



## Behind the Scenes: Data Collection Coordinator, Shannon Felt



All schools and school systems in Georgia must collect and report FTE information, or “full-time equivalent” data. In a nutshell, we report data on the number of students enrolled and how we are serving those students. FTE drives how schools are funded. We receive funding based on the number of students we serve, but also based on how we are serving those students.

While collecting and reporting FTE data is a mammoth task in any district, the unique structure of Foothills makes the task more challenging. Regional Data Collection Coordinator Shannon Felt is responsible for ensuring that data from all sites is reported accurately for FTE. When we sat down to chat with Shannon about her role in the FTE process, she emphasized the importance of collaboration and communication with each Foothills site.

Because Shannon is not physically at each site, she notes the importance of open communication: She is often “asking questions to make sure the data reflects what is really happening.” The registrars at each site serve a vital function in making certain that the information reported from their site is accurate and complete. During our FTE window—a time period when we count every student who comes to class and report their classes and services—Shannon sends nightly reports to the Dr. Gibney-Sherman to share with sites. Registrars work with Shannon to check data for accuracy.

Checking for accuracy, though, only works if everyone is on the same page and speaking the same language. Shannon views her role as ensuring that the sites are using common language and vocabulary when they talk about services for students. Foothills is unique as a school system because it is actually made up of sites that serve many different systems and areas of the state. So, across sites, Shannon has recognized that the staff often speak of the same thing in different terms. As she asks questions and works to communicate with registrars, she also works toward a common language and understanding across sites.

While Shannon will humbly downplay her role in the process, her behind-the-scenes work is essential to Foothills. Her attention to detail and accurate reporting ensure that Foothills has the funding to serve our students.

---

### Message from the Superintendent

This month, our newsletter is adding a new feature. While we will continue to shine a spotlight on our amazing Foothills students, we have decided it's time to turn a spotlight on some of our amazing staff members as well. “Behind-the-Scenes” will feature staff members who are making a difference at Foothills, with a special emphasis on how they navigate the unique challenges of a non-traditional charter high school setting. We are super proud to feature Ms. Shannon Felt, who is the Madison County High School registrar by day and the Foothills Data Collection Coordinator by night (and weekends).

Ms. Felt uses her sharp attention to detail to make sure that Foothills meets the 1000's of deadlines for reporting all year long; she makes sure that the information that we send to the Georgia Department of Education is correct; and she helps us to maximize potential earnings for our students. We love Ms. Felt as she shares her care and concern for every student we serve each and every day. Ms. Felt is a critical member of the Foothills family.

With Pride,

*Dr. Sherrie Gibney-Sherman, Foothills Superintendent*

### In This Issue

- Behind the Scenes, Regional Data Collection Coordinator
- Message from the Superintendent
- Welcome to Phillips!
- Regional Graduation

## Congratulations, Summer Graduates!

Foothills has a year-round calendar, and students progress at their own pace toward graduation. So, we don't just celebrate graduates in the spring—we celebrate all year long!

In late August, we held a regional graduation ceremony at Clarke Central High School for our summer graduates.

Hats off, Class of 2017!  
Best of luck in the future!



*Dr. Gibney-Sherman gives a speech at the regional graduation ceremony.*



*Graduate Hunter Melton and mentor David Benton (Jackson Site) at the regional graduation ceremony.*

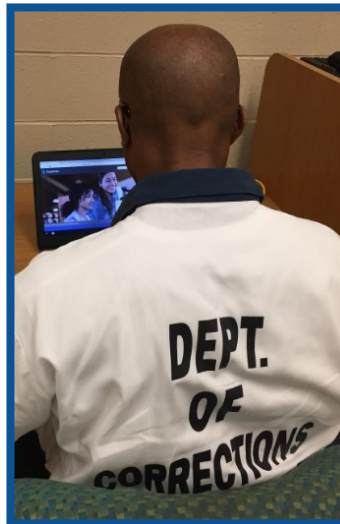
## Welcome to Phillips! Our Newest Foothills Site

Our newest addition to the Foothills family is our site at Phillips State Prison in Buford, GA. While they are just getting started, the faculty and students are already off and running. Dr. Sherrie Gibney-Sherman, Foothills Superintendent, has been impressed with how quickly the staff at Phillips has come together and begun to function as a collaborative team.



Even before the student desks had been delivered or the ribbon had been cut, staff and students were anxious to share their thoughts about what the addition of a Foothills site means at Phillips. One student tried to put into words what having access to Foothills means: "A second chance at freedom, more doors are being opened . . . A blessing in disguise, an opportunity of a lifetime to help other people . . . To further my education and be whatever I want to be is a blessing from God above . . . To show the world if you can do it from prison you can do it from anywhere."

Another Phillips student echoed the sentiment that Foothills provides a second chance: "This has given me a second chance in life, I want to work hard to earn my diploma and continue my education by taking college courses that are also offered at Phillips. I want to look into taking business classes in college."



Staff at the Phillips site also see Foothills as an opportunity that will open doors in the future for students: "I am extremely excited for our students to get this unique opportunity to obtain their high school diploma. Their education can open opportunities for them in the future that might not have been available."

Phillips will expand our partnership with the Department of Corrections, as we already have successful Foothills sites at two other state facilities, Burruss Correctional Training Center and Lee Arrendale State Prison. We are proud to be part of the Foothills vision as we provide an accessible, flexible high school option for students. At Foothills, we know that it is *never* too late to become what you might have been. Welcome, Phillips!

### ***The Foothills Vision***

***Foothills Education Charter High School strives to be an accessible, high-quality high school option that is flexible and responsive to the needs of the People of Georgia and its communities.***



Foothills Education Charter  
High School  
www.foothillscharter.org  
706-795-2191 x 1476