



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mathletes fare well in competition; Highlands Junior team to compete at state level

The MATHCOUNTS program in Goose Creek CISD has hit a new high. "Mathletes" spend countless hours calculating equations, learning formulas, and doing high school level mathematics to prepare. Fifty Goose Creek CISD students participated in the Second annual MATHCOUNTS District competition on Jan. 29, and 36 advanced to the Bay Area MATHCOUNTS competition.

The junior school competitions – in which students test their skills in a fast-paced "bee"-style competition – aim to spark an interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Started by the National Society of Professional Engineers and the National Council of Teacher of Mathematics, the MATHCOUNTS program is not about tedious math work and basic calculations. Instead, it celebrates the problem-solving, creative and applied side of math where equations and formulas can offer solutions for everyday life. Students compete both as individuals and as teams of four.

In each competition students compete in four rounds. In the sprint round, students have 40 minutes to solve 30 problems. The target round consists of 4 rounds in which students are challenged to solve 2 problems in 6 minutes. The team round lasts 20 minutes, and students collaboratively complete a 10-question exam. Depending on their individual score, finalists can advance to the Jeopardy-like countdown/final round.

Eight schools competed in the Bay Area chapter MATHCOUNTS competition on Saturday, Feb. 26. Out of the 60 competitors, 36 were from the five Goose Creek CISD junior high schools – Baytown, Cedar Bayou, Gentry, Highlands, and Horace Mann.

The Highlands Junior team, coached by Michelle Williams, placed second in the team round. They qualified to advance to the state competition in Austin on March 26. The winner circle includes: Kyrie Yong, Pooja Bhula, Chinmayee Kulkarni, and Erika Padilla. Students around the district are cheering on the advancing "mathletes" in hopes of going to MATHCOUNTS Nationals in May in Washington, D.C.

The Gentry Junior team, coached by Laura Heinrich, placed fourth. The team includes Nathan Kelly, Ayesha Patel, Cameron Jackson, and Akila Patel.

Goose Creek CISD had four students that placed in the top 25 percent of the competition: Kyrie Yong of Highlands Junior placed fifth; Pooja Bhula also from Highlands Junior placed 11th; Nathan Kelley of Gentry placed 12th; and Kayla Stears of Cedar Bayou placed 13th.

"The implementation of the District's MATHCOUNTS program has been a collaborative effort between our Superintendent Dr. Toby York, our professional and industry partners such as the Bay Area Chapter of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers, ExxonMobil, and Community Resource Credit Union, community leaders such as Spencer Carnes, Tucker Coughlin, and Connie Tilton, as well as the District's math department," said Jacqueline Shuman, Goose Creek CISD's Coordinator of Mathematics K-12.



The Highlands Junior MATHCOUNTS team, coached by Michelle Williams, placed second in the team round in the Bay Area chapter MATHCOUNTS competition on Saturday, Feb. 26. They qualified to advance to the state competition in Austin on March 26. From left are Williams, Kyrie Yong, Chinmayee Kulkarni, Pooja Bhula, Geovanna Arguelles, and Noel Arrellano. [Photo Gallery](#)

"Because of the community effort realized through the implementation of this program, GCCISD junior school students are being given the means to soar beyond their grade level expectations both in mathematical concepts and problem solving strategies. Our goal is to instill a desire to participate in the study of mathematics that will lead toward professional careers in fields such as engineering and science."

The Goose Creek CISD MATHCOUNTS program is led by Shuman, Brandy Woods, MATHCOUNTS coordinator and secondary instructional specialist, and Robert Allen, assistant MATHCOUNTS coordinator and Lee High School math teacher.

District Results — Individual

- First Place - Kyrie Yong, Highlands Junior
- Second place (tie) - Nathan Kelly, Gentry, and Pooja Bhula, Highlands
- Third Place - Kayla Stears, Cedar Bayou
- Fourth Place - Nyrobi Celestine, Cedar Bayou
- Fifth Place - Ayesha Patel, Gentry
- Sixth Place - Astrid Guevara, Cedar Bayou
- Seventh Place - Chinmayee Kulkarni, Highlands
- Eighth Place (tie) - Gary Vazquez, Highlands, and Zachary Murray, Horace Mann

District Results — Teams

- First Place – Highlands: Chinmayee Kulkarni, Kyrie Yong, Pooja Bhula, and Noel Arellano
- Second Place – Cedar Bayou: Kayla Stears, Astrid Guevara, Rachel Lahowetz, and Mwago Kuria
- Third Place – Gentry: Nathan Kelley, Chrishuana Washington, Ayesha Patel, and Cameron Jackson
- Fourth Place – Horace Mann: Evette Garcia, Ashley Rayon, Bella Elliot, Zachary Murray, and Claudette Ramos
- Fifth Place – Baytown: Nyrobi Celestine, Liam Degler, Jhonathan Guevara, and Lesley Hernandez

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