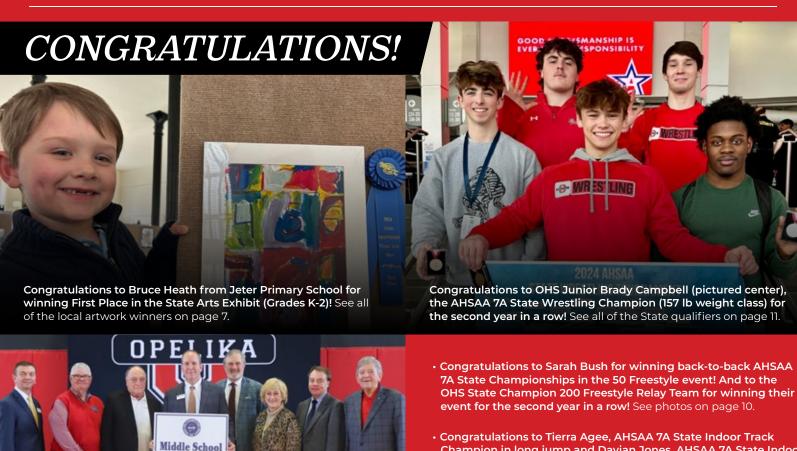


# OPELIKA CITY SCHOOLS

**FEBRUARY 2024** 

EDUCATING EVERY CHILD, EVERY DAY.

**OPELIKASCHOOLS.ORG** 



- Champion in long jump and Davian Jones, AHSAA 7A State Indoor
- · Congratulations to the Opelika High Theatre Society on winning Best in Show at the 2023 State Trumbauer Festival and representing Alabama at the 2024 Southeastern Theatre Conference in Mobile in March. See details on page 9.

Track Champion in the triple jump! See photos on page 11.

Congratulations to Opelika Middle School Principal Keith York for being selected as the Alabama Middle School Principal of the Year! Story on page 5.

Principal

of the Year

Horace

**OPELIKA, AL** PERMIT No. 369 **DIA9** U.S. POSTAGE PRESORT STD

Opelika, AL 36801 300 Simmons St Opelika City Schools



### MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Community Members, Students, and Teachers,

Thank you for your help in establishing another successful school year. This year brings much change as we have added Fox Run School and changed the class structure of Opelika Middle School. It was a great day as we cut the ribbon and celebrated the opening of Fox Run school with the community. The addition of Fox Run is evidence of the tremendous growth in our community where people from all around seek quality schools for their students.

I would like to especially thank our outstanding school leaders throughout Opelika City Schools. Research shows us that to transform schools into powerful places of learning, it takes effective people. I am pleased to work with our many outstanding principals, directors, instructional leaders, and coordinators. Our leaders are known and respected statewide for their contributions to the field. One such person is Keith York, who was most recently named the 2024 Alabama Middle School Principal of the Year–his second time winning this award. Additionally, I want to thank our outstanding teachers and support staff who make the educational experiences each day meaningful, effective, and relevant.

Spring is upon us and there are plenty of activities. The spring sports schedule is busy with softball, baseball, tennis, golf, and track and field events. The arts are also showcased readily as our show choirs are actively competing. The theater department is gearing up for West Side Story and preparing to represent Alabama in the annual Southeastern Theater Conference in Mobile, as winners of this year's one-act play. The Spirit of the South will perform on Main Street in Disney World's Magic Kingdom in April, showcasing the best in marching bands.

Thank you for your continued support of Opelika City Schools.

Go Dawgs!

Farrell Seymore Superintendent



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300 Simmons Street , Opelika, AL 36801 334-745-9700 | www.opelikaschools.org



### **SCHOOLS**

### **OCS Pre-K**

1700 Bulldog Parkway Opelika, AL 36801 334-741-5623 Director Jolene Clark

#### Carver Primary School

307 Carver Avenue Opelika, AL 36801 334-745-9712 Principal Joe Ross

#### **Jeter Primary School**

700 Jeter Avenue Opelika, AL 36801 334-745-9723 Principal David Carpenter

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2712 Marvyn Parkway Opelika, AL 36801 334-745-9711 Principal Mary Salmon

### Morris Avenue Intermediate School

8 Morris Avenue Opelika, AL 36801 334-745-9734 Principal Nino Mason

#### **Northside Intermediate School**

501 N. 5th Street Opelika, AL 36801 334-745-9731 Principal Cindy Poteet

### **West Forest Intermediate School**

2801 Waverly Parkway Opelika, AL 36801 334-745-9737 Principal Ryan McDonald

### Fox Run School

1100 Fox Run School Opelika, AL 36801 334-745-9751 Principal April Brock

### Opelika Middle School

1206 Denson Drive Opelika, AL 36801 334-745-9726 Principal Keith York

### Opelika High School

1700 Bulldog Parkway Opelika, AL 36801 334-745-9715 Principal Kelli Fischer

### Opelika Learning Center

214 Jeter Avenue Opelika, AL 36801 334-741-5603 Coordinator Thomas Sherfield

# CONGRATULATIONS TO THE OCS 2023-24 TEACHERS OF THE YEAR!



















## OHS 2023-24 Elementary Teacher of the Year $Branham\ Smith$

Congratulations to Branham Smith from Northside Intermediate School on being chosen as the OCS 2023-24 Elementary Teacher of the Year! Branham has been teaching third grade at Northside for the past five years and has just been selected as the Instructional Coach for the school.

Growing up in Charlotte, NC, Branham Smith loved school and always had the feeling she wanted to be a teacher. She is the oldest of four girls and "playing school" was the norm at her house. However, it wasn't a teacher that helped her make that decision, but a friend from the bus named Frank. According to Smith, he wanted to be a bus driver when he grew up. She soon realized that in Frank's world, the bus driver was the person that made sure Frank got his homework done and made sure he was at school each day. "It doesn't just take a teacher to make a positive impact

on a child's life," said Smith. "It takes the bus drivers, the cafeteria workers, the counselors, the office staff. It takes everyone." When Branham realized what an impact she could have as a teacher, she knew she had found her path. "We're so lucky to spend eight hours a day with our students. It's a role that I don't take lightly."

According to Smith, one of the most important aspects of being a good teacher is building relationships. "Relationships are so important," said Smith. "The relationships we have with our students are vitally important, but so are the relationships we have with our co-workers and school family." Connections with her students and their families are also important. "It's great to be out on the weekend and see my students. I enjoy meeting their families and getting to know them outside of school."

Smith said that her dad gave her some good advice that she tries to pass on to her students. "I want my students to understand that they are a reflection of their family and class members and that their actions speak volumes." Based on the love she has for her students, and the love that her students have for her, it sounds like Mrs. Smith can be confident that her actions speak volumes in the best possible way.

Branham and her husband Brad are proud parents of Bradley, who will be one year old in March. Most of their free time is spent focused on enjoying every moment with their daughter. They are members of First Presbyterian Church in Opelika.



## OHS 2023-24 Secondary Teacher of the Year $Mandy\ Baker$

Congratulations to Mandy Baker from Opelika High School on being chosen as the OCS 2023-24 Secondary Teacher of the Year! Mandy has been teaching Education and Training at Opelika High School for the past seven years. Even though Mandy always wanted to be a teacher, her path took a few turns before she landed in the classroom. Originally from Gadsden, AL, she always played school and loved to babysit. She was always the teacher, and her sister was always the student. Two of her main influences growing up were Peggy Gilbert, her home economics teacher at General Forest Middle School, and Glenda Hicks, the librarian. "They both showed me that education was about more than just what was being taught each day, it was also about the relationships that you create with your students," said Baker. "I think it is important to teach them the course material, but it is also important to help them learn life skills."

Since being hired at Opelika High, Baker has helped build an extremely successful Education and Training Program at OHS. Students in Mrs. Baker's class learn the fundamentals of teaching, classroom management, lesson planning, and how to work with children. Having Pre-K classrooms on campus at OHS has provided "amazing experience for our students" according to Baker. "Our students are able to get hands-on experience in a true classroom setting every day without having to leave our school campus. It helps our students confirm that they want to be in education or decide that they want to follow another path."

When asked about her favorite part of teaching, Baker talked about the relationships she has with her students. "I love to get to know them, to help them learn, and to help them succeed," said Baker. "I love watching them go out into the world and find what they want to do." Even if her students decide not to go into the education field, Mrs. Baker hopes she teaches them skills to help them be successful. Regardless of their future plans, Baker wants to make sure that her students know she is there for them. "I want them to know that I will help them with whatever they need. I'm here." Whether her students hear the familiar phrase as they step into her classroom on the first day of school, or after they have graduated, they know they can count on Mrs. Baker to guide them.

Mandy and her husband Charlie love to travel and enjoy taking road trips across the country. They also enjoy hanging out with their border collie named Shep. They are members of Embrace Church and serve on the leadership team.

### OCS KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION • APRIL 2, 3, AND 4



Online registration links will be posted on the OCS website beginning April 2, 2024.

Items needed for registration include:

- · Birth Certificate
- · Certificate of Immunization
- · Child's Social Security Card
- Two Current Proofs of Residency
- · Photo ID of Parent/Guardian

For more information contact Opelika City Schools, 334-745-9700.



# YORK NAMED 2024 ALABAMA MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Opelika Middle School Principal, Mr. Keith York, on being named the 2024 Alabama Middle School Principal of the Year! A schoolwide assembly was held at OMS to surprise Mr. York with the news. Many thanks to Vic Wilson and the members of Council For Leaders In Alabama Schools for presenting the award. Special thanks to Dr. Seymore and Mayor Gary Fuller for helping pull off the surprise. Congratulations Mr. York, we are proud of you and appreciate your leadership and dedication to our schools!

## GOLDEN STATE FOODS PROVIDES NEW TENNIS SHOES TO STUDENTS

On Friday, February 9, 2024, members of the Golden State Foods Foundation (GSF) delivered over 800 pairs of new tennis shoes to students at Carver Primary School and West Forest Intermediate School. Just prior to Christmas, GSF reached out to both principals to see if they were interested in the shoe donation program. "When Ms. Richardson contacted us, our immediate answer was yes!" said Ryan McDonald, Principal of West Forest Intermediate School. "This is an amazing gift to our students." When thinking about the project, GSF determined that they would like to not only give shoes to one grade level at one school but decided to give shoes to every student in every grade level at two schools. "We are so appreciative of Melissa Richardson and Nate Murphy and Golden State Foods for their generosity to our students," said Joe Ross, Principal of Carver Primary School. "They are helping us make a difference in the lives of our students." Both schools had assemblies to thank Golden State Foods with posters and cards. Carver even had a visit from "Pete the Cat" and the students sang about "rocking in my school shoes". Smiles were abundant throughout the day at both schools. Thank you to Golden State Foods Foundation for being incredible partners with the Opelika City Schools!









### **LEARNING TO BE A SUPER CITIZEN!**

Second Grade students from Carver Primary School, Jeter Primary School, and Southview Primary School enjoyed meeting Libby Liberty during the "Hands on Liberty" Program Kickoff. Students will continue to learn about citizenship for the next few months and will end the program with a celebration in late April.



# CARVER PRIMARY SCHOOL RECEIVES \$5000 DONATION FROM BURLINGTON

Thank you to our new neighbors at Burlington Stores in Tiger Town in Opelika and the national nonprofit AdoptAClassroom.org for their generous \$5,000 donation to help further our students' education!

## AIM HIGH: SOARING WITH THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN



Students from many of the OCS elementary schools have been learning about aviation by visiting Aim High: Soaring with the Tuskegee

Airmen. Field trips have been rolling through the Opelika Public Library and will continue throughout the spring. This traveling exhibit honors the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen by exploring STEM concepts and aviation themes through the lens of the pioneering group's Six Guiding Principles. Inspired by the tools and tasks connected to airplanes and flying, the interactive exhibits mix real artifacts with hands-on imaginative play. Aim High allows visitors of all ages to imagine themselves as future aviators, inspired by stories from the past. Our students have truly enjoyed this experience. Many thanks to the Opelika Public Library for bringing the exhibit to Opelika!





### MR. AND MISS OHS 2024





Congratulations to Miss OHS-April Vega Sanchez and Mr. OHS-Sam Kemp!
Congratulations also to Miss OHS First Runner-Up-Stella George, Miss OHS Second
Runner-Up Kailey Bice, Miss Sophomore Class-Memshalyah Weaver, and Miss Freshman
Class-Caroline Couey. Mr. and Miss OHS will receive scholarships and serve as Emissaries
during their Senior year. Congratulations to all!



Congratulations to 2023 Opelika High School Homecoming Queen Roniyah Lilly!



# JONES SELECTED FOR AHSAA STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Congratulations to Makayla Jones, a junior at Opelika High School, on being chosen to serve on the Alabama High School Athletic Association Student Leadership Team! Jones was selected from a pool of over 120 applicants throughout the state and will serve for two years. The AHSAA Student Leadership Team is comprised of sixteen student athletes representing eight districts. Jones said that she is excited to serve in this capacity and hopes to motivate others to show leadership through sports.



# CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF THE 2023-24 SUPERINTENDENT'S ART SHOW

### **GRADES K-2**

**Bruce Heath** · Kindergarten · *Untitled*Jeter Primary School · 1st place
1st Place State Superintendent's Visual Arts Exhibit

**Elijah Ball** · 1st grade · *Untitled* Jeter Primary School · 2nd place

**Nikolai Kitchens** · 1st Grade · *Untitled* Jeter Primary School · 3rd place

**Evelyn Ortiz Monteavlo** · 2nd Grade · *Untitled* Carver Primary School · Honorable Mention

### **GRADES 3-5**

**Kole Houston** · 3rd grade · *Untitled* West Forest Intermediate School · 1st place

**Jonathan Bernardo Vasquez** · 3rd grade · *Untitled* West Forest Intermediate School · 2nd place

**Julio Miguel Jose** · 3rd grade · *Untitled*West Forest Intermediate School · 3rd place

**Elsie Clay** · 4th grade · *Untitled*Northside Intermediate School · Honorable Mention

**Savannah Finck**  $\cdot$  5th grade  $\cdot$  *The Clown* Northside Intermediate School  $\cdot$  Honorable Mention

**James Bass** · 4th grade · *Untitled*Northside Intermediate School · Honorable Mention

#### **GRADES 6-8**

**Maily Chilel Lopez** · 7th grade · *Flower Power* Opelika Middle School · 1st place

**Skylar Milford** · 7th grade · *Flowers* Opelika Middle School · 2nd place

### **GRADES 9-10**

**Azaria Johnson** · 10th grade · *Moon Walking* Opelika High School · 1st place

**Isabel Caldwell** · 9th grade · *Pretty City* Opelika High School · 2nd place

**Ariella Jade Moore** • 9th grade • *Compass Jellyfish* Opelika High School • 3rd place

**Mackenzie Christopher** · 9th grade · *Raskolnikov* Opelika High School · Honorable Mention

#### **GRADES 11-12**

**Sydney Willis** · 11th grade · *My Little Vampire* Opelika High School · 1st place

**Serena Scherbert**  $\cdot$  11th grade  $\cdot$  Quad Persona Opelika High School  $\cdot$  2nd place

**Anna Webster** · 11th grade · *Miracle Worker* Opelika High School · 3rd place

**Pate Lovelace** · 12th grade · *Uncle Sam* Opelika High School · Honorable Mention



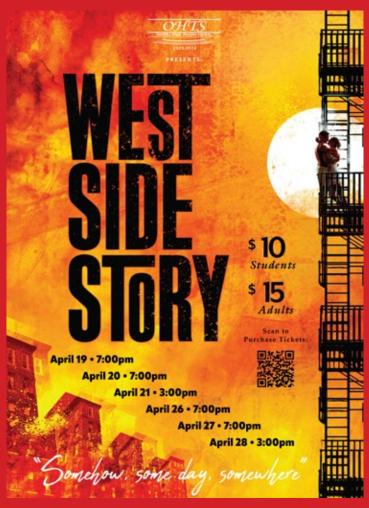
SCENES FROM... Charlotte's Web







### **COMING SOON...**



### OPELIKA HIGH THEATRE SOCIETY WINS BEST IN SHOW AT 2023 TRUMBAUER FESTIVAL





Congratulations to the Opelika High Theatre Society (OHTS) for winning "Best in Show" at the 2023 Trumbauer Theatre Festival. OHTS performed "Quilt, A Musical Celebration" for

the one-act competition and will now advance to the Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC) in Mobile, AL in March 2024. In addition, three individual members of the Quilt cast were named as All-Star Cast members: Drue Gagliano, Clayton McBurney, and Atticus O'Banner.

In the individual event categories, Patrick Seymore won first place in Puppet Design-Varsity Division for his work on "Sven" from the OHTS performance of Disney's Frozen. Makiah Paschal won first place in Dramatic Monologue (1910-1980)-Intermediate Division.

The Quilt was directed by Revel Gholston, with music director Dean Jones, and technical director Tracy Tidwell. The Trumbauer Theatre Festival was held December 1-2, 2023, at the University of North Alabama in Florence. Best of luck to the cast and crew as they compete at SETC!

### **CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ALL STATE MEMBERS** FOR CHOIR AND BAND

#### 2024 All-State Honor Band and District Honor Band

Jacob Kroll · Opelika High School · Clarinet All-State Blue Band & District High School Honor Band **Essence Dawson** · Opelika Middle School · Alto Saxophone District Middle School Honor Band

**Zaelvn Trimble** · Opelika High School · Trumpet District Middle School Honor Band

Kylan Fanning · Opelika High School · Trombone All-State Blue Band & District High School Honor Band

**Sivan Phatsadavong** · Opelika Middle School · Trombone District Middle School Honor Band

**Dvlan Lund** · Opelika Middle School · Baritone District Middle School Honor Band

Will Deshazo · Opelika High School · Tuba

All-State White Band & District High School Honor Band

Madeleine Flick · Opelika High School · Percussion

Middle School All-State Alternate & District Middle School Honor Band

Wyatt Mitchell · Opelika Middle School · Percussion District Middle School Honor Band

### Alabama All State Choir (Middle School Division)

Anderson Melnick Emma Huguley Gavin Hickman Tiana Key Aliyah Benford Caria Maddox Kassidy Chamblee Harley Norwood Ally Corbitt Abigail Parrish Ava Dawson Dominic Parrish Essence Dawson Gabby Rosener Kayce Dowdell Emunah Weaver





### **REVEL GHOLSTON** WINS OUTSTANDING **EDUCATOR AWARD**

Congratulations to Revel Gholston, Opelika High Theatre Director, on being awarded the 2023 Dorothy Schwartz Outstanding Educator Award for the State of Alabama from the Alabama Conference of Theatre! We are so proud of you and appreciate the difference you make in the lives of our students each and every day!

Atticus O'Banner Jacob Kroll

## OPELIKA CITY SCHOOLS WELCOMES BRYAN MOORE AS THE NEW HEAD FOOTBALL COACH

"OCS welcomes Coach Bryan Moore as our new head football coach. He was an outstanding teacher and coach during his previous tenure in Opelika and he has only grown in his capacity as a strong effective leader," stated Farrell Seymore, OCS Superintendent. "We look forward to the positive impact he will have on the students in our community." Moore worked for Opelika City Schools from 2007-2015 as a teacher and coach. "We are incredibly excited to welcome Coach Moore and his family back to Opelika," said Kelli Fischer, OHS Principal. "Coach Moore has proven himself as a quality head coach, but what is even more impressive is his ability to establish relationships with players, coaches, and the community where he works."



Moore was the head football coach at Hartselle High School from January 2020 to December 2023. Prior to that, he was the head football coach at Jasper High School (2018-2020) and at Eufaula High School (2015-2018). His coaching career began at Opelika High School in 2007 as the 9th grade football assistant coach and the 9th grade head basketball coach. After being the 9th grade head football coach in 2008, he was the tight ends/inside wide receivers coach from 2009-2011. He then served as varsity offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach from 2011 until March 2015. "I am so honored to be the new head football coach at Opelika High School. It's surreal to have the opportunity to come back and lead a program that I began coaching in many years ago," said Coach Moore. "Opelika has always been a special place to me and my family. It's where I got my start in teaching and coaching and where my kids were born. My desire for this program is for it to be the best football program in Alabama."

Coach Moore graduated from Auburn University in May 2007 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Social Science Education. He received a Master's Degree in Coaching and Athletic Administration from Concordia University in 2018. He and his wife Lindsey are the proud parents of three boys: Parker (age 13), Baker (age 10), and Tucker (age 7).

OCS is excited to have Coach Moore back home in Opelika. GO DAWGS!

# SARAH BUSH TAKES BACK-TO-BACK 7A STATE TITLES IN THE 2023 AHSAA 7A SWIMMING & DIVING CHAMPIONSHIPS





Congratulations to OHS Senior Sarah Bush for winning back-to-back titles in the 50 Yard Freestyle event. Bush was also the State Runner-Up in the 100 Yard Freestyle event. The 200 Yard Freestyle Relay team also won the State Championship for the second year in a row! Members of the Relay Team include: Sarah Bush, Grace Nelson, Presley Mullins, and Mylee Bordeaux. Also placing third at State was the 200 Yard Medley Relay Team of Presley Mullins, Aniston McGhee, Grace Nelson, and Sarah Bush.

Congratulations to all!



Congratulations to Gabby Reese on winning 3rd Place at the AHSAA State Wrestling Tournament

# BRADY CAMPBELL WINS BACK-TO-BACK TITLES AT AHSAA 7A STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP

OHS Wrestlers had a great showing at the State meet. Brady Campbell (157 lb) won his second State Championship, Trell Anderson (144 lb) was the State Runner-Up, Brayden Wilson (138 lb) placed third, Trace Gaither (150 lb) placed fifth, and Kyle Epperson (heavyweight) placed fifth. OHS sent a total of ten wrestlers to State and OHS placed sixth overall.





Wrestling State Qualifiers pictured (I-r): Left to right Brandon Denson, Calvin Fenn, Kyle Epperson, Trace Gaither, Tommie Johnson, Derek Hoyett, Brayden Wilson, Brady Campbell, Trell Anderson, and Recavien Howell.

# OPELIKA EXCELS AT INDOOR TRACK MEET

Opelika had a great showing at the 2024 AHSAA Indoor Track State Championship. Top performers were as follows:

- Tierra Agee, State Champion in long jump and 4th place in the 60 meter dash
- Davian Jones, State Champion in triple jump and State Runner-Up in long jump
- $\cdot$  Kyndall Brundidge, State Runner-Up in triple jump and 4th place in long jump

Congratulations to all of our track athletes on a fantastic indoor season! Go Dawgs!



### **CHS ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIP SIGNINGS**



Jackson Killcreas • Baseball Chipola College Sarah Bush • Swimming
Auburn University

Roman Gagliano • Football Middle Tennessee State University



Russell Copous • Baseball Central Alabama Community College **Chris Floyd • Baseball**Coastal Alabama South Community College





### MESSAGE FROM COACH BRYAN MOORE

Hello Opelika,

I am blessed and honored to be the Head Football Coach at Opelika High School and very grateful to be able to serve this football program and community. Opelika gave me my start as a teacher and coach, and I am happy to be home.

Opelika Football has been one of the best programs in that state of Alabama for a long time and I hope to continue that tradition and take it to the next level.

Our team is working hard in the weight room right now. We have had lots of gains in the weight room and with nutrition over the last month. Some guys have gained as much as 10 pounds and have made tremendous strength gains. It's so important for our guys to be in the best shape they can be moving forward.

For the next 8 weeks or so we are focusing on strength and power. We are working on getting bigger, stronger, and faster. Once we get past spring break, we will start focusing on getting more explosive and begin focusing on spring installations.

Our Spring schedule will consist of 10 practices spread out over three weeks finishing with a spring football game against Clay Chalkville in Bulldog Stadium on May 16th.

If you're a football parent, make sure you attend the parent meeting on Monday, March 4 from 5:30-6:15 p.m. in Bulldog Café. We will provide you with the information you need to be ready for upcoming practices and football season.

Again, I am honored to be back in Opelika and I can't wait for football season.

Go Dawgs! Coach Bryan Moore OHS Head Football Coach

