



Student Spotlight: Emilio's Story, Class of 2016

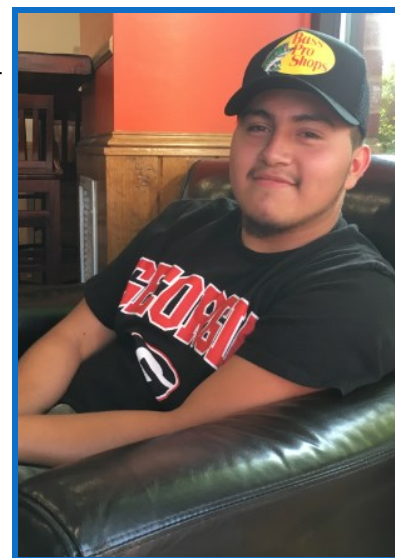
"The people at Foothills did not let me down. They always told me I could do it."

Emilio Sandival is a member of the recently graduated Foothills Class of 2016. He did not graduate on time from his traditional high school, but he was motivated to earn a high school diploma at age 19 for two reasons—to be more qualified for employment opportunities and to serve as a role model for his younger brother.

As an 18 year old student at his former high school, Emilio participated in a work-based learning program and was placed at Caterpillar. Work-based learning allowed him to gain a job through Caterpillar—one that he could only keep if he earned a high school diploma. Emilio chose to attend Foothills to complete his diploma so that he could continue working at Caterpillar during the day.

While the flexibility of the Foothills schedule allowed Emilio to continue his job at Caterpillar, Foothills also served Emilio in other ways. He was able to work his way through the courses at his own pace, and he was surrounded by faculty who encouraged him along the way. Emilio was encouraged by graduation coaches: "They believed in me when I did not believe in myself." His mentor also pushed him, and taught him life lessons: "He told me, 'Don't cut corners. Get the job done.' I found this to be true."

Emilio is currently still employed with Caterpillar, but he is also considering other options now that he has his diploma. Perhaps the best thing about having that diploma, however, is the example that Emilio has set for his little brother. Emilio said that his brother "needs a brother who has graduated from high school." Now he has one!



Congratulations, Emilio!

Message from the Superintendent

We could not be prouder of our work in 2015-2016. At this writing we have 122 graduates. We are anticipating a total of 150 graduates—or more—by the end of August when the 2015-2016 school year comes to a close. We are hosting one more regional graduation for those students who needed the summer to finish up coursework. This ceremony will be held on August 30, 7:00 pm at Clarke Foothills.

As we move into 2016-2017, we have a strategic plan to guide our work. Our teachers met over the summer to make modifications in each subject area to strengthen course delivery and improve student performance. In addition, all staff will receive training in the summer to refresh their Foothills work in order to ensure continuity of the "Foothills way." We are fortunate to have a strong staff of 360 professionals. We are also very fortune to have 915 students enrolled to-day, with the promise of many more as the year progresses. These are students who see the importance of and made the commitment to earning a high school diploma.

Thanks for following our work. The best is yet to come.

Dr. Sherrie Gídney-Sherman Foothills Superintendent

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A Vision for Transparent Communication

Foothills Education Charter High School strives to be transparent with our stakeholders. We want to ensure that our staff, students, parents, and communities understand our vision and mission and how we are working to achieve the goals outlined in our strategic plan and in the comprehensive performance framework.

To aid in transparent communication, we are using eBoard to publish our strategic plan and agendas from governance team meetings to our website.

Check out our eBoard site by visiting <https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Index.aspx?S=4189>

You can also access our eBoard site from our website at www.foothillscharter.org (under Governance Team tab).



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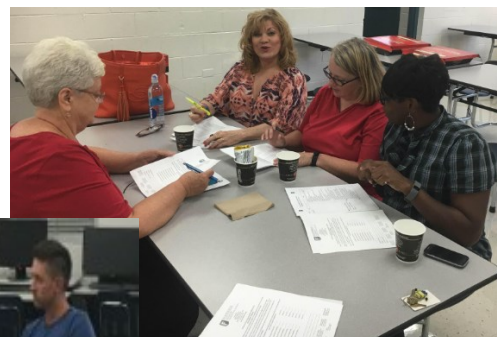
Aligning our Work: Planning for Achievement

As we mentioned in the [June 2016 newsletter](#), Foothills Education Charter High School staff, with support from the Carl Vinson Institute at the University of Georgia, have developed a strategic plan to guide our work. Using feedback gathered from stakeholder surveys, governance team members and staff crafted strategies and actions to achieve our strategic planning goals.

Our [strategic plan](#) is designed to help us reach the performance indicators set for us by the State Charter School Commission (SCSC). The SCSC holds charter schools in Georgia responsible for meeting criteria in three areas: academic performance, financial performance, and operational performance. These performance criteria are collectively called the [Comprehensive Performance Framework](#).

Foothills is committed to meeting the performance criteria as outlined in the Comprehensive Performance Framework. We have designed our strategic plan and indicators to align with the SCSC evaluation measure. We won't actually get our evaluation measures for 2015-16 until next spring (2017), but we have focused our planning processes on ensuring that we are moving toward the targets in the Comprehensive Performance Framework.

This summer, regional Foothills staff, as well as staff at each site, discussed the vision and direction of Foothills, as well as the strategic goals, strategies and actions.



Foothills staff at the Barrow site participate in a planning meeting to discuss the vision and direction, as well as the strategic goals for the coming year.

The Foothills Vision

Foothills Education Charter High School strives to be an accessible, high-quality high school option that is flexible and responsive to the needs of the People of Georgia and its communities.