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## NEWS RELEASE

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## Russell Student Wins Elementary Oratorical Contest Quail Run wins 2<sup>nd</sup>, Miller wins 3<sup>rd</sup>



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – Seventeen fifth-graders from the Houston County School System’s gifted and talented education classes competed in the Elementary School Oratorical Contest on March 8, 2018. The topic this year was, “Where are My Roots of Optimism?”

The 2017-2018 top orators are:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place – Christian Copeland, Russell Elementary, Coach Amanda Hunnell;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Sophia Comportie, Quail Run Elementary, Coach Jordan Northenor; and
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Taylee Julkes, Miller Elementary, Coach Mori Harris.

Sophia, Christian and Taylee are pictured (from left) with their cash awards of \$20, \$25 and \$15. They presented their speeches at the March 13, 2018, Board of Education meeting. Video of their presentations may be viewed on the [district Facebook page](#).

Three honorable mentions were also announced: River Ray, Kings Chapel Elementary, Coach Kelly Voss; Chosen Cooley, Eagle Springs Elementary, Coach Dawn Stuckey; and Kiersten Rainey, Langston Road Elementary, Coach Shelley Shillcutt.

Fifth-graders create a two-minute speech to present at school and vie to qualify for the system competition. School representatives are selected by a panel of judges at their school. The top district orators are chosen by three judges using a scoresheet.

Director of Gifted Education, Jan Jacobsen, said. "Our Oratorical Contest encourages students to take risks and ownership of their own learning behavior. They embrace the process through engagement, enthusiasm, and enjoyment. Judges consider each orator for his or her poise, speech content and depth, delivery, presentation, and overall effectiveness. Many thanks to our 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers who serve as oratorical coaches, our district judges for their time and expertise, and our Board of Education for their support of this event."

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