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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Ruckel Middle School Dedicates Cafetorium in Honor of Former Principal Dr. Ginny Morgan**

Today, Ruckel Middle School held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially name its new cafetorium The Dr. Ginny Morgan Cafetorium, honoring the beloved late principal whose decades of leadership and service left a lasting impact on the school and the Okaloosa County School District. The Okaloosa County School Board unanimously approved the naming in August. Superintendent Marcus Chambers, along with district leaders, current and retired school staff, students, family, and friends, gathered to celebrate Dr. Morgan's profound legacy. Dr. Virginia "Ginny" Henderson Morgan began her career at Ruckel in 1968 as a middle school math teacher. She later served as the district's math supervisor before returning as principal, a role in which she transformed the school academically and culturally. She passed away on February 15, 2024, at the age of 76.

Superintendent Marcus Chambers, who was hired by Dr. Morgan in 1998, reflected on her influence. "Dr. Morgan was a principal, but more importantly, she was an educator through and through," Chambers said. "She shaped the careers of countless teachers and leaders, including my own. Her guiding question, 'What is best for students?' continues to echo through the halls of Ruckel and throughout our district." During her tenure, Dr. Morgan introduced innovative programs such as the International Baccalaureate and "Alternatives to Learning," championed a collaborative teacher-led effort to define student core values, and emphasized her "three A's," Academics, Arts, and Athletics. She built a school culture centered on high expectations, student engagement, and community partnership. Her leadership attracted top educators and coaches, helping make Ruckel one of the most sought-after middle schools in the region.

Ruckel Principal Joe Jannazo stated, "As we officially dedicate this new facility, we ensure that her name and her impact will remain at the heart of Ruckel Middle School for generations to come. The Dr. Ginny Morgan Cafetorium will stand not only as a building, but as a living reminder of a leader who believed deeply in students, deeply in staff, and deeply in the power of school community." Her husband of 56 years, Dr. David Morgan, spoke proudly about his wife, joined by their daughter-in-law and granddaughter. Lily Morgan, who was honored to share memories of her grandmother, reflected on their many conversations and the stories her grandmother loved to tell from her years in education. "My grandma knew what she wanted and wasn't afraid to ask for it. This quality is what I think made her such a great leader and principal, and the ability to effortlessly command a room," stated Lily Morgan.

Today, Dr. Morgan's influence continues through the mentoring culture she established, the core values she helped define, and the programs she championed, foundations that have supported Ruckel's sustained excellence for more than three decades. The naming of the cafetorium stands as a lasting tribute to her vision, leadership, and unwavering dedication to the students of Okaloosa County.

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