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

### **Two Richmond County students named to State Superintendent's 2025-2026 Student Advisory Council**

(AUGUSTA, GEORGIA) – Two Richmond County School System have earned a place on State School Superintendent Richard Woods' 2025–2026 Student Advisory Council, selected from more than 1,200 applicants across Georgia.

Justin Jones, an 11th-grade student at the Academy of Richmond County High School, and Pilar McClain, an 11th-grade student at A.R. Johnson Health Science and Engineering Magnet School, are among 79 high school students statewide chosen to advise the superintendent on education policy, represent their peers as ambassadors, and participate in service projects to support schools and communities.

"Justin and Pilar represent the incredible talent, leadership, and dedication of Richmond County students," said Dr. Malinda Cobb, superintendent of schools. "Their voices will help shape conversations about education in Georgia, and we are proud to see them representing our district at the state level."

Throughout the school year, the Student Advisory Council will meet with Superintendent Woods to provide feedback on how state policies affect classrooms. Members will also take part in service projects that build leadership skills, promote civic responsibility and encourage continued community involvement beyond their council term. In addition, Jones and McClain will serve on Superintendent Dr. Malinda Cobb's Student Advisory Council, helping connect state-level discussions to the Richmond County School System.

Council members were selected based on their responses to essay questions addressing current education issues such as curriculum and graduation requirements, mandated assessments, teacher recruitment and retention, and equitable access to opportunities for students in rural areas.

The 2025–2026 Student Advisory Council includes students from each of Georgia's Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) regions, representing rural, suburban, and urban schools. The first council meeting will be held in November at the Georgia Department of Education in Atlanta.

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*Photos courtesy of the Richmond County School System.*



*Pilar McClain, 11<sup>th</sup> grade, A.R. Johnson Health Science and Engineering Magnet School*



*Justin Jones, 11<sup>th</sup> grade, Academy of Richmond County High School (ARC)*