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For Immediate Release:

Oxford Named GSCS 2021-22 District-Wide Teacher of the Year

GRIFFIN, GA –Jordan Hill Elementary Teacher Aprille Oxenford was named the Griffin-Spalding County School System (GSCS) 2021-22 District-Wide Teacher of the Year. Oxenford will go on to represent the district as she competes for the 2023 Georgia Teacher of the Year. Oxenford was surprised with the news in her classroom on Friday, October 29, and will be recognized at the Griffin-Spalding Board of Education meeting on Wednesday, November 3. You can watch the video of the surprise here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DITplQ_VR9k



Pictured (L-R): Executive Director of Student Support Services Dr. Norman Sauce, Executive Director of Communications & Partnerships Adam Pugh, Special Education Coordinator Dr. Kateisa Engram, Jordan Hill Elementary Dottie English, Executive Officer of Elementary Education Cynthia Jewell, Jordan Hill Elementary Special Education Teacher and GSCS 2021-22 District Teacher of the Year Aprille Oxenford, Superintendent Keith Simmons, Jordan Hill Elementary Special Education Paraprofessional Helena Taylor, Special Education Director Charles Kelley and Jordan Hill Elementary Assistant Principal Jonathan McGavin

Oxenford has been a special education educator for 16 years. She currently teaches students with severe or profound disabilities, in kindergarten through second grade at Jordan Hill Elementary. During the 2020-2021 school year, she served as the virtual teacher for students with severe or profound disabilities in kindergarten through 12th grade.

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Oxenford received her Bachelor of Arts in Education, Master of Education and Specialist in Education all from the University of West Georgia.

“Mrs. Oxenford’s work with the severe and profound exceptional students is second to none. She looks at challenges as opportunities. She sees the potential in all of her students. And she works to help them to be successful. After working with Mrs. Oxenford for four years, I can attest to the great work she does with each and every child that comes under her care. Watching students light up as they learn new things cannot truly be put into words. Being able to observe a student learning to speak, and then that same student being able to read words Mrs. Oxenford has taught them; is an experience you won't soon forget. I've always seen teaching as a calling. I believe being able to inspire our exceptional students is a mission only a few are able to accomplish. Mrs. Oxenford is among those few and her humble spirit as she carries out her life's work is noteworthy,” wrote a Jordan Hill Elementary administrator.

GSCS Superintendent Keith L. Simmons stated, “Mrs. Oxenford is passionate, professional and student-centered. I am confident that she will represent our district in a positive and professional manner. I want to thank the selection committee for their time and efforts in conducting interviews and observations during this process. I also want to acknowledge Mr. Christopher Bailey of Griffin High and Ms. Shwanda Dukes of Cowan Road Middle for being finalists for this recognition.”

Candidates from all 19 schools completed applications and were scored by outside evaluators. Christopher Bailey of Griffin High School, Shwanda Dukes from Cowan Road Middle School and Aprille Oxenford from Jordan Hill Elementary School, were named finalists on September 7. Interviews and classroom observations with the finalists were conducted by a panel of judges to determine the Teacher of the Year.

Sponsored by the Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Teacher of the Year Program annually recognizes outstanding public-school teachers at both local and state levels. This is a prestigious award program focused on excellence in teaching.

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