

The AASD Panther Tracks



Atlanta Area School for the Deaf

Volume 16, Number 1

Fall/Winter 2011



Steven Ware, Tony McFarland, Ashley Arteaga, Raybob Zinn, Dara Duggan, Audrey Shields-Cloues, Daniel Cagle, Alex Munoz, Archias Grimsley, Nathan Scott, and Aubrey Garard

Atlanta Area School for the Deaf
2011-2012
Vanessa Robisch, School Director/Principal

Helen Malone, Assistant Principal
Marie Tronolone, Assistant Principal
Kerri Watson, Assistant to the Principal

Teaching/Faculty

Instructional Support

Mary Carol Cowart, Math Instructional Coach
J.R. Roberson, Language Instructional Coach
Stacey Shapiro, Special Projects Manager
Karen Snapp

Early Childhood/Elementary

Amanda Adams	Maria Ruckel
Dara Duggan	Cynda Rosenbaum
Brenda Flanagan	Leah Seymour
Wende Grass	LaDonna Sutton
Angie Mathews	Steven Ware
Jillian Minarich	Frances Willis
Alisha Moore	

Middle School

Terynce Butts	Matt Luacka
Jennifer Chastain	Glennis Matthews
Henry Etsitty	Shelley Parker
Elyse Ferrell	Natalie Pereles
Marie Gilbert	Kim Thompson
Nyanna Harris	

High School

Reggie Bess	Dana Nave
Patty Cox	Greg Owen
Crystal Daniels	Kayleen Pugh
Emily Friedberg	Heather Rowland
Nicholas Giagios	Ashley Thompson
Jamia Green	Jessica Walker
Lara Metcalf	Chantel Watkins
Rebecca Miller-Dumet	

Bridges

Diedre Wells

Graduation/Transition

Karen Bonner
Adam Garfinkel
LeeAnn Pendergrass

Recreation/PE

Ericka Lipscomb, Recreation Director

Electives

Candace Jones, Health/Social Skills
Ben Smith, Physical Education
Andrea Waterstone, Drama/Art
Michelle Weaver-Fudge, Technology

Paraprofessionals

Krista Coggins	Joyce Miller
Shamia Freeman	Audrey Shields-Cloues
Mathew Gunnels	Patty Spurlin
Karisha Hurlbut	LaRhonda Strickland
Franchesca Johnson	Darlene Thomas
April Malyski	Danielle Valenza

Communication/Speech

Stephnie Booher, Lead
Katie Boyd
Kimberly Sherman
Wendy Wolf

Educational Support Staff

Amy Cohen-Efron, School Psychologist
Lisa Stevens, Behavior Intervention Assisstant

Media Technology, Joyce Fongbemi

Media Center

Kathy Hope, Media Specialist

Accessible Materials Project

Sandy Huston, Project Manager
Tina Caloud, ASL Specialist
Michael Clegg, Video Editor

Office Manager, Andrea Johnson

Shelly Glenn, Secretary
Tamecia Wright, Personnel Technician

Business Office

Annie Franklin, Administrative Operations Specialist
Robin Jones, Financial Operations Coordinator
Westley Roberson, Central Supply Coordinator

Food Services

May Helen Johnson, Manager
Bertha Hughes, Line Supervisor
Lynette Rodgers
Shawn Simpson
Francine Thompson

Maintenance

Robert Calloway, Skilled Utility Worker
Cameron Forte
Niki Johnson
Fernandez Maloyd
Jarvis Ross

Student Services & Operations Coordinator, Don Galloway

Doug Johnson, Operation Analysis Technician
Carrie Kalberg, Program Associate

Diagnostic and Evaluation Unit

Gray McKenzie, Educational Diagnostician
Dr. Maura Meehan, Lead Audiologist
Lori Schmidt, School Psychologist
Dr. Andrea Thow, Audiologist

Interpreting Services

Donna Flanders, Sign Language Interpreter
Nella Ginocchio, Spanish Interpreter

Health and Social Work Services

Dona Harris, School Social Worker, Homeless Liaison
Coordinator, Parent Involvement Coordinator
Carolyn Harris, School Nurse

Occupational/Physical Therapy

Humera Savaja, OT

State Testing and Assessments/Response to Intervention

Amanda Chilvers, State Testing and Assessments Coordinator

Technology

Ali Rashad, Systems Analyst
Katrina Davison, Micro Systems Support Technician

Professional Learning

Gail Allen, Professional Learning Coordinator



Georgia PINES

Alice Stanley, Program Manager
Karmon Cain, Administrative Assistant
Lynn McFarland, SKI-HI Coordinator
Kitt Meaders, INSITE/VIISA Coordinator

GMIC

Jim Downs, Program Manager
April Calloway, Program Associate
Yanique Norman, Secretary
Vacant, Program Specialist

*Excellence Everyday;
That's the Panther Way*



Atlanta Area School for the Deaf
890 North Indian Creek Drive
Clarkston, Georgia 30021
404-296-7101 (Voice)
866-640-8678 (VP)
404-299-4485 (FAX)

Publication Staff

Editor.....Stephnie Booher

Staff Writers.....Amanda Adams, Karen Bonner, Stephnie Booher, Dara Duggan, Elyse Ferrell, Don Galloway, Nick Giagios, Dona Harris, Kathy Hope, Carrie Kalberg, Dana Nave, Greg Owen, LeeAnn Pendergrass, Natalie Pereles, Kayleen Pugh, Vanessa Robisch, Lori Schmidt, Stacey Shapiro, Alice Stanley, Ashley Thompson, Jessica Walker

Table of Contents

Principal’s Corner.....2	To Catch a Bully.....14
Welcome Newly-Enrolled Students.....2	Middle School Bowling Trip.....14
Welcome New AASD Staff.....3	Letters to the Troops.....14
Exciting New Initiative at AASD.....3	Will Vanessa Robisch Kiss a Pig?.....15
SES Saturdays.....3	MARTA Cards for Transportation.....15
Summer Fun Will Return Summer 2012.....4	Notes from the Library.....16
Halloween and Trick-or-Treating.....6	Reading Buddies.....17
Halloween Costume Day.....6	Career Awareness Day.....18
Pajama Day.....7	Internships.....18
Mix Match Day.....8	Parent Involvement Program.....19
Support Your Favorite Team Day.....9	Georgia PINES.....19
Fall Festival Pep Rally.....10	Soccer.....20
Fall Festival 2011.....11	Volleyball.....21
Fall/Winter Activities.....12	Winter/Spring School Calendar.....22

Welcome New AASD Staff

We are happy to welcome a number of new staff to AASD this year. The early childhood and elementary departments are happy to have **Wende Grass** and **Maria Ruckel** join them as classroom teachers. Middle school welcomes new teachers **Terynce Butts**, **Henry Etsitty**, and **Glennis Matthews**. The high school department is happy to add **Nicholas Giagios**, **Lara Metcalf**, and **Rebecca Miller-Dumet**. The paraprofessionals are happy to have **Matthew Gunnels** and **Karisha Hurlbut** join them. The kitchen staff is glad to welcome back a familiar face as **Francine Thompson** rejoins us, and maintenance welcomes **Cameron Forte** and **Niki Johnson**. Last, but not least, the technology department is thrilled to have **Katrina Davison** on board. Please offer a warm welcome to all our new AASD family!

.....

Exciting New Initiative at AASD!

This fall, AASD was excited to launch the start of our Language & Literacy Planning Initiative (LLPI). As part of our school improvement plan, this project is funded by our school improvement grant. The initiative is the result of the School Improvement Plan's push to examine best language and literacy practice for Deaf students and implement a plan that will enable AASD to be a comprehensive ASL/English Bilingual Education Program. Dr. Stephen Nover, Director of the Language Planning Institute at Gallaudet University and former CAEBER developer and director, along with Nancy Kelly-Jones, teacher of 35 years and language planning mentor of 15 years, have been engaged to consult with AASD's project coordinator Stacey Shapiro on the implementation of the plan. Twelve AASD staff members are participating in an intensive staff development program (ASL/English Bilingual Professional Development AEBPD) that consists of four semesters of learning led by Dr. Nover and Ms. Kelly-Jones. Dr. Nover's expertise in the bilingual education of deaf children and the associated research and practice along with Ms. Kelly-Jones' years of experience mentoring and implementing successful bilingual classrooms sets the stage for the weekly seminars led by Dr. Nover and coaching led by Ms.

Kelly-Jones. The LLPI also includes a planning team comprised of AASD stakeholders that includes AASD teachers, administrators, coaches, parents, psychologists as well as, outside university representation and GA PINES Early Intervention staff who, together with the consultants, will examine the plan for AASD and implement steps for full school-wide cultural and programmatic change. The team will also look for ways to extend beyond AASD as we move forward. The LLPI also includes an administrative planning team that provides support to the AEBPD participants so they can experiment with new strategies, become leaders within the AASD environment, and serve as change agents. This is an exciting time in AASD history as we create and pioneer a project that will impact our program in a huge positive way and has the possibility for replication at schools across the country. For more information about the LLPI, contact Stacey Shapiro, Project Coordinator, at: sshapiro@doe.k12.ga.us

.....

SES Saturdays

What are you doing on Saturdays? Could you be having fun and learning more? YES! Bring your family and come to SES. It's a great time to get some extra practice on your school work and you get to work with your family. You can teach them more sign language and what you are learning at school. Upcoming SES Dates are 12/3, 1/7, 1/21, 2/4, 2/25, 3/10, 3/24, and 4/14. SES is from 10am-2pm. If you have not signed up, please ask your teacher for an SES form or contact Amanda Adams Lee.



Blair Roberts works with Kayleen Pugh on ASL facial expression.

Summer Fun Will Return Summer 2012!

In the summer of 2011, we launched a new summer program we called Summer Fun! With a combination of cooperative learning and language activities set in the backdrop of the nationally acclaimed Science Olympiad, we created a week long program where students participated in problem solving, strategy development, and hands-on activities with a science theme. Teams participated in events where a problem or project was to be solved or created given specific materials and criteria to earn points. Last summer's activities included: creating protection to drop an egg from a second story height without breaking it; creating soda bottle rockets that could stay airborne for an extended period of time; building a tower with a restricted set of supplies that could hold a designated amount of weight without collapsing; creating and floating clay boats to see which could hold the most items without sinking; building bridges out of pasta that could hold 20-30 pounds of weight; as well as participating in an assortment of science labs. It was challenging, visual, creative, and most of all fun!

We are excited that this coming summer 2012 we will be offering our Summer Fun week again and extending it to a limited number of non-AASD students for a fee. Information will be available at the start of 2012. If you have any questions about Summer Fun contact Stacey Shapiro at: sshapiro@doe.k12.ga.us.



Kristen, Janelle, and Erika protect their egg with bubble wrap..



Which boat will hold the most items without sinking?



Students get instructions for building a rocket.



Marcina and Manuel work on their tower base.



This strange guy showed up to get us going each morning!



This team used lots of glue on their pasta bridge, and they won!



Nicholas Peppers prepares to launch his team's rocket.



Matt led the students through science experiments in the lab.



Christain follows instruction from Kristen to assemble the toy.



A great day for water balloons



The Wolf Team shows off their awards.



Summer Fun, June 2011



Prizes for the top campers

Halloween and Trick-or-Treating

The tradition here at AASD has been for the preschool classes to dress up in their Halloween finest and hit the halls of the school for Trick-or-Treating. This year was no exception, although we had to scale back our number of stops so that we would not interrupt classroom instruction time. The students brought their own costumes from home and this year we had a fireman, Woody and Buzz Light Year, a super girl hero, Sponge Bob, and a pirate. The students practiced signing, “Trick-or-treat” at each stop and then signing “thank you” after they were given their treat. Once we made it back to the classroom, each student looked through his/her bag of goodies and picked out the favorite one to eat right away.

The faculty and staff are always very generous in supporting the annual trick-or-treating and this year was no exception. A huge thank you goes out to everyone who helped to provide a wonderful and safe trick-or-treating experience for the students.



Halloween Costume Day



A very spooky pumpking head



The Ninja Turtles return.



Even the teachers got into the fun.



A Transformer arrives for breakfast.



Cute Lady Bugs



Makayla is a disco queen.

Pajama Day



Nilah and Pablo are comfy in their PJs.



Tam is pretty in her pink bathrobe.



Ms. Waterstone is still asleep.



Shamia and Glennis look ready to face the day.



The middle school staff are relaxed.



Manuel Magana likes his Spiderman pajamas.

Mismatch Day



Early childhood staff play along.



Hey, your shoes don't match!



Marqesha Turner and Tiana Miles are stylishly mixed up.



Greg Owen matches his hair to his tie.



Andrea Waterstone artfully mixes it up.

Support Your Favorite Team Day



Can'Vashia is a cute Bulldog fan.



Matt Gunnels supports the LSU Tigers.



Jorge Moralas for the Lakers



Elizabeth for the Falcons



Colin is a Lions man.



Sammy is true to UGA.

Fall Festival Pep Rally



The early childhood marching band opened the festivities.



The Panther Pep Squad entertains us with some smooth dancing.



The AASD Panther was on hand for the fun.



Amber Sheppard and Lavan Hood, Fall Festival Queen and King



The crowd roars.



Marrie Tronolone announces the Fall Festival King and Queen.



Cute Pep Squad members



Fall Festival 2011

AASD celebrated its' 20th annual Fall Festival on Saturday, November 5th. We kicked off the celebration with an awesome spirit week leading up to the big event! The students and staff had a great time dressing up for each day's theme. On Monday, October 31, everyone wore Halloween costumes, of course! What fun it was to see all the creative costumes! Tuesday we were all comfy in our PJs for the day. Wednesday was our traditional tacky day with people mixing everything from strips and plaids to crazy shoe combinations. Thursday everyone supported their favorite sports team showing off their favorite hats and T-shirts. Friday, as always, was AASD school spirit day and our Panther Pride showed all over the school.



Jessica Walker's daughter, Vivian, takes a pony ride.

We had an awesome Pep Rally on Thursday, led by our hilarious Master of Ceremonies, Greg Owen. The preschool children paraded and grooved around in the gym to get us in the spirit. Our Pep Squad showed off their new uniforms as well as some great dance moves! Last, but not least, our high school court elected **Lavan Hood** and **Amber Sheppard** Fall Festival King and Queen! Congratulations!



The clown and the AASD Panther

The weather was beautiful for our big event on Saturday, and we had an amazing turnout of students, staff, friends, families, former students, and members of the community. Participants enjoyed carnival games, huge moon bounces, a giant slide, horse-back riding, rock climbing, and a clown! The festival goers also rocked to great music provided by a DJ and feasted on popcorn, Little Caesar's Pizza, burritos from Moe's, and Coca-Cola products! The vendors' section was packed full of a variety of items for people to buy, and we offered even more goodies for sale in the Silent Auction.

Thanks to everyone for a wonderful Fall Festival 2011. We are looking forward to another fabulous festival next year! If you are interested in helping out, reserving a booth as a vendor, or donating items for our Silent Auction next year, please contact Carrie Kalberg at: ckalberg@doe.k12.ga.us and phone # 866-639-0470.

Our next Fall Festival will be on Saturday, November 3, 2012. Be sure to stop by next year! The proceeds from this year's festival will go to our Parent/Teacher Involvement Committee fund. We had many volunteers from different areas, and we are grateful for their help! We must also thank our Fall Festival Committee members for making this year's festival so successful!



Students enjoy the activities.

Fall/Winter Activities



Elementary students explain the three Rs.



Ashley Arteaga



Alex watches TV.



Da'Nayia Haynes-Robinson



Areana, McKenzie, and Madison



LeeAnn explains it all to Monserrat.



Aidan Black



A perfect Kodak moment



Brandon Perkins



Christopher



Marty Ziegler enjoys his breakfast.



Will Hanners



Taja and Tymera on for the first day of school



Aaron Sosa



This is Evan's morning look.



Ms. Friedberg and her students get the greenhouse going.



Fermin Liborio



Ms. Cox, running late?



The many colors of Owen's hair



Anthony and Anthony are ready for Halloween.



Alex Valdez sews a backpack bag.



Dressed for success



The 2011-2012 AASD Basketball Team



The Panther Pep Squad

To Catch a Bully

Elyse Ferrell's and Kenneth Bryant's classes had a lot of fun supporting PBIS during class meetings and learning to use the new bully incident reporting procedure. The students went around the school and used flip cameras to film various bullying scenarios in different locations. Then we came back to the room, watched a video, and filled out a mock bully reporting form to match the incident that we witnessed. It's been fun and educational, and we think we may have a few future film stars in the 8th grade! (Please limit your autograph requests to before and after school.)



Ms. Thompson's class



The whole middle school group

Middle School Bowling Trip

As part of our PBIS behavior program at AASD middle school students earn Panther Dollars by showing Respect, Responsibility, and Readiness. Students who earned a total of \$750 Panther Dollars were rewarded with a bowling field trip to Stars and Strikes Bowling Alley. We bowled several games, enjoyed a pizza lunch, and played games in the arcade. It was a great time and everyone is motivated to earn the skating trip planned for February, 2012.



Glennis's students are having fun.



Marie has fun with her girls.

Letters to the Troops

AASD joined forces with the Bert Show and Q100 radio station this month to write letters to American troops serving overseas. The goal was to send 400,000 hand-written letters thanking our servicemen and women for their sacrifices and to wish them a Happy Thanksgiving. Thanks go to the many classes, teachers, and staff members at AASD who wrote letters. AASD contributed over 190 handwritten letters!



DeShon donates food for the Atlanta Community Food Bank.

Will Vanessa Robisch Kiss a Pig?

This fall, the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf rolled out a fantastic new program, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS). We are focusing on making sure that school-wide we provide clear expectations and reinforce appropriate behaviors. This national program is seen to increase student independence, confidence, and school achievement. Our established behavioral expectations include expectations for all areas in the school but our general AASD Panther Pride consists of what we call the 3Rs – Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Ready. We have also implemented a reward or incentive system called “GOTCHA!” where we (teacher/staff) catch each other and students following the expectations. When we catch people doing the right thing they receive GOTCHA tickets that they can trade in for assorted rewards/prizes. We kicked off the school year with a focus on GOTCHAs, and during the months of August and September 4,500 GOTCHAs were given to the students school-wide. We challenged the students to earn more GOTCHAs and when we reach 7,500 our principal, Vanessa Robisch, will kiss a pig! So far, the count is 5,500... Our principal has gladly taken up this challenge and is looking forward to smooching a pig! We will keep you posted!



.....

MARTA Cards for Transportation

In October, AASD transition coordinators **Karen Bonner**, **Adam Garfinkel**, and **Ashley Thompson** took 25 high and middle school students on a field trip to experience the MARTA public transportation system and to apply for half-fare cards. Before the trip the students were challenged to find the easiest route from the bus stop on Indian Creek Drive in front of the

school to the MARTA Five Points station. They rose to the challenge and we had no trouble arriving at Five Points. When we arrived, the students applied for and received their half-fare cards. After a fun lunch at a nearby McDonald’s, the students navigated our way back to AASD. The benefits of this trip included exposing students to the possibilities that public transportation has to offer, successfully obtaining half-fare cards, and encouraging students to think and act independently. These students were successful with their navigation skills and we had a great time!



Waiting for the train



Adam, Ashley, and Karen, the transition coaches



We got our MARTA cards.

Notes from the Library

Fall is here and our elementary and middle school students have been busy reading and cooking. As a reward for meeting their fall reading goals students from preschool to the 8th grade came to the library and learned to make “Apple Hand Pies.” Kathy Hope read them a story about her first time eating apple pie. She was 5 years old and visited her grandmother who worked in an elementary school cafeteria. Her grandmother had made apple pie and when Kathy tasted it she was hooked. The students loved their pies and maybe they are now hooked on apple pie and reading!

We have added many new titles to the library collection this fall. Graphic novels have really caught on and our students are gobbling them up. These are not the comic books we remember from our childhood. These are real books telling real stories. Graphic novels link pictures directly with words and are really a help to our students reading comprehension.

We have also added lots of signed books and DVD sets from AMP, AASD’s Accessible Materials Project, to our library collection. These sets combine a book with a signed telling of the story on DVD. These sets are available to AASD students and their families through library check-out.

The best way to improve reading is to read. Please read with your children and encourage them to read every day. You are not limited to books. Billboards, TV captions, cereal boxes, texting on phones, street signs, and many more things to read are everywhere and free. Use them to help improve your child’s vocabulary and reading comprehension!



Kathy Hope tells the story of her first apple pie.



First we read the directions.



Tymera cuts the apples.



Quincy and Aaron roll the dough.

Reading Buddies

Over the last few months, you may have seen elementary students greeting high school seniors in the hallways and asking the seniors when they are coming to the elementary school again. The inspired seniors smile with pleasure and answer the youngsters, always invoking excited responses from the elementary students. What makes our elementary students want to see the seniors? The high school seniors in ELA have been visiting the elementary school twice a week to read books to various classes. The elementary students are fixated with the seniors, looking up to them as reading and signing role-models. The Reading Buddies program was spearheaded this year by Ms. Dana Nave's class working with Ms. Kim Thompson's class. Impressed by the achievement of Ms. Nave and Thompson's collaboration, Mr. Nick Giagios and Ms. Jessica Walker quickly adopted the idea for their own senior ELA classes. Mr. Giagios's students work with Ms. Amanda Adams, Ms. Angie Matthews, and Ms. Leah Seymour.

Another elementary teacher, Ms. Maria Ruckel, learned of the program and asked Mr. Greg Owen's class if they would participate with her students. The results have been wonderful. The seniors are learning valuable skills while developing independence and confidence, and the elementary students are learning through literacy. The program is making strides and both teachers and students are motivated to keep it going. There are sparks of inspiration in the eyes of the children, and our seniors are holding their heads up high with success.



Chris Sims watches as D'Miracle Swint reads.



Evan Ferguson tells a story to the group.



Lucy Merlo reads to the elementary boys.



Jose Agaton works with Christopher Morales.



Jessica Orozco helps Eddie Beasley with his vocabulary.

Career Awareness Day

The Transition Department recently established a monthly Career Awareness Day with the goal of increasing awareness of employment opportunities available to AASD students. It is not often that our students get an opportunity to meet a successful deaf adult who holds a steady job in the competitive workforce.

The Transition Department invited Jessica Sherry, former AASD student and now a full time employee at Publix Supermarket, to participate in Career Awareness Day. Ms. Sherry has been employed as a baker with Publix for the past twelve years.

Ms. Sherry talked with middle school and high school students about what it is like working with hearing people, and about how she has been able to overcome communication barriers at her workplace. She encouraged the students not to give up on their dreams and not to let others take away their dignity. Ms. Sherry also urged students to consider volunteering first before looking for an entry level position. Volunteering at a workplace is a great way to gain experience and to prove to a company that a deaf student is capable of doing the same job as their hearing peers. The students were also given the opportunity to participate in the discussion and they all had good questions for the presenter. The students left the meeting with a powerful message- knowing that there is a bright future ahead of them.



Internships

Some AASD students have internships at Publix grocery store in the produce department. We restock fruits and vegetables, check for out-dated grocery items, clean out any expired produce, as well as keep the general area tidy. Sometimes we work in the freezer or in the kitchen, and sometimes we work on the produce floor. We also have one student who works bagging groceries. Publix is very grateful for our contributions and we are grateful they allow us to work with them.



Alex Valdez stocks produce at Publix.



Shanae Grant bags groceries at Publix.

Other students have internships at Piccadilly restaurant. We complete a variety of tasks including cleaning tables, rolling silverware, washing dishes, and filling up the ice in the coke machines. We also work in the bakery and in the prep stations preparing the restaurant for opening. Piccadilly and its employees have been so accepting of us and really take pride in teaching us how to do the work correctly. Sometimes they even give us treats like a slice of cake that we helped prepare! We are so happy to have the opportunity to partner with Piccadilly.



Renisha Watkins rolls silverware at Piccadilly.

Parent Involvement Program

AASD's Parent Involvement Program (PIP) team is made up of five dedicated members who strive to engage parents to become involved in the academic and social achievements of their child. **Maria "Nella" Ginocchio** is the bi-lingual interpreter. Nella has worked at AASD for 17 years and has built a strong, caring relationship with all of the families she assists. **Shelly Glenn** is the Parent Liaison with the program. Shelly speaks fluent Spanish and frequently partners with Nella to interpret for our parents. Shelly's role is to help establish community relationships for community sign language classes and to facilitate the AASD Volunteer Program. **Dona Harris** is the School Social Worker/Parent Involvement Coordinator/Homeless Liaison. Dona has 15 years with AASD and believes a strong parent base is the foundation of a strong school. **Diane Pickett** started with the school approximately 4 years ago as a volunteer and has grown to be an invaluable member of our staff. Diane maintains the organization of the program and helps to facilitate one of the new Siblings of Deaf Youth (SODY) groups. **Deshonda Washington** is the Parent Mentor and joined the program about a year ago. Deshonda works to support, educate, and empower parents regarding the academic success of their child.

The PIP team hosts the Parent Involvement Program on Saturdays while the students receive SES tutoring. We are collaborating with the PBIS program. The PBIS team will share information with the PIP group on January 7th and March 10th. Amy Cohen Efron, AASD's school psychologist, developed our Siblings of Deaf Youth program. This program focuses on engaging the siblings of AASD students to discuss how they feel about having a deaf/hard of hearing sibling, as well as how they feel about their relationship within the family. February will bring workshops on technology and IEP rights and process. March 24th is a collaborative conference with GA PINES. We will invite parents from mainstream schools and various programs that service special needs students. April 14th is planned for a Community Benefit Walk. We will encourage everyone to join us in support of the Parent Involvement Program. Finally, May 5th, we will have our second Parent/Volunteer Celebration!

Georgia PINES

Georgia Parent Infant Network for Educational Services (Georgia PINES) is a statewide early intervention program that has been serving families of children with sensory loss since 1980. Georgia PINES currently serves over 500 families and has almost 200 contractors who serve as Parent Advisors. Georgia PINES conducts a family workshop for parents and early intervention professionals annually. This year, in conjunction with Georgia Sensory Assistance Project (GSAP), Georgia PINES is pleased to present its 26th annual family workshop on January 28, 2012 at the Georgia Academy for the Blind in Macon, and on March 24, 2012 at AASD. Workshop sessions include presentations on sensory loss and parent emotions, making books fun and accessible for children with sensory loss, creating listening and reading activities to promote literacy, getting ready for Braille-vocabulary and concept development, and how to improve the quality of interactions with the child's hearing healthcare providers. The Clarkston workshop will collaborate with the AASD Family Involvement Program and will add sessions on applying for the Katie Beckett Medicaid Waiver, promoting communication for children with dual sensory loss, and other topics. Siblings of children with special needs will have their own Sibshop activities and parents will meet based on the disability of their children in Mom to Mom and Dad to Dad sessions. Spanish interpretation is available upon request. Professionals will have a session on Supporting Language, Literacy, and Academics through Accessible Materials. Participants can obtain either PLU or SCEIs credit. Georgia PINES-GSAP Family Workshop will truly have something for everyone.

This year, Georgia PINES has started a new holiday initiative. Georgia PINES contractors and staff are donating money to help Georgia PINES families in need. Georgia PINES has selected 20 families based on nominations by their parent advisor. Each family will receive a \$50.00 gift card from Wal-Mart. Other exciting news about Georgia PINES includes a tele-intervention pilot project, collaboration with AASD to provide Deaf Mentors as tutors for AASD families, and continuing our Listening Talking Kids Program.



S O C C E R



The AASD soccer team had a great season this year. We were extremely proud to finish in 2nd place in the regular season standings for our division. Captains for the soccer team this year were **Marvin Marquez** and **Luis Naranjo**. Our top scoring players were **Luis Naranjo**, who scored 15 goals and **Hugo Soto** with 12 goals. **Moise Gatua-Ngamou** and **Marvin Marquez** were our defensive leaders. The other soccer players were **Deion Harvey King**, **Antonio Jackson**, **Eziquiel Mixcotal**, **Juan Ortiz**, **Rosa Perez**, **Julio Reyes**, **Cordell Richards**, **Donte Stanley**, **Alex Turner**, **Nsikak Umoren**, **Lysett Uvalle**, and **De'Shon Walker**. Many thanks go to the coaches, **Natalie Pereles** and **Ben Smith**, and to the parents for their constant support. We are looking forward to another great season in 2012!



Moise follows as Juan moves the ball down the field.



The 2011 AASD Soccer Team



Hugo Soto evades the other team.



Teamwork!



AASD plays against Brandon Hall.



Volleyball



Our AASD volleyball team started off this year with fireworks. We are especially proud of our team of only six players. We do not have enough players to allow our girls even a brief rest during a game. All six girls played the whole game every game. The girls struggled and fought and did their best all the way to the end without any substitutes. That is teamwork and determination at its best!

Besides a shortage of players, we also overcame transportation obstacles. We often went to the away games with no bus driver available. We managed to get rides from our parents and friends to most of the games. But the girls' "tough little hearts" found their way to success. We entered the Atlanta Athletic Conference (AAC) tournament and won 3rd place! We were all so proud because we have never placed in the AAC tournament before this year!

The members of this year's team were: **Denetrice Arnold, Xylinda Collins, Xylonda Collins, Camry McCaleb, Jaquisha New, and Amber Sheppard**, with **Jessica Santiago** as their team manager, and their coaches, **Kayleen Pugh** and **Emily Friedberg**. Congratulations on a great season!



Camry McCaleb and Xylinda Collins



Everyone waits as Amber Sheppard serves.



The team huddles before the game.



The girls have a serious discussion about strategy.



We are so proud of our trophy!

Atlanta Area School for the Deaf
January 3 – May 29, 2012

January 3	Tuesday	Teacher Workday, Students do not report to school
January 4	Wednesday	2 nd Semester begins, <u>Students report</u> to school
January 16	Monday	Martin Luther King Day No School, Administrative Offices Closed
February 17	Friday	Teacher Workday, Students do not report to school
February 20	Monday	Mid - Winter Break No School for Students/200/210 Day Staff Administrative Offices Open
March 16	Friday	Teacher Workday, Students do not report to school
April 2 – 6	Mon – Fri	Spring Break No School for Students/200/210 Day Staff Administrative Offices Open
May 25	Friday	Last Day of School *10:45 Graduation
May 28	Monday	Memorial Day Holiday Administrative Offices Closed