



## The Journey of a Thousand Miles: 3 Years of Foothills

Sometimes, it is difficult to think back to a time before Foothills existed as an option for high school students in our partner districts. Yet, it was just three short years ago that Foothills began operation in five partner school districts and two sites with the Department of Corrections.

Modeled after Mountain Education Charter High School, which serves 11 sites in the north Georgia area, Foothills sought to be a free, public high school option for students who needed something a little different from what traditional high school offered.

In the beginning, our target was to serve 850 students across those first seven sites: Baldwin, Barrow, Clarke, Jackson, Madison, Arrendale, and Burruss. The current enrollment (as of June 1) at those seven sites is 1,044 students. From the beginning, we knew we would serve a non-traditional student body—a student body that often faces challenges in the process of completing high school. In the first year, we celebrated the Foothills class of 2016, with 135 total students. As of this writing, our class of 2018 is 222 students strong, and still growing.



*Ribbon-cutting at the Jackson County Foothills Site in August 2015*

What began as the goal of providing a flexible, responsive option for students at our original sites has grown, and the reach of Foothills is now far and wide. Currently Foothills serves students across eleven sites, including three sites with the Department of Corrections. A successful pilot of a site in Glynn County sparked the beginning of the Coastal Plains Education Charter High School, which now has ten sites in southeast Georgia. Recently, Foothills entered into a partnership with the Georgia National Guard's Youth Challenge Program and will be providing the coursework for the Youth Challenge program going forward. Retired Madison County Superintendent Dr. Allen McCannon has agreed to work with Foothills as the Regional Director for Special Campuses. He will be working directly with the Youth Challenge sites, as well as the Department of Corrections sites at Arrendale, Burruss, and Phillips.

Earlier this year, Foothills completed a successful accreditation review with AdvancED, and we are officially accredited as a high school in the state of Georgia. In a recent email to staff, Superintendent Dr. Sherrie Gibney-Sherman noted that the weeks are passing "like a speeding bullet" and "many good things are happening in the Foothills world. Indeed, these first three years have passed quickly, but the reality of what we have accomplished together has exceeded our dreams. The future at Foothills is bright!



*Ribbon-cutting in August 2015 at the Madison County Foothills Site on the campus of Madison County High School*

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## Message from the Superintendent

In a recent "Thank you" email to staff, I attempted to put into words all that we have accomplished at Foothills this year. These are just a few of the many things of which we can be proud:

- 222 total graduates in 2017-18 thus far
- Nearly complete work of our Charter Implementation Grant, which has helped us create formative assessments aligned to EOCs
- Improved EOC scores across all 8 subjects
- First cohort of students with the Youth Challenge Program began in Milledgeville in June
- Formed a network with Mountain Education Charter High School (MEC) and Coastal Plains Charter High School
- Fiscally sound and have a healthy fund balance
- Accredited by AdvancED

It is amazing to think about all that we have accomplished at Foothills in our first three years, and we know we are not finished. As we continue to be responsive to the needs of students and communities in Georgia, we will continue to seek out ways in which Foothills can grow and serve.

With Pride,

*Sherrie*

Dr. Sherrie Gibney-Sherman

## Student Spotlights: Class of 2018

We have held graduations across all Foothills sites in the months of May and June. We continue to be proud of the Class of 2018, and what they have (and will) accomplish!



Foothills Education Charter  
High School  
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### *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.*