

Fayette County Public Schools



EXCELLENCE

Annual Report 2009

Our Mission...

- Deliver ***Effective Instruction***
- That results in ***High Expectations***
- And continued ***Student Achievement***



Where Excellence Counts

To Our Community



“Where Excellence Counts” has been our motto for many years and is a goal that we continually strive to meet.

Worldwide and nationally, we are experiencing difficult financial times. However, with the support of our Board of Education through a sound budgeting process, we have been able to protect our educational and instructional programs for students. Despite budget cuts, our system continues to meet its goal of excellence in student achievement.

We remain the only school system of our size in Georgia to have all of our schools meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for six consecutive years - meaning our schools have achieved this mandate each year since it was implemented. Two of our high schools have earned spots on the prestigious “Top of the Class” list published by *Newsweek* magazine, ranking them in the top six percent of all high schools in the United States.

I want to thank our employees and community for their sacrifices and support this past year. It has enabled us to continue to operate without taking any instructional programs away from our students. I also want to thank everyone who has given input and their time to serve on our various standing and ad hoc committees.

Despite any changes that come our way, the Board and I will remain committed to our mission, and we will do everything possible to protect the integrity of our academic programs and the success of our students because in Fayette, “Excellence Counts.”

Sincerely,

Dr. John D. DeCotis
Superintendent

STUDENT AND STAFF HONORS

Student Scholarships

Two Fayette County High seniors, Cecelia Oparah and Ehizele Osehobo won National Achievement Scholarships from the National Merit Corporation, established to honor scholastically talented African American youth.

Jennie Lee of Fayette County High and William Kearney of McIntosh High were each awarded \$2,500 National Merit Scholarships.

David Fratto and Qian Zhou, McIntosh High; Joseph Morrow and Ryan O’Shaughnessy,

Starr’s Mill High; and Randy Goodheart, Whitewater High, received college-sponsored scholarships through the National Merit Corporation.

Jonae Felton, Whitewater High, received the prestigious Gates Millennium Scholarship.

Fayette Students Shine

Our students earned a number of awards and accolades in 2008-2009, including several history-making achievements.

For the first time in the school system's history, a middle school economics team advanced all the way to the National Economic Challenge Championship in New York City. Rising Starr Middle's team posted a third place finish in their first national competition. Students begin learning about economics in the third grade (see photo caption below). Also, another first for the school system was Starr's Mill High's mock trial team advancing to the state finals.

Jonae Felton, a senior at Whitewater High, was the first student in our system to win a Gates Millennium Scholarship that provides full tuition coverage for undergraduate, graduate and doctoral study. Only 1,000 high school seniors across the nation are selected each year.

Fayette students are well educated on the ebb and flow of economics. Learning begins in the third grade with the Mini-Society program where students set up their own communities, currency and jobs. Spring Hill Elementary teacher Shelby Gardner is credited with growing the program's success.



Testing Achievements

SAT average score of 1,555 topped the state's average by 95 points and the nation's by 46 points.

Third, fifth and eighth grade Writing Assessments had more students scoring in "meets" and "exceeds" categories while fewer failed to meet standards.

Fifty percent of schools were recognized by the state for making the greatest gains or highest achievement on the CRCT or Georgia High School Graduation Test.

All schools made AYP for the sixth consecutive year.

Students posted high scores on the ACT for the fifth consecutive year. Participation was up 16 percent from last year and composite scores increased .5.

More students scored in the "exceeds" category of the Georgia High School Writing Test, up four percent from last year.

Outstanding Staff

Teachers

All of our teachers have earned “highly qualified” status. A highly qualified teacher must have a bachelor’s degree, full state certification or licensure and be able to demonstrate competency in each academic area he or she teaches.

School Nutrition Program

More than 1.9 million meals, including breakfast, were served to students and adults during the 2008-2009 school year. The school nutrition program operates on a zero balanced budget, meaning it does not make a profit from food sales but relies on revenues generated from sales to cover its costs. More than half of the costs to prepare meals (54.1%) are supplemented from meal sales.



Transportation

Fayette’s transportation department safely transported 12,129 students approximately 9,814 miles daily during the 2008-2009 school year. Ridership represented 54 percent of the school system’s total enrollment.

School Health Services

Each school has a staffed clinic that cares for 25-100 students per day with illnesses, chronic health conditions and injuries. Additionally, 25-40 students receive medications at each school clinic everyday. During the 2008-2009 school year, the school system’s clinic staff combined cared for 144,467 students, assisted 33,879 students with medications and performed 13,736 special procedures such as blood sugar checks, respiratory treatments, catheterizations, tube feedings, etc.

Pass rates for the Georgia High School Graduation Test ranged from 97-98 percent.

Fayette County, Sandy Creek and Starr’s Mill high schools were named Advanced Placement Honor Schools by the Georgia Department of Education.

CRCT scores were the best in the state with Fayette leading in all grade levels and subjects tested.

Science Honors

One hundred percent of Fayette’s middle and high school students advancing to the regional science fair tournament won placements, with 22

of 25 projects earning first place honors.

Sonya Jooma and Sonika Reddy of Fayette County High, and Ryan Kitchens of Starr’s Mill were selected to participate in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair.

The InvenTeam at Whitewater High received a \$10,000 grant

District Accreditation Awarded

A Quality Assurance Review Team of AdvancedED recommended that District Accreditation be awarded to our school system following a three-day visit in March that included reviewing documentation, interviewing stakeholders and observing classrooms.



In its report, the committee commended the school system for its “strong and positive academic learning climate in which teaching and learning are actively supported.” The report also commended the positive and productive working relationship among both external and internal stakeholders, the accessibility and openness to input from a broad spectrum of stakeholders and invaluable resources and support services that the system provides to schools.

Part of achieving and maintaining accreditation is implementing a continuous improvement process. The committee issued five recommendations that the school system is in the process of addressing. The committee’s full report is on the school system’s website, www.fcboe.org, under eBOARD.

AdvancED District Accreditation provides a national protocol for school systems committed to systemic, systematic and sustainable continuous improvement. The district accreditation process invites school systems to collaborate in reviewing the quality of the district’s systems and their contributions to teaching and learning. The process supports, enhances and stimulates growth and improvement throughout the school system.

from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to create a condenser to purify water. The school’s team was one of only 16 in the United States and Canada to receive a grant. The invention was showcased in the spring at MIT’s EurekaFest.

J.C. Booth Middle School

Science Olympiad Team finished fifth in the nation at the National Science Olympiad.

Miscellaneous Achievements

A total of 20 students from Fayette’s five high schools were selected as finalists for the Governor’s Honors Program, a six-week summer study program

for intellectually gifted and artistically talented high school students.

Rising Starr Middle’s economics team finished third at the Economic Education/Goldman Sachs Foundation National Economics Challenge.

Energy and Fuel Conservation



Predicting what would turn out to be a tough financial year in 2008-2009, the school system took proactive measures in the summer to start saving money on energy and other utility costs. From early June through late July of 2008, employees worked a four-day schedule, logging 10 hours per day Monday-Thursday with Fridays off.

By shutting down the central offices and schools on Fridays, the system saved over \$40,000 in energy costs compared to the year before when employees were on a five-day, eight hour schedule.

Energy saving measures continued throughout the school year as employees were mindful to turn off lights and electricity to other items when they were not in use, as well as adjusting the thermostat to a lower temperature in cooler months and a higher one in warmer weather. Energy savings ranged from over \$3,000 to more than \$80,000 per month during the 2008-2009 school year, resulting in a total overall savings of over \$400,000.

The school system's transportation department also worked diligently during the year to help generate a significant fuel savings. By consolidating routes with minimal students and using those extra buses to avoid second loads, the department saved over \$350,000 in budgeted fuel costs.

**Total Energy Savings:
\$406,362.27**

**Total Fuel Savings:
\$358,051.40**

Jay Gayda, a gifted student at Peeples Elementary, was the state's sole recipient of the Nicholas Green Distinguished Student Award that recognizes students in grades 3-6 who have distinguished themselves in academic achievement, leadership, or the visual or performing arts.

Taylor Lee of Whitewater High and Ryan O'Shaughnessey of Starr's Mill High were the recipients of the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship, which recognizes exceptionally able high school students who show promise of continued excellence in post-secondary education.

McIntosh and Starr's Mill High

made *Newsweek* magazine's list of the top 1,500 high schools in the nation.

Sam Burgess of Rising Starr Middle and Logan Caustin of Bennett's Mill Middle qualified to compete at the National Geographic State Bee. They were among 100 who qualified statewide.

Reducing Paper and Printing Costs

In an effort to further reduce spending, the school system implemented paperless school board meetings. Agendas and all documentation for public meetings are now available online through the system's eBOARD site. The public can review materials on the site prior to the meeting; all documents are shown electronically during the meeting.

The school system's publications also went electronic. The *By the Way* newsletter and annual report are posted on the the fcboe website. RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds have been set up to notify subscribers each time a new publication is posted. Subscription is free.

Not only is the system saving in paper and printing costs, but the electronic formats have made it easier for the public to get quick access to information of interest to them. The school system's policies and other public records are available for online research and review.

By saving costs in other areas, the school system has been able to avoid cutting academic programs it feels are vital to student success such as fine arts, technology and vocational.



Whitewater High was one of seven schools in North America to receive the Goethe Institut Award of Excellence in German. Student Lee Frye was selected as the schools grand prize winner for an all-expenses paid summer study trip to Germany.

Huddleston Elementary was awarded the Poetic

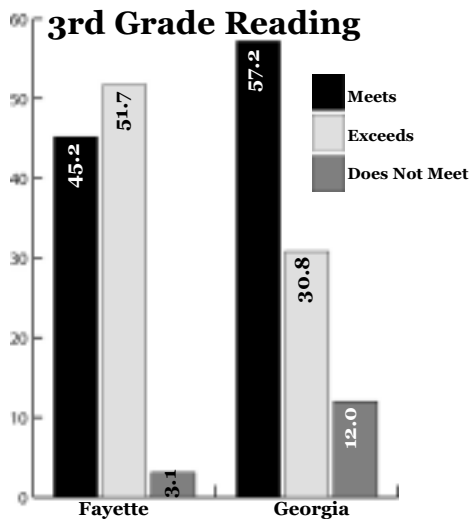
Achievement Award from Creative Communication in recognition of more than half of the school's writing entries being accepted for publication in the anthology, "A Celebration of Poets." Less than 50 percent of the poems that are submitted nationwide are accepted for publication.

The school system's only DECA Club, a business, marketing, management and entrepreneurship organization, at Whitewater High had 15 members earn top four placements at the regional competition. 2008-2009 marked the club's second anniversary.

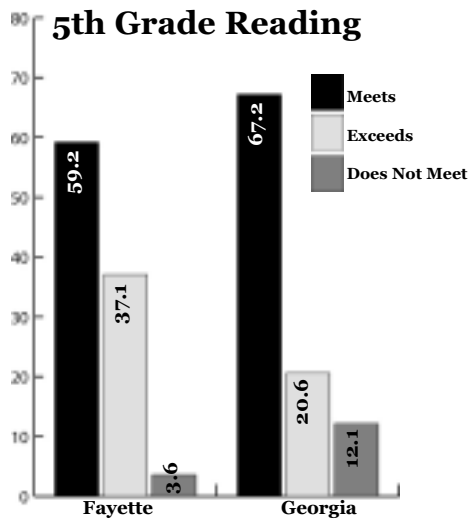
Economic students at Fayette

State Standardized Tests

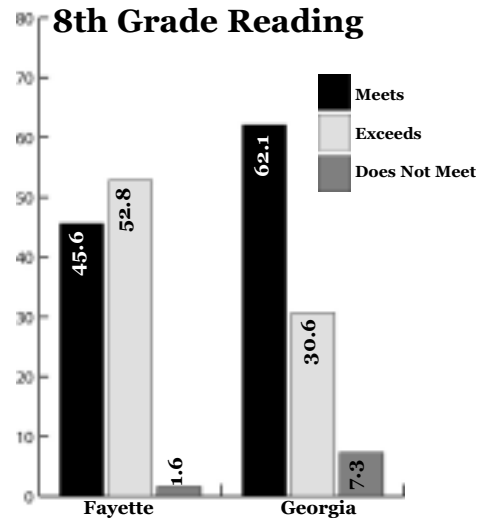
3rd Grade Reading



5th Grade Reading

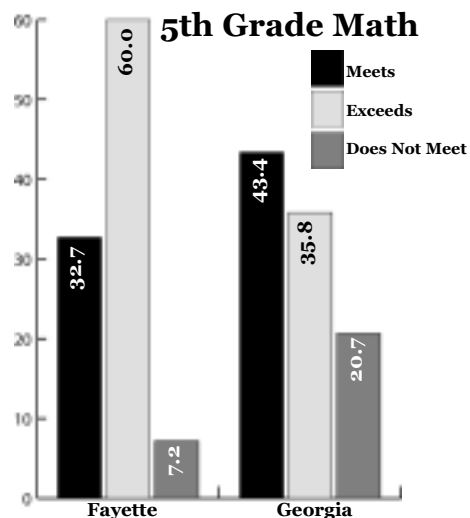


8th Grade Reading

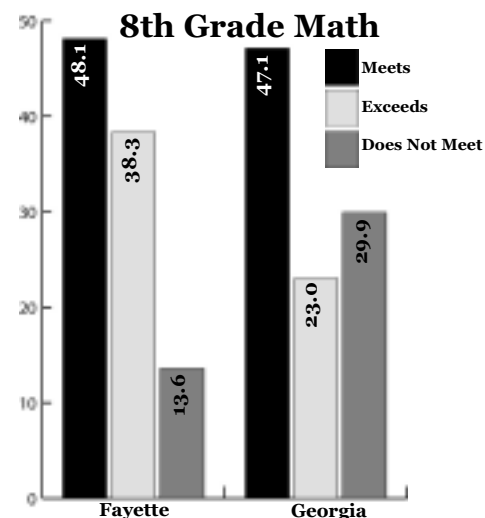


Students must pass reading in third grade and both reading and math in fifth and eighth grades to get promoted to the next grade level. Fayette had some of the highest scores in the state in the critical grade levels (3, 5 & 8) compared to systems of the same size.

5th Grade Math



8th Grade Math



School bus driver Michael Dixon placed first in the Fayette County School Bus Road-O and went on to compete at the state level safety competition where he placed eighth out of 44 competitors.

The school system's public relations department earned a Golden Achievement award

from the National School Public Relations Association for its employee communication efforts.

The Fayette School Counselors Association named the following counselors as 2009 Counselors of the Year: (elementary school) Linda G. Williams, (middle school) Dionne Maddox and

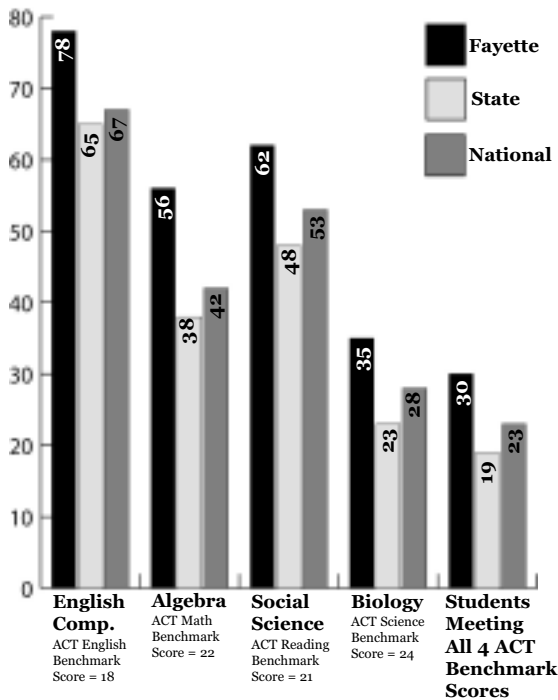
(high school) Sonya Tucker. The association also named Diann Ferrante, secretary for CARE (Children at Risk in Education), as the 2009 advocate of the year.

Dr. Carol Taylor, Rising Starr Middle Math Teacher, was selected as the 2009 Fayette County Teacher of the Year.

National Standardized Tests

2009 ACT Scores

Fayette posted the highest composite score, 22.5, in the state compared to the number of students tested, 1,027. The number of test takers continue to increase—up more than 80 percent since 2005.



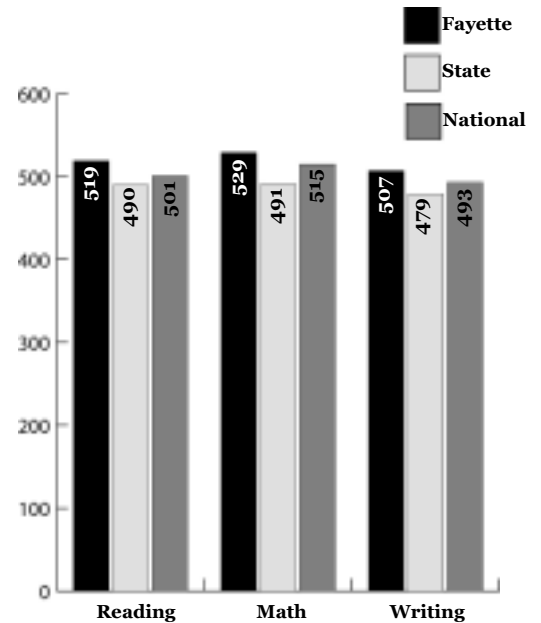
A benchmark score is the minimum score needed on an ACT subject area test to indicate a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college course.



Fayette students took both the ACT and SAT college entrance tests during the 2008-2009 school year. Although most students chose to take the SAT, the ACT has been gaining in numbers over the last five years. Both tests are accepted by most colleges and universities and are used to measure a student's readiness for college-level work.

2009 SAT Scores

Fayette's high school graduates posted an overall average score of 1555 – 4 points above last year's average, 95 points above that of the state and 46 points over the national average. A total of 1,320 high school graduates took the SAT in Fayette.



school system has received the award for six consecutive years and is the only system to receive the honor since its inception.

Staff Awards & Honors

Social Studies Coordinator Cathy Geis was named National Supervisor of the Year by the National Social Studies

Supervisors Association.

Superintendent John DeCotis received the 2009 Outstanding Educator Award from the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders.

Elementary teacher Shelby Garner was named the 2009 Economics Teacher of the Year

by the Georgia Council on Economic Education.

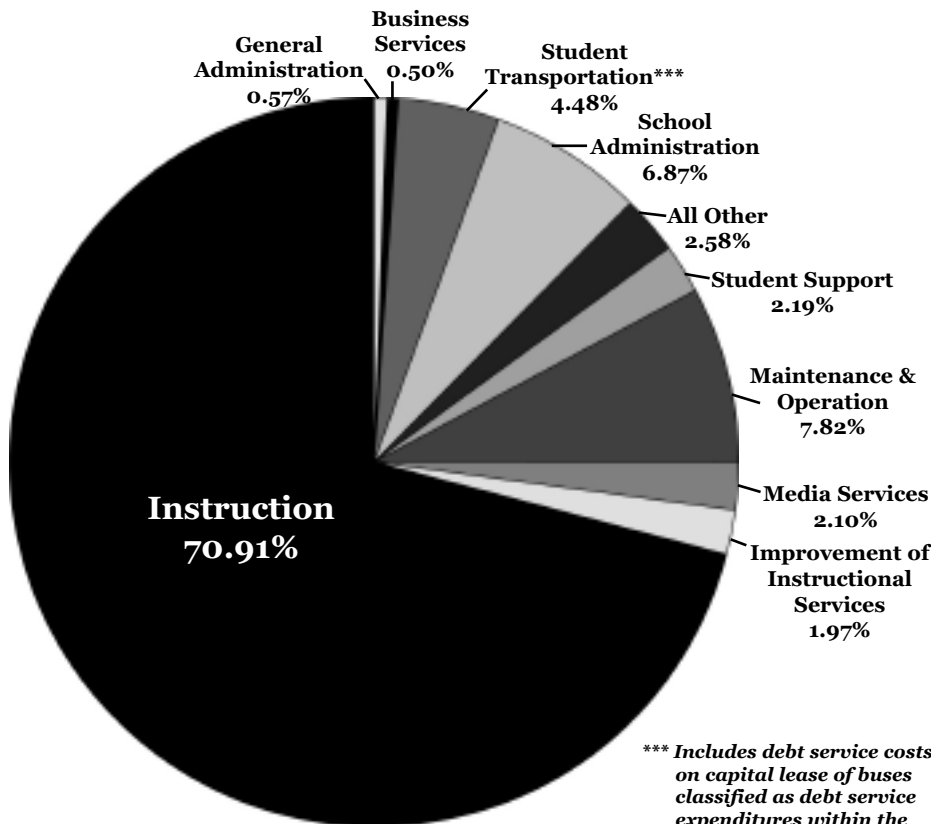
The Georgia Veterans of Foreign Wars named history teacher Sue Mullin as the 2009 Georgia Citizenship Education Teacher of the Year for middle schools.

Financial Overview

Expenditures 2008-2009

(Note: All numbers are unaudited.)

Total Unaudited Expenditures for FY 2009:
\$186,618,421



*** Includes debt service costs on capital lease of buses classified as debt service expenditures within the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

Teachers, counselors & aides, instructional materials, books & equipment & other instruction	\$33.25
Maintenance & Operation	\$3.67
School Administration	\$3.22
Student Transportation***	\$2.10
Student Support (psychologist, etc.)	\$1.03
Media Services	\$0.98
Improvement of Instructional services	\$0.92
General Administration	\$0.27
Business Services	\$0.24
All Other Services	\$1.21
Total Cost Per Student Per Day	\$46.90

The end of the year enrollment for Fiscal Year 2009 was 22,108.
Per pupil expenditures for Fiscal Year 2009 were \$8,441.22.

Economic students at Fayette County High were the regional winners of the Georgia Stock Market Game. They took a hypothetical \$100,000 and made a \$16,896 profit in a 10-week period.

Three graduating seniors, Jennie Lee, Fayette County High, and Minna Choi and William Kearney, both of

McIntosh High, were named semifinalists in the 2009 Presidential Scholars Program. Application is by invitation only based on the student's SAT or ACT scores.

Bennett's Mill Middle won the Region 6 Academic Bowl for Middle Grades sponsored by the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE).

Only two school teams from 12 regions throughout the state are selected as regional winners.

Exceptional Children

The Pacesetter award was presented to the Exceptional Children's Program by the Georgia Department of Education in recognition of excellence in education of students with disabilities. The

Board of Education



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Dr. John DeCotis
Superintendent

Fayette's five-member school board is the official governing body for the school system. The board's responsibilities include policy making, budget approval, hiring and the evaluation of the superintendent, hearing appeals of discipline and grievance issues and other duties as prescribed by law. Board members are elected to four-year terms; terms are staggered. The school board holds a reorganizational meeting every January to elect a chair and vice chair.

The school board meets on the third Monday of most months. Regular meetings begin at 7 p.m. in the boardroom of the Fayette County Board of Education, 210 Stonewall Avenue in Fayetteville. Work sessions are held as needed. Dates and times of these sessions are posted in the lobby of the board of education and on the website.

To sign up to speak at a school board meeting, call the Office of the Superintendent at 770-460-3535 10 days prior to the meeting.

Board of Distinction

The Fayette County Board of Education has been named a Board of Distinction by the Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA).

The Standards for Local Boards of Education is a voluntary program. It sets benchmarks of organizational structure and governance objectives for local boards of education that wish to participate in the program. Details on the standards are available on GSBA's website: www.gsba.com.

Fayette County Public Schools



2009 - 2010 Calendar Overview

New Teacher Orientation	July 27-31, 2009
Pre-Planning/Staff Development	August 3-7, 2009
Students Report	August 10, 2009
First Semester	August 10-December 17, 2009
Staff Development (Student Holiday)	October 16, 2009
Semester Exams (Secondary)	December 15-17, 2009
Workday (Student Holiday)	December 18, 2009
Workday (Student Holiday)	January 4, 2010
Second Semester	January 5-May 28, 2010
Semester Exams (Secondary)	May 26-28, 2010
Graduation	May 28, 2010
Post-Planning	June 1-2, 2010

Holidays

Labor Day	September 7, 2009
Staff Development (Student Holiday)	October 16, 2009
Thanksgiving	November 23-27, 2009
Workday (Student Holiday)	December 18, 2009
Semester Break	December 21-January 1, 2010
Workday (Student Holiday)	January 4, 2010
Martin Luther King Day	January 18, 2010
Presidents' Day	February 15, 2010
Winter Break	February 16-19, 2010
Spring Break	April 5-9, 2010
Memorial Day	May 31, 2010

School Months for Attendance

1st Month	August 10-September 4, 2009
2nd Month	September 8-October 5, 2009
3rd Month	October 6-November 3, 2009
4th Month	November 4-December 8, 2009
5th Month	December 9-January 22, 2010
6th Month	January 25-February 26, 2010
7th Month	March 1-March 26, 2010
8th Month	March 29-April 30, 2010
9th Month	May 3-28, 2010

Nine Week Periods

1st Nine Weeks	August 10-October 12, 2009
2nd Nine Weeks	October 13-Dec. 17, 2009
3rd Nine Weeks	January 5-March 17, 2010
4th Nine Weeks	March 18-May 28, 2010



2009 Regular School Board Meetings • 7 pm

210 Stonewall Avenue • Fayetteville • 2010 dates announced January 2010
Aug. 17, 2009 • Sept. 21, 2009 • Oct. 19, 2009 • Nov. 16, 2009 • Dec. 14, 2009

Fayette County Public Schools

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Website: www.fcboe.org

Web Site

The school system's website (www.fcboe.org) is the best way to keep up with news and activities in Fayette County Public Schools.

On Television

Fayette County Public Schools operates Channel 24 on Comcast Cable. This channel provides school announcements as well as programs highlighting student and staff achievements and county-wide initiatives.

Contact Us

This annual report is a publication of the Office of Public Information of Fayette County Public Schools. Questions or comments may be sent to Public Information Department, 210 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, GA 30214, phone (770) 460-3535, fax (770) 460-8191, email berrydreisbach.melinda@mail.fcboe.org.

The Fayette County Public School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age or disability in any of its employment practices, educational programs, services or activities. For more information about nondiscrimination provisions or to request accommodations based on a disability, contact the Human Resources Department, 770-460-3535.