

McDuffie County Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to Tan Dukes, the 2020 McDuffie County Teacher of the Year! Ms. Dukes will represent McDuffie County Schools in the Georgia Teacher of the Year competition later this school year.



Ms. Dukes is in her fifth year of teaching in McDuffie County, and currently serves as a fifth grade reading and English/language arts teacher at Norris Elementary school. She was a 1996 graduate of Thomson High School and is a native of Thomson. She is engaged to Zachary Bouttry and has two beautiful children: Christopher (C.J.), who is in fourth grade at Norris Elementary School and Corrine, who attends Thomson Elementary School.

When asked about teaching, Ms. Dukes says, “Kids are like little sponges, ready to soak up all that you have to give them. Teaching is colorful, surprising, and entertaining! You can be as creative and fun as you’d like. My goal is to build relationships and foster the growth of my students academically, socially, mentally, and intellectually.”

A Report of Board Action

In October the BOE:

- Recognized the Superintendent’s Students of the Month for October and the System Support Persons of the Year
- Awarded Georgia Accrediting Commission certificates to the principals of all schools
- Heard an update on the PBIS program as well as updates from each department on current projects and initiatives
- Approved fundraiser requests for THS, TMMS and Student Services
- Approved a revision to Policy IHE - Promotion and Retention and the accompanying Regulation IHE- R (1): K-5 Promotion and Retention Requirements
- Heard a proposal to revise Policy JB: Student Attendance and its companion Regulation JB-R: General Attendance Rules in order to comply with changes to state law and state board rules



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#Watchusmove

Please note:

- Do you know about an achievement we need to highlight? Do you have an event that you want to be sure makes it to the calendar page? Let us know! [Email Julia Lambert at the BOE](mailto:juliam@mcpsd.net) and we will include it in the next issue if space permits.
- Don’t forget to submit your classroom videos to www.watchusmove.org for a chance to have your students showcased on our site.

TMMS Region Champions... Again!

Great things are happening in TMMS sports! We've got two amazing teams who are repeat region champions!

Congratulations to the **TMMS Lady Dogs softball team** on an undefeated season and another region championship! The Lady Dogs defeated Glascock 8-2 on September 27 to claim their fourth consecutive title!



Our **TMMS football team** defeated Washington County 42-28 for the CSRA Athletic League Region Championship. They are now back-to-back region champions! Well done, guys!



THS Bulldog Brigade is on the Move

Congratulations to the Thomson High School Bulldog Brigade for winning the Silver Division Grand Championship at the 16th Annual Lake Hartwell Marching Competition on October 20th!

Out of 7 bands in their division, the Bulldog Brigade was honored as the 1st Place overall Champion Band with the 1st Place overall Champion Drum Major (Hannah Bowers). Out of 5 bands in their classification, the Bulldog Brigade brought home the following awards: 1st Place Band; 1st Place Drum Major; 3rd Place Drum Line; and 3rd Place Color Guard.

Our band students work hard to perfect their competition show, dedicating hours each week to practice on top of their busy academic schedules. Following Friday night football games where they keep the hometown crowd and the team energized, they get up early to attend competitions several weekends in a row during the month of October. That's dedication, and the work they put in has clearly paid off! (Photos courtesy of THS Band Boosters.)



McDuffie on the Move

We are on the move this school year! We have been so excited to visit each school this month! On this page, you can see some of the photos taken of awesome teaching and learning in action. Thank you to each staff member who allowed us to showcase his/her work! We look forward to featuring more wonderful classrooms in coming editions. Remember to visit www.watchusmove.org to watch and share your videos.

TMMS Cohort 8-3 is working on a STEM interdisciplinary unit centered around the U.S. Forestry Service Hot-shot Crews, highly skilled professionals who manage wildland fire assignments. Students learned how the crews prepare and plan before entering a wildfire. Students then used math skills to simulate the routes these firemen might use to escape a fire; learned the history behind firefighting; and completed reflection and analysis papers on what they learned.



Fifth grade QUEST students in Mrs. Henry's class used the engineering design process to complete the "Touchdown-Lunar Lander" NASA Design SQUAD STEM Challenge.

The activity challenged students to build a shock-absorbing or parachute system to protect an "astronaut" when landing.

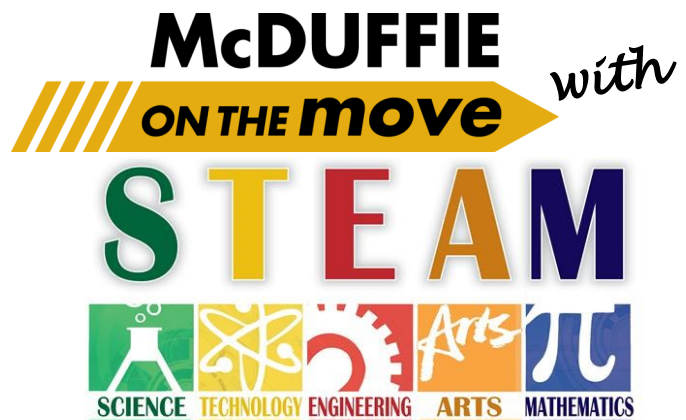
Teams had a limited amount of time to design, build, test and tweak their landers.



Students in Ms. Hulin's fourth grade science class built a model water cycle to help them see the water cycle in action. Students began by learning the meaning of water cycle and why it is important.

Students are learning the multiple pathways water may take during the water cycle including evaporation, condensation, precipitation, and collection. This project helps explain standard 4E3- how all water moves continuously and is recycled over and over again.

Mrs. Fields' science classes at TMMS recently completed an ice cream lab. The ice cream lab was a great activity to summarize states of matter, phase changes, pure substances versus mixtures, and physical/chemical changes. The lab was a fun, hands-on activity to tie these concepts to real world experiences!



Curriculum & Instruction Resources

Revised Promotion and Retention Policy

At its October 2018 meeting, the board approved a revision to the promotion policy and its companion regulation. With teacher input, the fourth grade fresh read selection was updated to align with the current Georgia Standards of Excellence. Additionally, the requirement for pupils in grades 3, 5, and 8 to demonstrate mastery of reading and mathematics on the Georgia Milestones was re-instated, with plans to offer a summer intervention and re-test. In grade 3, students must achieve the “Grade Level or Above” designation on the Georgia Milestones ELA sub-test in order to meet this requirement. In grades 5 and 8, students must meet this reading requirement **and** score at the Developing Learner achievement level or above to meet the promotion requirement. Letters for parents of students in grades 3, 5, and 8 were distributed following the board meeting.

Lexile Information

Lexiles, which measure both a student’s reading level and text difficulty, are interpreted as the level of book a student can read independently with 75% accuracy of comprehension, a mark which provides both comfort and challenge. Lexiles examine word frequency and sentence length. **To grow a reader’s skills, a student should select books in a range generally 50L below to 100L above his/her current Lexile level.** The Find a Book feature located at Lexile.com can assist teachers, parents, and students in located books within Lexile ranges. Teachers can copy and paste (or type) passages into the free [Text Analyzer](#) to determine Lexile levels and the free [Renaissance Learning ATOS Analyzer](#) to determine approximate grade level also.

Grade	Typical Lexile Reader Measures by Grade for English Text	College- and Career-Ready Ranges	Minimum Lexile to Achieve Georgia Milestones Reading Status of “Grade Level or Above”	Minimum Lexile to Meet CCRPI Literacy Readiness Indicator
K	BR40L to 230L			
1	BR120L to 295L	190L to 530L		
2	170L to 545L	420L to 650L		
3	415L to 760L	520L to 820L	520L	670L
4	635L to 950L	740L to 940L	740L	840L
5	770L to 1080L	830L to 1010L	830L	920L
6	855L to 1165L	925L to 1070L	925L	997L
7	925L to 1235L	970L to 1120L	970L	1045L
8	985L to 1295L	1010L to 1185L	1010L	1097L
9	1040L to 1350L	1050L to 1260L	1050L (9 th Grade Lit. & Comp.)	1155L
10	1085L to 1400L	1080L to 1335L		
11 & 12	1130L to 1440L	1185L to 1385L	1185L (American Lit. & Comp.)	1285L

In a 2015 linking study, the results of a parallel Lexile test administered to 2,500 students were matched with their actual Georgia Milestones scores to establish the basis of “Below Grade Level” or “Grade Level or Above” reading designations. The chart above shows the Georgia Milestones and College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) expectations for Lexile achievement.

Teachers can search [Common Lit](#) for texts, including paired passages and thematic units, appropriate for a variety of Lexiles in grades 3-12. Each resource includes text-dependent guided reading questions, vocabulary, discussion topics, assessments, and writing activities. Teachers can create classes and track student progress, as this **free** resource can be used online or in print. Common Lit features include read-aloud text as well.

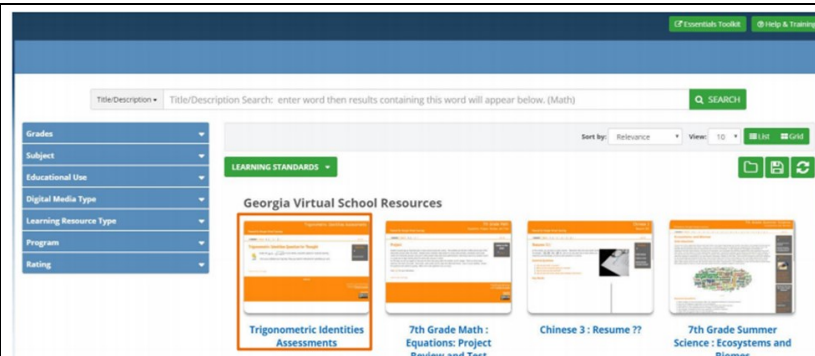
The screenshot displays the CommonLit website interface. The top navigation bar includes links for Library, About, Blog, Contact, Press, Research, and Donate. The main content area is divided into three sections:

- LIBRARY**: Features a search bar and a grid of book covers with details like 'THE VELDT', 'I HAVE A DREAM', and 'THE BILL OF RIGHTS'.
- SHARE WITH STUDENTS**: Shows a sample lesson for 'MALALA YOUSAFZAI: A NORMAL YET POWERFUL GIRL' with a text excerpt and a video of Malala speaking.
- TRACK PROGRESS**: Displays a dashboard with circular progress indicators for 'STUDENT PROGRESS' (70%, 81%, 89%) and a table for 'ALL CLASSES ASSIGNMENT AVERAGES' comparing scores across different periods and subjects.

 The bottom of the interface includes brief descriptions for each section: browsing the library, assigning text-dependent questions, and analyzing student performance.

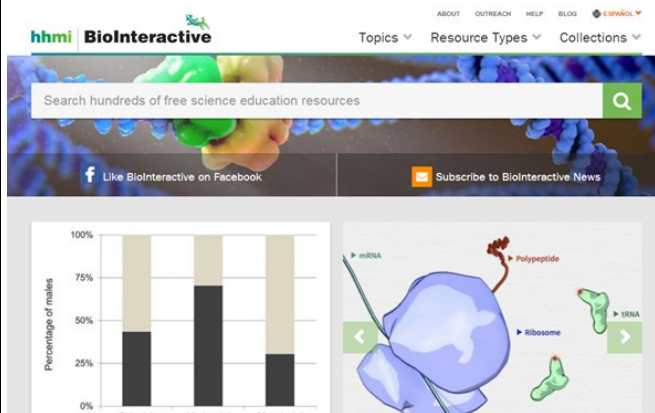
New & Updated FREE Curriculum Resources

GeorgiaStandards.org has been updated with new [science](#) and [social studies](#) resources, including pacing guides (science), labs, and teacher resource notes (SS).

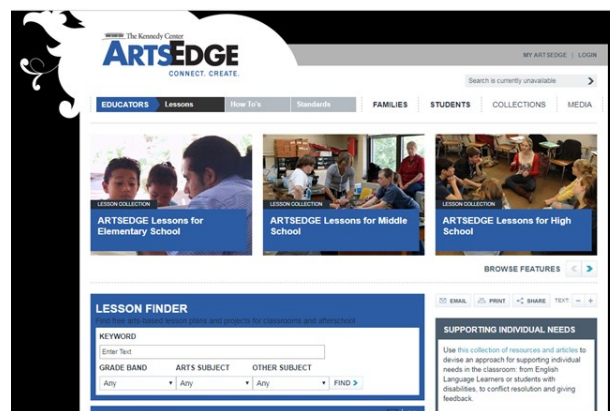


Teacher Resource Link (TRL) in the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) can be accessed following the directions in the [User Guide](#). The TRL includes content from Georgia Virtual School and various publishers. Teachers can search by standard, content area, grade level, or resource type.

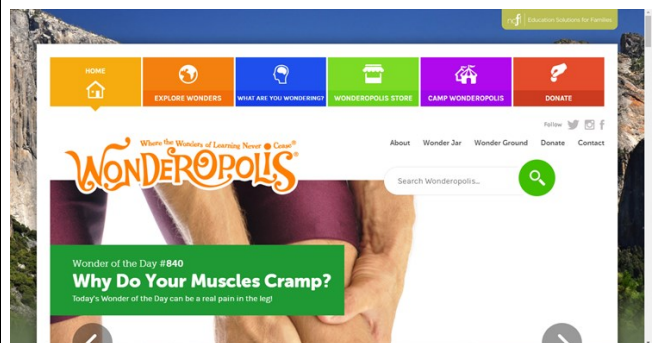
BioInteractive has hundreds of free science resources, including virtual labs, readings, videos, lesson plans, apps, phenomena images, and 3-D models applicable to grades 6-12 biology, chemistry, physics, and statistics units.



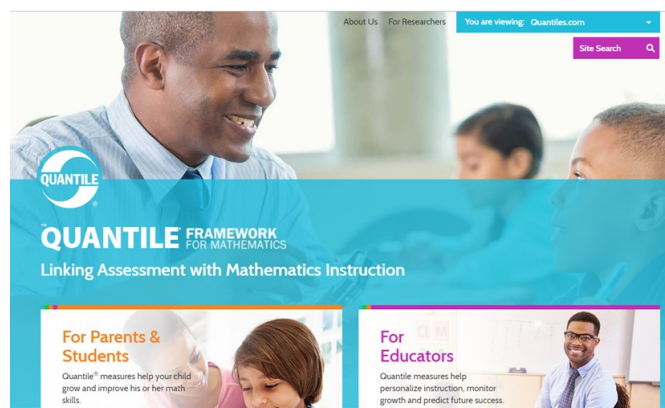
ArtsEdge, sponsored by the Kennedy Center, has fine arts-integrated lessons for grades K-12. Each lesson connects two or more subjects, making the experience meaningful and relevant to students while underscoring the content. Lesson plans, complete with printable student resources, videos, and assessments, are provided.



Wonderopolis includes a bank of Wonder of the Day questions to stimulate higher-order thinking. Wonder Ground contains K-12 educator resources aligned with the Common Core State Standards reading for information anchor standards.



Quantiles.com houses web-based resources aligned to the Georgia Standards of Excellence in mathematics.



Highlighting Achievement



The board of education recently recognized the Superintendent's Students of the Month for October 2018. These students must meet specific criteria in the areas of academics, attendance and attitude.

This month, we're recognizing: **Gabe Hudson** (DES), **Willis Knox** (MES), **Trinity Sanford** (TES), **Alayna Harris** (NES), **Noah McCloud** (TMMS), and **Kathleen Acuna** (THS). Great job!

Congratulations to THS students **Christian Cody** and **Baylea Jones** for being selected to serve on the Watson-Brown Junior Board! The Watson-Brown Foundation supports historic preservation in part through its Junior Board of Trustees, a select group of local high school students whose exclusive mission is to preserve local history.

The Thomson Fire Department visited students at JA Maxwell recently to talk about fire safety and fire prevention. Pictured at right is Mrs. Poston's PreK class exploring the fire truck and seeing firemen in their gear.



Congratulations to the THS One Act Play Cast!



Their production of *Junie B. Jones* placed third in the region at competition on October 23rd. Extra-special congratulations to senior **Hannah Bowers** who was named the region's Best Actress and to **D.J. Brown** and **Carson McGahee** who were selected as part of the All-Star Region Cast. Well done, everyone!

Please help us congratulate the Thomson High Lady Dogs softball team! They are the 2018 Region Champions, with back-to-back region titles in 2017 and 2018.

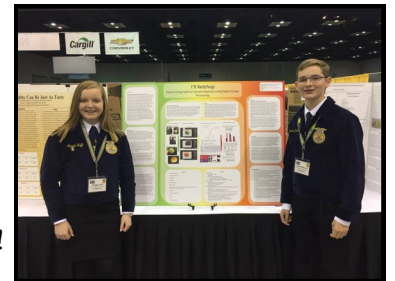
Congratulations to THS sophomore **Libby Derry**, who has qualified to run in the state cross country meet coming up on Nov. 3 in Carrollton. THS students **Allison Myers** and **Cammie O'Neal** also placed in the top ten at the region meet. Great job, ladies!

Thomson High School Senior and FFA member **Anna Wallace** and FFA Advisor **Rick DuBose** received notification that their performance in the Employment Skills LDE earlier this week has earned them a spot in the Area 4 Championship! The next round of competition will be Nov. 6 in Swainsboro at Southeastern Technical College and will decide the Area 4 Champion.



THS freshmen **Maggie Huff** and **Hayden McCord**

participated in the National FFA Agriscience Fair competition October 23 in Indianapolis, IN. They placed eighth in the national competition, earning national recognition with a silver medal. We are proud of you!



Nicole Bridges, a THS graduate and FFA member, received the American FFA Degree, which was awarded at the FFA National Convention. This award, the highest award earned at the national level, is earned by FFA members who have made significant accomplishments in their supervised agricultural experiences. Congratulations, Nicole!

Finalists of the Dairy Production Placement Proficiency were recognized at the 91st National FFA Convention. **Charles (C.J.) Martin** of the Thomson High FFA in Georgia was recognized as one of four national finalists. Although he was not the national winner, C.J. was awarded \$500 and a plaque for his accomplishments. Great job!





McDUFFIE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Here's What's Coming Up!

November 1

MES MEEC Field Trip

November 2

Fall Gifted Testing Ends
MES MEEC Field Trip
THS Football at ARC, 7:30 PM

November 3

SAT Administration at THS

November 4

Daylight Savings Time Ends (fall back 1 hour)

November 5

GA Milestones EOC Mid-month Begins
THS Apply to College Day (seniors)

November 6

BOE Planning Session, 9 AM
THS FAFSA Completion Session, 5:30 PM

November 8

BOE Meeting, 6 PM
DES & NES Thanksgiving Lunch
MES Parent Activity
TES Movie Fun Event
TES Class & Coffee

November 9

Mid-term for 2nd Nine Weeks
TMMS Veterans Day Celebration, 1 PM

November 10

All-state Chorus Auditions

November 12

Lead Teacher Meeting, 2 PM

November 13

PBIS Coaches Meeting, 2 PM
PowerQueen Meeting, 3:30 PM
NES School Council, 4 PM
THS Musical for Elementary Schools

Announcements

In order to allow more space for student features, personnel updates will no longer appear in the newsletter. They are available for review on our eBoard site, Simbli, after every BOE meeting.

<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/index.aspx?S=4112>

Young Georgia Authors Competition

The K-12 Young Georgia Authors (YGA) annual competition is now open. Entries from any genre or subject-area are welcomed. Students may submit writing samples from classroom assignments, including journal entries, essays, research papers, short stories, poetry, and narratives. Winning school-level entries will advance to the district competition, where one entry per grade level will be forwarded to CSRA RESA for the regional contest. The 2018-2019 YGA Competition rules can be found [here](#).

Georgia Accrediting Commission

We are proud that again this year, all K-12 schools, as well as the Pre-K programs at Maxwell Elementary and Dearing Elementary schools, are Accredited with Quality by the Georgia Accrediting Commission. Accredited with Quality is the highest recognition afforded by GAC.



Certificates for the 2018-2019 school year were presented to principals at the October board meeting.

Support Persons of the Year

Each year, our schools name a Support Person of the Year - an outstanding member of their support staff who goes above and beyond to help the school and their co-workers.

This year's Support Persons of the Year are: (left -right) Elisa Smith (TMMS); Annette Lott (TES); Linda McNair (MES); and Shaquette Ivey (NES). Kara McGahee (DES); and Joyce Shurling (THS) were not available for the photo.



Thank you all for your hard work and for all that you do to keep McDuffie on the Move!

