

ATER | MATH | SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | DESIGN | GI  
M | STEAM | DANCE | GARDENS | GROWING | LITEF  
CHER TRAINING | SCHOLARSHIPS | GRANTS | SPON  
ORS | NEW BOARD MEMBERS | BOOK BUS | PARTNERS  
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# IN JUST

# YEAR...

**A Relaunch + A Renewed Mission =  
Amazing Success  
For Our Kids!**



**The Newton Education Foundation puts community resources to work for our kids so they can achieve academic and personal success. We do this by providing funds that help our schools remove obstacles, provide great educational opportunities that deepen learning and support teachers in meeting the learning needs of all kids.**

## INSIDE:

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# LITERACY



◁ Students engage in reading activities



Teachers participate in training activities



◁ REAP trainer works with students to assess reading level

“ I can confidently say that this is the best training that we have ever been a part of.”

– Teresa Sauls  
Principal | East Newton Elementary School

## REAPing the Rewards of Literacy Training

During the 2024-2025 school year, all Kindergarten and 1st grade teachers at South Salem and East Newton Elementary Schools are being trained in structured literacy thanks to funding from NEF. REAP (Reading is Essential for All People), is providing 10 days of professional development with the goal of improving reading proficiency for all students.

**READ MORE** 



△ Teacher at East Newton using REAP learning in the classroom

### Teachers Say

It's exciting to see the science behind the epic journey that we call "teaching kids to read," and now I feel empowered and invigorated to begin this journey with this

I have thoroughly enjoyed the REAP training. It has made me reflect on both how I was taught to read and the traditional methods we've used for so long. The emphasis on explicitly teaching each skill in detail, rather than relying on memorization, has been particularly valuable. I appreciate how we can immediately apply what we learn to our students' needs.

It is so exciting to learn how to teach ALL students to read, not just a few students. After teaching for so many years, it is so refreshing to feel that we can actually teach students to read the correct way! This is the best professional learning I have received in many years!



△ Author Molly Webster gets a warm media center welcome



▷ Students with author and former UGA and Superbowl Champion, Malcolm Mitchell



△ Students dig into "The Greatest Book in the World" by Malcom Mitchell

## Reading Comes Alive

**Unique NEF partnership with the Emory Ideas Festival brings children's authors to NC schools**

Students got a chance to engage with two amazing authors, Malcolm Mitchell and Molly Webster, learn their stories, and take home a free book thanks to funding from NEF.

## A Vending Machine ... for BOOKS!

Two Newton County schools are using an innovative vending machine to promote literacy. Instead of junk food or soda, this machine allows students to exchange a token for a book that they get to keep. NEF teacher grant funds supported book vending machines at East Newton and Oak Hill Elementary this year.

**READ MORE** 

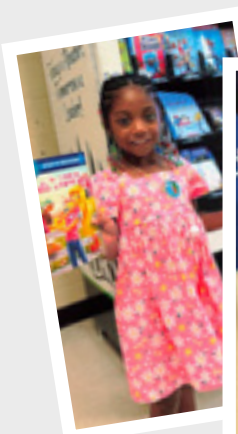
Students show off books they got from the vending machine with tokens they earned for positive behavior.



## Hop on the Book Bus

In spring of 2024, NEF wrapped up a \$30,000 grant received from Newton County as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to help communities coming out of the pandemic. The funds helped stock and refurbish The Book Bus, a converted school bus that provides free, age-appropriate reading material to help families build their home libraries.


*Covington City Manager Harold Cooper stocks the Book Bus with close to 500 books donated by Newton County employees.*




# GROWING THE GOOD

Newton Education Foundation was one of just three Georgia organizations to receive a **USDA Farm to School Program Grant**.

The \$94,000 grant will fund a collaborative partnership between **NEF, Newton County Schools, Love is Love Cooperative Farm**

and **Small Bites Adventure Club** to expand Farm to School activities across Newton County Schools. [READ MORE](#) 

*Small Bites will provide curriculum kits with hands-on vegetable experiences to 40 Pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms over a two-year period.* 



## Getting Our Youngest Learners “Veggie-Ready”

880 students and their teachers will participate in in-classroom agriculture education, visit Love is Love Cooperative Farm, taste test local food in the school cafeteria, and receive a certificate of program completion.



There was a lot of laughter and a lot of ‘WOW’ coming from our students as they learned and discovered the art of gardening!”

– Kimberlee Sorrell, Fairview ES Principal



## Fast Stats

The CDC Estimates ...

**37.6%**

Georgia children ages 1-5 years old who do not eat fruit daily

**47.9%**

Georgia children who do not eat vegetables daily

Source: CDC 2021

*Fairview Elementary second graders, supported by volunteers from First Presbyterian Church, clean and prep the soil for planting as part of a teacher grant to improve the “curb appeal” of their school entrance.*

## How does your garden grow?

Five schools got funding to start or improve their school gardens thanks to the USDA Farm to School Grant received by NEF.

Additional recipients of school garden grants include: Catrina Pollard, Eastside HS, school orchard; Jennifer Pole, Porterdale ES, pollinator garden; Heidi Grady, South Salem ES, flower garden; Christy Williams, Clements MS, year-round garden.

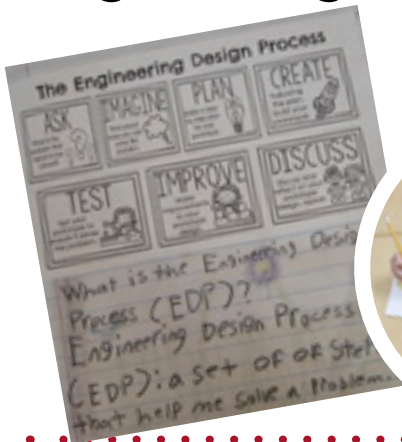
# FULL STEAM AHEAD

NEF grant funds supported student engagement in STEAM Education: Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics this year.

## Learning Teamwork and the Engineering Design Process



Each month at South Salem ES, students participate in a STEM Friday that challenges them to work together to complete a task.



Third grade students at the NC STEAM Academy study and draw birds they observe as an early part of working through the design process.

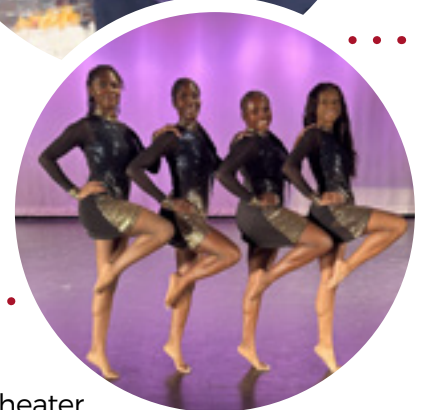
## STEAM-ing Forward at WSCC

Students at the Washington Street Community Center (WSCC) will benefit from a \$14,000 grant from Views on Learning to NEF that pays for STEAM activities provided by Decatur Makers, Coding with Culture and the STEAM Generation, plus field trips to the Decatur Makerspace and family activity days. [READ MORE](#)



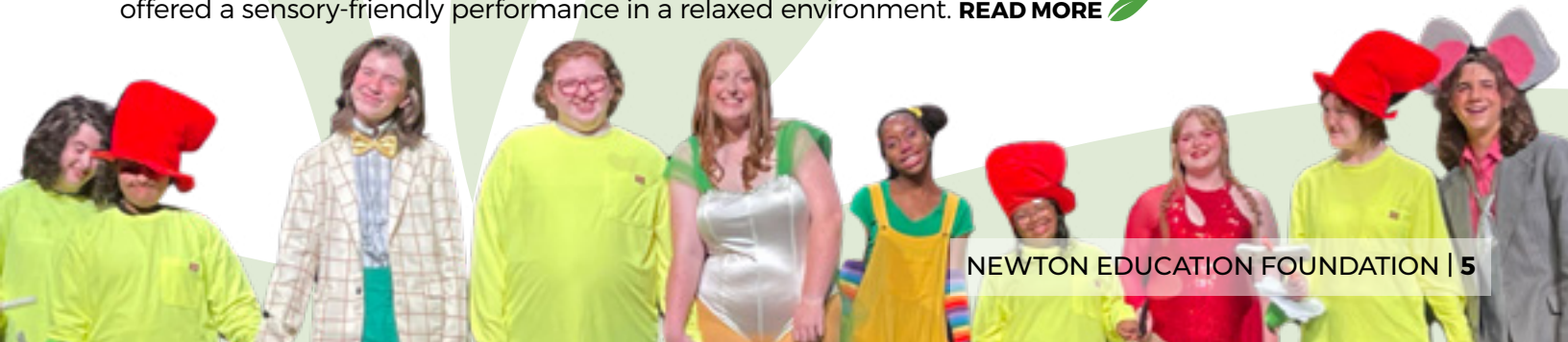
## NHS Dancers Sparkle and Shine

Newton High School dance teacher Alainna Evans received a grant for costumes that allow her dancers to sparkle and shine, elevating their performances. Says senior Anaya Wren, "When you look good, you feel good, and when you feel good, you dance good!" [READ MORE](#)



## All-Access Pass for EHS Theater

An NEF grant supported a new, inclusive approach to this year's musical theater performance, which included neuro-divergent students as "curtain call buddies" and offered a sensory-friendly performance in a relaxed environment. [READ MORE](#)



# LIFE AFTER NCS

NEF knows that life doesn't end with high school graduation and supports programming that helps students achieve their goals.



## Aspiraciones Mas Grandes

◀ From left: Travis Collins, Madison Forsythe, Hailey Quinn, Bryan Gallardo, Rose Collins

Rose and Travis Collins, alumni of Newton County Schools, funded three \$3,000 Aspiraciones Mas Grande Scholarship Awards, administered by NEF. The name reflects the Collins' commitment to helping students dream big about their futures.

[READ MORE](#) 

## REACH Georgia

Newton Education Foundation serves as the funding partner for Newton County Schools REACH GA program. REACH is a mentoring and scholarship program designed to ensure Georgia's academically promising students have the academic, social, and financial support needed to graduate from high school and pursue a college education.

Upon graduation, each REACH Scholar receives a \$10,000 scholarship to an eligible Georgia college or university.

◀ Congratulations to the Class of 2029 REACH Scholars (from left): Elijah Thompson, Indian Creek MS; Michael Johnson, Veterans Memorial MS; Zion Hall, Indian Creek MS.



REACH GA Scholars from the class of 2028 visit the University of North Georgia



# GIVING/CONNECTING

## Join Us. Reconnect. Give Back.

Take a few minutes and fill out our Alumni Network survey. Know a Newton County alum who's doing something great? Nominate them for an Alumni Spotlight at [newtoneducationfoundation.org/alumni](http://newtoneducationfoundation.org/alumni).

[READ MORE](#) 



## NCS Alum Gives \$25K for Opportunity Fund

Debra McGiboney Griffith, NHS Class of 1973, filled out our Alumni Survey and indicated she was interested in learning more about our work. After meeting with Executive Director Gail Rothman, Debra pledged a generous gift of \$25,000 to help lower-income students participate in enrichment opportunities that would otherwise be out of reach.




## Sponsors 2024-2025 | Thank you so much for your support this year! [READ MORE](#)



Applied Underwriters Aviation

Solid Rock

### Sponsors welcome!

It's always a great time to give for our kids. Visit our website to sign up. [READ MORE](#) 

## Grants Received

**\$10K**

from Police Who Care

**\$5K**

from Snapping Shoals EMC

**\$94K**

from USDA

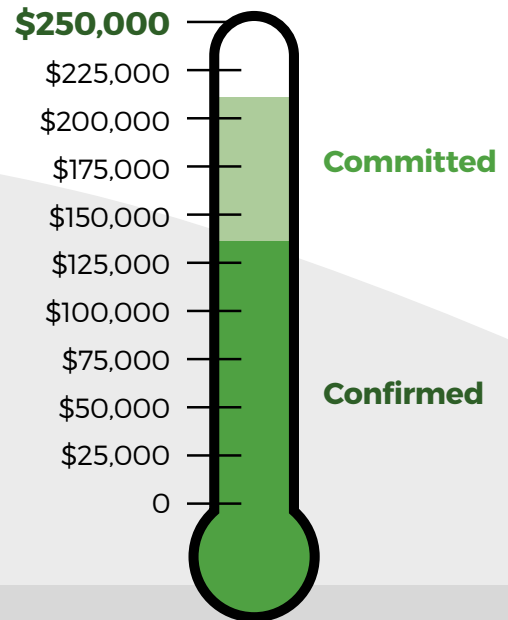
**14K**

from Views On Learning

# Be All In for Kids, and Keep Your Tax Dollars in Newton County



Newton County taxpayers can turn their Georgia income taxes into a dollar-for-dollar donation to the Newton Education Foundation by taking advantage of the PEACH Education Tax Credit. This Georgia Foundation for Public Education program was funded by the legislature with \$15 million for the entire state, which is being distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Act now! [READ MORE](#)



## MEET THE BOARD

These volunteers give their time and talent to help expand NEF's reach and impact



Loucy Hay



Asher Dozier



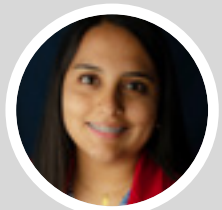
Dory Berry



Jill Morehouse Lum



Shamus Mulvihill



Wendy Rodriguez



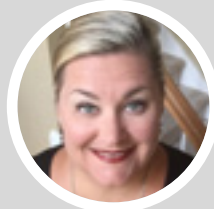
Gabriel Stovall



Tami Thomas



Elizabeth Harwell



Michelle Jenkins

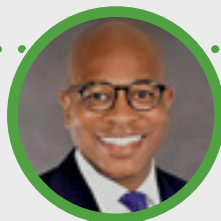


Sharita Gorham

### Closing Thoughts

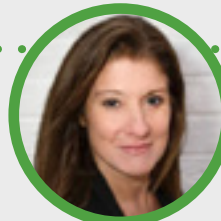
The Newton Education Foundation (NEF) is a vital partner in advancing the initiatives of our school district, securing essential funding that directly benefits our schools and students. They play a key role in providing additional resources for innovative programs that address the complex needs of our students!”

– **Dr. Duke Bradley III** | NCSS Superintendent



We are excited to see how the community has embraced the relaunch of NEF. And this is just the beginning. We hope this report has inspired you and that you will join us to ensure every child has what they need to thrive!”

– **Gail Rothman** | NEF Executive Director



Scan to view this report online and to learn more.

P.O. Box 1586, Covington, GA 30015  
678-532-8232 | [newtoneducationfoundation.org](http://newtoneducationfoundation.org)

