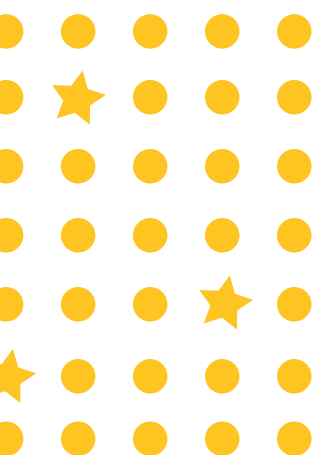


Last year was our 20th year as an independent local nonprofit focused on helping Decatur students reach their full potential. ★ We began as a one-person operation with a small budget for teacher grants back in 2002. ★ Today we're a team of six who manage multiple student programs. ★ We help address the big issues facing all of our students – racial and economic inequity, behavioral health needs, and food insecurity.

Look Back Look Ahead

Decatur Education Foundation

Impact Report
2021-2022



With 20 years under our belt, it's time as an organization to look forward and plan for the next 20 years. Questions we are asking: How can we better serve today's students? How can we eliminate or reduce the obstacles they face and make them more resilient, empathetic humans in preparation for life?



• The man who moves a mountain begins
• by carrying away small stones.”

• – Confucius (551-479 BC), philosopher

We will “move our mountain” by continuing the programs we have established that we know are helping Decatur students. →

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Our Programs

To learn more about all of our work/programs, visit decaturreducationfoundation.org

“ . . . help students discover their interests, pursue their passions and develop life skills.”

AIM MENTORING | The AIM Scholars mentoring program focuses on closing the opportunity gap by connecting Decatur students to the resources of our community. AIM partners with the Decatur Housing Authorities Afterschool Program (STAR) to pair third graders with adult mentors. By supporting **Academics**, exploring **Interests**, and providing **Mentors**, AIM helps connect students with educational and enrichment opportunities to discover their interests, pursue their passions and develop life skills so that when they graduate, they are socially and civically connected to the greater community.

“ . . . demand for tutoring remains high for help with homework, organization and motivation.”

VIRTUAL PALS TUTORING PROGRAM | When our schools pivoted to virtual learning due to COVID-19, we established the Virtual Pals Tutoring program. Demand for tutoring has remained high, so we will continue to offer this program in which we pair students in grades 2 through 8 with upper high school or adult volunteers for one-hour weekly sessions for help with homework, organization and motivation.

LIGHTEN THE LOAD | Established in 2018, our Lighten the Load program provides supplemental food for food-insecure families during weekends and school breaks, and ensures that our schools’ food pantries stay stocked. Talley Street Upper Elementary, and Beacon Hill Middle School have monthly Amazon wish lists. If you would like to donate snacks to those school pantries, or contribute to our Weekend Backpack Program, follow these links:

- **Talley Street Upper Elementary** | <https://a.co/8BxrMEz>
- **Beacon Hill Middle** | <https://a.co/d0HJHTR>
- **Weekend Backpack Program** | <https://a.co/6Etc74W>

TEACHER INNOVATION GRANTS | Every fall, CSD teachers apply for DEF Teacher Innovation Grants that allow them to fund projects that enhance classroom learning, address different learning styles and bring creative ideas to life. We will announce our teacher grants in the coming weeks!

ZARA’S FUND ARTS GRANTS | The arts are a powerful way to talk about big issues like equity, and interacting with a hands-on project provides a new way of engaging and learning about something that helps make it stick. Through DEF’s Zara’s Fund, we support arts infusion in the classroom. Last spring we partnered with Paint Love, a local non-profit that empowers kids through art, on projects at both CSD upper elementary schools. Talley 3rd graders worked with local fiber and textile artists to learn to weave with fabric donated by re:loom and custom made looms from Decatur Makers. At F.AVE, fourth-grade students explored place-based justice with four multi-disciplinary artists and created mixed-media journals.



Next Steps

New Program to Address Student Need

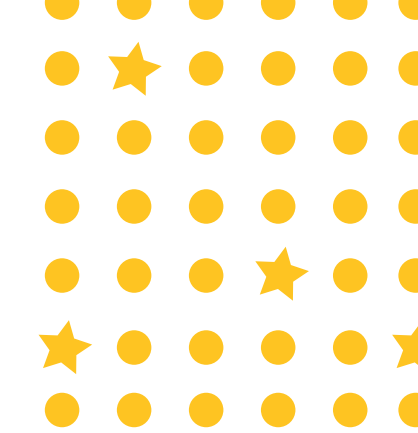
FOCUS PREP Program for DHS students

“What are your post-high school plans?” can be a daunting question for a lot of students. FOCUS Prep Program is a new program for the 2022-23 school year to help high school students realize and reach their post-secondary goals. We are pairing adult “coaches” with 9th-12th graders to help them FOCUS: Finding Opportunities to Create yoUr Success. These “Focus Coaches” will be trained through the College Ave. Consulting curriculum and will commit to 2-3 hours per month for the 2022-2023 school year to help their students plan for college. The coaches’ presence and guidance will help eliminate the anxiety and uncertainty a lot of students feel about taking steps towards their future.

Integrating Youth Voice into Our Work

YSI Year of Strategic Inquiry

As an organization that supports youth, we feel compelled to better understand their lived experience in order to make informed decisions for the future. To that end, DEF Executive Director Gail Rothman will be leading a year of strategic inquiry for DEF which will include a review of the research on what helps kids thrive, an expansion of our partnership with VOX ATL to host peer-led listening sessions with Decatur youth, and visits to innovative youth centered programs across the country. You can follow along through her blog, “Connecting the Dots,” www.decatureducationfoundation.org/connecting-the-dots, where she will be sharing her experiences and observations.



• “. . . help eliminate
• the anxiety and
• uncertainty many
• students feel about
• taking steps towards
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• “. . . a review of
• the research on
• what helps kids
• thrive”

Join Us

Virtual Pals Tutors | 1 hour per week

AIM Mentors | 2-4 hours per month

FOCUS Prep Coaches | 2-3 hours per month

We need volunteers to donate some time each month to help our students as mentors, tutors, and coaches. The time commitment is small compared to the BIG impact on a Decatur student and the rewarding feeling you get from making a difference in your community.

There’s still time to sign up for this school year! Learn more about volunteering for these programs at www.decatureducationfoundation.org/mentoring.

Be A Part of Our Current Programs

It doesn’t take a lot of time for one person to make a difference.



Support Our Kids



STEP UP
CIRCLE

Decatur Education Foundation



*Can't Volunteer
But Want to Help in
Meaningful Ways?*

Join the Step Up Circle! | DEF Step Up Circle Sponsors are local businesses, families and individuals who commit to supporting DEF throughout the year. Not only do our circle sponsors support our mission, but their commitment allows them to enjoy perks like Tour deCatur registrations and Step Up teacher tributes. Becoming a corporate step up sponsor is a great way to showcase your business while supporting an important cause. To learn more about Step Up levels and perks, please visit www.decatureducationfoundation.org/step-up-circle or email leah@decatureducationfoundation.org.

Attend Soirée in the City! | We are hosting our first fall fundraiser in two years and we're celebrating our 20th Anniversary! The easiest (and most fun) way to support DEF is to attend Soirée in the City on **Saturday, November 12, 6-10 pm**. There will be a seated dinner, cocktails and mocktails and live music by Maxwell Street. Tickets are now available at www.decatureducationfoundation.org/soiree.

**Save these Dates for
Future Events that Support DEF**

Mead Road Mardi Gras | For almost a decade, Oakhurst residents have hosted the Mead Road Mardi Gras Parade and Party every winter. The almost-annual event has raised approximately \$30K specifically for music and arts grants for City Schools of Decatur. February 4, 2023 will likely be the last year to experience this popular homegrown event that brings New Orleans traditions to Decatur. Participate as a community krewe, or march with your student's school. More information available at www.meadrdmardigras.org.

Tour deCatur 2023 | Decatur's biggest 5K is also DEF's biggest fundraiser. Come out to run or walk the Tour deCatur 5K or one-mile fun run on Saturday, March 11. Registration begins in January at www.tourdecatur.com.



Tell a Friend

***Share Your Enthusiasm for Our Work:
Connect with Us on Social Media.***

If you believe in DEF's mission of helping every Decatur student reach their full potential, tell a friend! Currently we accomplish all that we do with support from just 10% of Decatur's households. Can you imagine what we could accomplish if that number were doubled? If you are part of that 10%, thank you! Please share with your friends why you support DEF and our kids. If you are not yet part of the 10%, we hope you'll join us. Go to www.decatureducationfoundation.org for more information.

***We do all of these things with the support
of just 10% of Decatur's households.***

Imagine . . .

***. . . what we could accomplish
if we doubled that number?***