BCS Celebrates Holiday Season With Annual Fest

The Arts Education Department of Birmingham City Schools hosted its 82nd All City Christmas Festival on Dec. 2 at The Boutwell Auditorium. More than 1,300 students across the district participated and showcased their talents.
THE SUPERINTENDENT SPEAKS

For the first half of this school year in Birmingham City Schools, we’ve been laser focused on advancing student achievement and eliminating learning gaps. I’m pleased to report that teachers throughout the district say they are seeing success in our classrooms. I am confident that this trend will continue.

Earlier this fall, we introduced our intersession period – a dedicated time for additional remediation and enrichment opportunities. We will have another intersession period before the start of our next grading period – January 3rd, 4th and 5th. Now is the time to register. Go online to www.bhamcityschools.org for registration and more information.

We want all of our Birmingham City Schools scholars to recover any learning loss they may have experienced during the pandemic, and we want them to have the support and opportunities needed to excel.

We have choices in Birmingham City Schools. In addition to our traditional programs, parents can apply for their students to attend our specialty schools – EPIC Elementary, Princeton Elementary, Phillips Academy, W.J. Christian (6-8), and Ramsay IB High School.

Also this year, rising ninth grade students can apply for admission to Early College at Woodlawn High – One School and a world of opportunity. These students can graduate with a high school diploma and up to 60 hours in college credit.

A small number of students have been studying through our virtual program this year. This program will expand into a full virtual school for the 2022-2023 school year. Applications are now being accepted and information is available on our district website.

As I stated earlier – Birmingham City Schools offers choices. We are proud to be the best choice for education.

Birmingham City Schools continues to partner with several medical groups to offer COVID-19 vaccination clinics for students 5 and up. We also will continue to offer COVID-19 testing at our schools through our partnership with UAB.

We want our employees, students and their families to be safe and healthy. Vaccinations and testing help us achieve that goal.

Lastly, I want to thank all Birmingham City Schools students, employees, parents and community supporters for a strong year in 2021. I’m looking forward to the break, followed by another great year in 2022.

Enjoy a safe and joyous holiday season.

Thank You,

- D. Mark Sullivan

District Dates

- BBOE Work Session: Dec 21
- Holiday Break: Dec 20-31
- Winter Intersession (Students): Jan 3-5
- Students Return: Jan 10
- BBOE Meeting: Jan 11
- MLK Jr. Holiday: Jan 17
- BCS en Español: Jan. 18
- BBOE Work Session: Jan 25

JANUARY 2022

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Applications Still Open

The BCS Specialty Schools Application Process opened on Nov. 29, 2021. The deadline to apply is Jan. 18, 2022. Our specialty schools include: Ramsay High, WJ Christian, Phillips Academy, EPIC Elementary and Princeton Elementary. Click here to register.

Winter Intersession will be Jan. 3-5, 2022 in Birmingham City Schools. Parents can register their scholars for this enrichment and remediation period before the start of our next grading period. Parents can register students on our BCS website. Click here to register.

Woodlawn's Early College is a dual enrollment program where high school students take college courses for both college and high school credit. They earned college credits to not only satisfy high school requirements for graduation, but also that may be applied towards a degree at Jefferson State Community College or The University of Alabama at Birmingham or possibly transferred to another college or university. Click here to register.
Ramsay High Senior Featured For Musical Talent

For Jada Dabney, the Ramsay High School music room is her “happy place”, her bandmates are “like family” and music is her “therapy”. The French horn player and now Drum Major of excellence reflects on how music has been present in her life and the impact it has in our everyday life. “You listen to music in your car, you hear it in commercials and movies, but it does something more for you — it puts you at ease or in a better mood without you really thinking about it,” she said.

Jada grew up with a musical ear that was nurtured by her father who is a pastor at Beluah Missionary Church and her mother who sings in the church choir. She remembers the days when her family would gather around the piano, play tunes, and sing together. “My dad would get up and play [the piano],” she said. “It could be 11 o’clock at night, and he would just start playing. I do the same thing, so that’s how I know I received that trait from him.”

Jada’s passion and dedication for music makes her hold herself to a high standard when it comes to learning and practicing new music pieces. “I really try to train myself to learn everything from memory as soon as I get the new music piece,” she says. However, she also is aware that sometimes, we need to give ourselves some space. “It’s important that I [avoid being] too hard on myself because, at the end of the day, nobody is perfect,” she said.

Her participation with the Ramsay High School’s Marching Rams has fruitful and fun, and with COVID-19 keeping them out of the field, she looks forward to being back on the field and the fellowship with her teammates.

Jada’s music career will continue at Tennessee State University, where she will enroll next fall in their music program. Jada is one of the many examples of BCS academic excellence and when asked how she stays focused, she says: “If people were to ask my advice on how to relax and stay calm, I would simply say, ‘Turn on some music.’

*This story contains information and quotes from The Birmingham Times: Meet Jada Dabney: Ramsay High School’s Drum Major of Excellence*
Huffman Students Make Progress on Little House

Huffman High School students with a future in construction and architecture hope they can make a North Carolina family happy through their “Tiny House” project.

Students DeMarcus Campbell and Oliver Hernandez are using their handy skills to go beyond Alabama and build a home for Jennifer Moore in North Carolina. “It’s been fun, literally. It’s something I never thought I would do in high school,” Hernandez said.

Moore, a single mom of two is looking to downsize. The students have taken her vision on paper and bringing it to life. “I want them to learn or gain a sense of pride and accomplishment because I believe there are not many people who can do this.”

Teachers Jack Dean and Terrance Marzette both have decades in construction and architecture.

They know first-hand how important it is to start early. “It’s just exposing the students to, you know, what they can do and the letting their imagination grow from there,” Dean said. “That’s the key thing: providing them with the opportunity.”

“They bought straight into it from the community service aspect,” Marzette said. The students hope to have the home completed by early January.

BCS Hosts Parent Night for Spanish Speaking Families

On Nov. 30, Birmingham City Schools’ English as a Second Language Department and the Communication departments hosted their first virtual parent night for Spanish speaking families in our district. The ESL team invited community partners to speak with families about services they have available for BCS students and families.

“The purpose of our recent BCS en Español Parent night was to open lines of communication between our Spanish-speaking parents, BCS, and our community partners,” said Nancy Nowlin-Blanco, ESL and World Languages coordinator.

Among the partners, The Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama, Jefferson County’s Department of Health, Cahaba Medical Care, Lawson State Community College and the Helping Families Initiative, spoke about college access, vaccinations, trade schools and other resources for community assistance.

Families were proactive in asking questions and addressing different concerns regarding educational and medical resources for their children.

“Because we had such a great turnout and received such positive feedback from parents and community partners, we hope to expand this event into a quarterly series. With any luck we’ll be able to be in-person again soon,” said Nowlin-Blanco. In efforts to inform our Spanish-speaking families and community, BCS shares district and community information through our website and social media, such as BCS en Español Facebook page.
Tamara Travis Inspires Students Through the Love of Music

Epic Elementary Music Teacher Tamara Travis is a daughter of Birmingham and a Carver High School graduate who inspires love and dedication to the art of music. She was recently featured in The Birmingham Times where she reminisced on her career and her wishes for music students of the future.

Travis comes from a family of musicians. She has been reading music notes since she was 5-years-old and music was key in her academic success and journey through college by gaining scholarships. After high school, Mrs. Travis attended AAMU on a band scholarship. “I went to college on a band scholarship, but when (Dr. Henry Bradford Jr.), chairperson of the music department and a piano player, found out that I was such a great piano player, I changed my major to piano,” she says.

During the pandemic, Travis did not stop teaching. Read more on her story here.

2021 Principals Academy Cohort Begins

Birmingham’s Aspiring Principals Academy is designed for educators with administrative certification and at least three years of service in an administrative capacity. The Academy is a five-month program to address related topics for effective district leadership.

The program includes interactive sessions beginning with a face-to-face orientation, biweekly virtual meetings, a group book study, and a final project presentation. Congrats to the 2021 cohort.

Employee Recognition Award Winners

**ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY**

Ameet Bosmia, BCS Psychologist

**CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE**

Linda Wall, BCS Security

**CAUGHT BEING GREAT**

Noil Rucker, P.D. Jackson-Olin

To nominate a BCS employee, email communications@bhm.k12.al.us
Congratulations the Huffman Vikings Boys Basketball Team for their win of the Heritage Thanksgiving Classic! The Vikings won this tournament to a 49-31 score against Oxford.

Congratulations to the Wenonah Lady Dragons for winning the BCS Girls Basketball Tournament.

Jackson-Olin's Feeder Team Wins Championship

The Jackson-Olin High’s feeder schools -- Bush Hills S.T.E.A.M, Green Acres, and South Hampton -- combined a few years ago to form competitive teams. This effort has paid off wonderfully for the schools. Recently, the football team, cheerleaders, coaches, and school leadership were honored. The Birmingham City Council celebrated the scholar-athletes for their citywide middle school championship and back-to-back undefeated seasons.

On Nov. 9, the Woodlawn High School Cheerleaders competed in the Alabama High School Athletic Association Central Regionals at the Birmingham CrossPlex and qualified for the Alabama State Cheer Competition. Teams vying for state finals were required to receive a score of 70 or better at Regionals.

The Colonels received a qualifying score and went on to participate in the state finals on Dec. 6, 2021. Congratulations to Head Coach Shenay Robinson, Assistant Coach Deltricka Mackey-Young, and the Woodlawn Cheerleaders.
STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

ALABAMA NAACP FOOT SOLDIERS SCHOLARSHIP: DEADLINE 1/10/2022

The Alabama NAACP Foot Soldiers Scholarship is a need-based scholarship opportunity open to Alabama graduating high school seniors who wish to enroll in secondary education at an Alabama college or university. We will award two $3,500 scholarships during our Annual Bridge Crossing Gala on March 4, 2022 in Montgomery, AL. To apply, click here.

2022 A-LIST HBCU SCHOLARSHIP FUND: DEADLINE 12/31/2022

The A-List Network, LLC would like to award scholarships to 2022 High School Graduates who qualify to attend a Historically Black College or University as a freshman next fall. Email the alistnetgroup@gmail.com for detailed information and application.

IMMIGRANTS RISING SCHOLARSHIPS

Immigrant Rising’s List of Undergraduate Scholarships contains scholarships for undergraduate studies that don’t require proof of citizenship or legal permanent residency. This up-to-date list, organized by deadline date, contains scholarships at the local (Bay Area), state and national level. To see a list of scholarships, click here.

DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY SCHOLARSHIP: DEADLINE 2/15/2022

The Jefferson County Alumnae Chapter has many great opportunities to get our youth prepared to further their education! Deadline: Tuesday, February 15, 2022. For more information, click here.

UNCF SCHOLARSHIPS, PROGRAMS, INTERNSHIPS, AND FELLOWSHIPS!

UNCF manages various scholarship programs and each program has its own eligibility criteria, open/close dates and required documentation. To apply for a UNCF scholarship, you must apply through the on-line application process. To see a list of scholarships, click here.