

History of

Jackson Elementary School

Jackson Elementary was named for the Jackson family and dedicated to Andrew and C.P. Jackson who build Jackson Academy, an early Gwinnett school that served poor children in the area in 1907.

Jackson Elementary opened in August 1994 with a projected enrollment of 1,085 and a staff of 108. The school was officially dedicated on October 21, 1994. At the dedication a number of speakers shared the origin of the school's name along with a tribute to the Jackson family. The tribute was included in the program and read:

*At the school of Jackson Academy
Fun and learning was the recipe
Along with discipline and consideration
But still different from other schools in the nation.*

*Jackson Academy was built by hand
By Andrew and C.P. on their precious land.
This school was meant to educate the poor
Twenty children attended, sometimes more.*

*The Jacksons were devoted to education
Their knowledge was passed through each generation.
There were many years that the Jacksons spent teaching
The effect of their efforts was long and far reaching.*

*By naming this school for their hard work and skill
Their memory lives on and always will.*

FAST FACTS

Address: 1970 Sever Road
Lawrenceville, GA 30043

The following have served as principals of Jackson Elementary School:

1994–1998	Nelda Heatherly
1998–2003	Christine Emsley
2003–2017	Dr. Ruth Markham
2017– Present	Kara Dutton

School Colors: Royal Blue and White with Red Accents

School Mascot: Golden Eagles

In addition to remarks from Superintendent George Thompson and members of the Board of Education, the dedication program included an introduction of the Jackson family that was conducted by longtime school system administrator and Jackson family member Dr. Wendell Jackson.

Jackson Elementary School

Gwinnett County Public Schools

Board of Education

Julie Duke - Chairman
Pat Mitchell - Vice Chairman
Jim Fisher
Louise Radloff
Joel C. Taylor, Jr.

Superintendent
George G. Thompson

Architect
Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart
Stewart & Associates, Inc.

Contractor
William Green & Son, Inc.

1994



In 2006–07, Jackson had an enrollment of 1,760 and a total staff of 180. Jackson has had two renovation/additions since 1994. The first renovation/addition, completed in the 1999–2000 school year, included an additional 23 classrooms and one administrative suite. The second renovation/addition, completed in August 2005, included 12 additional classrooms; a new computer lab; an expansion of the administrative suite, existing cafeteria, and media center; and a new activity building. The school also received much needed relief as additional elementary schools opened in the surrounding areas. The school's growth landed it the title of "largest elementary school" in Gwinnett County for a number of years.

Since its opening, Jackson Elementary has been led by outstanding leaders. Mrs. Nelda Heatherly served from 1994 to June 1998. Mrs. Christine Emsley was principal from July 1998 to June 2003. As Mrs. Emsley transferred to open a new school (Duncan Creek Elementary), Mrs. Ruth Markham was tapped by the Board of Education to lead Jackson ES. Mrs. Markham led the school from July 2003 until her retirement in 2017. The Board named Principal Kara Dutton to lead Jackson. While Mrs. Dutton might have been a new face to some in the community, others recognized her as she had been an assistant principal at Jackson from 2002–2013.

Jackson sponsored the following annual community building events: a Curriculum Festival ("Spotlight on Specials") and "The Jackson Jam." The PTA has supported many schoolwide initiatives, including: a sprinkler system for the playground area; a security system which allows continuous monitoring of movement in the hallways from outside doors, and wiring for an additional computer lab.

The Jackson PTA and the school have conducted fundraising projects in order to add new equipment to the playground promoting student fitness. A walking track and two pieces of new playground equipment have been added. The students, school staff, and community look forward to the addition of more fitness equipment, trees, and park benches for the playground.

When the school first opened it was a part of the Collins Hill Cluster and its mascot and colors were in line with that cluster— green and white and the school's mascot was the Golden Eagle. However, when Peachtree Ridge opened in 2003, Jackson was redistricted to that cluster. Jackson Elementary joined the other schools in the cluster and changed its mascot, transitioning from the Golden Eagles to the Lions.

Jackson Elementary takes pride in its focus on academic achievement and its support of its young

learners. The school offers before school tutoring and through its Early Intervention Program, students participate in additional reading instruction each day. In addition, a math specialist, two math coaches, two science specialists, and a literacy coordinator support Jackson students and teachers. Grade-level teachers met for common instructional planning each week to collaborate on GCPS' Quality-Plus Teaching Strategies to maximize student achievement. These research-based teaching techniques have been proven effective with all types of learners across grade levels and subject areas.

Also supporting great teaching and learning is the largest classroom in the school—the media center. The Jackson Media Center offers a rich collection of more than 24,000 books. That focus on literacy and a love of reading is evident in the school's successful Accelerated Reader (AR) program in which more than 1,000 students participate each year.

Students also have the opportunity to participate in a number of clubs and afterschool activities including a chess club, math club, computer club, and drama club.

Over the years, Jackson's focus on learning and student success has earned the school recognition at the local and state levels. Just a few of the honors include recognition as a Green & Healthy School in the Environmental Achievement Awards program sponsored by Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful and the 2014–15 Good Turn Award presented by the Boy Scouts.

As Jackson Elementary nears the 25-year mark of service to its community, the school is still "Roaring to Success." And just like the Jackson family members from long ago who served students at Jackson Academy, today's Jackson Elementary school community and the effect of their efforts will be long-lasting and far-reaching.