



# STUDENT SERVICES REPORT



## Meals for Kids



**S**chool Nutrition is happily continuing to serve our community during this difficult season. Our drive thru sites and van routes have been serving thousands of meals weekly, and we are on track to provide over a million meals to families by June 1<sup>st</sup>. Our team is currently putting together new ways of reaching those who need additional food assistance. We are preparing to have several pizza pick up nights in May at four middle schools across the county. To accomplish this, we are working with suppliers to procure pizza delivery boxes to hold whole frozen pizzas, fresh produce and 1/2 gallons of milk. We have even partnered



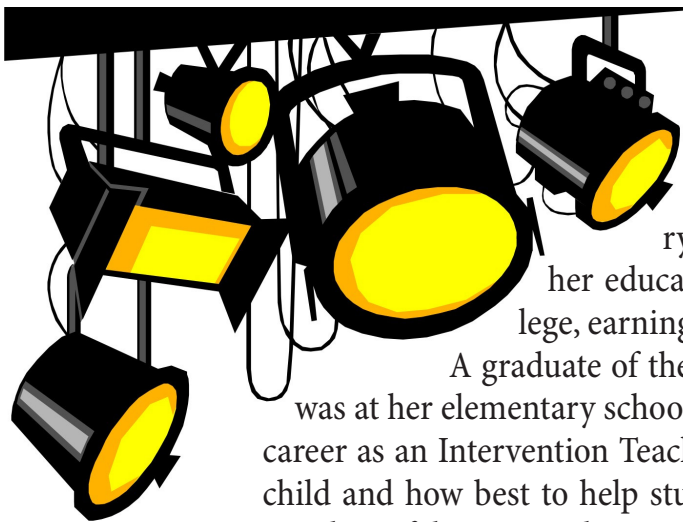
with The Strawberry Patch in Reynolds, Georgia to ensure their efforts and harvest are well used and to provide fresh berries for our kids. It has been exciting to form new partnerships during this time, and we hope to carry these relationships into future years!

We have also been able to provide some great fresh produce, and have received comments on the wonderful food education and time together happening at home to yield tasty results. We've seen pictures of orange marmalade and heard tales of apple fritters and applesauce from scratch. It all sounds delicious!



National Nurses Week is May 6<sup>th</sup> through May 12<sup>th</sup>. We are very appreciative of the hard work our school nurses are doing to keep students healthy and learning during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Since 1972, National School Nurse Day has been set aside to acknowledge school nurses. It is an honor to recognize the contributions to student health and learning that school nurses make every day! Those contributions include ensuring that medication is properly administered and stored, supporting student health and safety by following the *too sick for school* guidelines, training in first aid care, and monitoring students who have chronic health conditions such as asthma or seizures. Houston County currently employs eight school nurses. We appreciate the hard work and dedication of our Houston County School Nurses!



## TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

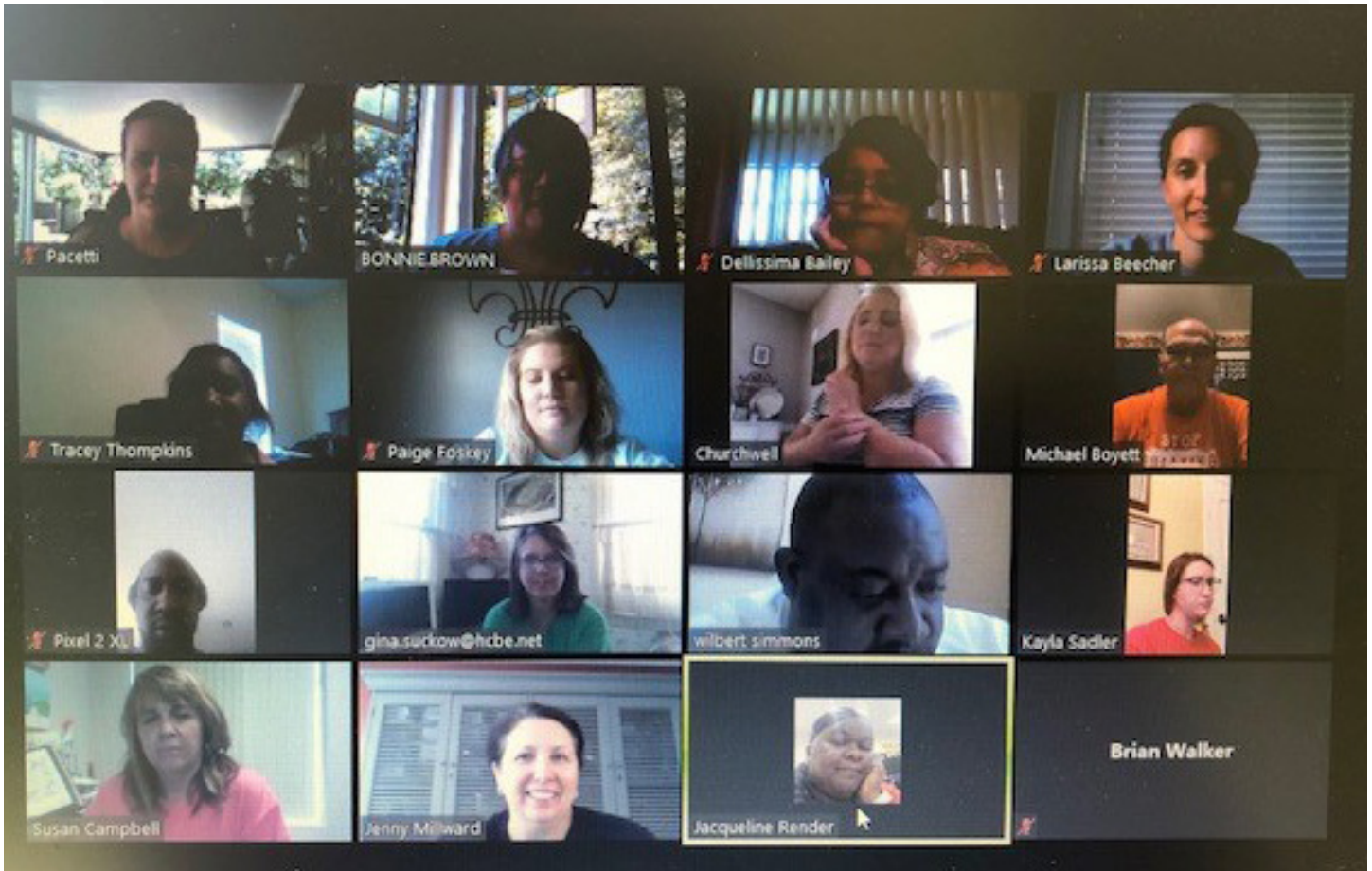
This month we would like to spotlight Rachel Floyd, an interrelated teacher at Langston Road Elementary. After graduating from Northside High, she continued her education at Georgia Military College and Macon State College, earning a dual degree in early childhood and special education.

A graduate of the Houston County School System, her first teaching job was at her elementary school, Eagle Springs. Rachel believes beginning her teaching career as an Intervention Teacher really gave her a better understanding of the whole child and how best to help students who struggle. Rachel always had a good understanding of the impact that teachers have because her mother is also a teacher. However, it was not until she had her own child that she realized the magnitude of the impact. She became driven to share her love and knowledge, creating a positive learning environment for children. When asked what she celebrates as an achievement from the school year she replied, "Thinking back I see the success my students have had from incorporating an Orton Gillingham approach to my reading instruction. I have seen my kids grow so much! It has changed the way I teach reading. I now understand the principles of reading, the why, and it has made a huge difference". She and her husband Austin have two children, Lili and Sawyer. In her spare time, she loves spending time reading, being outdoors, and family camping trips.



# zoom

## *Professional Learning Communities*



**O**ur Middle School Mild Intellectual Disabilities teachers and paraprofessionals have had the opportunity to participate in weekly Zoom Professional Learning Communities (PLC) lead by Jacqueline Render from Huntington Middle School. Discussions include everything from curriculum delivery



and virtual field trips to opportunities for socialization using video conferencing. Participants also use the opportunity to brainstorm about technology access for students and communication with families. The PLC has been an outstanding way for teachers to collaborate and stay connected.



Georgia Department of Education

**T**he Georgia Department of Education has money allocated for “High Cost Grants”. Local Education Agencies have the opportunity to apply for additional funding through this grant for students meeting the criteria as a “High Needs Child”. A student that fits this definition is one that

requires special education services and related services that are more intense, more frequent and more diverse than the needs typically demonstrated by students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This application process is intense and requires substantial documentation. The student services department is pleased that the GaDOE has approved all four of the Houston County grant applications submitted. This year, the grants totaled \$89,960. These funds will help support the costs of implementing intense, highly individualized instructional programs that are essential for ensuring success for these students.

**W**e want every student in our system to have an opportunity for success in digital learning, while feeling socially and emotionally secure. During this trying time, we realize the needs of our students extend beyond access to the online learning environment and teacher guidance. Many students are experiencing social and emotional difficulties due to school and community closures that are impacting their ability to fully engage in learning. In order to support the emotional needs of our students, we have made a new resource available. The Houston Hopeline is manned by our Social Workers and School Psychologists and is available for all of our students. The number for Houston Hopeline is 478-273-9174. No crisis is too big or small. We are here to help!

 **HOUSTON**  
hopeline

**478-273-9174** 

Any crisis, big or small,  
we are here to help!





# Digital Learning Webinar Support

FOR FAMILIES & CAREGIVERS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

**D**uring this transition to digital learning, Student Services has worked diligently to support parents and caregivers of students with disabilities. Paula Cooper, Denise Duke, Larissa Beecher, and Cindy Hamilton from our Behavior Support Team and Academic Support Team, collaborated to provide digital learning webinars. These webinars cover topics such as language arts, math, behavior, as well as functional and social skills supports. Participants are provided information on practical ways to support academic and social-emotional learning during this digital learning time. Webinars include tips, activities, and resources that could be easily incorporated into students' daily routine with little to no cost. The webinars are scheduled to be released each Monday, beginning April 20th through May 11th. They will continue to be available on the district's resource page.

**See HCBE eResources for links to webinars**  
**<https://www.hcbe.net/spederesource>**

GAA Support: [larissa.beecher@hcbe.net](mailto:larissa.beecher@hcbe.net). GMAS Support: [cindy.hamilton@hcbe.net](mailto:cindy.hamilton@hcbe.net).  
Behavior Support: [paula.cooper@hcbe.net](mailto:paula.cooper@hcbe.net) or [denise.duke@hcbe.net](mailto:denise.duke@hcbe.net).



**B**eing an educator requires a certain degree of many characteristics, among a few: flexibility, patience, endurance, accountability and passion. Each is exhibited daily, at times before we arrive on campus and past the final bell of the school day. This is typical of all educators. However, I believe that special educators have a natural tendency within themselves to magnify these characteristic elements.

After March 13th, Ms. Batchelor and I, along with all educators in Houston County, had to make the transition from in-class to e-learning. Being educators in the Mild Intellectual Disabled environment, who already accommodate students in all areas of academia, we were now challenged to go beyond our usual and continue to make a path for our students in this new world of e-learning.

The first challenge was not for our students but for us. If educators do not understand the e-learning environment and technology required to access it, how should we expect our students to successfully navigate this new world? The next question focused on e-learning and teaching the curriculum. How do we make accommodations online for our students with special needs? In the classroom, we are able to assist with immediate attention and feedback; some students require one-on-one service while others may need visuals to help understand the concept.

Finally, not only did we have to teach our students about e-learning, but the many of their families too. Ms. Batchelor and I have come to build a deep professional relationship as we depend on each other's experience while learning the ins and outs of these new online resources. I have learned to use and create multiple resources for students and their families to access the curriculum. Some of these are: Google Docs (quizzes and answering sheets) and Slides (notes to coincide with other resources). Due to the various needs of my students I have made myself available by offering my personal cell number in order that students and/or parents may ask questions at any time. Additionally, working out assignments via Duo (similar to Facetime) or texting a picture of a hand-written walk-through (i.e. subtracting by borrowing and calculating the Mean) and discovering that I can offer feedback on student work instantly using Google Docs. Recently, for my science classes, I have ventured out of my comfort zone and begun to film myself conducting science labs. While I am no expert in creating a Youtube video, I believe the results of presenting a lesson in this manner increases student engagement; as in the classroom, they knew I was a stickler for science labs and playing videos to help break down their understanding.

We all know that this season is unconventional and this requires us to engage with our students in unconventional ways. While doing so, we will continue to go beyond our normal levels of flexibility, patience, endurance, accountability and passion to ensure each student thrives.