



# Panther Press

A publication of the Georgia Academy for the Blind

Friday, August 26, 2022

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider*

Dr. Cindy Gibson, Superintendent

2895 Vineville Ave. Macon, GA



Georgia Academy for the Blind

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**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

9/5 - Labor Day Holiday

9/11 through 9/17 - Housekeeping Appreciation week

9/16 through 9/23 - Space Camp in Huntsville, AL

9/23 - First School Council Meeting on Friday at 1:00

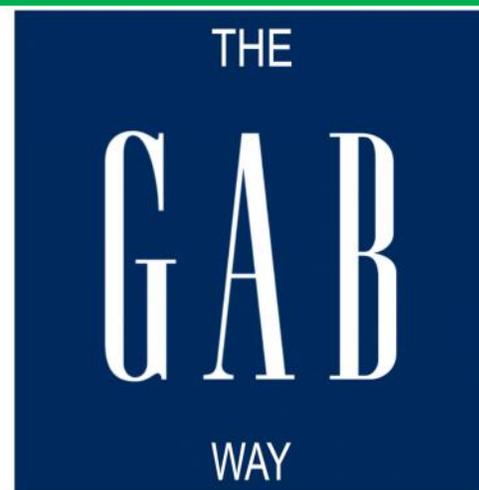
10/11 through 10/14 - Fall Break Week

**PBIS** Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports



Next week's  
Motto:

**Punctuality**  
**Promptness**



Give it your best  
Achieve your goals  
Be respectful

# A message from our Superintendent

**Dear GAB Family,**

**Happy 3.5 weeks of GAB Way 2022-2023! I hope families are feeling settled in with case managers and unique programs for students. It is a joy to work with our new families and see students becoming engaged and taking ownership of their environment! Please take every opportunity to reach out to members of the team when you need clarification or support.**

**Movin' on; Movin' STRONG! Just as GAB challenges students to their highest potential, so do we with staff. No resting on laurels here! State Schools contracted with Middle Georgia RESA to provide classes in Educational Leadership certification to build a cadre of certified applicants for administrative positions. "Sustainability" is such a sweet word! I am pleased to announce that three GAB/SPC leaders are participating in this forward-looking program called APEL (Alternative Preparation for Educational Leadership). The program is hybrid, online and in-person. "School and district leaders become partners in determining skills and behaviors that are most critical to their growth and needs. Each candidate has a rigorous Individual Growth Plan." Salute our candidates as they continue the journey!**

**Alicia Jackson** is the Principal of Transition at Georgia Academy for the Blind. She has been at GAB for 18.5 years! She holds a B.A. in Political Science from Auburn University, an M.Ed. and Ed.S. in Special Education, both from Georgia College, and a Visual Certification from Florida State. She demonstrates passion for working with our staff and students in different capacities ranging from being a classroom teacher to being a transition instructor for Project SEARCH.



**Dr. Gloria Gardiner** received her undergraduate degree from GA College & State University, Master's degree from Mercer University, and Education Doctorate from Nova Southeastern University. She has been teaching special education for 25 years and has taught many different subjects for all levels. She is married to Michael, and they are the founders of the community music school Greenwood School of Music in Macon.



**Tara Bowie** started her 24-year journey in the world of VI, at the University of Pittsburgh in the Dual Master's Program for Certified Teacher of the Visually Impaired and Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist (ACVREP). She began working for Northeast Georgia RESA in 99' teaching in multiple districts and serving as the VI Coordinator. Tara is beginning her 3<sup>rd</sup> year working for the Smokey Powell Center, as an Education Program Specialist and is currently serving as Chair for GVEST.



**Congratulations to Mrs. Tiara Akridge Fields!** Tiara is the Housekeeping Manager at GAB, and her husband Nate is a GAB retiree! We wish you many happy years! Thank you also to the GAB team who organized the shower and kept it **SECRET!**

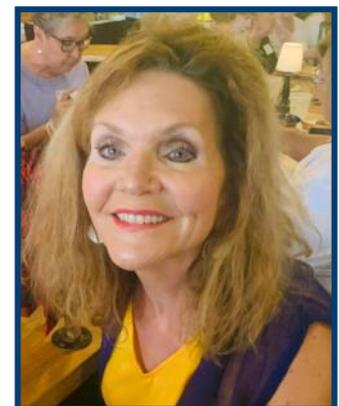


We are now adding Music Therapy to the GAB offerings! Macy Ellis will be joining us a few hours per week to provide music therapy services to some of our students as part of her graduate degree internship requirements at Georgia College and State University. We have been in collaboration with GCSU for several years and have been a part of training professionals for this area of expertise. Stay tuned for pictures!

As ever,

Cindy

**“Creating a Brighter future by Working Together!”**



**The Smokey Powell Center for Assistive Technology** is nominating Parent members to serve on the Smokey Powell Center Advisory Board. Please volunteer! Here's the link!

<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6322982/Smokey-Powell-Advisory-Board-Parent-Recruitment>



*This just in. . . If you are needing affordable internet services, here is a resource!*

*For Learners and Families: [getinternet.gov](https://www.getinternet.gov)*

*The FCC's [Affordable Connectivity Program](https://www.fcc.gov/affordable-connectivity) (ACP) allows qualifying households to reduce their internet costs by up to \$30/month (\$75/month on Tribal lands). Getinternet.gov is a simple, easy-to-use website with details on how households can sign up for ACP and find participating providers in their area. Several companies additionally committed to offer ACP-eligible families at least one high-speed plan for \$30/month or less, with no additional fees and no data caps. This mean that if households apply their ACP benefit to one of these plans, they will have no out-of-pocket cost for internet.*

# Transition Talk

## Parents and Guardians!

This week in “Transition Talk,” we are continuing our focus on the 9 areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). This week we are sharing how our students are “growing their own way” by using assistive technology to access their schoolwork as well as using it as a means of communicating with their teachers and peers. Assistive technology is a powerful tool that can empower students with vision loss to overcome some traditional barriers to independence and employment. Things like screen readers, for example, enable children who are visually impaired to access information online (Perkins, 2022).

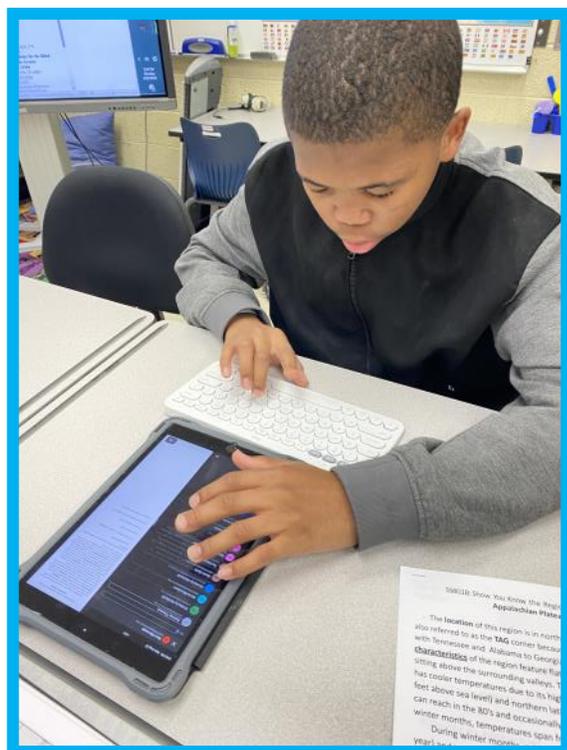
In the pictures shared, you will see how our students are using a range of devices from something as simple as a laptop, to devices more advanced such as a Braille Note Touch, Vizio book (for enlarging print), and iPads with blue tooth keyboard. You would be **AMAZED** at what they can do with this equipment.

You can support your child in using assistive technology by becoming familiar with what device(s) they are using and learning how to use it yourself! Simply reach out to your child’s teachers or case manager for more information. You can also contact our Principal of Curriculum and Technology, Mrs. Dawn Day who is very knowledgeable in this area as well.

Until next week, continue working with your child in helping them to become self-determined and as independent as possible.



**Alicia M. Jackson**  
**Principal of Transition**

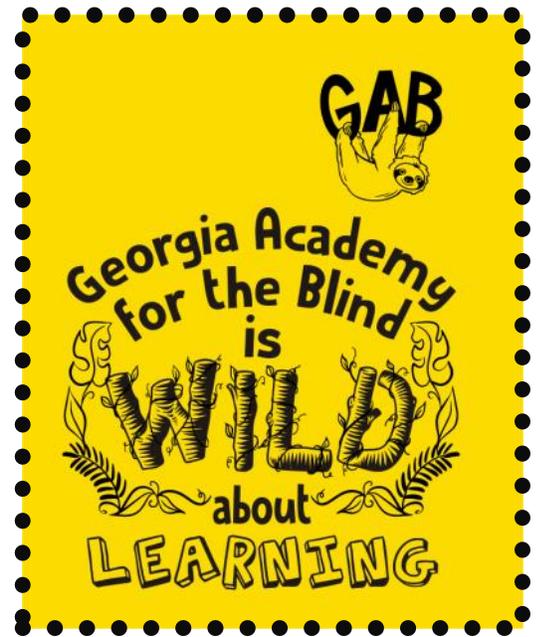




# Assistive Technology Aids in Learning



**We are so wild about our  
Summer Program  
T-shirt this year that we  
are offering it to  
everyone who is wild  
about GAB!**



**There is still time to get a  
T-shirt. Please send your order  
form and money to  
Jennifer Minter.  
Deadline to order will be  
Monday 9-12-22**

**Please pre order:**

**T-shirt size Small - XL = \$15**

**T-shirt size 2XL to 4XL = \$18**

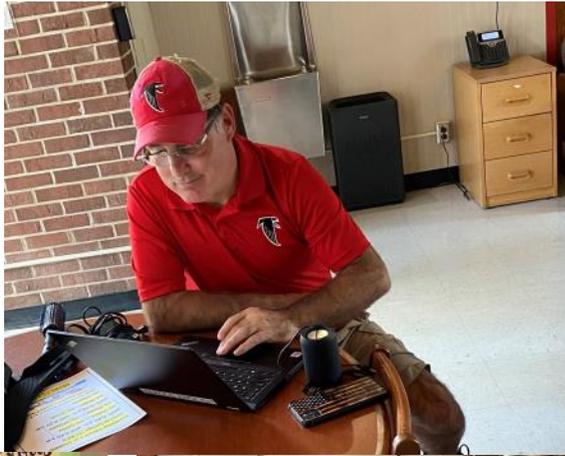
**Name:**

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**Order: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Cost: \_\_\_\_\_**



**Students from Cottage7  
enjoy an afternoon of  
bowling supervised by RA's  
and the new Activity Leader,  
Eddie English**



# August Birthdays

8/2 Devin 8/20 Karma

8/3 Logan A. 8/25 Josie

8/3 Justice 8/29 Rickoy

8/5 MJ 8/30 Emily

8/6 Marquan 8/30 Jesse

