

# History of

## Sycamore Elementary School

Sycamore Elementary is located at 5695 Sycamore Road in Sugar Hill, Georgia. The school opened in August 2003 with an enrollment of just under 800 students from Riverside and Sugar Hill elementary schools. The school is located on property that was previously a pasture used to raise horses for more than 30 years. Sycamore Elementary is named for the road on which it is located. The original facility consisted of 82,453 square feet and was built at a cost of \$5.6 million. Sycamore Elementary contained 40 regular classrooms, seven special education, ESOL, reading, and gifted classrooms, two technology labs, two music and art rooms, a cafeteria, a media center, and several offices with a conference room.

The school also had a large gymnasium (8,000 square feet). Sycamore Elementary celebrated its opening day with a flag-raising ceremony on August 3, 2003, with approximately 775 students in grades K–5 and 88 staff members participating. Students and staff eagerly began their charter year and enjoyed the beautiful facility and the new materials and equipment provided. Sycamore Elementary held its dedication ceremony on October 26, 2003, in the school cafeteria.

Fourth grade student, Laura Joplin, opened the ceremony, singing “The Star Spangled Banner,” and the

### FAST FACTS

**Address:** 5695 Sycamore Rd.  
Sugar Hill, GA 30518

The following have served as principals of Sycamore Elementary School:

2003–06	Brenda Anderson
2006–2009	Wanda Law
2009–2012	Amy Bryan
2012–Present	Crystal Cooper Thompson

**School Colors:** Orange and Black

**School Mascot:** Huskies

dedication address was delivered by CEO/Superintendent J. Alvin Wilbanks. Following a performance by the fourth and fifth grade chorus and a slide show entitled “We’ve Only Just Begun,” Principal Brenda Anderson, Superintendent Wilbanks, School Board Chairman Dr. Robert McClure, District II Board Member Daniel Seckinger, PTA President Terri Doolittle, Student Council President Hannah Bush, and staff member Pam Wilson



participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Approximately 500 guests enjoyed a reception after the dedication.

There are many admirable highlights in the school's history. For example, during her tenure as principal, Brenda Anderson was selected as PTA Principal of the Year and recognized at the 100th Anniversary Convention in Atlanta.

Sycamore continued to evolve positively over the years under the principalship of Wanda Law (2006–2009). The school's enrollment grew to its largest point, serving more than 1,300 students. This area of Gwinnett County continued to increase in population, A two-story addition was completed and opened in December 2006.

In the 2007–2008 school year a World War II veteran participated in the school's annual Veterans Day Program and wrote a letter about his experience, stating, "Patriotism is alive at Sycamore Elementary School."

In 2009, Amy Bryan became principal. Sycamore was recognized as a Georgia Title I Distinguished School for making AYP for seven consecutive years. The school received enrollment relief, opening with just under 700 students as White Oak Elementary School opened its doors. Sycamore Elementary was recognized as a Reaching Higher Green & Healthy School in the Environmental Achievement Awards sponsored by Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful.

In the 2013–2014 school year, Principal Crystal Cooper Thompson helped Sycamore celebrate its 10-year anniversary, welcoming several guests and supporters to honor a great history of achievements. Since the 2013 school year, Sycamore has completed a new outdoor classroom, added new swings to the playground, and also improved academically. Students have participated in leadership opportunities and various clubs. Clubs such as the Orfesstra Club, Dance Club, Student Council and Jr. Beta Club have allowed students to have a well-rounded view of school life. Staff and students have participated in community based events, supported United Way and Relay for Life fundraisers.

The Sycamore PTA continues to promote the home-school-community connection through instructional activities and programs, including Skate Night, Bingo Night, Spring Carnival, Holiday Gift Shop, Donuts for Dads, and the annual 5th Grade Picnic.

Sycamore Elementary is presently committing to learning, leading, and succeeding. The school has a new crest which embodies the pursuit of excellence. The school and its teachers have won several grants that support the purchase of essential school technology and

supplies. Teachers continue to innovate and transform their teaching skills to promote a higher level of academic learning. Students are learning to use STEM and Project Based Inquiry Learning (PBIL) for alignment to College and Career Readiness.

In the 2015–2016 school year, Sycamore will welcome students from the Buice School. These pre-kindergarten special needs students will participate in all school activities and add a positive and welcomed experience to the school community. The school also will launch the FLIP (Fostering Learning Through Inquiry Projects) Academy for 4th and 5th grade students. These students will complete projects, learn about producing for audiences, and integrate STEM and the sense of entrepreneurship into their daily lives.

As students move on to middle school they are equipped in understanding how positive behavior, leadership and resilience support them in becoming admired members of our community. The city of Sugar Hill and Sycamore Elementary are great places for students to thrive. We continue to see how our school aids students in soaring to extraordinary results.

