

FISCAL YEAR 2023 RURAL EDUCATION FUND MID-YEAR PROGRAM UPDATES REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

The Georgia Foundation for Public Education (GFPE), the philanthropic arm of the Georgia’s Department of Education’s (GADOE), exists for the single purpose of supporting educational excellence for students in Georgia. Through donations, the foundation is able to fund a variety of projects, as well as serve as a channel for organizations to fund their vision.

One of the GFPE’s signature annual grant programs, the Rural Education Fund, provides traditional public schools, charter schools, and school districts located in counties with 35,000 or fewer residents up to \$10,000 to use however they wish to drive student outcomes. The Rural Education Fund is made possible through the purchase of the “Educator” and “Support Education” license plates by Georgia residents.

In 2022, GFPE awarded seven Rural Education Fund grants to Georgia schools and districts, totaling \$70,000. This year is the second that the GFPE provided up to \$10,000, rather than \$5,000 offered in 2020 and before. With the increased funding amount, awardees can offer more robust programing with the potential to impact more students. The grants focused on art and music education, STEAM programs, virtual reality experiences, literacy, and community service projects for high school students.

This report summarizes the mid-year outcomes for the FY2023 Rural Education Fund grantees and presents evidence of impacts from grantees.

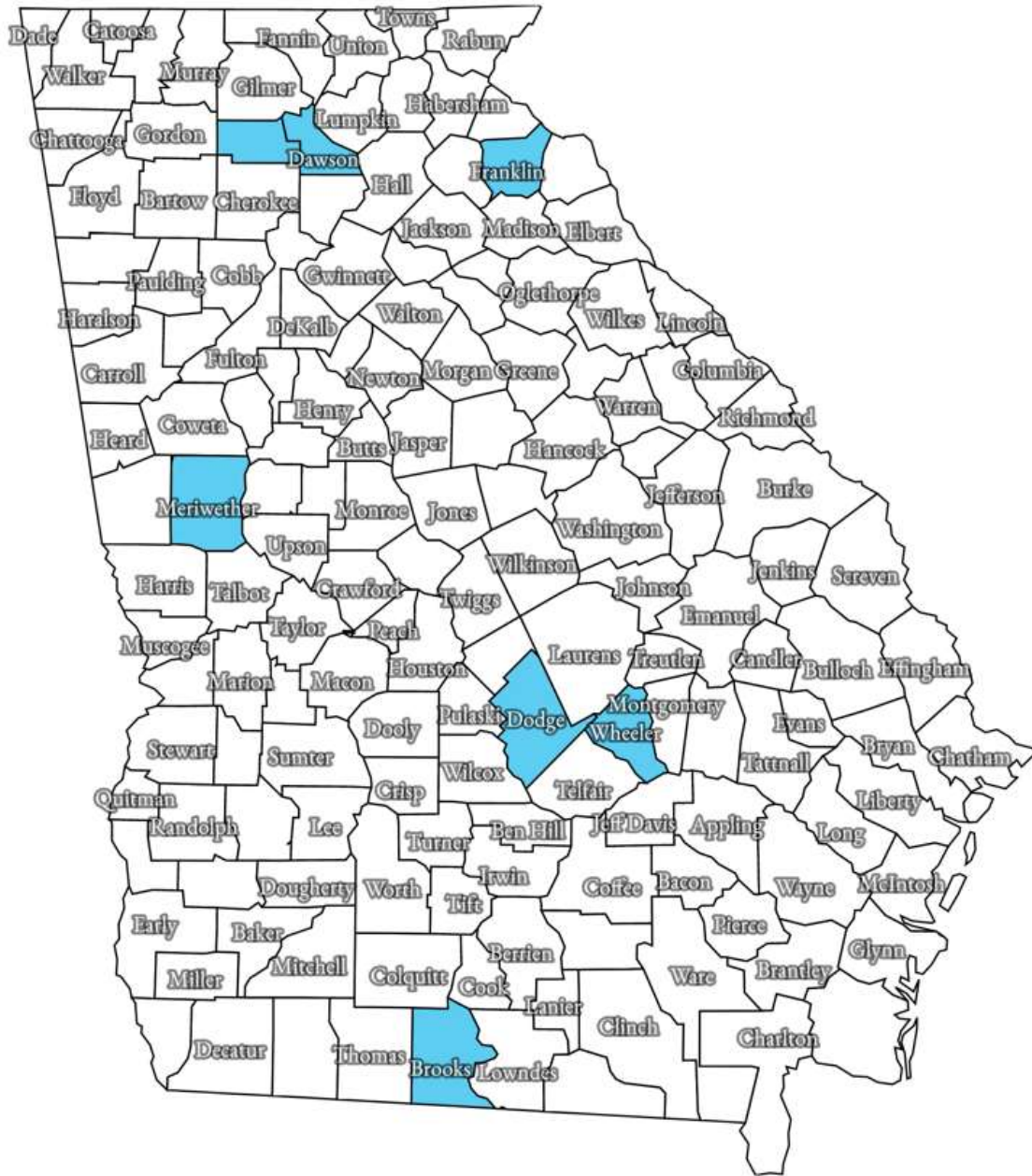
TABLE 1. FY23 RURAL EDUCATION FUND GRANTEES

- *Dawson County Schools, Dawson County, \$10,000*
- *Franklin County High School, Franklin County, \$10,000*
- *Quitman Elementary School, Brooks County Schools, Brooks County, \$10,000*
- *South Dodge Elementary School, Dodge County Schools, Dodge County, \$10,000*
- *Tate Elementary School, Pickens County Schools, Pickens County, \$10,000*
- *Wheeler County High School, Wheeler County Schools, Wheeler County, \$10,000*
- *Unity Elementary School, Meriwether County Schools, Meriwether County, \$10,000*



MAPPING THE FY23 RURAL EDUCATION FUND

GRANTS BY COUNTY



FY23 RURAL EDUCATION FUND IMPACTS AT MID-YEAR

AT A GLANCE

9 Schools
Involved in
Programming

By mid-year, 5,023 students were IMPACTED by Rural Education Fund programs.

Impacts by Race/Ethnicity

White, 74%
African American, 14%
Latino, 7%
Asian, 1%
Native American, 1%
Other, 3%

55% of students impacted are identified as ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED

Of the students impacted, 49% are FEMALE and 51% are MALE

Impacts by Grade Band

Elementary School, 58%
Middle School, 17%
High School, 23%



SNAPSHOTS OF IMPACT

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

"High school art students can now use more advanced art materials to learn new techniques to broaden their foundation in art to increase their love and passion for the new technique to use...in post-graduate courses." – Dawson County Schools

"We were able to cover more material in class because less time was needed to repair and address issues with low-quality equipment. We also were able to cover more in detail how to maintain all instruments." – Franklin County High School

"I have seen an improvement in one of MY students' attitudes when dealing with conflicts since the beginning of our [agriculture club] meetings. I believe this has been impacted through her involvement in the club." – Quitman Elementary School of Brooks County

"Several of my students have expressed to me that they have enjoyed participating in the science experiments with manipulatives that were purchased with our grant funds. STEMscopes has math extension activities that the students can participate in during class. During Q2 2022 I had 46 out of 49 students who were able to pass my math class." – South Dodge Elementary School of Dodge County

"Choral tracks can be used for more independence in learning how to produce music appropriately giving students a more structured lesson to craft a skill to be more marketable after graduation in the field of music." – Dawson County Schools

"With the purchase of high-quality instruments, students were able to make better sounds and perform with more expression and technique compared to on their old instruments." – Franklin County High School

"45 out of 49 students passed the unit assessment for physical and chemical changes. Also, 47 out of 49 students passed the unit assessment for electricity and magnetism." – South Dodge Elementary School of Dodge County

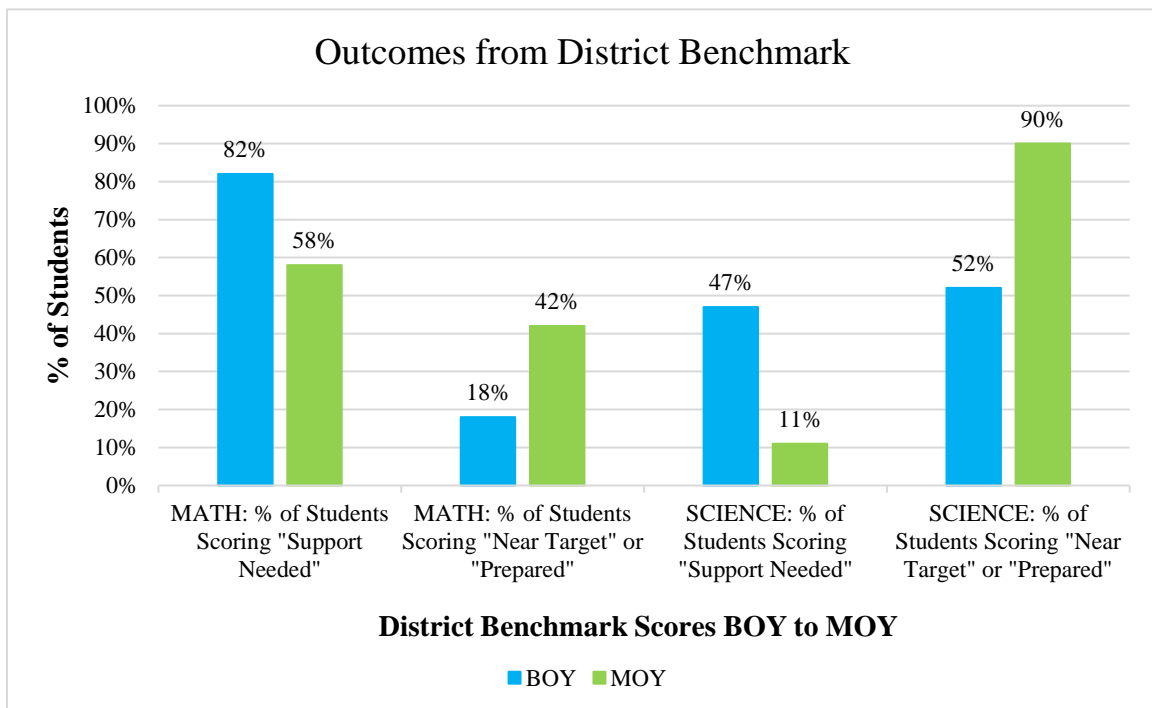
This is so cool!"
"I love being outside to learn."
"This is such a wonderful opportunity to get out in the sunshine and continue learning at the same time. I cannot wait to see students out there!" – Tate Elementary School of Pickens County

"Our virtual reality initiative will provide our students with the opportunity to explore learning spaces that are outside of our district's reach. For example, our students in the 21st Century Afterschool Program were able to visit museum art exhibits from around the world. This opportunity would not have been possible without virtual reality." – Unity Elementary School of Meriwether County

STANDARDIZED DATA

Grantees are required to report standardized data that align with the purposes of their grant. Doing this allows the GFPE to assess high-level grant program impacts even though the grant programs have different focuses and goals. Grantees may provide standardized data from a list of standardized measures that fit with the priority area with which their program aligns. Four of the seven grantees still have data pending which will be reported on the end-of-grant evaluation report. Here is a breakdown of the standardized impacts from three of the Rural Education Fund grantees which had data to report at mid-year:

- Student Wellness Survey: At mid-year, 90.3% of students participating in the Wheeler County High School service project agreed or strongly agreed that they “feel more plugged in and a greater sense of belonging” since joining the program.
- DRC Beacon (district benchmark): At mid-year, South Dodge Elementary School students showed improvements in science and math:



- Band Instrument Utilization: Franklin County High School was able to increase the number of students using school-owned instruments 158%, from 12 students to 20 students.
- At mid-year, grantees had leveraged \$1500 because of the Rural Education Fund grant.

FEEDBACK FOR THE GEORGIA FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

Grantees are required to provide mid-year and end-of-year grant evaluation forms. In the evaluation, grantees highlight the grant's current status, including the demographics of students/faculty/families impacted, as well as progress towards the SMART goals outlined on the original application. In addition, the evaluation provides space for grantees to give feedback to the Georgia Foundation for Public Education regarding its responsiveness as a grantor. Here are the feedback findings from the 2022 mid-year evaluation reports:

- Grantees are asked to rate the GFPE's quality of technical assistance and support on a scale of one to five, with one being poor and five being excellent. Of the six grantees that provided a rating, all gave GFPE an excellent rating.
- GFPE received an overall average rating of five.
- Here are the grantee comments:
 - **Dawson County Schools:** Jaclyn has been amazing to work with this year. She has made the entire process much easier, and her support has been greatly appreciated.
 - **South Dodge Elementary School of Dodge County Schools:** Jaclyn has been very easy to work with during the grant period. She has provided assistance when needed in a quick/professional method. In addition, she has sent reminders for the due dates regarding grant reporting periods. SDES is excited to continue utilizing these GFPE funds towards the success of our students academics. Thus far, our students have really enjoyed using materials purchased to participate in hands-on learning.

