NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS
SPIRIT | PRIDE | EXCELLENCE
Achieves



Organizational Priorities:

Academic Summary Report, 11.A.1

April 21, 2026

Tracy Blackburn

Chief of Leadership & Learning

Organizational Priorities

ADVANCING ACADEMICS, SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT, AND STUDENT SUPPORTS

- Strengthen the district's literacy foundation; clarify and document the district's literacy improvement philosophy, strategy, and resources
- Strengthen the instructional core (implement research-based instructional practices, interventions, and support systems in service of ensuring rigorous, Tier 1 Instruction, district-wide

ADVANCING OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- Advance school safety through coordinated improvement strategy
- Ensure the development of a multi-year Strategic Plan
- Identify and implement necessary operational efficiencies to streamline core systems and enhance organizational effectiveness
- Evaluate district-wide facilities to explore opportunities for future use, right sizing, efficiency, upgrades, and modernization

ADVANCING CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT

- Develop a commonly applied, Tier I behavior support and intervention framework
- Deepen community and stakeholder engagement

ADVANCING INNOVATION & ORGANIZATIONAL STABILITY

- Strengthen pathways and programs for students that support workforce development, aligned with community needs and industry partnerships
- Evaluate and modernize policies to promote coherence and to correspond with the current state of the district
- Invest in the professional growth of current and aspiring leaders to strengthen executive capacity, develop a sustainable leadership pipeline, and ensure high-impact leadership at all levels

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

Strengthening the **Instructional Core**









> The instructional core is composed of the **teacher** and the **student** interacting with **content**. The relationship between these three elements — not the qualities of any one element alone - determines the nature of instructional practice.
>
> **Richard Elmore,** Harvard Education Researcher









How the **Work** Was Done







NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS TEACHER ADVISORY

I look forward to continuing to build teacher capacity through collaboration, data-driven planning, and targeted instructional support. Strengthening systems that promote consistency, high expectations, and student engagement will be key. **Marlayna Bryant,** Teacher, WNES









STRENGTHENING ACADEMIC INFRASTRUCTURE



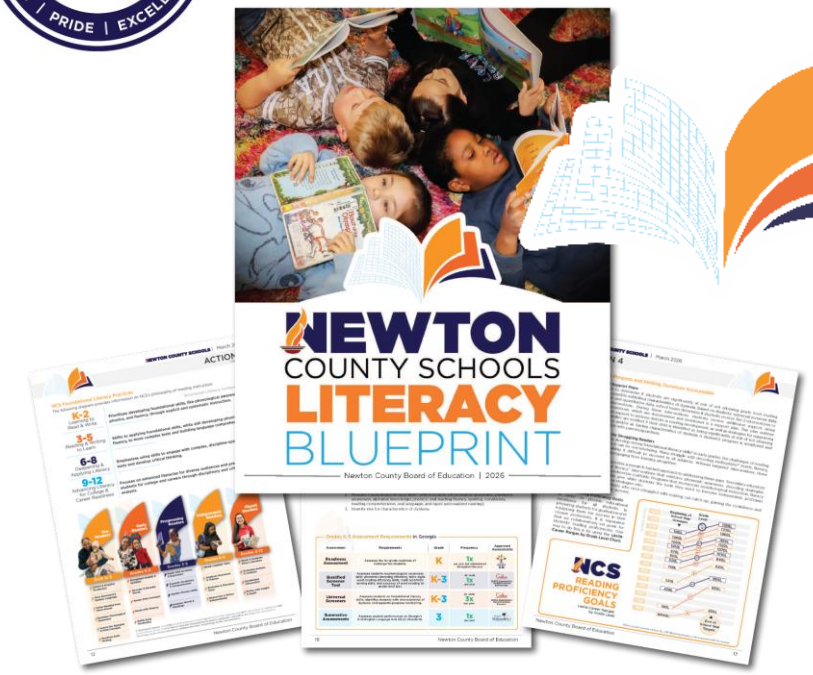
INTEGRAL PARTNERS

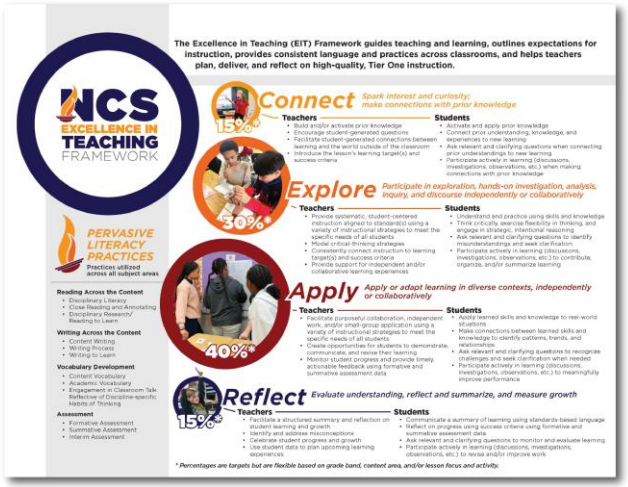
Abigail Coggin - Newton County Board of Education, *Chair*
Andre Person - Georgia Power, *Workforce Development Specialist*
Andrea Denson - Twiggs County Public Schools, *CTAE Director*
Andrea Hendricks - Georgia State University, *Senior Director of Online Initiatives*
Andrea Lane - Newton County CTAE Advisory Board, *Healthcare & Bioscience Chair*
Anthony Smith - Clayton County Schools, *Superintendent*
Asher Dozier - UGA Carl Vinson Institute, *Infrastructure & Community Resilience*
Barbara Johnson - Georgia State University, *Dean*
Benjamin Roundtree - Newton County Schools, *Special Assistant to The Superintendent*
Brandy Turnipseed - Henry County Schools, *CTAE Coordinator*
Chad Walker - Newton College & Career Academy, *Principal/CEO*
Charlene Scott - UGA Extension & Georgia 4-H, *Newton County 4-H Youth Development Agent*
Cherri Nix - Georgia Department of Education, *Program Manager, STEM/STEAM*
Chuck Berry - Newton Chamber of Commerce, *Board Member*
DaBrian Jones - Archer Aviation, *Human Resources*
Dan Murphy - University System of Georgia Board of Regents, *Board Member*
Debbie Harper - Newton Chamber of Commerce, *President/CEO*
Dee Cook - Newton Chamber of Commerce, *Board Member*
Deena Sams - Newton County Schools, *Director of Afterschool & Community Affairs*
Doryianne Gunter - Dekalb County Schools, *Director of CTAE*
Dr. Artesius Miller - Technical College System of Georgia, *Chair*
Dr. Arther Reece - Newton County Schools, *Human Resources Coordinator*
Dr. Ashante Everett - Newton County Schools, *Assistant Superintendent*
Dr. Dana Rickman - Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, *President*
Dr. Eric Holland - Rome City Schools, *Superintendent*
Dr. Ijeoma Johnson - Newton County Schools, *Instructional Technology Coordinator*
Dr. JoAnne St. Aime - Newton County Schools, *Executive Director of School Leadership*
Dr. Keith Benton - Newton County Schools, *Director of Family & Support Services*
Dr. Michael Barr - Newton County Schools, *Chief Operations Officer*
Dr. Stephen Hammock Newton County Schools, *Principal Newton High School*
Dr. Takila Curry Newton County Schools, *Executive Director of School Leadership*
Dr. Tavarez Holston - Georgia Piedmont Technical College, *President*
Dr. Vanshelle Turner - Newton County Schools, *Principal Indian Creek Middle School*
Dr. Veronica Bacote - Newton County Schools, *Principal Clements Middle School*
Dustin Davis-Austin - Gwinnett County Schools, *Director of Academies & CTAE*
Erica Robinson - Newton County Schools, *Chief Financial Officer*
Gabriel Khouli - Takeda Pharmaceuticals, *Head of Site Communications*
Greg Dozier - Technical College System of Georgia, *Commissioner*
Greg Herring - Newton Chamber of Commerce, *Board Member*
Heather Pouliot - Newton County Schools, *College and Career Specialist*
Hon. Fleeta Baggett - City of Covington, *Mayor*
Hon. Michael Patterson - City of Porterdale, *Mayor*
Jay Bailey - Newton Chamber of Commerce, *Board Member*
Jeff Cher - Newton County Schools, *Principal Eastside High School*
John Pritchett - Newton County Schools, *CTAE and Workforce Innovation Coordinator*
Jordan Troutman - Newton County Schools, *College and Career Specialist*
Josey Cameron Kelly Products, *Director, Learning and Development*
Joshua Williams - Georgia Piedmont Technical College, *VP of Economic Development*
Kari Knight - Clairon Metals Corporation, *Director of Human Resources*
Katherine Dunn - Georgia State University Georgia Policy Labs, *Senior Director*
Kathy Morgan - Newton County Industrial Development Authority, *Chair*
Kaytlyne Taylor - Process Equipment & Controls, *Human Resources Manager*
Keisa Gatewood - Newton County Schools, *Principal Cousins Middle School*
Lacey Fleming - Newton Industrial Development Authority, *VP of Government & External Affairs*
Lanier Sims - Newton County Industrial Development Authority, *Chairman*
Laura Warren - META, *Community Development Regional Manager*
LeAnne Long - Newton County Board of Commissioners, *District 5*
Lindsey Petrini - Piedmont Newton Hospital, *CEO*
Linsey Shockley - Newton College & Career Academy, *Assistant Principal of Business Engagement*
Lisa Kinnemore - Georgia State Board of Education, *Board Member-District 4*
Lisa Tolliver - Georgia Power, *External Affairs Area Manager*
Loucy Hay - Newton Education Foundation, *Chair*
Lourn Evans - Michelin, *Plant Manager*
Mack Bullard - Twiggs County Public Schools, *Superintendent*
Marcus Ross - Right at Home, *Director*
Marlon Gilbert - Newton County Schools, Principal Veterans Middle School
Marores Perry - Rome City, *CTAE Director*
Martha Zoller - Georgia State Department of Education, *Board Member-District 9*
Michael Chapple - Newton County Schools, *Principal Alcovy High School*
Michelle Jenkins - Newton Education Foundation, *Member*
Mike Hopkins - Newton Chamber of Commerce, *Board Member*
Mollie Melvin - Newton Community Partnership, *Executive Director*
Nicole Ricks - Piedmont Newton Hospital, *Manager of Human Resources*
Niquan Alston - Newton County Schools, *Principal Liberty Middle School*
Nyree Sanders - Newton County Schools, *Chief Human Resources Officer*
Olu Brown - Impact Church, *Founding Pastor*
Pamela Pitts - Clayton County Public Schools, *CTAE Executive Director*
Patrick Ledford Georgia Department of Education, *Economic Development Liaison*
Rep. Clint Crowe - Georgia General Assembly, *State Representative*
Richard Woods - Georgia Department of Education, *State Superintendent*
Robert Gaines - Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, *Chief of Staff*
Robert Lane - Mainstreet Land & Properties, *Business Development Officer*
Roger Ivey - Georgia Department of Education, *CTAE Program Manager*
Ruth Wilson - Georgia Piedmont Technical College, *Board Vice-Chair*
Sallie Holloway - Gwinnett County Schools, *Director of Artificial Intelligence and Computer Science*
Sam Hay - Main Street Land and Properties, *CEO*
Sen. Tonya Anderson - Georgia General Assembly, *State Senator*
Serra P. Hall - Newton County Industrial Development Authority, *Executive Director*
Shamica Tucker - Covington Housing Authority, *Executive Director*
Shamilleon Payne - Atlanta Public Schools, *CTAE Coordinator*
Shamus Mulvihill - Newton Education Foundation, *Board Member*
Shannon Buff - Newton County Schools, *Executive Director of School Leadership*
Shaun Mock - Snapping Shoals EMC, *President/CEO*
Sheila Thomas - Newton County Schools, *Chief of Strategy & Support Services*
Sherri Partee - Newton County Schools, *Executive Director of Communications*
Stephen Woodall - Newton County Schools, *College & Career Specialist*
T. Demond Mason - Newton County Board of Commissioners, *District 2*
Tarrence Houston - Rotary Club, *Director*
Ted Cummings - Onyx MS Group, *Founder & CEO*
Terry Owens - Georgia Power, *Education/WFD Coordinator*
Tim Hemans - Gwinnett County Schools, *Executive Director of College & Career Development*
Tim Schmitt - Newton County Schools, *Director of CTAE and Workforce Innovation*
Tracey Clark - Newton Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, *Board Member*
Tracy Blackburn - Newton County Schools, *Chief Learning and Leadership Officer*
Trey Bailey - Newton County Board of Education, *Board Member-District 1*
Vanessa Parks - Beaver Manufacturing, *Manager*
Yakera Lawman - Becton Dickinson (BD), *Global Distribution Center*
Yvette Dupree - Henry County Schools, *CTAE Supervisor/YAP Coordinator*
Dr. Ramone Garner - Atlanta Public Schools, *Principal*

NEWTON / COVINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
GEORGIA PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Carl Vinson Institute of Government UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
GEORGIA Archway Partnership
NEWTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

STRENGTHENING **ACADEMIC INFRASTRUCTURE**





Literacy Leadership Committee Members

Literacy Leadership Committee

NCS District and School Leaders

- **Dr. Ashante Everett** - Assistant Superintendent Teaching & Learning
- **Dr. Hope Barr** - Director, Teaching & Learning
- **Kristen Bagwell** - Literacy Coordinator
- **Dr. Lisa Hockada** - Elementary ELA Instructional Specialist
- **Lori McGovern** - Instructional Technology Specialist
- **Tiffani Johnson** - MTSS Lead
- **Keyra Fray** - Director, Risk Management
- **Angela Brown** - Employment Coordinator
- **Dr. John Pritchett** - CTAE & Workforce Development Coordinator
- **Starr Smith** - Newton County Schools SRO
- **Karla Simpson** -Special Education Instructional Specialist
- **Angela Woods** - Virtual Instructional Program Coordinator
- **Keisla Tisdel** - Instructional Coach, Veterans Memorial Middle School
- **Camiyah Ray** - Instructional Coach, Veterans Memorial Middle School
- **Jasmine Howard** - Instructional Coach, Rocky Plains Elementary School
- **Dr. Vanshelle Turner** - Principal, Indian Creek Middle School
- **Linsey Shockley** - Assistant Principal, Newton College & Career Academy
- **Donald Helm** - Principal, STEAM Academy

These stakeholder groups were invited to review and provide feedback:

- Teachers and Staff
- School and District Leaders
- Georgia Piedmont Technical College
- Georgia State University

These community stakeholder groups were invited to review and provide feedback:

- Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia
- Georgia Piedmont Technical College
- Georgia State University
- Newton Chamber of Commerce
- Newton Community Partnerships
- Newton County Industrial Development Authority
- Newton Education Foundation
- Reading is Essential for All People (REAP)

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS TEACHER ADVISORY

Jessica Baxter
Kimberly (Taylor) Moody Brown
Kelly Byrd
Tonya Cannon
Serrita Carr
Taya Combs
Katlyn Doster
Andrea Dowdy
Jasmine El-Jourbagy
LaShonda Glover
Rob Gourlay
Angela Hayes
Olga Jennings
Tonya Jones
Isabelle Konicki
Miranda Lamb
Chelsey Lee
Brandi Martin
Quinita Morrow
AdrienneOsgood
Gersinta Payne
Marcus Pollard
Sabrina Pruitt
Sandy Quinn
Sherise Rollins
Katie Sauls
Nikisha Shields
Reshonica Williams
Michelle Yarbrough

NCS EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING FRAMEWORK
Connect
Explore
Apply
Reflect

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

NEWTON FORWARD

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

STRATEGIC PLAN








Impact Data

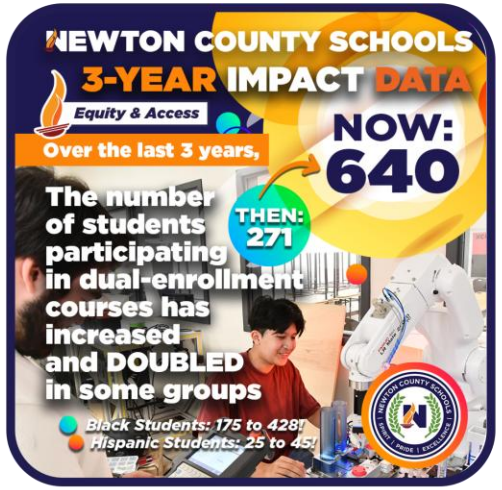
I believe student success comes from using data to inform instruction—whether that's formative assessments, progress monitoring, or analyzing patterns in student work. When we combine that with clear learning objectives, differentiated support, and consistent feedback, students know what they're working towards, and teachers can adjust in real time to meet them where they are.

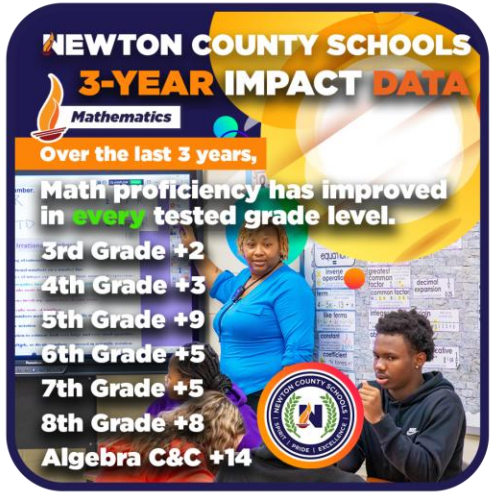
Kathie Pierce, ICMS

OVER THE LAST 3 YEARS

READING
Reading has improved in 5 of 6 tested grade levels:

3rd Grade	+6
4th Grade	+3
5th Grade	+2
6th Gradee	+7
7th Grade	+6

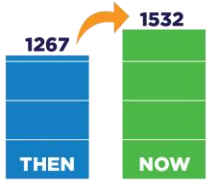




ADVANCED PLACEMENT

AP Courses Offered THEN 25 → NOW 32

AP Course Participation



AP Scholars NOW 181 THEN 71

STUDENT PERFORMANCE - CAREER TECHNOLOGY (CTAE)

Our state End of Pathway Assessment pass rate has increased from: 48% → 68% UP 20%

BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS



GRADUATION RATE HAS REMAINED ABOVE **90%**



INVESTING IN **PEOPLE AND SYSTEMS**

STUDENT SUCCESS



ACADEMIC INVESTMENT



TEACHER INVESTMENT



LEADER INVESTMENT

STRENGTHEN THE FOUNDATION

Consistent small group instruction, utilizing Lennections and Writable, and focusing on vocabulary instruction throughout the year... We utilized the platforms we were given and made them really work for our students.

Marsha Castillo, ICMS



NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

EVIDENCE OF **IMPACT**

Student achievement continues to be positively impacted by… the expansion of advanced academic opportunities, including increased access to AP courses and Dual Enrollment ... our strong partnerships with [universities] and [colleges] have streamlined the Dual Enrollment process, making it more accessible and supportive for students as they pursue college-level coursework.

Gwendolyn Strong, EHS

NEWTON FORWARD
NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS
STRATEGIC PLAN

NCS EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING FRAMEWORK
Connect
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Reflect

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

STRONG FOUNDATION
BRIGHT FUTURE

Student achievement will continue to be positively impacted by continued implementation of REAP training as students are moving from grades K, 1, 2, & 3 with stronger phonics skills.

Christina Hart Spinks, ENES

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

SPIRIT | PRIDE | EXCELLENCE

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS *Achieves*













