



WHAT'S NEW!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Meet the new Exceptional Education Leadership
- Learn all the offices under the Department of Exceptional Education
- Parent Engagement Events
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- Who to Contact

Meet our new Executive Director!



Kiana King
Executive Director, Exceptional Education
DeKalb County School District

As the Executive Director of Exceptional Education, I am excited to connect with you and share updates, resources, and important information that supports the diverse needs of our students. Each month, we'll highlight our efforts to provide an inclusive, engaging, and supportive learning environment for every child.

The Department of Exceptional Education meets the individual needs of students ages three through twenty-one who require services as a part of the District's Child Find obligation, are eligible for special education and related services according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or who require accommodations in order to access their education. The department prides itself on working in partnership with students, families and the community.



The offices under the Exceptional Education umbrella include:

- 1. Special Education**
 - Transition
 - Behavior
 - Intellectual Disabilities
 - Assistive Technology
 - Preschool Program
 - Related Services
 - Incarcerated Youth
- 2. School Psychology**
- 3. Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS)**
- 4. Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Supports (GNETS)**
- 5. Section 504/Hospital Homebound**



NEW



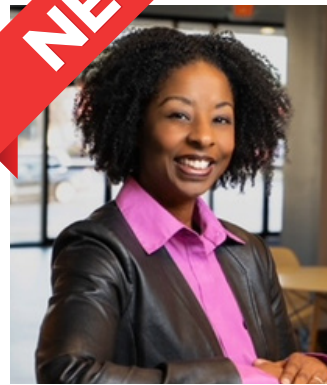
Erin Baptiste
Director, Special Education
DeKalb County School District

Meet our new Director of Special Education!

The new Special Education Director, Erin Baptiste, works with a dedicated team of professionals in collaboration with students, schools, families, and the community.

The office of Special Education is proud to assist students with disabilities in increasing academic performance and enhancing post-secondary outcomes for all students. We ensure a full continuum of services is available, ranging from the least restrictive to more restrictive environments, depending on the specific needs of the student.

NEW



Lisa Lake
Parent Transition Liaison
DeKalb County School District

Meet our new Parent Transition Liaison!

The new Parent Transition Liaison, Lisa Lake, is a parent of a student with disabilities who works closely with the Parent Mentors to provide education, resources, assistance and support to parents navigating Exceptional Education services and supports. Contact her today and learn about the Parent Mentor Partnership at <https://parentmentors.org/>

PARENT ENGAGEMENT EVENTS:



- October 22nd, 2024: PEERS Virtual Parent Education Sessions! Tuesdays, 6-7:30pm on Microsoft Teams.
- October 1st-31st: School Choice Open Enrollment



Parent Education, Empowerment, Resources, and Support (PEERS) Virtual Parent Education Sessions!

Register today for our virtual parent education monthly sessions! Each month will be a new topic. First session is 10/22/24 on "Transitional Services". Register at <https://forms.office.com/r/RJHGq748sv>

School Choice Open Enrollment is now OPEN!

DeKalb County School District offers multiple school choice options. to attend outside of their home attendance area, after completion of the application process and if space is available. Apply at <https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/featured-news/school-choice-open-enrollment/>



COMMUNITY
RESOURCES

MONTHLY

Spotlight



Our Mission

To support Georgia families and individuals from birth to 26 impacted by disabilities or special health care needs

Phone: 770-451-5484

Website: <https://www.p2pga.org/>

Parent to Parent of Georgia provides statewide services to Georgia families impacted by disabilities or special healthcare needs.

- Supporting Parents is our signature program that matches you to another parent who has had similar experiences.
- Our Special Needs Database is an online searchable database to help you find providers in your area.
- The Roadmap to Success provides resources and information to guide you through the trip of a lifetime.
- Learn about leadership, support groups and community volunteer opportunities in your part of the state as part of the Navigator Project.
- Check our Training Calendar for face-to face for Statewide Free Trainings.
- Our Online Opportunities allow you to learn about upcoming special events and volunteer news through our mailing list and social media platforms

WHO DO I CONTACT?

School Support

Your child's **SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER or CASEMANAGER:**

- Concerns involving: Academics (grades, curriculum, classwork, homework), student behavior, interactions, and social-emotional development in the classroom (social skills, regulating emotions, making friends)

Your school's **LEAD TEACHER for SPECIAL EDUCATION (LTSE):**

- Concerns involving: Initial Individualized Education Plans (IEP), re-evaluations, parental consent, IEP transportation issues, transferring IEP to a new school, case-manager/teacher communication issues

Your school **ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL:**

- Concerns involving: Disciplinary actions, school safety, procedures and policies, inappropriate staff conduct, building maintenance, PTA, unresolved parent-teacher communication issues.

Your school **PRINCIPAL:**

- Concerns involving: All unresolved concerns brought to the Assistant Principal properly but were not addressed to satisfaction.

Department of Exceptional Education Support

Exceptional Education **Parent Mentor/Parent Liaison:**

- General questions on how to navigate the DCSD Department of Exceptional Education, Special Education, transitions, parent rights, learn district protocols and processes, find appropriate staff, get resources, education and support.

Department of Exceptional Education Leadership

Special Education Director:

- Concerns involving: All unresolved special education concerns and IEP related issues (implementation, meeting concerns, goals/objectives, progress monitoring, services) that have been previously communicated with the appropriate staff at your student's attendance school (see who to contact above first) but have not been addressed to satisfaction.

Senior Coordinator for School Psychology:

- Parents should reach out to the Senior Coordinator of School Psychology when there are unresolved concerns that have been appropriately shared with the local school principal or designee that involves psychological services, evaluations, or mental health support for a child.

Senior Coordinator for Section 504/Hospital Homebound:

- Parents should contact the Senior Coordinator of Section 504/HHB when their concerns involve ensuring that their child, who has a disability, is receiving appropriate accommodations and protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Concerns involving 504 plan development or eligibility, plan implementation or discrimination concerns may require District level support.

Executive Director of Exceptional Education:

- Parents should reach out to the Executive Director of Exceptional Education when there is a need for leadership-level intervention or advocacy to ensure their child receives appropriate and equitable educational services.

General Parent Support

The Ga. Dept. of Education **Special Education HELP DESK (404-656-3963):**

- General questions about Special Education and related services, statewide initiatives, rules, projects, outreach, processes, and support agencies for students with disabilities.

**All phone numbers and emails can be found on the DCSD website.*

Parent Education, Empowerment, Resources & Support (PEERS)
and Transition Services



presents

Virtual Parent Education Sessions

FALL TRANSITION SERIES:

October 22, 2024



Transitional Services

Speaker: Sheryl Arno,
GAIPSEC

November 19, 2024



Guardianship

Speaker: Atty DJ Jeyaram,
Jeyaram & Associates

December 3, 2024



NOW/COMP &
Katie Beckett Waivers

Speaker: Parent to Parent
of Georgia

All sessions are Tuesday evenings from 6:00- 7:30pm on Microsoft Teams

REGISTER NOW!

SCAN ME! >>>



REGISTER by scanning
the QR code or go to
<https://forms.office.com/r/RJHGq748sv>

For more information contact dcsdpeers@dekalbschoolsga.org

Parent Mentors

Support. Advise. Educate.



What is a Parent Mentor?

Parent Mentors are parents of children with disabilities, hired by the District, to support other families in their county by providing resources and education to help parents of students with disabilities navigate special education services and supports. They support family engagement and work with special education directors and staff to increase parent participation in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and school programs and events.

Why should I contact the Parent Mentor?

- I need to talk to another parent that understands and will listen to my educational concerns.
- I need help locating resources that will help me support my child.
- I have questions about my child's education program and how to be engaged in the process.
- I am unsure what my child may need to graduate and options after high school.
- I worry that my child will struggle with transitions to new schools.
- I would like to know what family engagement activities, events and parent training's are available.

Contact your DeKalb County Parent Mentors today!



SCAN
ME!