

# History of

## Susan Stripling Elementary School

As a result of Gwinnett County's tremendous population growth, Susan O. Stripling Elementary was opened to relieve overcrowding at two area elementary schools. In 1999, Stripling opened its doors, taking students from nearby Peachtree and Norcross elementary schools. In 2005–06, the school served 994 students and their families. In 2007, the school benefitted from a 11-classroom addition, bringing the school total to 64 classrooms. By the spring of 2015, the school served more than 1,200 students. With the opening of Baldwin Elementary School in 2016, the school's population changed as a number of boundaries in the Norcross Cluster changed. In the spring of 2017, the school served approximately 875 students. The school has a large international population, speaking more than a dozen different languages. The school's English Language Learner (ELL) population represents approximately one-third of the student body, with Hispanic students making up the major ethnic group.

Stripling Elementary was named after Susan Otwell Stripling, a beloved Norcross High School teacher. For 20 years, Susan Stripling dedicated her energies to her students and to her community. A beloved teacher and outstanding professional, Mrs. Stripling began teaching at Norcross High in 1974. Her two children, Taylor and Todd, attended the school. She taught English and was the chair of that department for 11 years. For the majority of her career at Norcross High, Mrs. Stripling served as yearbook advisor—a position that allowed her to work closely with young people who came to

### FAST FACTS

Address: 6155 Atlantic Boulevard  
Norcross, GA 30071

The following have served as principals of Susan Stripling Elementary School:

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1999–2002     | Jane Robertson  |
| 2002–06       | Donna Ledford   |
| 2006–2008     | Clay Hunter     |
| 2008–2016     | Priscilla McHam |
| 2016– Present | Elisa Brown     |

School Colors: Red, White, and Blue  
School Mascot: Red Rockets

appreciate her sense of humor and sense of fun. Her peers valued her work in the classroom, electing her Teacher of the Year in 1987. She also taught Sunday School and sang in the choir at Norcross Baptist Church.

Throughout her two-year battle with thyroid cancer, Mrs. Stripling continued to teach. Her courage and perseverance were matched by her dedication to her students and their learning. She was in the classroom until the day before she died.

Stripling Elementary School stands as a long-lasting tribute to a wonderful teacher who touched the lives of so many students in the Norcross community. Mrs. Stripling's two adult children, Taylor and Todd, volunteered and were a part of the school for a number of years when the school first opened.



### Susan Stripling Elementary School

Gwinnett County Public Schools

Board of Education  
Robert McClure - Chairperson  
Mary Kay Murphy - Vice Chairperson  
Billy Britt  
Louise Radloff  
Dan Seckinger

Superintendent  
J. Alvin Wilbanks

Architect:  
Lindsay Pope, Brayfield & Assoc., Inc.

Contractor:  
J. Wilson Cook, Inc.

1999

The staff at Stripling Elementary try to embrace learning and life for their students as Mrs. Stripling did. In addition to their work in the classroom, they partner with community groups to provide opportunities for students. Stripling Elementary has partnered with the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center to promote STEM programs and is recognized as a STEM Partner School. In addition, the following have helped to provide enrichment opportunities for the school's students: Stripling PTA, Norcross Cluster Partnership, Corus 360, 100 Black Men of North Georgia, PNC Bank, FedEx, Zaxby's, Norcross Rotary Association, Liberty Mutual, Norcross United Methodist Church, MJAY's Specialty Baked Foods, and World Changers Church of Norcross. More than 68 business community members participate as reading mentors in Everybody Wins! Atlanta, a Power Lunch reading program and StoryTime program. And additional enrichment opportunities include Art Club, Guitar Club, Critical Thinking Club, Technology Club, Spanish Club, Gardening Club, Readers Rally, Stripling Chorus, Red Rocket Soccer League, and Wizzle Pro Math. Students also have opportunities to grow as leaders through Student Council, Student Safety Patrol, and the school's Talented 10 Mentoring Leadership Program.

Stripling Elementary earned a platinum medal and a place on the Governor's SHAPE Honor Roll, honors it has held for a number of years.

Over the years, Stripling Elementary has experienced a number of changes. However, one thing remains constant... the school's commitment to its students. Its mission is to develop literate student citizens who are critical thinkers, problem solvers and productive members of society. Teachers and school leaders believe that every student has a right to an excellent education and that it is their responsibility as educators to inspire and motivate our students to learn. As a former educator, this is a sentiment that Mrs. Stripling would appreciate for the school that bears her name and serves the students in the community she long served.

