The Russell County School District kicked off the second semester of the 2020-21 school year with social distancing in full effect. The team returned to the trenches with masks on their faces feeling refreshed and appreciated because of the surprise incentive checks received in December and a much-needed break. A virtual Institute Day program was made possible because of the support of our community partner, CTV Beam, who live-streamed the event to all schools. After being reminded of the life-changing impact they have on students and the community through the heartfelt words of an RCHS alumni, Mrs. Chandra Wright, employees were celebrated for "Rising Up" and continuing to meet the needs of the children and families across the district in the presence of challenges and during a global pandemic. Sincere gratitude is expressed to Mrs. Wright for taking the time to visit, encourage teachers, and celebrate with the RCSD.

The events of the day continued when employees gathered at their assigned school sites and other district locations to participate in targeted professional development sessions. All members of the RCSD team, including: CNP, bus drivers, P.E. teachers, custodians, nurses, bookkeepers, secretaries, and teachers engaged in professional development. This investment in the growth and development of our team was possible because of the great leadership of our Superintendent, Dr. Brenda Coley, the support of teacher-leaders from the district, and virtual session facilitators.

In Russell County, we are committed to learning and growing as individuals and professionals because we believe that we are “Destined for Excellence” even as we face the perils of COVID-19. Warriors Rise!

Every year, seven of Russell County’s finest educators are selected by their colleagues to represent their schools as the Teachers of the Year. From among the seven, a districtwide elementary and secondary teacher is selected. We are elated to announce that the elementary teacher of the year is Mrs. Kelley Knoll from Oliver Elementary School and the secondary teacher of the year is Mrs. Samantha Davis from Russell County High School. We appreciate your commitment to the growth and achievement of our students and the district. Thank you for being champions for learners. Congratulations on a well-deserved honor. A teacher of the year luncheon was held on Tuesday, February 23, 2021, at the Warrior Training Center in honor of all seven top teachers.

“Teachers who love teaching, teach children to love learning”
GO LADY WARRIORS!!!
GREAT WINNING SEASON

The Russell County Lady Warrior Basketball Team ended another great season with an overall record of 15 wins and 7 losses. During this season, the Lady Warriors had attained many accomplishments and surpassed several goals. For the first time in many years, the Lady Warriors beat cross-town rivals, Central of Phenix City in a thrilling 1 point victory. The Lady Warriors also defeated the 3rd ranked team in 6A, the Eufaula Tigers, with a buzzer-beater at home! For the second year in a row, the Lady Warriors went into Smiths Station and placed first in the Lee County Christmas Tournament! At a point in the season, they were ranked as high as #9 in the state with an 11-0 record! The highlight of the season was celebrating senior Sydney Beasley and her 1000th career point vs Smiths Station High School. Sydney and all of the seniors of this year’s team dedicated themselves to never give up and fought through many obstacles. Even though the Lady Warriors missed the playoffs by one game, the coaches, are ready to get back in the gym and start working with a group of wonderful student-athletes who are ready to work hard for their school, community, and family! Better and Bigger things are to come for the Russell County Lady Warrior Basketball program. Special thanks to Head Coach Demond McCoy and Assistant Coach Diana Malcolm for another great season!

Russell County employees would like to offer a huge “THANKS” to Dr. Chandra and her staff at Preferred Medical Group in Fort Mitchell. Dr. Chandra has always been a great supporter of our system. She recently reached out and offered to set aside one-hundred doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. This consideration for educators was especially generous as supplies of the vaccine are very limited at this time. Dr. Chandra plans to offer additional vaccinations as soon as they are available.

RCHS/RCMS BAND STUDENTS RECEIVE HIGHEST HONOR

Since August, several band students registered and prepared for the Alabama Bandmaster’s Association All-State and All-District Auditions. The auditions are exceptionally challenging, and the material the students have to prepare is nearly at the collegiate level of music. High school students around the state prepare for months prior to the auditions in late January. This year, RCHS was fortunate enough to have ten students audition and of those ten, seven were selected!

Aubree Jones, Flute, placed 1st in our District and was selected to the All-State Red Band
Jasmine Chaney, Clarinet, was selected to the All-State Blue Band
Leanna Bridges, Saxophone, was selected to the All-State Blue Band
Marcus Thorne, Trombone, was selected to the All-State Blue Band
Ilana Johnson, Trumpet, was selected to the All District Band
Molly Wilson, Trumpet, was selected to the All District Band
Luke Jones, Tuba, was selected to the All District Band

For the first time in school history, RCMS had two students selected to the All State Band! RCMS also had one student selected to the District Honor Band. Thank you to our band directors, Mr. Ray and Mr. Malave, for your dedication in helping our students to continue to Rise!

Brayden Doran– All-State Band
Kyle Jackson– All State Band
Morcina Baker– District Honor Band

FAREWELL TO DISTRICT RETIRees

Congratulations to Dr. Mesha Patrick and Dr. Lorenza Pharrams for their outstanding accomplishments and many years of service as educators. The employees, students, and parents of Russell County have been especially honored to work with and alongside both directors.

Dr. Patrick served Russell County for fourteen years beginning as the principal of Russell County Middle School and then transitioned into the role of Federal Programs Director and Pre-K Coordinator.

Dr. Pharrams has served Russell County for two years as the Director of the WIA/At-Risk and Attendance. Of course, both of them are much too young to completely retire and plan to continue serving students in some form.

Congratulations again to both of you!! We are going to miss you, but have the greatest confidence that through your future endeavors you will “Rise Up” and continue to Inspire, Empower and Educate with Excellence.

THANK YOU, DR. CHANDRA VACCINES AVAILABLE TO RCSD

Congratulations to Dr. Diana Malcolm for another great season!

Special thanks to Head Coach Demond McCoy and Assistant Coach Diana Malcolm for another great season!

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The Russell County School District is excited about the numerous accomplishments made by our team members across the district each day, but we are overjoyed and beaming with pride about the achievement of National Board Certification by Mrs. Jessica Campbell. Mrs. Campbell joins the elite ranks of 3,089 teachers in the state of Alabama who are National Board Certified. The journey to National Board Certification requires teachers to show evidence of their ability to teach every student and address their specific learning needs while collecting and using data to ensure that all students are challenged and taught in a manner that prepares them for success in school, career, and life.

Kudos! to this Mt. Olive Primary School educator. We are PROUD of you!

NCWIT Aspirations in Computing (AiC) Educator Award identifies exemplary formal and informal educators who play a pivotal role in encouraging 9th-12th grade students to explore their interest in computing and technology. The award recognizes these educators for their efforts to promote gender equity in computing. Ms. Tangela Crocker, RCHS Computer Science teacher, is one of the state of Alabama’s leaders in the promotion of Computer Science Education. As Facilitator/Teacher Leader she is helping prepare thousands of students across Alabama to learn more about computer science.

Additionally, one of her students, Raven Leininger, received a student award of Honorable Mention AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award. The College Board announced the schools that received the Female Diversity award earlier this month. Russell County HS was among those announced and helped Alabama to be one of the leaders in the country.

Congratulations Mrs. Tangela Crocker!

National Signing Day took place on February 3, 2021. The first Wednesday in February provides the opportunity for college programs to cement their recruiting classes and high school student-athletes to finalize their future decisions. Congratulations to three of our extraordinary Warriors on signing scholarships to play football. We are so proud of their academic and athletic achievements, and we are so confident these three young men will do great things!

Lee Camper III - Faulkner University
Jaylen Davis - Tyler Junior College in Texas
Tarik York - Faulkner University

We are Warriors! We Rise!

The Countywide Spelling Bee was hosted at Russell County High School on Thursday, February 4, 2021. Incredible spellers from each of the elementary, middle, and junior high schools in the Russell County School District and the Phenix City School District competed for the opportunity to be named “Countywide Spelling Bee Champion”. Students displayed integrity, courage, sportsmanship, and spelling talent as they made their bids for the champion’s trophy. The pronouncer for this year’s Bee was WRBL anchor-woman, Brya Berry, and the judges were Lisa Trammell, Kathleen Mitchell, and Dr. Paige Paquette. We are grateful to these individuals for the sacrifice of their time and their willingness to serve in this capacity. Additionally, we express our gratitude to CTV Beam for allowing us to share this event with parents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The winner of the Countywide Spelling Bee will represent Russell County in the State Spelling Bee in March.

1st Place: Baylee Welch, Sherwood Elementary School
2nd Place: Jasmine Vazquez, Russell Co. Middle School
3rd Place: Brianna Altman, Ladonia Elementary School

CONGRATULATIONS
MRS. JESSICA CAMPBELL
NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED

COMPUTER SCIENCE
FEMALE DIVERSITY AWARD

COUNTY WIDE SPELLING BEE WINNERS

NATIONAL SIGNING DAY
WARRIORS RISE
Greetings to the awesome stakeholders of Russell County School District. It is always such an honor and pleasure to address our warrior family. We have so much to share and celebrate during these unprecedented times. I am so very proud of our warrior family as we continue to Rise Up through the many challenges we face on a daily basis as fellow Americans as well as at our local levels of government and communities. The safety of everyone continues to be our focus and priority.

Although current data supports a decline in COVID-19 cases, we must continue to adhere to our safety guidelines and enforce our reopening plan. I am grateful for the hard work of our administrative team, teachers, and support staff as well as the cooperation from our parents and students. We have worked uncompromisingly to keep our school doors opened and because of each of you, we have been successful. I cannot find words to express just how much we appreciate the dedication and commitment of our Russell County warrior family. However, I do want to share my warmest sentiments with all of you for everything that you do for the success of our students and schools.

The delivery of remote learning has certainly improved and served as an alternative instructional method. Unfortunately, remote learning will never replace the positive impact of our traditional face-to-face learning method. As we continue to keep safety a priority for students and staff, we encourage parents that have chosen the remote learning option to genuinely consider sending their students back to our brick-and-mortar schools. Alike many other districts across the nation, our students are facing a huge achievement gap as a result of the health pandemic.

While we understand the fears of choosing traditional learning, please monitor our COVID-19 Dashboard data. I think you will agree that our staff is doing an amazing job of ensuring the safety of all. It is our goal to have all students return to school in the fall of 2021 and provide as many extended learning opportunities as possible. We are currently developing an academic recovery plan. We want to hear from all stakeholders as your input is critically important. Surveys will be administered in the upcoming weeks to employees, parents, and students in order to gain insight from multiple perspectives.

Again, thanks for being an invaluable asset to our warrior team. We will continue to rise up for education excellence for every student. I encourage each of you to stay connected, get involved, and check out our social media outlets to celebrate all the great things happening around the district. It is indeed a great time to be a Warrior!

Warriors Rise!

We Appreciate our Board Members

Thank You for all that you do to support the students of the Russell County School District

Pictured from left to right, beginning with bottom row: President, Eugenia Upshaw, District 5; Dillie Elliott, District 2; Superintendent, Dr. Brenda Coley; Joseph Williams, District 6; John Keith Mitchell, District 2; Timothy Simpson, District 7; Vice President, Kenneth Barnes, District 4; and Tommy Pugh, District 3