



McGinnis Woods Buzz

February, 2026 Volume 19 Issue 2



*Inspiring Students with
the Passion to Excel*

The latest buzz . . .

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DATES TO REMEMBER

- 2/2 2nd-8th Science Fair Topics Due
- 2/5 4th Grade Field Trip to The Mimms Museum
- 2/6 5th-8th Field Trip to The Georgia Bar Association
- 2/7 Cupid Shuffle 5:00-9:00pm
- 2/9-2/13 Student Council Spirit Week
- 2/10 PreK Field Trip to The High Museum
- 2/11 2nd Grade Field Trip to The Tellus Museum
- 2/13 Candy Grams Delivered Parents Night Out
- 2/16-2/17 No Classes President's Day and Teacher Workday
- 2/18 K-8 Science Heroes Assembly
- 2/19 Kindergarten Field Trip to Fernbank Museum
- 2/26 3rd Field Trip to The Tellus Museum

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-

A Message From Ms. Mary

January has flown by, and we are happily back in the groove of learning! Our students have settled into familiar routines and have been excited to expand their learning by working with visiting scientists from High Touch High Tech, as well as Ms. Apryl from Keep Forsyth Beautiful. These hands-on experiences continue to spark curiosity and enthusiasm across grade levels.

We also enjoyed an amazing Moving Up Day in January. Students had the opportunity to visit classrooms they may be in next year and participate in fun, engaging projects. Our fourth graders even took part in a mock breakout room—an exciting challenge they absolutely loved!

This month, we hosted an Open House night for our current preschool families and were looking forward to welcoming new and returning families at our annual Open House on January 24 and January 31. Unfortunately, the weather had other plans, so we rescheduled the event for **Saturday, February 21 from 1:00–3:00 pm**. Fingers crossed for a beautiful, dry afternoon—we can't wait to welcome everyone!

We are thrilled to share that McGinnis Woods School has once again been voted **Best Private School of Alpharetta for 2026**. This honor is made possible by the incredible support of our school families and community members who voted for us. This marks the third consecutive year that either our Preschool or PreK4–8th program has been recognized as a Best of Winner. This recognition affirms that the hard work, creativity, and thoughtful planning that go into every lesson, activity, and school year truly make an impact.

Last week, we proudly celebrated **National School Choice Week**. Since its inception, McGinnis Woods has been a strong promoter of school choice because we believe every child is unique and that parents are the best judges of the learning environment in which their child will thrive. Our students marked the week by creating meaningful projects that highlighted what they love most about their school. Some wrote heartfelt thank-you notes to their parents, recognizing that attending a private school is a privilege. Others created posters showcasing their favorite aspects of McGinnis Woods, and our third graders collaborated on a list of **100 reasons they love their school** in honor of the 100th day. We even kicked off the week with a Pep Rally, where three students read impressive essays they had written for the occasion.

Thank you for choosing McGinnis Woods School and for being such an important part of our community. We are grateful to partner with you in your child's education.

Ms. Mary

Parent Association Update



The PA kicked-off the second quarter with our 8th Annual Wildcat Fund with a record setting year of exceeding our financial goal of \$45K!! Thank you to our McGinnis Woods School families that donated, we truly value your support for our school, teachers, staff and most importantly the students. The funds raised this year will be used to purchase awnings to cover the sidewalks that connect the school buildings to shelter our students, teachers and staff from the weather elements. Along with child proof display boards for the preschool building, allowing for our littles to display their wonderful and creative art throughout the classrooms.

Our Holiday Shoppe is always a family favorite and this year the gym was transformed into a winter wonderland! The students enjoyed visiting and purchasing from the shop that offered an array of items for mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, siblings, friends and more. Thank you for your support, while allowing the students to spread holiday cheer!

Our Valentine's day dance "The Cupid Shuffle" is on February 7, 2026 and this is an event for the entire family. There will be food, dessert, a photo booth, lots of music and a red carpet! All families are invited to the event to see how our gym is transformed into a big dance party that will end with a balloon drop, we look forward to seeing you there!

Join us for our next meeting on Tuesday, February 10, 2026 at 6pm in the school lunchroom.



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

Steven Boos – President | Gretchen Cummins – Vice President | Vacant- Treasurer | Nsharra Gross – Secretary

We Love to Hear from You! Email us at pa@mcginniswoods.org

Preschool Corner



We have such a wonderful group of infants who are each growing and reaching milestones at their own pace every day. They enjoy exploring independently while also sharing early social interactions together in a calm and nurturing space. Our babies especially love colorful, textured books, making group reading a fun way to support early literacy and sensory learning. We are amazed by their growth each day!

Our Toddlers and Transitionals have been busy learning through fun, hands-on activities! They learned nursery rhymes through Frog Street, color sorting activities, and building snowmen using blocks, which help strengthen their fine motor skills. Older toddlers worked on 4–6-piece puzzles to build problem-solving and hand-eye coordination skills. They also enjoyed painting with watercolors and decorating paper snowflakes, encouraging creativity and self-expression.

Our Preschool and 3/4 classrooms have been learning all about winter and arctic animals through fun, hands-on activities. The children painted with frozen colored ice blocks, created snowy arctic animal sensory bins, and beaded snowflakes to strengthen fine motor skills. One of their favorite projects was making Borax crystal snowflakes. They helped measure the ingredients, placed their snowflakes into the mixture, and watched with excitement as the crystals formed over the next few days. Their finished snowflakes are now proudly displayed on the classroom doors for everyone to enjoy. We're looking forward to the next few months of learning in the preschool!



Wildcat Chat by Coach Ricky



This winter, our Wildcats programs had an outstanding season filled with growth, competition, and school pride. Our swim team made history by competing in the MAAC Conference for the first time. On the boys side, Ryan Skala finished 1st in the 50yd Backstroke, helping McGinnis Woods place 4th overall in the MAAC Conference standings. Our girls swimmers Beatriz Bennett and Ada Duggal represented us with great effort all season, highlighted at the MAAC Championships when Beatriz Bennett placed 7th in the 100yd Freestyle, earning our girls team 7th overall in the conference.

On the court, our boys basketball team focused on development and character, welcoming five new players to organized basketball and learning not only the fundamentals of the game, but also how to be strong student leaders off the court through game-by-game sportsmanship themes. The boys remained competitive all season, and we hope to return the remaining 7 players from this year's team as we build upon the experiences, growth, and progress made this season. Our girls basketball team has been just as impressive, returning 5 of 8 players from last season and showing tremendous growth and confidence. With two games remaining, the girls are currently undefeated, and we're excited to see them finish the season on a high note as they continue building momentum for next year.



As we transition into spring, track & field and tennis begin in early February, and excitement is already building. Track & field is adding seven new faces to the program, and we look forward to their energy and contributions. Tennis will welcome nine new athletes, and we're excited to see the program continue to grow. Our girls tennis team will compete for a MAAC Championship this spring, while our boys tennis team will use this season to learn the game, build confidence, and lay the foundation for an exciting future of Wildcat Tennis!



Go Wildcats!

Science Olympiad Team Practices for Competition



The Science Olympiad team has been hard at work preparing for the upcoming competition! Students have been focused on mastering their events and are ready to give it their all at the competition! We have a dedicated team of students who are excited to test their skills against students from other schools. The competition will be held on March 7th at Walton High School, where students will compete against both public and private schools! More information about the competition will come as we get closer to competition day!

Science Olympiad events are a mixture of trivia or knowledge-based events and hands-on STEM events. There are a total of 18 events being held in this year's competition. Elementary Science Olympiad provides students engaging learning opportunities in STEM – from classroom instruction, to inter-grade level competitions, all the way to a statewide competition! Georgia hosts one of the largest Elementary Science Olympiad competitions with 65 teams competing in May at Kennesaw State University.



Words of the Month Impact Each Day



Developing strong character in our students is an essential part of our curriculum. Each morning, students begin the day with a “Thought for the Day” centered on a monthly character trait. This character word is then reinforced throughout the school day in the classroom and during weekly counseling classes. Many students make a conscious effort to live out the character word each month, understanding how important it is to treat others the way they would like to be treated.

In January, we focused on the word *commitment*. Students learned the importance of creating a plan and sticking with it in order to achieve their New Year's goals. This month, our focus has shifted to *respect*, reminding students of the value of showing consideration and kindness toward others in all that they do.



Technology Fair



Each year Forsyth County Schools holds the Regional Technology Competition which serves as a qualifier for the Georgia State Technology Competition. This year's event was held at Midway Elementary School on January 10, 2026. Over 140 students competed in the Middle School competition, and there were 13 categories. Nineteen students from McGinnis Woods participated in the competition. These students had placed either 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in the McGinnis Woods Tech Fair this past November.

Each of our students presented their projects before a panel of judges who asked questions about how they created their projects, what programs and apps they used, and how they could improve their work. The judges then provided the students with summary sheets that outlined the highlights of each project and suggestions for improvement.

In the Game Design category were Aman Bhattacharya and Vardaan Sethi. In the Multimedia Application category was Angad Jayshwal. Angad placed 2nd in the 5th/6th grade group. In the Video Production category were Akanksha Puram, Gabby Fisher and Meredith Monnell. Meredith placed 2nd in the 7th/8th grade group. In the Animation category were Elliot Stevens, Zishaan Rahman, and Ada Duggal. Zishaan placed 3rd for the 5th/6th grade group and Ada placed 3rd for the 7th/8th grade group. In the Graphic Design category were Olivia Ivanou, Madeleine Monnell, and Aarya Jayshwal. Aarya placed 1st for the 7th/8th grade group and will move on to the State Competition in March. In the Photo Production category were Sarah Bijani, Gabby Greene and Ashlyn Horne. Gabby placed 2nd in the 7th/8th grade group and Ashlyn placed 1st in the 7th/8th grade group and will move on to the State Competition in March. In the Robotics category were Mayukha Bobbili, Ahati Melke and Ryan Skala. Ahati placed 2nd in the 5th/6th grade group.

The students were thrilled to share their projects at this level, and we are so proud of their hard work. This was a fantastic opportunity for each of our students to learn, grow, and shine!

Parents Night Out is Always a Blast!



January Parents Night Out on January 27th was a fun time for all! Ms. Valorie, Ms. Amy, and Ms. Leah hosted an evening full of fun as the children kicked off the evening by creating their own English muffin pizzas for dinner and then played with friends in the gym, sang their hearts out during a karaoke party, and ended the night relaxing with a movie. It was a wonderful night of laughter, creativity, and connection.

The next Parents Night Out is scheduled for **Friday, February 13th**, in both the pre-school and PreK4-8th grade program as we celebrate Valentine's Day! The evening will include a Valentine's Day-inspired dinner, decorating valentine cookies, a glow party in the gym, all wrapped up with a movie and dessert. **Spaces are limited**, so be sure to sign up today!

Kindergarten is a Happy Place to Learn and Grow



Kindergarten is off to a wonderful start at McGinnis Woods, where students are exploring, discovering, and growing every day. Kindergarten at McGinnis Woods is a place where children feel welcome, curious, and ready to learn. With caring teachers guiding them, our kindergarteners are building a strong foundation for learning and having fun along the way.

Ms. Christy is the lead teacher for the Kindergarten Pandas, and she is assisted by Ms. Peggy. Ms. Christy is happily married to her husband, Doug, and they have two children, Mason (27) and Maddy (24). She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education from Louisiana State University and has taught in Arizona, Texas, and Louisiana. This is her 12th year teaching at McGinnis Woods, and her experience brings warmth, knowledge, and fun to the Pandas classroom.

Ms. Peggy is the assistant teacher in the Pandas classroom. She is married to her husband, Devon, and they have two boys and a Bernedoodle puppy named Stella. Ms. Peggy has been a McGinnis Woods parent for over 12 years, and this is her second year as an assistant teacher. Her youngest son, Hudson, is a fifth grader at McGinnis Woods. Outside of school, Ms. Peggy enjoys spending time with her family, cooking, traveling, and working on her debut fiction novel.

Ms. Dajla is the lead teacher for the Kindergarten Dogs classroom and is assisted by Ms. Diane. This is her third school year at McGinnis Woods and her second year teaching kindergarten. She earned her bachelor's degree from Georgia Gwinnett College and will have completed her master's degree from Thomas University this year, further deepening her knowledge and passion for early childhood education. The "Dogs" classroom, inspired by her "fur child", May, a toy poodle, is full of curiosity and engaging activities, bringing creativity, and a genuine love of learning to every day.

Ms. Diane is in her second year as the assistant teacher in the Dogs classroom. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business and an MBA. Before joining McGinnis Woods, she worked as a project manager in the aerospace industry and for New Jersey Family magazine, and she also spent several years as a substitute teacher while her children were in elementary school. Ms. Diane loves the close-knit, family atmosphere at McGinnis Woods and is grateful to be part of such a wonderful team.

Together, our kindergarten teachers create classrooms where students feel supported, challenged, and excited to learn. Each day is full of curiosity, laughter, and growth, and we are proud to watch our students take their first steps on a lifelong journey of learning.

Spotlight on Second Grade

The second grade teaching team at McGinnis Woods is made up of four kind, caring, and dedicated educators who work closely together to ensure each child's day is both meaningful and engaging. Learning in second grade is filled with fun and creativity as students master foundational skills while being encouraged to stretch and grow. Through hands-on and innovative lessons—including experiments, readers' theater, and creating PowerPoints and Canva posters on their iPads—students are actively engaged and excited about learning.

Ms. Joan has been a valued member of the second grade team since 2023, after moving to Georgia from Nevada. She holds a Master's degree in Elementary Education, Curriculum, and Development from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Ms. Joan has been married for 24 years and is the proud mom of a son attending Virginia Tech and a daughter at the University of Georgia. She loves to travel and recently visited England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. In her free time, she also enjoys reading, tennis, yoga, and gardening. What she loves most about the McGinnis Woods family is the strong sense of community and watching her students grow academically and personally.

Ms. Susan is in her seventh year at McGinnis Woods after relocating from Birmingham, Alabama. She supports all second-grade students and brings a wealth of experience and care to her role. Ms. Susan is an Auburn University graduate with a Bachelor's degree in Public Relations. She has been married for 32 years and is a proud parent to a daughter who is earning her Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health and currently works as a clinical therapist. In her free time, Ms. Susan enjoys trips to the beach and traveling with her family. She is excited to work with and support your child's development this year.

Ms. Isabelle is thrilled to be back at McGinnis Woods for her fourth year of teaching. She graduated magna cum laude from Kennesaw State University with a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and has loved being in the classroom ever since. Isabelle is passionate about creating a supportive environment where students feel curious, confident, and successful. Outside the classroom, she is married to her best friend, Ryan, and together they have three "fur babies"—two cats, Olive and Gumbo, and a dog named Biscuit. In her free time, she enjoys reading thrilling novels and traveling whenever possible.

Ms. Sophie is the newest member of the second grade team and brings over 30 years of classroom experience with her. A dedicated educator, she has inspired countless students throughout her career with her passion for learning and commitment to education. Outside of school, Ms. Sophie enjoys reading, traveling, and playing tennis. She is also an enthusiastic Georgia Bulldogs football fan and loves cheering them on during the season. Education truly runs in her family—her daughter teaches first grade in Forsyth County, and her husband is a coach and teacher at Lambert High School. We are so glad Ms. Sophie has found her home at McGinnis Woods.



Robotics Competition Was Successful!



On December 6, 2025, the halls of Dunwoody Baptist Church were buzzing with creativity, teamwork, and a lot of LEGO® energy as McGinnis Woods competed in the regional **First LEGO League** competition! We were proud to have **two teams** representing our school: **Wildbots 1** and **Wildbots 2**.

In the weeks leading up to the event, both teams worked tirelessly—designing and coding robots to conquer the competition course, while also researching, developing, and presenting thoughtful solutions for their chosen innovation challenge. Their dedication and problem-solving skills were on full display throughout the day.

Wildbots 1, led by team captain **Riya Manohar**, and **Wildbots 2**, led by **Aman Bhattacharya**, showed impressive growth and confidence in front of the judges. A special highlight of the day was seeing a **former McGinnis Woods student, now attending Georgia Tech, serve as an MC** for the event—an inspiring full-circle moment for our students!

When the scores were tallied, **Wildbots 2 earned an outstanding 3rd place finish** in the robot challenge course, while **Wildbots 1 placed 8th overall**. Both teams received positive feedback from the judges, especially for their presentations and teamwork. While they did not advance to the next round, the students achieved many personal goals and gained valuable experience along the way.

We are incredibly proud of all our Wildbots:

- **Wildbots 1:** Riya, Ahati, Zishaan, and Daniela
- **Wildbots 2:** Aman, Ryan, Hyder, and Andreas
- **Additional team members who were unable to attend:** Jack and Harrison

Congratulations to our Wildbots for their hard work, perseverance, and enthusiasm—what an amazing season of learning and growth!



Student Council and Beta Clubs Keep Things Moving



Last semester, we proudly counted all the votes and confirmed our Student Council Officers for the 2025–2026 school year. This year’s officers are Ariel Kayakov, President; Noam Kayakov, Vice President; Gabrielle Greene, Secretary; and Akanksha Puram, Treasurer. This outstanding group of students has already been hard at work, running our school store each month and organizing both a winter-themed Spirit Week and our upcoming Random Acts of Kindness Spirit Week.

The Student Council Officers jumped right into action by hosting a Holiday Shoppe Preview Night, complete with a fabulous hot chocolate bar. Families and students enjoyed festive cookies along with delicious hot chocolate topped with all the favorites—marshmallows, chocolate syrup, whipped cream, sprinkles, and more.

Their Holiday Spirit Week was full of creativity and fun, featuring themed days ranging from “Dress Like a Snowman” to “Festive Reds, Blues, and Greens Day.” It was a wonderful week of school spirit and celebration as we headed into winter break.

The Jr. Beta Club’s coat drive was another tremendous success, thanks to the generosity of our amazing school community. Together, we donated more than 96 new and gently used coats to North Fulton Community Charities. We are grateful to everyone who contributed to this meaningful cause.



In addition, our Jr. Beta Club students continue to demonstrate exceptional leadership both within our school and throughout the community. They have assisted with our annual Thanksgiving Feasts, volunteered at church events, supported the Meals by Grace Food Pantry, spent countless hours shelving books in the school library, and even ran the concession stand during several home basketball games. Our Jr. Beta students truly make a positive impact on both our school and the community we are proud to call home.

Spelling Bee



In November, the Middle School held our annual Spelling Bee. Two students from each grade level, 5th-8th, participate. Our participants were Angad Jayshwal, Vardaan Sethi, Ahati Melke, Juan (JC) Fernandez-Ancarola, Akanksha Puram, Ada Duggal, Feli Ancarola, and Faye Jones. After a fierce spelling battle, our middle school Spelling Bee Champion is Ada Duggal. Our runner-up is Akanksha Puram. These two seventh grade young ladies will complete in the first round of the GISA Spelling Bee on Thursday, February 12th. This round is an online vocabulary round. If they score high enough, they will then progress to the in-person round, held in Macon, GA, on February 24th. We are very proud of all of our participants and cannot wait to cheer on Ada and Akanksha.



The Museum of Illusions was Fascinating!



Middle School students had the opportunity to visit the Museum of Illusions Atlanta during January. The museum encourages visitor to “immerse yourself in the fascinating world of illusions and let our captivating rooms play tricks on your mind!”

While there, students were able to experience captivating illusions exhibits. They saw themselves in ways that go beyond the everyday experience. The illusions they experienced were optical and challenged their view of perception. Many of the exhibits were hands-on and gave the students an exciting experience. Other exhibits were merely meant for viewing, using mirrors in interesting ways.



One of the favorite exhibits was where students became a part of an upside-down cafe. When pictures were taken, students appeared to be hanging from cafe tables and benches. The interactive activities encouraged students to actively engage, experiment, and uncover the principles of illusions and perception in a memorable learning environment.

Music Makes Life Joyful



Mr. Bryant grew up in Broken Bow Oklahoma, a small town in the southeast corner of Oklahoma, and has been singing on stage since he was four. Bryant has pursued music all through his life. He was in church choirs and every honor choir his schooling allowed for. When he was in 5th grade his school put on a production of OKLAHOMA! And he took the stage as Curly, the male lead. He decided then that music was the perfect storytelling vehicle for him.

On top of an obvious love of music, Mr. Bryant also loves reading and storytelling as well as playing a wide variety of instruments. Mr. Bryant spent much of his time in school in the band room or in various language clubs. Before graduating college, he worked as a carpenter’s apprentice, and a stage manager for the theatre at Henderson College. Each step of his educational journey was preparing him for the important job he does at McGinnis Woods.

Mr. Bryant started his teaching career at 23 after deciding that his love for the stage and music would be best used shaping the future of musicians. He tutored, taught private lessons and did lighting and stagecraft for multiple Atlanta theaters before making McGinnis Woods home. This is his third year teaching at the school and his fourth year teaching fulltime. He recently passed the GACE for Georgia Certification, another important milestone.

Now Mr. Bryant spends his free time reading and playing board games with his fiancé Emily, who he will wed this March. We are sure that they will make beautiful music together!

McGinnis Woods Celebrates National School Choice Week



National School Choice Week highlights the importance of empowering families to choose the educational setting that best meets their children's unique needs, learning styles, and interests. Celebrated nationwide, this annual event shines a spotlight on the many educational options available to families, including public, private, charter, magnet, online, and home schools. This year, National School Choice Week took place January 25–31 and served as a time to celebrate the schools, students, parents, and educators who work together to help children thrive.



Students at McGinnis Woods celebrated this special week with fun and meaningful activities that reflected pride in our school community. We kicked off the week with a Pep Rally featuring three of our middle school students and two special guest speakers from our community. Padraig Gallivan, Meredith Monnell, and Akanksha Puram shared brief essays they had written about why they love McGinnis Woods and the tremendous impact it has had on their lives. Their poise and heartfelt reflections were truly remarkable.



In addition, Praveen Puram arranged for Todd Jones, Georgia State Representative, and Kristin McCabe, Fulton County School Board President, to join us. They spoke with students about the importance of education and why learning is fundamental to future success. Their practical insights, along with their encouragement to dream big and follow one's passions, set a wonderful tone for the week ahead.

Throughout National School Choice Week, students participated in a variety of engaging activities, including scavenger hunts, creative artwork showcasing what they love about our school, word searches, and heartfelt letters written to parents expressing appreciation for the opportunity to attend a private school. Our second graders created impressive posters about their favorite aspects of the school in Canva! Creating with their iPads was challenging, fun and exciting! These experiences encouraged students to reflect on their educational journey while celebrating the choices that support their growth and success.



Ms. Caitlan Brings Spanish to Life!



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 culture! Ms. Caitlan continued learning Spanish through high school and college and added on some French as well (Bonjour, mes amis). 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.

Ms. Caitlan started her teaching career at 18 years old, when she made the dubious decision to spend her whole summer before college teaching high school percussionists for a marching band camp. While sharing her love of music that summer, she caught the teaching bug and decided that education was the way to go for her. This is Ms. Caitlan's 4th year at McGinnis Woods and her 9th year teaching overall. Before coming to McGinnis Woods, Ms. Caitlan taught high school

Spanish for one year and middle school Spanish for four years. Ms. Caitlan loves getting the opportunity to teach a wide range of students and incorporating her love of music into her classroom!

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. Ms. Caitlan spent most of her time in school in the band room or in various language clubs and classes. 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. Ms. Caitlan has since learned to do less things at once and likes to relax with her pets, family and friends.

Safety Patrols Lead the Way!



Our Safety Patrol Swearing-In Ceremony took place during the second quarter to officially welcome our 4th grade students into this important leadership role. These students have committed to helping keep our school community safe by assisting with our PreK–4th grade carpool each morning and afternoon, while modeling responsibility, kindness, and leadership throughout the school day.

This special event was led by Deputy Christopher Williams of the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office. Deputy Williams holds a meaningful connection to our school community, as he is the son of our very own Ms. Valorie, the brother of Ms. Amy, and a former Physical Education Coach at McGinnis Woods. We are grateful for his time, leadership, and dedication to guiding our students through this memorable and impactful ceremony.

We are pleased to recognize our 4th Grade Safety Patrol Team: **Bianka Bandaru, Skylar Cummins, Abir Duggal, Lauren Franceschin, Mackenzie Grant, Megan Grant, Shannon He, Ira Kalakuntla, Anvi Kovelamudi, Chloe Peng, Kaysen Poe, Zara Rodrigues, Hemanya Sanampudi, Shreya Sathya, Arya Siddiqui, Ade Sinke, and Jace Spencer.**

Being a member of Safety Patrol is a meaningful honor, and we are proud of these students for stepping up to serve others. We thank our families for their continued support and look forward to watching our Safety Patrol members grow in confidence and leadership as they carry out their responsibilities this year.

Summer Camp at The Woods is Like No Other!



Make this summer one to remember with our engaging and activity-filled Summer Camp Program! Open to students in PreK through 8th grade, with children required to be **at least 4 years old** to attend. Each week brings a brand-new theme, giving campers something exciting to look forward to all summer long, along with a weekly field trip for all campers. Campers will visit destinations such as Chestatee Wildlife Preserve, Stars and Strikes, the Marietta Fire Department, and many more memorable locations.

Throughout the summer, campers will also participate in weekly Art and STEM classes, encouraging creativity, problem-solving, and hands-on exploration. In addition to the daily camp experience, families can choose from a variety of specialty and academic camps offered each week for a small additional fee. These options allow students to explore personal interests, build new skills, and stay academically engaged during the summer months. With experienced staff, engaging activities, and plenty of opportunities for social growth, our Summer Camp offers the perfect balance of education and excitement. Enrollment fills quickly, so be sure to register today to secure your child's spot for a summer full of discovery and fun!



Click Here for Summer Camp Paperwork for Enrolled Students:

Middle School Activities Designed to Build Friendships



Prior to our Winter break, the middle school combined their holidays parties with a social activity that has become an annual favorite with the students... The Annual Gingerbread House Decorating Contest! The students worked in small groups to build and decorate a one-of-a-kind gingerbread house to be voted on by their peers. Students were given a base to build on, graham crackers, and a piping bag of icing to construct their houses. Students used a variety of candies to decorate their masterpieces and then put them on display for all of the Middle School to view during our party.

Students voted on their top three favorite houses and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place was awarded. Our winner each received points for their middle school house!

- 1st place – House 6 – Oliver and Luke
- 2nd place – House 8 – Lyla, Ariel, Feli, and Faye
- 3rd place – House 4 – Vihaan, Elliot, and Aman



Middle schoolers need time to develop friendships beyond the school day, so in the McGinnis Woods middle school, students participate in quarterly socials throughout the year. These socials are designed to give the students a change to hang out and have fun in a non-academic setting (with no parents or siblings)! Some of the socials take place during the school day, like the gingerbread houses, while others take place after school or in the evening. This quarter students will participate in an off campus social to The Adventure Air Sports which is an indoor trampoline park which is sure to be a great time for all.

Pictures from Around the School

