

## HAPPY NEW YEAR, WILDCATS!

On behalf of the faculty, staff and administration, welcome to a new year at A. Quinn Jones Center for Learning.

Our teachers and staff want to work with you to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of our community's children. At AQJ, we expect our students to be respectful, responsible and ready to learn. Working together as a student-parent-teacher team, we hope to prepare every student for educational success. Whether your student plans to return to your home-zoned school, to complete his or her education here at A. Quinn Jones, or would rather prepare for vocational success through work/study programs, we are committed to working together to help your child get the most out of his or her school experience.

We will cultivate creative thinkers, competent communicators and career-focused students. We seek to establish equity for all student learners so that each child feels valued and respected. Our school environment embraces uniqueness and creativity, fostering support for student enrichment. Our daily routine is to inspire and motivate students, wherein their outcomes will include successful academic achievement, career readiness, college preparedness, social-emotional stability and noble citizenship. We hope the families and educators in our communities will come together here at A. Quinn Jones to establish the building blocks for future excellence.

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# THE A. QUINN JONES JOURNAL

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# IT'S ALL ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIPS



PRINCIPAL  
DARIN JONES

I'm amazed each day by our teachers and staff, whose dedication to helping our students never wavers. Each student has at least one staff member who checks in on a daily basis, taking the time to help the student with issues they are having at school or at home, to give words of encouragement and to make sure our students are having a great day. Our relationship with our students is the key to helping them find success and move toward graduation.

The A. Quinn Jones family rewards our students for improving their behavior. Each week teachers and staff recognize our students by awarding them with Wildcat Cash (which can be used on Fridays to buy snacks in the lunchroom) and by sending me the names of those students who exemplify A. Quinn Jones' three expectations: be responsible, be respectful, and be ready to learn. These Wildcats of the Week are honored by having their names broadcast over the morning announcements and then having a specially catered lunch provided by the principal.

Congratulations to our entire faculty and staff for moving our school accountability rating from 'Unsatisfactory' to 'Maintaining'. We were two percentage points away from being awarded a 'Commendable' rating by the state. Forty-four percent of our lowest academically performing students showed learning gains, earning us recognition from the state of Florida for achieving this school-wide goal. This achievement was all due to the hard work of our students, faculty and staff. Our goal this year is to receive a 'Commendable' rating from the State.

I encourage every parent to utilize Skyward Family Access. Skyward is the district data system. Family Access allows parents to monitor their student's attendance, grades, behavior and other important information. Please take a few minutes each week to review your student's progress. Please contact me if you have any questions about Skyward Family Access.

It is critical that we have accurate parent information on file. If you have moved, changed phone numbers or email address, please contact the front office.

Each day we encourage our students to dream big, to improve their relationships with others, and to believe in what they can accomplish. Together we can achieve those goals and continue to set new goals for growth and success. I look forward to another fantastic school year.



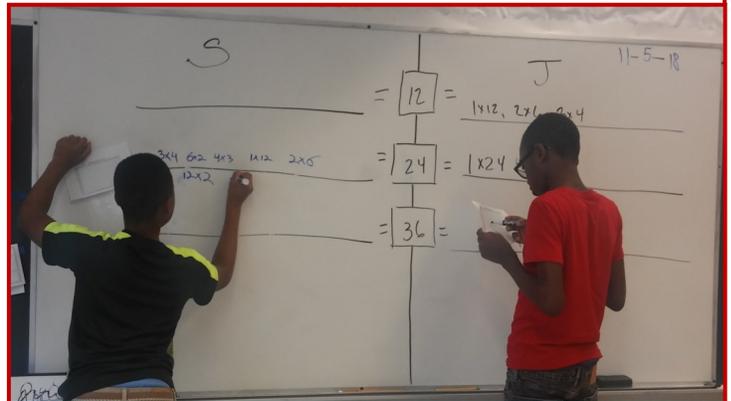
# Proud to be a Title I School

## **Title I Topics** By Ms. Britton

As a Title I school, the A Quinn Jones Center receives funds to supplement our academic program. We also receive a small budget to help us work with parents and families to improve the academic performance of their children.

This year, we used some of our Title I funds to purchase 30 new desktop computers as part of a district wide refresh. Students now have faster computers with the Windows 10 operating system, which students use to access district approved programs to enhance their education.

We also use our Title I funds for a reading and a math tutor. Mr. Whitlock tutors students in reading. They use the computer based Achieve 3000 reading program to assess their skills and provide lessons and activities to help them make gains in reading. Ms. Pegg tutors a math group using TestPrep USA, another computer based program. This program helps students learn the math skills they need to be successful on state assessments as well as college entrance exams such as the SAT and PERT.



Another use of our Title I funds is to provide professional development for our staff. We plan to have a book study, learning walks, and have part of our leadership team and staff attend a summer conference. These learning opportunities increase our educational knowledge and give us new innovative methods to work with students. Just as students must learn, educators must strive to keep their knowledge base up to date.

Finally, we used the majority of our Parent and Family Engagement funds to provide a wonderful Art and Music Activity in December. This program showcased our Art and Music programs at the school and their importance in education. Parents and families who attended the event this year enjoyed a delicious meal provided by Title I and our staff. Afterwards, they saw students perform and learned how the arts are used to enhance academic performance. Everyone had a wonderful time.



# WILDCAT CORNER

## I AM FROM by Janiya Jones

I am from robbing to pay the bills,  
from homeless and starving.  
I am from Mary Jane and cigarettes  
people smoke all around me.  
I am from beatings and being grounded  
from Mom and Grandma.  
I am from *Do It Now* and laughing,  
from do right and stay strong.  
I am from religion and survival and love.  
I am from Pompano  
and problem collard greens and fried chicken.  
From the gutter and Dad in jail.  
I am from lovely hearts and mothers.  
I am from Parkway Lane  
and we cherish our moment of joy.



**Janiya Jones** is a poet, a dreamer, a leader, and one of AQJ's most delightful students. She's smart, she's tough, and we love her.

## WHERE I'M FROM by Kani Speed

I'm from trees, from greens in Spring.  
I am from vases of flowers—fake, colored and steamy.  
I am from my backyard, my family grill  
and sticks and stones.  
I'm from family reunions at my Auntie's  
and people who fight,  
from Emily and Troy.  
I'm from lots of anger and the absence of love,  
from fight back and clean up.  
I'm from people who love Jesus  
and are in church all the time.  
I'm from Gainesville with a large family in Miami,  
from deviled eggs and fried chicken,  
from the tooth I lost in a fight.  
I'm from watching TV without cable with my mom,  
who always has a gun.  
I love the picture of me and my Spider Man cake  
and I love my mother's picture the most.



**Kani Speed** is a poet, an artist, a loyal friend, and one of our most treasured students. He's kind, he's generous, and we love him.



# WILDCAT CORNER

I sat down to interview two of our most successful students at A. Quinn Jones, **Terriana Taylor** and **Tequandre Flowers**. We could all learn a thing or two from these superstars!

***Miss Taylor, describe your experience at AQJ.***

When I started, I felt like I was gonna be a failure. The vibe around me made me feel like I wouldn't be able to make it. But I discovered that as long as I can change, that's all that matters. I can't change anybody around me, just myself.

***Do you feel like it's been a failure now?***

No, not at all. It's actually a thrill coming to school now. I feel so welcome. I hear so many good things about me rather than bad things.



***How about you, Mr. Flowers? How have you changed since you first arrived at AQJ?***

My attitude mostly. I used to get mad in class about every little thing, but now I've learned to control it better. If it's really bad, sometimes I just put my head down and think about music.

***Good strategy! Miss Taylor, what are you most proud of about yourself?***

I'm proud that I'm able to make people smile in a positive way now. You can make people smile by saying something negative, but I don't have to do that anymore. I feel like some people pick up off what I give. Like my sister, if she sees I'm being positive—listening to my mom, doing what I'm supposed to—she'll pick up on that. That way she won't go down the same road I did.

***Mr. Flowers, what are you most proud of?***

I improved my grades and my FSA scores a lot this year. It took a lot of hard work.

***Miss Taylor, what advice would you give to a newcomer at AQJ?***

You need to know that you can't change the cards you're dealt, but you can change how you play them. Don't let people suck you into their stuff. Always think before you react, think about the consequences. Every day won't be a good day, there are gonna be bad ones, but it's all about how you get through it that matters.

***And your advice, Mr. Flowers?***

When you exit A. Quinn Jones, don't come back. Learn from your mistakes.

***Tell me about the future, Mr. Flowers.***

I'm either going to East Side High School or Gainesville High School next year. I want to play sports. Then one day I want a big house, a nice car, and probably kids.

***Wonderful! What about your future, Miss Taylor?***

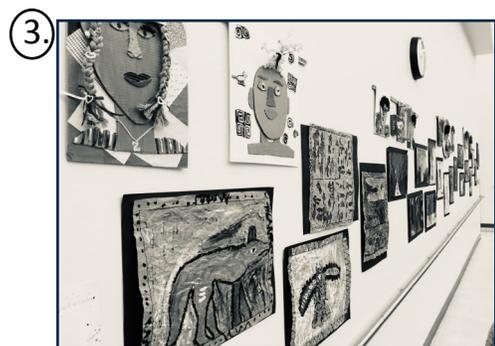
I'm going to start high school with a clean slate, and I'm going to try volleyball or track. After high school, I'm going to college to be a prenatal doctor. I plan to learn enough so that I can give back everything I took from my mom—not just financially, but physically, emotionally, and mentally.

# THE A. QUINN JONES WINTER PROGRAM

Each December the A. Quinn Jones' auditorium opens its doors to our community to ring in the Winter season and show off our students' amazing art and musical talents. Here are some moments we captured from a wonderful night full of songs, visual art, and scrumptious food!



1. Mmm-mmm, good! Nothing like some home-cooked meals to ring in the holiday spirit! Everybody brought a dish to share. Most of us returned for second and third helpings!
2. Our AQJ families chowing down, eagerly awaiting the next student performance.
3. Various styles of visual art from Mrs. Anderson's classes blanket the walls of the AQJ auditorium.
4. Experiments in pointillism from Mrs. Anderson's classes.



# THE A. QUINN JONES WINTER PROGRAM



1. Clayton Wamsley performs “Fur Elise” on the keyboard. What a treat!
2. Mr. Gerald Mobley sang two songs and the crowd wanted more! He crooned, we cried!
3. Juan Ramirez-Jackson played some more Beethoven for us. So much talent in the room!
4. Gregory Curtis rocked on a drum kit while Mr. Collier played Michael Jackson’s “Billie Jean”, officially making our Winter program the funkiest in the district.
5. When Owen Rushing isn’t dancing, he’s mastering his classical piano skills. Great job!

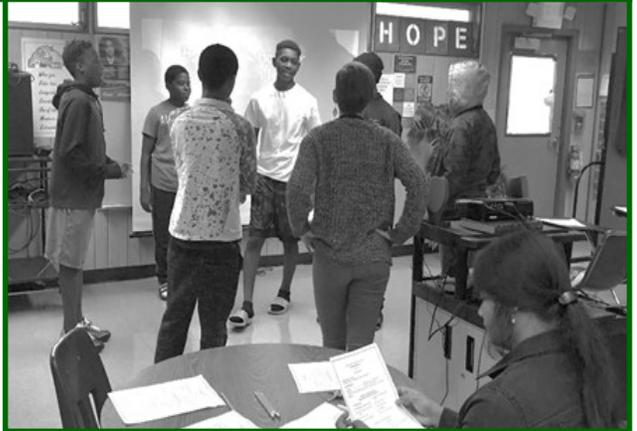


# SCHOOL COUNSELOR CT

## Healthy Relationships by Sezra Gay

In our School Counselor Healthy Relationships presentations, students and staff participated in roleplaying activities, open discussions, and made illustrations to facilitate conversations and strengthen relationships. We discovered common hobbies and effective ways to communicate with each other while embracing our personality differences.

We encounter many relationships in life (peers, family members, siblings, significant others/partners, parents and friends) and sometimes they can be confusing, stressful, even discouraging. Healthy relationships help us feel happy, confident, important, and loved. Here are the five most important characteristics of Healthy Relationships that our students selected as traits they look for in healthy relationships: trust and support to do positive things, honesty and loyalty, mutual respect, open communication, and non-judgmental listening.



## Suicide Prevention Highlights

According to the Centers for Disease Control, there is 1 death by suicide every 12 minutes and approximately 1 young person dies by suicide every two hours. We care about our students and value their lives. Several students discussed their experiences and friends/family experiences with past suicide attempts during the School Counselor's Suicide Prevention Presentations.

Presentations were held at the A. Quinn Jones Center and the Outpost location. The Alachua County Crisis Center Team, Melissa Justis and Kevin Sosa, co-facilitated with Sezra Gay, the school counselor, in these events to help encourage students to use the school counseling resources or community resources. Students are encouraged to ask to speak with the school counselor, school mental health counselor, school nurse, or staff at any time

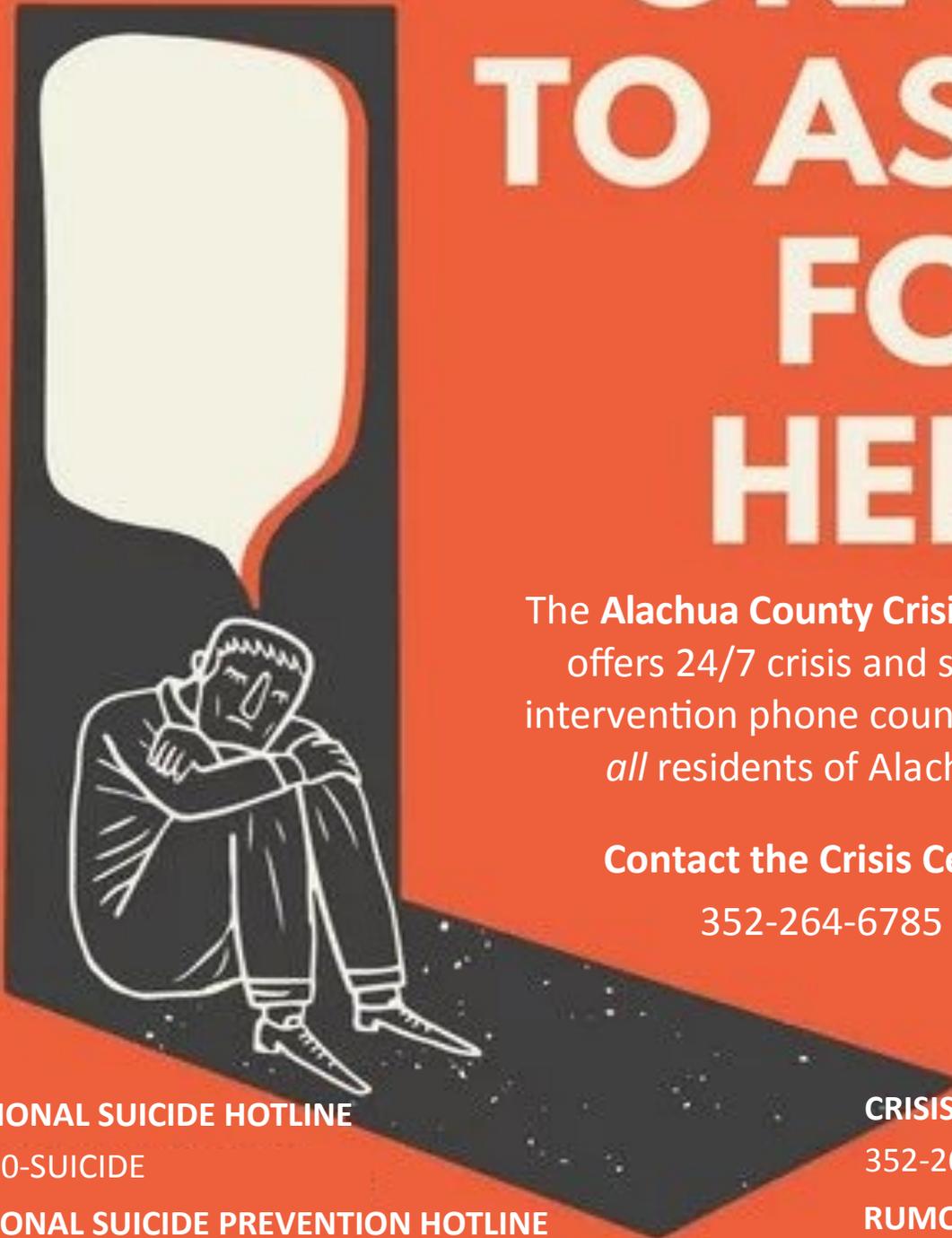
they have a need and want to be listened to with a non-judgmental ear.

The Alachua County Crisis Center may be reached 24 hours daily at Crisis Line: 352-264-6789. The Suicide Hotline may be reached at 1-800-273-8255 and free face to face counseling is available too. There is no challenge too small or too big that your School Counselor will not listen to.

Always remember: **YOU ARE IMPORTANT and YOU MATTER.**



# IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP



The Alachua County Crisis Center offers 24/7 crisis and suicide intervention phone counseling to *all* residents of Alachua.

**Contact the Crisis Center**

352-264-6785

**NATIONAL SUICIDE HOTLINE**

1-800-SUICIDE

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE**

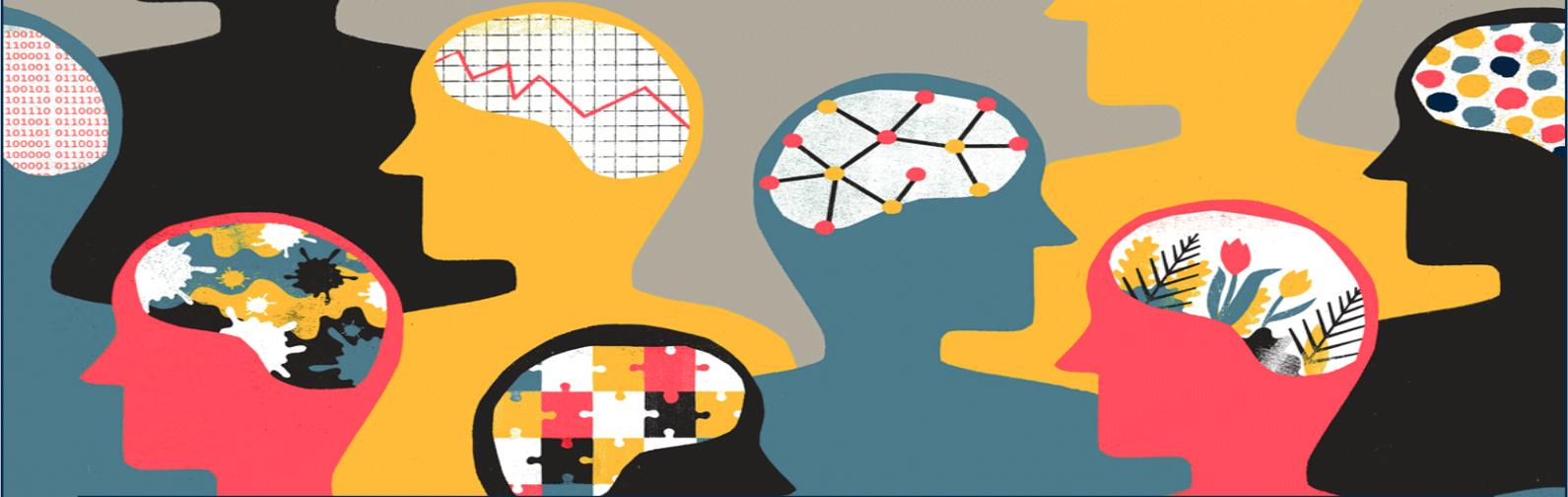
1-800-273-TALK

**CRISIS 24/7 HOTLINE**

352-264-6789

**RUMOR CONTROL**

352-264-6557



# SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

Greetings! As the new licensed mental health counselor at A. Quinn Jones, I wanted to introduce myself and thank you for making my transition to your school so welcoming. I am especially honored to have been selected as one of the first licensed mental health counselors in Alachua County. This role was created to better serve our students and families who may have difficulty accessing counseling in our communities. I am able to coordinate services with the staff at A. Quinn Jones, increasing the likelihood of meeting each student's needs. If you or your student could benefit from counseling, please feel free to reach out to me by calling A. Quinn Jones. I am available on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Friday afternoons.



Malia Norris,  
LCSW

**If you or your student could benefit from counseling, please call us.**

**[ 352.955.6840 ]**

**Ask to speak with our School Psychologist or our Mental Health Counselor.**



Lance Hastings  
M.A., M.Ed., CSP

This is my first year serving as A. Quinn Jones' school psychologist, and already I have had the pleasure of working closely with both the staff and the students. Under the leadership of Mr. Jones and Mr. Kavanaugh I have assisted in the development of a new point system, individualized interventions, and expanded counseling services to help our students make better choices about their behaviors and their learning options. I believe, as do others, that "students will do well if they can." As AQJ's psychologist, I am committed to helping each student and staff member work collaboratively in an effort to find the best way to maximize a student's strengths to overcome weaknesses that are keeping the student from reaching his or her full potential. If I can be of assistance, please feel free to call me at A Quinn Jones (352- 955-6840).



# WILDCAT CORNER



## **GERALD MOBLEY**

### **Renaissance Man of A. Quinn Jones**

When I reach the end of a long day of teaching, there are few things more peaceful to hear than Mr. Mobley's sweet tenor crooning as he makes his rounds in the hallway. As a custodian at A. Quinn Jones, Mr. Mobley maintains the health and well-being of our students and staff, but he goes far beyond the call of duty by reaching out with a friendly smile and words of wisdom for each person he meets.

Mr. Mobley is a man who wears many hats. In addition to his work at AQJ, he is a loving husband to a wife of 34 years, a father to two, and a grandfather to three. For thirty years he worked as a very successful plastering contractor, but retirement hasn't slowed him down a bit.

After building his house with his own two hands, Mobley still takes building and plastering jobs on weekends when he's not cheering on his grandsons at their baseball and football games. "My wife and I also do a lot of singing engagements with our church—programs, weddings, Valentine's Day balls. I was born with the passion to sing. I've sung the lead in numerous R&B groups as well as church groups."

Mr. Mobley is a natural family man, which is why he enjoys himself so much working in our hallways. "I love being around the A. Quinn family. I know a lot of people have been through hard times, but for me, being here isn't hard. I've done hard work before. These days I'm as happy as a fat pig in the sunshine. I enjoy my retirement, do a little work, get to be with my grandkids, and do some traveling with my wife. I'm just happy. I don't let things get me down. Anything can be put aside so that you can enjoy life."

With this philosophy, it's no wonder Mr. Mobley has such an easy time finding a song to sing to get through the workday. But he's not done working yet. Mobley feels a strong sense of duty to his community and he's willing to jump right back to work to do it. "My new goal is to get into law school so that I can become an attorney. I want to help my community, because there's a lot of people who are being taken advantage of by those with power."

His commitment to community is just one of the qualities that makes Mr. Mobley such an important part of our family here at AQJ. He inspires the staff and students alike with the wisdom he's gained over a life full of fighting battles in the name of what is right. "Knowledge is power, and that's the truth," he says. "If you gain the right knowledge, you have the power to stand on your own square." And to the students specifically, he says, "If you could just wake up and love yourselves enough to get it right and deter from the path you're on, you can turn it around and gain the knowledge to graduate so you can become a benefit to your families and to our society. Life is not waiting on you, it's passing you by. You better get it together!"

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE WHOLE A. QUINN JONES FAMILY!



PROGRESS

NOT PERFECTION.

## WILDCATS OF THE WEEK IN 2018

These students were recognized by their teachers because they exemplified our three most important expectations: Be responsible, be respectful, and be ready to learn.

Sa'Marrion Barton	Cantrell Evans	Malachi Knight	Gene Riccio	Zachary Summerhill
Solaijah Bennett	Gabrielle Faught	Jacob Lawrence	Eric Ricks	Terriana Taylor
Robert Brown	Lanetta Fleming	Jaborhi Littlejohn	Trevon Rivas	Andrick Thorpe
Lacorrin Calhoun	Tequandre Flowers	Anthony Mack	Jordan Roberts	Don-ye Washington
Takara Campbell	Madison German	Davarius Martin	Matthew Roberts	Tyvant Weldon
AJ Clayton	Elijah Hill	Brayden Merrill	Mikiah Robinson	Isaiah Wiggins-Robinson
Landon Coleman	Justice Irving	Damari Mitchell	Dennis Rowe	My'air Williams
Sh'paris Cruz	Andrea Johnson	Edward Pinkney	Jehovah Smith	Sekraun Williams
Gregory Curtis	Kendrick Johnson	Brooklyn Prescott	Kani Speed	Mikel Young
Faith Dexter	Janiya Jones	Juan Ramirez-Jackson	Leniyah Stephens	Geraldo Zayas-Velez