

CROSS KEYS TOWN HALL MEETING

October 12, 2023

Questions & Answers

[Cross Keys HS Town Hall October 12 2023 \(dekalbschoolsga.org\)](https://dekalbschoolsga.org)

Link to Cross Keys Town Hall Meeting

Please see the remaining questions from the Cross Keys Townhall. Please send your responses to me by Thursday, October 19th. I will compile your responses and send them to Ms. McGinniss on Friday, October 20th.

1. How can you help us at Cross Keys HS with the security at the school?

**DCSD Public Safety's mission is to provide safe and secure learning environment free from violence, drugs, and weapons for all students, faculty, staff, and guests. How do we provide this mission and help for the school; by assigned security personnel at the school which include an DCSD Police Officer (SROs) and Campus Supervisors. Also, there are two new security initiatives that have been added to the school to help. Evolv (Walk-Through Weapon Detection) and Centegix which is a badge alert system that can stimulate an immediate alert of a crisis to Administration and Security personnel for quick response. Lastly, DCSD Public Safety will continue to promote the "See Something; Say Something" strategy in the schools.**

**The campaign is for all stakeholders. They can contact the assigned DCSD Police Officer of the school. If the parent cannot reach an officer, there is number to DCSD Public Safety (678-676-1810) printed on the flyers of the "See Something Say Something" campaign that are posted in the school(s) to report any criminal activity.**

2. Why are students in the ESOL Program from Pre-K-high school?

**DCSD adheres to the GADOE guidelines to determine ESOL eligibility. ELs who qualify must receive ESOL services until they reach the GaDOE/DCSD established criteria to exit services. ELs exit ESOL services based on GADOE exit criteria. 2023 Grades 1-12 Minimum English Learner (EL) Exit and EL Reclassification Criterion Reported by Georgia's Local Education Agencies (LEAs)**

**Pre-K students are not screened for ESOL services and do not receive ESOL services. See Kindergarten screening guidelines.**

3. More coordinators are needed. The ones that we have are overwhelmed and we have a long wait time to talk to her. I need to know how to help my sons in grades 10 & 11.

**The district will look at the staffing for schools prior to next school year based on FTE. Please work with the teachers of your sons on what is needed and the principal of the school can assist as well.**

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4. Do we have a date to start construction at Cross Keys since classes cannot meet in some rooms?

**It is anticipated that construction will start in Summer 2024.**

5. How is H-Pride certification determined? Is there community/parent/stakeholder input to be transparent and provide a holistic voice to the efforts? That will ensure schools aren't misrepresenting the essence of H-Pride.

**Roundtable visits are conducted at approximately 2-6 per week. The principal, a parent, teacher, student, and community member are invited by the principal to attend the meeting to answer two questions posed by Dr. Horton. 1) What is going well at your school? 2) What can the district do to better support your school so that students can have a better experience? During the visit panel members share their thoughts as it relates to the questions while Dr. Horton's team listen intently and note concerns for follow-up. At the conclusion of the open dialogue session, Dr. Horton goes into great detail explaining H-Pride. The H-Pride core values represent how we should interact with each other (students, school & district staff, community members, and etc.). The certification represented by the yard sign is just a way to let the school & community know that the H-Pride values are mutually agreed upon values that will be upheld and demonstrated by all.**

**Stakeholders are encouraged to take advantage of the weekly ThoughtExchanges. It is an excellent way to provide ongoing feedback about various topics. The QR code and link can be found in the Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter and social media. The newsletter is sent by text, social media, and posted on the district's website.**

**[sup-newsletter-flyers.pdf \(windows.net\)](#)**

6. Why the lack of communication in the school district?

**DCSD recognizes the importance of clear and transparent communication in creating a positive and collaborative environment. The district makes every effort to communicate in a variety of ways. Because each school community is unique, the local schools have the option to use additional methods of communication through School Messenger, text, hard copy flyers, Dojo (elementary schools), and etc.**

**In addition, the Hitting the Road Weekly Newsletter is a great way to stay abreast of happenings in the district. It can be found on the DCSD website and it is also sent by text message for those who have a correct telephone number in Infinite Campus.**

**[sup-newsletter-flyers.pdf \(windows.net\)](#)**

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**[DeKalb County School District \(dekalbschoolsga.org\)](http://dekalbschoolsga.org)**

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**[Infinite Campus – DeKalb County School District \(dekalbschools.ga\)](https://dekalbschools.ga)**

7. Why do families only find out about events through WhatsApp?

**WhatsApp has become very popular with international families. However, we must ensure that the social media platforms we use and promote are cyber-safe. IT leads on cyber safety. However, Fambassador volunteers might use this platform to communicate with families, but it is not an official social media platform for the district. Our communication happens here:**

**District website**

**[DeKalb County School District \(dekalbschools.ga\)](https://dekalbschools.ga)**

**School Website**

**School messenger (email, text, call)**

**Social Media (FB, IG, X)**

**<https://twitter.com/DeKalbSchools>**

**<https://www.instagram.com/dekalbschools/>**

**<https://www.facebook.com/DeKalbSchoolsGA>**

8. Why are we being ignored?

**DCSD makes every effort to uplift the voices of all stakeholders. The newly launch Superintendent Parent Advisory Councils provide a way to discuss issues/concerns and problem solve in a small group with Superintendent Horton. After each advisory meeting, next steps will be developed in order to address issues on a given topic.**

**Stakeholders are encouraged to take advantage of the weekly ThoughtExchanges. It is an excellent way to provide ongoing feedback about various topics. The QR code and link can be found in the Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter and social media. The newsletter is sent by text, social media, and posted on the district's website. The data from the ThoughtExchange questions will be shared in the upcoming weeks. This data will also inform next steps for improvement.**

**[Hitting the Road with Horton – DeKalb County School District \(dekalbschools.ga\)](https://dekalbschools.ga)**

9. Why don't they have some programs as they did 4 years ago? They didn't work with the children to increase their academics at Dresden ES.

**Based on the school's CCRPI data and the local school's CSIP plan, Dresden Elementary School determines what programs or supports are required to address their students' academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs.**

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10. Teacher Residency Program- If DCSD is paying for each participant, what commitment does that participant make back to the district to stay and use these skills to help our students, will they pay the district back if they leave?

**The teacher is required to work in the District for 5 years after completing the Residency.**

11. Can you comment on consultation and cooperation with local municipalities in the areas we are building "new". Specifically, Chamblee is looking at what is needed in the Shallowford - Dresden area. Is DCSD involved in commenting?

**District staff work with local municipalities, including the City of Chamblee, on a regular basis to track changes that may impact local schools such as new housing developments or transportation improvements. Local municipalities in turn work with the District to track how local school improvements may impact their communities. This is especially true in areas where the District is building new school facilities.**

12. With the passage of SB48 and the GA Early Literacy Act, Districts are required to screen all students for characteristics of dyslexia and provide structured literacy and appropriate interventions. What is the status of teacher training and implementation to comply with the legislation?

**Per Senate Bill 48, implementation of a screener to identify characteristics of dyslexia is not required by the GADOE until 2024-2025. To prepare for state-wide implementation, the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) is required to conduct a multi-year (3-year) Dyslexia Pilot from 2020-2023.**

**The DeKalb County School District (DCSD) is participating in the GADOE Dyslexia Pilot Program. During the first year of participating in the pilot, DCSD utilized the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Fluency only in the state-identified schools. The screening for characteristics of dyslexia was done in addition to system-wide universal screening for academic performance.**

**DeKalb Schools was granted GEER II funds by Governor Kemp in the amount of \$1,298,303. These grant funds made it possible for DCSD to partner with IStation to administer the dyslexia screener in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 to identify students with characteristics of dyslexia.**

**All elementary K-3 teachers in DeKalb have been trained on how to administer the dyslexia screener and began screening each K-3 student in September 2022. DCSD has a robust fully operational Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework with clearly defined expectations for identifying and supporting students with academic (including reading and math) and social-emotional-behavioral challenges. Support includes an array of evidence and research-based interventions to improve targeted skill-specific needs among students including student language processing and reading skills. Interventions for early literacy encompass all five**

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domains of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension).

General education reading instruction at all tiers (Tier 1 Core instruction, Tier 2 moderate intensity support, and Tier 3 intensive support) incorporates the Science of Reading (SOR) and we are making a commitment to continue our education to support the learning of every student.

The DeKalb County School District currently supports a structured literacy approach: explicit, systematic teaching that focuses on phonological awareness, phonics, and language comprehension at all tiers.

The DCSD Board of Education adopted and approved Reading resources for K-5 which will be implemented starting SY 22-23. Wonders by McGraw Hill for K-2 and myView by Savvas for 3-5 are both evidence-based and grounded in the Science of Reading.

The Board of Education approved the second year of the Lexia Learning two-year agreement to offer LETRS professional development as a teacher resource providing the fundamentals of reading instruction – phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and language. The DeKalb County School District is focused on building teacher capacity to provide strong, aligned reading instruction at the elementary level for kindergarten through grade 3. LETRS supports the District's instructional framework for deep teaching and learning aligned to the instructional core. The professional learning also supports the Georgia Early Literacy Act (HB538) which requires districts to require all public-school kindergarten through third grade teachers in Georgia to complete training in the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills. At the end of year one, 430 employees had completed units 1-4.

13. Family Friendly Audit-Given communication challenges with parents, will the audit be hard copy, in Class Dojo, What's App, and website?

The Family Friendly Schools Audit is sent electronically to parents with an expectation that a minimum of 30 parents will complete it. We will also conduct in-person sessions for ESL populations for ease of completion. For example, Our Spanish speaking Liaisons will conduct and IMPACT Huddle at Dresden and Sequoia MS to assist parents with completing the survey. The same will happen in several languages at Indian Creek Elementary School. Communication with our International population happens regularly using social media, videos and WhatsApp. A Link will be sent out via the school messenger.

14. Increasing the graduation rate is important. Cross Keys students need to go to Elizabeth Andrews, but cannot afford to take the bus (MARTA or cabs). Are there any plans to provide transportation for those students who need additional credit so that they can graduate on time?

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**Transportation continually evaluates and assesses all services provided to accommodate our students. Due to our current staffing challenges and current schedules, transportation is unable to commit to providing additional services.**

What is the strategy for DeKalb School of Technology North-Cross Keys CTAE and more broadly across the district?

**Response:**

Specific Strategies for DeKalb High School North and Other CTAE Programs

The following strategies and ideas below are being executed to increase interest in DeKalb High School of Technology North and other CTAE programs across the school district:

- Host school tours of CTAE programs for all 8<sup>th</sup> graders.
- Enhance the development of college and career curriculum and programs across the district.
- Collaborate with economic development and workforce development programs to determine high wage, high skilled, and high demand industries.
- Organize a CTAE Expo in 2024-2025.
  
- Use student interest data to offer career pathways.

CTAE Goals

The goals of the CTAE Department are to:

- **Deliver real options for ALL students for college and rewarding careers;**
- **Deliver real-world workforce-ready skills;**
- **Deliver real high school experience with added value;**
- **Provide middle grades CTAE students with a successful transition to high school with an actionable plan for next steps;**
- **Prepare ALL students for high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand careers;**
- **Provide students with employability skills; and**
- **Provide students with work-based learning experiences such as internships, co-ops, Youth Apprenticeship Programs and Great Promise Partnerships.**

Improve and Expand CTAE Programs

**Using the guidance of the DCSD CTAE Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment, Perkins grant funds allow the school district to improve and expand programs and**

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**career pathways in high demand, high skill, and high wage career fields. This includes strengthening academic and technical skills of students, providing work-based learning opportunities, making available industry credentials and certifications, and providing professional development for teachers, counselors, and administrators.**

**Opportunities for CTAE High School Students**

**Students are exposed to and made aware of CTAE pathways and Dual Enrollment opportunities at the local school through programming from the Counseling department. There are 49 CTAE pathways from 17 career clusters offered throughout the school district. The career pathways vary in our high schools and career academy centers (DeKalb High School of Technology North, DeKalb High School of Technology South, and Warren Technical School).**

**Currently, DCSD students are participating in Dual Enrollment opportunities at a number of colleges and universities. These include Georgia State, Georgia Gwinnett College, Georgia Piedmont Technical College (CTAE pathways, STEM pathways, and Core content) and others. Students who choose to attend schools in the Technical College System of Georgia are eligible to earn college credits and high school credits without impacting their HOPE Scholarship funding as well.**

**CTAE students are also extended the opportunity to receive industry credentials and licensure as well. There are 25 industry certified programs in the areas of Audio Video Tech & Film, Business, Culinary Arts, Early Childhood, Engineering, and Marketing.**

15. Why did the District change the name of the Welcome Center? We need help because a lot of us don't understand technology and we have to do registration online.

**The DeKalb County School District has implemented online registration for all students. Parents who indicate a language other than English during the OLR process are directed to the International Student Screening Center for their child to be screened for eligibility for ESOL services. The International Student Screening Center staff interpreters help parents who need assistance completing the online registration in person at the center or over the phone.**

**The official name of the space in the District and GaDOE has always been "International Student Screening Center." The signage now reflects the official name.**

16. Comment: I would like for parents to be heard so you know what our needs are. **DCSD makes every effort to uplift the voices of all stakeholders. The newly launch Superintendent Parent Advisory Councils provide a way to discuss**

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**issues/concerns and problem solve in a small group with Superintendent Horton. After each advisory meeting, next steps will be developed in order to address issues on a given topic.**

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17. My son does not have a Literature teacher. He will be taking the GA Milestones/EOC at the end of the year. What is the District doing to offer assistance to the schools?

**Teacher shortages are a national issue, and our District is not immune to the challenges that come with it. Educator pipelines are not producing the necessary quantity of high quality, highly qualified staff needed to support schools. As a result, the District implemented an “all-hands-on-deck” approach to start the school year thereby ensuring that every student had access to quality instruction.**

**The District employed the following Comprehensive Coverage Plan to support classrooms:**

- **Allocated STAR Subs**
- **Provided Day to Day and Long-Term Substitutes**
- **Hired summer graduates as paraprofessionals**
- **Offered Extended Day and Planning Period Coverage opportunities for teachers**
- **Promoted the Retiree Job Share and HB385 options in Math, Science, and Special Education**
- **Supported schools with Instructional Specialist for up to the first 45 instructional days**
- **Allowed District and School Level Administrators to serve as instructors**
- **Provided learning through (APEX) and Buddy Teacher Program**

**At the Board Meeting on Monday, October 16th, the Board of Education approved the IGNITE (Inspiring Greatness and Normalizing Innovation in Teacher Education) DeKalb Teacher Residency Program to create an alternate route to certification programs designed to prepare high quality, committed, aspiring teachers who can work effectively with students in the District. During the preparation experience, residents will serve under the guidance of highly qualified DCSD mentor teachers, with whom they will collaborate and engage in coaching sessions. Teacher residents will be eligible for a full-time teaching position upon successful completion of the program and certification requirements. Also, each teacher resident must commit to serve as a full-time teacher of record in a Horizon**

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**School in the District for a minimum of five years upon successful completion of the program.**

18. Does the county still plan to put a middle and high school on the current Sequoyah MS site? If so, have you thought about the new development in the area and the impact on the enrollment, parking, and traffic?

**The plan for the new Sequoyah MS & new Sequoyah HS is for both schools to share the site of current Sequoyah MS campus. The District closely tracks new developments as part of enrollment forecasting and is very aware of the potential impacts of placing two secondary schools on the same site. The District is working closely with the city of Doraville to mediate and mitigate potential impacts to the surrounding community, including traffic, as well as incorporating as many site design elements as feasible to provide safe and efficient traffic flow and parking.**

19. Are Level 2 volunteers required to get fingerprinted and background checks? What if cost/travel/documentation status is a barrier?

**Level II volunteers are not finger printed or background checked. Volunteers who are undocumented cannot serve as level III volunteers.**

20. I'd like to request that Finance respond to the question we received regarding allocation and auditing of Title III and other funds for ELS.

**Title III (Federal) funding is allocated to the LEAs to provide supplemental services to improve English learners' English language proficiency and academic achievement.**

**Title III services include:**

- **Supplemental language instruction (LIEP)**
- **EL-focused PD for teachers and school leaders**
- **EL parent/family activities to enhance LIEP**
- **Equitable services for ELs in private schools**

**The Title III, Part A grant is audited through Cross-Functional Monitoring (CFM). ESEA/ESSA § 3113(b)(8) requires states to “monitor the progress of each eligible entity receiving the subgrant to ensure English Learners achieve English proficiency and further assist the LEAs if the strategies funded under this subgrant are not effective”. [GaDOE Title III, Part A Program Handbook](#)**

21. Can you clarify the plans for Tech North as it relates to Cross Keys modernization. We (Tech North) have not been included in the design discussions.

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**he CTAE wing at Cross Keys HS (where DHST North is located) is less than 20 years old and will receive some renovation treatments as part of the modernization & addition project. However, at this time there are no significant changes or modifications planned for the wing.**

22. The Dresden Elem. enrollment is down this year so there aren't enough Title 1 funds to provide for a parent liaison. Last year was the first year in many that the school has had one and it made a huge difference. While the school is a Promise school and is getting a lot of extra academic support, research tells us that parental involvement is crucial to a student's success. Providing a parent liaison sends the message that the school district is committed to helping them be involved. Is there any way funds can be found to make this a reality?

**Schools have discretion in how they use their Title I allotted funds. Last year, Dresden chose to hire one Academic Coach and one Parent Liaison. This school year they chose to hire two academic coaches with their funds. Parent engagement will continue to be a priority at the school; however, the management of the initiatives may look differently.**

School Year	School #	School Name	Title I Budget	PFE Budget	Title I Personnel
2023 - 2024	176	Dresden Elementary School	\$ 280,800.00	\$ 3,888.00	2 Academic Coaches
2022 - 2023	176	Dresden Elementary School	\$ 273,240.00	\$ 3,833.20	1 Academic Coach; 1 Parent Liaison
			\$ 7,560.00	\$ 54.80	

***Question A:** Last spring at a town hall with Ms. McGinnis at Cross Keys, several families expressed concerns about the way DCSD implements the ESOL program. Some concerns were the high bar for "graduating" from the program, being pulled out of classes and learning less/missing out daily classroom instruction, the lower success rates compared to Gwinnett students....have any changes been made or are there plans to re-evaluate how DCSD implements ESOL instruction;*

**Response A:**

- 1. Revamped the Intensive English Program to reduce the number of transitions for students and allow students to access courses such as CTAE pathways that were not offered at the International Center**
- 2. Revised the transcript evaluation process to align with current practices and offer flexibility**
- 3. Offering the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol training at Cross Keys**

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4. **Hiring an EL Specialist to assist and support teachers with planning, scheduling, deliver, and assessing quality instruction for English Learners**
5. **Assisting teachers with interpreting and utilizing data to inform and improve instruction**
6. **Differentiating instruction for English Learners**
7. **Modeling evidence-based practices**
8. **Engaged stakeholder focus groups for teachers, leaders, parents, and community partners to obtain input, develop strategies, and modify practices, procedures, and policies**

**Question B:** *When will DCSD release the school calendar for the next school year? Families need to have appropriate time to plan accordingly. In addition, has the county considered a more balanced schedule like many of the other school districts, including APS?*

**Response B:**

The proposed school calendars will be presented to the Board of Education at the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting for action. Yes, the metro area school calendars are reviewed.

Balanced school calendars incorporate more frequent breaks throughout the year. For instance, the students learn for 45 days followed by a 15-day fall break. The committee is considering extending the fall break and winter break in February.

**Question C:** *What is DCSD's plan to create a new ELA curriculum that supports the new GSE as well as the Georgia Early Literacy Act? Specifically, I'm interested in the knowledge building aspect of the science of reading for grades K-5. Will the curriculum use our Social Studies and Science standards as the knowledge students must learn?*

**Response C:**

1. **The expectations and guidance for the Science of Reading and the Georgia Early Literacy Act is designed and structured around an intentional focus for grades K-3 using decodable readers, phonics instruction, phonics-based scaffolds, and content from science and social studies.**
2. **The DCSD curriculum is currently being reviewed in preparation for the revision process to include the framework of structured literacy and a focus on the GSE domains addressing a diverse range of literary, social studies, and science topics that build on each other and make connections within and across grade levels to deepen students' understanding and vocabulary.**

The expectation is that students will be afforded the opportunity to practice comprehension skills with the foundation of content from science and social studies.

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**Question D:** *I have a child with a 504 plan for ADHD. I often get the feeling that teachers do not have any training in how to cope with students with ADHD. This student is bright and has a lot of academic potential but has trouble working in a group and staying on task. My question for you is, are teachers receiving any particular training on behavior modification techniques? If so, can someone share with parents what they are doing through a workshop of sorts. I know teachers are overworked as it is but we should all have the same goal- Success of all students. Anytime a student is sent out of the class for causing minor disruption he/she is missing valuable instruction time. Your thoughts please.*

23. Good afternoon, to whom it may concern, I would like to know what the steps to follow would be when our children are being bothered, they report it and they only say to avoid it and it gets to the point that our children react and they are the bad ones and when one as a parent realizes and the assistant principals tell you a different version and the problem is very advanced and they receive unfair punishments, our children begin to not trust anyone on the LSHS staff. And as a parent myself, I realize that there is discrimination and favoritism just for not speaking English... I decide to change schools, my children suffered from bullying in MS. And 1. It affected him a lot and he comes to this HS. And they treat her like this and it gets worse... now here at CSH things are going well, but I wish that no child or parent would go through this in schools and that there would be trained personnel to know how to treat students and parents, in certain problems... yes I went to the county school, they helped me a little at least everyone involved was punished and my daughter did not receive the extra punishment they wanted, I hope there is more sensitive and understanding staff who know how to deal with children who have gone through or are going through bullying problems.

***In 2010, the DeKalb County School District revised its policy and procedures to provide a comprehensive approach to student bullying, harassment, and hazing. This comprehensive approach includes the following components:***

***Stakeholder awareness***

***Districtwide process for consistency across schools (flowchart)***

***Training for all students, school administrators, teachers, staff, bus drivers, and student support personnel***

***Specific report form and process.***

***Consequences for violations that are aligned with state law***

***Local school follow-up and aftercare for all parties***

***District-level technical assistance and support are available***

***The policy, regulations, and process flowchart are contained in the DeKalb County School District Code of Student Conduct, which is also translated in the district's top ten languages. This information provides the flow of swift and timed actions from the point of reporting through resolution. In addition, this process indicates the steps to take if a parent feels there has been no response to their report. Parents and students are urged to first make their concerns***

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***known to the school principal. After that, they may share their concerns with the appropriate area superintendent.***

[Student Relations – Division of Equity and Student Empowerment \(dekalbschoolsga.org\)](https://dekalbschoolsga.org)

24. What metrics do we have for ESOL program?

DCSD adheres to the federal laws and state guidelines regarding the entry and exit of English Learners. [GaDOE Entry & Exit Procedures for ELs](#)

**Federal Law**

Under Section 3113(b)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), each State educational agency (SEA) is required to establish and implement standardized statewide procedures for English learners (ELs) to enter and exit from EL status and language instruction educational programs (LIEPs).

**State Guidance - Entry**

All public-school systems in Georgia are required to use a Home Language Survey (HLS) at the time of enrollment to identify the primary (home) language(s) of all Kindergarten – Grade 12 students enrolled in the public-school system. If the students are new to U.S. schools, i.e. Kindergarten students and newly arrived immigrants, then the original HLS serves as a trigger to determine which students should be administered the ELP screener to identify whether they are or are not English learners entitled to English language instructional programs.

- Registration staff must administer the HLS at the time of enrollment and not thereafter.
- Parents may not decline to complete a Home Language Survey. (The generic use of the term “parents” in this guidance document refers to any legal guardians and primary caregivers enrolling the student.)
- Per OCR and ESEA Title I, Part A requirements, the HLS must be in a language the parents can understand to the extent practicable.
- DCSD provides the HLS in the district's top 15 languages. Additionally, state translations of the HLS are available in several other languages at the GaDOE ESOL language Program Forms Bank.

All students enrolling in a U.S. school for the first time must answer the state-required three HLS questions in order. However, the EL records of all transferring students must be used to identify whether the in-state or out-of-state transfer student is an EL or not.

**State Guidance – Exit**

In Georgia, the standardized statewide EL Exit Procedures are as follows:

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1. LEAs must administer the annual ELP assessment to all English Learners (Kindergarten ACCESS, Grades 1-12 ACCESS for ELLs, & Alternate ACCESS, as applicable) per Title I, Part A requirement. In collaboration with Title III, Part A, Title I, Part A will be monitoring each LEA's EL ACCESS Participation Rate on an annual basis.
2. LEAs must follow the standardized statewide ACCESS for ELLs® Overall Composite Proficiency Level criteria as well as the Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing language domain criteria (when applicable) to identify EL students who have met the criteria to exit EL status.
  - a. Kindergarten EL Exit Flowchart: Must exit all Kindergarten EL students who score CPL > 5, and Listening, Speaking, Reading > 5, and Writing > 4.5 on the Kindergarten ACCESS.
  - b. Grades 1-12 EL Exit Flowchart:
    - i. Must exit all EL students who score Overall CPL > 5 on the ACCESS for ELLs
    - ii. LEAs may establish written procedures and EL Exit minimum criterion within the state-approved range ACCESS CPL 4.3-4.9.

[EL Language Programs - State Guidance Updated 28 July 2022.pdf \(gadoe.org\)](#)

**What is the process for parents to opt students out of EL/ESOL services?**

"According to the Georgia Department of Education's guidelines, there is no option for parents to opt out of EL status. However, parents have the right to waive ESOL services through the waiver process. Per GaDOE guidelines, students whose parents waive ESOL services must still take the ACCESS test annually until they meet the exit criteria. (Please refer to the attached standard operating procedure for parents to waive ESOL services.)

EL Language Programs – State Guidance document on pp. 31

“Under the ESSA, all Grade K-12 students identified as English learners must take the ACCESS for ELLs® English language proficiency (ELP) assessment annually, including students whose parents have waived ESOL services and including EL students with disabilities. ESEA/ESSA Section 1111(b)(2)(G); 34 C.F.R. §§ 200.5(a)(2), 200.6(h).”

[EL Language Programs - State Guidance Updated 28 July 2022.pdf \(gadoe.org\)](#)

**Are they available to parents? Average time in program?**

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"Are they available to parents? There are multiple searchable databases that are available to the public on the websites for GaDOE and the Governor's Office of Student Achievement. For example:

[Curriculum and Instruction \(gadoe.org\)](#)

[WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS \(gadoe.org\)](#)

[Report Card | The Governor's Office of Student Achievement \(georgia.gov\)](#)

<https://gosa.georgia.gov/dashboards-data-report-card/downloadable-data>

[GADOE CCRPI Reporting System](#)

According to research, it takes 5-10 years for a second language learner to develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), which is the type of English proficiency measured by ACCESS. In addition, children with no prior instruction or no support in their native language development may take up to 10 years to develop CALP (Collier and Thomas, 1995), (Hakuta, K., 2020). "

**How many students who start in Kindergarten are still EL by 6th grade? What percentage of students exit each year?**

"How many students who start in Kindergarten are still EL by 6th grade? This number would vary year-to-year depending on the cohort of kindergarteners during a specific year and depending on how many are still enrolled in the DCSD. There are also different variables, including that the exit criteria have changed, and the ACCESS revised its scoring criteria. Note: We must consult Student Information Systems to gather the data. What percentage of students exit each year? Since 2019, the GaDOE has given flexibility to LEAs to establish their own exit criteria (within the GaDOE-established range of 4.3 to 4.9 Overall Composite Proficiency Level) through EL Reclassification. Prior to 2022-2023, DCSD elected to maintain the GaDOE's standard clear exit criteria of 5.0 on the ACCESS test in order to maintain a high standard of rigor to ensure that exited students would be successful in the mainstream classroom. After the pandemic, we decided to continue the clear exit criteria in order to assess our students' loss of instruction. Then, in 2022-2023, DCSD implemented the EL Reclassification process for the first time based on data analysis showing that some students who score below 5.0 are capable of success. Students in grades 4-12 must attain the following scores to qualify for consideration for reclassification in DCSD (students in grades K-3 must meet the clear exit criteria):

- 4.5-4.9 Overall ACCESS Composite Proficiency Level (CPL)
- 4.3 and above Literacy Composite Score

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- 4.3 and above Comprehension Composite Score

DCSD's exit rate by year:

2022-2023 - 6.9%

2021-2022 - 3.6%

2020-2021 - 2.3%"

**How does this compare to other districts in the metro/in Georgia?**

Each LEA establishes its own EL Reclassification exit criteria within the range set by GaDOE (please see the attached document). Therefore, a comparison may be difficult. For example, in 2021-2022, DCSD used the clear exit criteria of 5.0, while some other metro districts had a reclassification threshold of 4.3. Furthermore, it is important to consider that DeKalb has a more diverse EL population than other metro districts. Currently, we have the largest population of students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) due to our large refugee and unaccompanied minor populations. We are the largest refugee resettlement county in the State of Georgia. All EL exit rates by LEA are available on the Governor's Office of Student Achievement.

**Can English proficiency on MAP or Milestone test be used instead of ACCESS to exit students from ESOL services?**

No, ACCESS is the Georgia Department of Education's adopted standards-based, criterion-referenced, English language proficiency test. WIDA ACCESS meets the federal requirements that mandate states evaluate EL students in grades K-12 on their progress in learning to speak English. As a member of the WIDA Consortium, all local education agencies (LEAs) in Georgia must administer the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS to measure English language proficiency progress annually. The MAP and GA Milestones tests do not measure English language proficiency. The MAP and GA Milestones only measure content skills in the areas of Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies.

**Would the district consider a student teacher program, to inspire DCSD students to become future teachers?**

" Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional information. Last year the Division of Human Resources launched our Higher to Hire Program. During college and career fairs, our recruiters are present sharing the good news about returning to DeKalb and the benefits of becoming a teacher. During our meetings we have had a number of students to express an interest in working in the District immediately after high school; and if eligible, we hire them!

Note that the state of Georgia has a statewide Future Educator of GA Program that, we also participate in. We hosted a ceremony last spring and recognized our High School Students who are going into education. We provided a promise to those identified and interested, of

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a position in 4 years if they return to DCSD with the necessary requirements to become a teacher. This is in collaboration with the Professional Learning Department. "