From the Superintendent’s Desk

The first part of the school year has been very busy and indeed the next couple of months will be filled with much learning and joyful activity in all our schools.

Now that we are beyond the first nine weeks of school, it is a good time to reflect on the efforts of staff and students resulting in learning for all. As our administrative staff and teachers participate in classroom walk-throughs, many examples of students and teachers building the intrapersonal connections that lead to a safe and supportive learning environment are evident. STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) concepts are being infused throughout the curriculum, project-based learning and service-learning projects to benefit our broader community are just a few of the many activities and experiences taking place across our school system. Students have progressed in their learning through rich classroom experiences in which they worked collaboratively and individually, benefitting from peer and teacher feedback.

I encourage our parents and community members to be active in our schools and athletic events. We ARE better together! – Ann Jackson

We are Better Together!

Save the Date!

HOLIDAYS

- **November 10**th
  Veterans Day Holiday

- **November 20**th – **24**th
  Thanksgiving Break

- **December 21, 2017 – January 3, 2018**
  Christmas Break

Thank you to all of our Veterans!
Parent volunteers met with me on November 2nd to plan several events over the course of the school year. Volunteers are considering upgrading teacher Smart Boards to transition to touch screen televisions. In addition to replacing older technology, the new screens prove to be student-user friendly and function well in a brightly lit classroom. The estimated cost is $1,500 per classroom. This includes the television, mounting brackets, HDMI cables, and document camera. The parents celebrated the success of the recent gift wrap sale that raised over $19,000 for the parent projects like the one previously mentioned. Furthermore, the overwhelming support from the community will allow for the technology project to proceed at a faster rate. Parents also planned holiday themed meals and snacks for faculty. These activities go a long way in encouraging our teachers and showing appreciation for their work. Finally, the parents discussed plans for a Winter Wonderland Dance on January 11th. The winter themed dance will be another great opportunity to engage families and strengthen their relationship with our school. More information regarding the dance will follow. If you would like to be a member of our parent involvement team, please see Mr. Allen or Megan Woods. We are all united around a love for our students as we make T.R. Simmons a place where every pre-k, kindergarten, and 1st grader wants to learn.

Red Ribbon week was celebrated at T.R. Simmons Elementary School from October 30th – November 3rd. The week is a national event constructed around goals of bringing awareness to drugs and the power of positive choices. Throughout this week in counseling, Mrs. Jones led our students to learn that they are in charge of themselves, as it relates to making good, healthy choices. Students enjoyed saying “Boo to Drugs” by wearing their Halloween costumes to school. The purpose of all of these themed days is meant to demonstrate to students that it is okay to stand out among their peers. More than silly hats or crazy socks, we want them to know making good choices is the best way to let their little light shine.

Ms. Lindsey Welch, Children’s Minister at Woodland Trace Church of Christ, joined our parents for Mrs. Jones’ first session of Cupcakes with the Counselor. Parents were invited to hear a motivational talk and participate in a craft with their child. The next session will take place in January with February and April to follow. All kindergarten parents will have an opportunity to attend one of the four sessions. We appreciate Mrs. Jones creating opportunities to involve our families.
As we are full swing into our second nine weeks, students and staff at Memorial Park Elementary have been very busy. Many classrooms have attended field trips to Rickwood Caverns, completed STEAM challenges in the classroom, participated in Red Ribbon Week, enjoyed the Fall Festival, etc. These events, along with others, have kept our students engaged and active in the educational process.

In looking ahead, our students will enjoy a much needed rest as we have the upcoming Veteran’s Day holiday on November 10 and our Thanksgiving Break on November 20 – 24. There are many Christmas activities on the horizon during the month of December. This time always proves to be a fun and exciting time in our school.

As always, we are so thankful for the support of our community and families. Memorial Park would not be the school it is without this external support. MPS will continue to strive for excellence in all areas to improve the education of each and every one our students.

I cannot begin to express how impressed I have been with our students since the start of school. As we finished the first nine weeks, we had 188 students reach their AR goal of 25 points or more. This is a true testament to the dedication of our students, parents and staff. As a stakeholder in our school, please continue to support our students and staff in this endeavor to encourage our students to read each and every day.

As we look to the next few months, we will have a busy schedule in front of our students. Here are a few of the upcoming activities and holidays for our students:

November 7 – Veteran’s Day program at 1:30 in our gym.

December 7 – Representatives from Dauphin Island Sea Lab will bring the Bay-Mobile lab to visit our students.

-Mr. Rigsby
Our very first Maddox Open House was a huge success. We had over 175 parents visit our school. We were so excited to show what we have been learning. We also had EXTREMELY Successful Parent Night at the Book air. Thank you parents for your support of our teachers and our students!

Our 4th grade enjoyed their first Field Trip to Oakville Indian Mounds in Danville, Alabama. We are also very excited about our Chess Club’s performance at their first match at Meek! Jasper City swept the competition in the elementary division and took 2 of the top three places in both the junior high and high school divisions. In all, about 50 students participated in the all day tournament. 34 students participated from Jasper City schools!

The rankings were as follows:
Elementary School Division: Jarret Morrison (5th grade, Mr. Phillips class) took first place winning all 5 games he played. Ben Harrison (5th grade, Dr. Jordan’s class) took second place winning 4 out of 5 games. Rohan Goetz won third and Andrews Evans won fourth place after a hard fought tie-breaker round. They are both in 4th grade in Mrs. Mobley’s class.
Junior High Division: Gavin Rigsby (6th grade, Mrs. Evans class) took second place and Devin Levans (6th grade, Mrs. Rice’s class) took third place.

Congratulations to them and to all students who participated and played so well in the competition. We are so proud of all of you, how well you played and represented Jasper City Schools!

The first Open House and the first Book Fair for Maddox Intermediate School was a great success. Thank you for all your support and involvement in these important events at Maddox. I want to take this opportunity to wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving. School is closed for Thanksgiving Break the week of November 20th. Students will return Monday November 27th... This month and next month there will be several opportunities for parental involvement. I encourage you to be a part of what is going on at Maddox Intermediate School.
Also, please remember that attendance is a vital part of your child’s education.
Thank you again parents for all your support. Go Vikes!!

-Mr. Sargent
It's our second nine week period here at Jasper Junior High School, and we have not skipped a beat! We are celebrating the achievements of our first nine week period in showing a 99% attendance rate of our students. We’ve released laptops to all students, and our first school-wide project involves our students creating their own digital portfolio that showcases their individual achievements.

We are very proud to have Garrett Pschirer, Dayion Johnson, Jose Bernardo Ponce-Ac, and Ashton Prescott represent Jasper Junior High School as our Students of the Quarter for the first nine week period. These students have done an excellent job in exhibiting great characteristics of quality leadership.

Our teachers and students are always working to surpass our high expectations. Recently, students were given a delicious opportunity to create mitosis replicas with Oreo cookies and sprinkles in Mrs. Wiginton’s classes. Students in Mrs. Ferrell’s Family and Consumer Sciences classes were given an opportunity to learn the basics of sewing by participating in the Beads of Courage community service project. The bags will be used to collect colorful beads that represent different treatment milestones. The Beads of Courage program is designed to support and strengthen children and families coping with serious illness.

We are proud of our fall athletic teams (XC, Football, and Volleyball) in the way each represented our school. We look forward to more of the same with our winter athletic teams (Basketball & Wrestling). We are also proud of school choir and Mr. Lindsey as our students performed in the fall choral performance. We are very fortunate to have the ability to provide so many opportunities for our students.

We are very appreciative of your support to our students and our programs! Go Vikes!
Congratulations to the Jasper High School Lady Vikings Volleyball team for placing 2nd in the state. They had an outstanding year with a combined record of 56-5. Congratulations ladies! We are all so proud of you!

Also, congratulations to the Jasper High School Band for receiving All Superior ratings in Athens. They also picked up many more awards and accomplishments including Best in Class Band.
Congratulations to all!!!

JHS VOLLEYBALL
State Runner-Up
Area 11 Champions
North Super Regional Champions
57-5 Record
In front of a raucous crowd at Bill Harris Arena, Viking Volleyball played what could have been the most memorable match in the history of high school volleyball. After defeating Helena (22-25, 25-13, 25-9, 25-18) and Spanish Fort (25-18, 25-21, 25-15) to advance to the 6A State Championship Game, Coach Daniels and his group of unyielding women posed one of the most improbable comebacks that anyone could ever imagine. The Vikes found themselves down 2-0 in the 3rd set best of five match, and Pelham found themselves with a big lead in the 3rd set. For those of you who do not follow volleyball, The Vikes were on life support, and the priest had been called in to perform the last rites sacrament.

They say that teams take on the personality of their coach. To say that, would be an understatement about this team. As I looked cross court, it was as if Coach Daniels set his jaw, and was determined that his team would not go without a fight- not that day- not on that stage. He calls timeout, and in what seemed like a World War air raid, the Vikes come storming back with a barrage of points that left the Pelham team stunned and the green and white student section shocked. The Vikes went on to take the fourth set after trailing 15-7. The improbable comeback saw the Panthers at championship point twice in that set. A kill sent us to the fifth and deciding set, and sent the crowd into a frenzy. By this time, the entire arena was close to filling as McGill and Bob Jones fans were seated ready for the 7A Championship Game.

The fifth set was the most entertaining set of the match. The Vikings struck first in a match that was dominated by runs by both teams, getting out 4-0 on the Panthers. Pelham took a timeout and responded with their own run to keep the Vikes within reach. A 12-10 Viking lead saw the Panthers take another timeout. The match then saw both teams within championship point. A total of six human emotions are all that our body can produce (sadness, happiness, anger, fear, disgust, and surprise). This match produced every single emotion within me in the span of two hours’ time in a 17-15 Pelham Championship. The most heartbreaking thing to handle about this match was that it had to come to an end.

Two teams played as hard as teams could possibly play. The game went extras in the fifth set, and every single person in attendance felt cheated because the match had to end. We would have stayed there for two more hours to watch those two teams continue playing. I guess every match has to end somewhere, and the 6A State Volleyball Championship ended yesterday at 11:57, with the Vikings hoisting the red State Runner-Up trophy in the air. In a season that saw an Area 11 Championship, our school’s first North Super Regional Championship, and a 57-5 record, I would say this in reality is not an end for us- it’s merely the beginning.

An amazing team effort had some fantastic individual performance for the Vikes. We had four girls with 12 or more kills with McKinley Ferguson carding 18, Tameyah Griffin and Morgan McClendon both totaling 13 each, and Alex Oliver adding 12. Ferguson and Khloe Kimbrell had 29 and 25 assists, and Temperance Chatman played a great match with 30 digs and four ace serves. Junior Tameyah Griffin and Sophomore McKinley Ferguson were named to the 6A All-State Tournament Team. They were joined on the team by Sarah Guthrie (Pelham), Georgia Stonicher (Pelham), Shyan Flack (Brewer) and Emorie Long (Pelham) the tournaments’ Most Valuable Player.
“I picked this book up at the Sea-Tac airport while returning home from visiting my son in Seattle. *World Without Mind – the Existential Threat of Big Tech* discusses the intellect, independence and privacy we trade for the convenience, conformity and effortless automation of daily processes through today’s technology. It’s certainly an interesting perspective on how the big tech companies’ algorithms are data-driving our everyday lives. I’ve been an avid reader since childhood. I try to rotate genres so that I read something creative, something historical and something that’s trending on a rotating basis.”

-Connie Rowe, Alabama State Representative

"Today a reader, tomorrow a leader."

– Margaret Fuller

JCS Board member Willie Moore III is reading “The ABC’s of Leadership” by Ronald P. Wilder and “The First: President Barack Obama’s Road to the White House” by Roland S. Martin. “Ronald P. Wilder is a renowned pastor and leader of the Covenant Church International in Birmingham, Alabama and Roland S. Martin is a nationally known journalist who works for CNN as a political analyst.

“There are leaders who serve and leaders who want to be served. There are leaders who have a title and a position, but have no real influence outside of the title. Then there are leaders who don’t have a title or position, but possess a power to lead through their capacity to truly impact and influence others. In order for a person in a leadership capacity continue to develop and grow in their leadership role, he or she need the tools and information that will enhance their leadership development. Both books covers tools needed to develop a leadership mentality both personally and professionally.”

-Willie Moore III, Board President of Jasper City Schools
Students in first grade participated in student-led conferences as a part of T.R. Simmons’ first grade open house. Students in all eleven of their classrooms shared with parents as they led them through the classroom scavenger hunt. Parents learned about many things like writing journals, "I can" statements, classroom routines, favorite IPad learning apps, Accelerated Reader growth, classroom behavior data, and many more. Parental involvement is a vital ingredient in each child's educational success.

Kindergarten students began their student-led conferences on Thursday, October 26th. Pre-kindergarten students participated in student-led conferences as a part of their Pumpkin Patch activities on Tuesday, October 31st.

Thank you to all of our parents for supporting your students and their teachers. In this collective effort, students take ownership of learning, set goals, and track their progress. In student-led conferences, students are empowered to make a difference in their learning gains as we use data to motivate students to reach their highest potential.

All students in grades Pre-K through 8th grade will be involved in student-led conferences this year.