

# History of

## Ferguson Elementary School

Ferguson Elementary greeted students for the first time in August of 2010. The school was named for lifelong resident of Gwinnett County, Dartha Ferguson, who was born to Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Bailey in Norcross, Georgia in 1921. Along with her sister, Gladys, she attended Norcross Elementary and Norcross High School, excelling in both English and mathematics. Dartha displayed a strong work ethic from an early age, working as banker and bookkeeper at her father's oil business well before she was even a teenager.

Upon graduating from high school, Dartha attended Georgia Women's College in Milledgeville for a year before transferring to the University of Georgia. In addition to earning Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Education at UGA, she also met her future husband, W. H. Ferguson, Jr. In 1942 she began her teaching career and for the next 33 years



*Dartha B. Ferguson*

she not only taught English, French and mathematics, but also served as a guidance counselor and senior class sponsor. During this time she continued working in the family oil business, keeping the books at night while teaching during the day.

Dartha carried high expectations for her students, many of whom considered her to be "tough but fair". She balanced her high standards with unconditional love and support for the young people in her care, not only in the classroom but at First United Methodist Church of Norcross, where she taught Sunday School and volunteered with the youth group. Dartha's door was always open, and she was always willing to go the extra mile for the students that put forth the effort. Above all else she believed you got out of life what you put into it, and nothing gave her greater joy than watching the hard work of her students pay off.

During her 33 years of service to Gwinnett County Public Schools, Dartha was named "Teacher of the Year" four times and "Counselor of the Year" twice. She was also named STAR Teacher at Norcross High six times. It is clear from the awards that she received that Dartha was universally loved by her students and respected by her peers.

Dartha's family was an important part of her life. She had two sons, W. H. Ferguson III and C. Scott Ferguson. Dartha was a beloved Grandmother, having 5 grandchildren. Upon retirement, Dartha and her husband split time between their home in Duluth and their farm in Cuthbert, Georgia. Dartha truly loved working

### FAST FACTS

**Address:** 1755 Centerview Drive  
Duluth, GA 30096

The following have served as principals of Ferguson Elementary School:

2010–Feb. 2012	Joe Ahrens
Feb. 2012–2014	Julie Peyton
2014–Present	Angelique Mitchell

**School Colors:** Blue and White

**School Mascot:** Mustang

with children, and watching her make a difference in the life of every young person she taught inspired many people.

In June of 2010, members of Mrs. Ferguson's family as well as several former students founded the Dartha B. Ferguson Foundation. The mission of the Dartha B. Ferguson foundation is to raise money that directly enriches and impacts the students, faculty, and staff of Ferguson Elementary. At that time, Ferguson Elementary was the only elementary school with a foundation dedicated solely to their school. To this day, the Ferguson Elementary Foundation continues to serve the school community, working with the Gwinnett County Public Schools Foundation.

The school partners with parents to serve students and the school community. The Parent Center offers programs to Ferguson families to strengthen the partnership between home and school. In addition, parent involvement events engage parents and students in learning and offer parents strategies for supporting student learning at home.

