

Great Things are Happening at Calvin Donaldson Elementary School

Working Hard Together: HCDE, PEF and Donaldson

Hamilton County schools and the Public Education Foundation are strong partners in providing training for teachers, helping principals become more effective school leaders, improving literacy in elementary schools, and improving secondary education in Hamilton County. Calvin Donaldson has made great use of this partnership:

- Calvin Donaldson principal **Becky Coleman** and assistant principal **Kendra Harris** have gained leadership skills through the Leadership Fellows program.
- **Ms. Coleman** collaborates with other Hamilton County principals in regular meetings and annual leadership institutes.
- As part of a PEF-funded Networked Learning Community, Calvin Donaldson leaders communicate regularly with leaders from Clifton Hills Elementary, East Lake Elementary, East Side Elementary, Orchard Knob Elementary, East Lake Academy, and Howard School of Academics and Technology to develop a plan for improving student success from kindergarten through high school.

In addition, as a result of the **Benwood Initiative**, Calvin Donaldson has:

- Hired model classroom teachers **Kristina Sahn** and **Lindsay Starnes**.
- Encouraged teachers to complete the Osborne Fellows program to earn a Master's degree in urban education; teachers who have participated in the program include **LaToya Oliver, Mitzi McEachern, Tonya Taylor, Kristina Sahn, and Lindsay Starnes**.

Good News! Tests will be harder!

Why is that good news? Because the state is raising its academic standards as part of the Tennessee Diploma Project (<http://tn.gov/TDP/>), beginning with tests taken in spring of 2010. Test scores are likely to dip at first, but they will rise quickly to meet the new standards, and Tennessee's students – your children – will be better prepared to compete for good jobs in our global economy.

2009 Report Card

Highlights:

- 20.7% scored **advanced** in math – up from 7.2% in 2003.
- 9.6% scored **advanced** in reading – up from 6.1% in 2003.

Achievement (NCLB)				
	Proficient & Advanced		Advanced	
	School	District	School	District
Math	73%	89%	20.7%	44.8%
Lang Arts	74%	90%	9.6%	39.3%

Value-Added*	School
Math	B
Reading/Lang	D
Social Studies	B
Science	B

*"Value-added" scores measure student progress within a grade or subject. A value-added score of A indicates exceptional growth, meaning that students in this school made significantly more progress in this subject than students in the average school in the state. Reported scores are 3-year averages.

I cannot wait to go to school.
I love Donaldson.

- Devon, Grade 2

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HCDE and PEF: Partners for Strong Schools

The Public Education Foundation (PEF) is a local non-profit organization that partners with the Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE) to improve student achievement by improving public schools.

PEF contributes:

- Research into best practices
- Training for teachers and school leaders
- Opportunities for educators to share great ideas
- Fundraising to support this work

Together, HCDE and PEF are changing education in Hamilton County, and changing students' lives. Learn more at www.HCDE.org or www.pefchattanooga.org.

The Benwood Initiative

Since 2003 the Benwood Initiative has been improving literacy and teacher effectiveness in Hamilton County's elementary schools. Funded by the Benwood Foundation, this HCDE/PEF partnership provides significant support to sixteen elementary schools, including Calvin Donaldson.

Calvin Donaldson Mission: In partnership with families and community, Calvin Donaldson Environmental Science Academy provides a nurturing, rigorous, environmentally focused curriculum that promotes responsible, high-achieving students who will respect others, themselves and their natural world.

Exciting New Initiatives!

Teacher Residency - Like a medical residency program that provides "on-the-job training" for doctors, teacher residents will spend a year working with a master teacher in the classroom while also taking classes to earn a master's degree and a teaching certificate. Recruits will specialize in math, science, or other hard-to-fill subject areas.

Principal Leadership Academy – It's not easy being a principal! This year, HCDE and PEF will provide a series of workshops for 15-20 assistant principals to help prepare them to move smoothly into the responsibility of being a principal. HCDE, PEF, the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce and UT Chattanooga are currently developing a full-scale Academy that will provide more intensive training, mentoring and support for assistant principals who are likely to become principals.

College Begins in Kindergarten

PEF has recently merged with the local College Access Center – a long-standing partner in our college access work. With help from the Hamilton County Department of Education and the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga, we have placed part-time college advisors in every high school in Hamilton County, and are working to encourage students to start thinking as early as middle school about post-high school college or technical training.

Partly as a result of this work, 70% of 2008 graduates from Hamilton County public schools enrolled in college the following fall.

Get info on helping your child go to college at www.pefchattanooga.org/CollegeAccess

There are excellent teachers in every school in Hamilton County. Learn about 20 of them and tell your own story at www.pefchattanooga.org/ExcellentTeachers.