Institution Progress Report

DeKalb County School District
Stone Mountain, GA

Prepared for the AdvancED® Monitoring Review Team

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OVERVIEW TO THE INSTITUTION PROGRESS REPORT

Purpose
The Institution Progress Report engages the institution in a detailed review and analysis of the steps it has taken to address the Required Actions outlined by the AdvancED Special Review Team. The institution uses the report to document progress and/or help prepare for the AdvancED Monitoring Team Review. The institution completes and submits the report within specified timelines for required progress updates and/or at least two weeks prior to a scheduled Monitoring Team Review. AdvancED reviews the completed report to ensure sufficient progress is being made toward the Required Actions of the Special Review Team. In addition, the report is used by the Monitoring Team, if applicable, for its on-site progress review.

Structure of the Report
The Institution Progress Report is organized around the Required Actions in the Special Review Team report. The institution should list each of the Required Actions from the Special Review team report, and for each, indicate a Performance Level score and provide a detailed response describing the steps it has taken and the results obtained. It is the responsibility of the institution to address each of the Required Actions made by the Special Review Team as required in the Special Review Team report. If a Monitoring Review has occurred, the Institution Progress Report should also address Directives that the Monitoring Team included within the Monitoring report that are designed to help in meeting the Required Actions.

Institution Progress Report

DeKalb County School District hosted a Monitoring Review team on December 8-10, 2014. Through interviews with institution stakeholders, observations, and reviews of institution documents, the team developed a Monitoring Review Team report detailing its findings from the review.

The Monitoring Review Team report contained specific Required Actions for the institution. The institution is responsible for addressing each of the Required Actions. Below, please provide a response regarding progress made toward meeting each Required Action from the Monitoring Review Team report along with a Performance Level score for each Indicator.

Introduction

After DeKalb received a Special Review Team Visit from AdvancED in the fall of 2012, AdvancED sent notice to DeKalb County School District that the school district's accreditation status was dropped to Probation. In January, 2013 when widespread news of the district's new accreditation status and the possible loss of accreditation from AdvancED was known, it was quite troubling to DCSD stakeholders and citizens of DeKalb. Next, in early February, 2013, the Superintendent resigned, and the Board appointed Mr. Michael L. Thurmond as the Interim Superintendent. Also, in February, 2013, the Governor of Georgia removed six of nine sitting Board of Education members. The Governor's action was the direct result of the school district's Accredited Probation status. In March 2013, the Governor replaced the Board Members that had been removed with individuals appointed from a pool of applicants representing each affected district.

During the same time period, the school district was facing a financial crisis resulting from a budget deficit greater than $13,000,000.00. Stakeholder confidence in the school district was low due to the perception of (1) Board interference in day to day operations of the district, (2) nepotism in hiring and promotions, (3) mismanagement of taxpayer funds and (4) an overwhelming sense of dysfunction in district and school leadership.

However, once the new Board and Interim Superintendent were in place, documented changes to Board of Education policies, procedures, training and norms began to occur. The Board and Interim Superintendent worked to stabilize the district. Board policies regarding nepotism, Board of Education governance practices, hiring practices, and Board Member conduct were revised or strengthened. The Interim Superintendent collaborated with the Chief Financial Officer and Finance Department to address the budget deficit. As a result of that collaboration, strict spending controls and more effective budget practices were put into place.

The Board and Interim Superintendent also concentrated on addressing the eleven (11)) Required Actions given by AdvancED. The Interim Superintendent commissioned a cross-functional team of district and school-based leaders to respond to the Required Actions. The group was called the AdvancED Core Team. Five of the eleven Required Actions were Board of Education concerns. The remaining six centered on strategic planning, change management, teaching and learning, instructional technology, equity /access of technology /resources, parent portal and financial operations.

The Interim Superintendent and Chief of Staff met extensively with technical advisors from AdvancED. The DCSD leaders sought advice and support for the district's efforts to improve the overall condition of the DCSD. They requested that technical advisors provide guidance (1) as the District worked to produce an effective response to the Required Actions and (2) as the District developed a process for nurturing a systemic culture of continuous improvement.

In May 2013, the AdvancED Monitoring Team visited DCSD. The report from that visit indicated that the District had made significant progress in addressing the eleven Required Actions. However, the district remained on Accredited–Probation.

When the Monitoring Team returned in December 2013, the team found strong evidence that the school system was continuing the process of transitioning from "a culture centered on the Board's behavior to a culture focused on the needs of the students with the day-to-day operations being led

by the Superintendent." At that time, the Monitoring Team agreed with the Board and DCSD that Required Actions 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 had been completed. Therefore, based on information gained from the Monitoring Team Visit, AdvancED elevated the district from Accredited-Probation to Accredited-Warned.

When the Monitoring Team returned in May, 2014, it was found that DCSD was continuing to make progress toward completing Required Actions and moving forward in developing a culture of continuous improvement. At that time, the Monitoring Team recognized that Required Action 6 had been completed. However, to ensure that the District kept focus on sustaining all completed work, Required Actions 12, 13, and 14 were added to the list of required actions for DCSD.

In December, 2014, the Monitoring Team again visited the school district. The team found documented evidence that Required Actions 1 and 14 were completed. Based on that visit, the accreditation status was moved to Accredited on Advisement. However, AdvancED noted that the Board would need to focus on sustaining improvement processes currently in place, as they progressed through the Superintendent hiring search. It was also noted that the Board must do the same when making the decision to become a charter system, IE2 district or other option as required by the State of Georgia (School Flexibility Options).

Therefore, in view of the information contained in December, 2014 Monitoring Report, the December, 2015 IPR attends to the remaining Required Actions. Responses provided in the three Required Actions (RA) describe steps the Board of Education and district have taken to complete the directives given by AdvancED. The IPR demonstrates how best practices have been utilized to ensure compliance with AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems and to continue moving in the continuous improvement cycle. The IPR is divided into the Introduction, Required Actions 3, 12 and 13, Conclusion, and Addendums (1, 2, and 3).

Since the District received the December, 2014 Monitoring Report, the Board of Education completed an approximate six-month search for a permanent superintendent that culminated in the appointment of Dr. R. Stephen Green as the Superintendent of DeKalb County School District. The comprehensive search included widespread input from the Board of Education and stakeholders across DeKalb County. Feedback from community engagement meetings, surveys, and Board meetings was used to identify the Superintendent's Position Profile. The Board also recognized the public's desire to be part of the actual selection process, which in turn, led to the Board soliciting and utilizing the expertise of a diverse panel of stakeholders from Board districts throughout the county. The group, known as the Community Liaison Group, reviewed candidate applications and ultimately provided the Board with a slate of candidates from which the Board chose Dr. Green. An extensive narrative of the process used by the Board to select Dr. Green is detailed further in Addendum 1 of the Institution Progress Report.

The Board and new Superintendent have continued the process of selecting a Flexibility Option in compliance with Georgia law. The School Flexibility Option decision process has resulted in the Board receiving much input and feedback from a wide range of stakeholders. The school flexibility decision is listed as one of Superintendent Green's focus areas for 2015-2016. Detailed information is provided in the School Flexibility Report found in Addendum 3.

The Board and previous Superintendent carefully reviewed and revised Board of Education Policy BAB in May, 2014. The revised policy eliminated language that could be used to circumvent the

Superintendent's authority to manage the day to day operations of the district. Details regarding the changes made to the policy are provided in RA 3. Additionally, the district reconvened the Policy Revision Committee first begun in 2010 to ensure that policies are reviewed on a consistent basis as required in RA 13.

Over the past year, the Board of Education has been diligent in the continual work on the self-assessment process. The work is in conjunction with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia and is detailed in RA 12. Additionally, the district has fully implemented the Strategic Plan. Benchmark metrics have been identified for the district and monitoring of results is on-going. Stakeholders are able to readily visualize all aspects of the Strategic Plan on the reconstructed DCSD Strategic Plan web page. The Change Management for Continuous Improvement process is being implemented throughout the district and is embedded in the Strategic Plan as it was originally designed. Additionally, the Superintendent's initiatives are aligned to the goals of the Strategic Plan and are also contained in the Strategic Plan.

When Dr. R. Stephen Green began his tenure in DCSD, new initiatives were put into place that enhanced and continued the on-going work of the district. The Superintendent implemented an education framework that is built on the philosophy of a sustainable curriculum using effective instructional strategies that encompasses an accountability-driven environment. Dr. Green stated, "We will have a laser focus on rigor, relevance, and relationships that speaks to the importance of learning and the engagement relationship between the student, teacher, and parent. Teaching and learning is the CORE business of the district and everything else (e.g. human resources, finance, facilities, technology) is wraparound support."

In order to better familiarize AdvancED with the new Superintendent's vision, the Institution Progress Report (IPR) contains the Superintendent's framework known as Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability (CIA^2). It is the plan the district is implementing to ensure that the central focus of the district is concentrated on effective teaching and learning.

Information regarding CIA^2 is found in Addendum 2 of the IPR. Additionally, the final portion of the report to AdvancED (Addendum 3) provides significant information regarding the Superintendent's focus areas. Each focus areas describes how the district is working to address matters regarding student achievement, college-career readiness, school flexibility, special education reconstruction, and testing and assessment The inclusion of the focus areas helps to explain how the Superintendent's initiatives support, strengthen, and further district efforts to sustain improvement practices now and for the future. Information regarding the Superintendent's focus areas are in Addendum 3.

The full report will show that the district is unwavering in its commitment to providing all students with academic opportunities to be successful in college or as a member of the job force. It will also demonstrate how the district has addressed, completed and is able to sustain all fourteen (14) Required Actions and each related Directive assigned by AdvancED so that students of DeKalb County will graduate from a fully accredited school system.

REQUIRED ACTION 3: *Establish and implement policies and procedures that ensure segregation of duties of the governing board and that of the administration including the elimination of Board working committees which result in board members assuming administrative functions that should be the responsibility of appropriate staff.*

1. Evaluate Section B of the DeKalb County Schools Policy Manual to eliminate any Conflicts with Policy BBC-- Board Committees

Progress Status: Indicate the progress the district has made toward addressing the required action.

X	**Completed** – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
	In Progress – The district is currently working to execute the actions and processes but has yet to fully implement all the necessary actions to address and/or complete the required action.
	Have Not Addressed – The district has not taken any action at this time.

Response and Evidence: Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The steps taken to address the required action/directives; 2) the evidence supporting those steps; 3) the institution's next steps with regard to the Required Action; 4) the results/impact of the steps taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the steps taken.

In May, 2015 Board Policy BAB: School Board Governance was revised. The policy revisions in BAB were put in place to ensure that previous potential conflicts in Section B of the DeKalb Policy Manual and Policy BAB have been removed. The revised wording in Policy BAB eliminated phrasing that held the possibility of interference by current or future Boards of Education in the day to day operation of the district. Wording in Policy BAB strengthened the Board's commitment to ensuring separation of roles between the Board and Superintendent. The Board also placed controls in Policy BAB and the Board of Education Manual to ensure that Board members adhere to the policy.

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

We have met this Required Action and (1) Directive by taking the following steps:

1. Board Policy BBC: Board Committees was last revised on February 18, 2013. Since 2013, the Board no longer has board committees. The policy abolished standing committees and set parameters that the Board must use when circumstances dictate that it has become necessary to form a short-term committee. The policy ensures that the purpose for any short-term committee must be clearly identified. The committee must be abolished once the task has been addressed. These specific short-term committees are also known as "ad hoc committees."

2. Board Policy BAB: School Board Governance was revised on May 4, 2015. In the revision, the Policy sets forth the limitations in which the Board is to operate and work with the

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Superintendent. References to Board contact with stakeholders have been clarified or removed to ensure that any possible current or future conflicts are reduced and eliminated.

3. On March 26, 2015 the Board of Education held a retreat at the offices of Nelson, Mullins, Riley and Scarborough, LLP in Atlanta, GA. During the retreat, the Board reviewed the Board Member Handbook and Board Norms in entirety to ensure that all sitting Board members, including newly elected Board members, received training regarding (1) the roles and responsibilities of Board of Education members and (2) the Board agreed upon set of norms for behavior of members as related to school board governance.

4. During the 2015-2016 school year, the District reinstituted the Comprehensive Policy Revision process through the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA). This division is responsible for ensuring that the online policy manual is reviewed on a cyclical basis as warranted by the need to update board policies and associated administrative regulations. OLA has devised a core team representing key departments of senior staff, attorneys, and support staff. They hold the responsibility to:
    - Review and identify existing policies for revision
    - Identify policies that do not exist that should be created
    - Solicit input from community on new/revised policies
    - Receive input and feedback from internal and external stakeholders
    - Present policies to the board for review, approval, and adoption

Evidence to Support the Steps:

The completion of the Required Action and (1) Directive is evidenced by the following:

1. When Board Policy BAB: School Board Governance was revised on May 4, 2015, the Board demonstrated commitment to ensuring separation of duties of Board Members and the Superintendent. During the process of revising Policy BAB, the Board considered the recommendations stated in the December, 2014 AdvancED Monitoring Report and agreed to remove all language that could compromise the integrity of separation of the roles of the Board and Superintendent. The revisions made in Policy BAB clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of the Board from those of the Superintendent. Board Policy BAB link: https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/epolicy/policy.aspx?PC=BAB&Sch=4054&S=4054& RevNo=1.38&C=B&Z=P

2. The Board removed all conflicts with Policy BBI when Policy BAB was revised. Policy BAB clearly states that when Board members plan to visit a school, Board members must follow the process outlined in Policy BBI. (See Policies BAB and BBI) Language regarding Board Members meeting with (formally or informally) or asking for information from senior staff

has been eliminated in Policy BAB. The policy states that Board Members are to direct their questions or concerns to the Superintendent. Board Policy BBI link: https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/epolicy/policy.aspx?PC=BBI&Sch=4054&S=4054&RevNo=1.25&C=B&Z=P

3. Each policy in Section B of the Board Policy Manual was reviewed and compared to Board Policy BBC to determine whether there were conflicts in the policies. No conflicts were found. References to Board Committees in Policies BBA and BC are in compliance with the wording in Policy BBC. Policy BBF Advisory Committees are advisory in nature and are in compliance with the parameters set forth of Policy BBC. There are no references to Board Committees in Policy BAB: School Board Governance. School Board Operations Section of the Board Policy Online Manual: https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/ePolicy/Listing.aspx?S=4054&Sch=4054&C=B

4. The commitment to continue the Policy Revision Process is evidenced by the Superintendent's decision to place this committee with the Legal Department. Individuals assigned to legal ensure that the District complies with all existing laws, ordinances and statutes. See the Policy Revision Flowchart.

5. The district publishes proposed new policies and amendments to current policies on the district's website for public input for a period of thirty days prior to receiving board approval. The district uses the Georgia School Board Association Guide to policy development to ensure all policies meet federal and state requirements, laws, and rules; advance the best educational interests of all students, and supports the vision and goals of the district. Information is posted in eBoard. EBoard Link to DCSD Policy Manual: https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/ePolicy/PolicyOverview.aspx?S=4054&sch=4054

Next Steps for the Required Action:

In order to sustain the work that has been completed for RA 3 and Directive 1, the next steps for the Board and district are to continue to implement the Policy Review Process so that all policies remain current, comply with state, local and federal laws and do not conflict with other policies. The Board must remain committed to on-going Board training to ensure that Board members understand and maintain separation of Board roles and responsibilities from that of the Superintendent. Board members must be diligent in supporting the Superintendent's authority to manage the day to day operations of the district.

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

The results or impact of the steps taken ensures that the Board and district have a systemic policy review process that provides written procedures for reviewing and revising policies.

The revisions made to Board Policy BAB eliminated wording that was confusing and could have been a potential source of conflict between Board Members and the Superintendent. The changes made to Policy BAB clarified procedures stakeholders are to follow when requesting information from the Board and district. The revisions to Policy BAB also addressed the concerns that AdvancED noted in the December, 2014 visit.

The Board's commitment to ensuring that all Board members know and understand how to implement effective governance procedures, including roles and responsibilities, was demonstrated during the March 26, 2015 Board Retreat. The agenda included full board training and review of the DeKalb Board of Education Policy Manual Handbook.

Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:

The long-term plans to sustain the results /impact of the Required Action are to utilize continued professional learning by the full Board to ensure understanding of roles and responsibilities of Board members and in using best practices for policy development, implementation and monitoring. The work will also be sustained by the Board as they practice effective governance strategies as they work with the Superintendent to lead the District.

Required Action 12: *Develop systematic and systemic processes to ensure the continued implementation and sustainability of the continuous improvement efforts of the DeKalb County Board of Education in establishing and sustaining the Board as a highly effective governing body.*

1. Eliminate the provisions in Policy BAB – School Board Governance that are in direct conflict with the roles and responsibilities of board members.
2. Develop and implement a Self- Assessment evaluation process to include Board Norms as well as to evaluate whether or not the Board's decisions and actions are in accord with board policies and procedures and the Board's defined roles and responsibilities.
3. Adopt and implement an annual professional learning plan to promote and sustain the Board's capacity to govern the school system that includes full board training in accordance with state law.
4. Develop and implement a plan to collect feedback from stakeholders at specified intervals to determine the nature of the school system's climate including the capacity to maintain trust between the system and its stakeholders. The Board and Superintendent must assess stakeholder survey results, the board's self-assessment and staff perceptions to determine how much progress is sustained over a period of time. Further, the Board and Superintendent should analyze the results of crucial decisions (such as the cluster charter petition) to determine how lingering issue of mistrust and lack of transparency surrounding issues may be effectively addressed.

Progress Status: Indicate the progress the district has made toward addressing the Required Action 12.

X	**Completed** – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
	In Progress – The district is currently working to execute the actions and processes but has yet to fully implement all the necessary actions to address and/or complete the required action.
	Have Not Addressed – The district has not taken any action at this time.

Response and Evidence:

Over the past three years, the current DeKalb Board of Education has been diligent in its pursuit of changing the culture of the Board. From the initial Board meeting in March 2013, to the present, the Board has worked to write or revise policies that have moved the district beyond the dysfunction that had been prevalent in past Boards of Education. One of the most sweeping changes to Board Policy was the creation of Policy BAB: Board Governance. Since the Board first adopted the policy, it has been revised in an effort to strengthen the policy and ensure that it reflects effective governance strategies.

The Board has utilized Board Retreats as opportunities to develop a board self-assessment model, review the DeKalb Board Policy Manual, which outlines protocols that members practice when implementing duties of the Board and implement the professional learning plan. The following action steps demonstrate the Board's commitment to sustaining the work that has taken place over the past three years.

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

We have met this Required Action and (4) Directives by taking the following steps:

1. Board Policy BAB: School Board Governance was revised on May 4, 2015. In the revision, Policy BAB identifies parameters in which the Board is to operate and work with the Superintendent. References to Board contact with stakeholders were clarified or eliminated to protect against current or future conflicts as recommended in the February, 2015 AdvancED Monitoring Report.

2. Board Policy BAB: Language regarding Board Members meeting with senior staff (formally or informally) or asking for information from senior staff was eliminated in the May 4, 2015 revision of Policy BAB. The policy states that Board Members are to direct their questions or concerns to the Superintendent.

3. The May 4, 2015, Policy BAB revisions state that Board member visits to schools must follow the procedures written in Policy BBI.

4. Policy BAB was revised to clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of the Board from those of the Superintendent.

5. The Board used the DeKalb Board Policy Manual as a full board training tool to review the roles of the Board of Education and outline the roles of the Superintendent during the March 26, 2015 retreat. The Policy Manual can be found at www.dekalb.k12.ga.us.

6. On March 26, 2015 the Board of Education held a retreat at the offices of Nelson, Mullins, Rile and Scarborough, LLP in Atlanta, GA. During the retreat, the Board reviewed the Board Member Handbook and Board Norms in entirety to ensure that all sitting Board members, including newly elected Board members, received the same information regarding the roles and responsibilities of Board members and the Board agreed upon set of norms regarding civility and behavior of members as related to Board Governance in DeKalb County.

7. During the Retreat, the Board Chair proposed that the Board consider having an outside entity such as the Carl Vinson Institute of Government from the University of Georgia assist the Board in establishing a process to use to conduct annual self-assessment. After discussion, the Board agreed to seek the services of the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia to assist the Board to develop a self-assessment process that demonstrates Best Practices.

8. On October 13, 2015, the Board held its second annual Retreat at the DeKalb Administrative and Instructional Complex (AIC) during which The Carl Vinson Institute of Government facilitated the discussion of the Board of Education's Comprehensive Plan, including the Self-Assessment and Board Norms.

9. The Board Chair convened the retreat in which Dr. Philip Boyd and Dr. Russ Cook of the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government facilitated the meeting. The discussion centered around three important concepts in relation to developing a tool for Board Self-Assessment; Board Norms; Board development and learning; Stakeholder feedback regarding communication, relationships, climate and trust.

10. On December 8, 2015, the Board of Education held the third Retreat of 2015. The purpose of the retreat was to continue the work of developing the self-assessment process. Personnel from the Carl Vinson Institute of Government provided board members with a working document entitled "DeKalb Board of Education Board Self-Assessment." Discussion for the retreat centered on introduction and reasons for the current construction of the document. The basis for the document was taken from information provided during the October 13 Board of Education Retreat. The document was built on five foundational principles of effective board governance and operation. The document also provided the

Board with connections to AdvancED standards and GSBA governance principles. The principles were identified as:

- Identifying, Defining, and Clarifying the Governing Board's Purpose, Roles, Responsibilities, and Relationships.
- Building a High-Performing and High-Satisfying Governing Board
- Strategic Navigation-Building a Collectively-Owned Vision, Mission, and Goals
- Community Building-Strengthening Connection, Belonging, and Public Engagement
- Future Forward-Building a Legacy and Sustainability (See the Board Retreat notes)

11. The Board, through consensus, agreed to continue the process of developing the self-assessment process. The board decided that the next retreat will focus on section one of the document and the Proposed Board Development and Assessment Process: Governance Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.

12. During the October 5, 2015 Board of Education Business Meeting, the Board voted to approve the 2014-2015 Local School Board Governance Annual Training Report for the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE). The signed form was forwarded to GADOE as required.

13. The District has conducted annual surveys, since 2012, regarding (1) issues identified as important, (2) the District's performance on selected issues, (3) parents' attitudes about the District, and (4) the parents' awareness and usage of feedback tools provided by the district.

14. The Board utilizes a plethora of ways to collect feedback from stakeholders including: Public Hearings, Community Input Sessions, surveys, stakeholder advisory groups, social media, and DCSD website. Annually, the Communications Department solicits input from a public opinion survey. The information from the surveys informs the Board, Superintendent, and staff of what issues are most important to the stakeholder community and provides leading indicators of items the District needs to address. The Board is able to set priorities for financial resource planning and policy planning and the Superintendent is able to use the information for operational planning. The Superintendent also uses the information for improvements for public transparency of information, core business planning for instruction, financial planning for people resources, materials, and goods, and work needed to improve stakeholder trust. Monthly, the Board solicits input from stakeholders prior to each monthly Board Meeting during the Public Comment session. Each speaker receives a written response to his /her comments through the U.S. Postal Service. On-going feedback opportunities are provided during community meetings, social media outlets and telecommunications. The Superintendent holds "On the Scene with Dr. Green" meetings across the five geographical regions at the school level during the school

year. This is an opportunity for parents, students, stakeholders, and teachers to share feedback with the Superintendent any topic, concern, and issue. This information is collected and used for strategic and operational planning for the district. Stakeholders are also given an opportunity to email their information at DCSD_Communications@DeKalbSchoolsGA.org. The schedule for the 2015-2016 school year include: September 29, 2015, November 19, 2015, January 21, 2016, March 29, 2016 and April 12, 2016. See attached flyer.

15. A sampling of the annual survey includes a statistical graph of stakeholder feedback on those issues most important regarding DCSD. The survey included issues such as quality of education, high quality teachers, classroom funding, safety, overcrowding, teacher-parent communications, school nutrition, curriculum, test scores, transportation, equality for children, management of funds, accreditation, superintendent, behavioral/discipline issues, teacher salaries/benefits, and leadership. The information obtained from the surveys is used to inform the Board and Superintendent of the stakeholder issues for strategic planning purposes. Also, the Board and Superintendent use feedback as an opportunity to engage stakeholders in the decision making process and/ or in the refining of plans such as the DCSD Charter application

16. During the October 5, 2015 Board of Education Committee of the Whole meeting, the district provided the Board with the following update regarding School Flexibility in DeKalb:
    - A presentation was made to the Board regarding final revisions to the charter application to submitted to the Board for approval
    - However, after hearing concerns made by the Board, examining input provided from the most recent community meetings, and reviewing comments made during the public hearings, the Superintendent recommended to the Board that DCSD consider other options for flexibility, particularly around a Strategic Waivers School System (formerly IE2 and the support of charter clusters.
    - The Board agreed and voted to continue investigating options for school flexibility.
    - In a Communique" from the Superintendent to the Board of Education dated October 9, 2015 the following information was given regarding School Flexibility Options:
    - On October 5, 2015, the District met its obligation to hold two Public Hearings on the current draft of the charter application. Along with the presentation to the Board at the Committee of the Whole, the input and suggestions from the community allowed the Superintendent and Board to consider other options for flexibility, particularly around a Strategic Waivers School System (formerly IE^2) and the support of charter clusters
    - On December 3, 2015, the full Board attended a one-day GSBA workshop at the Renaissance Waverly in Cobb County, GA in which they received training on the Strategic Wavers School System (SWSS) school flexibility option.

Evidence to Support the Steps:

The completion of the Required Action and (4) Directives is evidenced by the following:

1. The Board of Education completed RA 12: Directive 1 by revising Board of Education Policy BAB: School Board Governance. The revised policy eliminated wording that AdvancED identified as problematic and put controls in place to ensure that the Superintendent is able to manage the day to day operations of the district without interference by the Board of Education. The Board participated in professional learning activities that were focused on understanding the roles and responsibilities of board members as noted in the BOE state approved professional learning plan and in local Board training (retreats). Board Policy BAB link: https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/epolicy/policy.aspx?PC=BAB&Sch=4054&S=4054& RevNo=1.38&C=B&Z=P

2. The Board of Education completed RA 12: Directive 2 by working to develop and implement a Self- Assessment evaluation process to include Board Norms as well as to evaluate whether or not the Board's decisions and actions are in accord with board policies and procedures and the Board's defined roles and responsibilities. Since March, 2015, the Board has been engaged in using the services of the University of Georgia (UGA) Carl Vinson Institute of Governance (CVIG) to create a self-assessment process and tools to use to evaluate Board policies, actions, and procedures. This will be a year-long commitment with UGA-CVIG. See DeKalb Board Building_UGA_CVIG Proposal.

3. The Board developed and approved Board Norms in 2013, which are still used. The Board was retrained on the Board Norms during the March 2015 Board retreat. See the DeKalb Policy Manual found at www.dekalb.k12.ga.us or https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/ePolicy/PolicyOverview.aspx?S=4054&sch=4054

4. The Board of Education completed RA 12: Directive 3 by adopting and implementing an annual professional learning plan that promotes and sustains the Board's capacity to govern the school system that includes full board training in accordance with state law. The professional learning plan was adopted and approved by the Board during the October 5, 2015 Board of Education Business Meeting. The Board voted to approve the 2015-2016 outline of professional learning to be offered from State Board of Education providers. The professional learning is in accordance with GADOE and is a means to ensure on-going professional learning of Board members is based on identified needs of the Board. The plan was remitted to GADOE as required. See the copy of the PL document submitted to the GADOE. See attached Local School Board Governance Training Report for 2014-2015, Local Board Training Plan for 2015-2016.

Additionally, the Board remitted the 2015-2016 Local School Board Governance Annual Training Report to the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE). The signed form was forwarded to GADOE as required. The form ensured that all veteran and new board members completed the required number of required training hours. Each member verified by signature the number of credit hours earned, maintain the Code of Ethics, and maintain Conflict of Interest. The form was signed by the Superintendent and submitted electronically to GADOE as required. See the document submitted to the GADOE. See attached Local School Board Governance Training Report for 2014-2015, Local Board Training Plan for 2015-2016.

In March 2015 during the Board retreat, the full board reviewed the entire DeKalb Board Policy Handbook. Included in the Handbook are specific expectations that are required by Board members regarding completion of professional learning hours. See the Board agenda. The Policy Manual can be found at www.dekalb.k12.ga.us or https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/ePolicy/PolicyOverview.aspx?S=4054&sch=4054 See attached BOE Retreat Agendas.

5. The Board of Education completed RA 12: Directive 4 by developing and implementing a plan to collect feedback from stakeholders at specified intervals to determine the nature of the school system's climate including the capacity to maintain trust between the system and its stakeholders. The Board utilizes a plethora of ways to collect feedback from stakeholders including: Public Hearings, Community Input Sessions, surveys, stakeholder advisory groups, social media, and DCSD website. Annually, the Communications Department solicits input from a public opinion survey. Monthly, the Board solicits input from stakeholders prior to each monthly Board Meeting during the Public Comment session. Each speaker receives a written response to his /her comments through the U.S. Postal Service. On-going feedback opportunities are provided during community meetings, social media outlets and telecommunications. A sampling of the annual survey includes a statistical graph of stakeholder feedback on those issues most important regarding DCSD. The survey included issues such as quality of education, high quality teachers, classroom funding, safety, overcrowding, teacher-parent communications, school nutrition, curriculum, test scores, transportation, equality for children, management of funds, accreditation, superintendent, behavioral/discipline issues, teacher salaries/benefits, and leadership. The information obtained from the surveys is used to inform the Board and Superintendent of the stakeholder issues for strategic planning purposes. Also, the Board and Superintendent use feedback as an opportunity to engage stakeholders in the decision making process and/ or in the refining of plans such as the DCSD Charter application. The following is an account of how DCSD uses stakeholder feedback in decision-making:

During the October 5, 2015 Board of Education Committee of the Whole meeting, the district provided the Board with the following update regarding School Flexibility in

DeKalb. A presentation was made to the Board regarding final revisions to the charter application to submitted to the Board for approval. However, after hearing concerns made by the Board, examining input provided from the most recent community meetings, and reviewing comments made during the public hearings, the Superintendent recommended to the Board that DCSD consider other options for flexibility, particularly around a Strategic Waivers School System (formerly IE2 and the support of charter clusters. The Board agreed and voted to continue investigating options for school flexibility.

In a Communique" from the Superintendent to the Board of Education dated October 9, 2015, information was given regarding School Flexibility Options that stated:

On October 5, 2015, the District met its obligation to hold two Public Hearings on the current draft of the charter application. Along with the presentation to the Board at the Committee of the Whole, the input and suggestions from the community allowed the Superintendent and Board to consider other options for flexibility, particularly around a Strategic Waivers School System (SWSS)(formerly IE^2) and the support of charter clusters. See the copy of the Superintendent's Communique'. See Issue 14, Communique.

After consideration of flexibility options provided by the State, the Superintendent recommended that the Board consider the SWSS option for DeKalb.

On December 3, 2015, the full Board attended a one-day GSBA workshop at the Renaissance Waverly in Cobb County, GA. During the workshop, the Board received training on the Strategic Wavers School System (SWSS) school flexibility option.

On December 7, during the Board of Education meeting, the Board voted to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to submit an Intent to Apply Letter to the State Board of Education for DCSD to apply to become an SWSS district. See the Intent to Apply Letter and copies of the Superintendent's Communique'.

Further evidence of the District's commitment to obtain community feedback and use for shared decision making is the approach used in the Cross Keys Cluster overcrowding issue within the District. Stakeholder engagement and collaboration was used in order to develop several options for consideration. Over 1,000 parents participated in the community meetings on September 15 and 17, 2015. Collaborative discussions were held with various support agencies (i.e. Cross Keys Foundation Mexican American Legal Defense, Latin American Association and Center for Pan Asian Community Services). The major themes from the community sessions were captured and provided back to the stakeholders. The BOE and Superintendent used the stakeholder feedback to refine the options and included the desires and needs of the community. See Cross Keys presentations, feedback document, and community flyers.

Next Steps for the Required Action:

In order for the Board to continue to make progress and ensure that the work begun since 2013 is sustained, the Board must provide on-going self- monitoring so that all current or future Board members adhere to Board policies, especially Board Policy BAB. Therefore, continued participation in professional learning provided by GADOE and other governance trainings is a priority. The Board must continue to develop, implement and evaluate its effectiveness by utilizing the self-assessment process. Finally, the Board must continue working to strengthen the trust of stakeholders by adhering to policies and procedures, as well as continuing to work cooperatively with the Superintendent and stakeholders.

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

The results/impact of the Steps Taken have been positive. The work of the Board and Superintendent has created a cultural shift within the DCSD. The attention of the district is on Teaching and Learning rather than on adult issues. The Board maintains awareness of the need to keep the roles of the Superintendent and Board of Education separate and within appropriate boundaries. There is a sense of urgency among Board members to ensure that stakeholders know and understand the chain of command of the DCSD

The understanding of the need for professional learning has been internalized by board members, and professional learning is being utilized to increase knowledge and in developing skills become a high-performing Board of Education. The willingness by the Board and Superintendent to listen and act upon feedback from stakeholders is rebuilding trust and hope.

Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:

The long term plans to sustain the results /impact of the Board include ensuring that governance policies such as BAB are implemented systemically. The controls the Board placed in Board Policy BAB have set the stage for continuation of best governance practices of both current and future Boards of Education. The self-assessment process ensures that the Board moves forward in continuous improvement. The practice of having required professional learning guarantees that Board members will continue to gain knowledge and develop skills in using effective governance practices.

Finally, the efforts the Board and Superintendent use to engage stakeholders in the education of DCSD students is changing the culture of the district, which will translate into greater student learning outcomes of students.

Required Action 13: *Develop and implement plans, policies and processes to monitor, evaluate and sustain the school systems' continuous improvement efforts.*

1. Establish a plan to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the fiscal policies, procedures and operations of the school system, including a review of all the accounting and financial management systems and resources currently in use.
2. Routinely evaluate the policies adopted to ensure the proper adherence to the chain of command and the ongoing training implemented to the Board and staff to guarantee the sustainability of the changing culture resulting from rigorous adherence to said chain of command.
3. Adhere to plans for the implementation of a systemic change management process for system initiatives (vision, mission, strategic plan, curriculum, benchmark assessment, etc.) to facilitate continuous improvement and sustain effectiveness.
4. Incorporate in the Instructional Software Purchase (ISP) Process a systemic and systematic review and evaluation of the effectiveness of the ISPs at the school and school system levels to determine the impact of ISPs implemented in schools on student learning and achievement and ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students.
5. Develop and implement a plan for the migration to the new parent portal platform, include details and a timeline for implementation, training and communication.
6. Develop and implement the strategic plan with fidelity, maintain a systemic and systematic process of accountability based on the plan, and sustain governance and management structures designed to monitor, evaluate and communicate the school system's progress on the plan's implementation.

Progress Status: Indicate the progress the district has made toward addressing the required action.

X	**Completed** – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
	In Progress – The district is currently working to execute the actions and processes but has yet to fully implement all the necessary actions to address and/or complete the required action.
	Have Not Addressed – The district has not taken any action at this time.

Response and Evidence: Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The steps taken to address the required action/directives; 2) the evidence supporting those steps; 3) the institution's next steps with regard to the Required Action; 4) the results/impact of the steps /focus areas taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the steps taken.

There are multiple directives included in Required Action (RA) 13. The directives in RA 13 correlate to previously completed Required Actions. The steps taken to address each of the directives are focused on the work that has been completed since 2013.

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

We have met this Required Action and (6) Directives by taking the following steps:

Directive No.1:

We have met Directive No. 1 by taking the following steps:

1. Instituted financial systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of fiscal policies, procedures and operations of the school system, including a review of all accounting and financial management systems and resources. Documents and systems evidencing the financial monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of our fiscal policies currently in use are:
     - Annual External Independent State Audits of the prior Fiscal Year
     - Required Annual Independent ESPLOST Performance Audit
     - School Books Software; including monthly reconciliation statements from the schools
     - Monthly Financial Reports to the BoE indicating revenues collected and expenditures versus projections and prior year actuals
     - Variance Analysis Report added to end of Monthly Financial Reports
     - Vendor Spends Reports and accrual analysis sent to the BoE monthly
     - Budget Status Reports sent out to the Division heads, Regional Superintendents, Unit Managers, and Principals on monthly basis
     - Requested Employee Verification Reports to Grant Administrators

2. The Consolidated Fiscal Budget as adopted on June 17, 2015 for FY2016 totaled $1,532,686,640 and contained projections relative to ending Fund Balance amounts as of June 30, 2016. Within this amount is $955,718,278 for the General (K-12) Operating Budget containing an appropriated (expense) amount of $874,489,990 exclusive of an end of FY2015 Fund Balance of $92,839,991.
     - In structuring the FY2016 General Operating Budget, total Local Revenues of $439,282,793 were employed, in addition to $435,564,835 in anticipated State QBE funds. These two amounts of anticipated revenues total the appropriated expense total of $874,489,990 – exclusive of the indicated fund balance amount. Additionally grant funds, mostly federal, are also budgeted within the Special Revenue Budget that are tied to the classroom. The specific line item amounts that are tied to the classroom within the General (K-12) and the Special Revenue budgets for FY2016 are as indicated below:

	General (K-12)	Special Revenue	Total
Budgeted Expenditures			
Instruction	$581,430,258	$76,051,250	$657,481,508
Pupil Services	38,489,656	3,356,518	41,846,174
Instructional Staff Services	13,501,244	17,241,867	30,743,111
School Administration	56,628,344	95,074	56,723,418
Capital Outlay	6,544,569	10,941,758	17,486,327
Total Expenditures	$696,594,071	$107,686,467	$804,280,538

The completion of the Required Action and directive No. 1 is evidenced by the following results relative to the reestablishment of a positive fund balance within the General Operating Budget:

At the closure of and reporting to the State of the operating results for FY2012, it was determined that the DCSD had an operating deficit (General Fund unassigned Fund Balance) of ($14,462,972). The DCSD submitted its first monthly deficit elimination report to the State during February 2013. By the end of FY2013 the deficit had been eliminated and a positive fund balance had been booked in the amount of $3,658,000. By the end of FY2014 the positive fund balance had increased to $40.4 million (as audited by State). Our internal determination of the General Operating Fund fund balance is presently at $92+ million for the end of FY2015. Better budgetary controls and revenue estimation by the Finance Division, in cooperation with the other Divisions, have made the rebuilding of the fund balance possible.

- The impact of having an adequate fund balance in the general operating fund is that it provides greater flexibility relative to planning to allocate additional resources to the classroom in order to enhance student performance on a short and long- term basis.

3. Systems that were set up to monitor and evaluate our Fund Balance (fiscal policies) which put in place the accounting and financial management controls making possible the rebuilding of the General Operating Budget fund balance, and which remain in place to support our sustainability efforts are:
   - Quarterly Budget to Actual expenditure analyses on a Division and School basis as reviewed periodically throughout the fiscal year.
   - Monthly Financial Reports to the BoE indicating revenues collected and expenditures versus projections and prior year actuals
   - Variance Analysis Report added to Monthly Financial Reports
   - Vendor Spends Reports and accrual analysis transmitted to the BoE monthly
   - Budget Status Reports sent out to the Division heads and Unit Managers on monthly basis

- Monthly Financial Reports transmitted to the Board and Superintendent showing in detail revenues collected and expenses incurred.

- Each Monthly Financial Report has included a Variance Analysis Report indicating actual revenues collected compared to projected collections along with actual expenses compared to projected expenses.
- Monthly a Vendor Spends Report is prepared and transmitted to the Board and Superintendent indicating payments to all vendors on an accrual accounting basis.
- Monthly Budget Status Reports are sent to each Budget Unit Manager indicating their actual expenditures as compared to Budget.
- Completed External Independent State Audits for FY2013 and FY2014 indicating the positive growth of the prior deficit Fund Balance to $40+million as of the end of FY2014.

Directive No. 2

We have met Directive No. 2 by taking the following steps:

1. Board Policy BAB: School Board Governance was revised on May 4, 2015. In the revision, the Policy sets forth the parameters in which the Board is to operate and work with the Superintendent. References to Board contact with stakeholders has been clarified or removed to ensure that any possible current or future conflicts are reduced and /or eliminated.
   - Language regarding Board Members meeting with (formally or informally) or asking for information from senior staff has been eliminated in Policy BAB. The policy states that Board Members are to direct their questions or concerns to the Superintendent.
   - Policy BAB was also revised to specifically state that Board member visits to schools must follow the procedures outlined in Policy BBI; thus, eliminating possible conflicts.
   - The revisions made in Policy BAB clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of the Board from those of the Superintendent.
   - The DeKalb Board Policy Manual outlines the roles of the Board of Education and outlines the roles of the Superintendent.
2. On March 26, 2015 the Board of Education held a retreat at the offices of Nelson, Mullins, Rile and Scarborough, LLP in Atlanta, GA. During the retreat, the Board reviewed the Board Member Handbook and Board Norms in entirety to ensure that all sitting Board members, including newly elected Board members, received the same information regarding the roles and responsibilities of all Board members and the Board agreed upon set of norms regarding civility and behavior or members as related to Board Governance in DeKalb County.
   - On October 1, 2015, a district level team met to review the 2010-2013 policy review and revision plan

- During the October 1 meeting, plans were made to reconvene the district-level Policy Review Team based on the practices established in 2010 updated to reflect the use if systemic change management processes whenever a Board of Education policy is recommended for review and revision by the Superintendent
- System-wide procedures and forms were updated to use to continue the policy revision process continue
- On November 2, 2015, the Superintendent notified the Board of the updated Policy Revision Process

3. During the October 2, 2015 Board of Education Business Meeting, the Board voted to approve the 2014-2015 Local School Board Governance Annual Training Report for the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE).
    - The signed form was forwarded to GADOE as required.
    - All veteran and new board members completed the required number of required training hours.
    - Each of the two new board members earned 18 hours each and the veteran members earned a range of 9-15 hours each
    - Each member verified by signature the number of credit hours earned, maintain the Code of Ethics, and maintain Conflict of Interest
    - The form was signed by the Superintendent and submitted electronically to GADOE as required.
    - Individual Board Members completed professional learning hours as stated in the Board Handbook as part of the total comprehensive professional learning plan for the Board as included in the DeKalb BOE Fiscal Year Agenda and Planning / Training Calendar
    - Additionally, during the 10/5/15 Board Meeting, the Board approved the 2015-2016 outline of professional learning to be completed from State Board of Education providers

        o The outlined professional learning is in accordance with GADOE and is a means to ensure on-going professional learning of Board members based on identified needs of the Board.
        o The plan was remitted to GADOE as required.

Directive No: 3

We have met Directive No. 3 by taking the following steps:

1. The Change Management for Continuous Improvement process and its components were embedded into the District's Strategic Planning process.
2. The Strategic Plan, comprised of the Division and School Continuous Improvement Plans, provides the organization with a roadmap to address areas that are most impactful on student learning. The overall process is summarized below:

- A change in practice, performance, and/or structure is initiated based on a need that is supported by multiple data sources and identified as an initiative.
- The initiative is connected to a goal area and performance objective.
- An implementation plan is created to address the initiative. The plan contains performance measures (S.M.A.R.T. Goals) with baseline data and yearly targets.
- The implementation plan is executed. Prior to executing the plan, action steps are identified along with the primary person responsible, budget implications, data to be collected (artifacts), and dates for internal progress monitoring.
- The implementation plan is monitored quarterly through data collection (artifacts) and whether or not the initiative is having a positive impact on practices and student learning. In addition, Regional Superintendents conduct collaborative school visits monthly to see evidence of progress. Cross-divisional/departmental meetings are scheduled to discuss implementation successes (celebrations), challenges, and next steps. This also offers an opportunity to focus on the initiatives that require intensive collaboration across divisions/departments.
- Final results based on actual performance are shared with leadership team (District and school).
- Changes to the Strategic Plan (initiatives and action steps) are made based on the evaluation results and whether or not the initiative produced the desired outcome. This sustains the work over time.

Directive No. 4

We have met Directive No. 4 by taking the following steps:

The DeKalb County School district is dedicated to embedding equitable access to a 21st Century Learning Environment for all students. Although the district has made huge strides towards these goals, several steps have been taken to ensure the district remains on this path.

1. **DCSD eStore**
   The district has fully implemented the DCSD eStore which continues to support the need to monitor and manage the Instructional Software Purchase (ISP) Process. The eStore provides all staff members with equitable access to view available instructional software and hardware approved for use in the district. However, principals and bookkeepers have the capability to actually submit requests for purchase. The eStore utilizes the district's Change Management for Continuous Improvement process to manage the evaluation and approval of technology tools not included in the eStore.   Authorized staff must submit a form that activates a workflow process that includes review and evaluation from several divisions. As a result, the eStore application is able to capture data that can be used to measure return on investment as well as alignment to the district's strategic plan.

2. **Launchpad Student Portal**

In August 2015, the district launched a student portal to ensure all students have equitable access to the digital resources provided at the district and local school levels. Once instructional software is approved and purchased through the eStore, the Information Technology Division collaborates with the divisions of Curriculum and Instruction, School Leadership and Operations and Finance to ensure that these resources are available to the students and teachers. The student portal allows students to sign in once and gain access to email account, productivity tool, and the Infinite Campus portal.

Directive No. 5

We have met Directive No. 5 by taking the following steps:

Infinite Campus Portal

1. During the 2014 – 15 school year, DCSD fully implemented Infinite Campus as the district's Student Information System (SIS). Infinite Campus Portal was also implemented as the new Parent Portal application. In order to increase the use of the Infinite Campus Portal, parent and student support was decentralized to the local school level.
2. Information Technology trained local school staff to support parents or students with registration as well as resolve issues. In addition, local school staff members were also trained to run reports that identify parents who do not have accounts.
3. As the district continues to provide flexible access to resources, the ability to launch the Infinite Campus Portal has also been added to the Launchpad student portal.

Directive No. 6

We have met Directive No. 6 by taking the following steps:

1. **2013-2014 Development of a five-year Strategic Plan**

   Addressed in previous AdvancED Institution Progress Report submissions.

2. **2014-2015 Implementation and Accountability**

   Implementation of the district's Strategic Plan began in the 2014-2015 school year. A systemic and systematic process of accountability was developed and implemented. Performance measures, with baselines and targets, were developed as a way to assess progress toward meeting the performance objectives for each goal area. Initiatives and action steps were also developed to answer the question of "How do we plan to get there?" In addition, a monitoring and data collection process for the Strategic Plan was created and executed. Each division determined what data would be collected quarterly (leading data) and annually (lagging data). Further, a Progress Check monitoring system, built on the plan-

do-check-act (PDCA) cycle for improvement, served as a checkpoint to evaluate progress towards reaching the performance targets. This continuous monitoring and data collection informed the initiatives and identified any course corrections needed.

Ongoing strategic planning sessions for all divisions were conducted throughout the school year. Guiding questions were utilized to provide focus, direction, and opportunities for reflection. In addition, the Strategic Improvement Planning FY15 Comprehensive Review (cross-divisional) was conducted in August and September 2015. This allowed a cross-divisional, collaborative forum to communicate initiatives, actions steps, annual progress (using data for each performance measure), and needs. Using a protocol, each division shared FY15 successes, challenges/barriers, and FY16 next steps. The work of each division was summarized and areas of support were identified. Each division leader also reported annual progress using the end-of-the-year data (Balanced Scorecard) to the Superintendent.

3. **2015-2016 Implementation and Accountability**

FY15 end-of-the-year data (Balanced Scorecard) was used to inform the division plans for FY16. In the strategic planning sessions conducted for each division, the following served as guiding questions:

- What is the purpose of your division (why do you exist?)
- Were the goal areas and performance objectives achieved according to the timelines specified in the plan? If not, why?
- Do personnel have adequate resources (budget, equipment, facilities, training, etc.) to achieve the goals?
- Should the performance measures and initiatives be changed in FY16 to put more focus on achieving the goals?
- What can be learned from monitoring and evaluation in order to improve future planning activities and also to improve future monitoring and evaluation efforts?

The performance measures, targets, initiatives, and action steps for FY16 have been reviewed and revised to ensure the district is on track to reach FY16 performance targets. Ongoing progress monitoring will be conducted and data will be used to inform mid-course adjustments. The FY16 strategic planning sessions for each division were held on October 6, 2015. FY16 plans were revisited and performance measures were examined to ensure they were inclusive of all strategic priorities. The FY16 2nd Quarter Monitoring Cycle and Mid-Year Review (cross divisional) was conducted on November 18th. During this session, a data review was conducted on progress thus far and presented to the Superintendent. The Superintendent, Division Heads, and all Board Members were provided with the FY16 Executive Mid-Year Summary, Mid-Year Data Review, and Progress Checks from each division. Information was also placed on the district's Strategic Plan webpage for full transparency and to keep all stakeholders informed of progress. The data was used to assess the effectiveness thus far of the initiatives and action steps to determine progress and make improvements.

4. **Continuous Improvement Planning with Schools**

   In partnership with GLISI, all schools engaged in Continuous Improvement Planning sessions. During these sessions, schools utilized a participant's guide to conduct a CCRPI data review, analyze the data, and identify needs specific to each school. Support was provided to align, refine, monitor, and evaluate the schools' continuous improvement efforts. School leaders were also able to identify clear, data-driven initiatives, actions, and performance measures. The district's tiered level of support, in the areas of Literacy and Mathematics, was also included in each plan. As a result of partnering with GLISI, a monitoring and accountability system of the continuous improvement effort was strengthened.

   Regional Superintendents attended a two-day institute to develop a protocol, Guiding Questions for Collaborative School Visits that scaffolds observation, discussion, and monitoring of the schools' Continuous Improvement Plans (CIPs). In addition, the Regional Superintendent Monthly Calendar tool was developed in an effort to allow more time to be spent in schools supporting continuous improvement efforts. Regional Superintendents also participated in a session designed to develop inter-rater reliability when reviewing all of the CIPs. The objectives of the session included (1) practice using common criteria for rating the quality of CIPs and (2) identify guiding questions and observations to support CIP effectiveness. CIPs were reviewed and discussed during the principals' LKES preconference. Ongoing monitoring of principals' efforts to implement and achieve targets in the CIPs will be further supported in the district's CIA^2 initiative (Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Accountability). Schools also utilize the Progress Check, built on the plan-do-check-act (PDCA) cycle for improvement, to serve as a checkpoint to evaluate progress towards reaching the performance targets.

5. **Communication of the District's Progress**

   Governance and management structures designed to monitor, evaluate and communicate the school system's progress on the plan's implementation are currently in place and are being sustained. All Board of Education Members, the Superintendent, and Division Heads received the FY15 Comprehensive Review containing:

   - A Strategic Plan FY15 Executive Summary of Progress
   - FY15 Annual Progress Data
   - Progress Checks (PDCA cycle) from each Division

   The Strategic Improvement Planning FY15 Comprehensive Review was presented at the Board of Education Work Session on October 5, 2015. This presentation provided the Board with a detailed view of the performance measures and targets for each goal area, the FY15 Annual Progress Data, FY16 next steps, and an overview of the communication plan for both internal and external stakeholders. Following the Board meeting, the Balanced Scorecard, located on eBOARD, was made live for public view. In addition, the updated Strategic Plan webpage, accessible through DeKalb's homepage, was made public. The updated webpage contains many communication improvements, including a link to:

- Vision, Mission, Beliefs, Goal Areas, and Performance Objectives
- Strategy Map
- FY15 Annual Progress Data
- FY16 Mid-Year Progress Data
- FY15 Executive Summary of Progress
- FY16 Mid-Year Executive Summary of Progress
- FY15 Progress Checks (each division)
- FY16 Progress Checks (each division)
- High Level Timeline
- Balanced Scorecard (eBOARD)
- Submit Feedback

The Board of Education is kept informed of the work with the district's Strategic Plan in the Weekly Communique newsletter. Additionally, in collaboration with the Communications Department, a Strategic Plan informational brochure was developed and published in hard copy and e-copy format for all stakeholders including translation in ten languages, making the information accessible to the international families being served in DeKalb.

Evidence to Support the Steps:

The completion of the (6) Directives is evidenced by the following:

Directive No. 1
- School Books Software evidence are the monthly School reconciliation statements printed out and mailed to Audit and Compliance with an electronic copy to Accounting in Finance Division
- In evidence are the Monthly Financial Reports presented each month to the Board and Superintendent, showing in detail revenues collected and expenses incurred.
- Each Monthly Financial Report has included a Variance Analysis Report indicating actual revenues collected compared to projected collections along with actual expenses compared to projected expenses.
- Monthly Vendor Spends Report prepared and transmitted to the Board and Superintendent indicating payments to all vendors on an accrual accounting basis.
- Monthly Budget Status Reports are sent to each Principal, Budget Unit Manager and Division head indicating their actual expenditures as compared to Budget.
- Quarterly Budget to Actual expenditure analysis by Division and by School
- In evidence are the Monthly Financial Reports presented each month to the Board and Superintendent, showing in detail revenues collected and expenses incurred. This report also indicates on a monthly and YTD basis the expenditures against each line item above shown as being tied to the classroom.
- Select Vendor and complete successful installation of new FMIS/HRIS ERP systems.

- Continue monthly, quarterly and annual analysis of revenue/expense relationship in order to accurately project end of year fund balance position in relation to internal fiscal policies

Directive No. 2
- Revision of Board Policy BAB on May 4, 2015 https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/ePolicy/policy.aspx?PC=BAB&Sch=4054&S=4054&RevNo=1.38&C=B&Z=P
- Board Retreat Agendas
- DeKalb Board Member Handbook http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/documents/board-of-education/board-of-education-handbook.pdf
- Local School Board Governance Training Report for 2014-2015
- Local Board Training Plan for 2015-2016

Directive No. 3
- See evidence in Directive 6 (Strategic Plan)

Directive No. 4
- eStore URL - http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/estore
- Help Document eStore - http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/AbouteStore.pdf
- PDF of Flow Chart for New Requests - http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/eStore Detailed Process.pdf
- PDF Example of a New Request - http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/newprodrequest.pdf.pdf
- LaunchPad Press Release - http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/news-and-events/dcsd-launches-new-student-portal-to-empower-students

Directive No. 5
- Screenshot: Infinite Campus Portal in Launchpad - http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/ICScreenshot.pdf
- Campus Portal Website - http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/infinite-campus

Directive No. 6
FY15 Progress Monitoring 3-31-15
FY15 Progress Monitoring 6-30-15
FY16 Progress Monitoring 11-18-15
Progress Checks (each Division) 3-31-15
Progress Checks (each Division) 6-30-15

Progress Checks (each Division) 11-18-15
FY15 Strategic Plan Executive Summary of Progress 3-31-15
FY15 Strategic Plan Executive Summary of Progress 6-30-15
FY16 Strategic Plan Executive Summary of Progress 11-18-15
FY15 Comprehensive Review video link
FY16 Mid-Year Review video link
Division and School Continuous Improvement Plan templates
Digging Deep into Data: Developing Continuous Improvement Plans participant's guide
Strategic Plan Cross-divisional Protocol
Guiding Questions for Collaborative School Visits tool
Regional Superintendent Monthly Calendar tool
Criteria for Assessing Quality of Continuous Improvement Plans tool
Systems Connections Flowchart
FY16 Session Schedule
Photos from Strategic Planning sessions
Regional Superintendents PPT 5-20-15
Division Meetings PPT 8-4-15
CIP Tuning PPT 9-9-15
Board of Education PPT presentation 10-5-15
Board of Education presentation 10-5-15
eBOARD (Balanced Scorecard)
Brochure
Strategic Plan webpage

Next Steps for the Required Action:

Directive No. 1
Finance, IT and HR Divisions have solicited proposals from the ERP community for a complete new FMIS/HRIS software installation to update the Financial Management and Reporting and Human Resources Management and Reporting (including Payroll) into the current IT environment. Proposals are due back to the Purchasing Department October 6th. This project will enhance Monthly Financial Reporting, Vendor Spends Reporting, Budget Status Reporting, along with providing added detail in the Accounts Payable and Payroll areas. Additional enhanced capability in Budgeting, Accounting, Financial and Grant Reporting are also part of the project.

In structuring future budgets the District will continue to target resources to the classroom in terms of days of instruction, teacher salaries and other related benefits, and technology enhancements.

Directive No. 2
The Board must be diligent in reviewing policies to ensure that current and future board members know and understand the roles and responsibilities of the Board and Superintendent. The Board must maintain strict adherence to the chain of command and must insist that stakeholders follow the procedures identified by the Board and District. It is also important that the Board follow the professional learning plan to continue to develop and extend learning for instituting a culture of high-performance among Board members.

Directive No. 3
This item is no longer a separate action since DeKalb is executing the Strategic Plan and the Change Management for Continuous Improvement process is embedded within the Strategic Plan.

Directive No. 4
- eStore: Add additional functionality within the eStore that will expand reporting and analysis capability.
- Launchpad Student Portal: Continue to expand and optimize availability of resources in Launchpad.

Directive No. 5
Infinite Campus Portal: Activate access to additional functions within the Infinite Campus Portal – student submissions and transportation routes.

Directive No. 6
Sustain the implementation of the Strategic Plan with continued ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and communication of progress towards reaching the goal areas and performance objectives. The FY16 Mid-Year Review was presented to the Board of Education during the meeting scheduled on December 7, 2015 and ongoing reports will be provided periodically throughout each school year.

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

Directive No. 1
All of the above financial /budget steps, including the installation of the new FMIS/HRIS, and the School Books software, will and have had the effect of improving the District's ability to "manage to the budget" thereby better controlling its expenses in relation to revenue collected. This improved Budget Management enhances the District's educational management ability to better plan for resource allocation to improve student performance.

All of the above steps, including the increase of resources targeted to instruction in the classroom has had the effect of improving the District's ability to "manage to the budget" thereby better controlling its expenses in relation to revenue collected. Such improved Budget Management enhances the District's educational management ability to better plan for resource allocation to improve student performance.

Directive No. 2
The results of the steps taken have resulted in a cultural shift within the DCSD. The Board maintains constant awareness of the need to keep the roles of the Superintendent and Board of Education separate and within the appropriate boundaries. There is a sense of urgency among Board members to ensure that stakeholders know and understand the chain of command of the DCSD. Professional learning is being internalized among board members and is utilized by the Board to develop a high-performing Board of Education. The willingness by the Board and Superintendent to listen and act upon feedback from stakeholders is rebuilding trust and hope.

Directive No. 3
Because the process was embedded into the Strategic Plan, DCSD has a systemic approach for managing and monitoring change/initiatives over time, thus ensuring that the work of the schools and district is having a positive impact on student learning.

Directive No. 4
- DCSD is able to provide transparent, clear, and concise communication regarding the approved instructional software programs and technology hardware available to students.
- DCSD is able to leverage economies of scale to negotiate optimal pricing with vendor partners using the eStore.
- DCSD has integrated a systemic and systematic process for approval of new items that utilizes the district's change management process and ensures purchases are aligned to support the goals of the strategic plan.
- The Launchpad student portal provides equitable access to instructional software programs. This access adds another channel of communication as to what technology tools are available for instructional use.
- The Launchpad student portal directly supports the district's commitment to embedding emergent and current technologies that support teaching and learning.

Directive No. 5
- Schools are empowered to increase access to the Infinite Campus Portal; thereby, increasing parental and student engagement.

Directive No. 6
The Strategic Plan has aligned the work of the district from the boardroom to the classroom for the purpose of increasing student achievement and organizational effectiveness. By executing the Strategic Plan with fidelity, student achievement will be positively impacted.

Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:

Directive No. 1
The installation of more current technological software, along with software improvements and with continued monthly, quarterly and annual analyses of revenue collected to expenses, will assist in the efficiency of better budget management practices, thereby, providing more stability relative to controlling and directing resources to the classroom to enhance student performance on a long-term basis.

Directive No. 2
The Board has put policies such as BAB into action. The controls placed on the Board within the policy is setting the stage for continuation of best governance practices for the current and future boards of education. Professional learning is assisting the Board as individuals and as a unit to function at a higher-performing level and is refocusing the attention of the Board to the priority of the district of Teaching and Learning.

Directive No. 3
As long as the process remains embedded in the Strategic Plan and the plan is executed, sustainability will be accomplished.

Directive No. 4

- DCSD Launchpad: The district will continue to evaluate programs and facilitate ease of access to new and innovative instructional software programs that support teaching and learning.

- DCSD eStore: The district will continue to update the eStore with newly approved instructional software programs and other technology tools. In addition, data collected from the review and evaluation process for new tools will be used to determine the effectiveness of instructional software applications.

Directive No. 5

- Infinite Campus Portal: In an effort to ensure long-term sustainability, the Infinite Campus program will continue to automatically create and manage unique, student-specific activation code needed to create a user name and password within 24 hours of a student enrolling in a school. Information Technology will continue to provide training and support to empower local schools to continue to share this information upon enrollment. Access to the portal will remain in the Launchpad Student Portal to ensure visibility and equitable access.

Directive No. 6

- With the alignment and implementation of the district's Strategic Plan, the work will be sustained through ongoing accountability, monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement planning. Current performance levels will be reported to all stakeholders objectively, clearly, and continually. The impact will be increased student achievement

Conclusion

As stated in the introduction of the Institution Progress Report, the DCSD was devastated upon learning of the district's probation status. However, since March, 2013, and at the present, there has been a concerted effort by the Board of Education and Superintendent to change the culture and improve the climate of the school district so that students are guaranteed the opportunity to be educated in a school district with a highly functioning Board and effective Superintendent.

 Evidence of improvement and progress demonstrate that the DCSD Board of Education and Superintendent has developed a culture of continuous improvement including the following: (1) having a Board and Superintendent who stabilized a district in crisis; (2) writing and revising Board Policies to reflect more effective governance; (3) strengthening curriculum and instructional practices so that teaching and learning has greater success and increased graduation rates; 4) using effective financials principles and management strategies to eliminate the budget deficit and develop a budget with $80,000,000 in financial reserves; (5) providing modest salary increases to employees after at least six years without raises; (6) utilizing transparent management strategies to rebuild trust among stakeholders; and (7) moving forward from Accredited Probation to Accredited on Advisement.

The following is a summary of actions taken within the past twelve months by the Board of Education and both the former and/or current Superintendent to continue and sustain the progress that has been made in DeKalb County School District

- The Board completed an open and transparent Superintendent Search that spanned approximately six months and culminated in the appointment of Dr. R. Stephen Green. The process was open and guided by input received from a variety of stakeholders as the Board listened, interviewed and selected the new Superintendent. (Appendix 1- Superintendent Search – a detailed report of the process)

- On May 4, 2015, the Board revised School Board Governance Policy BAB and removed all questionable language that could be interpreted as opportunities for Board interference in day to day operations of the school system. Board policy BAB requires Board Members to comply with Policy BBI when visiting schools. Board Policy BAB clarified the distinction and separation of roles between the Board and Superintendent.

- On March 26, 2015 the Board held a retreat as required in the Board of Education Handbook. During the meeting, the Board reviewed the Handbook with the seven elected Board Members, which ensured that the two new members of the Board received the same information regarding Board norms, governance policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities of the Board and Superintendent and procedures in Board functions and operations. The Board also agreed to utilize the services of the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government to assist the Board with developing a plan for self-assessment. On October 13, 2014, the Board met in retreat with personnel from the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government to begin development of a plan for self-assessment and Board Evaluation. On December 8, 2015 the Board met with personnel from the UGA Vinson Institute of Government in a third retreat and confirmed the plan for the board self-assessment which includes a commitment of 12-15 days of professional development that addresses five board governance areas to support the Board's ongoing comprehensive plan. The goal areas include board's roles, responsibilities, and relationships; building a high-performing governing board; building collectively-owned vision, mission, and goals; community building – strengthening connection, belonging, and public engagement; and building a legacy and sustainability.

- The Board continued and completed its plan for professional learning for 2014-2015 according to procedures found in the Board of Education Handbook. On October 5, 2015, the Board voted to approve the Annual Board Training Report and submitted it to the Georgia Department of Education. During the meeting the Board also approved the professional learning plan for 2015-2016.

- The Board and Superintendent utilizes annual surveys with parents/stakeholders to obtain feedback information on important education issues and uses the feedback for strategic planning purposes. Additionally, citizen community input meetings are

held monthly and various town hall meetings, public hearings, Superintendent "On the Scene with Dr. Green" are held in the community strategically around the five geographical regions to ensure public access to Board, Superintendent, and staff. Parents have an opportunity to participate and collaborate in shared-decision making for school issues.

- The District has reestablished the policy and review team for the purpose of ensuring that all policies are current, relevant, and align with state, federal and local laws. The district team met on Oct 1, 2015 to review and update the process that had been in place since 2010. System-wide procedures and forms were updated.

- The District has systems in place to monitor and evaluate all accounting and financial management systems and resources. The District uses annual State Audits of the prior Fiscal Year, ESPLOST Performance Audits, School Books Software, monthly financial reports to the Board, and sends monthly Budget Status Reports to division, department head and schools monthly.

  As a result of the constant monitoring and evaluation of accounting and financial management systems, the General Operating Budget is expected to end fiscal year 2015 with a surplus of approximately $80,000,000.00.

- The Change Management for Continuous Improvement process has been embedded within the Strategic Plan as was first envisioned. The process is no longer a separate entity. The process is included in district and school improvement plans. The Change Management for Continuous Improvement process through Strategic Planning provides the District with a road map to use for approval of new initiatives that are written in school and regional improvement plans.

- The District has remained committed to ensuring equitable access to 21st Century Technology for all students. The district has "opened" and fully implemented the DCSD eStore, which is a strategy the school district has put in place to support and monitor the Instructional Software Purchase Process (ISP). The eStore utilizes the Change Management for Continuous Improvement process to manage, evaluate, and approve technology tools not included in the eStore.

- In August 2015, the district launched a new student portal to ensure that students have access to digital resources provided by the district and local schools. Once a purchase has been approved through the eStore, Instructional Technology collaborates with Curriculum and Instruction, School Leadership, and Finance to ensure that the resources reach the students. The student portal, known as LaunchPad, is available to students through the student portal. The student portal students to sign in once and gain access to an email account, productivity tool, and the Infinite Campus portal.

- During 2014-2015, the district fully implemented Infinite Campus, which is the Student Information System (SIS). The Infinite Campus Parent Portal was also fully

implemented. The Infinite Campus parent and student portals were decentralized to the local school level. Information Technology trained local school staff to support parents and students with registration and other technology based issues.

- During the 2014-2015 school year the district's Strategic Plan was implemented. Included in the Strategic Plan is a systemic and systematic accountability system process that was developed and implemented. Performance measures, with baseline targets and measures were developed in order to assess progress. Specific goals, initiatives, and action steps were developed. A quarterly and annually monitoring and data collection process was put into place. Ongoing strategic planning sessions for all divisions were conducted throughout the year. In August 2015, a cross-divisional collaborative forum was held in order to communicate initiatives, action steps and annual progress. Using a protocol, each division shared successes, challenges, barriers and identified next steps for 2015-2016.

- Strategic Planning is in progress for 2015-2016. In order to move forward from 2014-2015, the Balanced Scorecard was used, based on end of year data for 2014-2015 to inform decisions for division plans for 2015-2016. Performance measures, targets, initiatives and action steps for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 have been reviewed and revised to ensure that the district is on track to reach FY performance targets. Ongoing progress monitoring will be conducted and data will be used to inform mid-course adjustments. The Strategic Planning Department, with the assistance from GLISI, has provided ongoing continuous improvement professional learning sessions to all schools. Communication to stakeholders has been through a presentation to the Board of Education on October 5, 2016 and through the DCSD website on an updated Strategic Plan web page.

- Three Addendums are provided to further enhance the report by providing information on the following:
  - Superintendent Search Process that resulted in the selection of a permanent superintendent focused on continuous improvement of student growth and academic achievement for the students of DeKalb County
  - Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Accountability (CIA2) provides the Theory of Action with strategies and metrics to improve student academic achievement.
  - Superintendent's Focus Areas of immediate attention with deliberate actions of response and intervention:
    - Opportunity School District, Focused, and Priority Schools
    - Special Education Reconstruction
    - School Flexible Option – Strategic Waiver System
    - College and Career Academy
    - Instructional Design/Assessment Practices
    - Central Office Reorganization

The DeKalb County School District has completed the remaining three of the fourteen Required Actions assigned from AdvancED as evidenced by actions and artifacts contained in the December 2015 Institution Progress Report. The Board of Education and Superintendent are continuing to

work collaboratively to ensure sustainability and a solid foundation for the district and the community. Policies and reforms have been put in place that have transformed the school district from a place focused on adult -driven issues into a school district engaged in student improvement-driven initiatives. CIA² has provided a plan for the district to follow to increase and enhance rigor, relevance and relationships for teaching and learning. The fully implemented Strategic Plan is the gauge being used to measure progress the district has made in achieving goals and in identifying areas that have missed assigned targets.

Over the past three years, DeKalb County School District has demonstrated growth and achievement in governance and in organizational effectiveness. However, most importantly, policies, plans for improvement and institutional practices are in place to ensure that the district continues to develop a positive environment for teaching and learning and for building a culture of success for continuous improvement within the district.

About AdvancED®

Background

Dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide, AdvancED provides accreditation, research, and professional services to 30,000 institutions in more than 70 countries. AdvancED provides accreditation under the seals of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI).

The Accreditation Process
To earn and maintain accreditation, an institution must:

1. **Meet the AdvancED Standards and accreditation policies.**
Institutions demonstrate adherence to the AdvancED Standards/Indicators and accreditation policies, which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for educational institutions to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.

2. **Engage in continuous improvement.**
Institutions implement a process of continuous improvement focused on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

3. **Demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review.**
Institutions engage in a planned process of ongoing internal review and self-assessment. In addition, institutions host an External Review team at least once every five years. The team evaluates the institution's adherence to the AdvancED Accreditation Standards and policies, assesses the efficacy of the institution's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and identifies Powerful Practices and provides Required Actions to help the institution improve. The institution acts on the team's Required Actions and submits an Accreditation Progress Report at prescribed intervals following the External Review. Monitoring Reviews may be conducted during this time to ensure that the institution is making progress toward the Required Actions.

Special Reviews

At any point, a Special Review may be conducted in response to complaints or information about the institution and/or its system (district, board, or corporation) to determine adherence to the AdvancED Accreditation Standards and policies. The institution and/or its system must respond to the Required Actions of the Special Review Team. Monitoring Teams may be sent to the institution and/or its system at regular intervals to ensure that progress is being made toward the Special Review Team's Required Actions. Both Special Review Teams and Monitoring Teams are empowered to make accreditation recommendations based upon evidence obtained during said review.

A Process of Continuous Improvement

The AdvancED accreditation process engages institutions in a continuous process of self-evaluation and improvement. The overall aim is to help institutions be the best they can be on behalf of the students they serve.