training September 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> with Dr. Haylie Miller.**

Classroom and ECC Assessment Deadline (Day & Jackson) **Needs Assessments turned in by September 10<sup>th</sup>; Reports due during the week of September 27<sup>th</sup>- Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

Estimation for start of ASP (Guest & Class) **September 20<sup>th</sup> for students; Preplanning for teachers September 13<sup>th</sup>**

School Council Minutes / Nominations (Gibson) – **August 20<sup>th</sup> – Leslie O'Neill is the SAP – she was excited that we had open house in person, Roofing in dining hall has been delayed; Parents advised about recent COVID case and were given the latest guidelines; the Hendricks building has a new HVAC system that helps purify the air; purifiers available for the cottages as requested; cameras are coming to the classrooms and new/better camera for other areas; Need another teacher representative; we have 91 students at this time; taking applications for a new groundskeeper;**

Update on Canopy for playground? (Bechtel) **Jon will look for what we need**

Best Friday for Football kick-off event (Bennett) **September 17<sup>th</sup> team day - decorate!!! and dip day**

Ideas Box: **You can wear a hoodie put don't cover your head - no hoods on the head**

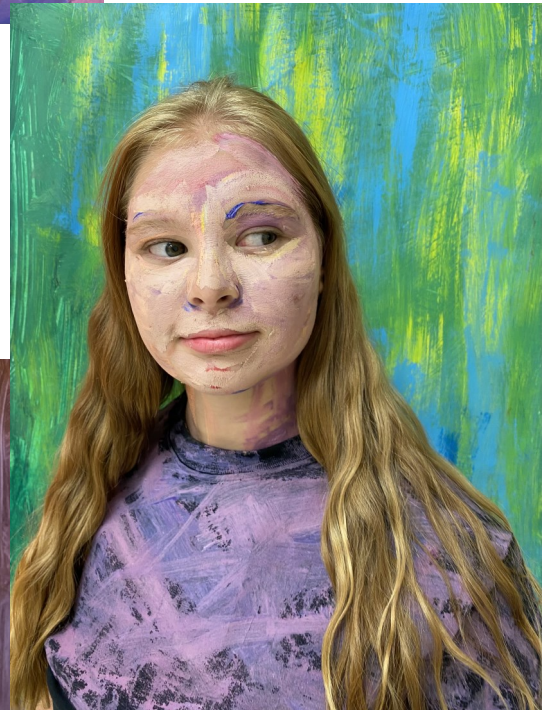
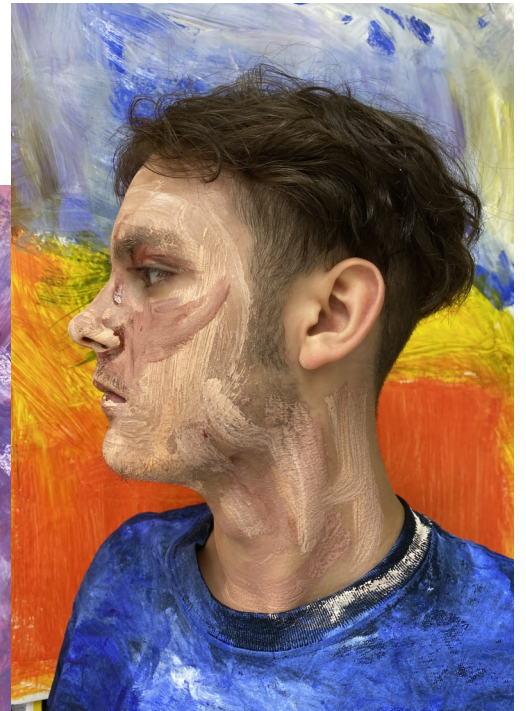
Anything else?

# Self Portrait Masterpieces



GAB Art students have been famous photographers, including Alexa Meade, who paints her subjects before photographing them. Each student painted t-shirts and backdrops before turning themselves into a canvas before stepping in front of the camera. No filters needed for us to let our colors shine!





**Mrs. Applebee is so grateful that we are able to be on campus to use the equipment that the school provides so students can explore the world of photography in the classroom. As she has presented her students with the big names in photography throughout art history, her students have been inspired to use their own creativity to combine mediums. Mrs. Applebee models how to create art by rolling up her sleeves and participating with the students in the lesson.**



Tyzia Brooks, the art paraprofessional, is seen here to the left, as a masterpiece in her own right. She wasn't afraid to get messy and take part in the project too!



Art Students worked on photo documentary projects before experimenting in photo collage. Some students covered faces with dots, like famous artist, John Baldessari. Others glued strips of photographs to create unique self-portraits.





Teresa Vaughn, PT, retired in May. We honored her dedication to GAB with a plaque that hangs outside of the therapy cottage. Teresa was committed to increasing the mobility and movement of the students she served. She was a big supporter for “Power Up for 30”, a collaborative effort between HealthMPowers and Georgia Shape, the governor’s statewide initiative to fight childhood obesity and other children’s health issues in Georgia. Teresa motivated and inspired students and staff to incorporate at least 30 minutes of fitness into their daily routine. The sidewalk path in between the cottages will now be known as Teresa’s Power Up Trail.

## **NEWS FROM THE EDITOR:**

This newsletter is published by our Parent Mentor/Family Engagement Specialist, Jennifer Minter. Feel free to send your ideas, news, and resources in your community to

her: [JMinter@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:JMinter@doe.k12.ga.us) or call 478-262-3303. Please remember to contact her if you've had a change in address, phone number and/or email!



# **September**

# **Birthdays**

**9/2      Ja'Veon                      9/10      Korey**

**9/7      Destiny R.                      9/15      Trinity**

**9/7      Lucas                              9/23      D.J.**

**9/9      Felix                              9/25      Ryan**

**9/27      Aubrey**

