

2020-2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

OCTOBER 1, 2020- SEPTEMBER 30, 2021



DECATUR CITY SCHOOLS
FOUNDATION



Our mission is to promote and enhance educational excellence for
all students in Decatur City Schools

**OUR
WORK**

**OUR
DIFFERENCE MAKERS**

**OUR
SUPPORTERS**

**OUR
FINANCIALS**

**OUR
TEAM**

Our Work

Our ROCKSTAR donors fund the extras and help prepare our students for a bright future! Here are the many ways they have made a difference.



John Baylor ACT Test Prep

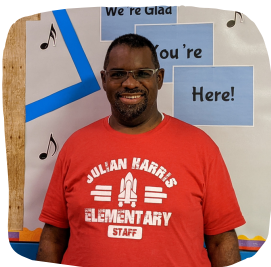
"During my junior year, John Baylor came to visit our school and shared with us the success stories behind his ACT Prep Program. This program takes individual categories seen on the ACT and breaks them down into subcategories consisting of mini-quizzes, practice tests, and videos where John Baylor teaches the strategies and rules that should be mastered to become an ACT "scholar". I have seen improvements in every category, but specifically in English. I am proud to say that by "Hammering the Grammar" I have increased my English score from a 26 to a 32, just in one month! With John Baylor's help, I have received multiple academic scholarships, and have cut down the cost of college tremendously." - Erin Self, Senior at Decatur High School



Medical Sciences Academy

"Being in the Medical Sciences Academy program at the Career Academies of Decatur has benefited me in ways that I couldn't have imagined. When I first entered the program I was not sure what to expect. I am so thankful I took that leap of faith because it has made me the person I am today. This program has furthered my love of medicine beyond what I even knew would be possible at the secondary level. I know I will be successful in nursing school because I have prior knowledge and a great teacher to refer back to in the future. This program has given me clarity on what I want to do for the rest of my life. I will be forever grateful for all of my teachers in this program that invested in me and my future success."

- Natia Johnson, Senior at Austin High School



Music Education

"DCS is so fortunate that every student in the district has access to Arts Specialists in a time when so many districts cut arts programs. We truly appreciate the value our school district places on the arts! With this year's funding, I was able to purchase a brand new bass xylophone which will serve students for decades to come. I was also able to collaborate with our P.E. teacher and we will be adding an annual cardio drumming unit for our students! I cannot begin to express how much impact these things will make in the lives of our students!"

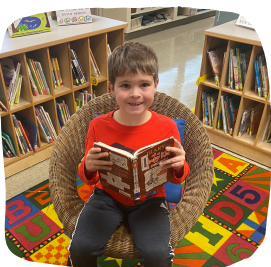
- Devin Lacy, Music Teacher at Julian Harris Elementary



Career Academies of Decatur Virtual Tour

"2020-2021 COVID 19 health concerns and the safety of students, parents, and stakeholders was a HUGE discussion when planning the Career Academies annual recruiting events including 8th grade student tours, parent open house, and employment signing day. What would closing our doors to the community do to Academy enrollment? OH THE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY! Thanks to a generous donation from the Decatur City Schools Foundation we were able to create a 360-degree Virtual CAREER ACADEMY TOUR! The virtual tour experience highlights students in action as well as including economic impact statements for each Academy."

- Angie Cushing, Career Academy Counselor



Million Word Challenge Reader

"I became a Million Word Challenge reader because reading gives me knowledge. I like reading and taking Accelerated Reader tests. It was a challenge that I wanted to prove that I could meet. I also wanted one of those t-shirts!"

- Flynn Stewart, Third Grader at Eastwood Elementary



John Baylor ACT Test Prep

"The John Baylor ACT prep has been very helpful in preparing me for the ACT. The OnTo College with John Baylor portion has also been helpful. Both helped to reiterate things I have already learned at some point in school, but have forgotten over the years. It has also provided me with new strategies to solve ACT problems. Being a part of ACT prep at Austin High School with the John Baylor program has boosted my confidence and prepared me to take the ACT!"

- Raven Sanders, Junior at Austin High School



Wetlands Edge Environmental Center

"From field trips in kindergarten to taking Field Studies as a senior, Wetlands Edge Environmental Center encouraged me to learn more about Alabama's wildlife and environment and helped me discover my passion for both. It inspired me to choose my major in Wildlife Veterinary Medicine."

- Camille Berry, Sophomore at Mississippi State University



Welding Academy

"I enrolled in the welding academy my junior year because I enjoy the hands on aspect of the class. The fabrication component is my favorite because I have learned how to take an idea off paper and turn it into something. The academy allows me to improve my skills each day in multiple welding processes and develop myself into what's needed for my future career."

- Eduardo Galvez, Senior at Austin High School



Greenpower USA

"I learned a lot during my time with my Greenpower team at West Decatur Elementary. For example, learning the names of the tools and how to use them, designing the go-kart and learning how to drive and control it. My team was in first place at the end of the race. I was pleased with myself, my team, and my school for allowing me to compete and for having so much fun. The most important lesson I learned was that when you work as a team and never give up, you will always have a chance of succeeding."

- Nayely Pedro, Sixth Grader at Decatur Middle School



Educational Software for Guiding Instruction

"We use ESGI (Educational Software for Guiding Instruction) as a resource to progress monitor students individually online. It is a teacher led assessment and is based on the nine weeks standards that are covered. Due to paper based progress monitoring being inadequate to collect effective student data, ESGI helps teachers by being an online solution for teacher led assessment. It is a leading progress monitoring solution for early childhood teachers and has proven to elevate learning potential for all students in my classroom."

- Amy Jackson, First Grade Teacher at Oak Park Elementary



Music Education

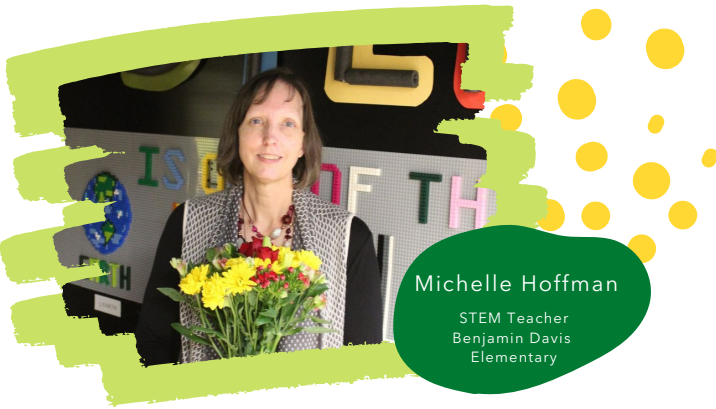
"I like music because it is fun! I like it because of all of the different styles like classical and rock. I sing a thousand times a day. I like music at school because we have fun and get to do plays. I really like it when we play instruments and also when we sing. I am looking forward to the exercise balls and drum sticks, it will be really fun!"

-Rorie McCormack, Fourth Grader at Julian Harris Elementary

Our Difference Makers

"A Difference Maker is an ordinary person who accomplishes extraordinary things by creating positive change in his or her community and in the lives of others."

- Principal Britt Lovelace

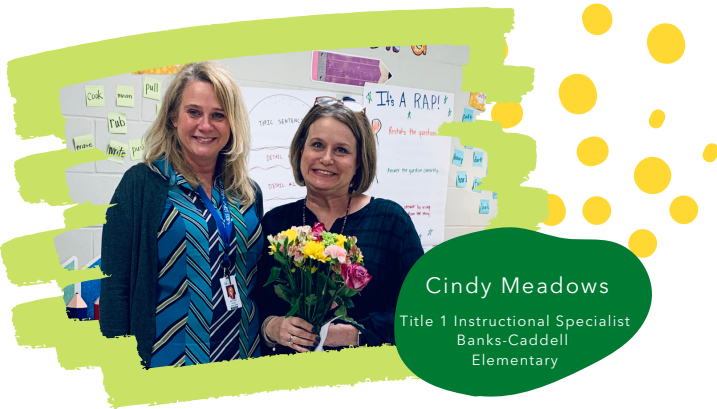


Michelle Hoffman

STEM Teacher
Benjamin Davis
Elementary

It is an honor to be named as a Difference Maker at Benjamin Davis Elementary School (BDES). I feel truly blessed to have the opportunity to work for a wonderful administrator and with an amazing team. The faculty and staff at BDES make it very easy for me to create interesting opportunities for our students to explore the world in which we live. Anytime that I need to brainstorm solutions or find supplies, I can count on my coworkers to step up and help. In turn, I am happy to support them as they need assistance and pass on the blessings that I receive.

My mission, as a STEM teacher, is to introduce our young students to new concepts, teach them to solve challenges creatively, and most importantly believe in their own ability to achieve. It is easier to accomplish this task when I draw on the knowledge and experience of those around me, so it is just natural for me to build positive working relationships with others. In the end, I am simply doing what I think is necessary to present each child with a loving environment that encourages them to flourish.



Cindy Meadows

Title 1 Instructional Specialist
Banks-Caddell
Elementary

Each year that I teach I find greater joy than the year before in doing a job of service to our most precious assets. I truly love my job! I enjoy it more and more every year. Being a part of the Banks-Caddell team for the past 17 years has given me the opportunity to grow in many ways. I believe there is no better place to work than Banks-Caddell. Our faculty supports one another, while working tirelessly to meet the individual needs of each child.

Our students continually demonstrate curiosity, creativity, and resilience, while enduring struggles in their everyday lives. Banks-Caddell Bulldogs are the best!

When I started teaching 30 years ago, our world was very different. The teaching profession has changed drastically; and with that I've had to grow and change in many ways. I'm continually searching for ways to better guide my students in ways for them to gain confidence, become problem solvers, and achieve success in their own lives.

Seeing students stretch their abilities and discover new things is the greatest joy of being an educator. It is a privilege to be a small part of each individual journey. It is an honor to see them as successful adults years later. My goal is to always give this position 100% in a positive and productive manner. May I always be appreciative of my opportunities and never take for granted the blessings I daily receive because I am an educator.



Mary Roach

Custodian
West Decatur
Elementary

I have been blessed beyond measure to have the opportunity to work at West Decatur Elementary. It is a pleasure to work with the staff.

I moved to Decatur, AL a year ago to be closer to my children. In the process of looking for a job, I put in for a couple of places, and one choice was West Decatur. I received a phone call from Mrs. Edwards for an interview, and I was hired. I was very excited, and thus began a new life here in Decatur.

I have always loved children. They are a gift from God, and it is a joy to be here at school every day. I was taught in my early years to always go the extra mile. I am always looking for another task to do. As you work with the staff each day, they become your family. I feel as if I am part as their family as well.

We are all here for a purpose. I feel my purpose God gave me is to serve others. When I serve others, whether they are old or young, I am making a difference, which gives me great joy in my heart. I believe when we are kind to one another is an act of love, and kindness goes a long way. Thank you all so much for your love.

Our Supporters

State Senator Arthur Orr Champion of Education



On September 30, 2021 we were proud to present Senator Arthur Orr with our inaugural State Senator Arthur Orr Champion of Education Award. Senator Orr has played a major role in securing funds for the Career Academies of Decatur and many other initiatives throughout our district. He truly embodies someone that champions education.

We are excited to present this award each year to a deserving individual that continues this effort. It's because of people like Senator Orr that we can accomplish our goals!

Supporter Spotlight



Jim Brown
Controller

NUCOR[®] **DECATUR**

Nucor Steel Decatur supports the Decatur City Schools Foundation because it will have a positive impact on the community, and to help equip today's students to be tomorrow's

leaders. We enjoy the privilege of being directly involved in STEM education and helping support vocational and career technical education. We look at this as an opportunity to give back to the Decatur community that has so generously given to us over the past 20 years.

Reflecting on this Year



Penny Townson
2020-2021 President

In true pandemic fashion, 2021 was another hard year for businesses, communities, and especially parents. However, Decatur City Schools (DCS) did not allow last year to inhibit our district's dedication to innovation, achievement, and most importantly our students. Through the Foundation and as a DCS parent, I've had the honor of watching this board unite with central office leadership and tackle each data point and challenge. When teachers and administrators could have shrugged off each struggle and waited for the pandemic to ease, they instead rolled up their sleeves and got to the important work of TEACHING under constant threat of closures, virtual limitations, and quarantines.

The Foundation's Million Word Challenge remains inspirational to DCS students with the help of encouragement from their teachers. Test preparation is being utilized by DCS staff to help students look forward with promise and determination. The realization of the new Career Academies of Decatur during these challenging times illustrates how vital it is to our community that students are prepared for the workforce waiting on them. This investment will continue to provide hands-on experience and credentials to the future employees our companies are begging for.

We've seen what a determined citizen can accomplish for our schools and in an effort to celebrate and encourage more community advocates, the Foundation awarded the inaugural Senator Arthur Orr Champion of Education Award to its namesake in September of 2021. Senator Orr's enthusiasm for our schools and dedication to our growth is evident in every endeavor and we are grateful for his leadership.

Through all of the difficulties of 2021, our schools continued to look forward to serving our students and our community. I'm incredibly grateful to the Foundation staff for their unmatched dedication and tireless efforts during these challenges and am honored to serve alongside this board. While serving on this board, I have come to learn that the materials and programs available to this district prepare our students for the global workplace in new and innovative ways. Our most promising asset is the teachers that continue to pour into our children everyday with an unmatched fervor. I'm looking forward to my time as a parent in this system to see all that my children will accomplish under the wing of these remarkable teachers.



Believe. GROW. Achieve.

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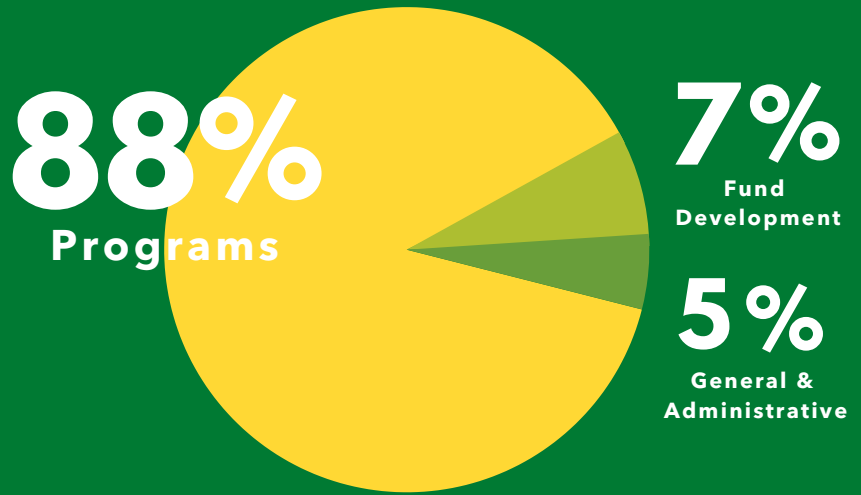
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Our Financials



\$780,972

Funds Invested 2020-2021

Contact us at (256) 616-1734 for a copy of our Annual Audit or Form 990.

To Our Donors



Zach Starnes
 2021-2022 President

With so many challenges facing school districts across the nation, it is truly humbling to witness the generosity and commitment of our donors. Please accept our sincere thanks for your continued support of the Foundation. It allowed us to provide funding for so many important programs and projects at Decatur City Schools, including making the new and exciting opportunities outlined in this report available to every student. Thanks to your donations and the fantastic work of our staff, we are continuing to reach new heights, reflected by the significant increase in funding that we have been able to provide to DCS this past year.

Thank you to all of our donors for recognizing the importance of education within our community and for supporting the Foundation and its ongoing mission to promote and enhance educational excellence for all DCS students.



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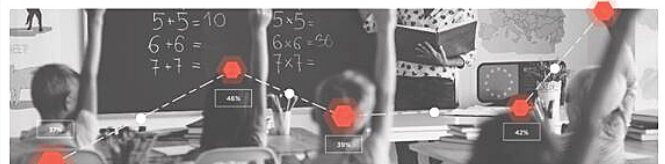
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Tour the Career Academies of Decatur from the comfort of your home! Simply hover over the QR code as if to snap a picture. The link will appear.



Realizing Our Potential:

A Plan for Reading & Math in Alabama



March 11

8:45 am - 1:00 pm



2019 4th Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35203

Visit www.parcAlabama.org/2022annualforum for more details.