

GEORGIA SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION GOLD AWARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR MAGAZINES

DCSS Digest

Highlighting Excellence in the Douglas County School System

Fall 2023

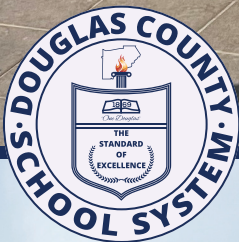


TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3** AHS Sophomore Selected for State Advisory Council
- 4** Cover Story: Student Travel Program
- 5** Lizzy Kilgore Receives National Recognition
- 6** Shemeria Hatcher Named 2023-2024 District TOTY
- 8** National Hispanic Heritage Month
- 10** Young Entrepreneur's Sweet Dream Becomes a Reality
- 12** Once a Lion, Always a Lion True for LSHS Alumni Staff
- 13** MCMS Student-Athletes and League of Stars
- 14** NMHS Embraces "Funding the Future"

The Vision of the Douglas County School System

Our VISION is to build a community of lifelong learners who become responsible individuals, independent thinkers, and productive citizens in a global society.

The Mission of the Douglas County School System

We will serve our community with excellence by:

- *Helping our students reach their potential as we prepare them for college and career in a safe and supportive environment*
- *Recruiting, cultivating and retaining the best teachers, staff and administrators*
- *Providing a challenging curriculum and relevant learning opportunities*
- *Providing the highest quality instructional resources and tools*
- *Fostering a culture of continuous improvement*

The Beliefs of the Douglas County School System

We BELIEVE that we must ...

- *STANDARD*
Understand how children and adults learn and continue learning
- *EXCELLENCE*
Build communities of lifelong learners
- *Cultivate the leadership potential of every employee, student and parent in our school system*
- *Be creative, energetic visionaries who respond quickly to diverse and evolving issues*
- *Meet the diverse needs of all stakeholders (students, parents, employees and community)*
- *Maintain efficient and effective administrative processes for instruction, operations, human resources and sound fiscal management*

Dear Douglas County Family,

We made it! A new year has arrived and we're embracing it with enthusiasm as we look forward to a fresh start. We extend our sincere appreciation for your unwavering support and dedication to the Douglas County School System and your students' education. Now is the time we buckle up as we prepare for the productive ride ahead. I assure you Team Douglas is all aboard and ready to continue shaping the future.



Although we are extremely proud of many shining moments that have occurred within our school system, in this issue of the DCSS Digest, we wanted to highlight how we're broadening the brilliant minds of our exceptional middle school students. My goal is to provide students with global perspective and experiences and it's a part of the school district's vision to ensure our young scholars are productive citizens in a global society. In 2022, the Board of Education and I began the Travel Abroad program that sends a group of students free of charge to explore different parts of the world. We are overjoyed with gratitude to be able to extend this amazing opportunity to our students. With their continuous hard work and dedication, we are committed to acknowledging and celebrating their achievements.

Inspiration is a prevalent theme within the Douglas County School System. In fact, you will read a heartfelt story about one of our exceptional students, Christopher Morgan, who receives a well-deserved honor. Strength and pride helps him exceed expectations and beat the odds. His unique story will inspire you for years to come.

As I conclude, I want to recognize our phenomenal teachers who continue to positively impact our students' educational journey. I'm proud of the diligence and perseverance they continue to display each day. While we have an abundance of wonderful teachers on staff, many consist of former students and alumni who are rooted in Douglas County and eager to return to the school system in various roles each year. We appreciate their passion to create a positive educational experience for today's students.

As we look ahead and witness our outstanding scholars continue to soar, we want you to remain inspired so together, we can shape the future for our students. Again, I am grateful for your ongoing support of our young scholars, and I look forward to celebrating many more achievements in the months ahead!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trent North".

Trent North, Superintendent
Douglas County School System

The DCSS Digest is published by the Douglas County School System, 11490 Veterans Memorial Hwy, Douglasville, GA 30134, in partnership with the Douglas County Sentinel advertising department.

Together, we shape the future.

dcssga.org

AHS Sophomore Selected for State Superintendent's Student Advisory Council



Christopher Morgan

The concept of individuality is occasionally associated with feelings of discomfort and shame. However, Alexander High School's Christopher Morgan embraces a different perspective as he acknowledges his distinct characteristics with strength and pride. In fact, the sophomore's recent recognition is evident of his resilience and determination to always strive for more, despite the obstacles he may endure. The exceptional student is one of 69 selected by State Superintendent Richard Woods to represent his peers on the 2023-2024 Student Advisory Council, and Morgan is truly grateful for the notable honor. "It is an honor to have been selected to be a part of the Student Advisory Council, but it feels even better, considering that oftentimes, people will automatically discount me because of my blindness," said Morgan. "They fail to realize that I am the same as everyone else, the only difference is I can't see," he added. Morgan expressed heartfelt appreciation for being chosen from among 1700 other applicants to serve on the Advisory Council as a blind student.

These remarkable students will have the opportunity to meet with Superintendent Woods throughout the school year, providing invaluable feedback on the impact of state policies in the classroom. Additionally, Student Advisory Council Members will discuss other issues surrounding education, serve as the Superintendent's ambassadors to their respective schools, and participate in service projects to benefit schools and students.

Students in grades 10-12 who attend a Georgia public high school are welcome to apply for consideration of the Student

Advisory Council, which includes at least four students from every Educational Service area in Georgia. The application includes short essay prompts that allow students to share their ideas about public education.

Principal of Alexander High School, Lora McAdams, expressed excitement about Morgan's impressive milestones as a Cougar.

"Christopher is an exceptional student in so many ways. He is not only amazing in the classroom, earning the honor of Top 10 for his class, but he is a vital part of our school culture."

- Principal Lora McAdams

According to McAdams, Morgan's welcoming spirit lights up the hallways and ignites the student section at sporting events. Furthermore, he sets the Cougar standard with his patience, consideration, and infectious personality. Morgan feels his blindness has given him the opportunity to share a different perspective as a student achieving academic success and thriving outside of the traditional education process.

The high school scholar continues to make his mark and exceed expectations. Most recently, Morgan was inducted into the National Honor Society, Beta Club and recognized as a Superintendent's Scholar. He also entered into the Georgia Council of the Blind Creative Writing Contest under the direction of his Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Ms. Sadisha Clarke. His powerful

story about the role of Braille in his life won the contest in the student category, and Morgan is now anticipated to recite his poem at the the GCB Conference and Convention in November. Additionally, the article will be represented in the GCB Digest. Other accolades for Morgan include earning first place in the National Braille Competition among the top 10 students in his age group, and being voted on the 2022 US National High School Boys All-American Team Honors for his dominance in a blind Paralympic sport called GoalBall.

"I will bring the perspective of someone who has special needs and sometimes struggles with things in school, especially socially," Morgan said. He emphasized how special needs children struggle to make friends and be included. His goal is to advocate for more awareness and acceptance of all kids with special needs, with a special emphasis on social inclusion so that every student can have an overall positive experience at school.

"While we know we are teaching Christopher many things here at AHS, there is so much more that Cougar Nation is learning from him," McAdams said. Morgan's mom credits the love and energy from his entire village, including his braille transcriptionist and teachers for his ongoing achievements.

DCSS Inspiring Global Citizens with Student Travel Program

Cover story

In an increasingly interconnected world, student travel has emerged as an indispensable educational and personal growth opportunity, allowing young minds to broaden, gain real-world experiences, and foster cultural understanding. Because of this, Douglas County School System has partnered with Douglas County Water and Sewage Authority (DCWSA) to provide travel experiences to students at no cost.

To earn this opportunity, students submit essays on the importance of student travel and all that can be gained from journeying abroad. All middle schoolers with good attendance, a low number of discipline referrals, and passing grades are eligible. Each essay is read by a group of retired educators who select the top candidates.

“The Board of Education and I celebrate the outstanding students who have the opportunity to travel internationally,” DCSS Superintendent Trent North says. “We strongly believe that traveling abroad expands horizons and creates a community of lifelong learners. We are excited to send these students on this new adventure so they may continue to enrich their minds.”

Thanks to the program, 14 students were sponsored for trips to Portugal and Spain during the 2022-2023 school year. For eight days during winter break, students experienced the unique sights, sounds, and cultures of two of Europe’s most historic cities.

In Lisbon, students were introduced to the rich history and culture of Portugal’s capital city. Students got to explore Lisbon’s charming streets lined with historic buildings while also visiting iconic landmarks such as Belém Tower.

Next, the students flew to Barcelona for another immersive adventure. While traveling through the historic city, they took in the city’s unique blend of Gothic and Modern architecture while enjoying the beautiful coastline.

“This meets our vision of making our students global citizens. It exposes them to travel, and it hopefully sparks their interest in travel so that they want to continue learning in this way.”

- Mitch Springer, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning

This year, DCSS is again sponsoring 14 outstanding middle school students to take a journey to explore the vibrant cultures and rich histories of Brazil and Argentina during winter break thanks to the



continued partnership with the DCWSA.

For eight days in February, students will explore Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires, experience authentic local cuisine, participate in cultural activities like Samba dancing, and take in the natural beauty of the tropical rainforest that borders the two countries.

“We’ll spend two days in the rainforest between Brazil and Argentina, and I’m so excited for the students to see that,” said Springer. “Brazil is culturally diverse, but Argentina is more homogenous. Getting to see the major differences in two countries that are so close together will be a great learning experience.”

To prepare, students, their parents, and chaperones participate in monthly meetings to familiarize the travelers with each country’s foods, languages, laws, and other customs to help them navigate a world unlike their own. This, Springer says, is another important benefit of student travel, as students gain openness to other cultures and people while understanding the interconnectedness between countries.

“These experiences open students’ eyes,” said Springer. “They see that we are all citizens of one earth, and we all have things in common, no matter what your cultural background is or where you live.”

DCSS plans to offer the essay contest for students again next year with the prize of a trip to Australia.



DCSS Bilingual Liaison Lizzy Kilgore Receives National Recognition



One of Douglas County School System's superstars has been recognized for her dedication to serving bilingual families and educators across the district. Over the past three years, Lizzy Kilgore has served as the District Bilingual Liaison for DCSS.

Because of Kilgore's passion and commitment to creating cultural bridges among multicultural families, the National Association of Educational Translators and Interpreters of Spoken Language Access (NAETISL) recently named her Language Access Champion. This honor acknowledges individuals who have worked diligently to ensure bilingual families and educators can effectively communicate.

The recognition is no surprise to Kilgore's supervisor, Dr. Karen Stoutmire, Executive Director of Federal Programs. "It was extremely obvious a few years ago that Lizzy Kilgore was undeniably the best fit when we created the position and interviewed her for our very first District Bilingual Parent Liaison. We knew that her zeal and passion for families who spoke languages other than English would be a game changer for Douglas County Schools," expressed Stoutmire. She went on to explain Kilgore's advocacy for bilingual families to "remove barriers and ensure proper communication across the district"



demonstrates her true passion to serve in this area.

Kilgore's career with DCSS began eight years ago as a paraprofessional at Mason Creek and Bright Star Elementary schools. Additionally, she offered unwavering support to students as a tutoring assistant. Her contributions to the Douglas County School System have expanded to assist the speakers of over 47 different languages including approximately 3,857 families.

In addition to Kilgore's support, additional resources for non-English speaking families are available. Resources are listed on the district website. Those interested may attend meetings on topics such as attendance, life after high school and summer learning.

Shemeria Hatcher Named 2023-2024 District Teacher of the Year



Superintendent Trent North and Chapel Hill Middle School Principal Catherine Westbrook join Hatcher, her mother and husband, and Douglas County Board of Education Member Glenn Easterwood

At Alexander High School Performing Arts Center, surrounded by school leaders and 34 school-level Teachers of the Year, Shemeria Hatcher was named the Douglas County School System (DCSS) Teacher of the Year (TOTY) for 2023-24.

“Being named DCSS’ TOTY is truly an esteemed honor,” said Hatcher. “Alongside so many other great leaders of education in our district, I must admit that I am in complete awe to have been afforded this grand opportunity.”

Hatcher, currently an English teacher at Chapel Hill Middle School, has served as a beacon of inspiration and excellence for her 10 years. She has consistently

continued ►

continued

Semifinalists



Shemeria Hatcher
Chapel Hill MS



Teresa Wellmaker
Douglas County HS



Jacqueline Roth
FLEX Academy



Jennifer Waits South
Douglas ES



Chelsea Montford
Stewart MS



Julie Buff
Winston ES

Finalists



demonstrated a deep commitment to fostering a dynamic learning environment to help students reach their full potential.

During the TOTY judging process, evaluators were captivated by her fierce passion for students and education. One judge noted that Hatcher's engaging and creative approach to teaching separated her from other candidates. And another said that her fervor for helping students grow and become the best versions of themselves was evident by how she conducts her daily classes.

"I didn't get here by myself. I always say it takes a village, and I am a product of mine," Hatcher said. "From my family and community to school administrators and students, they have all played a part in getting me to where I am today."

Superintendent Trent North praised Hatcher's work. "We are pleased to recognize excellence in education by celebrating our Teacher of the Year," he said. "This year's winner is committed to student success and is strongly dedicated to the teaching profession. Her investment

in Douglas County Scholars will shape the future for years to come."

As the 2023-24 DCSS TOTY, Hatcher will represent Douglas County for the next year at various speaking engagements and will compete for the title of Georgia's 2025 Teacher of the Year. With this platform, she says she plans to continue advocating for DCSS students and the school community.

"As an advocate for my DCSS community, I plan to utilize this platform to continue dissolving classroom walls," Hatcher said. "There is an old euphemism that, 'It Takes a Village to Raise a Child.' The significance of this notion is that everyone plays a key role in the educational outcomes of our youth and the overall success of our future. Therefore, all stakeholders must be invested. I plan to fill in the gaps and bridge connections to ensure that our students remain globally competitive and intellectually sound in all environments."

At the banquet, several other outstanding educators were also honored. DCSS TOTY Finalists Julie Buff, Winston Elementary

School third grade teacher, was named Elementary School TOTY, and Teresa Wellmaker, chemistry teacher at Douglas County High School, was named High School TOTY.

Throughout her career, Buff says that she most enjoys getting to be quick on her feet in her classroom in order to execute her lessons best each day. She firmly believes that each child in her classroom can learn, and she works daily to create an inclusive and nurturing learning environment to help each child reach their potential.

Wellmaker, a DCSS graduate, has been an educator for 18 years. She says that DCSS has profoundly impacted her life, so she aspires to have the same loving impact on her students that others shared with her as a student.

Other semifinalists, in addition to Hatcher, Buff, and Wellmaker, were Jennifer Waits (South Douglas Elementary), Chelsea Montford (Stewart Middle School), and Jacqueline Roth (FLEX Academy).

National Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15 – October 15

National Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated in the United States from September 15 – October 15 each year. According to the U.S. Department of State, our government celebrates the countless contributions of more than 60 million Hispanic Americans, Latinos, Latinas, and Latinx-identifying people to our culture and society. Hispanic Americans are the largest minority group in the United States today, and generations of Hispanic Americans have consistently helped make our country strong and prosperous.

Various celebrations and presentations take place across the Douglas County School System providing countless learning opportunities for students. Engaging lessons about historical figures, performances of music, dance, and traditional costume, and interactive experiences with food and art are examples of the offerings rich in cultural education and enjoyment.

Featured here are highlights from events that took place at **Beulah Elementary, North Douglas Elementary, and Turner Middle schools.**



Beulah Elementary School



Beulah Elementary School opened their doors to families and the community on September 29 for their Latino Heritage Festival. It was a showcase of Hispanic culture at its finest including delicious food, mariachi, traditional music, lowrider cars, and a museum of cultural artifacts. The crowd enjoyed special performances from Ximena Sanchez Aguilera, and Beulah's chorus and step team.





North Douglas Elementary School

North Douglas Elementary School students and families celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month on October 3. During the day students were asked to wear clothing that represents their Hispanic Heritage or a color that represented a color in a flag from Hispanic countries around the globe. That evening was Parent Night. Each grade featured a part of Hispanic culture and families and staff brought food for everyone to sample. The book fair was also open for parents to shop with a table of featured Spanish titles. The night ended with everyone taking a turn hitting pinatas and receiving prizes.



Turner Middle School

On Friday, October 6, **Turner Middle School** had its first Latin Heritage Festival. It was an absolutely magical experience for the community. Rather than having a traditional assembly program, it was decided to have an experience of full immersion into Hispanic cultures.

Families in the TMS community donated pinatas for the event. The Carillo family donated freshly made pupusas! In addition, several others provided their favorite dishes so our festival would be complete with authentic dining experiences. Two former TMS students who are now at Lithia Springs HS, siblings Ivana Martinez and Guillermo Martinez, performed a dance routine. Ivana, a professional choreographer, volunteered her expertise to teach the routines to our dance teams for the event. TMS' Latin Heritage Festival team – Rubi Perla-Iglesia, Angela DeLaTorre, Joel Boyce, Dawn Digsby, and Carol Jones-Rozier, along with The Herban Group, primary sponsor for the event, did an amazing job.



Young Entrepreneur's Sweet Dream Becomes a Reality

DCSS DECA Students Explore Entrepreneurship through Local Partnership with Dreaming Sweets

“Do not be discouraged by other successful people in the room. No one can do it like you,” is advice 19-year-old Trinity Marks offers young aspiring entrepreneurs. In 2021, her high school friends encountered sweet dreams after sampling her buttery pound cakes, then her entrepreneurial spirit led her to establish Dreaming Sweets. She began the exciting business venture her senior year of high school at the young age of 17. Three months following graduation, she designed and opened a Douglasville storefront with unique wall art, filled with delicious desserts. The gourmet popcorn establishment, which also serves specialty cakes and mouth watering dipped caramel apples, has been in business for two years.

Throughout high school, “baking was my hobby,” Marks explained. “I would

bake pound cakes and distribute them at school,” she added. Her friends would return to school the next day raving about how they dreamed of her cakes the previous night. Ultimately, it’s how Marks discovered the name Dreaming Sweets. She would bake the enticing pound cakes on presentation days when she knew it wouldn’t be her best performance. “The pound cakes were a distraction, so I didn’t have to worry about everyone focusing on my bad presentation,” she shared.

This fall, Chapel Hill and Douglas County high school students had the opportunity to support the young entrepreneur through school fundraisers or by indulging in her popular treats on campus. According to Douglas County Marketing Teacher and DECA Advisor, Janice Ritchey, the high school marketing teachers were encouraged to partner with local businesses for a job shadow experience. A sequence of business meetings connected the high schools to Marks. Ritchey says, “Dreaming Sweets has been a very exciting new partner as the business has



a wonderful start up story and the kids can certainly relate to the owner, since she is closer to their age. As partners, we hope the students will develop an understanding of how to begin a business, build confidence through listening to her story, and gain hands-on experience through selling and other marketing activities provided by this partnership,” she added. This year, the marketing teachers desire to increase

continued ►

local business partnerships for real world experiences that align with coursework.

Marks contributed a solid foundation to her immediate success. To initiate the new endeavor, she saved enough money from one of her final paychecks. However, she emphasized “self funding is not immediate gratification.” The savings funded essential items and packaging for the business. Overall, the benefits of pouring hard work into building the business is recognition and “it’s a good foundation to build generational wealth,” Marks said.

When asked about the inspiration behind starting her own business, Marks proudly implied her parents paved the way. They owned a soul food restaurant and bakery in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In fact, her mother named the bakery Trinity’s Treats for her daughter. “The irony is my mom’s business was named Trinity’s Treats, and now my business is named Dreaming Sweets,” explained Marks. Additionally, Marks gives credit to her neighboring restaurant, Kuumba cafe for her influx of customers. “Kuumba cafe was the segway



to me meeting a lot of people,” she stated.

As for Mark’s future, she would like to expand Dreaming Sweets by securing contracts with stadiums, movie theaters, hotels and corporations. She has already received purchase orders from Nike and is hopeful for many more. Statewide and corporate events have showcased her sweet treats.

Dreaming Sweets is just the beginning of Mark’s success journey. She’s currently the youngest member of the local Convention and Visitors Bureau Advisory Board. Most recently, she has become a Marketing Pathway Advisory Committee Member for Douglas County Schools. Other goals for the young entrepreneur include

mentoring local students and sharing her journey to inspire other young aspiring entrepreneurs.

Chapel Hill High School Marketing teacher and DECA Advisor Antoinette Godfrey says she was intrigued by Mark’s confidence and ability to speak so eloquently about her business. “I was even more impressed by her being such a young entrepreneur who took a chance based on the direction she wanted for her life. This partnership will allow our students a unique opportunity to sell and advertise the products in our school store and sharing the story of this young entrepreneur,” she added. Students will also be able to use this business partnership in the school based enterprise competition at the DECA state conference where they will discuss the product/service management function of marketing in their presentation, according to Godfrey.

The shop is located on Veterans Memorial Highway in Douglasville, next to Kuumba Coffee and Gumbeaux’s. Store hours are Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday 12-6 p.m. and Friday 12-8 p.m.

Once a Lion, Always a Lion: Nine LSHS Graduates Talk About Returning to Teach, Guide Students



Left, front row: Naomi Douglas, Nicole Oliver-Wynn, Jaime Samples, Candice Cooke; back row: Scotty “Donald” Parker, Chris Billingslea, Darius Owens

Bottom left: Assistant Principal Payton Milinor (center) with her former students and current Science Teachers Naomi Douglas (left) and Bryanna Jordan-Pettit

Bottom Right: High School classmates Zephina Romero and Darius Owens became professional colleagues in the same setting.

The Douglas County School System has many former students and alumni who return as teachers or staff members in various roles each year. This year, Lithia Springs High School has an abundance of loyal lions who are passionate about creating a positive educational experience for today’s students. Currently, LSHS has nine alumni on staff who share similar stories about their desire to perpetuate the influence and impact that helped shape their lives.

Assistant Principal Payton Milinor expressed her excitement about two of her former students, LSHS STEM graduates Naomi Douglas (Class of 2018) and Bryanna Jordan-Pettit (Class of 2016), who have returned as science teachers. “I taught both of these extraordinary young ladies. Working alongside two amazing teachers who once sat in my classroom is a dream. I am thrilled to have them back on campus, and I know they will have a lasting impact on their students,” Milinor said.



Student Resource Officer Chris Billingslea graduated from LSHS in 2004. He said, “being able to work in law enforcement at the school I attended is a dream come true. I can brag because I played in the first ever game in the “new” gym 20 years ago and had a triple-double (25 points, 14 rebounds, 11 blocks). It’s an honor to be able to work with the next generation of Lions!”

Candice Cooke graduated in 1988 and is now a science teacher. “Returning to the Lion’s Den as a teacher brings back wonderful memories and excitement,” she said. It is a privilege to be part of a school that shaped my journey and to have the opportunity to contribute to the growth and development of new generations.”

Nicole Oliver-Wynn graduated in 1991 and now teaches computer science. “I chose to come back to LSHS as a teacher because I felt compelled to contribute to the educational community that had a meaningful impact on my own academic development. The experiences, insights, and mentorship I gained during my time here in high school have given me a distinct outlook that I can now share with the present generation of students,” she explained.

Coach Darius Owens is a member of the Class of 2011 and a current PEC (Program for Exceptional Children) teacher. “I enjoyed my time here as a student, and I’m excited to be an educator in a place that helped shape me into the person I am today. I’m excited to be back. Go Lions!”

Scotty “Donald” Parker, Class of 1988, Health and PE Teacher said, “It is always great to give back to what you once received -- once a Lion, always a Lion!”

Zephina Romero graduated in 2013 and is working as a long-term substitute teaching English. “Before last year, I never thought I would come back to teach at Lithia. I had the best time while at Lithia during my four years, and I want these students to have that same experience. So, I’m excited to be back home.”

Jaime Samples, 2003, Social Studies Teacher said, “I am excited to be teaching and coaching at LSHS and have the opportunity to be a positive influence in the lives of my students. So many teachers and staff had a huge impact on the person that I am today, and I hope that I can have that kind of an impact on my students.”



MCMS Student-Athletes Make Dreams Come True with League of Stars

Student-athletes from Mason Creek Middle School had the opportunity to inspire and create smiles from students with special needs on September 30.

Football players and cheerleaders volunteered with Douglas County Parks and Recreation's League of Stars at Hunter Park. For children with mental or physical challenges, the league helps their baseball dreams come true.

"We were originally given the opportunity to volunteer on the opening weekend of the League of Stars, but it was rained out due to weather," said MCMS football coach Brad Miller. "My kids were super excited about it and when we weren't able to help out I could see how disappointed they were and they all immediately started asking if we would get another chance, and luckily we did just a few weeks later."

Upon arriving at the field in the morning, League of Stars players first picked MCMS football players to review the game's fundamentals. Then, each

player got to take a turn at bat with their assigned football player, and the two ran the bases together. When they were not at bat, the pairs played defense together. While the football players assisted the athletes on the field, MCMS' cheerleaders provided encouragement by cheering everyone on during the game.

"It was really inspiring as a coach to see my cheerleaders interacting with all the players. They taught some of the players cheers and played baseball with them," said MCMS cheerleading coach Hope Carnes. "Seeing the joy it brought to my cheerleaders, the players and families was heartwarming. Our team is looking forward to working with A League of Stars again."

Following the first game, MCMS' student-athlete volunteers stuck around to assist a second group of League of Stars players during the afternoon game. Though this group was older and didn't need as much help, everyone was active in cheering on the athletes and encouraging them to do their best.



"It ended up being one of the greatest things I've gotten to do as a coach with my players. We just finished an undefeated regular season, and I'm super proud of my boys, but not as proud as I was seeing them that day at the League of Stars," said Miller. "Winning football games is great but having a positive impact on the people around you is far more important."

NMHS Embraces “Funding the Future”— Unique Approach to Financial Literacy

“Funding the Future” recently offered New Manchester High School students a non-traditional approach to learning financial literacy. The non-profit financial education tour engages musicians in schools to teach real-life lessons about personal finance.

The NMHS Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter hosted the “Funding the Future” initiative, which coordinates live musical performances in educational settings nationwide where students and accomplished musicians engage in meaningful conversations about various financial topics. While lessons ranged from the importance of maintaining healthy credit scores, wise strategies for avoiding unnecessary debt, steering clear of high-risk online lenders and other financial pitfalls, there was also a strong emphasis on the risks associated with predatory lending and payday loans, devising a robust financial savings and investment plan, and the significance of setting goals and pursuing dreams.



NMHS was privileged to collaborate with “Funding the Future” in their mission to promote financial education. “We find it important for our fellow classmates to know as much as possible about finances because in a world where numbers speak louder than words, financial literacy becomes the universal language of empowerment,” said NMHS FBLA Chapter President, Kossivi Edoh.

Notably the event featured a special appearance by national recording artist, Carter Hulse, who traveled from Nashville, Tennessee, to grace the audience with their music and share valuable insights on financial literacy.

The Georgia Secretary of State’s Office sponsored the show, further emphasizing the importance of financial education for today’s youth.