

Eradicating Poverty

THE NEWTON COUNTY JOURNEY

Taking the First Step: Establishing an Opportunity Community

**Shakila Henderson-Baker,
Board Member,
Newton County School System**

**Samantha Fuhrey,
Superintendent,
Newton County School System**

SETTING THE STAGE



POVERTY

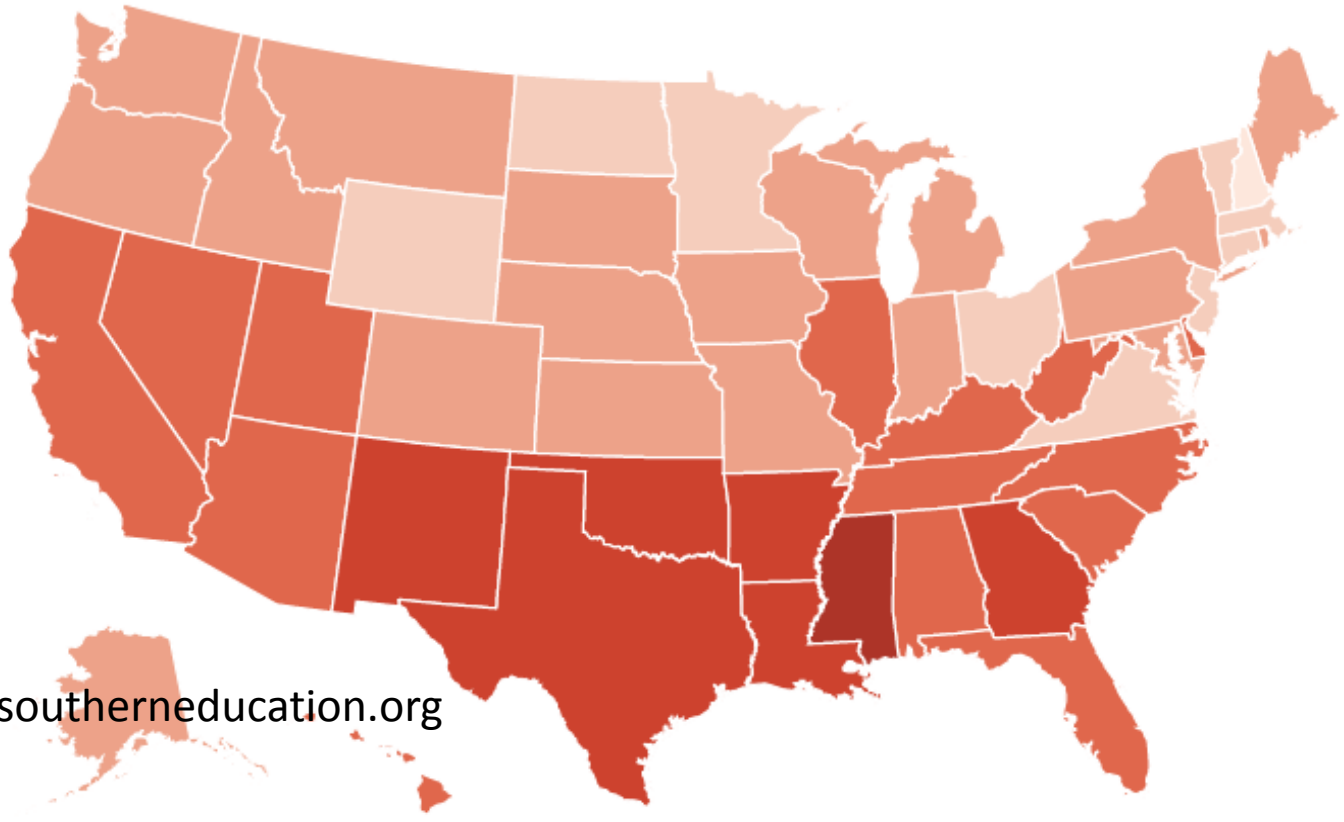
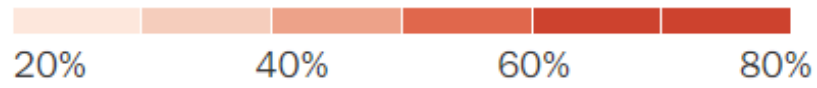


POVERTY QUICK FACTS

- For the first time in recent history, the majority of students served in public schools are impacted by poverty.
- In Georgia, the percentage of students impacted by poverty has exceeded 60%.
- In Newton County, the poverty rate fluctuates between 68%-72%.

THE CRISIS OF POVERTY ACROSS THE NATION

For the first time in at least 50 years, a majority of public school students across the country are considered “low-income”, according to a new study by the Southern Education Foundation. While poor children are spread across the country, concentrations are highest in the South and in the West.



<http://www.southerneducation.org>



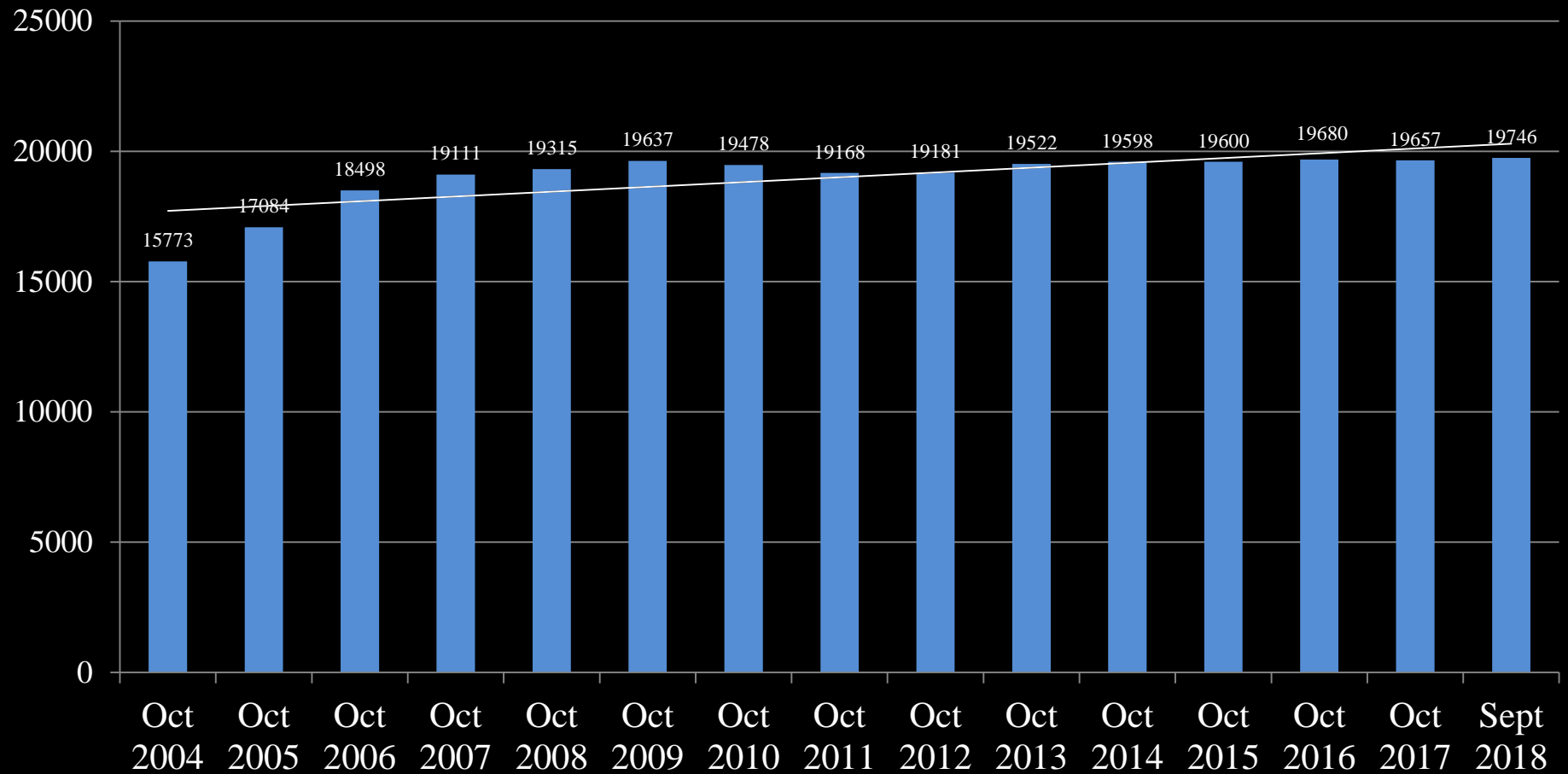
CREATING COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

The Challenge: Recognizing Poverty Impacts Communities

- Historically, when discussing poverty, the community claim was that the school system used poverty as an excuse to underperform.
- NCSS data demonstrates that poverty influences student performance.



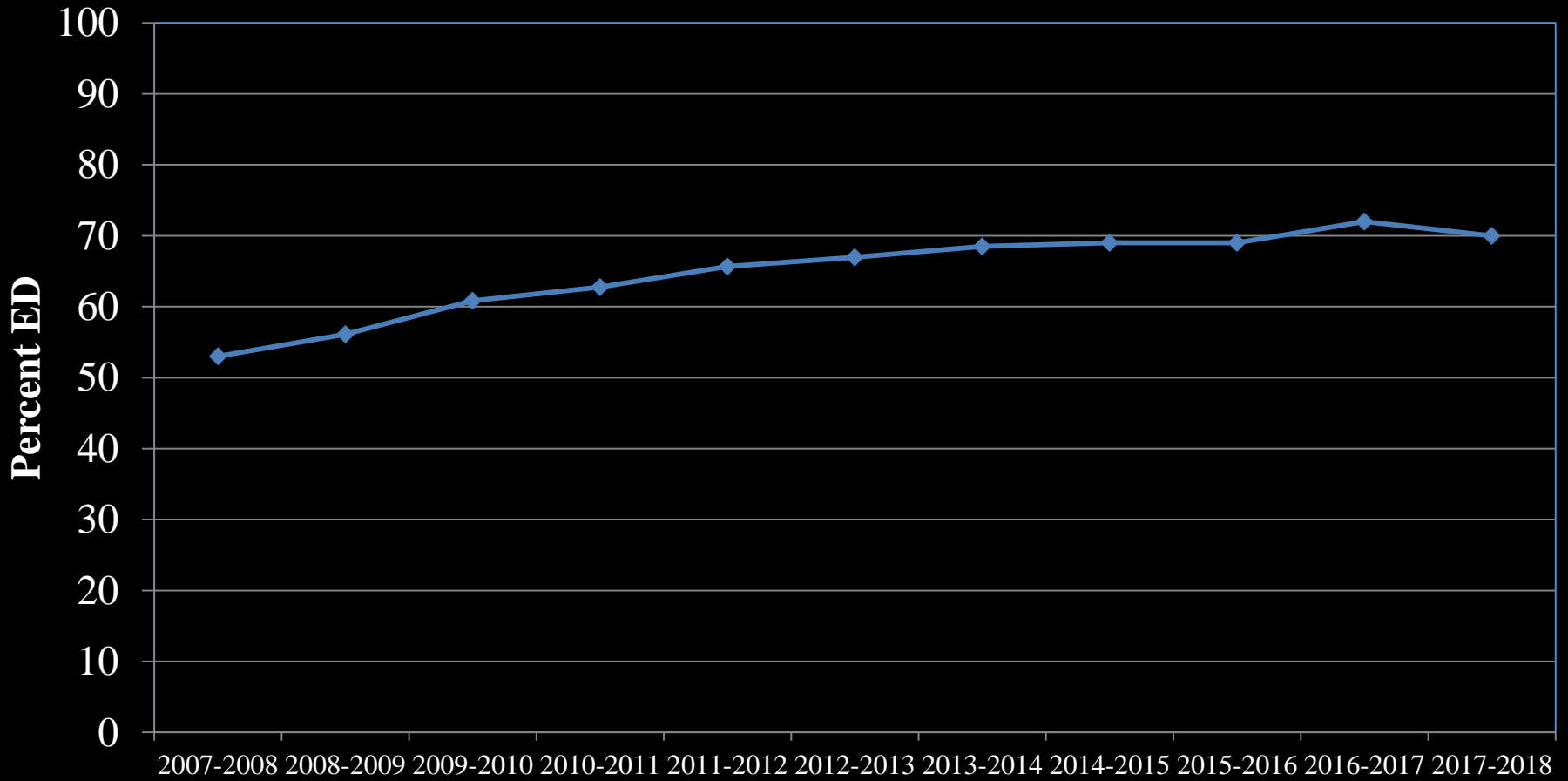
STUDENT ENROLLMENT





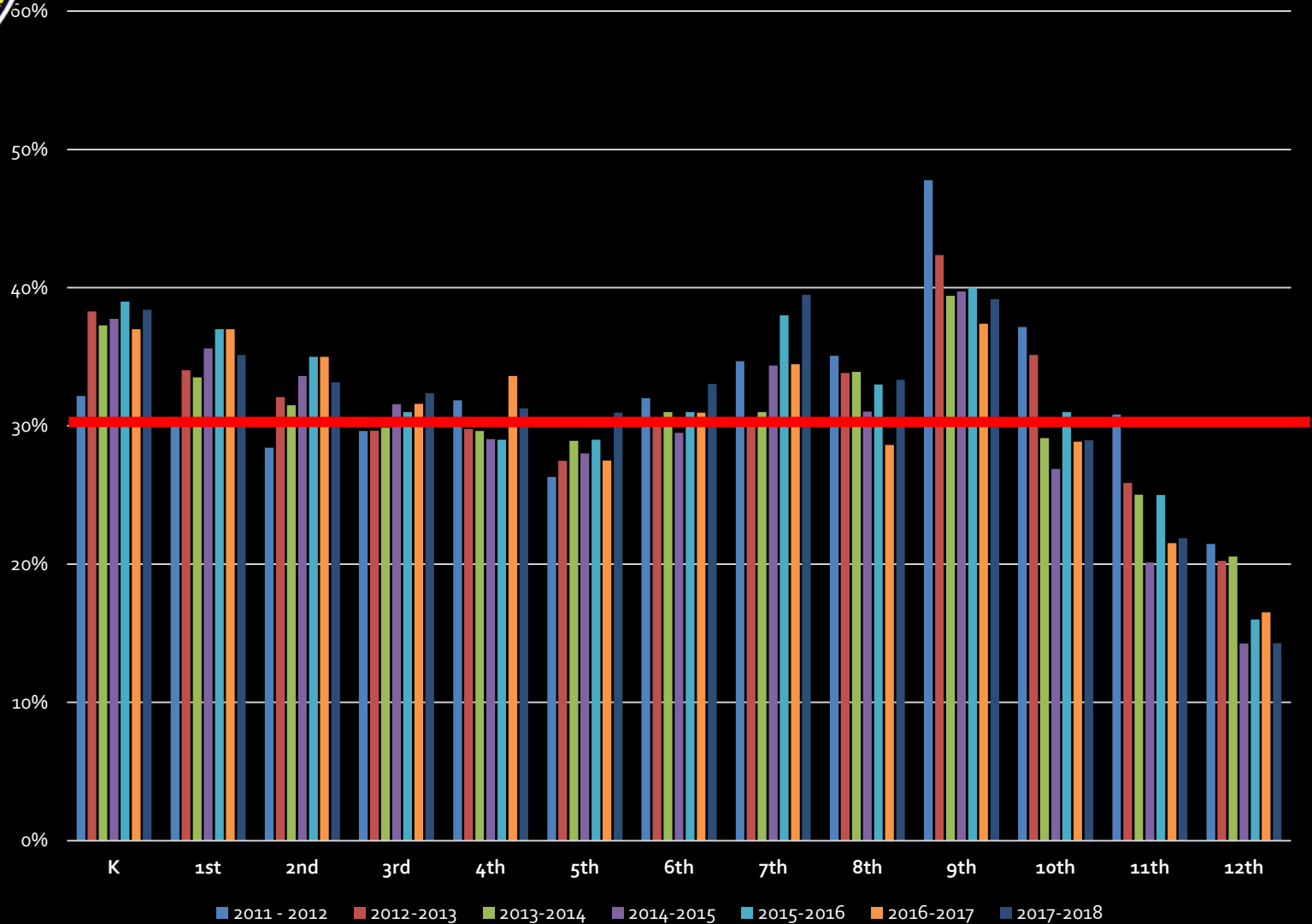
ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED

Economically Disadvantaged





Mobility Rates by Grade Level (Kindergarten - 12th) 2012 - 2018





Comparison of Mobility Rates FY17 & FY18

As of 5/24/17	
K	37%
1	37%
2	35%
3	32%
4	34%
5	28%
6	31%
7	34%
8	29%
9	37%
10	29%
11	22%
12	17%
District	31%

As of 5/24/17	
K	38%
1st	35%
2nd	33%
3rd	32%
4th	31%
5th	31%
6th	33%
7th	39%
8th	33%
9th	39%
10th	29%
11th	22%
12th	14%
District	32%

Group Profile for Newton County

Group Code: 707

Cognitive Abilities Test™ (CogAT®)

Form: 7

Test Date: 09/09/2016

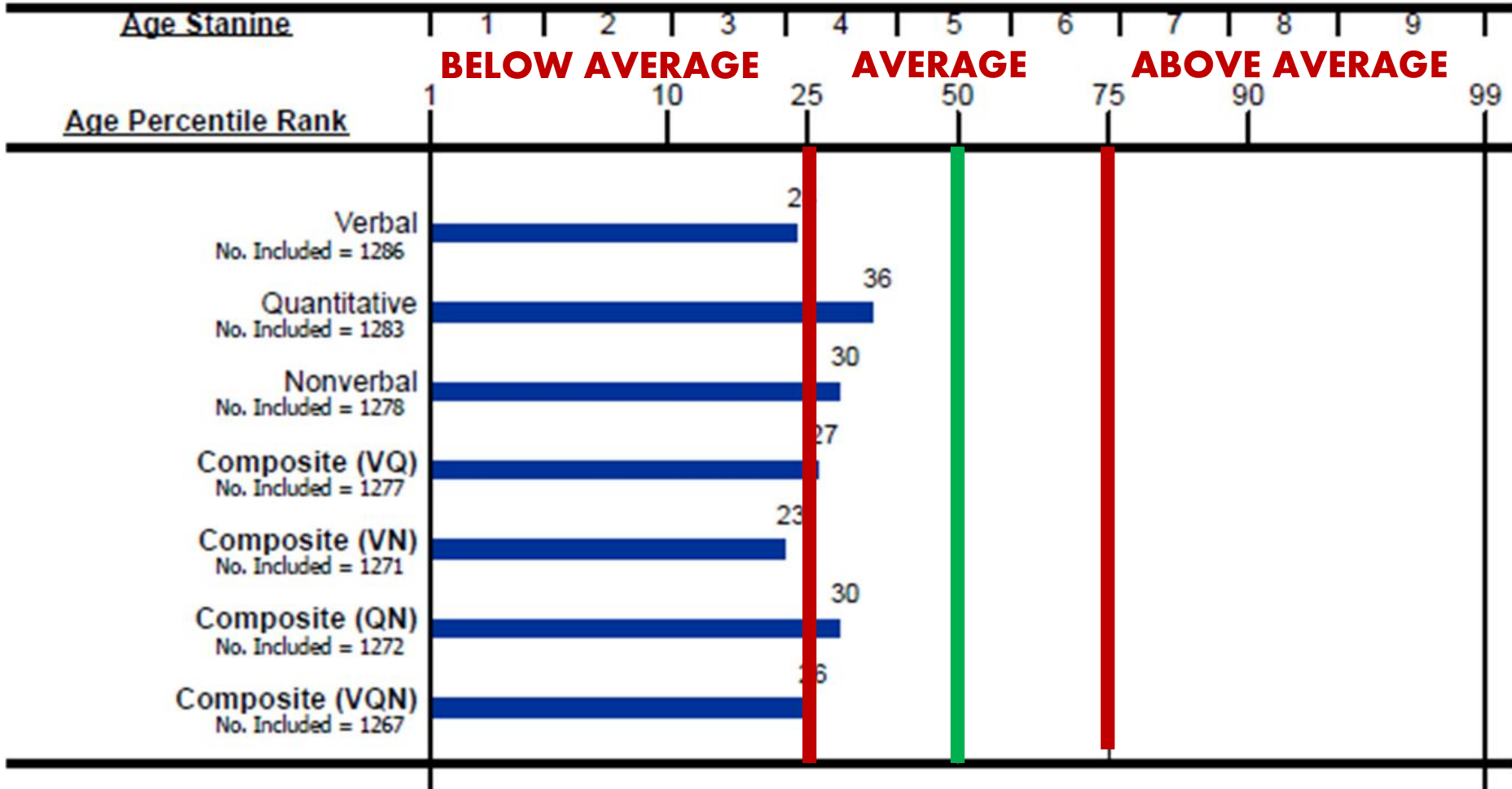
Norms: Fall 2011

Grade: K

Level: 5/6

System: Newton County

State: GA





Newton County School System's PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE



PAVING THE WAY



Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, difficulty. I have never in my life envied a human being who led an easy life. I have envied a great many people who led difficult lives and led them well.

Theodore Roosevelt

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK



COMMUNITY EDUCATION



- The Goal: Move the community from Poverty Awareness to being Poverty Informed
- Trained 21 Poverty Coaches
- Hosted a series of workshops that were open to anyone in our community who wished to get involved
- More than 500 people attended our Poverty Awareness Workshops

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

- Hosted Leadership for Change Summit
- Hosted Prosperity Summit
- Trained Navigators (Several Times)
- Newton County Tomorrow
 - Identified Three Community Target Areas
 1. Eradicate Poverty
 - Assemble a Planning Team
 2. Workforce Development
 3. Public Transportation



ORGANIZING THE WORK

VISION: Eradicate Poverty In Newton County

MISSION: Collaborate to develop a family-driven, county-wide response that creates opportunities for all individuals and families to re-define their quality of life.

GOALS:

1. Develop a Poverty Informed Community
2. Increase collaboration between and among all organizations that serve individuals and families
3. Create/Implement an Opportunity Community



BUILDING AN OPPORTUNITY COMMUNITY?



WHAT IS AN OPPORTUNITY COMMUNITY?

The OC model employs a comprehensive, people-to-people approach to assist people in moving out and staying out of the war zone of poverty. This model removes

- the shame poverty teaches,
- rebuilds the hope poverty steals, and
- connects people in poverty to people who are not in poverty.



HOW DOES THE OC WORK?

The OC provides structured ways for community members to become poverty informed and to become active and engaged in improving outcomes for their neighbors.

Builds on the existing strengths of people in poverty, business, social service, education, healthcare, justice, faith-based organizations and community members to make a difference for their region.



HELPING ORGANIZATIONS IN NEWTON COUNTY





**FIRST STEP TO
BECOMING AN
OPPORTUNITY
COMMUNITY**



WHY AN OPPORTUNITY COMMUNITY?

Results

- **Empowered Neighbors who possess hope, tools, support and connections to get out and stay out of poverty.**
- **The ability to use new tools and ideas as well as better awareness of the resources that are already available.**
- **An understanding that they are cared about by their community.**



WHY AN OPPORTUNITY COMMUNITY?

Results

- **Trained Navigators**– increase in community members active and engaged in bettering their community.
- **Strengthened Social Safety Net** – new resources, more people engaged in fighting poverty and enhanced use of existing resources.
- **Better-connected Community** – across age, race, income and education levels.



THE OPPORTUNITY COMMUNITY BEGINNING TO MAKE CONNECTIONS



BASIC RELATIONSHIP

NAVIGATOR

Most anyone can be a Navigator. Navigators are community members who agree to become trained (through the OC model) to understand different experiences of poverty, to learn the structural causes of poverty, and to gain communication and relationship building skills. Navigators commit to sharing their contact information and to using their networks to assist their Neighbor to access resources and support for moving out and staying out of poverty.

NEIGHBOR

A Neighbor is a person living in poverty – people of all ages, races, families and backgrounds. The decision of who participates in the OC is made by the community. The OC includes an education program for Neighbors that is designed to remove the shame that prevents people from moving forward; to rebuild the hope that stops people from grabbing opportunities; and to reduce the isolation of poverty by connecting Neighbors to Navigators and building community wide networks of support



HOW DOES THE OC HELP?

- **The OC serves people from generational, working class, situational, and immigrant poverty.**
- **The OC provides structure for a better-connected community network resulting in a more effective and efficient poverty-fighting system.**
- **The OC provides community-wide education to increase awareness and understanding about the real causes of poverty... educating people living in poverty (Neighbors) and volunteers (Navigators and Specialty Navigators), then connecting Navigators and Neighbors in strong relationships.**



HOW DOES THE OC HELP?

- **The OC provides training for community professionals to serve as Specialty Navigators and support the efforts of Navigators who are working to access resources and opportunities for their neighbors.**
- **The OC increases engagement of sectors of the community not previously involved in fighting poverty.**
- **The OC builds the capacity of helping professionals who serve people in poverty.**



SUCCESSFUL OPPORTUNITY COMMUNITY



Learning Outcomes: The Board Members' Perspective

What questions should board members be asking?

According to the data

According to your district

Why should I even be asking questions?

You know the community

You know your district



Social-Emotional Learning= Barriers



Data/Statistics - According to What (Data & District)

(All Related to SEL or Barriers)

- Mobility Rate
- Free and/or Reduced Lunch
- Poverty Rate or Median Salary Range
- Drop out rate
- Graduation Rate
- Alternative Program – population, tribunal hearings, acts of recidivism
- Special Needs and Mental Health population
- ELL
- Community Data (GED or illiteracy rates)



Mobility Rate

- Why do people move around in the district?
- Community Conversation (CCRPI one school versus another)

Newton's solution (*each district is different -what applies to one may not apply to all)

- Stakeholders meetings
- Opportunity Community – Does it solve everything? No, but it starts the conversation and gets people on board
- Defend your schools (School A v. School B dialogue should be how can we make it just as good not one is better than the other)



Free/Reduced lunch, Poverty Rate or Median Salary Range, Drop outs, & Graduation Rate

- Technology – Ability to have and availability of internet (NCCA donation)
- Book Adoptions
- Library and Summer Reading requirements (Book bus)
- ASAP & 21st Century programs
- ACTION network & Summer feeding program
- Make up days due to inclement weather
- Alternatives to learning does not always include an alternative program – College & Career Academy, ROTC, STEM, ALANHS, and Rise Academy
- MOU –Viewpoint CSB Mental Health
- Project Aware (Mental Health First Aid, Peer to peer, Sources of Strength)
- Liberty Middle – Whole child health services pilot



Special Needs, Mental Health Population, Other

- Suicide
- Gangs
- Mental Health population
- Tribunal Hearings

Newton Solution:

MOU Viewpoint Health (School Counselors do not do this type of work)

Project Aware (evidence based interventions i.e. Sources of Strength, Mental Health First Aid)

PBIS



ELL or ESOL

Enrollment

Elementary Schools
12 schools
8,739 students

Middle Schools
5 schools
4,113 students

High Schools
3 schools
5,766 students

Theme School
1 school
981 students

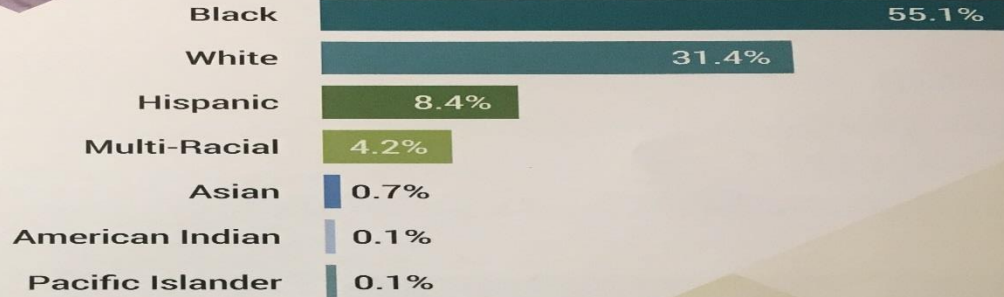
6-12 Alternative Program
1 school
55 students

NOTE: Career Academy students are counted at their base schools.



Student

Racial/Ethnic Distribution



38 Different Languages

Spoken in NCSS in 2016-2017

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|--|
| Akan | Cambodian | Somali |
| Amharic | Korean | Swahili |
| Arabic | Lao | Ukrainian |
| Chinese | Tagalog | Urdu |
| Czech/Slovak | Portuguese | Englishes other than Standard American English |
| Dutch | Russian | Creoles and pidgins (Other) |
| English | Spanish | Creoles and pidgins, (English-based) |
| French | Vietnamese | Creoles and pidgins, (French-based) |
| German | Other African | |
| Greek | Other Asian | |
| Gujarati | Other European | |
| Haitian Creole | Other Indian | |
| Hebrew | Hmong | |
| Hindi | Punjabi | |
| Japanese | Romanian | |



ELL or ESOL

(English Language Learners or English as a Second Language)

- Michael Thurmond story
- Are our schools inviting? (i.e. Fairview-ELL)
- Messages are sent out where everyone understands
- Conferences are set up for everyone to understand
- Sometimes we have to remove our lens and view it from the lens of others



Why should I even be asking?

- First responsibility is to the children you serve
- You know your community – Bd members must live in the community serve- Superintendents may or may not live in the community they serve
- Local school board impact the quality of your local schools
- Everyone has a stake in the success of public schools
- Set the direction for your district and provide oversight and accountability versus day to day management

- Legal Role:
 - Hire and evaluate your Superintendent
 - Make policies and rules that govern the school system
 - You give final approval to all contracts that bind the local school system



ARRIVING AT THE DESTINATION



FIRST OPPORTUNITY CONFERENCE



What Helped?

**I finally found some people to
navigate resources and
opportunities.**

Danny – my first healthy baby.

Thanks to people at:

Community Action

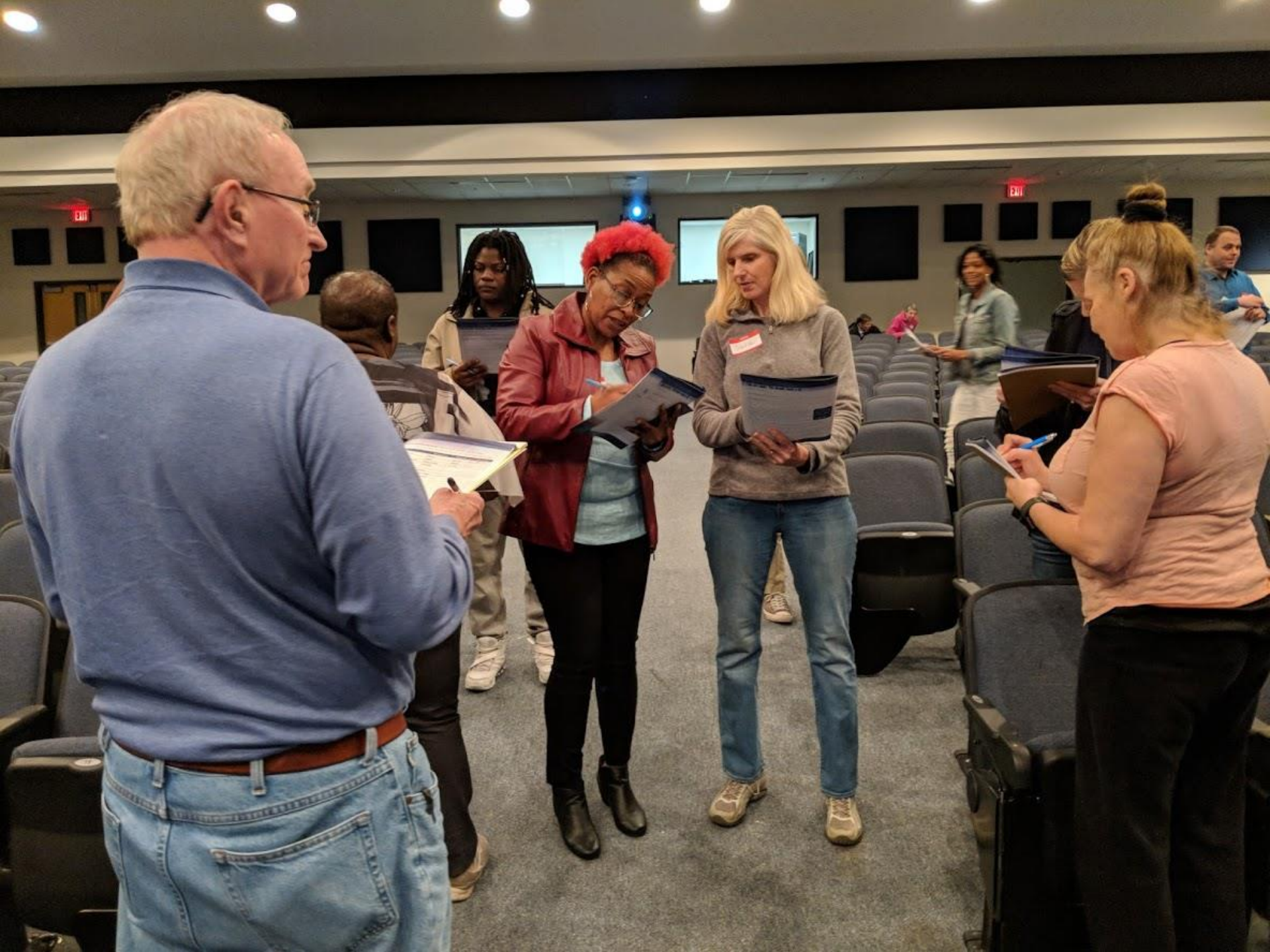
Head Start

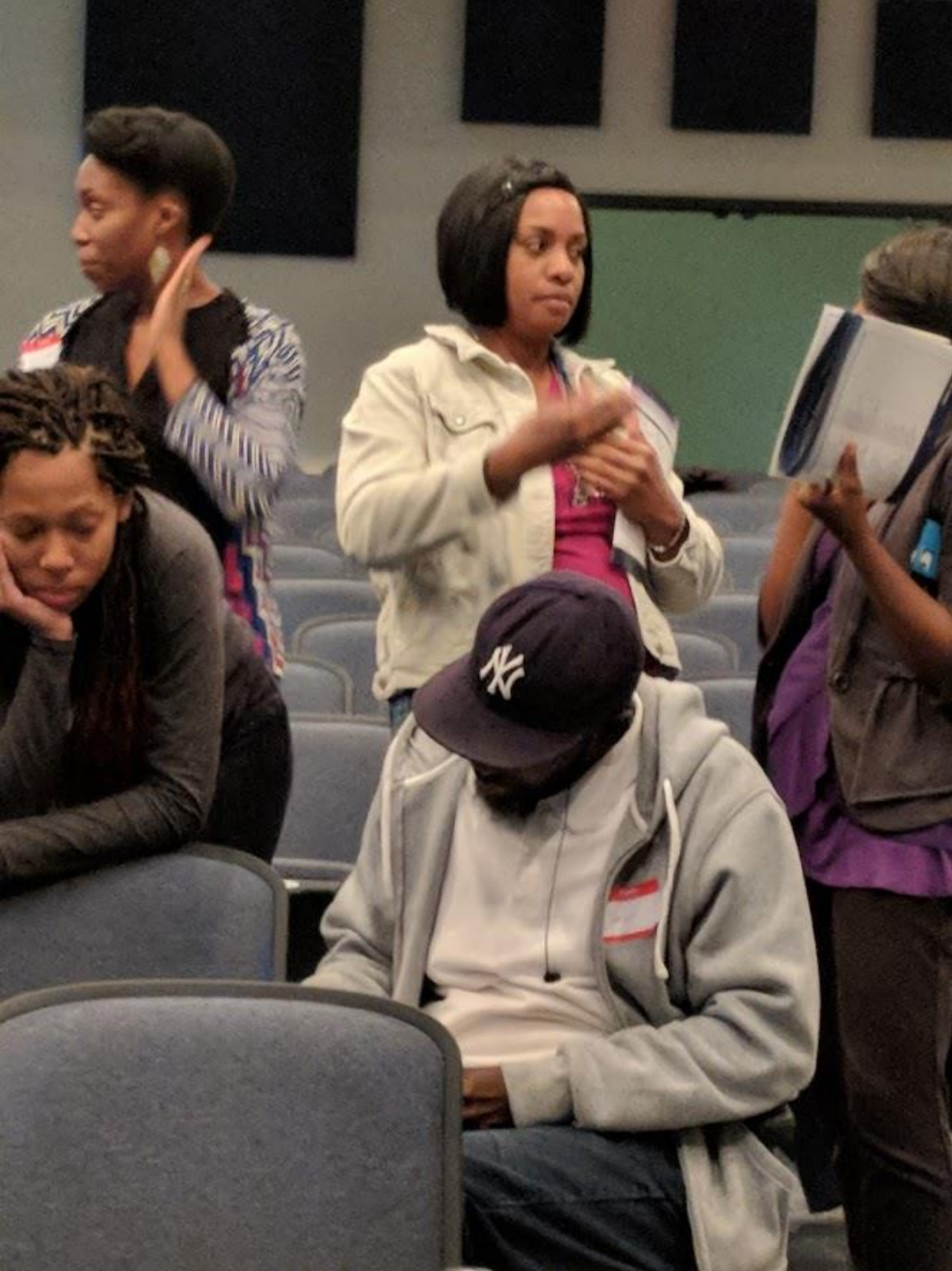
WIC



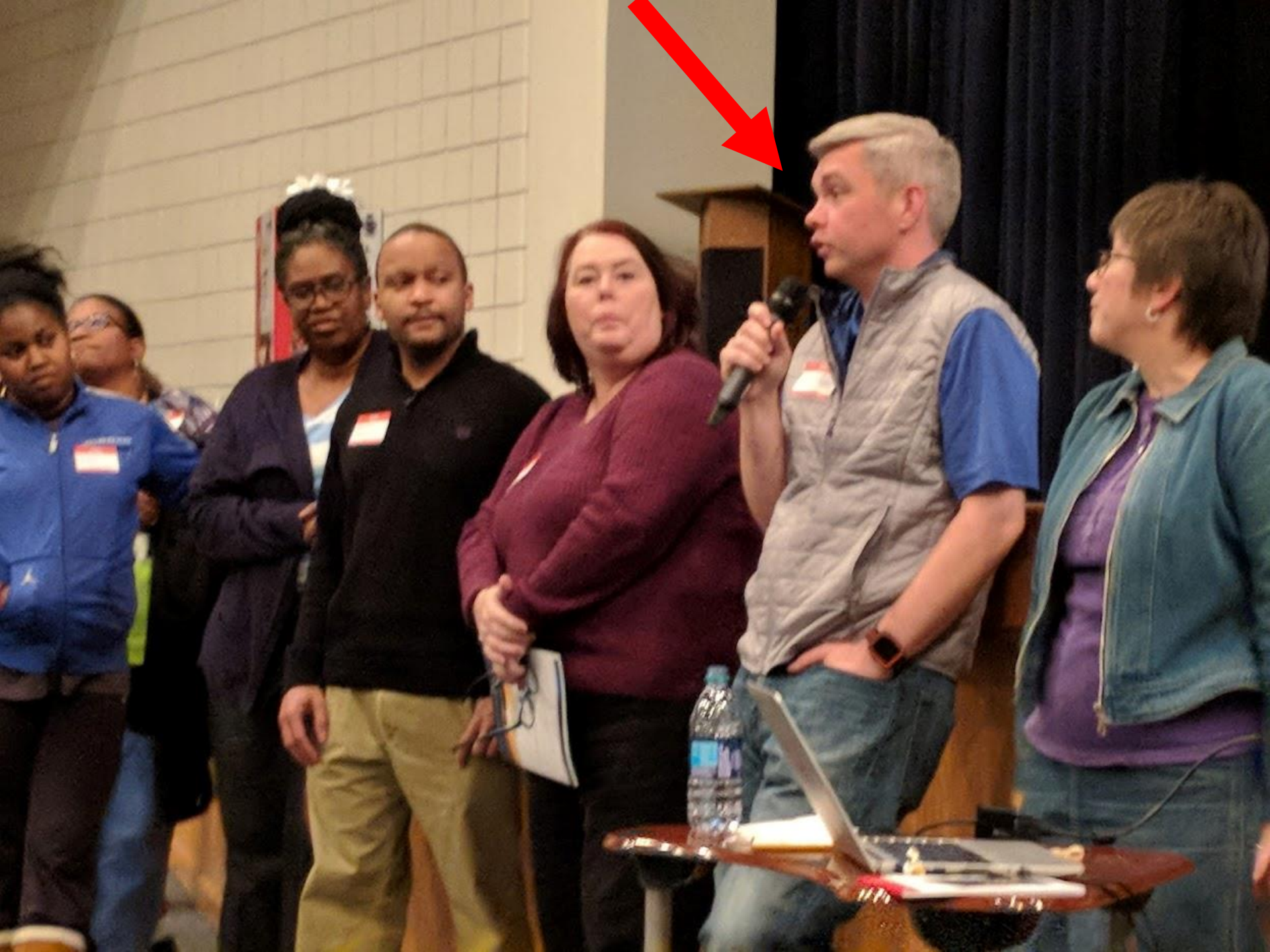


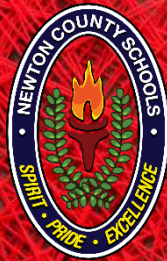












THE JOURNEY CONTINUES