

McGinnis Woods Buzz



March, 2024 Volume 17, Issue 3



*Inspiring Students with
the Passion to Excel*

DATES TO REMEMBER

3-1	Wildcat Book Day
3/4-3/8	Teacher Appreciation Week
3/4-3/7	Read Across America Week
3/7	Report Cards Sent Home
3/8	No School/After School Only Teacher Workday
3-12	3rd Field Trip to Chattahoochee Nature Center
3-13	2nd-8th Science Fair Projects Due
3-14	1st Field Trip to Puppetry Arts
3-14	5th-8th Field Trip to City Springs Theater
3-20	Kindergarten Field Trip to Puppetry Arts
3-21	STEM Family Fun Night 6:00-7:30pm

McGinnis Woods Mission Statement

*Our mission is to provide
superior academics
through hands-on
approaches, which foster
self confidence and self
esteem that inspire a life-
long love of learning.*

The latest buzz . . .

PA Update.....2	STEM Family Fun Night.....6	Discovery Clubs.....10
Preschool Corner.....3	Science Olympiad.....6	Internet Safety Class.....10
Wildcat Chat.....4	PreK Team.....7	25th Anniversary.....11
Word of the Month.....4	National School Choice.....8	3rd Field Trip.....12
Middle School5	New at McGinnis Woods.....8	Ms. Caitlan, Spanish.....12
GISA Spelling Bee.....5	Jr. Beta and Student Council.....9	Ms. Tanya and Safety Patrols.....13
Science Fair.....6	Matilde Jr.9	Photos.....14

A Message From Ms. Mary



These are very exciting days at McGinnis Woods School. The second semester is flying by as the third quarter closed today and report cards are being prepared to be sent home next Thursday, March 7th. We are so pleased with the students' continued growth. They are doing so well mastering concepts and developing their thinking skills taught by our committed and inspiring teachers.

We are excited to be celebrating our schools 25th anniversary and the many remarkable milestones we have accomplished throughout the years. You can read more about the anniversary celebration in this edition of the Wildcat Buzz.

We are also excited to be celebrating our amazing teachers and staff during our Teacher Appreciation Week, which is scheduled for next week, March 4-8th. The Parent Association has created a special week for our team based on a spa theme. We will be treating the team to special healthy foods, treats, massages and more because our teachers are SpaTacular! Be sure to purchase your Teacher Raffle tickets. More information about the week has been sent by the Parent Association.

We are thrilled that McGinnis Woods Elementary School and the Preschool have been voted the Best of Johns Creek and Alpharetta for both 2024 and 2025. This recognition affirms that the hard work, creativity, and planning that goes into each lesson, activity and school year is noticed! Thank you for choosing McGinnis Woods for your child's education!

Today is Wildcat Book Day and students young and old participated by dressing up as favorite characters and reading favorite books. There is always something going on at McGinnis Woods, the joy and of learning makes every day special!

Please enjoy this edition of the McGinnis Woods Buzz as you catch a glimpse into the life of our school days!

Happy reading,

Ms. Mary



Parent Association Update

Hello McGinnis Woods Wildcats! Happy New Year!

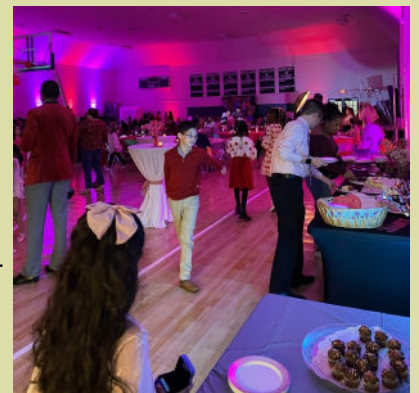
Teachers' Treat Event



We started the new year off by celebrating our spectacular teachers! In January each teacher received a personalized reusable cup along with breakfast. The PA's goal is to continue to show our teacher's that they are valued, and the teacher's treats are the perfect opportunity for pop-up celebrations throughout the year. Thank you to Megan Martinez, Hally Patel and Steven Boos for making sure this event was a success!

The Cupid Shuffle

The Valentine's Day Dance tradition has returned! This year the PA hosted "The Cupid Shuffle". This amazing event was the perfect way for families to celebrate Valentine's Day and dance the night away. This year's event was hosted in the school gym, the gym was transformed into a stylish space where families came together for a delicious meal, including dessert, with lots of fun and of course dancing! There was a photo booth and to top off the night, a balloon drop! Hally and Alex did an amazing job planning this event.



Teacher Appreciation Week – A Spa-tacular Theme



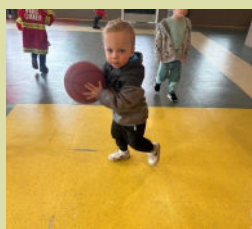
The PA is thrilled to announce this year's teacher appreciation week with a spa theme! We are celebrating our teachers continued dedication to inspire, educate, and nurture our students. Throughout the week of March 4th – March 8th there will be various activities and surprises planned to shower our teachers and show them how much we value and appreciate all they do. Parents, we encourage you to join us in celebrating our teacher's hard work and dedication, please look for emails and flyers about this week-long celebration. Thank you to all the parents who continue to play a vital role in making these events possible.

Thank you to this year's Parent Association Board Members:

Dale Emel, President
Chen Cai, Vice President
Nsharra Gross, Secretary

Are you interested in becoming a part of the PA Board? We'd love to hear from you! You can get in touch with the PA Board through our email at pa@mcginniswoods.org

Preschool Corner



We've had a busy few months here in the preschool. In the month of January, we learned about winter themed animals and celebrated McGinnis Woods School's 25th Anniversary. The month of February was super exciting as we celebrated Valentine's Day and learned about the different types of community helpers. We even dressed as our favorite community helpers and had a parade around the playground.

The infants in the preschool are changing before our eyes and growing so quickly. They were able to participate in the community dress up parade outside and are working on mastering gross motor skills by practicing walking as we sing along to our favorite Frog Street songs. We love watching them learn and grow each day!

In our Toddler classrooms the children are working with the Frog Street curriculum and learning about shapes, sizes, and colors. They are busy learning new songs about shapes, using their bodies to make different shapes, and play a game called Shape Twister. The teachers are also focusing on potty training, practicing the little ones' fine motor skills by making a shape collage and strengthening their gross motor skills in the gym. The children have also enjoyed learning sign language for different shapes, participating in circle time activities and painting with different shaped sponges.



Our Threes and Pre-K Prep programs have been extra busy learning about recycled items and how to repurpose them. The children made sock puppets and cardboard robots from recycled food boxes. The children are also learning how to be a scientist by exploring with bubbles, seeing if items sink or float and making penny drop predictions. During their math lessons they practice writing numbers and counting by 10's. They participated in Pre-K move up day and have been preparing for their big transition to the PreK4 program.

Spring is almost here, and we have some very fun and exciting activities planned ahead. The month of March will include Read Across America week where we will have parent opportunities to come in and read their favorite books to the classroom. We also have lots of fun Dr. Seuss dress up days and a Scholastic Book Fair event the last week of March. Coming up in April we will be celebrating NAEYC Week of the Young Child where the preschool will focus on the importance of early childhood education from Music Monday to Family Friday.



Wildcat Chat by Coach Ryan



Now that our Basketball season is in the books it is a good time to reflect on the season that we had. Both teams this year were young and inexperienced but by the end of the season had experienced and learned so much about basketball and how to be a team. It is not easy to go play a team that is bigger, faster, and stronger every week, but these young athletes did it week in and week out with determination and never once wanted to quit or give up. I could not be prouder of both teams and cannot wait to see how much more improved they are next season.

Our Girl's Basketball team was back this year after a one-year hiatus, and they set a building block for years of success to follow. The schools we played against were more experienced and older than most of our team, as most of our players had never played basketball competitively before. The growth from practice to practice, game to game, and week to week was incredible. I watched as the younger players who began the season afraid to shoot the ball became more comfortable and confident by the end of the season began taking shots and scoring points at a high rate for the team. We started the season learning how to dribble the ball and finished the season competing in the playoffs and losing to the eventual champions in the semi-final round.



The Boys' Basketball team, led by Coach Roger, was a perfect example of grit and pride. The team grew astronomically in their knowledge of the game and developed a sense of teamwork and a desire to never quit. The Boys were very talented and were able to score points but in basketball sometimes the bigger teams win more games than the smaller teams and that's what the season ultimately came down to. The team had fun throughout the year, and I truly believe that next year's team will accomplish great things.

We are now set to move into our final sports season of the year. This season our Track Team, led by Mrs. Lisa Giri, Coach Ricky, and myself, will be competing in numerous track meets in which they will compete for both school and individual awards. Track is a great opportunity for athletes to enhance their current running abilities and helps improve endurance and overall good health. The team will be competing against other schools in our division and early signs show that we will have plenty of speed and strength on the team.



Go Wildcats!

And the Word of the Month is....



Our word of the month for February was kindness. We celebrated a kindness week and our Student Council held a kindness poster contest. The winners of the contest enjoyed "PJs and Popcorn" to celebrate! During March we will be focusing on the character word Peace. The definition of peace we are using this month is "*proving you care more about each other than winning an argument*". Each morning we will talk about our word of the month and discuss practical ways that we can live out the word at school and in our homes because we believe developing good character matters. At the end of the month children from each kindergarten through 8th grade will be recognized with a special treat for living out the word and our Citizens of the Month will also be announced during our morning broadcast. The Citizens of the Month and their parents will be honored at a special pizza lunch to celebrate!

Middle School Happenings



The Middle School always stays busy throughout the entire year; however, the second semester seems to bring a rush of excitement and activities. In Middle School we have enjoyed some wonderful field trips. So far this semester we have visited The GA Bar, and The Atlanta History Center.

During these trips we learned how our judicial system works, specifically our first amendment right of freedom of speech (as well as acting out an entertaining case in our

mock trial), and the Civil Rights Movement.



Valentines Day Just Dance Social

Another special event that middle school students participate in are socials. On February 14th the middle school students enjoyed a surprise ice cream social. They were able to create fun ice cream treats and enjoy time with their friends socializing while playing Just Dance!



Spelling Bee Champ Competes at GISA Bee



Congratulations to Ella, a 7th grader, who represented McGinnis Woods School in the 2024 Georgia Independent School Association Spelling Bee which was held on Tuesday, February 27 at Mount de Sales Academy in Macon, GA.

Leading up to the GISA Finals, there were 105 students from 54 GISA Schools who competed in the Round 1 Spelling Bee Online. The top 25% advanced to Round 2 which was a written competition. The top 15 students then proceeded to the final oral competition in front of a live audience.

After 11 rounds of oral spelling and vocabulary, Eli, an 8th grader at Davis Academy was crowned the 2024 GISA Spelling Bee Champion by successfully spelling the word "coaxial". Ella finished 9th place overall which is truly remarkable given the level of competition and difficulty of the words. We are so pleased with Ella's determination and grit! Way to go, Ella!

Science Fair 2024



The McGinnis Woods Science Fair is in full swing! Students in 2nd-8th grades have already chosen their topics, and the exciting experiments have begun at home! Students began the process the end of January when informational packets came home. Next, topics were due on February 5th. Scientific Method Booklets or notecards will be due on February 26th, and the final project is due on March 13th with an oral presentation of their findings. The

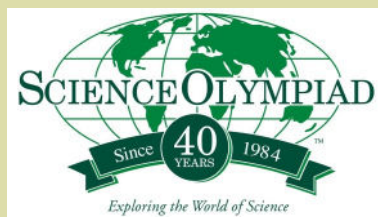
students in 2nd-4th graders will present a tri-fold board and middle school students can present a PowerPoint or tri-fold board. This project incorporates so many great skills for our students to explore and learn about the world around them! Top projects from each class will then compete in the school wide Science Fair. Judges will then score these exceptional projects, and winners will be announced at STEM Family Fun Night on March 21st!

STEM Family Fun Night,,, Save the Date!



A favorite annual McGinnis Woods' event is STEM Family Fun Night! This fun, family event will take place on Thursday, March 21st, from 6-7:30 pm. The theme for the night is "Go Green!" and the classrooms around the school will have STEM activities related to the theme. The evening will end in the gym with the announcements of the winners from the school Science Fair! Be sure to save the date for this fun event

Science Olympiad Competition



Our McGinnis Woods Science Olympiad Team had been practicing since September 2023 to prepare for the big competition that will be held on March 16, 2024, at Hillgrove High School. Our team has 3rd, 4th and 5th Grade students. Angad Jayshwal, Ronin Dryer, Alma Kayakov, Mayukha Bobbili, and Alex Vayman-Brady are our third graders. Anishka Potharaju, Luke Espinel, Delainie Pressley,

Max Reiter and Leul Takele are our fourth grade members. Chetana Polineni, Ayaan Shaik and Alicia Wester are our 5th grade members. Ms. Lauren (middle school science teacher) and Ms. Wendy (4th grade teacher) are our fearless coaches for this amazing team! Our team has been practicing some STEM events along with studying for the STEM related trivia events. Some of our STEM events are the egg drop, paper rockets, gram-a-gram, bridge building, water rockets, and barge building. The STEM Trivia events include the Deep Blue Sea, Starry Starry Night, Weather or Not, and No Bones About It. We are super excited about the big competition and being able to show how much we have learned this year!

Our PreK Teachers Make Each Day Special!



Our wonderful PreK teachers love making learning fun for our students and pushing them to be their best! The teachers work well together to meet the needs of our little ones through their creative, engaging lessons that tie into our excellent curriculum. Here is some information about our amazing PreK teaching team.

The PreK-4A Lions lead teacher is Ms. Kelly Cissell. Ms. Kelly was born and raised in Indianapolis, Indiana, and moved to Georgia in August 2022. She attended Purdue University and has taught Pre-School for 25 years. She has 3 children. She feels that teaching is a calling, not just a job.

The PreK-4A Assistant Teacher is Ms. Kelly Ralph. Ms. Kelly is from Marietta, GA, but has also lived in Reston, VA and Princeton, NJ. She went to school for Art. Before she joined the McGinnis Woods team, she was a nanny for 7 years. Working with children brings her so much joy! She also loves drawing, hiking, collaging, sewing, photography, animals, and spending time with her 3 nephews, 4 dogs, and family/ friends.

The PreK-4B lead teacher is Ms. Natascha. She was born and raised in Germany where she met her husband while he was serving in the US military. She has been married for 32 years and they have two sons. Daniel is 24 years old and graduated from the University of North Georgia with a degree in political science pre-law. He is currently an assistant teacher at McGinnis Woods School. Benjamin is 18 years old and is attending Denmark High School. She also has one dog named Bella. Her educational journey began in nursing where she completed her studies in Germany before coming to the United States. After having her second child, she decided to pursue a new career in early childhood education. This school year marks her 18th year as a preschool teacher! She also has a CDA certification. In her free time, she likes to read, bake, and watch movies with her family.

The PreK-4B Assistant Teacher is Ms. Valorie. She resides in Woodstock, GA with her husband of 36 years. She has three children and is a proud grandma of three little boys. Ms. Valorie received her CDA in 2011 and has been teaching PreK at McGinnis Woods for 14 years. Her hobbies include reading, and anything outdoors.

The PreK-5A Lead teacher is Ms. Sarah. Ms. Sarah has lived in the Atlanta area most of her life but her extended family lives in New Zealand and Australia. She has a ten year old daughter named Kenley who is her world! She lives on a horse farm and loves to ride horses, dirt bikes and four wheelers. When she's not teaching, she is selling houses! She also loves being in nature, fishing, cooking, gardening, going on hikes and road trips.

The PreK-5A Assistant teacher is Ms. Kate. Kate attended McGinnis Woods through middle school. She has worked at McGinnis Woods School for 3 years as a floater and an assistant teacher and loves it! Kate lives with her mom and younger sister and enjoys playing sports and coaching!

The PreK-5B Lead teacher is Ms. Abby. She was born and raised in Marietta, Ga. She attended Western Kentucky University, Go Hill Toppers! Abby has a degree in Elementary Education and Business Administration. She has been married to her Husband, Mike for 9 years. He is also in education and teaches High School students. She spends her free time with her 3 Dalmatians, Kona, Picasso, and Oliver, her family and loves watching hockey & lacrosse.

The PreK-5B Assistant teacher is Ms. Liz. She has been in education for over 20 years. She has 2 Grandchildren who attend McGinnis Woods and loves being a part of the school family. Ms. Liz enjoys spending time with her grandchildren and shopping in her free time!

National School Choice Week



McGinnis Woods kicked off National School Choice Week in January with our 25th Anniversary Celebration! Parents have been choosing McGinnis Woods since the school opened in 1999. School choice is a popular movement that gained direction and visibility about 10 years ago and we have proudly partnered with the organization since the beginning because we are proud to be an independent school. Parents across the nation are pleased to have options for their child's education. Each school has its own focus and goals.

At McGinnis Woods we strive to inspire our students to learn what they are passionate about through hands on activities and a deep curriculum that extends learning beyond the classroom through meaningful field trips, guest speakers and independent research completed by the students for Project Showcase, book reports, and our annual Technology and Science Fairs. Our teachers work to create engaging lessons that meet the high standards that we hold.

The McGinnis Woods School Community is warm, nurturing, caring, and kind! Our students, parents and staff also love to give back to the community outside our school walls. This is accomplished in many ways led by our students. This year our students have held a food drive and have completed volunteer hours at different organizations and throughout the school.

Thanks for choosing McGinnis Woods School for your child's education. We believe it is the best school choice you can make!

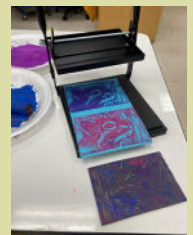


New at McGinnis Woods



Thanks to the generous donors of the Wildcat Fund, we have added some amazing new art items to our already stellar program. Ms. Tanya requested Gelli Plates to be used in printmaking and they have been a real hit with the students. The Gelli Plate system provides the tools needed for the students to explore, create, and bring their creative ideas to print.

Ms. Tanya and her students have also enjoyed their new clay stand. Someone is always creating through clay and the stand helps to keep the clay pliable and provides additional space for the drying process necessary before the pieces are fired.



Ms. Liz and the students have enjoyed using Marty the Robot during their recent coding unit. They have just skimmed the surface of the amazing curriculum that Marty teaches and have had fun learning about his capabilities all while they continued to use the school Ozbots to participate in class Battle Bots.

These are just a few of the new items that were added to our school since November. Thanks again for your continued support!

Jr. Beta Club and Student Council Lead the Way



Kindness Week was a blast. Students had an opportunity to develop a poster that showed what kindness looks like. Each class was judged on creativity and message. Congratulations to our Pre-K Groovy Gardeners, our Kindergarten Bees and our 6th grade classes. They all took 1st place in their respective categories. With a special honorable mention to our 2nd grade Owls for their Kindness around the world poster. We also got to team up to show kindness and dreamed of a world of kindness by wearing our team attire and PJ's. Thanks to all the teachers and students for their hard

work.

Student Council has kicked off our second semester with a bang! We have been meeting to discuss really cool upcoming school wide events. We just wrapped up judging the posters from Kindness Week and delivering nearly 700 candygrams to our teachers and students. We are also preparing to celebrate National Cereal Day in March. On this day, our Elementary and Middle School students can sign up to have cereal for lunch.



Junior Beta Club has been busy serving our school and our community. They have been volunteering in our holiday shop, serving at local farms, volunteering at local Tai Kwan Do program along with various activities around our school. Next up is a trip to visit The Place Forsyth in March. This is an organization right here in our community. We often do food drives for The Place and this is an opportunity to explore the food pantry and learn more about their store.



Matilde Jr. is Sure to Entertain

The Drama Club has been hard at work preparing for their spring debut of Matilda Jr. The performers and crew directed by Mr. Bryant, Ms. Liz, Ms. Kelsey, and Ms. Rachel are working to bring this imaginative story to life as Matilda tries to overcome the challenges of her family life by escaping to other worlds through books and lots of zany ingenuity.

This production has two casts that have been working since September to memorize their lines and learn choreography during their weekly rehearsals. The cast can't wait to showcase their talents on the big stage.

The performances featuring each cast will be held Friday, April 26, through Sunday, April 28 with four shows throughout the weekend. Tickets for the shows will be going on sale soon. You will not want to miss this show and the amazing cast and crew.



Discovery Clubs



McGinnis Woods Discovery Clubs are 6-week long clubs that are offered 4 times a year. We are finishing up our 3rd session of this year's Discovery Clubs and will start new clubs in March! Our clubs change each session and often include Robotics, Jr. Robotics, Cooking, Chess, Slime Time, and many more.

During Session 3, our PreK-5B Teacher, Ms. Abby had a sticky time doing Slime Time with students. They explored different ingredients and made many variations of slime including glow in the dark, cloud, sand, and even edible taffy slime!

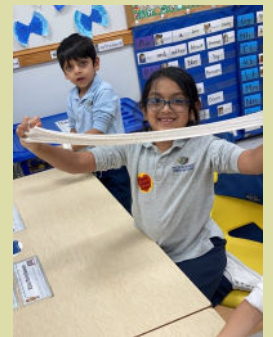


Students loved being part of the Chess Club with Ms. Amy. They met every Friday and learned new strategies and tactics to checkmate their friends!



Ms. Kristen headed up Crafts Club with many students. They loved making new keychains for backpacks, and picture frames to keep memories! The kids loved spending extra time with friends while making memories that will last forever.

Our 4th Discovery Club Session will begin the week of March and will offer clubs including Drama, Slime Time, Jr. Robotics, and many more. Be sure to sign your child up for one of these exciting clubs to keep them exploring new activities!



Parent Only Internet Safety Class Was Informative



On February 7, McGinnis Woods hosted a Forsyth County Sheriff's Internet Safety at Home session. Two Forsyth County Sheriffs taught the very informative session which Ms. Francella arranged for our families. The sheriffs provided a time for questions at the end of the session. The resources they provided and discussion that they facilitated enlightened the parents who were able to attend.

Deputy Ferraro, who teaches our students' DARE program, shared about the lessons that he has taught to our middle school students and informed parents of the challenges that they encounter in other schools throughout Forsyth County on a regular basis. We hope to schedule another session for those who were

unable to attend sometime soon.



McGinnis Woods Celebrates its 25th Anniversary



Congratulations to McGinnis Woods School which is celebrating its 25th anniversary during 2024! The school hosted a wonderful party to celebrate this remarkable achievement on Saturday, January 20th from 4:00-6:00pm in our school gym. Hundreds of current and former students and their families filled the beautifully decorated gym as we reminisced and reconnected. Memorabilia showcasing the school's 25 years included yearbooks, awards and trophies which were enjoyed by all.

The event was catered by Seven Sister Scones which is owned by former Parent Association President Hala Yassine. The delicious desserts included cookies, brownies, 7-layer bars, salted caramel bars, Lemon Bars, and pecan square bars and individual dessert of Strawberry Shortcake, Banana Pudding, Key Lime Pie, Cheesecakes, and Chocolate Mousse. A fabulous Hot Chocolate Bar kept us warm on the unseasonably cold, blustery day.

Lisa Aber and Nicole Seltzer spoke about the earliest days of the school and marveled at how large the school has become. Mr. Josh invited the children in the crowd to participate in a brief McGinnis Woods Trivia game. Michael Robinson and the first Parent Association President, Pam Evans, greeted the crowd with special memories of the school and hopes for continued success. The chorus serenaded the crowd with a beautiful song of peace led by Mr. Bryant and a recording of the band was shared. Ms. Mary also spoke on behalf of the tremendous work that has poured into thousands of students since the school's inception.

A PowerPoint showcasing the school through the years provided wonderful viewing pleasure, but most of all Wildcats old and new were proud to return home to the school we all love!



Third Graders Visit the Carter Center



Have you ever visited the Oval Office? Our third graders have! The third graders recently went to the Jimmy Carter Library and Museum where they learned all about the process of “*How a Bill Becomes a Law*” and then spent time learning about the fascinating life of Georgia’s only president. The library houses remarkable photos and memorabilia of the president’s humble beginnings, time as governor and his journey to becoming the 39th president and his time in the White House. The displays were incredibly informative and the replica of the Oval Office was

a real hit. The students enjoyed their experience and learned so much during their field trip!



Ms. Caitlan Shares Her Love of Spanish



Ms. Caitlan grew up in Georgia and has been learning Spanish since she was in the 6th grade—when she finally attended a school that offered it! It was love at first sight (sound). She quickly became interested in not just the Spanish language, but also Spanish music and Latino/Hispanic culture! Ms. Caitlan continued learning Spanish through high school and college and added on some French as well! During her time in college, she participated in her school’s Spanish chorus and became a member of Sigma Delta Pi (the National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society). She completed her Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and her teaching certification at the University of North Georgia in Dahlonega.

In addition to loving Spanish, Ms. Caitlan also loves music and has been a musician, specifically a percussionist, since her parents got her a drum set for Christmas when she was 10. She began her experience in education by helping high school percussionists over the summer during band camp. Before graduating college, Ms. Caitlan taught percussionists at four different high schools, tutored Spanish and French at her college's language lab and volunteered at the elementary school where her mother taught...she kept herself very busy!

Ms. Caitlan is in her 7th year teaching Spanish and is still having a blast. She is really enjoying being able to teach a wide range of students and incorporating her love of music into her teaching!

In her free time, Ms. Caitlan’s favorite thing to do is spend time with her niece and nephew, who are obsessed with her dog (Minnie) and cat (Noodle). If she is not doing that, she is usually spending time with friends, reading at home or at her local library, or listening to Spanish music and/or podcasts.

Ms. Tanya Inspires Artists of All Ages



Tanya Sinke has been the Art teacher at McGinnis Woods for almost five years and last year she was recognized as the Elementary and Middle School Teacher of the Year! She was born in West Palm Beach, Florida. She moved to Georgia with her family when she was three, and has resided in Georgia ever since. She is married and has two children; a son who is 20, and an eight-year-old daughter. Ms. Tanya also loves animals! She has a dog: Delilah, a parrot: Wally, some fish, and a one-year-old kitty named Lily! When not creating or sharing art, Ms. Tanya adores doing yoga, hiking, travel, and spending time outdoors during warmer months with her family.

Tanya has been drawing since she was two years old! She would adorn her parent's walls and baseboards (among other things) with little drawings of mostly cats. Her artwork would also fill the blank end pages of books and thankfully she had patient parents who would give her blank paper to draw on instead. She's always admired the art in picture books too, even trying to replicate some of them on opposite pages. Some of her favorite illustrators are: Beatrix Potter, Charles Santore, Munro Leaf, and Maurice Sendak. Her love of drawing from observation began when she was very young, sketching friend's or relative's faces any opportunity she had. Experimenting with any and all art medias she was allowed to use, Ms. Tanya always knew she wanted to be an artist. Teachers and professors in her family as well as a variety of favorite teachers throughout her years in school inspired her love of learning and to want to teach and inspire our youth as well.

Having attended SCAD in both Savannah and Atlanta, Ms. Tanya holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration, with a minor in drawing from: The Savannah College of Art and Design. She taught through several schools for eight years prior to joining the McGinnis Woods family. She adores sharing her love of all art forms with her students! It brings her joy to learn new kinds of art to share when her students inquire about them. She also has a huge appreciation for both music and dance. She sang in chorus for eight years as a youth and still loves to sing! She took jazz dance classes as a child, did cheerleading for a year in middle school, and later joined the SCAD Stingers Dance team in college. She recently joined an adult hip hop dance group at her daughter's dance studio.

Safety Patrols



This term we started up our Safety Patrols with the 4th grade class! Our Safety Patrol members include: Fawzan Shaik, Leul Takele, Abigail Darby, Luke Espinel, Anishka Potharaju, Delainie Pressley, Olive Fan, Vivian DeMedeiros, and Maven Iiliescu.

The students participated in an early morning swearing in ceremony led by Mr. Darby, a Dekalb County Police Officer and parent. This was a wonderful way to stress the importance and serious nature of this roll with our students. The patrols also enjoyed some donuts after the ceremony concluded.

The Safety Patrol students have been a big help during our morning and afternoon carpools. They assist the teachers with opening car doors for students and walking PreK students to their classrooms. We are proud of these students' dedication to being patrols and look forward to watching their confidence and leadership skills develop as they help our school!

Pictures from Around the School

