



Academic Report January 2024

Mrs. Michelle Dillard
Chief of Schools

December and January have been very impactful for Schools and Leadership Champions. We are excited to support the schools and provide them with the necessary tools to be successful leaders and improve scholar achievement. During December, we continued to refine the Six Systems with our Principal's communication committee, and the Area Superintendents got input from principals in their area. We planned our Schools and Leadership Retreat that took place on January 5, 2024. The exit slip with feedback was amazing. This retreat was in collaboration with Curriculum and Instruction with the entire division of Schools and Leadership.

We are proud to report we have completed two of our MIRACLES priorities. The schools all have been holding learning walks in the buildings. We are now working on the second semester of Learning Walks. The Area Superintendents, Executive Administrators and Culture and Climate Coordinators have now established the dates for the second semester learning walks.

Schools have identified the dates for the Collaborative Calibration Visits. There have been multiple professional learning opportunities for principals to learn about the CCVs and the process.

Leadership Development Department Update - December and January Achievements
As we reflect on the past months, we are pleased to share some significant accomplishments and milestones the Leadership Development Department achieved in December and January.

A Game Plan for the Revised CCRPI Toolbox Session:

Through our valuable partnership with the Georgia State University Principals Center, we successfully sent a group of leaders to the A Game Plan for the Revised CCRPI Toolbox Session. This initiative aims to enhance our leaders' capabilities and keep them abreast of the latest educational leadership developments on the CCRPI changes and how they impact their planning for their buildings or supporting building leaders.

Focus Group Sessions and Needs Assessment Planning:

The Focus group sessions were finalized, contributing significantly to the planning for the Needs Assessment for our Executive Leadership Series. These sessions played a crucial role



in shaping our strategic approach to leadership development within the department and the content that was included in the Needs Assessment.

New Assistant Principal Consortium:

We held an initial meeting with our New Assistant Principal facilitators, who will be instrumental in leading the New Assistant Principal Consortium. This initiative is designed to provide targeted support and learning around the Six Systems for our New Assistant Principals. We will also offer "Just In Time" instruction.

Continued Collaboration with Mike Rutherford:

Our ongoing collaboration with Mike Rutherford on coaching, observation, and feedback instructional practices for all district Assistant Principals remains a cornerstone of our commitment to professional growth and excellence.

New Principals Academy:

We successfully offered the New Principals Academy in partnership with The Principals Dynamic for our new principals with 0-3 years of experience. The focus was on cultivating leadership in others and galvanizing teams around the instructional foci for building success.

Problems of Practice Cohort Work:

Fourth-year principals had the opportunity to participate in Problems of Practice cohort work in Austin and Kingsley ES. This cohort approach allowed leaders to think through specific focus areas and collaborate with peers on their next steps.

Division Retreat Collaboration:

Our team collaborated with the Chief of Schools and Leadership to plan a division retreat. This collaborative effort with Curriculum and Instruction delved deeper into the six systems, fostering camaraderie among leaders and their job-alike partners.

Phase II Legal Symposium:

Excitingly, we finalized the Phase II Legal Symposium planning scheduled for January 30th. This symposium will offer valuable insights to district leaders, contributing to our continuous growth and development around legal issues and matters. This initiative has allowed Leadership Development and Employee Relations to collaborate to meet the legal learning needs of our district employees.

Our team's dedication and hard work have been instrumental in these achievements. We will continue working together collaboratively with other departments and divisions to elevate our leadership capabilities and contribute to the overall success.



Beth Kyle
Area 1 Elementary Schools

Area 1 is starting the second semester learning walks and preparing for CCVs. This data will help guide the work of the team for the next 30 to 45 days. Schools have been deeply engaged in reviewing their school-specific reality check data to strategically refine the supports and focus for various student groups. We also welcomed our Area 1 special education and math coordinators. We are excited for Mr. Robert Clayton to take over as the next principal of Vanderlyn Elementary on February 1.

Area 1 had five students honored as winners in the DeKalb Watershed Management (DWM) 2024 Art Calendar Contest. They will be recognized at the January 23 DeKalb County Board of Commissioners Meeting on January 23, 2024. A fifth-grade student at Dunwoody Elementary was the runner-up in the Dunwoody Police Holiday Card Contest.

Trenton Arnold
Area 2 Elementary Superintendent

Area 2 has scheduled all Learning Walks for second semester and the Principals are excited to welcome the Team back into their schools. The Area 2 team has also worked to develop an effective strategy to implement the CCVs with the CSIP monitoring process so that all progress monitoring is aligned and designed to support student learning and academic achievement. Area 2 will also welcome two new Assistant Principals at Briarlake ES and Indian Creek ES by the end of the month and then fill the new Assistant Principal vacancy at Evansdale ES in February.

Community collaboration with Area 2 schools also continues. Dunaire ES will be receiving a donation from Amazon of school and personal supplies for families while Briar Vista ES is working with a partner to develop a mural for the school.

Ateshia Lester
Area 3 Elementary Schools

Area 3 finished CSIP Reviews and Reality Checks with the remaining 9 elementary schools focusing on individual monitoring of CSIP implementation and the impact of those initiatives. Also, Area 3 Principals have completed 3 modules of structured literacy training. In January, Our ELA Content Leads kicked off second semester with professional learning via Microsoft Teams



to 180 staff members on the GMAS Blueprint Awareness and the Curriculum at a Glance. ELA Content Leads have been supporting building level teachers with utilizing My View/Wonders resources for instruction. Collaborative Planning support is being provided by content leads on unpacking standards, understanding instructional tasks, and identifying ELL and SWD strategies for implementation. Culture and Climate Coordinators were trained on PBIS and Bullying Awareness. They continue to monitor attendance and behavior incidents at all schools. Our Mental Health Coordinator provided professional learning to Princeton ES staff on Trauma Informed Care and will begin monitoring SEL lesson implementation in Area 3 Schools.

In Area 3, great things are happening. Princeton ES was H-Pride Certified. Barack Obama and Princeton scholars participated in the ML King parade hosted by the DeKalb NAACP. Principal Davis of Kelley Lake was a presenter at Principals' Academy for System 4 (Progress Monitoring) because of the school's growth in content mastery. HUGE SHOUT OUT to all scholars from Area 3 who came out this past weekend to McNair Middle School to compete in the district's Technology Fair. The time and effort our students put into their individual projects was AMAZING, and we should all be proud!

Jacqueline Taylor
Area Superintendent – Middle Area

During the months of December and January, the Middle Schools Area concluded ELA learning walks and delivered professional learning to all area middle schools on higher order questioning as a response to trends in learning walks. Also, we began to finalize and communicate plans for differentiated professional learning on learning targets and success criteria and MRESA for all academic coaches and math teachers. We continued our book study on School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results, Chapter 4: 21 Responsibilities of School Leaders.

After several school visits, it has been determined that several of our middle schools need support with Special Education in the following areas: preferred co-teaching models (several teams of teachers are utilizing one teach/one assist), instructional strategies, active participation during collaborative planning, implementing IEP accommodations and classroom management. Additionally, with the influx of Intensive English (IE) students, teacher need guidance on teaching Vocabulary Acquisition to I.E., students in the same class as students who need explicit content instruction. The observations and discussions with teachers revealed that not all teachers had the same district resources to support their Intensive English students. Not all teachers were using the DCSD IE curriculum in Canvas or Unit Plans/ assessments for middle grades ELA.



Additionally, the software resources (Lexia English, Ellevation, Lexia Core 5, Rosetta Stones) were not utilized by ESOL teachers routinely due to lack of knowledge of programs and awareness of availability. In addition to appropriate software usage, teacher support with planning multiple domain practice during instructional sessions was a visible need. Teachers also need support with explicit vocabulary instruction and higher-order questioning strategies to produce rigorous dialogue and increase academic language speaking opportunities.

Further, middle school math teachers need support in deconstructing the standards, creating appropriate learning targets, success criteria, and constructing higher order thinking questions. PL sessions on deconstructing the standard, learning targets, success criteria, and H.O.T.S. questions were conducted and are ongoing. Some teachers are utilizing resources like the DCSD curriculum, GaDOE Inspire, and HMH textbook while others still need the support to utilize these effectively. Math Coordinators are working with the Math Coaches and teachers to ensure the use of rigorous tasks that are aligned to the standards in their instruction consistently.

The focus of the Middle School Culture & Climate has been on supporting schools to ensure consistent monitoring of school attendance, discipline and progressive plan, and communications to stakeholders. As the efforts to increase restorative practices in schools continues, the C&C Coordinators began supporting schools in the MTSS process and encouraging collaboration between the school administrators and support personnel (MTSS Specialists, 504 Coordinators, and LTSE) to ensure targeted interventions are implemented and monitored with fidelity. In addition, the coordinators have fostered positive relationship-building and proactive approaches to meet the needs of school stakeholders, including providing suggestions and strategies for implementing restorative resolutions in lieu of consequences resulting in absences and the loss of instruction for students.

Norman Sauce
Area Superintendent – High Schools:

In December 2023 and January 2024, our High School Area Support Team welcomed four brand new members to our team in support of high schools: Exceptional Education Content Lead, Dr. Toniece Walker; Mental Health Coordinator, Dr. Christa Robinson; English Language Learners Content Lead, Mrs. Adriana Smith-Vargas; and Mathematics Content Lead, Mrs. Alesha Allen. Our new teammates have spent their first month learning the assets, needs, opportunities, and challenges for our high schools, particularly related to their areas of expertise. They have also



been abundantly present within our high schools learning and observing firsthand our conditions for learning within our high schools, as they implement plans for support.

Specifically, our Mental Health Coordinator has focused on initiating the implementation of wraparound services at identified schools, collaborating closely with the Division of Wraparound Services to connect students and school staff for needed mental health resources.

Collaborative teacher planning continues to be an area of renewed focus for the High School Area. One high school in particular, Redan High School, as our Area Support Team recently observed, is so effective with their systems that we could not immediately discern which were the general ed and which were the exceptional ed teachers.

Our Content Leads have joined weekly peer Focus Walks within our high schools, joining members of academic departments and school leaders in observance of classroom- observing for specific evidence related to student engagement, learning targets and success criteria alignment to the rigor of the standards, for feedback afterwards. Our ELA Content Leads have worked with schools in December and January to implemented specific steps to support schools to integrate the writing checklist into instruction- on the heels of a recent data conversation sessions (specific to GMAS writing) with Dr. Braaten. Our ELL Content Lead has conducted professional development meetings within teachers' professional learning communities - focusing on using data driven instruction for multilingual students, data talks/training using the ELlevation platform for ESOL teachers and collaborating with school leaders to conduct classroom observations- with a focus on multilingual instructional practices.

Our High School Area Support Team began individual school-level Reality Checks during January 2024. These sessions have yielded highly engaging data-driven dialogues with principals and their teams on the systems that are already underway, and needed adjustments, to meet the needs of each school to surpass our high expectations for learning and social development. We expect to conclude this round of Reality Checks by the first week of February, with Collaborative Collaboration Visits (CCVs) schedule to begin soon thereafter.

In the month of January, our High School Area Culture and Climate Coordinators were able to provide administrative support for Druid Hills High School to support the daily operations in the temporary medical absence of Principal Joyner. One of the biggest highlights for January is the work underway that our Culture and Climate Coordinators are assisting with, to plan and implement our DeKalb County Schools Voter Registration campaign, and development of uniformed master scheduling expectations.



Triscilla Weaver

Area Horizon Superintendent

The Horizon Area is proud to announce the following: Stone Mill has been selected by Scana Energy to spotlight their Homework Center on Star 94. This honor was bestowed based on their students' attendance and the program impact on parents and students. Additionally, Flat Shoals hosted their PAC, a monthly event, to target families with chronically absent students. Parents were empowered with interventions and community resources to remove attendance barriers. This event was led by the school's Social Worker, Cassandra Doss, Behavior Interventionist, Shamaya Eppinger and Communities in Schools.

Salem Middle School hosted a "Real Men Read" event on Friday, January 12th, in conjunction with the King Holiday. Over 80 men from the Salem Middle School Community, including DCSD Superintendent Dr. Devon Horton, Stonecrest Mayor Pro Tem George Turner, Former Stonecrest Councilman Rob Turner, Horizon Area Leadership, and representatives from several fraternities across the Metro Atlanta area came to share their love of reading and some essential life lessons with the Salem Scholars.

The good news continues as we are excited to announce, Towers High School Teacher-Librarian, Deneba Muhammad, has been selected as the DCSD Media Specialist of the Year for the 2023-2024 school year. Also, Towers is the Georgia High School Association E-Sport Champion for Madden NFL 2023-2024. Student, Nathan Scott, lead his team to the victory over Marietta High School and Kaylon Young, 5th grader at Panola Way ES was one of twelve 1st place winners in the art contest.

Michelle Jones

Area Specialty Superintendent

For the months of December and January, the Specialty Area has focused on Early Literacy in grades K-2. With a clear focus of reviewing use of high-quality resources (Wonders), looking for components of the Science of Reading, monitoring the types of reading and if students are writing about their reading, our Specialty Area Support Team has been able to give feedback, review data, and debrief learning walks with school leaders. During the Area Learning Opportunities, we discussed the Area Reality Check Data, provided highlights and trends in learning walks and gave



key information about Literacy, including specific guidance on Lexile levels. In January, schools received information about the GADOE Climate surveys. Additionally, we have focused on Leadership Teams and each school leader has completed the High Impact Rubric For Leadership Teams from the GADOE website. We have supported two Charter schools who have applied for renewal, DeKalb Preparatory Academy and International Community School.

In December, we celebrated the retirement of Principal Yul "Royce" Toombs after 32 years of service and attended several holiday events such as Narvie J. Harris TTS's Dinner Theatre and Fernbank Science Center's Holiday STEM Day. The BETA clubs at Wadsworth and Wynbrooke Elementary were winners at the convention. We also highlighted the schools in the Specialty Area with strong CCRPI Scores. Kittredge and Wadsworth continue to excel in every category of CCRPI: Content Mastery, Progress, Closing Gaps, and Readiness. Both of these schools were listed in the US News and World Report's Top 20 Best Elementary Schools. Several of our schools had gains, including double digit gains at DESA. In January, we celebrated Coralwood School being identified as a DCSD Spotlight School. Most recently, over 100 students at Wadsworth competed in the DCSD Technology Competition. The School Choice window is open and several schools are hosting tours and information sessions to support families who would like to apply.

Candace Alexander
Professional Learning

During the month of December, we organized professional learning activities to achieve Strategic Goal Area 3, which aimed at recruiting, developing, and retaining highly effective staff. To meet our recruitment goals, we collaborated with DeKalb's HR to assist with the Job Fair on December 7, 2023. In January, we continued to collaborate with DeKalb's Education Provide Programs (EPP) and the Governor's School Leadership Academy (GSLA). We continued the Para Academy class, which focused on brain development and brain-based classrooms. Additionally, we conducted the December GACE preparation, which included a leadership session. This was met with great enthusiasm, with 48 attendees showing up for the Saturday session. The January GACE session will include sessions for the Paraprofessional test. The monthly PL for Veteran Teacher Support and Coaching Specialists focused on Instructional Strategies in Reading for TSCs to help develop and retain new teachers. The topic for the January meeting will be Instructional Planning. Lastly, school visits are still being conducted by Veteran TSCs.

In December, various orientation, induction, and mentoring activities were conducted. One of these activities was the December NETWORK Monthly Induction Seminar, which had a theme of "Robots! Robots! Everywhere!" and focused on Differentiated Instruction. Ms. Andrea Wright,



the CTAE STEM Program Coordinator, organized the seminar. The participants were divided into groups based on their Content/Area PLC, and they worked as "engineers" to create robots using a combination of literature, crafting, and programming. Representatives from district STEM schools and STEM partner vendors led demonstration/exploration activities for each group.

Reaching a significant milestone at ***Transition Point 2 in the DCSD TAPP program***, **11 Candidate Support Team Meetings** were conducted, where candidate progress, strengths, and areas for improvement were addressed, along with charting a path to meet the DCSD TAPP 24 teaching competencies as required by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

Collaborative efforts with ***Cedar Grove Middle School*** resulted in a successful implementation of the ***CCRPI Content Mastery Tool***, accompanied by training on January 2, 2024. Additionally, the effective implementation of the tool at ***MLK High School*** on January 4, 2024, through collaboration with the science academic coach, exemplified a commitment to educational excellence. Ongoing discussions with the academic coach at ***Redan Middle School*** aim to tailor the tool for their science teachers, with an implementation date set for January 25, 2024. Our ***Professional Learning Request*** link continues to show progress, with 14 requests total, including 5 completed and 9 in progress, reflecting a dedication to continuous professional learning in the district.

James Jackson
Executive Director Athletics

Congratulations to Cedar Grove for winning the GHSA championship in football. This is the fourth state championship in the past six years.

Congratulations to Dr. Phil McCrary for winning his 700-career game. His team also won the William Burns Classic in Freeport Bahamas for his 700 wins.

On Saturday, December 9, 2023, DeKalb Athletics hosted a youth track and field camp. Over 350 elementary students participated in the camp.

Congratulations to Ms. Pam Johnson of Lithonia High School for being name the 4-AAAAA Athletic Director of the Year



Weight Rooms have been installed at 18 of the traditional Middle Schools. The only school without a new weight room installation is McNair Middle School. McNair is a new school with a weight room installation.

Dr. Markisha Mitchell
Chief of Continuous and Improvement Accountability

Although a short work month for some, December remained quite busy for the division. High level priorities included the preproposal conference for an RFP regarding the evaluation of computer applications purchased at schools. The intended outcome of the RFP is to select a vendor who is able to obtain accurate information on the applications being used in schools and determine their impact on student growth and achievement.

The first round of Reality Checks was completed for all schools. Reality checks occur in the fall and spring and provide school leadership and district administration an opportunity to collectively review academic, attendance and disciplinary data. Action plans are shared at the fall session for follow up at the spring session. Support from district level staff is offered. Fall survey data indicated 80-85 percent of participants found the session valuable. Spring Reality Checks will occur in late February to early March.

Interviews were conducted for the open Director of Assessment position. The hired candidate will lead the department that is responsible for the training, implementation, and monitoring of all district assessments.

Department leads (RDE, Federal Programs and Assessment) continue to monitor their individual department priorities. These priorities are aligned to the MIRACLES framework and are regularly monitored for impact.

Dr. Myisha Warren
Executive Director of Federal Programs

The Office of Federal Programs (OFP) includes the work of Title I, Part A, School Improvement 1003 (a), Title II, Part A, and ESSER.

Title I Coordinators are beginning to work with their assigned schools on Title I Carryover and budget amendments. Title I and School Improvement Coordinators meet continuously with schools to discuss CSIPs, budgets, requisitions, travel, and progress monitoring.

Accountability and Continuous Improvement (ACI) continues to work with AmeriCorps and participating schools on logistics, trainings, schedules, and resources.



Federal Programs, HR, Allotments, and the Planning department are collaborating to work on Comparability. Comparability is a requirement for receiving Title I funds and is one indication that a school district is using Title I funds to supplement and NOT supplant other funding sources. Meeting comparability is a federal, Title I Part A, requirement. The district must equitably allocate all state and local funds, in absence of federal funds. Title I schools must receive comparable services to non-Title I schools. This is a district responsibility.

All federal programs are preparing for Cross-Functional Monitoring that will take place on March 4, 2024, with the GaDOE.

As the acting Equitable Services Director (**VACANT Position**), I attended the monthly GaDOE Title II meetings. I continuously review all plans, budgets, and approve all requisitions. I also travel to schools to meet with private school and charter school officials. Divisions are also providing input into the mid-year progress monitoring of the Continuous LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP).

As the acting ESSER/CARES Director (**VACANT Position**), I attended the monthly GaDOE Meetings. The team met with various divisions to discuss budgets and final supports needed. I continuously review all requests to ensure that they are aligned to the intent of the grant, review all budgets, and approve all requisitions. The ESSER team continues to collaborate with Finance and HR on the guidelines and funding for the Ignite – Teacher Residency Program.

From 12/1/23 - 1/19/24, the team of four ACC supported 121 schools and over 160 Academic coaches. Their efforts included but were not limited to:

- Planning with Area Superintendents/Area Teams
 - Area Learning Walks
- Conducting Professional Learning for academic coaches:
 - December Academic Coaches Academy (12/8/23)
 - Topics:
 - The Science of Reading
 - Integrated Approach to Student Achievement
 - Technology Inventory
 - End of Semester Closeout
 - New Academic Coaches Academy (1/19/24)
 - Topics:
 - Using the GaDOE Writer's Checklist
 - Writer's Workshop
 - CCRPI Tools for Targets
 - Collaborative Learning Sessions
 - Differentiated topics based on Area needs
 - Topics included but were not limited to:
 - Individual AC Data presentations
 - Continued work with The Georgia Early Literacy Act HB 538 (Early Literacy and Phonics)



- MAP Data
- Equity in the Classroom: Essays From 10 Educational Leaders -- Book Study (continued)
- CCRPI Targets and High Impact students
- Phase 1 Technology Refresh (1/19/24)
 - Academic Coaches began exchanging their older laptops for newer models
- Continued support for coaches with technical assistance (face-to-face or virtual support) which included but was not limited to coaching conversations centered around the expectations for the 23-24 school year: (Instructional Coaching Tool, Coaching Plans of Support, Tiered System of Support, collaborative planning, observations, and Tier I instructional support plans)
- Conducting weekly ACC Team calibration meetings
- Collecting CSIP Improvement Strategy data from the months of November 2023 and December 2023 (data were submitted by coaches on 12/5/23 and 1/5/24)
- Attending Short-Term Action Plan (STAP) Meetings
- Attending State/District Continuous Improvement Team (CIT) Meetings
 - Annual reviews for Tier 4 schools

Ms. Shaun Thompson
Director of Title I, Part A

Second semester is off to a good start. The Title I Coordinators are working with schools to complete amendments and carryover budgets due on Friday, February 9, 2024. One on one meetings with Coordinators will be scheduled for the week of February 12, 2024 to ensure that the schools are on track with meeting spending deadlines.

The Parent Center Facilitators have submitted a proposal to present at the National Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL). The topic is Curriculum & Cuisine. This is based on the successful program we had in November 2023. A response is expected on Friday, January 26, 2024. We are excited for the potential opportunity.

All Title I schools will receive the FY25 preliminary allocation during the scheduled allotment meetings in February 2024. We are anticipating adding new Title I schools and additional schools becoming CEP.

Dr. Sherry Johnson
Director of School Improvement

Increasing literacy skills continues to be a district-wide focus for continuous improvement. The Office of School Improvement is supporting Horizon School CSIP reading and literacy goals with the Read, Encode, Annotate, and Ponder (REAP) strategy that is geared towards helping student readers proficiently comprehend text.

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and Metro Regional Educational Service Agency (MRESA) have shifted their support structure to serve Tier IV Schools and CSI Elementary Schools only. To ensure schools have uninterrupted support with improvement processes, School Improvement is collaborating with school leaders, the Horizon Team, GaDOE, and MRESA to develop sustainability plans and short-term action plans for exited schools and all high schools.

Elementary and Middle Horizon Schools leaders are preparing their AmeriCorps schedules and learning spaces for the inception of AmeriCorps tutoring. The AmeriCorps Team is responsible for hiring tutors, who are reporting to schools during the week of January 22nd for onboarding and training.

Dr. Rebecca Braaten
Director of Research, Data and Evaluation

The winter research approval window closed during the month of December. All research proposals were reviewed by at least two members of the Research Review Board (RRB) which includes Research, Data, and Evaluation (RDE) staff. This review cycle included sixteen (16) applications; ten (10) doctorate proposals, three (3) external agency proposals, and three (3) local proposals.

Georgia Policy Labs requested assistance with the selection of their next Senior Director. Dr. Braaten met all three candidates and provided feedback to the selection committee.

The department processed twelve (12) electronic online document requests during the months of December and January. Of those twelve (12), six (6) were online registration/application forms, three (3) were event/training feedback surveys, and three (3) were stakeholder surveys. The electronic online documents were created for the following divisions/departments:

- Assessment Administration
- Athletics
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Federal Programs
- Grants and Partnerships
- Leadership Development
- Professional Development
- Student Health Services

The annual GA Student Health Survey 2.0 and the School Climate Surveys for Parents and Personnel are statewide survey instruments created by the Georgia Department of Education. The purpose is to help with identifying safety, climate, and health issues. RDE has created a dashboard to monitor each school's participation. The dashboard is updated weekly and shared with Area Superintendents to make



sure each school reaches the participation threshold for each stakeholder group before the survey window closes on Friday, March 1, 2024.

The department completed the following updates to online data platforms:

- Profiles in the eduCLIMBER platform have been created for all Area Superintendents, Executive Administrators, and Area Coordinators. Members of these groups have been added to the current 2023-2024 visualizations in the Achievement Dashboard.
- New demographics and MAP visualizations have been added to the Achievement Dashboard in the eduCLIMBER platform. These visualizations are now accessible to area staff, building administrators, MTSS Specialists, and Academic Coaches.
- Thirty (30) additional student profiles and five (5) employee profiles have been merged to ensure there is only one profile in the eduCLIMBER platform.

The new School Profiles are complete for Areas 1, 2, 3, and middle. The profiles contain the following information and longitudinal data: school accomplishments, improvement priorities, CCRPI, Georgia Milestones, attendance, discipline, and demographics. Demographic data and high school Georgia Milestones data are being added to the remaining areas. RDE anticipates the release of the School Profiles in February.

The department has completed twenty (20) data and dashboard projects that support the data needs of internal and external stakeholders. Numerous projects were focused on assessments, such as the Georgia Milestones Spring 2023 End-of-Course and End-of-Grade exams, NWEA Fall 2023 MAP, and DCSD Benchmark 1 and Benchmark 2. Additionally, data was supplied to all schools throughout the county to support CCRPI improvement, including the identification of high-impact students and how many proficiency points are needed to reach 2024 targets. Student-level 2023 English Language Arts data was sent to multiple schools to assist with triangulating writing data by genre.

During December and January, RDE provided seventy-one (71) supplemental services and support to divisions, departments, and schools. Of the seventy-one (71), thirteen (13) were training, four (4) were technical support, one (1) was application support, and fifty-three (53) were categorized as other miscellaneous support. The support was provided for six (6) divisions, fourteen (14) departments/areas, and nineteen (19) schools. The following notable supplemental services and support occurred in December and up through January 23, 2024:

- Twenty-six (26) Reality Check presentations (Areas and remaining Horizon schools)
- Georgia Milestones writing data- Area High principals
- Georgia Milestones writing data- Area 1 principals
- Parents and Pens presentation- Wadsworth Magnet School
- Georgia Milestones writing data- Chesnut and Sagamore Hills Elementary K-5 core teachers
- 2024 CCRPI Content Mastery achievement rate targets and related calculators- Area 3 principals
- CSI and ATSI criteria, 2024 achievement rate targets, and GaDOE portal data- Area Horizon principals



- Charter School Annual data meetings- International Community School, Leadership Preparatory, and GLOBE Academy

Vacant

Director of Assessment Administration

ACT/SAT: The ACT/SAT School Day Committee met on Dec. 6, 2023. The committee discussed the benefits of both the ACT and SAT, graduation requirements, possibility of administering both assessments and test prep opportunities for students scheduled to test. A review of the presentation and flyer was completed. Modifications to the presentation will be made, pending a meeting with the superintendent. Committee members signed up to facilitate the Community Input meetings and/or the focus group meetings. The meetings will be held Tuesday, February 20, 2024, through Tuesday, March 26, 2024. A meeting with the Chiefs for Change is scheduled for February 5, 2024.

ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Assessment: The ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessment administration began on January 10, 2024. The DSCD has 17,874 EL students who are scheduled to take the ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessment. Training for all school test coordinators was held on November 29, 2023 with a make-up training held on December 14, 2023 and January 8, 2024 for new school test coordinators. An additional WIDA DRC online platform training for new school test coordinators was held on December 15, 2023. follow-up training held on December 15, 2023. An open lab ACCESS session was held virtually for any school test coordinator scheduled to administer the ACCESS assessment to more than 500 students. STCs were able to share their testing plans, testing tips and suggestions with other STCs. More than 21 STCs attended the session. As of January 23, 2024, only one irregularity has been reported.

2023 Winter Georgia Milestone EOC: The 2023 Winter Georgia Milestone EOC was administered December 5 – 13, 2023 to all high school students enrolled in EOC courses for the first semester. All high schools participated in the Winter 2023 EOC with over 3000 high school students taking the assessment. School test coordinators were trained November 15, 2023 with follow-up trainings held on Monday, November 27, 2023 and December 1, 2023. A total of 24 irregularities was reported and five (5) were invalidated. Weekly email reminders were sent to high school test coordinators to ensure all testing policies and procedures were followed regarding test security, test administration, and testing accommodations.

Spring 2024 EOC Mid-Month: The Spring EOC Mid-Months window is open for January. School test coordinators participated in the Spring EOC Mid-Month Pre-Assessment Webinar was made available to STCs from January 8-10, 2024. The first Spring EOC Mid-Month was held January 17, 2024 – 23, 2024. The schedule was modified due to the school closure on January 16, 2024. Parent letters were developed and translated for STCs to send to parents regarding the EOC Mid-Months, EOC Test-Out opportunities, and EOC Retest Eligibility. There were 17 high schools that participated in the January



EOC Mid-Month with 526 students scheduled to test. Only one irregularity was reported and no invalidations.

Spring 2024 EOC/EOG Main Administration: Enrollment counts were inputted on January 19, 2024 as mandated by GaDOE. All elementary, middle, and high schools submitted their needs for braille, large print and paper documents based on a student's IEP, IAP/504, and/or EL-TPC plan.

NAEP: School test coordinators of selected schools administering the NAEP Assessment in January/February 2024 are in weekly communication with the GaDOE assessment specialist. Two meetings have been held with the Assessment Administration department, Dr. Mitchell, the DCSD IT department, Chief Monika Davis, and the GaDOE NAEP assessment specialist to discuss technology requirements for the NAEP administration. The team decided that the NAEP field test administrators would bring Chromebooks and Surface Pros laptops and routers for students to access the NAEP assessment. Dr. Rhone and the IT department has scheduled weekly meetings leading up to the NAEP administrations in January and February.

CogAT: Final score reports went home to parent on January 17th. Principal's memo was created and sent out on January 1st detailing all steps to be followed.

Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) - A meeting was held with special education team to discuss upcoming training opportunities for teacher and administrators. Developing a webinar for teachers. Creating a virtual Q&A session for teachers on March 8, 2024. Creating the GaDOE Pre-Administration Workshop to prepare for the March 5, 2024 district-wide presentation and training. The GAA 1% Application was completed, submitted, and approved by the superintendent.

Assessment Administration Monthly Newsletter: January assessment newsletter was created and disseminated on January 5, 2024. February assessment newsletter will be finalized for distribution by Friday, January 26, 2024.

MAP: The NWEA MAP Winter Assessment window opened on December 4th and will remain open until February 9th. Off-grade band testing was completed from January 17-23, 2024. The final segment of the three-part NWEA Book Study, Goalsetting-Empowering Student Growth, was completed on Monday, December 4, 2023. Part II of the NWEA training Responsive Learning Cycles: Building Learning Paths with Students began on January 17-18 and 23-25, 2024 with Academic Coaches and MTSS Specialists using data from Fall data.

Renaissance/Illuminate- Benchmark Assessments opened December 4-15, 2023 for Benchmark 2 for Traditional Elementary, Middle, and High Schools; and December 4-15, 2023 for Benchmark 4 for Block High Schools (Optional due to End of Course). This window was extended to January 8, 2024 due to stability issues with Renaissance Learning. All constructed responses had to be completed by January 12,



2024. Training for K-2 teachers took place on December 5, 2023, using a virtual platform to teach them how to build Skills Assessments using Data and Assessment in Illuminate Education (DnA).

eduCLIMBER: eduCLIMBER training for Area superintendents, executive administrators, and area coordinators took place on January 17, 2024. This onsite training at Stone Mountain High School introduced how to access, navigate, and effectively use the platform. The next round of eduCLIMBER professional learning sessions have been scheduled January and February 2024 for principals, assistant principals, academic coaches, PBIS coaches, behavior specialists, school psychologists, counselors, and LTSEs.

School Visits/New School Test Coordinator Trainings: Assessment coordinators have scheduled second semester school visits of new test coordinators and test coordinators who need additional support. Horizon school visits will begin January 31, 2024 through March 2024. The End-of-Semester training and celebration, called the Bye-Week, was held January 12, 2024, for all new school test coordinators and their mentors. The two-hour session provided an overview of the upcoming Spring assessments, and STCs were given the opportunity to share what went well last semester and areas where they needed growth. A total of 42 school test coordinators attended the session. The next three-monthly trainings will be held virtually.

Ms. Stacy E. Stepney
Chief Academic Officer

MIRACLES Priorities

Horizon Schools – Literacy, Mathematics, and Special Education Support

Per the District's Plan of Support (DPOS), the K-12 English Language Arts Coordinators, K-12 Mathematics Coordinators, EIP Coordinators, and content PLFs provided professional learning at Fairington Elementary School, Flat Shoals Elementary School, McNair Discovery Learning Academy, Panola Way Elementary School, and Stone Mountain Elementary School. The professional learning for the mathematics teachers focused on the following instructional improvement strategies: concrete-representational-abstract (CRA) approach for teaching math concepts, questioning, and feedback. The professional learning for the English Language Arts teachers emphasized the POW (pick an idea, organize notes, and write and say more) writing strategy.



The Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS) conducted 15 individual coaching sessions for special education teachers participating in the New Teacher Induction Program. Also, the Special Education Department provided support to Student Success “SSIP” high schools with the implementation and monitoring of ASCEND Math at McNair High School, Martin L. King, Jr. High School, Stephenson High School, Clarkston High School, Towers High School, Chamblee High School, Stone Mountain High School, and Columbia High School.

Reality Checks

Reality Checks continued in December. The schools shared strategies and next steps in response to attendance, discipline, gifted, and MAP (reading and math) data. The gifted and talented eligibility process was identified as an area requiring district-level support. As a result, the Department of Pre-K-12 Teaching and Learning provided support during the

Principals’ Learning Opportunity on Thursday, January 18, 2024. Principals and district-level leaders engaged in a “perspective walk” activity to consider the perspectives of others as they reflected and discussed statements describing the needs of gifted and talented students and the attributes of effective teachers of gifted students. Also, information was shared about the gifted eligibility process, gifted endorsement program, gifted service models, and professional learning support available for gifted liaisons and gifted endorsed teachers.

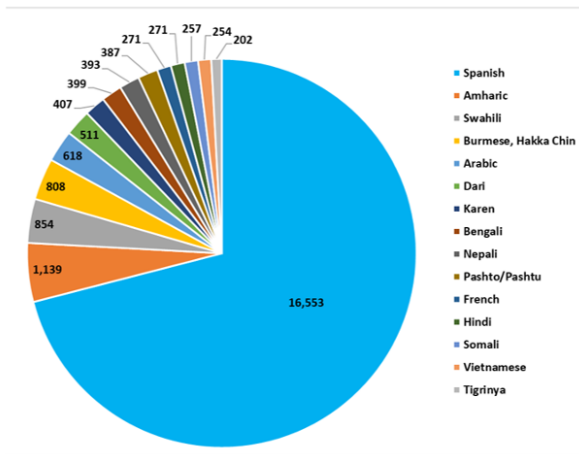
Superintendent’s Bilingual Parent Advisory Council – January 18, 2024

The English Learners Department reviewed the responses from the following Thought Exchange: *“Many parents and students struggle with English, which hinders their ability to access resources, communicate with schools, and support their children’s education.”* The thoughts were grouped by similarities and organized into the following themes: preparing students for post-graduation success, targeted teaching strategies, multilingual staff for schools, effective communication strategies, alternative pathways instead of traditional schooling, and need for more interpreters. In response to the Thought Exchange, the presentation highlighted how the DeKalb County School District enhances the academic success for English Learners through CTAE and advisement, serves our multilingual families, and supports schools with instructional resources and translation and interpretation services.

Diversity of the DeKalb County School District



Top 15 Non-English Languages in the DeKalb County School District



Summer Learning Programs



On December 6, 2023, Food Nutrition, Transportation, and Research, Data & Evaluations shared procedures and processes to assist all summer program directors with planning. Presentations included information about the summer meal program, bus routing procedures, summer program applications for families to register students, and applications for interested employees to apply for summer positions.

On January 11, 2024, Business Services provided information about Trip Tracker, invoicing, field trips, and daily troubleshooting. Additional topics of discussion included the increased rate of pay, sites, and logistics. Also, summer program directors participated in small group technical support sessions to address questions.

Dr. Sean R. Tartt
Deputy Chief Academic Officer

Executive Leadership Retreat

On January 5th, the Division of Curriculum and Instruction engaged in a day of professional learning orchestrated by Champion Dillard. Staff from Curriculum and Instruction and School Leadership participated in a day of learning centered around supporting schools. Curriculum and Instruction developed interactive sessions with leaders focused on the Alignment of the Instructional Coordinators in Curriculum and Instruction and School Leadership, EL/Exceptional

Education Compliance, Literacy & Numeracy, Early Literacy and Knowledge Building, Supporting EL/Exceptional Education Learners, MTSS, and Academic Skills Centers.

Academic Skills Centers

Academic Skills Center sites are preparing to launch and schedule ribbon cutting ceremonies with Superintendent Dr. Horton and the Board of Education. With the support of Operations and Instructional Technology, all ASC rooms are ready for staff and students. As of January 2024, the furniture and technology have been received and installed.

Supports for Students

The Division of Curriculum and Instruction has explored expanding **Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)**, which is a program that assists scholars with developing academic habits needed for success as they matriculate through school and prepare for the collegiate experience. AVID teaches scholars organization, self-advocacy, study skills, communication, and structured notetaking amongst other skills.

Coming in August of 2024 is the **Student Success Skills Backpack (SSSB)** via the newly designed Portrait of a Graduate. The SSSB is a set of attributes, skills, and qualities DeKalb believes every student should possess when they walk across the stage at graduation to be ready for college and life.

DCSD is currently exploring options to expand and enhance the offerings for students who are over aged, under accredited, and/or need credit recovery. On January 19th, a district team inclusive of Superintendent Dr. Horton, Vice Chair Pierce, Curriculum and Instruction, School Leadership, and school-based staff visited the Acceleration Academy in Gwinnett.

Dr. Lenisera Barnes-Bodison



Executive Director (Curriculum and Instruction)

Interdisciplinary Math Challenges

On January 11th, 18th, and 25th, teachers in Grades Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2 at our DCSD Traditional Theme schools received mathematics training on the implementation of interdisciplinary math challenges, curriculum resources, instructional frameworks, and essential instructional guidance to support the key components of the Traditional Theme School. The traditional theme school is designed to offer students a comprehensive, interdisciplinary educational program in a highly structured setting. As a result of the training, students in grades K-2 will be able to actively participate in challenging learning experiences that are rooted in career exploration and STEM. Teachers in grades 3-5 will begin receiving training in February 2024.

Mrs. Lummie Baker

Director, Educational Media and Instructional Materials

Educational Media Professional Learning

On Tuesday, January 9, 2024, Educational Media held a mid-year professional learning meeting with teacher-librarians and library media assistants. During the session, they learned about promoting the library's learning environment through program planning and collaboration, elevating information and technology literacy skills for students, and supporting the learning

goals of the school community through strategic and innovative practices utilizing the media center's space, resources, and services.

Educational Media Mid-Year Presentations

- Interweaving Standards in School Library Media Programs
- Effective School Library Programming Can Transform Students' Learning and the School's Learning Culture
- The Power of Passive Programming
- DeKalb Professional Library Resources and Services

Dr. Evelyn Hall

Director, English Learners Department

ACCESS Window

The testing window for the WIDA ACCESS 2.0 for ELs opened on January 10th and will close on March 1st, 2024. All active English learners must be assessed to determine their growth and English language proficiency level. Any student enrolling in the school district during the ACCESS testing window and identified as an EL must be administered the ACCESS assessment.

Kindergarten ACCESS Training

The EL Department provided Kindergarten ACCESS for ELs 2.0 training for elementary school teachers who administered the Kindergarten ACCESS assessment on January 9th and January 11th.



LAS Links

As part of the Intensive English (IE) program for newcomers, students in grades 4-12 participate in the LAS Links progress monitoring assessment which measures students' growth in English language proficiency. The second LAS Links window was December 4 - December 15. Intensive English students who score at level 2 or above (Overall Proficiency Level) on the LAS Links assessment meet the requirements to transition to the general ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) classes.

Interpretation/Translation

The English Learners Department is pleased to announce the hiring of three new interpreters: one Pashto/Dari interpreter and two Spanish interpreters.

Bilingual Parent Advisory Meeting

The EL Department participated in the Superintendent's Bilingual Parent Advisory council and presented on how DCSD enhances academic success for English Learners (ELs), serves multilingual families, and supports schools with EL instruction.

Registration

The English Learner and PHLOTE (Primary Home Language Other Than English) populations continue to grow in the DeKalb County School District.

Mrs. Doryiane Gunter
Director, CTAE

Professional Learning

Three engineering and computer science teachers (Tucker HS, Redan HS, and Arabia Mountain HS) have been accepted into the **ExCite** program to receive professional development on computer science integration in technology and engineering. **ExCite** is an NSF-funded partnership led by the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association (ITEEA) in conjunction with Hofstra and North Carolina State universities to develop a professional development and implementation support program to help prepare the nation's high school Technology and Engineering teachers to teach Computer Science.

Career Technical Student Organization (CTSO) Competition

SkillsUSA

The SkillsUSA Region Champion was held January 18, 2024, at the Cobb Innovation and Technology Academy. DCSD had 78 competitors out of over 400 students from various metro Atlanta districts. We had two 1st place winners, two 2nd place winners, and two 3rd place winners. These students will advance and compete in the SkillsUSA State Leadership and Skills Conference in February.

Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)

On January 18th over 350 students participated in the Region 10 Georgia FBLA Competition at Salem High School. DeKalb schools had great success at the event.



- 1st Place Overall – Chamblee HS
- 2nd Place Overall – Arabia Mountain HS
- 3rd Place Overall – Cedar Grove HS

Their overall placement indicates that they had more students' place in individual events than any other school. We are very proud of all our students and their advisors for their dedication and hard work. These schools will move forward to the State Leadership competition in March.

Battle of the Brigade - Culinary Arts

The Shular Institute has teamed up with the DeKalb County School District Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) culinary programs to organize the Battle of the Brigades competition. The competition was created to promote the culinary skills, creativity, and teamwork of eight DeKalb County CTAE culinary programs. The Shular Institute, a culinary school located in Tucker, GA, aims to inspire and train young culinary talents at the high school level. The first round of competition is complete, and four teams have been selected to move on to the second round. Tucker HS, Redan HS, Clarkston HS, and Miller Grove HS will participate in the ultimate restaurant takeover challenge with two schools competing in the same kitchen at the same time. This event will take place in late February 2024.

Engineering/STE(A)M

Freedom MS and Dekalb Elementary School of the Arts (DESA) received an Innovation Award at the First Lego League (FLL) region championships. DESA will advance to the State FLL Championship. They are one of the top 48 teams out of 438 to move on to the next level.

Dr. Kimberlynn Weston

Director, Pre-K-12 Teaching and Learning

Honor Band

Middle and high school scholars participated in Honor Band concerts held on January 13, 2024, at Martin Luther King High School. More than 400 musicians participated in a day of instruction by three of Georgia's renowned symphonic band directors.

Gifted and Talented Support

On January 18, 2024, the Gifted and Talented Coordinators led a training on gifted eligibility and supports for all principals. Leaders reviewed the gifted identification process and discussed the role of the gifted liaison in each school. Other topics of discussion included Renzulli testing procedures, gifted endorsement program opportunities for teachers, and available professional learning for local schools.

National History Day

Scholars in grades 6-12 participated in the National History Day competition on January 25, 2024. Scholars explored historical themes and showcased their understanding of the past in a creative and engaging manner, fostering critical thinking and communication skills.



Mrs. Stephanie Brown-Bryant
Director, Pre-K-12 Teaching and Learning

Spelling Bee

The annual DCSD Spelling Bee was held on January 23, 2024. Twenty-one scholars showcased their skills in the spelling competition. The final word was **widdershins**.

Leadership Development Partnership

In partnership with Leadership Development, members of the Teaching and Learning Department are planning professional learning sessions for new principals with 0-3 years of experience. Topics of discussion include how to access and navigate the curriculum on Canvas and to learn more about how to monitor the gifted program at the local school level. Upcoming opportunities will be provided to engage new principals in programming provided through World Languages, Visual & Performing Arts, Health & PE, Music, International Baccalaureate, and Advanced Placement. Super Saturday, held on January 27, 2024, supported implementation of the new mathematics curriculum through focused learning sessions. Teachers participated in hands-on learning as they navigate the new mathematics curriculum.

Mrs. Kiana King
Director, Special Education

FY 24: LEA Determination

The Department of Special Education is excited to announce the FY 24 Local Education Agency (LEA) Determination of “**Meets Requirements**” for the identified Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) compliance indicators. Each year, based upon an extensive review of data, each LEA is evaluated on its performance to meet requirements for purposes of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) implementation related specifically to supporting students with disabilities.

The Department of Special Education continues to work diligently to ensure that improving academic outcomes and compliance requirements for students with disabilities in the DCSD are the priority as we support Goal Area 1-Student Success with Equity and Access.

Parent Mentor Collaboration

Our Special Education Parent Mentor, Ms. Lisa Lake, collaborated with Peace Baptist Church to present a parent workshop to approximately 30 parents who currently have DCSD students enrolled in their community afterschool program, SYNC Community Learning Center. This program provides free afterschool care, homework support, tutorial, parent sessions, and STEAM activities for 3rd to 12th grade students who attend the following DCSD schools in DeKalb County: DeKalb Preparatory Academy, Rowland Elementary, Peachcrest Elementary, Bethune Middle School and Towers High school.

Ms. Lake is actively working on a partnership with Peace Baptist Church to develop an ongoing series of parent workshops designed to educate new and existing parents of students with disabilities whose students participate in their afterschool program. The presentation focused on the topic, " Establishing



Effective Communication with Your School.” Parents also engaged in conversations about the types of supports, resources, programs, and services DCSD provides families of students with disabilities.

Ms. Terri Jenkins
Director, GLRS

In January, the Metro East Georgia Learning Systems began a train the trainer series for Specially Designed Instruction. Participants gained a deep understanding of SDI and received ideas and materials promoting redelivery. We will begin a second five-day cohort in February.

Through the GA TPRP New Teacher Induction Program, Metro East GLRS has provided multiple training sessions, virtual reality sessions, and 52 coaching visits to our 17 participants. Hats off to Bethune Middle School. Bethune Middle school has **seven** of its new special education teachers deeply involved in the program and on track to be program completers in April.

Ms. Lila Brown
Director, GNETS

Scholars from Eagle Woods Academy are attending curriculum-based instruction (CBI) field trips bi-weekly through April 2024. Students can use functional and academic skills to practice in

real-world settings. The field trips align with state standards in English Language Arts and mathematics and the monthly learning objectives for each student.

Students visited the Dollar Tree in January. The students found items from a shopping list with visuals such as coupons, pictures, and words. They practiced paying using the next dollar up method and how to wait patiently in line. These learning objectives are also practiced in the classroom setting prior to students attending the CBI trips and after for review and feedback for students.

Mrs. Watina April
Section 504/Hospital Homebound (HHB) Coordinator III

The 504 Office is working diligently on district-wide compliance audits. During the compliance audits, every school's Section 504 implementation practices are reviewed for alignment with DCSD's procedures. Audit results are reported to the local 504 Chairs and principals. This data is used to identify gaps and drive content for professional development sessions.

Mrs. Janetta Greenwood
Director, Fernbank Science Center

Single Visits and Outreach

Fernbank Science Center continues to provide planetarium visits, single visits, and outreach in science across the district. In December, the Science Center served 6,619 DCSD students in grades PreK-12. For



December, 331 DCSD students participated in single visit programming, 1,447 DCSD students participated in outreach programming, and 4,841 DCSD students participated in planetarium visits. In January, the Science Center served 6,280 DCSD students in grades PreK-12. For January, 536 DCSD students participated in single visit programming, 3,384 DCSD students participated in outreach programming, and 2,360 DCSD students participated in planetarium visits.

On January 3, 2024, Fernbank Science Center welcomed the STT Spring Class of 2024 with approximately 100 ninth graders from across the district. Students participating in STT for the spring will engage in unique learning experiences that expose them to high levels of rigor and project-based learning in science.

Professional Learning Opportunities

On December 8, 2023, Fernbank Science Center hosted the School Master Gardner professional development for identified schools. The professional development was designed to support teachers in using outdoor experiential learning to increase learning outcomes in science. Teachers from across the district, representing grades K-8, engaged in learning about Monarchs Across Georgia. All participants received materials, books, and other resources to support them in the implementation of the training at their respective schools.

Special Events at Fernbank Science Center

Fernbank Science Center hosted a STEM Holiday Workshop on December 16, 2023. Teachers, students, and parents had the opportunity to participate in a holiday themed makerspace where they engaged in the practices of engineering gingerbread houses and exploring the science of toys.

Fernbank Science Center participated in the districtwide event, Techpalooza, on Saturday, January 20, 2024. Program information for Scientific Tools and Techniques (STT) and Advanced Studies was shared with parents and students to support them as they prepare for the application process for fall 2024. Students are encouraged to apply for both programs for the upcoming academic school year. The application window opened February 1, 2024 and closes on March 1, 2024.

Ms. Kanessa Fain and Dr. Scott McManus MTSS Coordinator I/II

The MTSS team is currently collaborating with Area Superintendents on the revision of the MTSS Fidelity Implementation Self-Assessment Tool. The self-assessment tool will be completed every 8 weeks to monitor the implementation of the MTSS process. Local schools will identify their strengths and areas of opportunity to improve the implementation of MTSS.

The MTSS coordinators:

- provided professional learning for Assistant Principals;
- continued the PBIS/MTSS collaboration to align with GADOE's expectations;



- participated in the Leadership Retreat and provided professional learning for the Culture and Climate Coordinators; and
- represented DeKalb at the SSTAGE Promising Practices Conference.

Dr. Zack Phillips
Director, Early Learning Center

ScienceTots

Pre-K students at the Early Learning Center will continue the successful ScienceTots program via a partnership with the Fernbank Science Center. Specifics for the second semester field trips were finalized this month and will start in February.

Early Learning Center Expansion Classes

- The furniture and instructional resources were delivered to the P3 expansion sites.
- The P3 expansion sites are finalizing their staff recommendations for each class.
- The registration process began the first week of January. Administrators are partnering with nearby schools to recruit more eligible 3-year-olds.

New Instructional Resource

Students began utilizing Active Floor as an additional instructional extension activity that supports the content areas of literacy, mathematics, STEAM, and social studies will be supported via the Active Floor platform.

Professional Learning

The staff at the Early Learning Center continued facilitating their book study on the book entitled the *Educator's Bandwidth*.

Special Event

The administration team and staff at the Early Learning Center hosted the Deputy Superintendent and members of the Executive Leadership Team from the Clarke County School District on Wednesday, January 10th. Clarke County School District is planning to open an Early Learning Center in the future and view the DCSD's Early Learning Center as a model site within the State of Georgia.

Ms. Keatra Wright
Director, FLEX Academy

FLEX Academy continues to support DCSD's strategic goal of improving the graduation rate by providing virtual options for students to obtain course credits needed to graduate. FLEX Academy will continue to serve students by offering teacher-led synchronous instruction for students during the school day. FLEX Beyond the Day offers full credit courses in a teacher supported asynchronous format. These courses are scheduled in addition to the students' regular schedule. Students can take up to an additional 2.0 CU virtually each school year.

Registration



FLEX Academy – 193
FLEX Beyond the Day – 193
FLEX Restore – Registration closes in February

Special Events

FLEX Academy visited Chancelight Education Service in Cobb County to gain information about their alternative education program.

Academic Report Document

Dr. Kishia K. Towns
Chief of Wrap Around Services



Super Partners Meeting

During the 2023-2024, the Post-Secondary Push Plan has been prioritized to meet the needs of our students in DeKalb County School District. One of the goals of the plan is to provide post-secondary opportunities once students graduate. To bring this to fruition, a Super Partners meeting was held on Friday, December 8, 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to identify current and future partners in the community and leverage the needs of the companies with the career interests of our students to ensure a pathway to the workforce, 2-year and 4-year colleges, military, and/or trade schools. More than forty agencies and industries were present to provide the who, what, why, when, and how they can assist students as they matriculate through the District and beyond. Students participated on a panel where they were able to share their needs and interest with the partners. As we move forward, Naviance, is a comprehensive college and career readiness and social emotional learning solution for 24 high schools, 20 middle schools, and 86 elementary schools and allows schools counselors and post-secondary transition specialists to work directly with students on their post-secondary plans and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) lessons, will be utilized to more closely align student interests with Super Partners.



Reality Checks

As we prepare for winter break, the Division of Wrap Around Services has been integral in providing attendance, discipline, health and wellness, and culture and climate feedback to all area schools including elementary, middle, high, specialty, and horizons through the Reality Checks. Reality Checks provide schools the opportunity to review key performance indicators along with feedback from chiefs of several divisions to learn

how to achieve your goals through specific data-driven strategies. Additional Reality Checks will be scheduled through the month of March.

FACE Advocates

In an effort to provide mentoring to our most at-risk students, Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Advocates have been recruited to meet the needs of a cohort of students at middle and high schools. Each FACE Advocate will serve up to ten students and administer programs/activities to bridge the gap between home and school and develop and implement a mentoring program for students assigned to their caseload in collaboration with the school leadership team that includes but is not limited to weekly relationship building activities, school-to-home support, and goal setting. The Division of Wrap Around Services has provided beneficial training to each FACE Advocate to support their efforts while transitioning into the school setting. The professional development includes Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) overview, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Home Visits, Bullying Awareness and Prevention, Professionalism in the Workplace, State Reporting, Trauma/Brain 101, and Restorative Practices overview.

**Dr. Deborah Moore-Sanders,
Substitute Administrator; Executive Director of Student Advancement:**

Reach Georgia

The Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen (**REACH**) Georgia Scholarship Induction Ceremony for DeKalb County was held on December 14th at Chapel Hill Middle School. Five students from DeKalb County will be participating in the program. Students begin program participation in 8th grade and will be provided mentoring until high school graduation. Three of the REACH scholars from Chapel Hill Middle are below.



Student Advancement/Counseling Collaboration

Deliberate collaboration with Student Support Services Counseling Team is taking place regarding the Post-Secondary Push Plan. A collaboration meeting was held with Naviance staff on January 18th for their mid-year review, and to set up data reporting features and reporting cadence for PUSH Plan elements. These elements include the following.

- College Application Submission Tracking
- Job Search feature to support employment application Submission Tracking
- FAFSA Completion Tracking.

The first College Application Submission Data report was also created for the Class of 2024.

Mobile Student Success Center

A schedule has been created to allow schools to sign up for the Mobile Student Success Center. The Mobile Center will support Georgia's Bridge Law activities by providing college and career information and STEM experiences to elementary and middle schools students. The Mobile Center will also support high schools with their college and career awareness activities.



The DCSD Student Advancement Team Proudly Presents

Book Us for Your Next Event!

The Mobile STUDENT SUCCESS BUS

- College & Career Guidance
- Financial Aid Awareness
- Trade & Technical School Experience
- STEM Experiences

<http://bit.ly/MSSCB>

For more info:
jennifer_livingston@dekalbschoolsga.org

Book Via QR Code or BIT.ly link



Student Success Centers



The Student Success Centers at Martin L. King High School, Stone Mountain High School, Redan High School, and Clarkston High School are complete! A Scope of Services for all Centers has been created to scale the work provided through the Centers. Core services that will be facilitated/provided by the Post-Secondary Transition Specialists include: **Post-Secondary Readiness, Workforce Readiness, Military Readiness, and Life Readiness**. Additionally, Post-Secondary Transition Specialists are providing requested assistance to schools without Student Success Centers.

College Transfer Panel Discussion

In collaboration with Georgia Institute of Technology, DCSD Student Advancement Department will be hosting a Transfer Panel Discussion so that parents and students can gain an understanding of how college transfers work, and the benefits of going the transfer route for their post-secondary education. The target audience is low income and first-generation juniors and seniors.



DCSD STUDENT ADVANCEMENT

UNIVERSITY

DEKALB COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL TRANSFER PANEL

Open to Current DCSD High School Juniors and Seniors

JANUARY 25 6PM

LEARN ABOUT

- Panelist Admission Requirements
- Benefits of Transfer Admissions
- Transfer Scholarships
- Frequent Q&As

PANELIST INCLUDE

- Georgia Institute of Technology
- University of Georgia
- Georgia Southern University
- Univ. of N. Georgia
- Kennesaw State Univ.

CONTACT:
Ms. Michelle Granville
michelle_granville@dekalbschools.ga.org
Mr. Wesley White
wesley_s_white@dekalbschools.ga.org

REGISTER NOW

Mrs. Denise Revels

Director of Wrap Around & Support Services

Human Trafficking

January is Human Trafficking Prevention Month, a presidentially designated observance designed to educate the public about human trafficking and to continue to raise awareness. The School Social Work Department kicked off the month with distributing t-shirts to staff and students to increase awareness and foster conversations around human trafficking. On Tuesday, January 23rd, everyone is asked to wear red and high schools implementing the curriculum have been provided with red sand to pour in the cracks as a reminder that we must prevent peers from falling through the cracks. The human trafficking team will also host a resource fair night at Tucker High School during the Girls and Boys Varsity games. The culminating activity for the month includes hosting a community Facts and Film night on January 31st.



Be the Voice



The Be the Voice Club is up and running at Salem Middle School. Students hosted a toy drive in December for the Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta and collected pajamas for the Ronald McDonald Foundation for Children. Members of the club meet every Tuesday, after school to plan the next big event that will impact the school in a positive way and to touch bases on topics they need to tackle for change at



the school. They will also be shooting videos to broadcast to students during the morning announcements. Students also created a Chalk of Inspiration for staff and students.

Mentoring

Our mentoring liaison, Demetric Crittle, has been busy planning events and connecting schools and students with mentoring partners, including: the Atlanta Falcons, U Champ, Georgia State University, Clark Atlanta University, and a host of other partners. The mentoring work is focused on highlighting the significance of mentorship and collaborating with schools to identify and address areas of need by providing resources to establish effective mentoring programs. The impact of these programs is multi-faceted, benefiting not only the students but also the mentors who cultivate leadership skills and derive a sense of gratification from positively impacting others. Through these collective efforts, we are creating brighter futures and transforming the lives of young people. Below are some mentoring highlights:

Education Day at GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY, REAL MEN READ, Grandparent's Day, National Mentoring Month, and ideas (January) and National Mentoring Day and ideas (October), Black History Month with Divine Nine Mentors, National Women's Month with Mentors, Movie Night with Mentors, etc.

PRINCETON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CELEBRATES NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH!!!!





Health Services

JoAnn Harris, our Coordinator of Student Health Services has been working diligently on creating a plan to provide unassigned, lifesaving, medication to schools to be used in the event of an emergency. She has secured Albuterol (rescue inhaler for asthmatics), EpiPens (decreases allergic reaction) and Narcan (opioid drug overdose) medication for all DCSD schools.

Dr. Darnell Logan Director of Student Relations

In the areas of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS); three (3) virtual drop-in sessions were held for new and veteran PBIS Coaches. The PBIS Coaches facilitated PBIS Overview sessions for newly hired FACE Advocates and conducted PBIS Booster for the PBIS



Leadership Team at Fairington Elementary School. The PBIS Coaches facilitated PBIS Overview for the Culture and Climate Specialist, a Universal Classroom Booster, and collaborative meetings with MTSS Coordinators. They participated in two (2) trainings/meetings with Metro RESA: External Coaching Meeting and the District Coaches and External Coaches Regional Meeting. The PBIS Coaches continues to assist schools with SWIS training along with ensuring all task are completed and collecting the necessary data and documentation for SWIS. They facilitated PBIS Coaches Meetings with School Level Coaches, highlighting deadlines and updates for SWIS, Product Books, and Walkthroughs.

In the area of Student Discipline and Student Reintegration, the Hearing Officers scheduled 70 DDP (District Due Process) Hearings; 6 canceled due to Discipline Team Meetings (DTM). Additionally, Student Relations cleared 86 students.

Two (2) Student Engagement Coaches were hired. In the process of interviewing and hiring additional Student Engagement Coaches.

The Bullying Awareness Campaign is underway. Dr. Fretwell sent all school liaisons modules for refresher training on bullying for students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Dr. Fretwell continues to conduct bullying awareness training sessions as requested by principals. He will resume weekly site visits to identified schools along with regular reviews of bullying data from all schools.



Ms. Monika Davis
Chief Information Officer

For the Division of Information and Instructional Technology, we are focused on ensuring we:

- Improve device management and support.
- Remediate and refresh the district's network and data center infrastructure.
- Harden information, cyber, network and physical security measures.
- Enhance and innovate the digital learning environment.
- Empower the "Digital Village" necessary to nurture and develop Digital Dreamers.

These goals represent our day-to-day commitment to the students, staff, and community.

During this midway point for the school year, extra attention has to be taken to revisit our goals and strategies to ensure so we stay the course and preserve. We have A LOT of activity going in in DIIT. However, each improvement initiative will get us closer to our ability to effortlessly sustain an empower digital learning environment for our students.

Infrastructure Projects (SPLOST and ESSER funded)

In the past months, we have referred to the intense focus on infrastructure project oversight and implementation. We often hear the term "go slow to go fast". The district is very aware of the need to address aging technology in our facilities, such as network components (*switches, cabling, and wireless access points*) and physical security components (*security cameras, door access, and intrusion alarms*). The Board of Education has funded major projects to overhaul this equipment. However, we had to slow down to ensure we addressed the needs of each facility. For DCSD, this has included setting a future-state standard for the technology, assessing each facility's current state against the standard, and structuring our installation plan with the intent of eradicating gaps. With purposeful and effective planning, we are gearing up to "go fast" with installation as we transform our technology infrastructure.

Student Technology Competition

All of the work the district puts in to procure, sustain, and protect our technology infrastructure is for naught if the end result is not impacting our main target...the students. For the past 21 years the district has hosted a technology competition (<https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/technology-fair>) designed to allow students show off their brilliance in categories such as robotics, 3-D modeling, game design, and device modification. The first-place winners in each category represents the district at the Georgia Student Technology Competition – <https://www.gastc.org>. DIIT spent December and January preparing for an epic event at McNair Middle School on January 20, 2024. Competition is healthy. But competition within such a critical concept is essential. Great job students, staff, and community!

Jeff Miller, Manager of Asset and End-User Computing
Herman Parker, Manager of Technology Assets

The Asset Management and End-user Computing Department has had a busy start to the new calendar year. We are currently performing the first of our semi-annual District wide audits. The winter audit that takes place every January allows us to ensure availability of devices for students during the upcoming spring testing window. The winter audit is slated to end on January 31st. The results of the



audit will be shared with the public via the device distribution dashboard. The second of our semi-annual audits, our summer audit, takes place in May before students are released for summer break. Devices are collected during this time for DIIT to wipe/clean the devices over summer break and prepare them for the upcoming school year.

Last week, we prepped and delivered 125 Chromebooks for the DCSD Technology Fair held this past weekend. Although students bring their own devices to the competition, we assure that equity is accomplished by having devices available if there is a need. Our team provided resources that worked at the event and enjoyed engaging the students and their caregivers.

Earlier this week, we were able to collaborate with a representative from Fulton County Schools that is spearheading the Georgia Urban District Unreturned Device Plan of Action. Having students return devices at the end of the school year is a challenge that is plaguing school districts nationwide. We provided useful information to the representative as we have already begun addressing device management challenges internally through our cross-departmental advisory board.

Natalie Terrell, Manager III of Project Management

SPLOST Technology Projects

IT PMO six major SPLOST projects are well underway either in assessment, implementation planning, and/or actual implementation. Under the Physical Security Program, the site assessments are complete, and the team has engaged in stakeholder reviews to discuss the results of the assessment with each building administrator and the Public Safety/ representative. This phase of the project is 47% complete. Implementation has begun for the three core sites. The WBBC is complete, Sam Moss will begin January 25 and AIC on January 26. School implementations will begin in April 2024. The remaining three projects are the cabling refresh, switch replacement, and wireless access point projects. For the cabling project, site assessments are complete, and the team is working to compile the information into summary reports for review, approval and purchasing for district rollout. The cabling and switch projects are still in the planning phases of gathering information to determine the next steps.

Please see updates for key projects occurring during December 2023 and January 2024.

- ***Optimizing the Interactive Flat Panel (IFP):*** Site assessments are complete. Overall, this project is 40% complete. A draft of the installation schedule is being finalized.
- ***School Choice Lottery:*** The application site went live on Friday, January 5 at 9AM. The lottery is running until Friday, January 26. The team is currently monitoring the site and providing customer support.
- ***PreK Lottery:*** The team is currently migrating information from the old site from last year to the newly built site for PreK only. Testing the new site, the week of January 29. Go-live for the lottery is February 20.
- ***HUDL Camera Installations:*** HUDL cameras have been installed 19 high schools. This project is 97% complete.
- ***Academic Skill Centers (ASC) Deployment:*** This project is 90% complete. The exceptions are two schools which are currently under construction, Dresden and Montclair.



- **Cell Phone Migration Project (T-Mobile to ATT):** This project is 45% complete. Migrations are complete for Superintendent's Office Staff and Board Members and Public Safety. Rollout at AIC is currently in progress.

Dr. Kyia Clark, Executive Director, Information and Innovation
Mr. Troy Palmer, Manager of Student Information Systems



Infinite Campus Language Translation Services

In collaboration with EL Services and Parent and Family Engagement, the SIS Department has been working to provide language translations in the district's top 15 languages for the Infinite Campus Online Registration (OLR) module, Parent and Student Portals, report cards and transcripts, and attendance letters. This project will enhance stakeholder engagement by providing more equitable access to new student registration and existing student annual information updates, student academic progress, and student attendance data. The translations work is approximately 75% complete with an anticipated date of March 2024 for all components to be translated.



Master Schedule Building Optimization

DIIT/SIS has been working collaboratively with DCSD School Leadership, Student Support Services, and Wrap-Around Support and Intervention on reviewing, updating, and optimizing master schedule building processes and procedures. This project will ensure equitable access to allocations and allow schools and program areas to more accurately identify resources and services to better meet all learners' needs. The collaborative work for master schedule building optimization is well underway and is on track for completion of SY2024-2025 student scheduling by April 2024.

Ms. Terri Webb, Manager of Instructional Technology

The Division of Information and Instructional Technology hosted the 2024 Technology Competition on Saturday, January 20, 2024, at Ronald McNair Middle School. This year's event theme, Ready, Player, DeKalb highlighted an introduction to eSports gaming while featuring workshops centered around career paths in video production and game design. With over 955 students and 220 community, district, and teacher volunteers, this year's event was a great success! Stay tuned for our next opportunity to engage our Digital Dreamers at the DCSD Hack-UR-Dream Hackathon!



Instructional Technology was featured as highlighted as guest speakers for the CTAE Region 10 FBLA Conference. This conference allows middle and high school students to compete in various interviews, skills-based and performance tasks associated with future business career paths. Our presentation's topic was Leading & Learning with Character and AI. This conference allowed our team to promote the awareness of using artificial intelligence in an ethical and responsible manner. We look forward to next year's event!



Instructional Technology will be representing the DeKalb County School District at the Florida Educational Technology Conference. The FETC conference focuses on ways to unlock the full potential of student success by highlighting digital tools, resources, and best practices of technology integration from edtech companies and school districts across the country. Our presentation will focus on how Instructional Technology supports teachers with coaching and technology integration through our professional learning and digital learning teams. We will also serve on a panel discussion on Prompt Engineering for all learners.

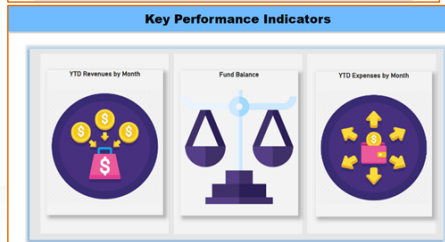
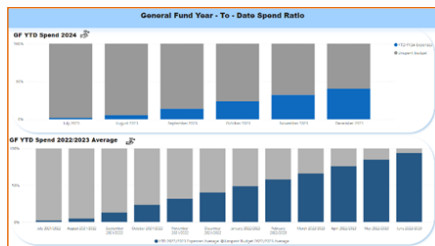




Ms. Linda Jordan, Manager III of Applications and Development
Ms. Mallorie Robinson, Manager II, of Enterprise Business Solutions

The **Enterprise Business Systems Team** provided Finance with year-end reports needed for all employee W-2 and IRS 941 on-time submissions. The team provided application setup and system support to process two (2) employee referral bonuses, the Governor's Bonus, Sick and Vacation Payout, Stipend Payout, and two (2) semi-monthly payrolls. The team continues to provide necessary data extraction upon request to the Munis Implementation Team from the CrossPointe legacy system to support 12-month employees in Munis and 10-month and 11-month employees in the Phase 2 Implementation.

The **Data Analytics and Visualization and Web Teams** updated and published Operations and Finance dashboards.



The **Web Team** completed the prototype for the DCEIP web page.



The **Learning Systems Team** completed creation of automated data extracts and began data testing for Infinite Campus interfaces with both EveryDay Labs and Timely. The team also provided technical support for the January 5 – February 9, 2024 School Choice Open Enrollment using a new vendor and continues to provide support through the end of the enrollment period. Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) began this month. All contributors have been notified of timelines and data requests.

Mr. Joseph Swing, Manager III, Enterprise Systems

Telecommunications has migrated over 100 Cellular phones (10% of current fleet) to key district employees. This upgrades users to the latest iPhone Technology. This project ensures users have new functional phones which shows the district’s commitment to having an accountable work force.

Telecommunications continuously monitors the telecommunication environment to ensure all schools are online. This is done through the Mitel Connect Software that monitors all the IP phone switches on the DCSD Wide Area Network. In addition, Telecommunications monitors the SIP Trunk line Utilization. These are the lines that allow us to make and receive telephone calls over an IP Network. In addition, call volume is also monitored and correlated with the utilization statistics. The following are graphs which enable the telecommunications group to see how the environment is functioning. The CIO’s office is sent an update weekly on the performance of the Mitel IP Phone System.

This is a graphical representation of the DCSD locations, and the IP Phone switches. If there is a down phone switch, at any of the locations, the site will turn red and allow us to drill down for further investigation.



Dr. Yolanda Williamson
Chief of Community Engagement & Innovative Partnerships

Dr. Yolanda Williamson
Community Engagement

High Level priorities for the month:

Staffing

Foundation Oversight Executive—Mr. Thurman Green began as the new Foundation Executive on January 22, 2024.

Project Director- In Progress

Manager of Strategic Partnerships-In progress



Thought Exchange & Advisory Councils

Top themes have been identified and shared with the Superintendent Advisory Councils. Cabinet members are encouraged to develop presentations for the meetings that align with the identified themes and correspond to their respective Divisions.

Here are the highest rated thoughts from the Superintendent Parent Advisory Council ThoughtExchange.

Participants expressed concerns about several issues they would like to discuss in the upcoming Superintendent's Advisory Council meetings. They highlighted the issue of school clubs requiring full tuition payments, arguing that these clubs should be accessible to all students as they foster community and provide additional opportunities. The decline of Arts programs and lack of diverse programs in schools were also raised, emphasizing the need to nurture well-rounded individuals. Participants also criticized the poor nutrition standards in schools, suggesting that improving these could reduce behavioral issues. Lastly, they stressed the need for increased attention on mental health and social emotional learning, including better mental health training for all school employees and more support for students pursuing dual enrollment options.

Here are the highest rated thoughts from the *Superintendent B-Lingual Parent Advisory Council* ThoughtExchange.

The participants expressed a desire to discuss several topics at the upcoming Superintendent's Advisory Council meetings, all aimed at improving student outcomes. They highlighted the importance of integrating bilingualism into career preparation, suggesting that leveraging students' language skills could equip them for a global workforce. They also emphasized the need for better customer service in schools, including effective communication with families, particularly in their native languages. Concerns were raised about the support for ESOL students, with a focus on improving graduation rates and transitioning from EL programming. Other topics included the need for improved access to resources, exploring alternate educational pathways, and developing plans to support EL students who may age out due to age restrictions.

Here are the highest rated thoughts from the *Superintendent Staff Advisory Council* ThoughtExchange.



The participants expressed a variety of concerns they would like to discuss in the upcoming Superintendent's Advisory Council meetings. They highlighted the need for a more efficient process for determining eligibility for special education, as many students with disabilities are left waiting for a year. They also emphasized the importance of a positive work culture, social emotional learning, and reliable transportation for students. Other topics included the safety of students and staff, the implementation of prevention strategies to keep students out of jail, and the improvement of parent-community relationships. Additionally, they suggested focusing on staff retention, improving student attendance, clear communication, remodeling school restrooms, including half days or virtual learning days in the calendar, mental and emotional health training for teachers, and the need for more inclusive programs.

DeKalb Schools Foundation

The Foundation Board met January 16, 2024, for an organizational meeting to appoint officers and revise bylaws. Next steps for the Foundation include:

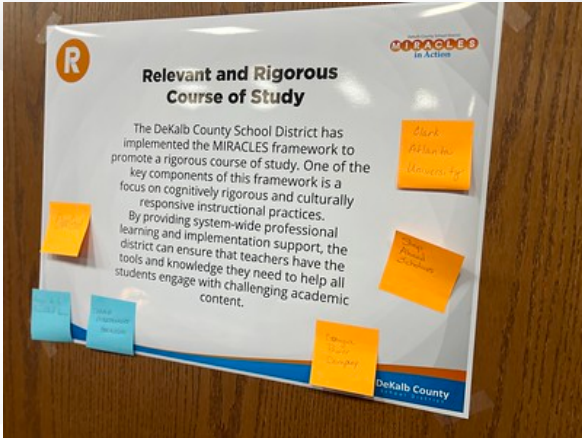
- 1) Reviewing the amendments of the bylaws and seeking approval from the DeKalb BOE.
- 2) Selecting a consultant to lead the strategic planning process for the Foundation.
- 3) Continue to acclimate the new Foundation Oversight Executive into his role.

Website for DCEIP- In progress

A preliminary design for the DCEIP website, incorporating the Foundation, has been forwarded to the IT Division. Emphasizing the Foundation's priority, our focus is on establishing its site initially, given that Family Engagement and Grants & Partnerships already have dedicated platforms. Consequently, the plan is to amalgamate all existing sites into one comprehensive representation for the Division of Community Engagement & Innovative Partnerships.

Mix & Mingle for Community Partners

The Mix & Mingle was a huge success. DCEIP fulfilled the goal of celebrating great partnerships. Our Superintendent shared the MIRACLES Framework and explained the importance of the alignment that must exist between the partner resources and the tenets. Participants were asked to undertake an activity where they placed their organization's name under the tenet that most closely matched their resources or services. DCEIP will follow up with the organizations to either build a potential partnership or strengthen the current partnership.





Exploration of New Community Partners

VCA Animal Hospital

K-12 Insight

U.S. Navy

Collaboration with another department for the specific month:

Staffing



Division of Human Resources
Staff members (panel interviews)

DeKalb Schools Foundation

- The Board of Education & Superintendent will be kept abreast of the progress of the development of the Foundation.

Community Impact Showcase

- Marcia Coward- Decorations & Setup
- Marcia Oglesby-Initiate the process for identifying District partners
- Division Chiefs- Provide names of District partners
- Portia Kirkland- Market the Showcase

Dr. Donald Porter
Press Secretary

MIRACLES Priority update for the specific month and your role in it:

- Wrote video script for Dr. Sherry Everett for Strategic Plan participation
- Wrote event script for Dr. Williamson for Mix and Mingle event
- Wrote press release announcing reelection of Mr. DaCosta and Mrs. Pierce
- Rewrote story about Principal of the Year Dodson and her journey into education

Collaboration with another department for the specific month:

- Rewrote Superintendent letter to certified staff inviting them to sign and return contracts.
- Media Statement regarding stolen catalytic converters from buses
- Media Statement regarding Cedar Grove Middle School employee accused of sending inappropriate messages to students.
- Referred questions about Chief Gober to Legal
- Wrote letter for Area Sup. Taylor to parent/Tucker City council member smoothing hurt/dismissive feelings during a previous phone call
- Worked with C&I to set-up science fair preview of outstanding DCSD students and their projects



- Worked with Communications graphics and IT to have Edulog banner, QR code added
- Worked with Superintendent's office to craft family message regarding back in school following closure on Jan. 16. Distributed to all media
- Worked with various cabinet members to answer AJC about why schools were closed on Jan. 16 rather than remote learning.
- Worked with Research to produce press release for DCSD School Exiting the CSI, Promise and TSI Improvement lists
- Worked with Research to produce press release for DCSD Surpasses State in Key Component Scores on the CCRPI

Professional Learning Opportunities:

N/A

Direct support for Schools (Reference names if applicable):

- Wrote family letter for Principal LaTonya Gray - DES regarding WWII lesson that caused upset parents, staff, and teachers.
- Worked with Stone Mtn Middle/Operations/Communications/ for EPA announcement of federal grant to purchase electric buses.
- Wrote parent letter for Stone Mountain HS fights with pepper spray
- Wrote parent letter for Stone Mountain HS intruders/lockdown
- Media Statement for Heating issues at Henderson Middle
- Media Statement for Heating issues at Jolly ES
- Rewrote Principal Ronald Mitchell retirement letter to families at Dr. Ronald E. McNair Middle
- Wrote family letter for Columbia HS band boosters missing money and school taking over fundraising for now.
- Media statement and supported Tucker HS in its sewage backup and mitigation efforts.
- Wrote media statement for DeKalb International School Center families whose children were onboard a bus involved in a no-injury accident.
- Wrote family letter for McNair Discovery learning Academy regarding a student with a weapon on campus.
- Wrote family letter for Huntley Hills ES regarding a student with a weapon on campus.

Portia Kirkland
Director of Communications



The Communications Department is an integral part of District offices as it supports various priorities, campaigns, and promotions. With its wide range of services such as creative design,

marketing strategies, video production, photography, bilingual communications, media relations, and strategic writing, the department plays a crucial role in the overall functioning of the organization.

With this said, all chiefs and departments such as Finance, Curriculum and Instruction, Operations, and Community Engagement and Empowerment, Human Resources, work closely with Communications on a day-to-day basis to meet their MIRACLES priorities for the month. Because internal teams have high level priorities, Communications is always on standby to provide support and ensure Cabinet and department heads can meet their deadlines.

High Level priorities for the month:

- **(M) Motions Toward Equity**
- **(C) Commitment to Accountability**

Communications Survey

Effective communication is crucial for the success and growth of DeKalb County School District. In collaboration with Thought Exchange, Communications has crafted a district-wide communications survey to identify how families, staff members, and community members receive information, the effectiveness of the communication, and the value of the information received.

The Department of Communications will encourage all stakeholders to participate, and the survey will be made available in several languages. The survey results will enable the District to increase and improve our communications and better serve the needs of our district, scholars, and community.

The Communications Survey is set to be released January/February 2024 and distributed on the following channels:

- Hitting the Road with Dr. Horton Newsletter
- News Flash
- Social Media
- School Messenger



- The District Website
- School Websites

Staffing

Communications welcomes Frida Flores who has been a contractor with DeKalb Schools TV (DSTV) for a few years. Frida is the host of DeKalb County School District's Te Eschua, a Hispanic Family Engagement television program that airs on channel 24 and keeps Hispanic Families in the know. In addition to managing the Fambassador program alongside the Family Engagement Department, Frida will also help manage translation for Communications. Frida is being trained and in the process of creating a group for Hispanic families.

Communications Suite

Due to increased Comms staff, the Communications suite has been re-structured to accommodate team members. This reorganization was challenging but crucial in providing everyone with a comfortable space where they thought they could be productive. A shelf was custom-made for storage, and cubicles were strategically placed so team members could collaborate and continue to get the work done. The next steps are ordering a conference table for meetings and collaboration.

Completed:



The Communications Toolkit is complete and will be reviewed by Cabinet for feedback. Once approved, the toolkit will be provided to all school principals and placed on the Employee Portal here:

<https://dcsd.sharepoint.com/communications/Pages/resources.aspx>

Toolkit: https://issuu.com/dekalbschoolsga/docs/comms_toolkit_2024

Collaboration with another department for the specific month: Communications is providing Information Technology with photos so that the Cabinet website can be updated.

Completed Projects:

Salem Middle School
Brockett Elementary School
Arabia Mountain High School

In-progress Projects (web banner, letterheads):

Cross Keys High School
Coralwood Center
DeKalb Elementary School of The Arts
E.L. Bouie Elementary School
Eagle Woods Academy



Early Learning Center
Fernbank Science Center
Flex Academy
GNET At Shadow Rock Center
International Student Center
Kittredge Magnet
Narvie J. Harris Traditional Theme School
Oakcliff Traditional Theme School
Robert Shaw Traditional Theme School
Wadsworth Magnet
Wynbrooke Traditional Theme School
Shadow Rock Elementary School
Princeton Elementary School
Stone Mountain Middle School
Columbia Elementary School
Murphey Candler Elementary School
Chapel Hill Middle School
Salem Middle School
PeachCrest Elementary School

Professional Learning Opportunities:

N/A

Direct support for Schools (Reference names if applicable): Communications has provided schoolhouses with the following support: Graphic design (logos, letterhead, flyers) and event coverage.

Dr. Marcia Oglesby
Director of Grants & Partnership

High Level priorities for the month:

- **(C) Commitment to Accountability** – Explore the requirements for the Indoor Air Quality grant. Attend the webinar on January 25, 2024. The grant will provide up to \$5,000,000 for Indoor Air Quality Demonstration Research in K-12 Schools.



- **(C) Commitment to Accountability** – Distribute the strategic stakeholder survey to community partners and encourage them to complete the survey.
- **(S) Sound Fiscal Stewardship** – Obtain addresses and signatures from parents to submit to the Housing Authority for certification. The district can receive funds from the Impact Aid Grant by submitting a list of all federal employed connected families, families who reside in low-income housing, and those who live on federal government properties.
- **(C) Commitment to Accountability** – Ensure the Public Safety’s grant quarterly report is submitted to the Governor’s office.
- **(S) Sound Fiscal Stewardship and (C) Commitment to Accountability** - Attend the Clean School Bus Grant Selectee initial meeting with the Environmental Protection Agency on January 25, 2024.
- **(A) Attract and Retain High Quality Staff** – The Alliance for a Healthier Generation/Kaiser Permanente \$20,000 grant proposal was submitted on January 10, 2024, requesting funds to create Zen Dens. Search for additional grants so all schools will have an opportunity to create a Zen Den or mental wellness space/resources for staff.
- **(M) Motions Toward Equity** - Development of the Employee Wellness Center’s proposal to present to Kaiser Permanente and other organizations for funding and equipment.
- **(M) Motion Towards Equity** - Continue to encourage teachers to post projects to Donors Choose; Grants and Partnerships created a special [DCSD Donors Choose landing page](#) on the platform; Teachers have received over \$5 million in resources through Donors Choose.
- **(S) Sound Fiscal Stewardship** – Collaborate with finance to ensure the State Farm grant award in the amount of \$75,000 is transitioned to the district and the account codes are established and provided to the departments who are recipients of the grant funds.
- **impact (S) Sound Fiscal Stewardship** - Ensure the board receives a summary from Marcia Coward of how the Publix donation in the amount of \$93,321 will be spent.
- **(M) Motion Towards Equity** - Participate on the planning committee for WorkSource DeKalb’s and DeKalb County Government’s summit; will serve on the leadership committee and assist with planning the upcoming WorkSource DeKalb summit
- **(M) Motion Towards Equity** – I am collaborating with community-based organizations who are interested in applying for the Georgia Department of Education’s 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant in the amount of up to \$350,000 per year, to fund after school academic tutoring and enrichment programs for five years.
- **(A) Attract and Retain High Quality Staff** - Monitor the release of the Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program grant and similar federal grant opportunities which provide incentives for teachers and school leaders. The previous U.S. Department of Education’s grant closed in June 2023.

Completed:

- **(S) Sound Fiscal Stewardship** – Public Safety \$1,650,000 grant’s final budget was approved by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget. Public Safety’s grant’s quarterly report was submitted and approved.
- **(M) Motion Towards Equity** – Ensure the partnerships and school surveys are submitted to community organizations and schools to assess which partners are supporting schools.
- **(C) Commitment to Accountability** - The school partnership surveys were approved to be disseminated to school leaders. The Grants and Partnerships team has compiled a list of partners specific to each school based on the survey results data.

MIRACLES Priority update for the specific month and your role in it:

- **(C) Commitment to Accountability** – EPA Indoor Air Quality grant – create a team of internal and external stakeholders to discuss applying for the grant after attending the grant informational webinar on January 25, 2024.
- **(A) Attract and Retain High Quality Staff** – Lead the efforts to complete and submit the Alliance for a Healthier Generation/Kaiser Permanente \$20,000 grant proposal to fund Zen Dens in schools by working collaboratively with Total Rewards (Andrea Aplin-Little and Karen Beadles).
- **(M) Motions Towards Equity** – My role will be to assist the Grants and Partnerships team with reviewing the Wellness Center Proposal.
- **(S) Sound Fiscal Stewardship** – I will work directly with Public Safety to ensure the quarterly grant report is submitted to the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget.
- **(M) Motions Towards Equity** – Ensure the partnership surveys are disseminated to school leaders and community-based organizations and corporations for the Community Impact Showcase.
- **(C) Commitment to Accountability** – Encourage community partnerships to complete the district’s strategic survey; disseminate the survey via email as a reminder.

Collaboration with another department for the specific month:

- Collaborate with Mr. Schueneman to submit the Impact Aid grant by the initial January 30, 2024, deadline and the 2nd deadline of June 30, 2024.
- Collaborate with Total Rewards (Andrea Aplin-Little and Karen Beadles) and facilities to locate an ideal location for an additional Wellness Center in the district and create the wellness proposal to present to Kaiser Permanente.
- Serve on the planning committee with WorkSource DeKalb, the CTAE department, and other community leaders to plan the WorkSource DeKalb’s education summit.



- Publix Donation – Family and Community Engagement – Collaborate with Marcia Coward (Family and Community Empowerment), Dr. Williamson, and finance to ensure the board receives a summary of how the funds will be spent.
- Collaborate with finance to stay abreast of active grant awards and transition new awards and donations to finance and the awardees.
- Schedule meetings with partners to discuss inquiries and partnership opportunities.

Professional Learning Opportunities:

N/A

Direct support for Schools (Reference names if applicable):

- Opportunity grants – Ensure the 69 schools who were awarded grants spend their funds
- Druid Hills and Lithonia High Schools – Schedule a meeting with the principals and the potential partner – The Coalition | _____

Commented [P(1)]: @Marcia Oglesby (Grants & Partnerships) I'm going to use this template!

Commented [MP2R1]: Okay! I am editing my updates I entered for January. You can leave information the template. I am almost finished with my adding all of my updates for this month.

Commented [P(3R1)]: Thank you!

**Marcia Coward
Manager of Family Engagement**

2024 is off to a great start! On Friday, January 12th, Anne Ferreira and Hau Dim (Esther), Family Engagement Liaisons, spearheaded the inaugural session of the Fambassador Program within the Burmese community. An engaging group of 20 parents from Indian Creek ES, Dunaire ES, and Jolly ES communities actively participated, showing eagerness for knowledge and empowerment. The session commenced with a meaningful restorative practice exercise. During this initial gathering, we delved into the intricacies of the Fambassador Program, explored critical aspects of our district, and delineated the mission of the Family & Community Empowerment Department. With a focus on personal development, we aimed to enhance parents' public speaking skills while instilling pride in their identity and heritage. Y All Fambassadors (34) will play a pivotal role in mobilizing their communities to complete strategic plan surveys, ensuring their voices are heard and acknowledged.

Adult Learning

We are currently at 54% of our enrollment target for students. We are gearing up to launch boot camps and testing blitzes, which we anticipate will bolster our HSE completion numbers. Another recruitment round is scheduled for January 18th and 24th, which is expected to further increase our enrollment figures. Our IET numbers are currently low, but there's an optimistic outlook with the new cohort for custodial training. Two out of the three individuals who completed the training have received their certification. We currently have 15 registrants for the upcoming round, and I am hopeful that a significant number will successfully complete the program. We are also working on initiating an IET for School Nutrition as well as CDL credentialing for Bus Drivers.



Satellite IMPACT Hub (Parents Center) - Sequoyah MS

We are eagerly looking forward to collaborating with Computdot. Plans are in progress for our computer literacy program for adult learners. Tentative dates are set for March 4 for Sequoyah and March 5 for CK, with GED dates to be determined. The MOU is pending. We continue to inform parents about the Family-Friendly Schools Audit, shared through social media and the Area 1 Title 1 Parent Conference.

Food Talk

In collaboration with The University of Georgia Snap-Ed, will host "Food Talk" in Spanish for our Hispanic families at Stone Mill ES. Participants of the 8-week Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) receive a certificate from the University of Georgia upon completion of at least 6 of 8 classes. The EFNEP program covers four key areas: nutrition, physical activity, food safety, and food resource management. Participants have used the certificate to apply for entry-level food services jobs such as McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's, etc., because the program provides foundational knowledge on food and food safety. Other students have used the certificate to apply for culinary programs. This will be a face-to-face session for one hour with the families. Parents will have the opportunity to witness healthy cooking demonstrations, sample the food, and receive gifts for participating. You can view the flyer [here](#).

Superintendent's Department

Dr. Sherry Everett

Director of Strategic Planning

Strategic Management

The Strategic Planning Process is underway with Insight Education Group.

Outlined below are updates.

- Conduct bi-weekly meetings with Insight Education Group consultant - weekly meetings will be scheduled as the work ramps up.
- The Strategic Plan Stakeholder Survey opened on January 8, 2024, through February 16, 2024, and will be advertised weekly as follows: Superintendent Newsletter, NewsFlash, All social media channels, School Messenger, District website banner, robocalls, text, and emails.
- The next Steering Committee meeting(s) will be held on January 25, 2024, and February 22, 2024, 5:30-7:30 PM, AIC Board Room.
- The second 2-hour BOE work session will be scheduled for February 2024 – Meeting Objectives: Review drafts from Steering Committee (Vision, Mission, Core Beliefs, Portrait of a Graduate info.).
- DCSD Data Reports will be uploaded to Insight Education Group by January 31, 2024, for analysis.



- The district website under the 2024-2029 Strategic Plan section will be updated after each Steering Committee and BOE work session with agendas and presentations.
- The Team is working to identify dates/locations for March/April Focus Group meetings to be held in each Board member district.

Mr. Joel Thibodeaux
Director of Internal Audits and Compliance

New Initiatives:

Booster Club Reform

Recent issues regarding booster club activity and school level fundraising have led us back to developing and advocating booster organization reform by both expanding the coverage of booster policies to include PTSAs and PTOs as well as booster organizations. The commonality of all these types of organizations is that they are established and controlled by parents and the local school community, which can potentially put principals and faculty in conflict between District policies and regulations and the intent of these locally powerful organizations.

The reform will consist of two main components:

1. Revisions of existing policy and establishment of administrative regulations. The Policy to define the organizations covered, and the regulations to provide the requirements for these organizations to operate at the local school. This includes oversight, financial requirements, right to review meeting and financial records, and the right to suspend or abolish an organization.
 - a. Additionally, a Booster Assurance Letter has been drafted that must be signed each school year by an organization's executive board that acknowledges and agrees to the "rules of the road".
2. Establishment of a central management structure for booster organizations district-wide for the purpose of removing pressure from Principals, faculty, and staff when club/organization actions or initiatives are in conflict with the policy or regulations. Discussions among Senior Management will be required to formulate the best structure and staff for such a management team.

Fleet Audit

Fleet Operations and Vehicle Purchases are being audited based on risk assessment and senior management request. A contractor has been obtained to assist internal staff with fieldwork. Senior Compliance Auditor Nicole Cook is the lead auditor on this case.

Mr. Elijah Palmer



Director of Organizational Effectiveness

Preparation for MIRACLES Workshop #4

Dec. 4th was a day where Cabinet Leaders came together to provide updates on initiatives that they were working on the previous 30 days. I facilitated this workshop where Dr. Horton and I probed with department leaders and their team about what occurred the previous 30 days. We had a great session where board members were in attendance to observe. These sessions are meaningful and effective, and it is how we hold ourselves accountable for the work that we say we are doing across the district. The next session is scheduled for January 29th for Workshop #5.

FACE Advocate Update

Working with our HR department, I helped identify 11 FACE Advocates through interviews and was instrumental in putting them into their respective schools based on the discipline data across horizon schools primarily, but schools that showed an increase in discipline amongst a small population of students exhibiting chronic behaviors. This is a huge win for the district since their presence will be impactful once they are introduced to the students on their caseloads, and they have a chance to build relationships and connect with students identified as at risk. We are in the process of hiring the additional 34 FACE Advocates that will make an immediate impact in our district for those schools that will receive one.

H-PRIDE Visits

Following the Superintendent into schools has continued to be a priority as we have visited over 90 plus schools thus far. Having an opportunity to connect with the Principal, Teacher, Scholar, Community Liaison has been a powerful practice as we pledge to bring about systemic change to serve our district. These meaningful and heartfelt conversations that are being held allows the team to debrief and devise a plan to address the immediate needs and to realistically plan to make their experiences better overall. This experience alone speaks to the intention of exhibiting H-PRIDE in practice and not just in words. It is being received well as our stakeholders continue to express their gratitude.

Weekly Cabinet Meeting

I have the pleasure of creating and facilitating weekly cabinet meeting agendas with Superintendent Dr. Horton. We analyze data and address issues that arise during the week and are creative in how we bring it to executive cabinet leaders. These agendas are ways to bring awareness to major initiatives or to provide professional learning experiences for Chiefs to take back to their team members. This is an attempt to increase the Attract and Retain High Quality Staff by investing in their development and passing it down to each department. It also addresses Commitment to Accountability by making sure systems and structures are in place for us to measure and monitor outcomes.



DeKalb County
School District