



**NEWTON
COUNTY
SCHOOL
SYSTEM**

Annual
Report

2013-2014





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Superintendent	4
Our Board of Education	6
Our Strategy	7
The Outlook for Reaccreditation	8
Revenue and Expenses	9
Our Employees	11
Our Students	15
Test Results	17
Performance Highlights	20
National Blue Ribbon School Award	22
Ford Next Generation Learning Community	23
IMS Global Learning Impact Gold Award	24
Partner of the Year Award	25
NCSS Fine Arts Highlights	26
NCSS Launches STEM Institute	28
NCSS Alumni Spotlight	29
Stay In Touch with NCSS	30

Message from the Superintendent



“...everything we do is
focused on the success
of our students.”

Dear Newton County School System Family:

My first year as your superintendent has been an exciting one, and I have truly enjoyed leading the Newton County School System (NCSS). As I reflect on our district's 2013-2014 school year, I can report that it was tremendously successful. We have much to be proud of!

Our school system made significant progress in 2013-2014, and the success of our schools can only be attributed to the support we receive from the community, employees, students, and parents. Throughout the year, our students demonstrated increased pass percentages on numerous statewide tests. They also won several regional, state, and national awards along the way. In addition, NCSS celebrated not only a National Blue Ribbon School but also many staff and department awards and recognitions.

While we have much to celebrate in NCSS, the year also brought some challenges. The switch to the tougher, more in-depth state standards has been a difficult adjustment for our students and teachers, but we have accepted the challenge and are working diligently to increase the rigor and expectations in the classroom.

Our mission is clear—to provide educational excellence for all students. As a result, everything we do is focused on the success of our students. There were many successes in 2013-2014. This report is designed to share with our many stakeholders highlights of the extraordinary accomplishments of NCSS staff and students last year. I hope you find it beneficial and informative.

Thank you for your continued support of the Newton County School System.

Sincerely,
Samantha Fuhrey
Superintendent

Message from the Board of Education



Dear Community Members,

It is with great pride that the Newton County School Board presents this Annual Report—filled with the outstanding achievements of our students and staff during the 2013-2014 school year.

As a School Board, we are entrusted by our community to define a vision of excellence in education. We set goals for our school system and hold our administration accountable for those goals. At the same time, we are required to maintain strict oversight of our school system's budget.

Over the past few years, it has been a challenging task to maintain the quality programs, staffing and excellent student opportunities available in Newton County Schools. We have faced decreased federal funding, diminished tax revenues, increased state mandates and overwhelming cost increases in health care. Despite these challenges, Newton County School System continues to maintain a balanced budget with adequate fund balance. By watching the bottom line, our School Board has enabled a tremendous increase in technology in the classroom; provided step increases for the first time in several years; given back one furlough day to employees; and even increased salaries by three percent. We believe in our employees and support them as they work tirelessly to provide educational excellence for each of our students.

As you examine the pages of this report, you will see the numerous achievements, accolades, and accomplishments of our students and staff. It was truly a successful year.

The Board of Education recognizes we cannot do this work alone. It takes community support. As such, we are grateful for a community that continues to support our students as they pursue their goals and dreams. Together we can meet our goal of providing educational excellence for ALL students.

Sincerely,
Shakila Henderson-Baker, Chair
Newton County Board of Education

Our Board of Education

The Board of Education of Newton County is composed of five members elected to represent and serve the educational needs and interests of Newton County. The Board approves all major decisions regarding school policy, employment of personnel, expenditures, and new or expanded facilities.

Each member of the Board of Education is a county officer, but such official duties can only be performed in conjunction with other Board members. The Board functions only as a body and not by virtue of the actions of individual members. Board members appoint the Superintendent of Schools to manage the day-to-day operations of the school system.

Newton County's 2013-14 board members include:

District 1 : Mr. Jeff Meadors

District 2 : Mr. Eddie Johnson

District 3 : Mrs. Shakila Henderson-Baker

District 4 : Mr. Almond Turner

District 5 : Mrs. Abigail Coggin

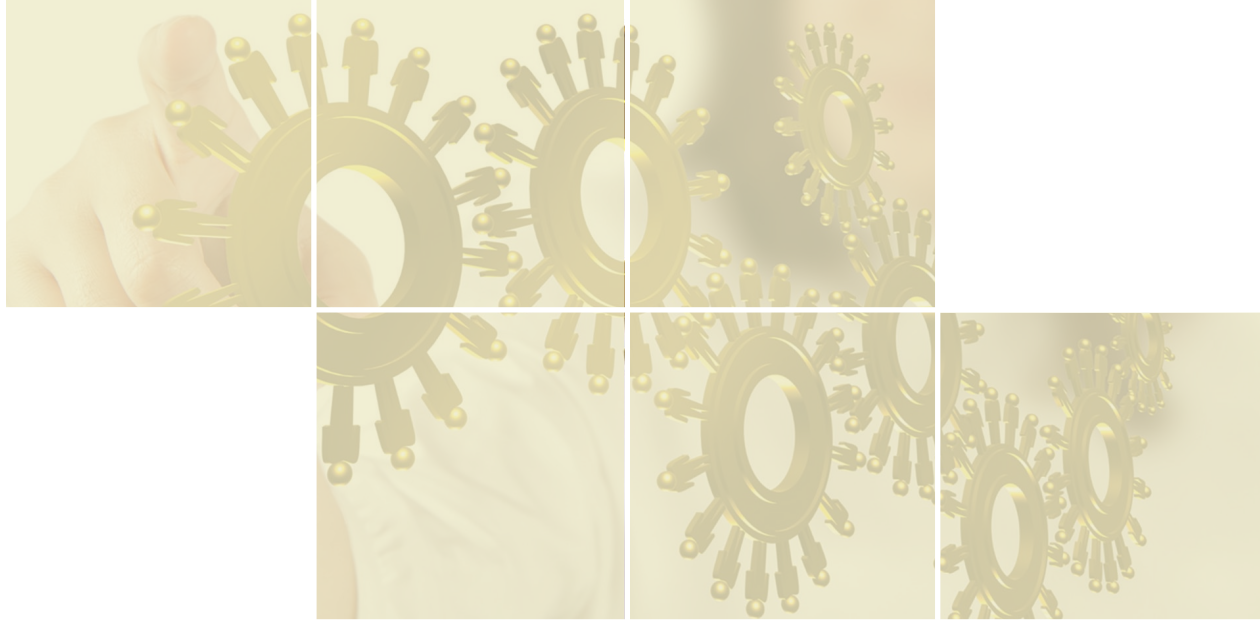
Mr. Jeff Meadors, District 1, did not seek re-election this year. Mr. Stan Edwards has been elected to replace him effective January 1, 2015.



The Superintendent is appointed by the Board of Education and functions as its chief executive officer. The Superintendent is also an advisor in keeping the board informed of the operation and progress of the various programs of the schools. The Superintendent is available to the Board as a professional resource, and her recommendations normally precede action on questions relating to the operation, staffing, and financing of the various programs for the schools.

Our Superintendent

The 2013-2014 school year marked a major milestone for the school district as the Board of Education hired the first female superintendent for Newton County Schools—Ms. Samantha Fuhrey. Ms. Fuhrey previously served as the Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction for NCSS. She has extensive leadership experience at the executive level as she previously served as the Executive Director for Secondary Education, the Director of Secondary Education, and the Director of Professional Learning for NCSS. She also has served as both a principal and assistant principal in the district.



Our Guideline: The NCSS Strategic Plan

Everything we do as a school system is centered on the framework of our school district's Strategic Plan. It is our blueprint for service to the students of Newton County School System. The Strategic Plan is a living document that is modified often as we meet existing goals and set new ones.

The Strategic Plan is utilized by teachers, school leaders, district administrators and all employees as the framework for the services we provide to our number one customer—our students. Everything we do is based on our mission of providing educational excellence for ALL students.

In order to accomplish our mission, we have two non-negotiable goals: Increased Student Achievement and More Effective Teaching.

A two-fold approach to student achievement and effective teaching

AT THE SCHOOL SYSTEM LEVEL

To build the capacity of personnel to deliver high quality instruction through: Using Research-Based Instructional Strategies in the classrooms; Building the Background Knowledge of students during the school day; and Integrating the Use of Technology in classroom lessons.

AT THE SCHOOL BUILDING LEVEL

To ensure high functioning Professional Learning Communities in each school with a definite time and place to meet and an agenda of work centered around instruction and its outcomes for students through ongoing question-asking and action steps.

Stakeholders are encouraged to read our Strategic Plan to learn about our strategies, objectives, and key initiatives in more detail. It is posted on our website at:

<http://www.newtoncountyschools.org/about/accountability/strategic-plan.aspx>



NCSS Recommended for Reaccreditation

Last year, NCSS completed the five-year process to obtain reaccreditation for all schools and the district through AdvancED SACS/CASI. Accreditation means that every public school in Newton County meets or exceeds the accreditation standards that support student achievement. Newton County Schools last went through the District Accreditation process in August 2008, after which NCSS received district accreditation as a quality school system.

The district and schools hosted an AdvancED External Review Team for a three-day audit period, during which team members visited schools and the central office to interview and observe staff. They also reviewed both school and district evidence of the five AdvancED Standards for Quality, which are:

- Standard 1: Purpose and Direction
- Standard 2: Governance and Leadership
- Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning
- Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems
- Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

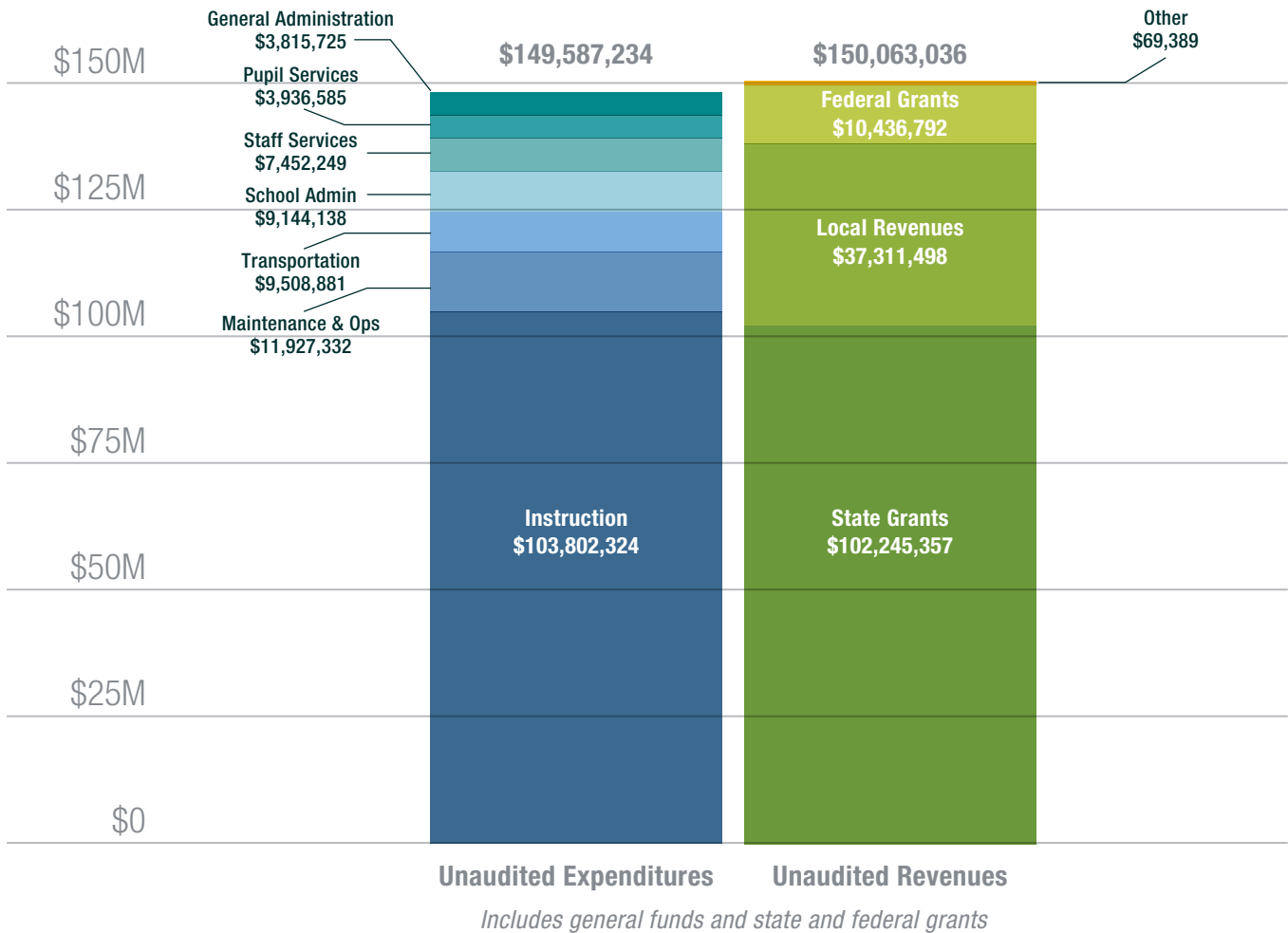
At the end of the three day period, the visiting team recommended reaccreditation for NCSS and all of its schools! Overall the district scored 312 out of 400 on the Index of Educational Quality. All AdvancED reports can be found on our website.

“As someone who visits schools and school systems, I always ask myself, ‘would I send my children there?’ and I would tell you I would send my kids to the Newton County School System in a heartbeat,” said Lead Evaluator, Ray Poplus.



Investing In Our Students

NCSS expenditures and revenues for fiscal year ending June 30, 2014

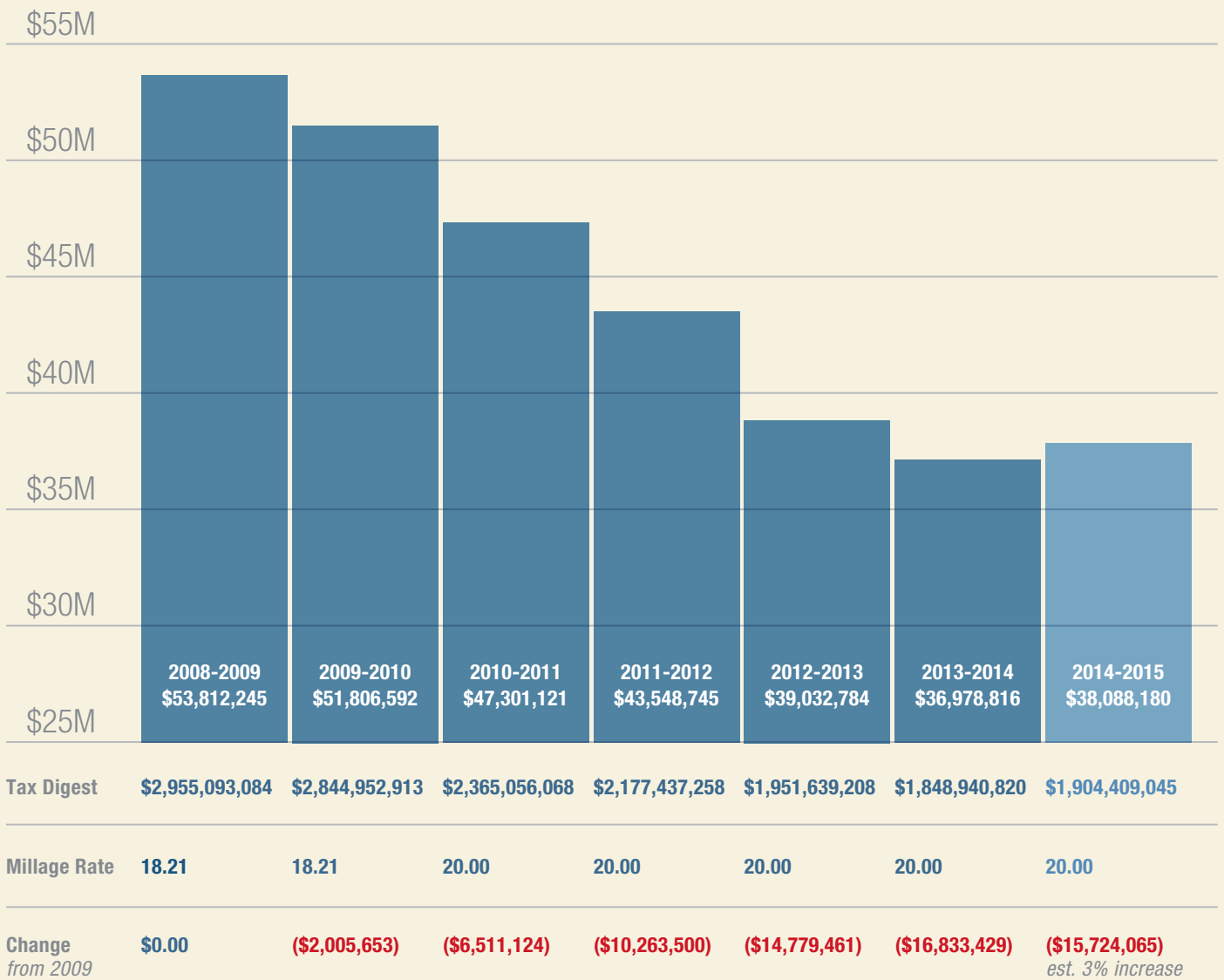


Newton County School System takes its duty as a steward of taxpayer money very seriously. Our number one priority is the students that we serve. As a result, 69% of our expenditures, or approximately \$100 million dollars, were designated to support our most important function--teaching and learning (Instruction).

NCSS has continued to provide a high quality education for students despite years of decreased tax revenues. As our M&O Tax Digest table page clearly indicates, tax collections have decreased by millions of dollars over the past five years, even as the local millage rate was increased from 18.21 to 20 mills. In 2009, the school district's millage rate was 18.21, which brought in tax collections in excess of \$53 million. By the 2013-2014 school year, the millage rate had been raised to 20 mills but collections still decreased by over \$16.5 million. As a result, NCSS has had to do more with less. Despite this financial predicament, a quick glance through our 2013-2014 Annual Report indicates that NCSS is making great strides in its goal of providing educational excellence for all students.

M&O Tax Digest

Seven Year History from
FY 2008-2009 to 2014-2015



ABOUT OUR EMPLOYEES

BY THE NUMBERS



1,467
CERTIFIED



1,049
CLASSIFIED



222
SUBSTITUTES

Newton County School System National Board Certified Teachers

The National Board Certified Teacher program is a rigorous professional growth and evaluation program dedicated to identifying and recognizing highly accomplished teachers in America.

While state licensure sets minimum standards for novice teachers, the National Board Certification program sets high standards for excellence among experienced teachers. The extensive evaluation process requires a teacher to pass written exams, submit video examples of their class and their teaching, and present a portfolio of their work. The process often takes more than a year to complete.

Newton County School System encourages experienced and highly qualified teachers to pursue this outstanding professional growth opportunity. NCSS is proud to have 13 National Board Certified Teachers on staff!

Pat Alexander | Alcovy
 Janie Buchanan | Alcovy
 Beth Moore | Indian Creek
 Sandra Owens | Alcovy
 Kathi Turner | Livingston
 Craig Lockhart | Central Office
 Pamela Moss | Mansfield
 Linda Allemani | Clements
 Shawanna Fluellen-Wilcher | Middle Ridge
 Teri Justice | Palmer-Stone
 Debora Ondracek | Porterdale
 Renee Mallard | Indian Creek
 Natalie Ochs | Rocky Plains



60
DOCTORATE
DEGREES

326
EDUCATION
SPECIALISTS

430
BACHELORS
DEGREES

647
MASTERS
DEGREES

4
TRADE & IND.
CERTIFICATES

Applicant Tracking System

The Newton County School System accepts online employment applications. Potential employees have convenient 24/7 access to apply for vacant positions as well as potential future vacancies. This technology increases the overall efficiency of the Human Resources Department and school level administrators in identifying applicants and hiring qualified candidates.

Teacher Induction—BEST Program

Through the BEST Program (Building Excellence and Supporting Teachers), Newton County School System provides opportunities specific for teachers new to the district, including those new to the teaching profession, to network with their peers and extend their knowledge of topics important to effective teaching and learning. All new teachers are assigned mentors or coaches. Teacher support mentors are assigned to each school to work with newly hired teachers. In addition to the New Teacher Induction program at the beginning of the school year, teachers are provided opportunities for follow-up meetings throughout the school year at both the district and school levels. The program wraps up at the end of the school year with a celebration of the new teachers' first year with Newton County Schools.

Best of the Best! NCSS Teachers of the Year

At the end of the 2013-2014 school year, school faculties elected their 2013-2014 Teachers of the Year. Those selected participated in the NCSS 2015 Teacher of the Year program. They spent their summer working on the NCSS Teacher of the Year application and essay packet and then participated in interviews with the judging panel this fall. Three finalists were observed in the classroom setting with Kenneth Hanson ultimately chosen as the 2015 NCSS Teacher of the Year. He will represent Newton County School System in the Georgia Teacher of the Year program. Congratulations to each of our 2013-2014 Teachers of the Year!

Christina Crowe | East Newton Elementary
Yolanda Canty | Fairview Elementary
Dr. Sharon Darley | Flint Hill Elementary
Sandy Moseley | Heard-Mixon Elementary
Velika Hurst | Live Oak Elementary
Brooke Mote | Livingston Elementary
Beth Coody | Mansfield Elementary
Allison Pittman | Middle Ridge Elementary
Kena Hudgins | Newton Co. Theme School - Ficquett
Allison Jones | Oak Hill Elementary
Ken Meakins | Porterdale Elementary
Linda Smith | Rocky Plains Elementary

April Burnfin | South Salem Elementary
Marci Scott | West Newton Elementary
Sandy Briscoe | Clements Middle
Chris Andrews | Cousins Middle
Kenneth Hanson | Indian Creek Middle
Sharon Oliver | Liberty Middle
Christy Mortimer | Veterans Memorial Middle
Michelle Finley | Alcovy High
Monique Mitchell | Eastside High
Chris Williams | Newton High
Heather Fuller | Newton College & Career Academy



Ashley Rickard

2014 NCSS TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Last September, Eastside High School's Ashley Rickard was elected Newton County School System's 2014 Teacher of the Year! She represented Newton County Schools in the Georgia Teacher of the Year Program. Her prizes included \$1,000 cash, a crystal vase, three-month's free car rental from Covington Ford, and one dozen red roses.

The two runners-up for NCSS Teacher of the Year were Ms. Maria Hargrove of Heard-Mixon Elementary and Ms. Dolores Williams of the Newton College & Career Academy. Both Hargrove and Williams each received a crystal vase for the special honor.

Ms. Rickard has spent her entire teaching career in the Newton County School System. She began her career at Eastside High School in 2009 and has been teaching Advanced Placement English Language and Composition there ever since.

Ms. Rickard earned her Bachelors in Secondary English Education from Georgia Southern in 2008 and should receive her Masters in Instructional Technology from the University of West Georgia this year. She has also completed her Gifted Endorsement, which certifies her to teach gifted students and led to her being named Gifted Coordinator at Eastside. In addition to serving as a support person for other teachers seeking Gifted certification, Ms. Rickard also serves as a Technology Teacher Leader.

In her Teacher of the Year essay packet, Ms. Rickard wrote, "I want my students to have enough self-awareness to recognize their formula for success. I hunger for them to understand that they are the sole holders of the keys to their future....the very foundation of my students' success is their ability and their courage to be independent thinkers. I am genuinely overwhelmed with immense gratification knowing that I play just a small part in teaching my students how to think."

NCSS 2014 Retirees



The end of the 2013-2014 school year marked the end of careers for forty-eight NCSS employees who retired from the district. Collectively they had 1,109 years of service to education! One employee retired with over 40 years of service and sixteen others retired with 30 or more years of service.

Deborah Anderson Clements Middle	Teresa Higgins Flint Hill Elementary	Sandra Richardson Business Services
Gwendolyn Benton Cousins Middle	W. Allen Johnson Veterans Memorial Middle	Billie J. Roberts Live Oak Elementary
Linda Bramhall Special Education	Susan Kowalczyk Livingston Elementary	Paula Robertson Livingston Elementary
Bobbie Browning Cousins Middle	Judy Landress Transportation	Beverly H. Rodgers Flint Hill Elementary
Preston Capes Veterans Memorial Middle	James Little Veterans Memorial Middle	Cathleen Smallwood Newton Co. Theme School at Ficquett
Rosa Carr Indian Creek Middle	Debora McCullough Oak Hill Elementary	Jimmy Stansell Newton High
Patricia Clason Oak Hill Elementary	Mary K. McMillin Live Oak Elementary	Patricia Stansfield Fairview Elementary
Deborah E. Clemons Newton Co. Theme School at Ficquett	Patrick Meacham Indian Creek Middle	Barbara Stephenson Live Oak Elementary
Nancy Cook Rocky Plains Elementary	Pamela Moss Mansfield Elementary	Marva Kay Stewart Mansfield Elementary
Lynda Davis Eastside High	Willie F. Nolley Porterdale Elementary	Rosemary Thompson Transportation
Naomi Evalyne Davis Porterdale Elementary	Kathy Owens Live Oak Elementary	Vladimir Varfolomeyev Veterans Memorial Middle
Elizabeth Fishburn Liberty Middle	Margaret Paz Special Education	Sharon A. Waters Fairview Elementary
Dianne Garrett Newton College & Career Academy	Mary Alice Perry Alcovy High	Ann Fay White West Newton Elementary
William Gibbons Alcovy High	Jane P. Piper Porterdale Elementary	James Wildman Special Education
Linda Gourley Oak Hill Elementary	Brenda Rappé Alcovy High	Sherri Williams Business Services
Mary A. Haney Live Oak Elementary	Caren Reed Veterans Memorial Middle	Gwendolyn Williams Middle Ridge Elementary

About Our Students

Student Racial/Ethnic Distribution

STUDENT ENROLLMENT 2013-2014



NUMBER OF SCHOOLS



NUMBER OF STUDENTS

13

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

9,020

5

MIDDLE SCHOOL

4,239

3

HIGH SCHOOL

4,927

1

THEME SCHOOL

898

1

6-12 ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM

167

4.7%
MULTI-RACIAL

0.3%
AMERICAN INDIAN

53%
BLACK

35%
WHITE

6%
HISPANIC

1%
ASIAN

30 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

SPOKEN IN NCSSS SCHOOLS IN 2013-14

KOREAN
HMONG
ARABIC
HINDI
LAO
PUNJABI
CHINESE
ROMANIAN
DUTCH
PORTUGUESE
SOMALI

FRENCH
RUSSIAN
SWAHILI
GERMAN
SPANISH
UKRAINIAN
VIETNAMESE
GUJARATI
URDU

FILIPINO, TAGALOG
AKAN, TWI, FANTI, HOUSA
KHMER, CAMBODIAN
AMHARIC, TIGRINYA, TIGRE
HAITIAN CREOLE
OTHER AFRICAN
OTHER EUROPEAN
ENGLISH NON-AMERICAN
OTHER ASIAN

NOTE: Career Academy students are counted at their home schools.

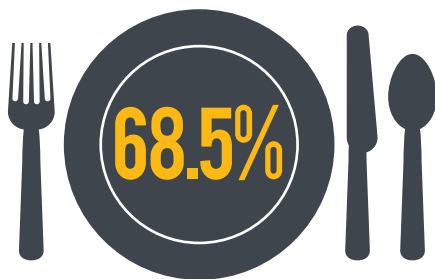


Safety and Security

Security measures placed within the Newton County School System prepare the district to respond to a variety of crises and emergencies. These measures include:

- Security cameras in secondary schools
- Classroom cameras and panic buttons in secondary schools
- Emergency communication and messaging systems
- Resource Officers in all middle and high schools
- School and District Emergency and Crisis Response Plans and Teams
- Regular drills to respond to emergency situations (fire, tornado, intruder, etc.)
- Visitor Screening Protocol
- Panic buttons for select personnel in each NCSS building

School Nutrition Program



FREE & REDUCED PRICE LUNCH

meal	daily	annually
Student breakfasts	7,100	1,243,904
Student lunches	14,819	2,605,121

Did you know? The School Nutrition web page provides nutrition, wellness and physical activity information for students and parents. The School Nutrition menus are also posted on the web page for student and parent access.

Daily Student Transportation



SCHOOL BUSES

211



STUDENT RIDERS

12,304



MILES TRAVELED

15,890

Our ACT Test Results

Newton County School System scores increased across the board on the 2014 ACT college entrance exam. The district also saw an increase in the number of test takers last year. The average score for English increased from 17.9 to 18.1 and the average Math score increased from 17.8 to 18.1 in 2014. The district's reading scores saw a large increase, going from 19.0 to 19.7 and Science scores rose from 18.6 to 19.0. As a result, the NCSS composite score increased from 18.5 to 18.8 in 2014.

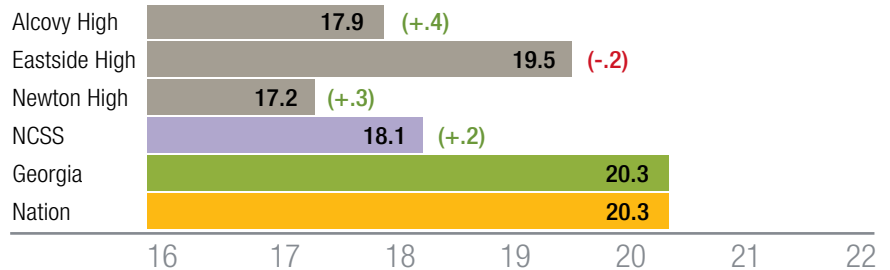
Unlike the SAT, a reasoning test that measures critical thinking skills and assesses how well a student analyzes and solves problems, the ACT is a series of curriculum-based, multiple choice tests that cover content knowledge in four basic skill areas: English (College English Composition), math (College Algebra), reading (College Social Science), and science (College Biology). Students also receive a composite score on the exam, which is scored on a scale from 0 to 36. The ACT also has an optional writing test.

Students Tested

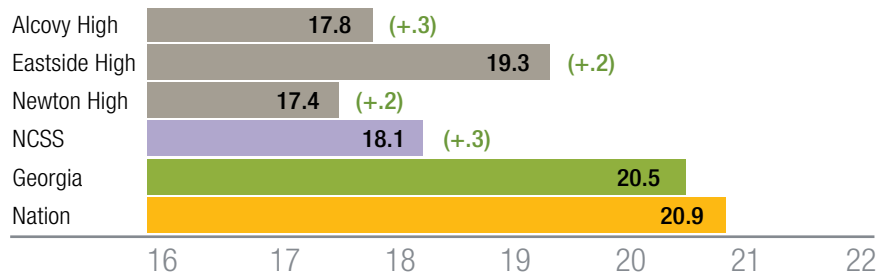
Alcovy High	161	(-23)
Eastside High	190	(+38)
Newton High	265	(+38)
NCSS	616	(+52)
Georgia	50,697	
Nation	1,845,787	

Numbers in parenthesis indicate the amount a score increased or decreased.

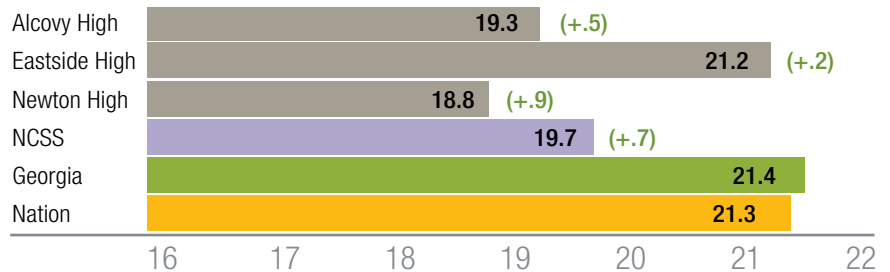
English Scores



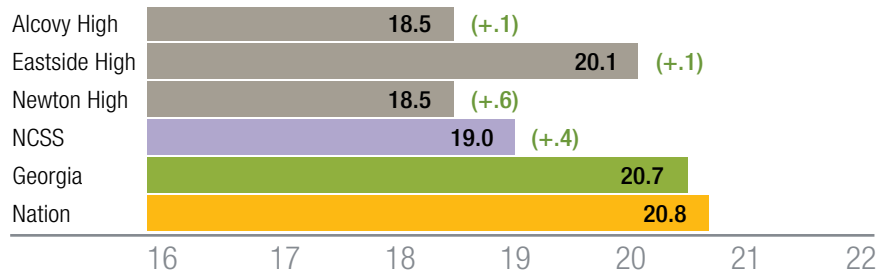
Math Scores



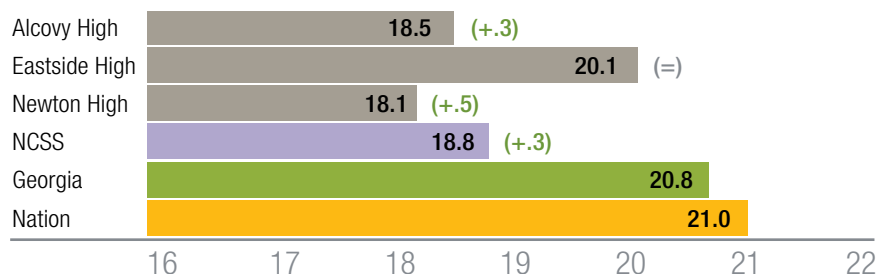
Reading Scores



Science Scores



Composite Scores



Our SAT Test Results

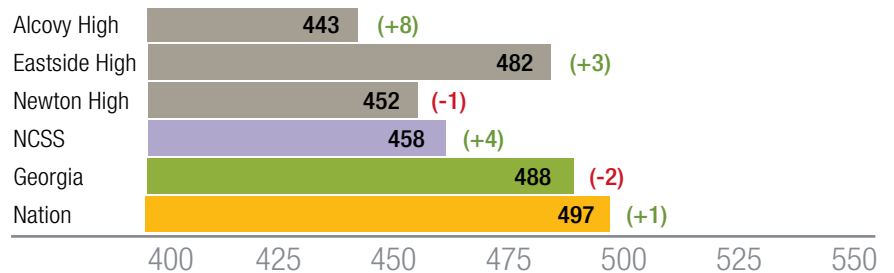
Each of Newton County's three high schools showed improvement on the 2014 SAT College Entrance Exam and as a result, the Newton County School System SAT scores increased across the board. The district's reading score rose four points; math increased by seven points; and writing improved by eight points. Both Alcovy and Eastside High School's scores increased across the board in 2014 and Newton High School's increased in all but reading. Significantly, Eastside posted an 11-point gain in math and Newton High's writing score soared fifteen points in 2014.

The SAT is a national college entrance exam some colleges and universities utilize to measure critical thinking skills students need for academic success in college. The SAT assesses how well students analyze and solve problems. It is typically taken by high school juniors and seniors.

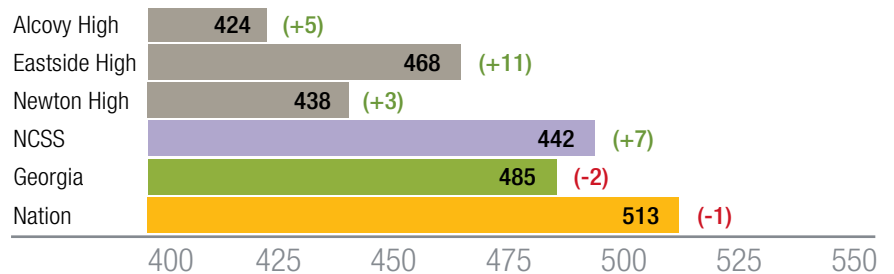
Each section of the SAT is scored on a scale of 200—800, with two Writing sub-scores for multiple-choice and the essay. It is administered seven times a year in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and U.S. Territories, and six times a year overseas. Students may take the test multiple times over multiple years. Colleges and universities will use for admission purposes the highest score from a testing category, regardless of how many times the student has taken the test. The College Board, however, only reports collectively the most recent scores achieved by students.

Students Tested	Alcovy High	219	(-30)
	Eastside High	184	(-2)
	Newton High	173	(+23)
	NCSS	576	
	Georgia	73,626	
	Nation	1,672,395	

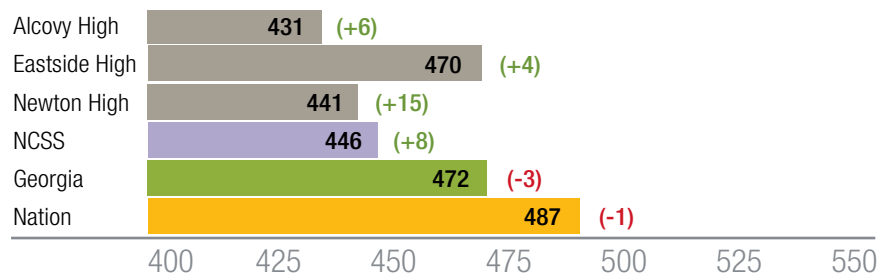
Reading Scores



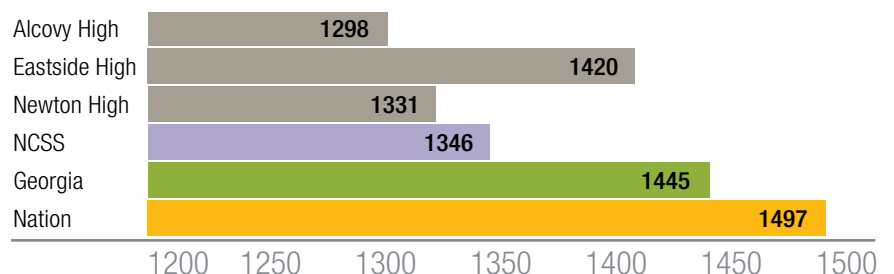
Math Scores



Writing Scores



Composite Scores



Our EOCT Test Results

Course	NCSS FY13 % Meeting or Exceeding	NCSS FY14 % Meeting or Exceeding	State's % Meeting or Exceeding
9th Grade Literature	86	90	88
American Literature	NA*	94	93
Coordinate Algebra	19	29	40
Analytic Geometry	NA**	30	35
Biology	72	76	75
Physical Science	88	88	85
US History	78	81	73
Economics	89	90	81

Newton County School System (NCSS) high school students showed positive results on their End-of-Course Tests during the 2013-2014 school year. Students not only posted improved pass rates in five of six tests but also outpaced the state pass rate on all but two tests.

NCSS students showed an 83% rate of improvement on EOCTs this year. NCSS students posted increased pass rates in Ninth Grade Literature, Coordinate Algebra, Biology, U.S. History, and Economics, and matched their previous pass rate in Physical Science. In fact, the 2013-2014 NCSS test takers also bested the state of Georgia's pass rate on all of the EOCTs but Coordinate Algebra and Analytic Geometry.

NCSS Rate of Improvement: 5/6 comparable courses, or 83%

*Due to changing the sequence of American Literature, only a few students took the EOCT.

** Analytic Geometry is a new state course to which no comparison can be made.

Criterion Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT) Elementary and Middle School Data

Grade	READING % Met or Exceeded		ELA % Met or Exceeded		MATH % Met or Exceeded		SCIENCE % Met or Exceeded		SOCIAL STUDIES % Met or Exceeded	
	State	Newton	State	Newton	State	Newton	State	Newton	State	Newton
3rd	92.3	92.4	88.5	89.9	80.7	80.4	77.1	76.7	83.7	85.9
4th	93.6	93.4	88.7	87.9	81.7	79.1	80.9	80.1	81.2	81.3
5th	94.8	94.4	94.7	94.8	87.7	83.2	81.9	80.5	80.7	79.5
6th	97.2	96.0	91.8	88.0	84.1	77.8	75.1	75.1	79.8	79.8
7th	94.7	93.4	93.9	92.9	87.6	84.0	84.2	81.7	83.5	82.9
8th	97.0	95.3	94.5	93.0	81.5	78.0	77.9	77.1	80.6	78.1

Elementary and Middle School CRCT Highlights

Newton County School System (NCSS) students performed at or very near the state level on the 2014 Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT)—Reading, English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. These averages do not include retest scores; scores are expected to increase once retest data is calculated.

Elementary School Highlights

At the elementary level, NCSS third-graders showed increases across the board in the number of students who met or exceeded standards on the 2014 CRCT. They even outpaced

the state average in Reading, English Language Arts, and Social Studies.

At the fourth grade level, NCSS increased the number of students meeting or exceeding averages on the Reading CRCT and had a better pass percentage than the state on the Science test. In addition, fourth-graders were within one point of the state average on the remaining four tests.

NCSS fifth graders saw an increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding standards on the Reading, English Language Arts, and Science CRCT in 2014. They also had a

better pass percentage than the state on the English Language Arts test.

Middle School Highlights

At the middle school level, NCSS sixth-graders posted an increased passing rate on the Reading, Science, and Social Studies CRCT in 2014. They also matched the state pass rate on the Science and Social Studies CRCT.

Seventh grade pass rates increased on both the English Language Arts and Social Studies and eighth grade pass rates increased on the Science CRCT in 2014.

New Testing System

To be Implemented by The Georgia Department of Education

The Georgia Department of Education will implement a new testing system, the Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) during the 2014-2015 academic year. The new system will replace both the CRCT and the EOCT.

Georgia Milestones will be aligned to the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) and will require more from students than the CRCT and EOCT it replaces, in order to better prepare students for college and career and to provide a more realistic picture of academic progress. A major benefit of the new system is that it is one consistent testing program across grades 3-12, whereas previously students took a series of individual tests.

The increased expectations for student learning reflected in Georgia Milestones may mean initially lower scores than the previous years' CRCT or

EOCT scores. That is to be expected and should bring Georgia's tests in line with other indicators of how our students are performing, according to State School Superintendent Dr. John Barge.

"We need to know that students are being prepared, not at a minimum-competency level but with rigorous, relevant education, to enter college, the workforce or the military at a level that makes them competitive with students from other states," Dr. Barge said.

The new testing system will include open-ended questions to better gauge students' content mastery. With some exceptions for special education students with specific testing accommodations, Georgia Milestones will be administered entirely online by the fifth year of implementation, compared to 35% online administration of the EOCT in 2013-2014.

NCSS College & Career Ready Performance Index Scores

Newton County School System fared well on the most recent Georgia College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) that measures schools and school districts on an easy-to-understand 100-point scale. The CCRPI is the accountability system that replaces the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measurement in Georgia.

The Index has been designed around a comprehensive definition of college and career readiness, or the level of achievement required in order for a student to enroll in two or four year colleges and universities and technical colleges without remediation, fully prepared for college level work and careers. This means that all students graduate from high school with both rigorous content knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge. The Index includes scores that easily communicate to the public how a school is performing. Each school receives a score based on 100 points, similar to what students receive in their classes.

A school and district's overall score is made up of three major areas:

- Achievement (60 points possible)
- Progress (25 points possible)
- Achievement Gap (15 points possible)

In addition to the three major areas, schools can receive "Challenge Points" to add to their score (up to 10 points). They receive these points if they have a significant number of Economically Disadvantaged students, English Learner students and Students with Disabilities meeting expectations. Schools can also receive points for going beyond the targets of the CCRPI by challenging students to exceed expectations and participate in college and career ready programs. The Index supports the state's and Newton County School System's core educational principles:

- Exemplary student achievement that prepares all for success in college and careers
- Effective teaching and leadership in all schools
- Innovative school improvement, particularly in low performing schools
- Reduction in the duplicative reporting requirements for local school districts

The most recent data come from the 2012-2013 school year and show that 18 of our 23 schools showed improvement on scores in 2013. In addition, the school system's overall elementary and middle school scores increased in 2013—as did the overall system score. At the district level, only the high school CCRPI scores decreased in 2013.

***NCTS @ Ficquett had the highest CCRPI score in the state.**

School	CCRPI Score	
	2012	2013
Elementary Schools	2012	2013
East Newton	79.7	85.4
Fairview	57.2	74.6
Flint Hill	61.4	69.1
Heard-Mixon	83.6	74.3
Live Oak	77.4	76.9
Livingston	67.8	69.9
Mansfield	83.4	84.8
Middle Ridge	70.5	71.8
NCTS @ Ficquett	89.8	93.8
Oak Hill	70.2	72.7
Porterdale	52.0	71.4
Rocky Plains	71.2	87.8
South Salem	59.0	75.2
West Newton	73.4	73.6
NCSS Total	71.5	77.5
State Total	74.9	78.5

School	CCRPI Score	
	2012	2013
Middle Schools	2012	2013
Clements	69.5	83.8
Cousins	64.4	75.4
Indian Creek	71.2	74.6
Liberty	74.9	77.2
*NCTS @ Ficquett	82.0	99.6
Veterans Memorial	72.1	66.6
NCSS Total	70.1	76.0
State Total	73.9	75.0

School	CCRPI Score	
	2012	2013
High Schools	2012	2013
Alcovy	75.6	69.1
Eastside	80.2	81.1
Newton	78.4	69.8
NCSS Total	78.6	69.4
State Total	73.0	72.0
NCSS Overall	73.4	75.2
State Overall	74.1	75.8



Middle Ridge Elementary Named National Blue Ribbon School

Newton County School System had reason to celebrate last year when it was announced that Middle Ridge Elementary was one of only 286 schools in the nation designated a 2013 National Blue Ribbon School. Only ten Georgia schools—eight public and two private, earned the special designation. The program recognizes schools in one of two performance categories. The first category is “Exemplary High Performing,” in which schools are recognized among their state’s highest performing schools, as measured by state assessments or nationally-normed tests. Middle Ridge earned its designation in the second category, “Exemplary Improving,” in which schools that have at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds

demonstrate the most progress in improving student achievement levels as measured by state assessments or nationally-normed tests.

“The faculty and staff at Middle Ridge Elementary School go above and beyond the call of duty every day,” said Michael Forehand, principal of Middle Ridge Elementary School. “I am so proud to see this dedicated group of professionals receive the accolades they deserve. We are now one step closer to our goal of being THE BEST! Not only are our students defined by our vision of strength and determination, but so too is our staff, which truly makes us worthy of being a school of National Blue Ribbon status.”

Newton College & Career Academy

Newton College and Career Academy prepares students for college and career in a multitude of ways. Academy graduates are benefitting from dual enrollment through Georgia Piedmont Technical College in programs such as certified nursing, automotive, cosmetology and law enforcement.



Named Ford Next Generation Learning Community

The newly formed STEM Institute will enhance the science and math focus for many students. And finally, the lessons students are learning through the implementation of professional skills (such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication and networking) will serve them in their future careers.

Ford Motor Company Fund named Newton College and Career Academy (NCCA) a Ford Next Generation Learning (NGL) Community—one of only fifteen communities in the nation. With this recognition, Newton College and Career Academy will:

- Receive ongoing guidance and technical assistance from the Ford NGL Leadership Team as Newton College and Career Academy implements its plan and reviews its progress annually.
- Become members in the Ford NGL national network, which will allow them to learn from other Ford NGL communities and tap into their expertise through peer-to-peer mentoring, online resources, webinars, and network institutes as well as share successful practices with other Ford NGL communities.
- Leverage the Ford NGL designation to encourage economic development for the region by demonstrating that Newton College & Career Academy is preparing students for high-wage, high-skill jobs in their community.

Ford NGL is nationally recognized for its unique approach to meaningfully engage key community stakeholders representing K-12, employers, post-secondary, and community-based organizations in the development of a long-term plan to develop academies within existing public high schools. At its core is a framework that provides successful practices for a community's development of its plan to ensure that academies are prioritized and support local workforce and economic development needs.

“Our founder, Henry Ford, built an entire industry from his relentless focus on innovation,” said Cheryl Carrier, Director, Ford NGL at Ford Motor Company Fund. “Today communities are looking for innovative ways to leverage educational resources to develop scalable and sustainable systems that provide students with the skills needed for success in a global economy. We are excited to expand our partnership with Newton College and Career Academy.”

NCSS and Safari Montage Win IMS Global 2014 Learning Impact Gold Award



Newton County School System (NCSS), Georgia, and SAFARI Montage were awarded the 2014 Learning Impact Gold Award at the annual IMS Global Learning Impact Leadership Institute. The award recognizes the district's outstanding achievement using VIEWPath classroom technology systems to increase teacher effectiveness, decrease student misbehavior and provide students with access to lessons from home. NCSS was selected from among 100 applicants from all over the world.

SAFARI Montage provides K-12 school districts with a fully integrated Digital Learning Platform, including a Learning Object Repository, Video Streaming Library, IPTV and Live Media Streaming, designed to handle video efficiently. The solution is IMS Global interoperability systems. The full suite of integrated modules provides a single interface for users to access and manage all digital, visual resources from within the school district network or from home.

"We have been thrilled with the educational benefits we have received using the VIEWPath System which includes the SAFARI Montage Learning Object Repository," said Dr. Gary Shattuck, Director of Technology and Media Services at NCSS. "We are increasing teachers' effectiveness through self-reflection and peer coaching. In addition, after controlling for other variables, our discipline referrals dropped 18%, and our test scores are increasing significantly. We believe that the VIEWPath System is a game-changer for education."

The VIEWPath systems, which consist of the SAFARI Montage platform coupled with Audio Enhancement's voice amplification tools, silent alarms and classroom cameras, were implemented in 552 classrooms throughout NCSS in September 2013, following a successful pilot the previous year. Since the district-wide launch, NCSS teachers and administrators have been utilizing the system to manage student behavior, record classroom activities and create digital resources to support blended learning and professional development.

The IMS Global Learning Impact Awards recognize the most powerful and influential uses of technology worldwide that address the most significant challenges facing the global education segment. Winners are selected by a panel of experts who use a series of rubrics to evaluate eight dimensions for improving teaching and learning impact, including improving access, affordability and quality of learning.

NCSS has approximately 150 individual school-business partnerships, and each year the district selects one who stands above the rest as the Partner of the Year. The Farm Bureau partners with Middle Ridge Elementary School and according to principal Michael Forehand, “They truly roll up their sleeves and dig in

In addition, the Farm Bureau provides Middle Ridge teachers with hands-on lesson activities and opportunities for project based learning, including all materials needed and even sent a representative to assist with implementation.

Newton County Farm Bureau 2014 NCSS Partner of the Year



the dirt with us, which means a lot to our boys and girls. Our students don’t have a lot of experiences outside of the school house, so they have actually brought education to life at Middle Ridge Elementary.”

Forehand noted that the Farm Bureau conducts a Book Club at Middle Ridge, which supports the school’s literacy program by promoting informational text reading, building and enriching background knowledge, checking for comprehension, and summarizing areas in which the students need support.

Each year, the Newton County Farm Bureau sponsors a Farm Day on the Middle Ridge campus, helping students better understand agriculture and the role it plays in our society. They also sponsor an annual Farm Day for all Newton County pre-kindergarten students, providing them the opportunity to experience life on the farm. Students have the opportunity to handle the animals, touch and sit on large tractors, and ask questions, all the while learning.

The Farm Bureau is not just a good partner in education with the school, they also support the entire school system, its students and teachers.

Finally, the Newton County Farm Bureau supports the teachers of Newton County Schools by offering numerous professional development opportunities each year. They provided a workshop in the fall for teachers and even removed the financial burden from the school system by providing compensation for substitutes to cover classes so teachers could attend. They provided lessons and materials needed to implement lessons, took the teachers on a field trip to local farms, and provided lunch—all at no cost to the teachers.

We are so grateful for all partners in education as they provide community support for our teachers and students.

Newton County Students Participate in All State Band

Seven NCSS students were selected to participate in the prestigious State of Georgia All State Bands. Newton County School System's elite musicians are:

COUSINS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Bailey Peebles
4th Chair French Horn

Chandler Parkman
5th Chair Trumpet

INDIAN CREEK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Wesley Rains
3rd Chair French Horn

NEWTON HIGH SCHOOL

John Harden
6th Chair Clarinet

Hezekiah Rodgers
3rd Chair Alto Saxophone

EASTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

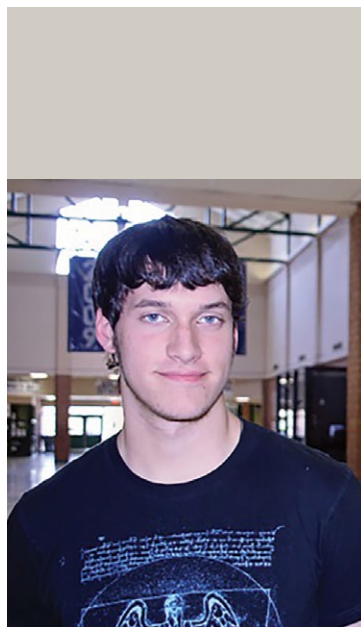
Kenney Harris
1st Chair Bass Clarinet

Reid Waters
6th Chair Trumpet

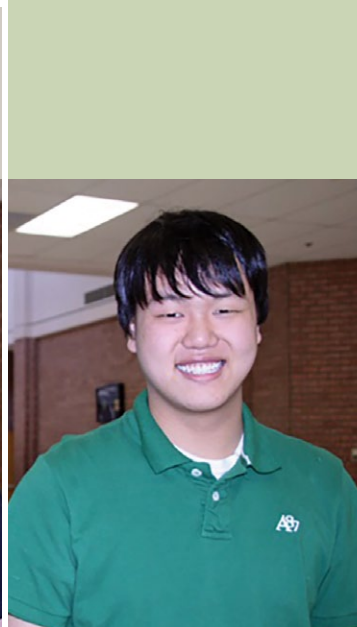
3 STUDENTS MAKE ALL STATE CHORUS

Eastside students Jacob Smith and Sam Potts, and Clements Middle School student Josiah Webb were selected to participate in the prestigious All State High School and Middle School Chorus respectively.

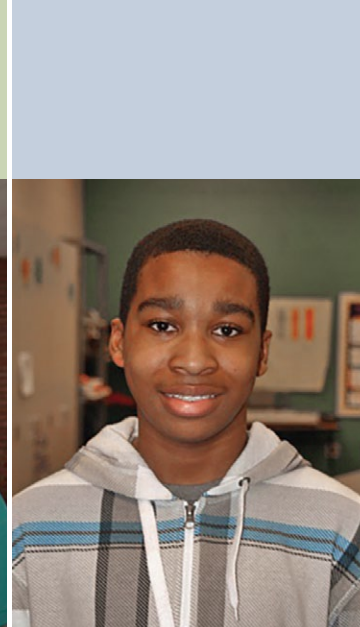
The very challenging auditions consist of memorizing a solo and performing it before two judges, reading three examples of music that have never been seen before with no assistance, singing three memorized scales for judges, and taking a written test with listening examples, Italian vocabulary words, tempos, key signatures, and more. And that's only for the first audition!



Jacob Smith



Sam Potts



Josiah Webb

NCSS students brought home several awards from the Regional Literacy Days Poetry Recitation, Ready Writing, and Drama Competition held at Griffin Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA).

Morgan Hawthorn won first place honors in the fifth-grade competition and Lily Cunniffe brought home third place honors in the fourth-grade competition. Both students attend the Newton County Theme School at Ficquett. In the middle school competition, Marissa Gray of Clements Middle School took home second place honors in the seventh-grade poetry recitation contest.

NCSS Students Win at Regional Literacy Days Competition

Newton County School System students also fared well in the Ready Writing Competition in which students are given a writing prompt and one hour to complete an essay. In the elementary division, Ray Holt of East Newton Elementary School placed third in the Ready Writing Contest. Middle school student Gabby Turcott of Cousins Middle School placed second in the seventh-grade competition and Anthony Fiddes of Clements Middle School won top honors in the eighth grade competition.

In addition to the Poetry Recitation and Ready Writing Contest, Newton County School System also had great representation in the Drama Competition, as Newton County Theme School at Ficquett's Drama Team placed third in the contest. Team members include: Ralph Brown, Isabelle Rogers, Jaylen Simons, Kris Prince, Emily Rose Hamby, Ivana Bugg, Sherri Oladapo, Danielle Lockhart, Seah Odum, and Savannah Miller.

Elementary School winners of the NCSS Literacy Days Contest. All winners went on to represent NCSS in the Griffin RESA Literacy Days Competition.





NCSS Launches STEM Institute

Newton County School System launched a new STEM Institute for ninth-graders in 2013-2014. It is a program of the Newton College and Career Academy. Located at the former site of Newton High School on Ram Drive, the program was enhanced to include both ninth and tenth graders during the 2014-15 school year with the goal of eventually serving students in grades 9-12.

While enrolled at the STEM Institute, students learn the foundations of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). They develop strong computation and problem-solving skills. The math curriculum includes everyday math skills and challenges students to explain reasoning and justify thinking. The science program is a blend of hands-on experiments and traditional science lessons. STEM concepts broaden students' understanding of the scientific process and its application in real-world situations.

NCSS Alumni Spotlight



Are you an alumnus of Newton County Schools? If so, the Newton County School System (NCSS) wants to hear from you.

“I am proud of the educational opportunities our school system provides for our students,” said Samantha Fuhrey, Superintendent of Newton County Schools. “If you are willing to put forth the effort, students can receive a high quality education that provides the foundation for an endless variety of career opportunities right here, in the Newton County School System.” And Fuhrey said that’s where school system alumni come in. “We want to hear from them,” said Fuhrey. “We want them to tell us their stories. We know right now there are doctors, nurses, engineers, mayors, educators, business leaders, and so many others who are successful, in part, due to the education they received in Newton County Schools. We want our graduates to tell their stories.”

As such, Newton County School System is asking alumni to complete a brief survey detailing where they are now in their lives. The district will use this information to tell the story of Newton County Schools. All alumni personal contact information will be kept strictly confidential.

“As superintendent, I want to hear how an education provided by educators of the Newton County Schools prepared the way for success in college and beyond or even a career right out of high school,” said Fuhrey. “I encourage all of our alumni, no matter when they graduated, to complete the brief survey. We know, as a district, we have touched the lives of thousands of students over the years. Our motto is ‘Spirit, Pride, and Excellence’ and I’m certain we have thousands of NCSS graduates out there who, as a result of their education, exemplify that motto. I want to hear from them so I can share their stories.”

All Newton County School System alumni are encouraged to visit the NCSS website at www.newtoncountyschools.org and download the brief survey (the link to the survey can be found in the picture slideshow at the top of the website). Surveys may also be picked up at the Newton County Board of Education. All surveys should be returned to Ms. Sherri Davis-Viniard, Director of Public Relations at 2109 Newton Drive NE, Covington, Georgia 30014. Surveys may also be faxed to 770-385-6915 or emailed to alumni@newton.k12.ga.us.

Stay In Touch with Newton County Schools

NCSS utilizes a variety of electronic tools to communicate with students, parents, and the community at large.

Use them often to stay in touch!

Infinite Campus (<https://campus.newton.k12.ga.us/campus/portal/newton.jsp>)

Infinite Campus provides parents and guardians real-time grades, attendance, and more straight from the teacher's gradebook to students and parents.

NCSS Website (www.newtoncountyschools.org)

The district site features general information, current news, links to school websites, Board of Education meeting information, the superintendent's news page, and so much more. Stay on top of current news by checking our website daily.

School Websites

Each school in the district has a dedicated website where announcements, documents, and contact information are easily accessible for students, parents, and community members. School websites may be accessed through the NCSS district website.

My Big Campus (<http://www.mybigcampus.com/login>)

Many NCSS teachers have their own My Big Campus webpages where they post homework assignments, daily lessons, and general information about their classes. Check with your child's teacher to see if he/she has a My Big Campus account.

Facebook (Newton-County-Schools)

Visit our Facebook page for news updates, inclement weather announcements, and pictures and videos of events taking place in our district.

Twitter (@NewtonCoSchools)

Check out our free Twitter page, where the district, administrators and even teachers are posting important news information, daily school pictures, and if needed emergency information regarding our district. Go even further and check out our hashtag, #ncssbethebest, for great pictures in the classrooms of our schools. Watch the learning taking place in our schools!

YouTube (NewtonCountySchools)

NCSS records important events in our district, such as the county Spelling Bee; Poetry Recitation, Drama, and Ready Writing Contests; Teacher of the Year Reception; Retirement Dinner; all school board meetings, and much more. Watch them any time day or night on our YouTube Channel.

School Messenger

School Messenger is the emergency contact system for the school district. School Messenger allows school and district administrators to send important mass telephone messages to parents. Please update your phone number each school year to ensure you receive these messages.

Constant Contact

NCSS utilizes Constant Contact to distribute news in electronic format straight to parent email. Publications include Thursday Folder, Board Notes, and any emergency messages from the school system. You can subscribe to this service by clicking on the "Stay Informed" link on the right hand side of our homepage.

MyPaymentsPlus

MyPaymentsPlus.com is your portal to convenient, secure meal account management. Approximately 15% of enrolled students use MyPaymentsPlus. Visit the NCSS website to apply for an account.



Thank you for choosing the
Newton County School System!

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Act of 2006); or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) in educational programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Students, parents, employees and the general public are hereby notified that the Newton County Board of Education does not discriminate in any educational programs or activities or in employment policies.

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