Miss GSD Pageant

Miss Congeniality and Petite Miss GSD Holly Adkins
Little Miss GSD Amaya Mason
Junior Miss GSD Parris McCrory
Miss GSD Rusia Saidi
All contestants on stage.

WOW! The Miss GSD Pageant was AWESOME! All the young ladies were not only beautiful, but showed off their intelligence, poise, and confidence! We are so proud of all the participants—there were quite a few tears of happiness in the audience! Congratulations to all the winners! It was wonderful to see so many family members, community members, students, and staff members in the audience. Thank you to the Pageant Coordinators Jamie Herston, Candace Heflin, and Tiffany Hebert, emcee Jackie Blanchard, judges Terry McElwee, Jamie Saunders, and Stacey Tucci, photographer Katherine Kennedy, principal Sharion Gooden, escorts Nolan Johnson, Trell Moorman, and Raul Real, greeters Le’Ambriah Soilberry and Yovanni Morales Romero, media technology Soibhan Wolcott and Mike Kimbrough, and all of our many staff volunteers and donors!! Here are a few candid photos—our professional photos and a recording of the pageant will be shared soon.
GSD and District Teacher of the Year Loren Frick was invited to present to the Georgia School Superintendent and State Board of Education recently. Loren emphasized that GSD is critical to the success of Deaf and hard of hearing students because we are in the unique position to provide language accessibility, instructional methods, a Deaf-friendly environment, and specialized support. State Schools Director Dr. Kenney Moore stated, “Loren did an amazing job presenting about his teaching strategies at yesterday’s State Board of Education meeting. All present were moved by his knowledge and passion for teaching Deaf and hard-of-hearing students mathematics, especially how he uses Thinking Maps and manipulatives to support teaching and learning. I know we all are proud to have Loren as part of our team!” Thank you, Loren!

Freshman Raybon Zinn shows off his brain—literally! Students made “brain hats” that identify the different parts of the brain. Cool!

ASL students made some beautiful art of flowers (mixed textures) in vases. Nice work!
Artists: Guadalupe, Langston, Layla.

Happy birthday, Eagan! Eagan is in 4th grade and his class had a little party for him with juice and snack cakes.
Elementary students had a super fun day of math learning last week. Teachers set up the gym with several math stations the students had to rotate through. Sounds easy, right? Nope—there was an extra challenge! The floor was made of lava! Eek! Students had to cross the floor on boards and various shapes on the floor, then stand on balance boards while they solved the math problems! This made it more fun and helped students really focus on their math challenge. The students loved it and did some great work solving the math problems—and prepping for the Milestones tests!

### Upcoming Events

- **Deaf History Month 3/13-4/15**
- **4/19 & 4/20 Dorm shopping at DG**
- **4/21 Mid-Quarter 4**
- **4/25-29 EOG Testing (ES & MS)**
- **5/2-6 EOC testing (HS)**
- **5/17 Graduation 2 pm**
- **5/19 Homegoing**
- **5/24 Kindergarten Graduation 1:30 pm**
- **5/25 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL!**
GSD was featured in Bridges magazine’s “Education and Healthcare” issue this past winter. Bridges is a magazine published by the Rome Floyd Chamber of Commerce. We really appreciate the Chamber including us in their publication!

Established in 1846, GSD is celebrating its 175th anniversary this year! When GSD opened its doors, there were four students and one teacher, Mr. O.P. Fannin. Fannin and his students didn’t know they were the first step in what has become a long tradition of education, but we look back on them with gratitude.

Any school that’s been around for 175 years has experienced many changes—and has seen some things come full circle. GSD is a bilingual school; our two languages are American Sign Language (ASL) and English. You might think this makes GSD classes function like what you might see in a world language class such as Spanish. But that’s not quite the case. In a Spanish class, you hear Spanish spoken, and you see Spanish written—all the same language. In GSD’s classes, you see ASL signed and English written—two different languages! American Sign Language is a natural language with its own grammar and vocabulary that is different than English. GSD students learn both languages while taking all their required courses.

Classes taught in ASL haven’t always been the case, however. In the late 1800s-early 1900s, signed languages were looked down upon by educators, and most schools for deaf children, including GSD, banned signing. Instead, students were taught in the oral method, which focuses on speechreading (lipreading) and the use of speech and listening. While some people with hearing loss can successfully learn via speaking and listening/speechreading, others struggle. Fortunately, we know today that a “one size fits all” approach to education is ineffective and that Deaf culture, which includes ASL, is a rich and valued tradition. GSD’s mission statement reflects our belief in the value of ASL and Deaf culture: “All GSD students will graduate with a positive Deaf identity as bilinguals in American Sign language and English and will be prepared for successful life choices.”

Deaf identity? Deaf culture? These terms might be unfamiliar, but they are of great importance at GSD. Like most cultures, language plays a central role in Deaf culture. We live in an auditory world and being deaf can be isolating due to language barriers. Deaf culture arose in residential schools where deaf people were finally able to be fully included without barriers. As such, Deaf culture continues to value educating deaf children in ASL and English. Deaf culture includes the arts, history, films, organizations, and
unique visual communication features. Many deaf and hard of hearing people identify proudly with Deaf culture and consider being Deaf a key element of who they are—those who do, use the capitalized D in Deaf to show they are proud to be Deaf and value their culture.

GSD is special in many ways, but in other ways, we are just like other schools across the state. GSD serves students in grades Pre-K to 12. We are one of three schools run by the Division of State Schools of the Georgia Department of Education. We are a public school for a specialized population—there are no tuition costs or fees for educational services, lodging, or meals. Local school systems provide transportation from a student’s home to GSD or to Macon, where a charter bus furnished by GSD transports students who live south of Atlanta to and from the GSD campus. GSD follows the same state-mandated learning standards as other public schools and students take state-mandated assessments, as well as some local assessments.

GSD has dorms that allow us to educate students from across the state. Most of our students live on campus in dorms during the week and return home on weekends to be with their families. Some students who live locally travel to and from school daily. We have enrichment activities such as robotics and our own print shop, GSD Apparel, which makes GSD-branded clothing and many other items. We recently opened a student-run café. GSD offers after-school activities, such as sports and other fun activities, like eating out or seeing a movie. We have chapters of national organizations such as Beta Club and Jr. National Association of the Deaf. Students can compete in Deaf-friendly events such as Academic Bowl and Battle of the Books. Residential life serves to continue and strengthen Deaf culture, help students develop a positive Deaf identity, promote language development, leadership, and independence.

GSD is proud of our long history and the work we do to help GSD students have good, successful lives after graduation.

If you want more information about GSD, you can contact GSD Superintendent Leslie Jackson at lejackson@doe.k12.ga.us or Family & Community Engagement Coordinator Marie Dickinson at mdickinson@doe.k12.ga.us or 706.331.6314.
Events 2022

April 16: ASL Day at the Atlanta History Center
April 30: ASL Day at Zoo Atlanta
May 7: DeafNation Expo
May 15: Deaf Awareness Day at Atlanta Braves
June 11: Co-ed Softball Tournament Fundraiser
July 7: GCDHH Birthday Celebration
July 17 - 22: Camp Juliena
August 6: ASL Night with Atlanta United
September 18 - 24: Follow the Sign 5K Fundraiser
October 8: Wild Adventures at Valdosta
October 22: ASL Day at Six Flags
November 5: ASL Day at the Georgia Aquarium

Follow us!  
Facebook: @GCDHH  
Instagram: @gcdhh89  
Twitter: @GCDHHtweets
Special Event for GSD Parents and Families!

We would like to invite you to participate in a one-hour, virtual parent session focused on Managing Stress and Anxiety During the COVID-19 Pandemic. In this session, the facilitator will review some of the emotional impacts of COVID-19, share practical steps to manage stress and anxiety and highlight the importance of self-care. The session will take place on Thursday, April 21st from 7:30 -8:30 pm. It will be in English, Spanish and ASL. The link to join us is below. We hope you will join us for this informative session designed just for you. https://gadoe-org.zoom.us/j/81571573109?pwd=OFdGY1dZNm53Wm0UE1Hb3BLR1Nodz09 Meeting ID: 815 7157 3109 Passcode: 864813

This FREE STEM camp for high school students will be awesome but space is LIMITED!!! It will be at Georgia State University and the cost is being paid by GA Voc Rehab! Applications will be sent home with students. Don’t delay—send in your application ASAP (deadline to apply is May 16).

Are you interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math? Do you want to make new friends and have fun learning about STEM?

This event is for you!
This is a one week camp designed for high school students with hearing loss.

When: June 12 - 17, 2022
Where: Georgia State University

At camp you will do hands-on activities, give presentations, build leadership skills and learn about empowerment while experiencing college life!

REGISTRATION IS LIMITED TO 13 STUDENTS ONLY!
Deadline to apply is May 16th, 2022

For more information or questions, contact Ericka Lipscomb-Capel(elipsomb@gcdhh.org)