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For media inquiries only, contact:
Haley Lacuesta
Director of Media and Public Relations
(706) 951-2674

Seven Richmond County Schools Earn State Recognition for Excellence in Cursive Writing

(AUGUSTA, GEORGIA) – Seven Richmond County elementary schools have been recognized by the Georgia Department of Education for excellence in cursive writing instruction as part of the inaugural John Hancock Award program.

“This recognition highlights the intentional efforts of our teachers and leaders to preserve important literacy skills,” said Dr. Malinda Cobb, interim superintendent of schools. “We’re proud of these schools for leading the way in supporting the development of foundational skills that benefit students in every subject.”

Bayvale, Belair, Goshen and McBean elementary schools earned the Ribbon of Distinction, awarded to schools where at least 90 percent of students can write both their name and the preamble to the U.S. Constitution in cursive. Hephzibah Elementary, Lake Forest Hills Elementary and Richmond Hill Elementary School received the Proficiency Ribbon, which recognizes schools where 90 percent of students can write their name in cursive. To be considered for the award, schools submitted applications that included student work samples that were reviewed by a panel of judges.

The award program follows the Georgia Board of Education’s approval of new K–12 English Language Arts (ELA) standards in May 2023. The revised standards, which take effect in the 2025–2026 school year, include explicit requirements for cursive instruction in grades 3 through 5.

Richmond County School System Early Learning Coordinator Vanessa Darling says, “As we prepare to implement the new Georgia ELA standards, this work becomes even more critical. By equipping our teachers with the tools and strategies they need, we will ensure that students develop the confidence and proficiency to use cursive writing across all contents.”

More than 300 schools across Georgia applied for the John Hancock Award during the 2024–2025 school year. Richmond County’s honorees are among the first in the state to receive this distinction.

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