

District Operations Report - MARCH

Dr. Tekshia Ward-Smith
Interim Chief of Human Resources

IGNITE Para to Teacher Residency Program Launched

The DeKalb County School District launched our IGNITE Para to Teacher Residency program on March 4, 2024.

Through a strategic partnership with Point Park University and BloomBoard, district paraprofessionals now have a pathway to earn a fully accredited Elementary Education and Special Education degree, by integrating online learning with practical classroom experience.

This pioneering program in Georgia aims to develop local talent and alleviate teacher shortages. An inaugural cohort of eighteen DCSD paraprofessionals are now enrolled in Point Park University's Residency Program and have begun their journey to pursue their bachelor's degrees, committing to a blend of coursework and hands-on teaching over the next 2-3 years.

BloomBoard, a national talent development provider for K-12 school systems, facilitates the program's marketing, implementation, and mentoring, utilizing its online platform to deliver the curriculum. The program, funded by federal COVID relief funding, requires participants to serve within DCSD for five years after completion, ensuring long-term benefits for the community.

1015 New Teachers Hired

FY24 was a record setting year for new hires in the DeKalb County School District. This year we hired a total of 1015 new teachers!

This was achieved by having a robust recruitment strategy. HR Managers and Recruitment Specialists have attended over 75 job fairs and events thus far. By the end of June 2024, this number will increase to over 120. To support our efforts, we have also created and branded our very own alternate interview days each week:

- **Walk In Wednesdays-** This is an opportunity for certified and classified applicants to register, walk-in, and interview for open positions.
- **Talent Screening Thursdays-** This is an opportunity for applicants to register, walk-in, and interview for available positions in Operations.
- **Transportation Tuesdays-** This is an opportunity for applicants to register, walk-in, and interview for available positions in Transportation.
- **Higher to Hire-** HR has begun to tap into the talent pool of our very own high school students. Recruiters are now attending college and career fairs in our local high schools.

In addition to the scheduled fairs, we have also established a number of partnerships to support and fill classified vacancies. #ChooseDCSD Classified Staff.

Angelica Collins
(Director of Employment Services)

FY 25 Contracts of Employment Released

More than 6600 employees have received a contract offer of employment for the 2024-2025 school year.

- 96.5% of Teachers accepted and signed a contract offer of employment for FY25
- 98.7% of Assistant Principals accepted and signed a contract offer of employment for FY25
- 98% of Counselors, School Psychologist and Social Workers accepted and signed a contract offer of employment for FY25
- 99% of Media Specialists accepted and signed a contract offer of employment for FY25

Although most contracts of employment were signed and accepted, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission allows educators to request a clear release up until June 1, 2024. We remain confident that individuals who accepted and signed a contract will remain employed with the district for the FY25 school year.

Certified & Classified Job Fair

Saturday, February 24, 2024

DCSD held our first job fair for FY25 on Saturday, February 24, 2024 at Lithonia High School. More than 450 applicants participated and Principals recommended over 100 for hire into available positions for FY 25!! Our next District-wide Fair is **April 27, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.** at Miller Grove HS. Note, most principals are working the applicant pools from posted positions on Frontline to locate and screen individuals. In an effort to provide staffing resources, the District plans to bring additional options to the Board of Education in the coming months. Our goal is to have qualified staff for all available positions.

HR Open House

Thursday, April 11, 2024

Employees will have open access to all HR staff. Questions regarding benefits; how sick days are calculated; family medical leave regulations, retirement, optional 403/457 Tax Sheltered Annuities Vendors, or the incentives of choosing DCSD will be answered. The event will be held on Thursday, **April 11, 2024, from 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm** in the AIC Board of Education Room.

The **Open House** is a great opportunity for employees to ask questions about the department and meet the HR support staff. Again, team members will be available to answer questions about Certification, Compensation, Benefits, Insurance, Leaves and so much more!

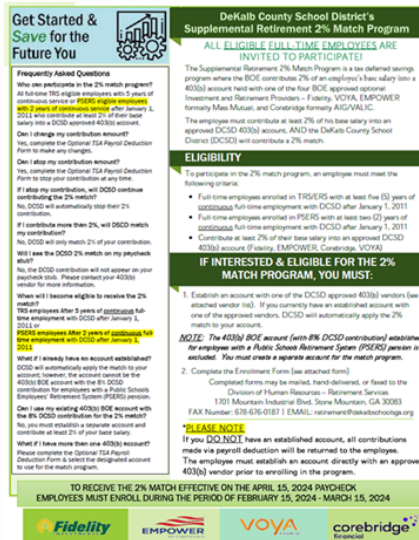
Karen Beadles
(Director of Total Rewards)

The Total Rewards team is responsible for the functional areas of compensation, benefits, leave administration, retirement, verification, and employee wellness.

Retirement – Supplemental 2% Match Program

The Supplemental 2% Match Program is a tax deferred savings program where the BOE contributes 2% of an employee’s base salary into a 403b account held with one of the four BOE approved optional investment and retirement providers – Fidelity, VOYA, EMPOWER, Corebridge.

- Supplemental 2% Match Open Enrollment was Feb 15 to March 15, 2024.
- 50 employees were successfully enrolled in the match program.



Get Started & Save for the Future You

Frequently Asked Questions
Who can participate in the 2% match program?
All full-time regular employees with 3 years of continuous service or PSEERS regular employees with 2 years of continuous service after January 1, 2011 who contribute at least 2% of their base salary into a DCSD approved 403(b) account.
Can I change my contribution amount?
Yes, complete the Optional TIA Payroll Deduction Form to make any changes.
Can I stop my contribution amount?
Yes, complete the Optional TIA Payroll Deduction Form to stop your contribution at any time.
If I stop my contribution, will DCSD continue contributing the 2% match?
No, DCSD will automatically stop their 2% contribution.
If I contribute more than 2%, will DCSD match my contribution?
No, DCSD will only match 2% of your contribution.
Will I see the DCSD 2% match on my paycheck stub?
No, the DCSD contribution will not appear on your paycheck stub. Please contact your 403(b) vendor for more information.
When will I become eligible to receive the 2% match?
TRG employees after 3 years of continuous full-time employment with DCSD after January 1, 2011 or PSEERS employees after 2 years of continuous full-time employment with DCSD after January 1, 2011.
What if I already have an account established?
DCSD will automatically apply the match to your account; however, the account cannot be the 403(b) ROE account with the 6% DCSD contribution for employees with a Public Schools Employees' Retirement System (PSEERS) pension.
Can I use my existing 403(b) ROE account with the 6% DCSD contribution for the 2% match?
No, you must establish a separate account and contribute at least 2% of your base salary.
What if I have more than one 403(b) account?
Please complete the Optional TIA Payroll Deduction Form & select the designated account to use for the match program.

DeKalb County School District's Supplemental Retirement 2% Match Program

ALL ELIGIBLE FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE!

The Supplemental Retirement 2% Match Program is a tax deferred savings program where the BOE contributes 2% of an employee's base salary into a 403(b) account held with one of the four BOE approved optional investment and retirement providers – Fidelity, VOYA, EMPOWER, formerly MetLife Mutual, and Corebridge formerly AIG/AVLIC.

The employee must contribute at least 2% of his base salary into an approved DCSD 403(b) account, AND the DeKalb County School District (DCSD) will contribute a 2% match.

ELIGIBILITY

To participate in the 2% match program, an employee must meet the following criteria:

- Full-time employees enrolled in TRGERS with at least five (5) years of continuous full-time employment with DCSD after January 1, 2011
- Full-time employees enrolled in PSEERS with at least two (2) years of continuous full-time employment with DCSD after January 1, 2011
- Contribute at least 2% of their base salary into an approved DCSD 403(b) account (Fidelity, EMPOWER, Corebridge, VOYA)

IF INTERESTED & ELIGIBLE FOR THE 2% MATCH PROGRAM, YOU MUST:

1. Establish an account with one of the DCSD approved 403(b) vendors (see attached vendor list). If you currently have an established account with one of the approved vendors, DCSD will automatically apply the 2% match to your account.
2. Complete the Enrollment Form (see attached form).

NOTE: The 403(b) ROE account (with 6% DCSD contribution) established for employees with a Public Schools Retirement System (PSEERS) pension is excluded. You must create a separate account for the match program.

Completed forms may be mailed, hand-delivered, or faxed to the Division of Human Resources – Retirement Services
1301 Museum Industrial Blvd, Stone Mountain, GA 30083
FAX Number: 678-676-0187 | EMAIL: retirement@dekalbcountyga.gov

PLEASE NOTE
If you **DO NOT** have an established account, all contributions made via payroll deduction will be returned to the employee. The employee must establish an account directly with an approved 403(b) vendor prior to enrolling in the program.

TO RECEIVE THE 2% MATCH EFFECTIVE ON THE APRIL 15, 2024 PAYCHECK EMPLOYEES MUST ENROLL DURING THE PERIOD OF FEBRUARY 15, 2024 - MARCH 15, 2024

Fidelity **EMPOWER** **VOYA** **corebridge**

Wellness Program – T.H.R.I.V.E – a DCSD Holistic Wellness Program

Employee well-being is vitally important to maintaining a good work-life balance. It is a retention booster and attracts talent. We want employees to feel happy and be happy to work.

March 2024 Events

- Wellness Center in operation M-F, 4p-6p with weekly activities
- Districtwide HealthyWage Weight Loss Challenge is Jan 26 to April 19
 - A team of 5 with the highest percentage of weight loss could win \$10k
 - A DCSD team that reaches their goal will win \$1,500
 - The Wellness Program sponsored 100 DCSD Employees
 - To date there are 130 participants entered in the challenge



- Atlanta Hawks Fundraiser 3/13/24 to 4/10/24
- Retirement Planning 3/14/24
- TRS In-Person Pre-Retirement Workshop 3/18/24
- Social Security Webinar 3/19/24
- Smart Grocery Shopping – Kaiser Permanente – 3/21/24
- Joint Replacement (Emory) Webinar 3/22/24
- Lunch and Learn EE Wellness **In-Person and Virtual 3/29/24**
 - Session promoting oral health, fitness, and overall wellbeing w/partners – LA Fitness, Be Well SHBP, and Art of Aesthetics Dentistry
 - Complimentary lunch provided
 - 100 in-person participants; open virtual format



Marissa Key

(Executive Director of Employee Relations)

Employee Relations and Leadership Development is collaborating to host the third and final Legal Symposium for the 2023-2024 SY. The Symposium will be held on April 30, 2024, for Central Office Leaders that did not attend the February Symposium.

The 2024 Georgia Legislative Session's final day (sine die) is March 28, 2024. The governor has 40 days, after sine die, to determine whether to sign the bill — creating a law — or to veto the bill. Employee Relations continues to monitor bills that may be signed into law. Legislative updates will be provided to leaders during the summer.

Mr. Erick Hofstetter
Chief Operating Officer

Antwyn Brown
Deputy Chief Operations Officer

On Behalf of Erick Hofstetter COO and Antwyn Brown, DCOO; Please click link below for our Division Newsletter

[Operations Division News Letter](#)

Dr. Connie Walker
Executive Director of School Nutrition Services

DCSD School Nutrition Services (SNS) recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are integral to students' well-being, development, and academic achievement in school. Schools offer the perfect setting to support various wellness activities fostering optimal health, safety, and learning. In support of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and the DCSD Wellness Board Policy EEE, School Nutrition Services provides annual training on the Wellness Policy/Regulation implementation.

From December 2023 through February 2024, SNS conducted four training sessions. Topics covered and discussed included:

- The district Wellness and committee requirements
- Implementation of the Wellness Regulation
- Wellness school level scoring criteria 80 - 100%
- The annual Wellness evaluation tool
- Mandated annual public posting of Wellness scores
- Smart Snacks (included taste testing)
- The portfolio submission process

SNS offered Wellness meetings to DCSD principals (or designees), school level wellness representatives, school nutrition managers, and assistant managers. To date, 135 wellness committee members have participated in these training sessions. Two virtual make-up sessions are being scheduled to ensure committee members have access to the Wellness Teams Conference and materials presented during the training. Wellness portfolios are submitted to the SNS office prior to the end of the school year. Our benchmark is 90-100% compliance.

Bernando Brown
Director of Student Transportation

I am excited to share the outcome of our recent Professional Development Day, held on March 8, 2024. With the theme "TOGETHER WE ARE DRIVING FORWARD," part of our focus centered on fostering inclusion and amplifying the voices of all members within the Transportation Department.

Throughout the day, the resounding message conveyed to our team was clear: "We want and need your input to drive Transportation Excellence in DCSD." It was emphasized that every individual's perspective and opinion are valued and integral to our collective success.

As part of our commitment to ensuring every voice is heard, we have implemented a new initiative. QR codes for surveys have been strategically placed at various locations, including fueling stations, fleet areas, supervisor offices, and transportation lounges. These surveys provide an accessible platform for all transportation staff to share their feedback, ideas, and concerns. The message accompanying these QR codes reinforces the importance of participation: "Please participate—your voice matters!"

We believe that by actively soliciting input from our team members, we can better understand their needs and perspectives, ultimately leading to more informed decision-making, improved service delivery, and employee success!

Moving forward, we are excited to see the positive impact of this initiative on our department's culture and performance. We remain committed to fostering an environment where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute to our shared goals.



Cedric Burse
Director of Fleet & Fleet Maintenance

Improving Culture

Enhancing our organizational culture is a top priority and requires a comprehensive approach to cultivating a supportive and nurturing work environment. Fleet managers and supervisors are committed to fostering clear, transparent communication and engaging employees with empathy and understanding. In an effort to support “team culture”, Supervisors convene with their teams at least twice daily: firstly, at the start of shifts, to assign tasks, discuss priorities, and ensure resource availability, Secondly, a brief 5–10-minute meeting is held at the end of shifts to review achievements, address challenges, and adjust future assignments as needed.

Feedback from both technicians and supervisors has been overwhelmingly positive, with a notable reduction in uncertainty and increased collaborative engagement between technicians and their supervisors. One technician appreciated the effort, stating, "I can see the effort managers and supervisors are putting in; I just hope it continues." Another highlighted the benefits: "Knowing what parts are available saves me unnecessary trips to the parts counter." I take pride in the wholehearted commitment of my managers and supervisors to drive cultural improvement by implementing the H-PRIDE philosophy.

School Bus Air Conditioning Project

The school bus air conditioning initiative remains a top maintenance priority. Under Kenneth Parmer's (Fleet Maintenance Manager) leadership, the AC project progresses seamlessly without any setbacks. Currently, 67 school buses have been successfully retrofitted with AC units. This is a significant progress benchmark when coupled with the daily management and control of the Fleet Maintenance Center! Kenneth's determination has motivated the vendor to ramp up HVAC retrofit installations from 4 buses per week to 6 buses per week to reach our goal of 225 buses retrofitted with HVAC by September 30th.

Richard Boyd
Director of Design and Construction



On March 12th, Design & Construction teamed up with Facilities Maintenance to participate in the 'Careers on Wheels Day' at the Early Learning Center. Senior Project Manager Chante' Lemon talked to the students about construction jobs and Grounds Operators showed the students how the equipment works. Many of the honorary construction project managers received plastic hard hats, had the opportunity to touch the equipment, and heard about various kinds of construction projects.

Participation in this event served as enrichment not only for the students, but also for the teachers who were intrigued by Ms. Lemon's project experience; especially when they learned how instrumental she was in the renovation of the facility into the Early Learning Center as the project's Project Manager! The enrichment extended to the Equipment Operators where the students gained more insight into what Project Managers do. Also, the contractors and Project managers both were able to engage the younger generations they were inspiring while being recognized by the stakeholders for the work they do - another way how Operations supports and promotes student career exploration This event, and others like it, reveals all the H-PRIDE core values in one setting.

Bobby Moncrief

Director of Facilities Services

The Facilities Management team is making monumental innovational strides and team building awareness in the Division of Operations. We take pride in our achievements and are excited to share these moments.



National Facilities Management and Technology Conference: Three of our managers had the incredible opportunity to attend this prestigious conference in Baltimore. They explored the industry trends and technologies, from innovative building solutions to sustainable practices. Armed with invaluable knowledge, they are ready to share their insights with our entire team!



APPA Supervisor Toolkit Training: Two of our skill trade supervisors took part in an intensive training course focused on adequate facilities supervision. From defining roles and

responsibilities to navigating organizational policies, they have honed their skills to lead our team to even greater heights.



New Boiler Training at EL Miller: Our HVAC Techs gathered at EL Miller for specialized training on our newly installed Riello boilers. These innovative boilers are now the standard for all DCSD properties, ensuring optimal performance and efficiency.

Installed Boilers: The Facilities and Maintenance Department installed two new boilers. One of the boilers was installed at Druid Hills HS, and the other at the Silver Hills Administration site.



Brightening Briar Vista ES: We are thrilled to announce the installation of new outside lighting at Briar Vista ES! This upgrade was a welcomed success, especially after the recent time change, enhancing safety and visibility for all.



Record-Breaking Work Orders: This month, our Facilities team completed a remarkable 1293 work orders, with 1022 new ones created. Our commitment to excellence and efficiency remains unwavering as we strive to meet and exceed expectations.



Celebrating Achievements: A round of applause to Mr. Lester Rollins for earning his ProFM credential and to Ms. Cambe Humphrey for completing the IAQ Manager Course with Indoor Sciences and attaining her certification. Their dedication to professional development inspires us all!



Silver Hills Administration Building: Work continues this vital project, reflecting our ongoing commitment to excellence in every aspect of our facilities.



Keith Singleton
Director of Business Services



We continue the Warehouse reorganization project. The picture is an example of optimizing security for high-dollar items and preparing space for the highly anticipated "Storefront" project .



Warren Technical School

DEKALB COUNTY SCHOOLS

REGISTRATION

INFINITE CAMPUS



TRANSLATE

DISTRICT HOME

DCSD NEWSLETTER

PARENTS

SCHOOL NUTRITION

BUS ROUTES

QUICK LINKS

What's New in Graphic Communications?

[Print this Article](#)

Posted Monday, November 13, 2023

A select few from Warren Tech's Graphic Communications program have been selected to participate in Work Based Learning at the DCSD Copy Center, located at the district office. Students were excited before boarding the bus, they chatted with each other about what kind of machines would be there and if they would be using machines different from those in the classroom.


It was a silent ride to the AIC building, but once inside students were greeted with warm smiles, handshakes, and even a huge Welcome Warren Tech Banner mounted on the wall. As students toured the shop, each member of the team explained their role and the machines they operate on a regular basis.

Students shadowed different team members asked questions about all of the machines they never knew existed and enjoyed a sweet treat at the end. After the first experience, the students were filled with questions about returning to the Copy Center, the large sheets of paper they carried, and the machines they hope to be assigned to next time.

Business services continue to welcome many new talents to our department. Each staff member brings a wealth of inspiration, adding to our department's collectiveness. The printshop dedication extends to every part of the DCSD Community and School. The Printshop services have a collaborative effort involving Warren Technical School and the DCSD Copy Center in their Graphic Arts Work Based Learning Program, which started with the Copy Center/ Mailroom staff and the Warren Technical School students in the following Operations newsletter. This collaborative effort involved Warren Technical School and the DCSD Copy Center in their Graphic Arts Work-Based Learning Program, which started in November 2023. We are so proud of these students' individual progress in learning the basic concept of digital printing and all the equipment and its functions in the copy center. The students attend every Wednesday for a few hours and shadow different staff members in the Copy Center who are willing to share their experience with the variety of equipment operated daily.

Hans Williams
Director of Planning & E-SPLOST/CIP Programming

Planning & E-SPLOST is the key to innovations at its finest as we revolutionize, ensuring every child's educational journey is smooth and seamless.

 **Mapping the Future:**

Our dedicated staff collaborates with the GIS Department of DeKalb County Government and DCSD's IT Division to update our list of known addresses in the District. With our state-of-the-art geolocation tool, we are not just mapping addresses – we are verifying attendance zones with pinpoint accuracy! The Planning Department prides itself on transparency as we ensure every student finds their rightful place in our educational system.

 **Empowering Families:**

We are not just updating databases with our annual update process. We are empowering families! We ensure that new students and their families know their neighborhood school, fostering a sense of belonging from the first day. Plus, we are identifying invalid addresses and students attending schools outside their zones, guaranteeing success and equity for all.

 **Ensuring Accountability:**

Our commitment to transparency extends beyond school district zoning and rezoning. We are also pleased to support the E-SPLOST IV and V audit conducted by Plante Moran. Our staff is working tirelessly to provide auditors with access to all digital and physical materials needed to complete the audit. Also, we are here to answer any questions about financial journal entries, ensuring every dollar is accounted for.

Mr. Byron Schueneman
Chief Financial Officer

During the month of March, the financial team

- Completed the implementation of Munis' Student Activity Module (SAM).
- Continued to work towards 100% of schools being comparable, only two remain.
- Met several times, providing budget, general ledger detail and funding detail to counsel for charter school litigation.
- Pushed to supply all requested information for the SPLOST and ESSER audits.
- Completed the FY23 financial statements for audit by Mauldin and Jenkins.
- Developed new strategies for the Payroll/HR Munis implementation and completed parallel 2 and began parallel 3.
- Made significant progress on the FY25 general fund budget. With ESSER III ending, health insurance increasing for certified and classified employees, and mandatory salary increases, we will have to carefully craft our FY25 budget and be selective on which priorities to fund.

Lauren Scott
Deputy Chief Financial Officer

Budget

The budgeting team is well underway with the FY25 budgeting process. For divisions, all operational budgets have been submitted within the Allovue platform and existing positions have been compared and contrasted to the FY24 budget. Requests to modify or add positions have all been submitted to Human Resources. School Allocations have been calculated and distributed. Initial revenue estimates are also in. Now that all requests are in, we are starting to see an overall budget shape up. Next, the budget team will be reviewing each line item for reasonability. Any new initiatives will have to be presented to and evaluated by the Superintendent. Based on the available resources, we will have to be very selective about which initiatives can be funded.

Lance McConkey
Comptroller

ERP - School Activity Module (SAM)

Implementation of the MUNIS school activity module is complete. All Bookkeepers have received Phase 2 training. The Local School Accounting (LSA) team continues to assist Bookkeepers as they become familiar with the new module.

ERP – Human Resources/Payroll

The Accounting team continues to focus on proper reporting to all retirement and investment vendors. Since the implementation of utilizing MUNIS payroll for 12-month employees, Accounting has ensured proper reporting during the transition, which involves combination of reports from both systems and manually creating reports in some instances.

Last Wednesday, 3.27.2024, Finance’s Business Services Department met with the Retirement Manager vendor discussing updates and improvements related to retirement and investment reporting. These updates and improvements will benefit Finance with consolidating reporting functions and District employees with better access to their information. Discussions will continue and implementation will occur once all payrolls are properly processed through MUNIS.

ESSER Surveys

GDOE’s Financial Review Division requires all District to complete annual surveys. To date, Finance has submitted surveys covering ESSER 1-3. After the completion and submission of ESSER 1 & 2 surveys, GDOE received updated survey forms for districts to use, therefore, updates are needed to both of those surveys. The ESSER 3 survey was updated by GDOE prior to being sent to districts, and therefore, the submission done March 11, 2024, shouldn’t require any updates. Finance will work collaboratively with the ESSER team to complete. These updates, along with two additional surveys are due by April 26, 2024.

FY 2023 Financial Statements and Audit

Mauldin & Jenkins (M&J) continues to work with the Finance's Business Services Department to complete the FY23 financial statements and audit.

Tyler MUNIS PACE Trainings

The Finance's Business Services Department has the following trainings scheduled through the Tyler MUNIS PACE program.

1. Revenue (Cash Receipts Imports, Modify Invoices, General Billing) – April 2nd
2. Payroll (Payroll Invoice Processing, Payroll Deduction Processing, Payroll Fund Recon., State Reporting, etc.) – April 15th, 17th, and 24th
3. SSRS Reports & Cubes – April 30th
4. Financial (Bank Recons., COA Segments, Month End Manager, Year End Close) – May 6th, 7th, and 9th

Dr. Milton Hall

Director of Allotments

In collaboration with the Department of Human Resources, FY25 Allotment Meetings are underway with newly identified principals as well as principals with 0-3 of experience. These meetings are onsite visits in which the focus centers around:

1. Ensuring that principals understand the allocations process and how allocations were awarded to their schools for FY25.
2. Identifying opportunities for increasing funding through program participation (EIP/REP, ESOL, Gifted, etc.) and revisiting historical data to explain how the school earned in previous years.
3. Ensuring that Position Controls Specialists are present in our meeting as a means of cleaning up the local school's rosters so that principals are aware of who may be sitting on their rosters along with what funding sources are being utilized. This is necessary to eliminate potential roadblocks when hiring qualified candidates.

The Allotment Team is still researching neighboring (Metro-Atlanta) districts on EIP delivery models, and the level of support given to their districts in effort to re-evaluate or enhance DCSD's support (*We anticipate that this effort will ultimately assist in minimizing DeKalb's funding loss opportunities*). Also, the team is attending SIS Virtual Scheduling sessions where we can address questions related to QBE earnings, State Reporting questions and answer Allotment-related questions. The team will also be present for the April 27th Job Fair at Miller Grove High School to support principals as it relates to Allotments.

The Allotment team is currently awaiting the outcome of the most recent GaDOE upload with hopes that we will be comparable as a district for FY24. The last submission was uploaded March 29, 2024. From the 21 initially identified schools in January, the district is now down to only two (2) schools in which one (1) is a charter center.

Carla Smith
ED of Vendor Services

A Finance Academy Wednesday Refresher was held to discuss topics that support bookkeepers and administrative assistants in being Super Stars! Approximately 120 people attended the Request for Check session this month. The session walked them through the travel reimbursement process and introduced them to a new method for tracking local mileage for itinerant employees. This process will eliminate the need for MapQuest to track school visits and verify miles from school to school.

On March 15, procurement training was held for bookkeepers who require additional assistance. This session allowed the attendees to pick the topics they needed most. The interaction was terrific, and everybody was engaged in the discussion.

The procurement year-end is quickly approaching. The last day for schools to use the purchasing card was March 22, and the last day for schools to enter requisitions will be April 15. Currently, we have processed 12403 purchase orders year to date, and counting!

Mr. Elijah Palmer
Chief of Staff

Plante Moran Update for SPLOST IV and V

Weekly updates with FORVIS are still happening. We have been seeing major progress since I stepped in as the Chief of Staff to support Audits and Compliance. I have been supporting Mr. Thibodeaux in making sure that divisions are being responsive in getting those documents to Plante Moran in a timely manner. A change in the scope of work had to be modified recently so that Plante Moran could send over 7 of their staff members to come in person to DCSD to obtain documents that are stored and housed at Sam Moss along with AIC in our finance division. This item must be approved by the board to ensure we can meet the deadline for completing it by the end of May.

FORVIS Update for ESSER and CARES

Weekly meetings are still occurring with me, Mr. Thibodeaux, and various departments to ensure we are getting the documents to FORVIS to finish the audit by the end of May. Collaborations with Finance, DIIT, Accountability, and Operations have allowed FORVIS representatives to move closer to providing the final report to their findings to share with our Board and Superintendent. This is a major priority of the Chief of Staff Division and Mr. Joel Thibodeaux is leading this charge and doing an excellent job as well.

MIRACLES Workshop #7

Cabinet members came together on March 25th to present their updates for the past 30 days. Some divisions introduced new priorities that they were responsible for. Overall, we saw divisions complete 8 priorities for the day as we celebrated their accomplishments. Board Members, Mrs. Anna Hill and Mrs. Whitney McGinniss were in attendance to spend the day with cabinet leaders along with Superintendent Horton. This is another way to show that we are honoring the “C” tenet Commitment to

Accountability. We have made major updates in our tasks and priorities across the district.

Public Safety

Chief Wright and I have been meeting to make sure that we are evaluating certain processes as they relate to school safety at our schools. Some systems need to be revisited to make sure that all stakeholders are aware and is being consistent across the district. HB 147 has been at the center with making sure we are honoring deadlines by the state for DCSD. Also, we want to make sure that Administrators have shared the updates with their educators, so that everyone is on one accord in case of an emergency. With Centegix and EVOLV systems being able to provide a sense of security across our district, we need to make sure our policy and procedures are also updated, and all are familiar with the processes.

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 the Insight Education Group consultant.
- The Strategic Plan Stakeholder Survey closed on February 16, 2024, with 8,399 responses. The survey re-opened on March 8, 2024, for additional stakeholder feedback.
- The next Steering Committee meeting will be held on March 21, 2024, 5:30-7:30 PM, AIC Board Room. Meeting Objectives: Provide an overview of goal structure (anatomy of a goal) & target number of goals for DCSD strategic plan. Draft possible performance objectives for each goal and identify measures of progress.
- The third 2-hour BOE work session will occur in April 2024.
- The district website under the 2024-2029 Strategic Plan section is updated after each Steering Committee and BOE work session with agendas and presentations.
- Conducted Strategic Plan Focus Group Sessions in the seven Board Member Districts March 8 (Virtual); March 11-14 (Face-to Face & Virtual); March 21 (Virtual)

Accreditation

The Cognia Commission released the final report for the Monitoring Review that was held in November 2023. Cognia has concluded that DeKalb County School District has met expectations for ***Cognia Performance Standard 1.5 – The governing authority adheres to a code of ethics and functions within defined roles and responsibilities.***

Since the district has met the expectations regarding the Monitoring Review, the district will be contacted again when it is time to host the routine Accreditation Engagement Review prior to June 30, 2027.

On March 6, 2024, during the Called BOE meeting, Dr. Andre L. Harrison, Vice President of Accreditation Services at Cognia presented an overview of the Monitoring Review Report and discussed the next steps with the Board of Education and Superintendent.

Mr. Joel Thibodeaux
Director of Internal Audits and Compliance

ESPLOST Comprehensive Audit (Plante Moran)

Our current challenge is providing documents for transactions executed prior to implementing Munis. Documents are by-and-large, physical records which do not exist in electronic form. Additionally, process flows were not only different, but also did not follow best practices – which translates to gaps in the audit trail that we are now trying to bridge by providing alternate documentation:

1. Spending approvals
2. Purpose/explanation of expenditure (business case)

Contractor's teams have been onsite since March 13 at AIC, Sam Moss, and WBBC for document collection. We have identified most of the necessary records and are now providing assistance to Plante Moran in their collection process. The current delivery timeline relies heavily on the production and delivery of these pre-Munis' records to the Plante Moran team.

Audits & Compliance is expecting a significant status update on April 3, which should provide a clear picture of what to expect in the upcoming report and when DCSD can expect delivery.

- The projected end date for the project (delivery of final report) remains May 31, 2024.

CARES/ESSER Comprehensive Audit (FORVIS)

Document collection and analysis has continued at an accelerated rate. Some high-level documentation is still being sought, but transactional documents are pretty much all accounted for. DCSD and the contractors are now in close collaboration for providing all outstanding requests and responses to auditor questions related to deviation from documented processes.

Our update meetings are well attended, thanks to Mr. Palmer's support as Chief of Staff. Additionally, Federal Programs has taken lead on requests dealing with early implementation and execution.

We still expect completion of the report in late April, early May. Thus far, this forensic exercise has demonstrated that our systems have greatly improved over the past 2-3 years and in fact, our Procurement to Payment process is substantially improved to the point that many of the issues that have been discovered and documented have already been addressed or resolved through DCSD's organic process improvement efforts.

- Additional updates –
 - Forensic procedures on CARES are complete, with observations and findings being used to evaluate ESSER II and ESSER III activity.
 - Development of the Draft report is underway as additional information is submitted by DCSD staff and analyzed by the FORVIS team. Collaboration sessions that include internal staff and the FORVIS team are scheduled as needed to advance and advise on the process.
 - The Draft report is projected to be delivered in late April 2024. The final report is scheduled to be delivered by the end of May 2024, contingent upon DCSD's timely reply/response to draft report.

School Audit Plan (Internal)

School Audits Completed:

Redan High School, Southwest DeKalb High School – audit reports have been transmitted and exit conferences are being scheduled. EAs from the High School Area have also been invited to exit conferences, as the Area office is expected to support Principals in implementing process improvement recommendations.

Current Audits:

Cedar Grove High School, Dunwoody High School, Lithonia High School – fieldwork is nearly complete at Lithonia High School while auditors are still onsite at Cedar Grove and Dunwoody conducting interviews, process analysis, and documenting sponsor account management.

- Initial audit reports that include recommended corrective actions were delivered to the school principals. Exit conference scheduling was requested at the same time.
- Final reports that include the principals' responses should be released within 2 weeks of the exit conferences. Audits will request support from the HS Area office if delays can't be resolved at the school administration level.
- Area EAs received report copies and have been invited to the exit conferences for these initial audits to establish the process for managing process improvement.
- Starting with the next set of reports, Area Superintendents (or EAs) will be invited to exit conferences only in situations where major non-compliance with internal procedures, Board Policy, or state law are included in audit findings, or if requested by the Area Superintendent or Principal.

Fleet Services Audit (Internal)

An audit of the Fleet Services department in the Division of Operations is continuing with minimal delays. The Fleet Services team has provided support for all aspects of this engagement, including interfacing with other departments for information, interviews, and documents.

Cedric Burse, Fleet Services Director has initiated a new MIRACLES initiative focused on developing Administrative Guidelines (SOP) for vehicle funding, purchasing, and assignment of

support vehicles for identified district departments. Audits & Compliance plans to release an early summary of findings in the Vehicle Procurement area to assist Mr. Burse with developing his project plan.

Remaining areas of engagement:

- Fuel – Purchase contract management, fuel distribution management and access procedures
- Vehicle Maintenance – Inspection, maintenance scheduling, emergency SOPs, Parts management
- Vehicle Disposal procedures

Current updates:

- Completed interviews with
 - 3 Service Advisors: Damonte Gates, Lilvonna Burnett, Denatcia Young
 - Fleet Managers: Kenneth Parmer, Fleet Operations Manager I, Long Bus, Kelvin Curtiss, Fleet Operations Manager I, Short Bus
 - Finance: Vickie Holt, Capital Assets Manager
- Interviews focused on the following:
 - Daily Process and Responsibilities
 - Fleet Vehicles (Yellow Fleet & White Fleet) Annual Inventory Process.
 - Data sharing & access to RTA & Samsara software.
 - Installation/Maintenance/Repairs inquiries
- Project completion and report delivery remains scheduled for the end of April 2024.

Interim Chief Larry Wright
Executive Director of Public Safety

In Workshop # 7 Public Safety has continued to push all priorities. Two of these priorities have not been achieved, which are the EVOLV Weapon Detection System and Legacy program. Both have a timeline of June 2024.

Evolve Weapon Detection System

Lt. Terrence Smith
Operational Lieutenant
Property & Evidence Manager

During the school year 2022-2023, data has shown that the weapons recovered was extremely high. A total of 117 weapons were recovered. This school year

2023-2024 it has only been 30 weapons recovered, most being knives and 3 being handguns.

The Evolv systems are still operating sufficiently in all middle and high schools. In April, the remaining system should be delivered to the stadiums and additional requested schools. Student flow is smooth and waiting periods are still being decreased. As of 08/07/2023 to 03/15/2024 there have been 9,106,299 visitors to walk through the Evolv Systems. There have been 1,708,128 alerts with an average clear rate of 81% and threat rate of 19%. Most alerts (threats) have been categorized as Benign (123,883), laptops, umbrella, eyeglass cases, and mobile devices, other.

Legacy

Sergeant Zandra Jackson

Sector 1 Supervisor

Community Outreach Coordinator

The Legacy director has met with mentors and presenters to discuss topics and subject matters that will be taught during various sessions. Contact has been made with the school nutrition department and we decided to follow the previous breakfast and lunch menu that was served during Legacy program 2023. We have started identifying students that will be attending the program and transportation is needed, such as car or bus rider. The program is set to be held at Dr. Ronald E. McNair High School.

Carolyn Lloyd

(Executive Director of Board Operations)

The Board Office works tirelessly each month to make sure that the district and the board are prepared each month for our Board meetings. This involves communicating Simbli deadlines, pre-agenda, agenda setting dates, keeping minutes, following up with district staff, monitoring Simbli uploads, responding daily to Board, Chief of Staff and Superintendent requests, special projects, events, etc. This work is ongoing every month.

The BOE presented its 2024 legislative priorities at the January BOE meeting. The Georgia General Assembly wrapped up the 2024 legislative session by adjourning Sine Die (the last day of the legislative session) on Thursday, March 28th. The BOE worked diligently with our lobbyist throughout this legislative session on key

issues in support of the district's mission, goals, and legislative priorities. We are pleased that HB531 passed the House on March 21st. We are now focusing on getting the Governor's signature.

Election qualifying took place the week of March 4 through the 8th. The May 21st elections will change the composition of the Board of Education. We will have at least three new board members starting in 2025 for districts 1, 5 and 7. One additional seat, district three, is up for election. The district celebrated National Board of Education Week during the March 11th board meeting. The Board office continues to work each month in service to the BOE, Superintendent and the district.