



District Academic Report Document – October 2024

Ms. Stacy E. Stepney, Chief Academic Officer

Literacy Partnerships

In alignment with DeKalb County School District's (DCSD) Strategic Goal Area 1- **Student Academic Success with Equity and Access**, the DeKalb County School District is partnering with Chiefs for Change and the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI).

Chiefs for Change (CFC)

District leaders from the Division of Curriculum and Instruction participated in Session #3: Scheduling SOR for Every Student. In preparation for the monthly session, participants read Chapter 2 of *It's Time for Strategic Scheduling: How to Design Smarter K–12 Schedules That Are Great for Students, Staff, and the Budget* and reflected on how the school district promotes best practices for scheduling. School and district leaders identified common scheduling challenges and collaborated with colleagues to assess and problem-solve schedule designs in K-12 settings.

GLISI Literacy Network

The DCSD GLISI Literacy Implementation Team (GLISI LIT) crafted individual and team empathy questions during our first GLISI Residential Experience. This month, GLISI LIT prioritized four empathy questions, which are listed below:

1. Tell me a little bit about your literacy journey.
2. How can your school develop a culture of literacy?
3. How does literacy impact each learner in your building?
4. What barriers exist in DeKalb that are keeping us from our desired literacy outcomes?

Each DCSD GLISI LIT member will conduct at least 5 empathy interviews with K-12 teachers in November.

Reality Checks

Reality Checks were conducted in October. The schools shared strategies and next steps in response to attendance, discipline, gifted, MAP growth (reading and math), and MAP Fluency (elementary schools only) data. As a result of the fall Reality Check sessions, Curriculum & Instruction (C&I) and Schools & Leadership are collaborating to provide additional literacy



support for elementary Horizon teachers. The goal of the **Knowledge Builder Support Sessions** is to reinforce the evidence-based skills and strategies from each of the Georgia Literacy Academy Courses and provide guidance for classroom implementation. Please note that teachers who have fulfilled the structured literacy training requirement of the Georgia Early Literacy Act through another pathway (i.e. LETRS, Orton-Gillingham, Reading Endorsement, etc.) will also benefit from the sessions as well.

Academic Coaches

The Academic Coach Coordinator (ACC) Team continues to forge ahead as we focus on "The Reset" to address the influx of new coaches, to clarify misconceptions, and to strengthen support based on feedback and documentation from academic coaches to enhance the coaching program and the work of the academic coach. In October, the team worked diligently to support academic coaches, including technical assistance with academic coaches at individual schools, orienting new hires, and attending job-alike meetings. The team participated in the Professional Learning Communities at Work session held at Martin Luther King, Jr. High School to deepen their understanding of PLCs to support the academic coaches in their respective schools.

Each Academic Coach Coordinator held a Collaborative Learning Session (CLS) with their assigned area academic coaches. The CLSs included a review of chapters 1 and 2 of the book, Make It Happen: Coaching with the Four Critical Questions of PLCs, data presentations/CSIP reviews, differentiated coaching support based on coaches' needs, and area updates. Tiered coaching support is based on feedback, documentation of work, and observation.

To ensure consistent practices across schools, the team held bi-weekly meetings and continues to cover the areas needing support. Members of the team have participated in Reality Checks and CCVs. Additionally, we have participated in area learning walks and in the District CIT.

UPDATE: There are 198 Academic Coach positions of which 188 are filled, leaving 10 vacancies.

Area	# of Coaches	# of Vacancies	# of New Coaches
Area Elementary 1	6	0	6
Area Elementary 2	16	0	6
Area Elementary 3	19	0	7
Area Middle Schools	41	0	22
Area High Schools	32	3	12
Area Horizon	66	5	42
Area Specialty	8	2	6
Totals	188	10	101

Dr. Sean R. Tartt, Deputy Chief Academic Officer
Coordinators' Content Collaboration

On November 1st, the Divisions of Curriculum and Instruction, Schools and Leadership, Student Support Services, and Wrap Around Services engaged in the monthly Coordinators' Collaboration meeting. During the collaborative sessions, job alike roles discussed standards implementation, effective use of resources, curriculum pacing, data and trends from the previous 30-days, and next steps of support. Leaders discussed topics, resources, and planning for the district's Professional Development on November 5th.



Student Success Skills Backpack

The SSSB is a digital backpack of skills that addresses each skill identified in the DCSD Portrait of a Graduate (POG) that scholars need to possess to be successful beyond graduation. As the district prepares to launch the Student Success Skills Backpack (SSSB) in November, three informational training sessions were held with 21 pilot principals who were selected by the School Leadership division. The schools selected are a reflection of each grade band (ES/MS/HS) inclusive of the seven areas across DCSD. We are excited to share that K-12 students will engage in this initiative that will prepare students to show readiness for the next grade level in multiple ways.

Dr. Penny Mosley, Assistant Superintendent P-5

DeKalb County School District is pleased to announce its partnership with MRESA supporting Georgia's Early Literacy Act with Let's READ, Georgia! Let's READ, Georgia was developed in response to HB538. Regional literacy specialists will provide DeKalb Literacy Leads and academic coaches with virtual and onsite professional development focused on the science of reading, foundational literacy skills, and evidence-based decision making while demonstrating lessons and



providing immediate feedback for improving instruction. Through this partnership, literacy leads will receive a stipend of \$1,000 after successful completion of requirements as stated in the DCSD literacy lead agreement.

Dr. Rose Prejean-Harris, Assistant Superintendent 6-12

DeKalb Acceleration Academy is getting closer to its opening date on December 2nd! We are preparing/designing our new, temporary space on an unoccupied wing of McNair High School; with a permanent location still yet to be determined with an estimated opening of late Spring 2025. We will have 3 spaces within this wing at McNair High School, which are newly renovated and inviting to students. Rooms will include a cafe with a casual learning environment, a quiet room for testing and studying, and a space for orientations and hybrid learning opportunities. Construction is currently underway, and all new staff will report to campus for the first time, Monday, November 18th, 2024. We are excited for our current and former DeKalb students who will thrive within this personalized learning opportunity. Stay tuned for additional updates!

Dr. Lynn Angus Ramos, Director, Literacy

One requirement of the Georgia Early Literacy Act (House Bill 538) is structured literacy training for all K-3 teachers. To best support DeKalb students’ literacy growth and achievement, DCSD is requiring training for teachers in grades 4 and 5 as well. Teachers who have not already completed training are engaged in 10 modules (approximately 25 hours of learning) through the Georgia Literacy Academy. Prior to the 2024-2025 school year, 430 teachers completed LETRS training through DCSD. As of October 15, 2024, several hundred additional teachers have made progress in the first two courses of the Georgia Literacy Academy:

Course	# of Teachers in Progress	# of Teachers Completed	Total
Course 1: Oral Language	457	650	1,107
Course 2: Early Literacy	187	333	520

Curriculum and Instruction partnered with the Professional Learning Department to prepare series of literacy strategies for parents and families, adapted from the National Institute of Education Sciences (IES). On October 10, C&I and the Family and Community Empowerment department hosted Read and R.I.S.E. DeKalb at Smoke Rise Elementary School. Ten families attended in person, and over 50 additional families participated over Zoom. Our next event, the Parent Literacy conference, is scheduled for Saturday, November 23.



**Lummie Baker, Director, Educational Media and Instructional Materials
DeKalb Teacher-Librarian Advisory Council (DTLAC) Meeting**

Members of the DTLAC met and discussed district support and literacy initiatives, Teacher-Librarian media center programming, and Professional Library updates. School library visits are scheduled from November through December, with a focus on the role of reading and providing an engaging and well-managed media center that is positive and welcoming. We are excited that the Professional Library has seen an increase in engagement and usage of the space, resources, and services. We also continue to collaborate with other departments and divisions to support the goals and initiatives of the district.

OctoberFest

Educational Media participated in the Octoberfest event sponsored by Title I and the Family & Community Empowerment Department, which was held on Saturday, October 5, 2024, at Redan High School. The event was attended by approximately 300 parents. Our department set up a vendor table to share our resources and services with parents and other community stakeholders. Educational Media also facilitated three 30-minute sessions for parents, sharing the district resources we provide for our scholars and teachers. Parents were shown how to access the resources via Clever. It was a phenomenal day of teaching and learning for students and parents.

DeKalb Early College Academy (DECA) Author Visit

On Thursday, October 10, 2024, Educational Media attended the author visit of DCSD's former Superintendent, Mr. Michael Thurmond. Mr. Thurmond participated in a round-table discussion of his most recent book, *James Oglethorpe- Father of Georgia*, with DeKalb Early College



Academy students. The book details James Oglethorpe's journey from being a slave trader to becoming an abolitionist. Mr. Thurmond also shared research findings from the text, autographed copies of the book, and took photographs with the scholars and teachers. Also, Mr. Thurmond expressed how impressed he was with the students from DECA and their interview skills as well as their persistence in repeating unanswered questions. It was an enlightening and engaging opportunity for everyone in attendance, and Educational Media was excited to support one of our libraries in one of their literacy initiatives.

Stephanie Brown-Bryant, Director, K-12 Teaching and Learning

Visual and Performing Arts – High Museum of Art Teen Program and Alliance Theatre Dramaturgy

"The High Museum of Art's Teen Team is composed of fifteen creative high school students who share a passion for art and community engagement and commit to an 8-week intensive, paid summer program, along with year-round monthly meetings. We are proud to announce that two of the fifteen participants selected are talented artists from DeKalb County School District: Bella Lanier-Starr from DeKalb School of the Arts (Nicole Jacobs-Licht, Visual Arts Teacher), and Vanessa Lopez from Chamblee High School (Kimberly Landers and Mattie Bell, Visual Arts Teachers). <https://high.org/teen-team/about-teen-team>

The study guide for the Alliance Theatre's production of *The Chinese Lady*, written by Courtney Moors-Hornick, Teaching Artist, along with Mr. Cole Jones-Ford's Drama 1 class at Miller Grove High School, as part of the Alliance Theatre's Dramaturgy by Students program, is now public! [Alliance Theatre's Dramaturgy by Students Program](#)

International Baccalaureate/Advanced Placement - GHP Student Nominations 2024-2025

The first phase of the Governor's Honors Program nomination and selection process generated over 320 student nominations from almost all DCSD high schools. This is a 39% increase in student applications from 2023-2024. Each student will be invited to interview with the DCSD selection committee to be selected for the district-level nomination for the prestigious summer program. Congratulations to this outstanding group of dedicated, passionate high school 10th and 11th graders! More information about Governor's Honors Program is available at <https://gosa.georgia.gov/governors-honors-program>.

English/Language Arts - Tier I ELA Resource Training

Training for the new DCSD board-approved Tier I resources Study Sync (grades 6-8) and Into Literature (grades 9-12) is complete. Teachers have learned how to navigate the online platform,

plan using resources and effective literacy routines and engage students in meaningful work using the resources.

Doryiane Gunter, Director, CTAE

Student

Activities

Community Access to Cosmetology Program - Exciting and new this year, the Level Two Cosmetology students at DeKalb High School Technology North are offering salon services to the community. Salon services are available Monday- Thursday (8:30am –11:00am and 12:15pm - 2:45 pm). We are extremely proud of our Cosmetology students applying the skills they have acquired to offer a range of services. Through hands-on training and supervised practice, students are enhancing their technical abilities and customer service skills by ensuring a professional experience for clients. This practical application not only benefits the students' learning but also provides affordable services to the community.

Flavors of DeKalb – Ten high schools and four middle schools showcased their exemplary culinary expertise and skills at the Flavors of DeKalb Culinary Expo. Students provided district employees, family, and friends with a taste of cuisines from across the globe. There were three winners that took home very special awards that day. The winners were: **Best Taste High School** – Redan HS; **Best Taste Middle School** – Salem MS; and **Best Dessert** – Arabia Mountain High School.



Professional Learning

October 21st and 22nd, current and future STE(A)M schools attended the GADOE STEM Forum in Athens Georgia. School teams were immersed in hands-on learning experiences that make real-world connections to assist students with mastering content. Teams were introduced to opportunities to make community partnerships and network with other STEM and STE(A)M

certified schools.

New Programs

Dunwoody High School has received four simulators to support the new Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO) pathway, which will begin in January 2025. In collaboration with our Operations and DIIT division, the equipment has installed. Thirty students will have the opportunity to be the inaugural group in the district's first HEO pathway. Students will learn Bulldozer and Excavator skills that allow them to work towards their National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) Certification.



Janetta Greenwood, Director, Fernbank Science Center

School Support – Single Visits and Outreach

Fernbank Science Center is continuing to provide single visits and outreach in science across the district. In the month of October, the Science Center served 2, 984 DCSD students in grades PreK-12. Currently, 832 DCSD students have participated in single visit programming, 1,305 DCSD students have participated in outreach programming and 847 DCSD students have participated in planetarium shows.

DCSD four-year-old scholars attended ScienToTs this month with learning focused on sound and energy. Students had the opportunity to engage in science experiential learning opportunities specifically designed for PreK students. This program supported 5 general education classes and 1 special education self-contained classroom at 4 different schools (Cary Reynolds Elementary, Indian Creek Elementary, Panola Way Elementary, and Pleasantdale Elementary). A total of 153



students were served and 16 teachers and paraprofessionals were engaged through this program during the month of October.

Professional Learning – School Master Gardener

On October 25, 2024, Fernbank Science Center hosted the School Master Gardener professional development for identified schools. The professional development was designed to support teachers in using outdoor experiential learning to increase learning outcomes in science. Teachers from across the district engaged in learning about worm composting systems, using weather stations to participate in collecting data for citizen science student engagement, school herbariums (plant libraries for preserving plants to support horticultural research) and participated in soil testing to inform best practices for school garden sustainability.

Community Engagement/Cross Departmental Collaboration – Spooky Science

Fernbank Science Center hosted Spooky Science on October 26th, 2024. Teachers, students, and parents had the opportunity to participate in hands-on activities focused on promoting science and STEM inquiry and investigation. There were approximately 1,000 visitors that attended the event. Some of the activities provided focused on chemical and physical changes, life science, and physical science. Visitors created slime, learned about carnivorous plants, created catapults, interacted specimens, and learned about snakes and turtles through an engaging animal encounter. Also, visitors were able to view a planetarium show, “Spooky Space”, in our new 10K planetarium.

Partnerships – Morehouse Center for Excellence in Education

In partnership with the Morehouse Center for Excellence in Education, Fernbank Science Center hosted World Space Day on October 12th from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Approximately 420 visitors engaged in robotics and advanced technology demonstrations from multiple non-profits and community organizations. There were hands-on demonstrations to investigate space with scientists and experts in the astrophysics, engineering, and astronomy fields. Visitors had the opportunity to view shows in the planetarium that were customized for the event and focused on discoveries and advancements in space and astronomical sciences.

Georgia Aquarium Partnership

The Georgia Aquarium Partnership continued during the month of October. The Georgia Aquarium has served 6,739 students and 40 schools for October and September. During these two months, 2,542 students have ventured to the aquarium with teachers and chaperones to participate in an instructor-led field trip. 3,077 students have been served through outreach programs. Virtual programs have served 1,077 students for September and October.

Monique Kimbell, Director, MTSS

Professional Learning

On October 30, 2024, the MTSS team received training on supporting the social and emotional needs of all learners throughout the MTSS framework. We collaborated with the Special Education Department, Student Support Services/PBIS, Area Middle Schools/Mental Health, Georgia State University, and Office of Executive Director of Professional Development to provide training for all tiers and all students.



School Support

During the month of October, I worked directly with school leaders and MTSS to provide on-site and Teams support around the MTSS framework. I participated in fidelity checks, student observations, as well as MTSS support sessions.

MAP Fluency

The MAP Fluency universal screener flagged over 8, 000 students. The MTSS have been leading grade level teams as they triangulate student data to determine if reading intervention plans are needed based on the State requirements in Senate Bill 48(Dyslexia Law) and House Bill 538. In addition to this work, they are currently supporting students who have already been identified within their buildings as needing academic and social and emotional intervention support. Below is a graphic highlighting the current support needs.

Parent Request	Legal Meetings	Total # Tier 2 Plans	Total # Tier 3 Plans
694	14	6,228	6,404



Keatra Wright, Director, FLEX Academy

In alignment with DeKalb County School District Strategic Goal Area 1, Student Academic Success with Equity and Access, FLEX Academy continues to provide opportunities for students to obtain credits towards graduation.

During the month of October, we partnered with leadership from Area Horizon and Area High School to establish SOPs for schools with students enrolled in credit recovery through FLEX Restore. The policy provides measures to ensure communication regarding student progress is active and support of students is ongoing.

FLEX Academy completed Session One of FLEX Beyond the Day with student success rate of 88.65%. Session Two is currently underway with an enrollment of 228 students.

Ms. Monika Davis, Chief Information Officer

DCSD is committed to ensuring equitable access to digital resources for all students, ensuring they have the tools and skills necessary to succeed in a connected and progressive society. Our strategic plan prioritizes digital equity, recognizing the pivotal role of technology in education. We are passionate about harnessing the power of technology to create a brighter future for our students. Our vision at DCSD is to equip every student with the digital skills and mindset they need to thrive in our connected global society.

Our Strategic Focus

To achieve this vision, we're focused on two key areas:

- **Enhanced Digital Literacy:**
 - **Teacher Empowerment:** We're investing in teacher training programs (IGNITE U) to ensure they have the latest tools and strategies to integrate technology effectively into their classrooms.
 - **Student Engagement:** We're exposing students to emerging technologies like AI, AR, and VR to spark creativity and innovation.
 - **Responsible Digital Citizenship:** We're teaching students how to use technology ethically and safely.
- **Secure and Accessible Digital Environment:**
 - **Robust Infrastructure:** We're continually upgrading our network and data center infrastructure to ensure reliability and performance.
 - **Ironclad Security:** We're implementing cutting-edge cybersecurity measures to protect our systems and data from threats.
 - **Equitable Access:** We're committed to providing all students with the devices and connectivity they need to succeed.



Empowering Our Digital Dreamers

Beyond technical expertise, we're focused on empowering our students to become digital leaders. Through initiatives like:

- Tech for Littles: Inspiring young minds with early exposure to technology.
- Student Technology Competition: Fostering creativity and problem-solving skills.
- Cyber Champions: Cultivating the next generation of cybersecurity experts.

To achieve our goals, we're also investing in and collaborating with our dedicated staff, engaged parents, and supportive community members. By working together, we can create a transformative digital learning experience for our students. This includes opportunities for students to explore, experiment, and innovate. By giving them a voice and a platform, we're empowering them to shape their own futures.

I'm excited about the future of education and the role technology plays in it. Together, we can create a truly transformative learning experience for our students.

Dr. Kermit Belcher, Deputy Chief Technology Officer

Always Learning

DeKalb County Schools is committed to our 1:1 student instructional device program, *Always Learning*, which plays a pivotal role in advancing personalized learning and enhancing instruction across the district. Providing every student with a dedicated device ensures consistent access to digital resources, empowering them to engage in learning anytime, anywhere. This initiative bridges the digital divide, promotes equity in education, and enables teachers to use technology for more interactive, student-centered instruction. As part of our commitment to supporting the *Always Learning* program, we are taking key steps to improve asset management, ensuring that every student has access to a Chromebook. By streamlining inventory processes and enhancing communication through our updated Device Lifecycle Management SharePoint site, we are optimizing how devices are tracked and managed across the district.

Network Modernization

A safe, secure, and reliable network infrastructure is essential to the success of DeKalb County Schools and the future of our students. A well-constructed network enables access to innovative learning tools, real-time collaboration, and digital resources that enhance student engagement, while also strengthening cybersecurity to protect sensitive information and maintain a safeguarded learning environment.

The district is making strides in upgrading our network infrastructure to meet these goals. For instance, the team has completed switch replacements at Chamblee High School and will soon install wireless access points to ensure consistent, high-speed connectivity for students and staff.

At Fernbank Science Center, network upgrades were completed to support its grand opening and future educational programs. Additionally, the team made substantial progress on the district-wide cabling project, with 25 schools completed to date. These efforts are vital in creating a digital ecosystem that will support the evolving needs of our students, teachers, and staff well into the future.

Physical Security

DeKalb County Schools is committed to ensuring the safety and security of our schools, which remains a top priority for the district. Enhancing physical security provides peace of mind for students, staff, and families, allowing everyone to focus on what matters most—education. Our ongoing upgrades to motion sensors, intrusion detection systems, and video surveillance help create a secure environment that proactively addresses potential threats. These improvements, combined with the implementation of advanced technologies like mobile badging, ensure that we are continuously strengthening our ability to protect our school community. With clear communication and thorough training, we’re building a safer, more resilient school system where safety and learning go hand in hand.

Natalie Terrell, *Manager of Project Management Office*

Digitized Records Program

We are proud to state that we are moving forward with the planning of this program. The data governance team has been established of which the steering committee for this program is included. The initial kickoff meeting for the governance team has been scheduled and plans for the kickoff of this program are forthcoming. Stay tuned, the best is yet to come!



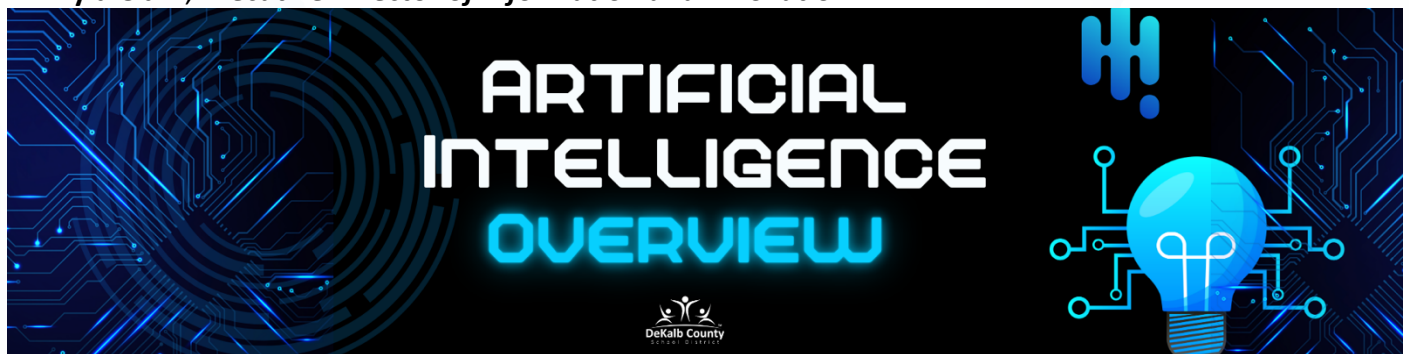
Cloud-based Managed Print Services Project





In June 2024, the district’s Board of Education approved a new contract with Lexmark, International Inc. to provide the district with copying/printing devices and services. The Division of Information and Instructional Technology has kicked off this project to update copiers across the district. We will be refreshing and updating all 753 existing Lexmark copiers and moving from an on-premises platform to a cloud-based platform. This digital solution will help minimize cost and improve productivity, efficiency, and sustainability. There is an aggressive implementation plan, to start in November 2024 with the intent to complete it by January 2025.

Dr. Kyia Clark, Executive Director of Information and Innovation



Instructional Technology has successfully rolled out the AI Awareness module through the IgniteU PL Course. This module is a requirement before educators can select a pathway and begin their Technology Integration Connections. This overview covers the Teacher and Student AI usage guidelines. Each guideline is addressed, and teachers are provided with examples they can use to put each guideline into practice with themselves and their students.

DCSD Tech for Littles

Tech for Littles is a technology fair that is designed to prepare young learners (Kindergarten through 2nd grade) to compete in the DCSD Technology Competition by third grade while showcasing their technology skills in fun, creative, and age-appropriate ways. Through hands-on activities, interactive lessons, and guided exploration, our Little Dreamers have created projects that demonstrate an early understanding of coding, digital storytelling, and problem solving. Tech for Littles will provide a forum for students to express their skills through 6 categories: Robotics, Digital Game Design, Audio Production, Video Production, Graphic Design, and Multimedia Applications. We have 140 registrants, and the event will be held November 16, 2024, from 9 am – 11 am at Rockbridge Elementary School. Click [here](#) to watch the video to learn more about Tech for Littles.



BRANDY PRYOR

DeKalb County School District

October
Before the meeting

TECH FOR LITTLE
"DEKALB'S EYE SIZED BRILLIANCE"

The meeting will begin shortly.

Type in the Chat:
Celebrations or
Shoutouts!

IGNITE U



The 24-25 IGNITE U Professional Learning Series is underway to support teachers integrating technology tools in our DCSD ecosystem. The goal is to ensure that all teachers become aware, proficient, and empowered when using these tools within their classrooms. To build DeKalb's teachers technology proficiency, the IGNITE U PL Series has five Technology Integration Connections (TICs) that teachers must complete within the series. These TICs focuses on the following:

- TIC 1: Goal Setting
- TIC 2: Communication
- TIC 3: Digital Learning Activities
- TIC 4: Differentiation
- TIC 5: Evaluation and Feedback

TIC One, Goal Setting, was released on Monday, September 16th. The due date for completion was Friday, September 27th. Currently, around 30% of schools have 80% or higher completed TIC One. Teachers are now working through TIC Two, Communication. The release date for TIC Two was Monday, September 30th. The due date was Friday, October 11th. TIC Three: Digital Learning Activities will be released on Monday, October 21st.



Glenn Melendez, *Executive Director of Enterprise Applications and Data Services*

Website Modernization

Our district is making remarkable strides in transforming our online presence to better serve our students, families, and staff. As part of our website modernization efforts, we've undertaken a comprehensive scoping exercise to ensure modernization efforts meet the evolving needs of our community. This includes a user-centric design; a robust Content Management System (CMS) that allows for easy updates; multi-lingual capabilities; compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) to ensure all users, including those with disabilities can easily access and navigate the site; and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) so that relevant information is easily discoverable. These key features will ensure our modernized website is dynamic, user-friendly, and reflects the innovative and forward-thinking values of our district.

On October 7th, our communications partners distributed the district's digital survey to capture feedback which includes input regarding the district's website functionality and design. Focus groups will also be completed by November 13, 2024. The insights gained from the survey and focus groups will be instrumental in shaping the future of our modernized website.

Our district is setting a new standard for excellence in digital engagement, and we look forward to sharing the results with our community.

Digital Resource and Technology Request Process

Our district continues to set the bar high in educational technology with the recent formation of a specialized sub-committee focused on refining our technology evaluation process. This process is used to incorporate new technology resources into the DCSD ecosystem – thereby advancing teaching, learning, and operational efficiencies. This dedicated group has provided strategic input to ensure that our technology decisions are both forward-thinking and aligned with the district's overarching goals.

Key accomplishments from this initiative, for this reporting period, include the establishment of clear and consistent communication channels throughout the technology evaluation lifecycle, guaranteeing transparency and collaboration at every stage. The sub-committee has also emphasized the importance of aligning all technology requests with our strategic objectives, ensuring every new tool or platform contributes to our long-term success.

To support this effort, we've developed an evaluation rubric to enable a systematic approach for vetting new technology for compatibility and integration within our district's robust technology ecosystem. In addition, we developed a prototype request form making it easier to request and implement cutting-edge technology solutions.

Data Governance Program

To guide our data governance initiative, we have drafted a Charter that outlines the scope, objectives, and guiding principles of our work in data management. Our vision is to create a data-



driven ecosystem that will foster academic success by empowering our educators, support personalized learning, inform interventions, enhance equity, and fostering a system that continuously evaluates and improves educational practices through data-informed decision-making.

During this reporting period, we have partnered with Microsoft to explore a state-of-the-art solution for data governance, protection, and management. As part of this partnership, a half-day workshop has been scheduled to empower our data management practices delivering the highest standards of data protection and oversight.

Our ongoing efforts to analyze usage data for popular educational platforms continue allowing us to measure student engagement with digital resources and correlate usage data with academic outcomes. By doing so, we are positioning ourselves to make informed decisions about the impact of our technology investments and their value on our students' learning.

Through this initiative, we are placing our district at the forefront of data governance excellence, ensuring that every decision, platform, and system aligns with our goals of safeguarding and optimizing data for our students and staff. We are excited to keep our community informed and involved as we continue making strides in data management and protection.

Eric Logan, Director of Information and Network Security

The DeKalb County Schools Division of Information and Instructional Technology (DIIT) continues to progress with its efforts to strengthen DCSD's security posture. After a 90-day assessment of the status, the initial draft of a strategic plan for strengthening the district's security posture has been created. This proactive security strategy will help DCSD:

- Prepare for a potential threat.
- Prevent accidental cyber incidents.
- Detect malicious cyber activity occurring within our infrastructure.
- Recover from a cyber-attack.
- Save your school district from reputational damage.

The target goal is to make sure that security is embedded into the very soul and culture of the district. Discussions around risks are not forced, but instead occur naturally and are part of the everyday language amongst students, teachers, and staff. The next step is to begin addressing the roadmaps presented in the strategic plan and start developing a formal and detailed Plan of Action & Milestones (POAM) to begin tackling areas of need.

Final selections were made for the first group of DCSD Cyber Champions! The application process started September 9th and ended on October 11th. Over 100 students within the district applied



from kindergarten to 12th grade from 41 schools. Sixty students confirmed commitment by October 23rd. These Digital Dreamers are committed to promoting the awareness of cyber security, artificial intelligence, and digital citizenship within the district. As a Cyber Champion, students will be required to:

1. Participated in the GLET Cybersecurity Poster Contest.
2. Join Monthly Virtual Student-Led Workshops that focus on various artificial intelligence, cyber security, and digital citizenship topics.
3. Create Monthly 2-5 Minute Presentation that correlates with the monthly workshop topic. Participants can work individually or collaborate in groups of 2-4 Cyber Champions. Present their work at the local level (class and/or school morning announcements, PTA, etc.). Students may also be selected to share their presentation district-wide at monthly Parent Tech Cafes or other district events.

Mrs. Michelle Dillard, Chief of Schools

The Division of Schools and Leadership has been active during the month of October. We participated in 38 Reality Checks- 31 schools in Horizon and 7 Areas. We also held our first Fall Retreat with the theme of Kick off: Leveling up our Leadership to New Levels, New Heights! The entire Division heard from multiple Chiefs about their Division's priorities, and leaders received professional learning from the Divisions of Accountability and Research, Student Services, and Wrap Around Services.

We participated in multiple town halls at our schools and SAP meetings to help support the mission.

Scholars in Middle and High School tested for the PSAT and SAT, during the school day on October 23rd, one of our MIRACLES priorities. We had other signature events such as Rock the Vote and Stroll to the Polls this month.

Principals participated in the first PPLC this semester and attended the October PLO and received training on Professional Learning Communities. They were also celebrated and appreciated for Principals' Appreciation Month!

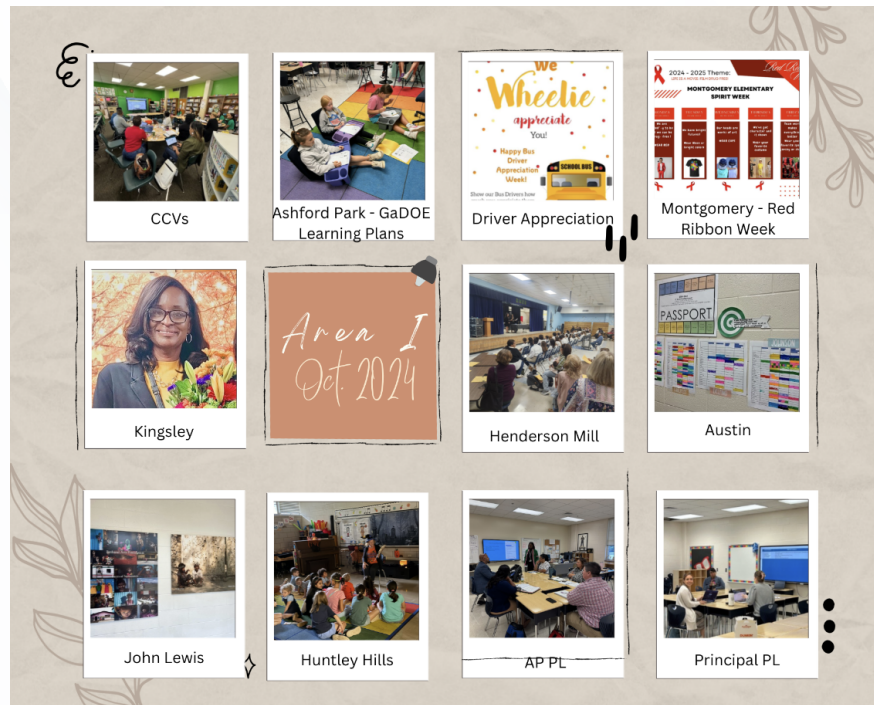


Beth Kyle, Area 1 Elementary Schools

Area I spent October focusing on CCVs with embedded learning walks and operations walks. CCVs are helping schools to focus deeper on what is working and what needs to be refined for increased improvement for all students. We are seeing clear evidence of GaDOE learning plans, DCSD pacing guides, and differentiated instruction utilizing Wonders, My View, and GA Reveal.

The Area also celebrated several special events this past month including National School Custodians Day, Bus Driver Appreciation Day during National School Bus Safety Weeks, Red Ribbon Week, and National Walk to School Day. We also welcomed Dr. Jackson as the new principal of Kingsley Elementary. Henderson Mill inducted their new Junior Beta Club members. Austin kicked off their fifth-grade reading challenge. John Lewis was awarded a permanent art installation by the Basharat Arts Foundation with photography from around the world by Simon Lister. Huntley Hills held a Spooky Story Family Literacy Night for families with important tips for families on how to help develop better readers.

Area team members facilitated principal roundtables and AP professional learning, so our leaders had time to explore DCSD resources and collaborate with the team and across schools. The Area I team members have been busy providing CSIP-driven support to schools as we prepare for CSIP monitoring and school-based reality checks.



Terri Brown, Area 2 Elementary Superintendent

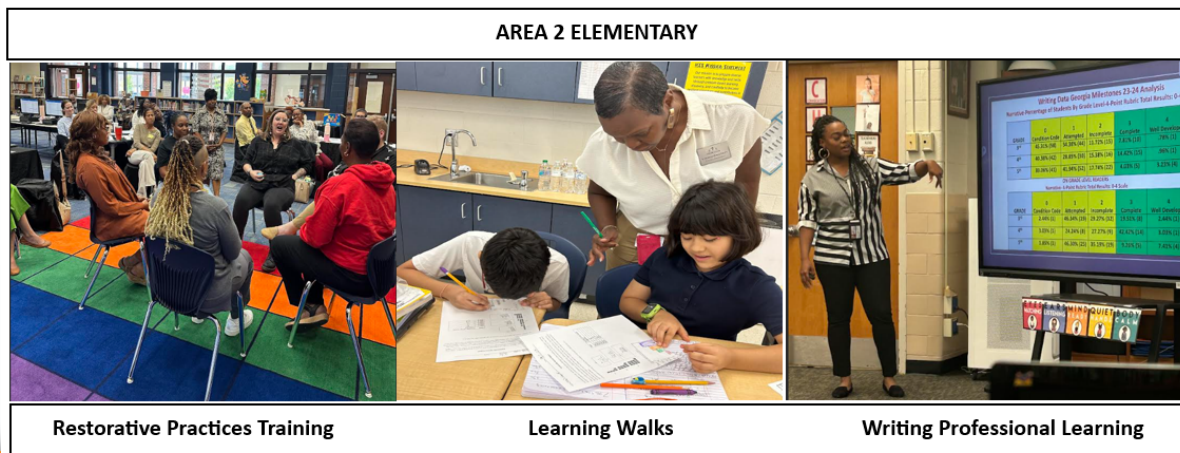
For October, Area 2 Elementary focused on writing achievement by facilitating data analysis for teachers, academic coaches, and principals that included site-based writing results for three genres: narrative, informational, and opinion. Writing achievement for on-grade level readers was highlighted as an opportunity for improvement area-wide. Along with writing data, narrative writing techniques for craft such as show not tell, sentence expansion, and student work analysis through state-released exemplars were modeled and practiced by teachers, academic coaches, and principals.

Follow up support was also provided for schools with less than 50% implementation for September’s focus: mathematics. Area 2 Elementary’s content lead for mathematics supported schools with collaborative planning sessions and observation follow-ups as well.

Collaborative Calibration Visits (CCVs) began in October with 7 out of 17 visits completed along with Learning Walks being conducted to observe whether evidence from CCV presentations was evident in classrooms. More observations for Learning Walks were recorded and shared in SchoolMint. To close out CCVs and Learning Walks, the Area 2 team discussed with schools “Notice & Wonder” feedback.

Area 2 Elementary’s Reality Check took place on October 9th; school-based Reality Checks are underway as well. All schools received feedback on their MAP Action plans, and all principals received feedback for their weekly “Six Systems” Check-In.

Area 2 Elementary’s Climate & Culture Coordinators facilitated Restorative Practices training for all 17 schools earlier this month. All schools now have at least 2-3 staff members to support restorative practices on site!



Ateshia Lester, Area 3 Elementary Schools

Area 3 instructional focus for the month of October included conducting Collaborative Calibration Systems check for 12 of our 14 schools. This included reviewing the work of the six systems and monitoring the progress of schools on key performance indicators. The school leaders are able to share strategies and artifacts that will improve student outcomes. Content Coordinators continue to support teachers in collaborative planning by offering guidance on the PLC guiding questions to support effective instructional practices. Our Mental Health and Climate and Culture Coordinator provided professional learning to identified staff in all Area 3 Schools on implementation of restorative circles. The SWD coordinator has worked with the LTSE's in all schools to ensure that special education staff understand and implement specially designed instructional strategies.

All Area 3 Schools are celebrating Red Ribbon Week, GA Pre-K Week, Fall Festivals, Rock the Vote, Bullying Prevention, and Book Character Parades.





Jacqueline Taylor, Area Superintendent – Middle Area

The Middle School Area continues to provide support with student engagement, academic discourse, implementation of primary resources, CSIP strategies, pacing of the curriculum, and behavioral and wellness management. For the month of October, the Middle School Area's instructional focus was on math instruction and collaborative planning. The MS Area conducted learning walks in math classrooms and Extended Learning Time. Evidence of the implementation of Math CSIP action steps was noted during the learning walks. Schools were provided with glows, grows, and actionable next steps. Further, EAs and Content Coordinators have been participating in collaborative planning sessions and providing immediate feedback based on the collaborative planning framework which includes the Three Moves of Collaborative Planning.

The EL Coordinator provided key Individual Language Plans and instructional strategies support. This involved assisting schools with understanding the purpose, goal setting, and the logistical process for ILPs. The coordinator focused on appropriate placement for potential EL with the WIDA Screener, clearing pending lists, advising on appropriate daily instructional strategies, and setting accommodations. Additionally, the EL Coordinator began scheduling one-on-one modeling support for new teachers, focusing on helping new teachers with EL strategies, lesson planning, and delivery.

SWD Coordinator has supported LTSEs by addressing paraprofessional concerns (relating to HHB support, student assignments and duties & responsibilities) and has attended IEP meetings for several schools to offer support.

MS Culture & Climate focused on attendance meetings, PBIS, and student wellness. The MS C & C Coordinators continue to collaborate with MTSS Specialists, FACE Advocates, Student Engagement Coaches, Attendance Specialists, and other support personnel. In addition, C&C conducted Restorative Practices training for school personnel within the district. The MS Mental Health Coordinator has been providing support to schools by following up on students who have exhibited suicide tendencies.

MS Area Coordinators have conducted the following PL sessions during October:

- Math Coordinators - Deconstructing Standards, Mathematics Non-negotiables, 3 Read Protocol, and use of the Achievement Level Descriptors
- ELA Coordinator - new ELA curriculum StudySync
- EL Coordinator – Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol (SIOP)
- SWD Coordinator – Co-teaching and Teacher Parity
- Culture & Climate Coordinators – Restorative Practices
- Mental Health Coordinator – Mental Health First Aid, Trauma Training with counselors, Wellness Seminars for staff.

Thomas Glanton, Area Superintendent – High Schools

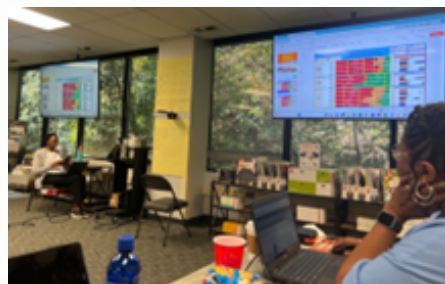
In October, Area High Schools focused on implementing key initiatives and supporting instructional leadership across campuses. The Rock the Vote initiative wrapped up with logistics for obtaining Voter IDs and facilitating student participation in voting, supported by district staff volunteer efforts. Central to this month’s activities were CCVs and the launch of Learning Walks, both designed to enhance instructional quality and promote a consistent, high-standard learning environment throughout the district.

- **Mathematics:** Mathematics Coordinator assisted with ensuring that the October MRESA math training sessions were conducted. During the October sessions, the algebra and geometry teachers work collaboratively with the facilitator and coordinator to unpack the GaDOE instructional learning plans for units 5 & 6 (semester courses) and unit 4 (yearlong courses).
- **Climate and Culture:** The Culture and Climate coordinators have been actively engaged in various M.I.RA.C.L.E.S. projects, including Rock the Vote, SAT Prep, and the ID project. In particular, the Rock the Vote initiative is approaching its conclusion. A transportation schedule was arranged for October 29th to help students obtain their Voter ID cards. On October 30th, transportation will be provided for all students to cast their votes.
- **Multilingual Learner (MLs) Support:** Area ELL Coordinator facilitated professional learning opportunities on data-driven instructional strategies and implementation of Instructional Language Plans for multilingual learners.
- **Special Education:** Special Education Coordinator has been actively involved in CCVs and is organizing professional learning opportunities for the team based on next steps from feedback.

We remain committed to creating engaging learning environments where all students can excel. Our efforts are dedicated to supporting the success and well-being of every scholar in the High School Area.

Derrick Hardy, Area Horizon Superintendent

October 2024 introduced the season for monitoring of the school improvement work we commit to through the six essential systems and the GADOE-DCSD District Plan of Support.



Horizon Area completed 31 school-based Reality Check analyses and the Horizon Area Reality Check analysis with after-action support planning in rapid time. The incredible work of reporting and action step sharing was led by our zone leaders of support that embodied distributive accountability and leadership.



The **Zone 1 High Schools** of Horizon supported the participation of 8 high schools in the effort to register scholars who are eligible to vote on Election Day.



Salem Middle School was the recipient of a \$2,000 grant from the Snapping Shoals EMC Bright Ideas group.



Farrington and Montclair Elementary Schools successfully engaged families and students in their fall festivals.



Hightower Elementary School conducted a Rock the Vote mock election.



Dresden Elementary School broke ground on the new building.



McNair Discovery Learning Academy cut the ribbon on the school's state of the art health facility to support students and families with care that minimizes time away from campus.

Finally, we applaud **DeKalb Alternative Program** and **Ronald McNair High School** for being among DCSD's most improved graduation rates during the Superintendent & Board of Education Press Conference announcing our 2024 graduation rate increases.



Michelle Jones, Area Specialty Superintendent

The focus for the month of October for Specialty Area has been Mathematics. We have reviewed the data for all schools in the area of mathematics, as well as reviewed most missed items on the benchmarks in Mathematics. Our Mathematics Coordinator has conducted professional learning to assist schools with the learning plans, Polya's problem solving, and other mathematical practices. Principals in the Specialty Area participated in PPLCs, where a cluster of principals focused on a problem of practice and conducted instructional rounds at a school.

We attended the first reality checks and reviewed the area data with leaders, discussed strategies and next steps. Each leader created MAP action plans and reviewed strategies and next steps. We have been attending schools and centers to conduct CCVs. The Area Support Team has also supported leaders and provided coaching which has been included in School Mint.

We celebrated Coralwood at their Spotlight School visit in partnership with School Innovation. Our schools and centers have had wonderful outreach programs such as Fall Festivals, Heritage Festivals, Pumpkin Patch, Beetle Juice dance, Book Character Day Parades, Spooky Science Day, Exhibit Night, Breast Cancer Awareness events, Red Ribbon Week events. The Specialty Area Support Team has enjoyed supporting our schools this month.

Finally, our schools have been hosting school tours and offering application assistance during the Open Enrollment for School Choice.



Mike Kell, Leadership Development/Performance Coaches

- **Executive Leadership Series Course: "Crucial Conversations for Improved Performance"**

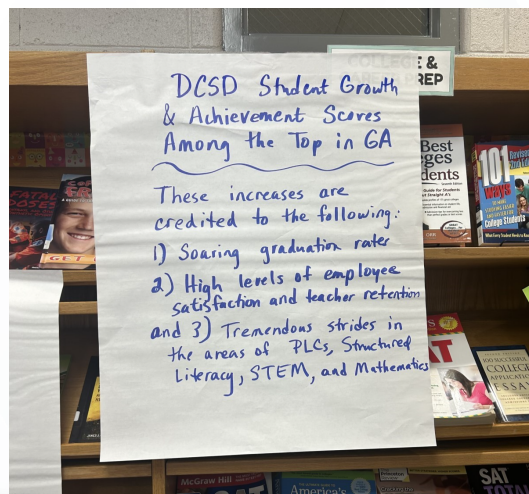
In October, Leadership Development, in collaboration with Crucial Learning, LLC, facilitated the last two virtual training sessions on *Crucial Conversations* for 31 school leaders across various leadership roles in the district. This training equipped leaders with essential communication tools to navigate high-stakes discussions effectively. The feedback was positive from participants and may lead to future PL with more of a focus on directly supporting school leaders.

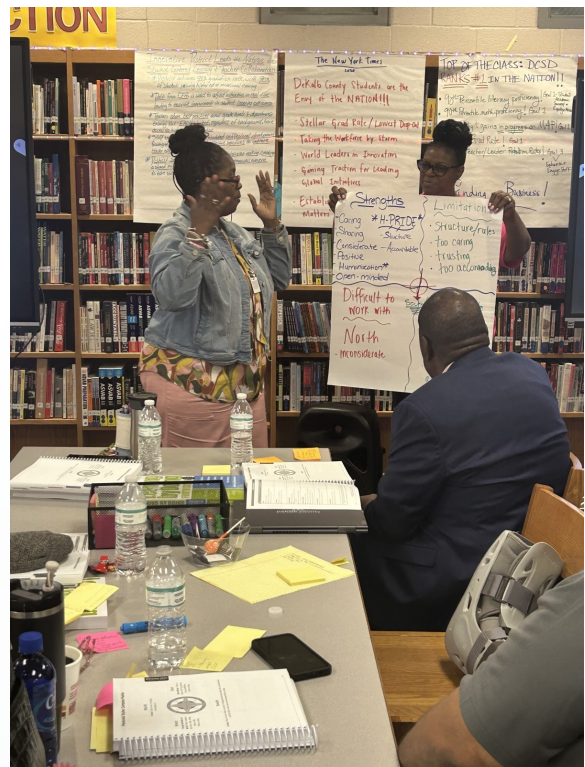
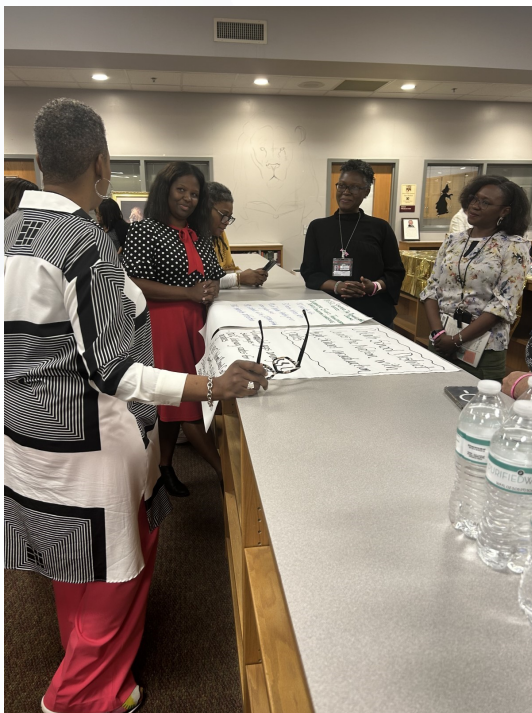
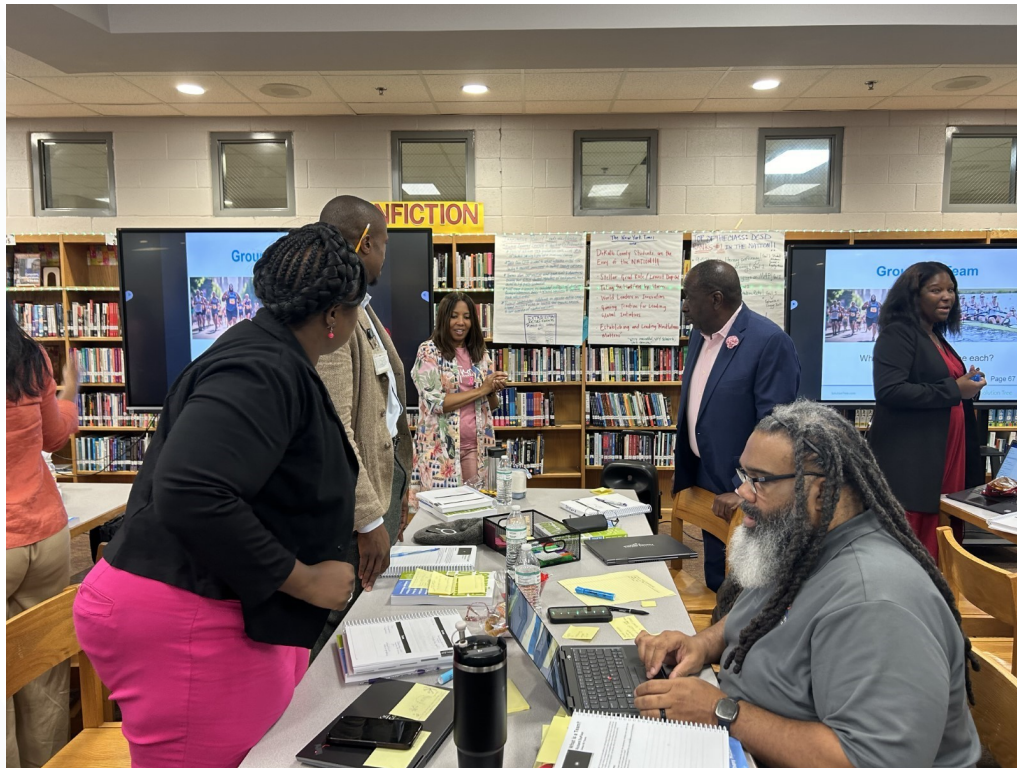
- **PLC Development with Solution Tree** (Professional Learning Facilitators, Performance Coaches and Academic Curriculum Coaches)

Leadership Development in tandem with the Professional Learning Department completed 2 intensive days of training with Solution Tree to begin implementation of PLCs across our schools and district. This partnership will provide these coaches the capacity to work with school leadership and PLC Teams at our schools.

This training allows for the following cultural shifts to take place.

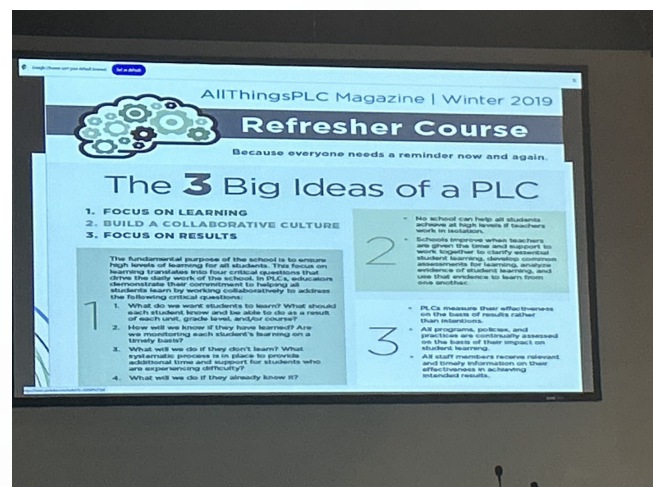
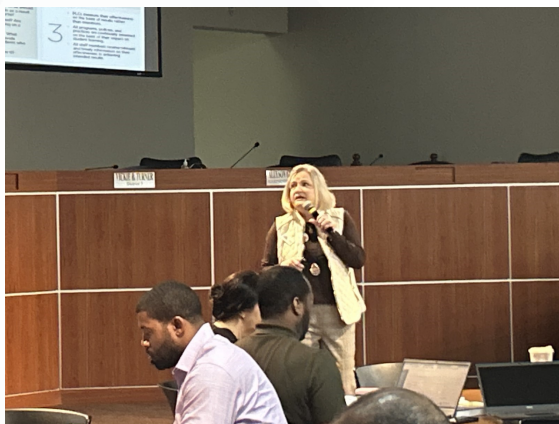
- Ensure that students are learning, move from teaching to learning.
 - The Four Big Questions
 - What do we want them to learn?
 - How do we know they learned it?
 - What do we do when they don't learn it?
 - What do we do when they do learn it?
- Developing a culture of collaboration. (Moving from collaborative planning to PLC Teams) Collaborative planning addresses question #1 but falls short on questions 2,3 and 4. This is the need for developing PLC Teams in our schools.
- Building a culture where school leadership and PLC Teams are **"Focused on Results!"**

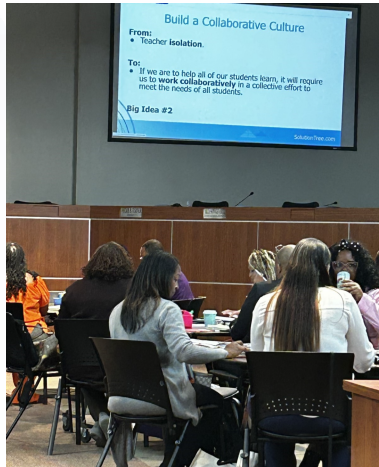




- **PLC Development with Solution Tree** (Principals and Assistant Principals) Leadership Development in tandem with the Professional Learning Department training with Solution Tree to begin implementation of PLCs across our schools and district. These sessions for principals and assistant principals provided the PLC Framework for school leadership to set expectations for implementation around what is tight and loose in the PLC process. This training also exposed school leaders to the following cultural shifts that need to take place.

- Ensure that students are learning, move from teaching to learning.
 - The Four Big Questions
 - What do we want them to learn?
 - How do we know they learned it?
 - What do we do when they don't learn it?
 - What do we do when they do learn it?
- Developing a culture of collaboration. (Moving from collaborative planning to PLC Teams) Collaborative planning addresses question #1
- but falls short on questions 2,3 and 4. This is the need for developing PLC Teams in our schools.
- Building a culture where school leadership and PLC Teams are **"Focused on Results!"**





The Leadership Development team, Performance Coaches have supported 1st and 2nd year principals with their CCV visits. They have provided pre-prep support, on-site CCV monitoring and post CCV reflection. Performance Coaches are reporting that New Principals are.

- able to build capacity in their building using the CCV monitoring process.
- They are seeing growth opportunities from the feedback that they are receiving.
- It is building consistency among schools around the six systems.
- Based on System 6 feedback from CCV's we will work to build additional PL opportunities for principals to support their work and to build clarity.
- Principals are getting clear next steps system work from district leadership feedback.

Leadership Development is actively developing the DeKalb Leadership Institute (DLI), a new leadership program for assistant principals aspiring to principalship. Dr. Collins distributed a survey, flyer, and program content to all principals and assistant principals. The data collected will be reviewed to initiate the selection process for the DLI cohort. The program's content is being refined to ensure it meets the needs of emerging school leaders.

- **The Leadership Academy**

Leadership Development is working with the Leadership Academy Group to develop our Aspiring Principals Program. We have begun the process of scheduling Community Stakeholders Feedback Groups. Groups included.

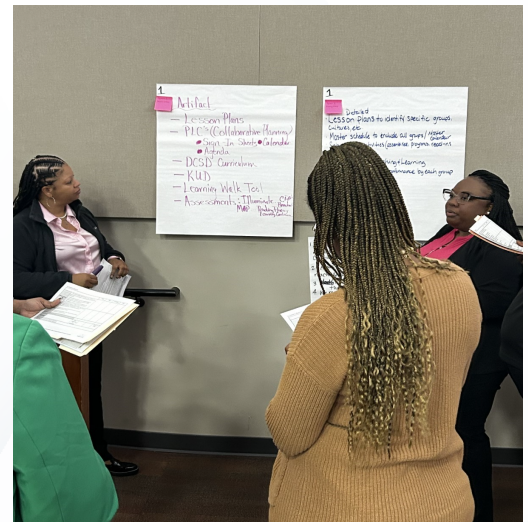
- Superintendent, Chief of Schools, Chief of Support Services, Chief of Accountability, Chief Academic Officer.
- Principal Group, Assistant Principal Group and Parent Group

The feedback data will be used with Leadership Development to drive the planning for our Aspiring Leadership Academy. At this point in time, we are working in a two-phase plan:

- Phase One: Start a pilot for a small group of 4-6 Aspiring Principals to begin in January.
- Phase Two: Establish a rigorous system for Aspiring Leadership Academy selection to occur in early June for the 2025-26 school year. This should support approximately 20 new candidates.

- **The New AP Consortium**

Leadership Development provided professional learning to new APs on October 22nd. They received leadership planning around their style of leadership and how it interacts with others. Updated training around assessments planning and a deeper dive into the 6 Systems.





Ayana Smith, Professional Learning

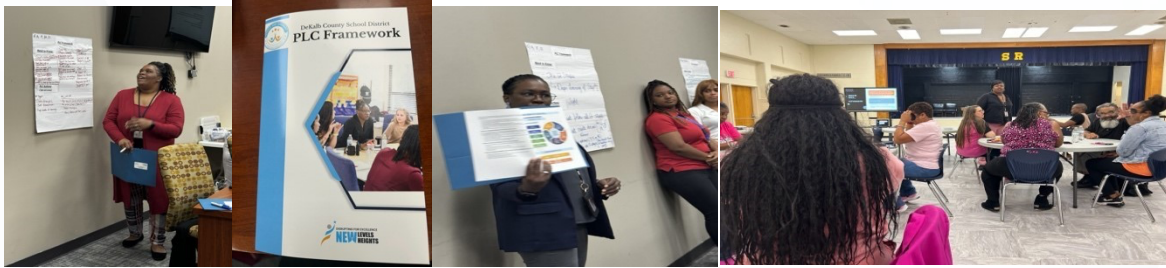
The Professional Learning Department has provided support to thirty-five schools and collaborated with three district divisions (HR, Operations, and Curriculum and Instruction), and 203 individuals (including Principals, AP's and teachers) during the month of October.

This month we aligned the work of the department with our Miracles Priority. 98% of the PL Instructional Staff were trained on the PLC Coaching Model on October 9&10th and incorporated the work from the training to create a PLC Framework presentation for the principals. The PLC core team finalized the PLC Framework created by Champion Dillard.

More than 60 members of the Human Resources Division earned H-PRIDE Certification during the H-PRIDE Certification Fall 2024 project held September through October. The Division of HR which includes Total Rewards, IGNITE, and Legal Affairs is on track to have the entire division H-PRIDE Certified before 2025!



As a department, we celebrated our small successes during our family meeting this month. Our meeting was dedicated to team building, communication and listening, and recognition of exemplary work completed by team members. The PL department is on the move to Unlock Potential and Ignite Excellence!



Norman C. Sauce III, *Chief of Student Services*

October was a dynamic and impactful month for Dr. Norman C. Sauce III, Chief of Student Services. He engaged with various initiatives and events throughout the district. Sauce began the month by attending a Charter Schools 101 lunch and learn session facilitated by DCSD's Department of School Governance at a local Good Will work force development center. He followed this by participating in the Fall Reality Checks sessions. With Reality Checks, Dr. Sauce personally attended 29 separate Reality Checks sessions during October, along with District and school leaders representing our Horizon Schools leadership and Area teams leadership. He continued his outreach by attending both the Parent/Guardian Superintendent Advisory Meeting and the Community in Schools Georgia Governance Meeting, deepening his connection with parents and school leaders. Along with 150+ teachers, he proudly participated in the ESOL Teacher and Administrator Conference (Title III Conference) on Saturday October 5, enhancing district-level supports for staff serving English learners. He also represented the district at the Board Meeting on October 7th, followed by his attendance at the DSCD Graduation Rates Announcements Press Conference at McNair High School. This was where key announcements were shared with the public regarding exciting graduation rates' increases, along with District and community civic leaders also in attendance.

A significant highlight of the month was Dr. Sauce's involvement in Georgia Pre-K Week (October 7th-11th), where he kicked off the week as a guest reader at Laurel Ridge and Barack Obama Elementary Schools, sharing his enthusiasm for early childhood literacy. The following week, Dr. Sauce took part in strategic planning for the district, including attending a Curriculum Audit planning meeting with Division leaders from Curriculum and Instruction, Accountability and Assessment, Schools and Leadership, the Superintendent's Office, and Insight Education Group.

Dr. Sauce continued his collaborative work in October via participation in the Exceptional Education, English Learners, and Gifted Education Departments' Focus Group discussions with teacher leaders to glean their perspectives and insights on supports the Division of Student Services provides them and their scholars. He was actively involved in and attended the District

6, 3, and 5 Town Hall evening meetings, along with the Courageous Conversations evening meeting in District 7. At these evening community events, he joined multiple stakeholders in discussion on the status and needs of the District community.

Dr. Sauce's commitment to early education was further evident during his visits to Pre-K4 and Pre-K3 Expansion Site classrooms at Indian Creek, Montgomery, and Austin Elementary Schools. He also had the opportunity to meet with the District's School Psychology team during their monthly meeting – to address their questions and learn more of their current needs and challenges. As part of his ongoing efforts to improve district-wide engagement, Dr. Sauce spent time at Dunwoody High School twice during the month of October: for classroom visits and with the Senior Coordinators for Gifted Education to facilitate professional development session for the staff of Midvale Elementary School – along with preparations throughout the month of October for the next Gifted Education Information Night virtual session on November 12, 2024.

Sauce joined Senior Cabinet and the Superintendent for the monthly MIRACLES workshop- in furtherance of our efforts to foster collaboration and coherence across Divisions. Dr. Sauce closed out the month with valuable participation in the monthly Principals Learning Opportunity, facilitated by the Division of Schools and Leadership, and evening Student Assignment Planning Sub-Committee Meeting at Miller Grove High School. October proved to be a month filled with impactful meetings, insightful discussions, and direct engagement with educators, administrators, and the community, all aimed at supporting student success and achieving District strategic goals.



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

I had a scintillating visit in Mrs. Williams-Pitkonen's World History class @DunwoodyHS! Her scholars were creating original visual representations to demonstrate their learning on the French Revolution. Thank you, co-teacher, Mr. Gibbons as well. Go, Wildcats!



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

Thank you, parent leaders, for your candor, compassion, & inquisitiveness during @DeKalbSchools Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council. We are so much better for your involvement & engagement. Together we're heading towards new levels, new heights! #iLoveDCSD



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

What a stimulating discussion we had last night @SMHSUPDATES for our latest Community Town Hall meeting! Thank you, Superintendent Dr. Horton, Cabinet colleagues, and Communications Team for your planning and partnership. @DeKalbSchools #iLoveDCSD



8:38 PM · 10/2/24 · 284 Views



DISRUPTING FOR EXCELLENCE
NEW LEVELS HEIGHTS

Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

@DeKalbSchools Board of Education proclaimed October 7-11, 2024 as #GeorgiaPreKWeek! We were joined by @GADeptEarlyCare leaders & some of our very own Pre-K educators to celebrate the occasion! We're proud to be the largest public provider of Pre-K in GA. #iLoveDCSD



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

So impressed w/ first visit to Austin Elementary School w/ Principal Mrs. Avis Moonenham. We observed quality student-centered instruction within Pre-K3, Pre-K4, self contained Pre-K, & 1st grade gifted & co-taught classrooms. What a smorgasbord of impactful pedagogy! Go, Eagles!



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

What a joy to read with Mrs. Curry's Pre-K scholars at Laurel Ridge Elementary School! They blew me away with their advanced vocabularies and vast prior knowledge! This is a terrific collection of future leaders. Thanks for the warm welcome! @DeKalbSchools #GeorgiaPreKWeek



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

As prior Area Sup. for High Schools & current Chief of Student Services, I'm proud to stand w/ Supt. Horton, BOE, & leaders to celebrate @DeKalbSchools grad rate 📈 -Highest in 10+ years! 7 subgroups 📈, ELs 📈 6%, SWDs 📈 5%, 3 schools 📈 10%+, 18 schools 📈 & 4 schools at 95%+!



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

Always my distinct honor to stand with & on stage with @DeKalbSchools Superintendent Horton, BOE Past-Chair Turner, & my Cabinet colleagues to represent the tremendous successes of our scholars & staff. Thank you @amhsrams & Principal Mason for hosting our town hall! #iLoveDCSD



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

Shout out @ObamaElemMagnet Principal Thomas-Bethea & Mrs. Dillard's & Mr. Hines' (@GADeptEarlyCare 2019 TOTY) Pre-K scholars. They wowed me w/ their active engagement, advanced vocabularies, prior knowledge on animal life, parts of plants, & even kitchenware! #GeorgiaPreKWeek



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

Happening Now: @DeKalbSchools ESOL Educators Conference. 150+ educators on Saturday come to fill their buckets on the best strategies, supports, & cultural proficiency for multilingual learners. We've got panels, keynotes, breakouts, & breakfast! #NewLevelsNewHeights #iLoveDCSD



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

Wow @MESMustangPride Mustangs! What a visit! I got to see the magic in Pre-K classrooms with Ms. Dane's & Ms. Smith's brilliant scholars, tour the STEAM Lab, pop in on Principal @Carolina_Girl96's Coffee & Conversation, see AP Ms. Nsele in action teaching Art class, & more!

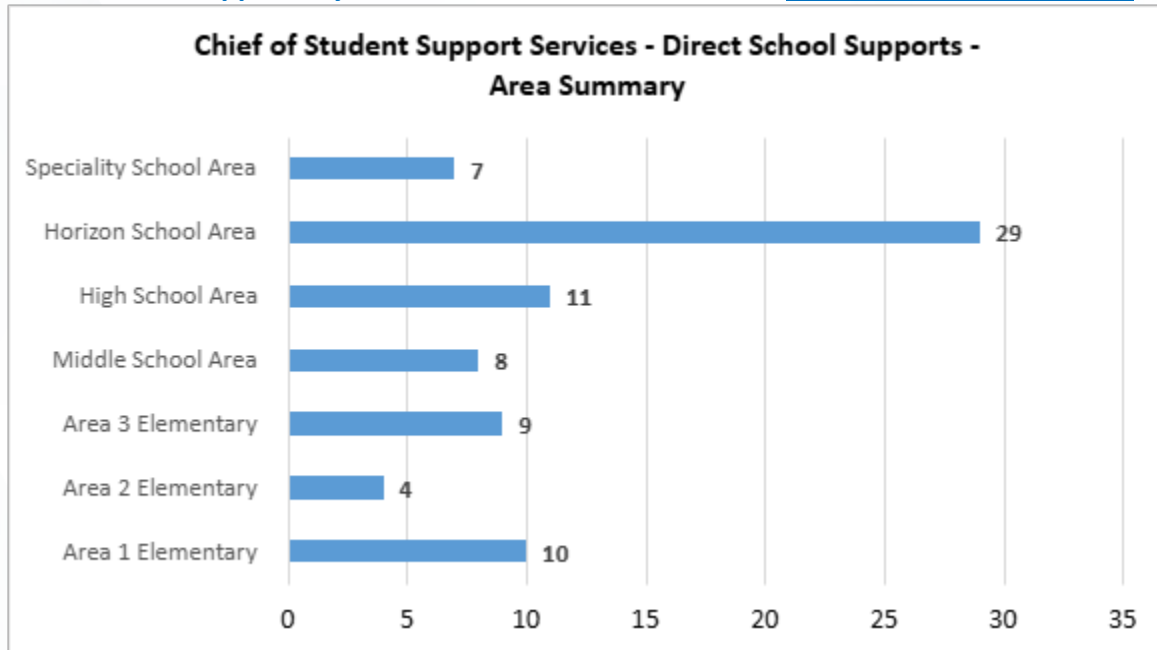


Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@DrNormanCSauce3

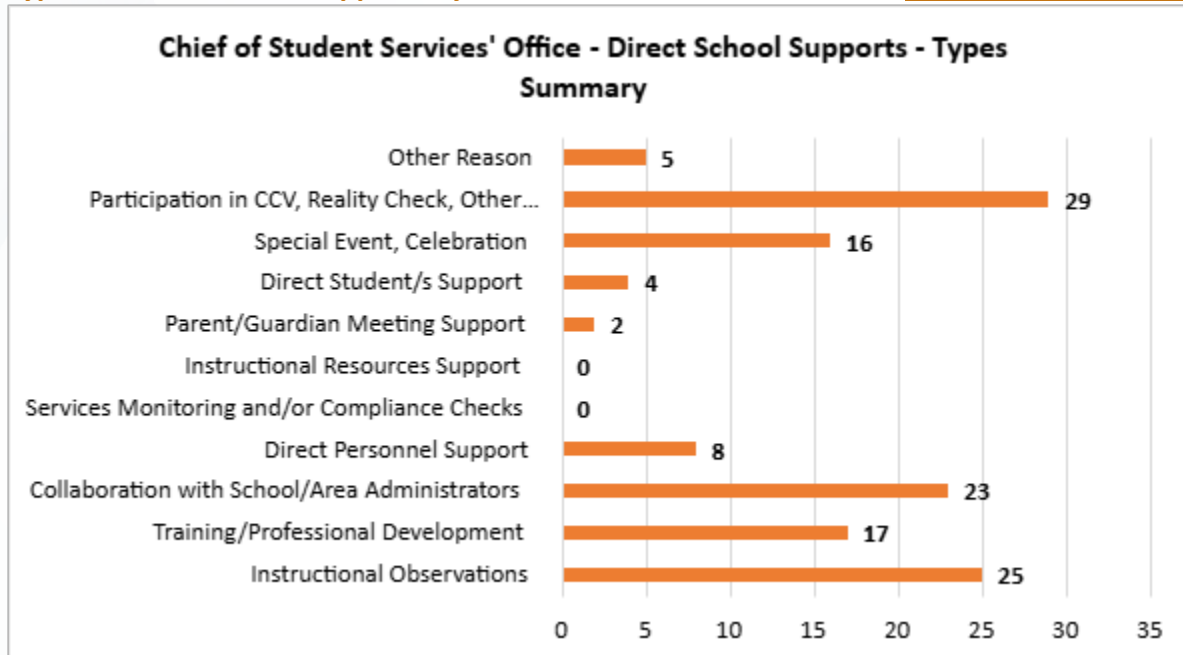
Student Services Division Office Specialist Mrs. Jasmine Smith-Silas read "A Magnificent Field Trip to the Governor's Mansion" with Ms. Brock's "magnificent" Pre-K Scholars at E. L. Bouie, Sr. Theme School. And we've had a "magnificent" #GeorgiaPreKWeek across @DeKalbSchools!



Direct School Supports by Chief of Student Services' Office Since Start of School Year:



Types of Direct School Supports by Chief of Student Services' Office Since Start of School Year



Dr. Evelyn Hall, *Executive Director, English Learners*
Title III ESOL A.C.E. Conference

The English Learners Department hosted the Title III ESOL A.C.E. Conference on Saturday, October 5, 2024 which focused on access, compliance and equity. One hundred fifty-six (156) participants were in attendance including teachers, administrators, Area Coordinators, charter school staff, and community partners. Key takeaways were data driven evidence-based teaching and learning strategies, culturally relevant discussion topics and educational technologies that inspired and motivated participants.





Division of Student Services
 English Learners Department
 PRESENTS



2024 A.C.E.

ACCESS . COMPLIANCE . EQUITY

Title III English Learners Conference

ELEVATING ELs TO NEW LEVELS | NEW HEIGHTS

Saturday, October 5th, 2024
 8:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

DeKalb Administrative and Instructional Complex (AIC)
 1701 Mountain Industrial Blvd, Stone Mountain GA, 30083

Sessions will emphasize access, compliance, and equity through the lens of ESOL services and instruction.

FEATURED SPEAKER



Dr. Meg Baker
 Senior Program Manager of ESOL & Title III, Part A Programs at the Georgia Department of Education

Check out some of the sessions you won't want to miss!

- ▶ STEAM by Dr. NyKamp & Dr. Tamakloe
- ▶ Oral Language Development & Reading by Dr. Joy Broughton
- ▶ Instructional Resource Support
- ▶ New American Pathways/Refugee Resettlement

Frontline Session #6187

This opportunity aligns with the DCSD Strategic Plan: Goal Area I: Student Academic Success with Equity and Access, Goal Area III: Recruit, Develop, and Retain Talent and Goal Area V: Organizational Excellence and the DCSD M.I.R.A.C.L.E.S. Framework for Continuous Improvement:

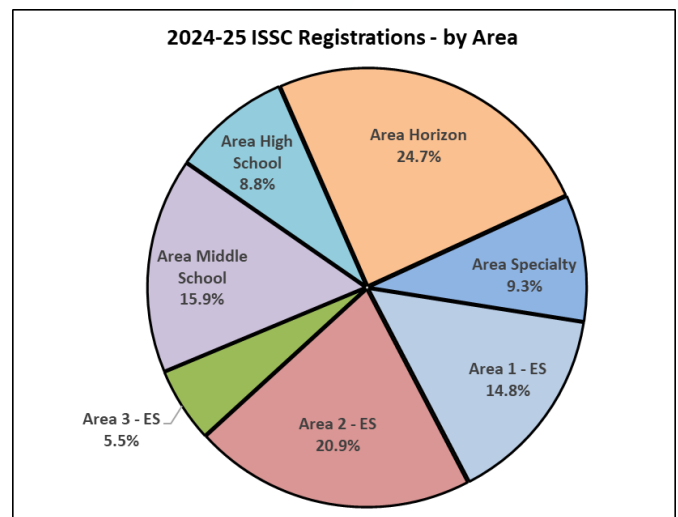
- M - Motion Towards Equity
- I - Improved Instructional Core
- R - Relevant and Rigorous Course of Study.

Registration & Interpretation

International Student Screening Center Registration

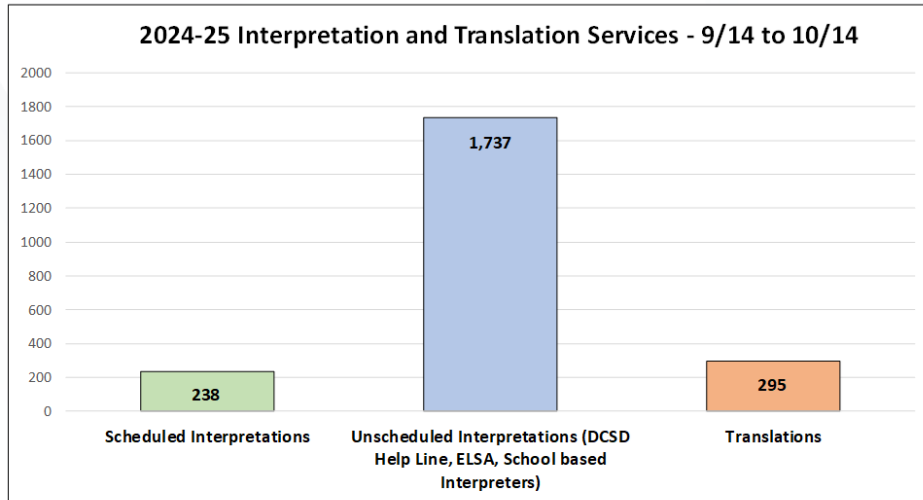
The International Student Screening Center (ISSC) continuously registers and screens students throughout the school year. This month the ISSC registered and screened **182** students. To date, the ISSC has registered and screened **2,907** English learners this academic year.

ISSC 2024-25 SY 30 day Registrations	
Area	Students
Area 1 - ES	27
Area 2 - ES	38
Area 3 - ES	10
Area Middle School	29
Area High School	16
Area Horizon	45
Area Specialty	17
Totals	182



Interpretation & Translation Services

The International Student Screening Center (ISSC) provides interpretation/translation services during registration and at local schools to families with a Primary Home Language Other than English (PHLOTE). During the past month, the English Learners department provided **2,270** PHLOTE families with language access and translated **295** documents.



The graph above shows the number of each type of interpretation and translation service requested from 9/14 to 10/14 for the 2024 - 2025 school year

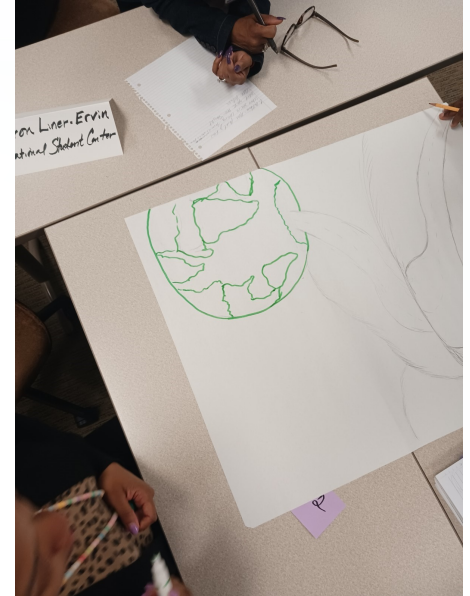
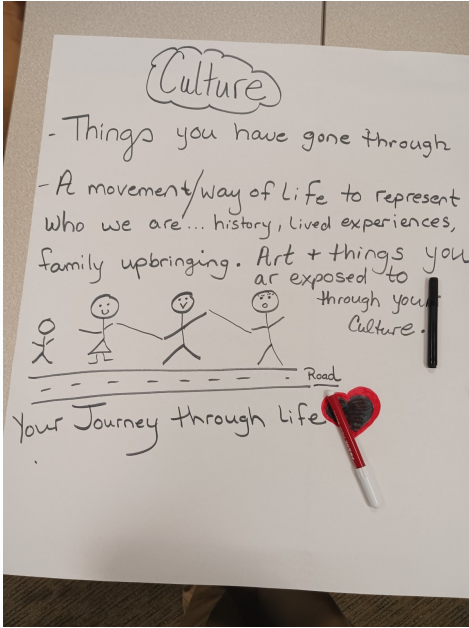
Interpretation and translation align with DCSD Strategic Plan: Goal Area II: School, Family, and Community Engagement and the DCSD M.I.R.A.C.L.E.S. Framework for Continuous Improvement:

- M - Motion Towards Equity
- C – Commitment to Accountability

Professional Learning: Cultural Awareness

To meet the needs of our culturally and linguistically diverse population, the Cultural Awareness workshops provide DCSD employees an opportunity to explore topics of culture and discuss strategies for working with students and families. Local refugee agencies have partnered with the English Learners Department to provide additional information on serving refugee and immigrant students and their families. The dates for the fall Cultural Awareness workshops are below.

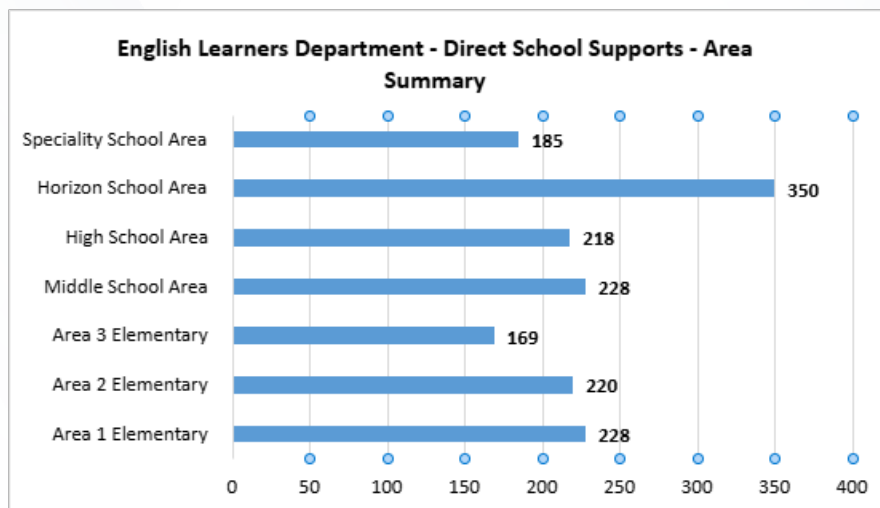
Fall 2024 Cultural Awareness Sessions	
Date	Frontline Code
Tuesday, September 17, 2024	5642
Tuesday, October 22, 2024	5653
Wednesday, November 13, 2024	5655



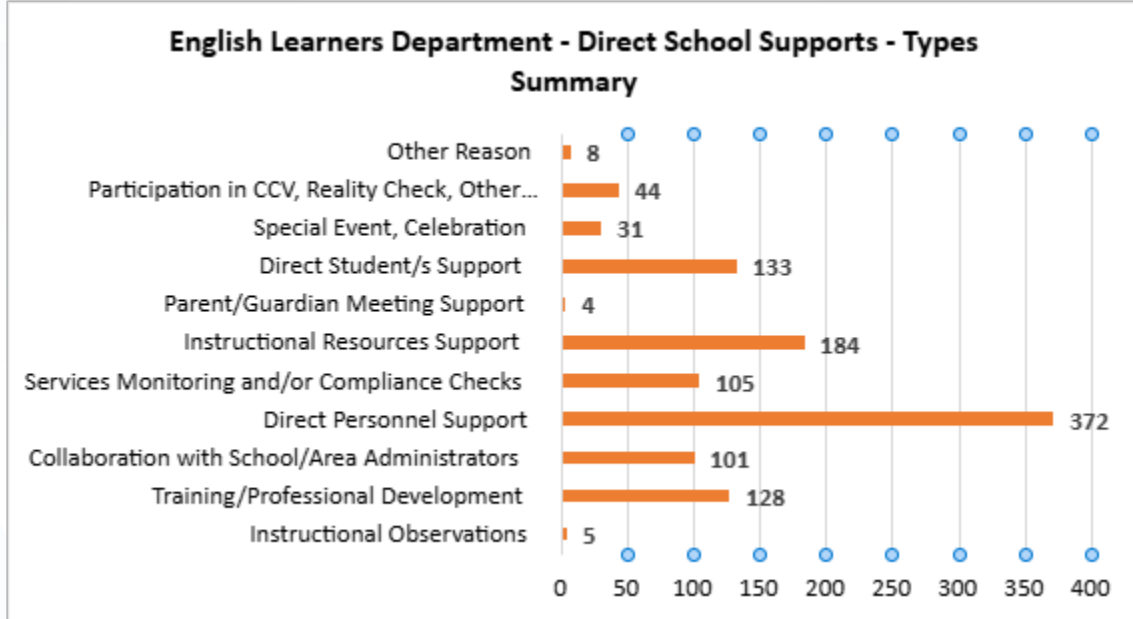
These opportunities align with the DCSD Strategic Plan: Goal Area 1: Student Academic Success with Equity and Access, Goal Area 2: School, Family, and Community Engagement, Goal Area 4: Culture and Climate, and Goal Area 6: Organizational Excellence and the DCSD M.I.R.A.C.L.E.S. Framework for Continuous Improvement:

- M - Motion Towards Equity
- I - Improved Instructional Core
- R - Relevant and Rigorous Course of Study.

Direct School Supports by the Dept. of English Learners Since Start of School Year



Types of Direct School Supports by Dept. of English Learners Since Start of School Year



Kiana King, Executive Director, Exceptional Education
Professional Development


We are excited about to announce the department’s monthly Parent. Education. Empowerment. Resources and Support (PEERS) Parent Education Sessions that are now being facilitated for families of students with disabilities. Our first session held on October 22nd was well attended by more than 92 families with at least 130 families registered to attend. Our speaker, Sheryl Arno, Executive Director of Down Syndrome Association of Atlanta and the parent liaison at GAIPSEC (Georgia Inclusive Post Secondary Education Consortium) provided meaningful tips and resources for families on the ways to engage in transition services at the collegiate level for students with intellectual disabilities. The next session will focus on Guardianship and will be held virtually on November 19, 2024 at 6pm.

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



Virtual Parent Education Sessions

FALL TRANSITION SERIES:

October 22, 2024	November 19, 2024	December 3, 2024
		
Transitional Services	Guardianship	NOW/COMP & Katie Beckett Waivers
Speaker: Sheryl Arno, GAIPSEC	Speaker: Atty DJ Jeyaram, Jeyaram & Associates	Speaker: Parent to Parent of Georgia

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

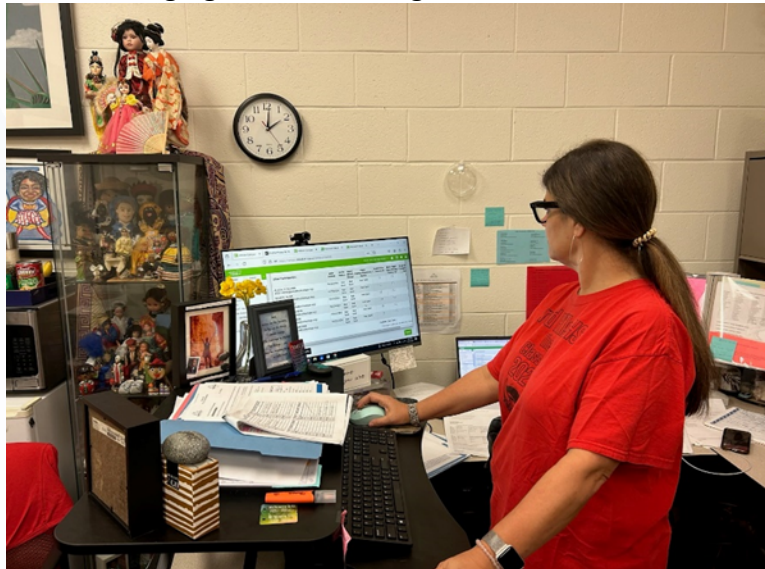
REGISTER NOW! 

SCAN ME! >>>

REGISTER by scanning the QR code or go to <https://forms.office.com/r/RJHGq748sy>

- This month, the Department of Exceptional Education, in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Education and the Horizon Area leadership, completed learning walks for all eight ATSI schools October 9-10, 2024. The focus of the learning walks were to determine how the schools are engaging students with disabilities, determine the additional supports required in the area of Specially Designed Instruction and to observe the initial phase of implementation of the Wilson Reading System (WRS) in all schools. Feedback and data will be shared with the Horizon area leadership, school principals and a plan for support and professional development will be communicated to the school teams during the Week of October 28th.
- The “Autism in the Classroom” professional development training is designed to provide educators with a foundational understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorder

- (ASD) and its impact on students within the classroom environment. Participants will learn to recognize the key characteristics associated with autism and explore evidence-based strategies to support the diverse needs of students on the spectrum. The session will cover essential topics such as communication challenges, social deficits, repetitive behaviors, executive functioning, and the importance of creating a structured and visually supportive classroom environment. This training is designed for all district staff and will be offered monthly, September 2024 – April 2025, via Frontline registration. The second training in the monthly series is scheduled for October 22, 2024.
- The Department of Exceptional Education is excited about a new opportunity for special education coordinators to provide direct support and training for special education teachers and paraprofessionals. The first session in the monthly series is entitled “Parental Rights and a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)” and will be facilitated by the District leadership team on Wednesday, November 13, 2024.
- The Section 504/HHB team is proud to announce the successful launch of a new K12 module, now fully operational in the first tiered roll-out. This module is streamlining the 504 process, enhancing compliance, and improving communication with stakeholders across the district. The introduction of this tool marks a significant step forward in managing and monitoring student accommodations more efficiently.



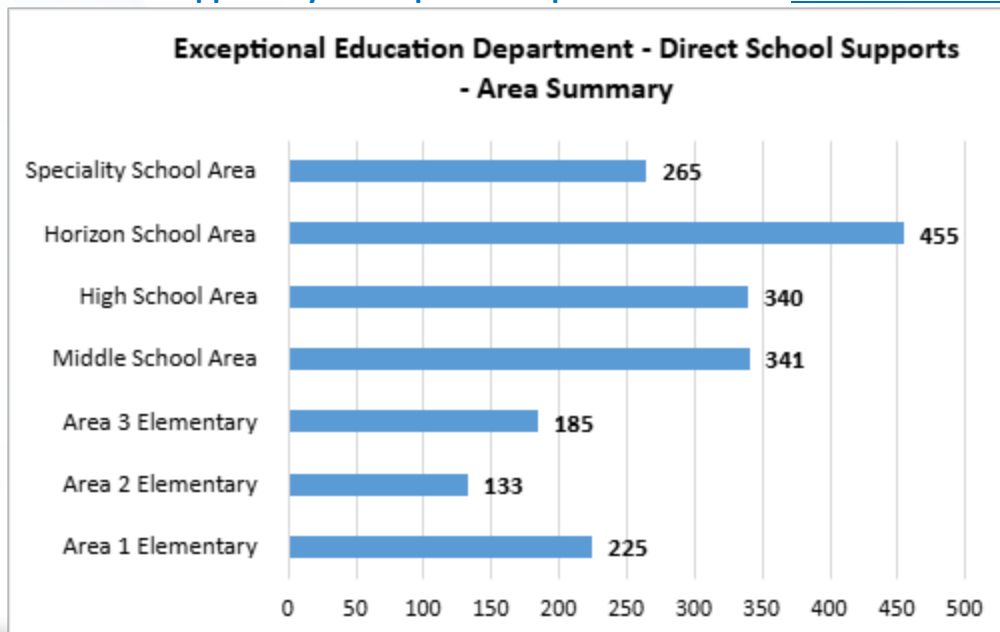
- In addition, the Section 504 team has strengthened its collaborative efforts. These efforts are aimed at ensuring equitable access for students, and the team has provided extensive training to a wide range of stakeholders, including assistant

principals, principals, district leaders, school psychologists, and special education lead teachers. This collaboration is fostering a more unified approach to supporting students across the district.

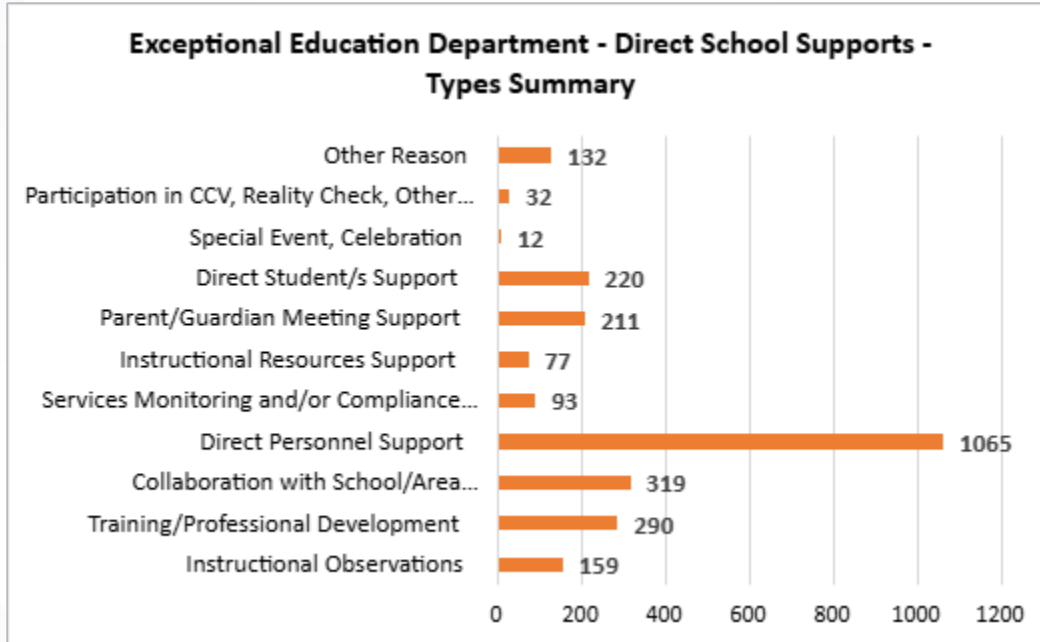
- The Office of Psychological Services supports the continuation of professional learning by “keeping the students in mind.” The school psychologists provided various presentations in the month of October sharing information with 1,683 participants across all schools highlighting the processes for requesting a special education evaluation and addressed the required documentation needed that allow for an evaluation to be completed in a timely manner.



Direct School Supports by the Dept. of Exceptional Education Since Start of School Year



Types of Direct School Supports by Dept. of Exceptional Education Since Start of School Year



Dr. Zack Phillips, Executive Director, Pre -K and Early Learning Center

GA Pre-K Week was celebrated throughout the district on Monday, October 7th – Friday, October 11th. A Proclamation was read at the board meeting on Monday, October 7th with Superintendent, Dr. Horton, various Board Members, Chief of Student Services, Dr. Sauce, members of the Early Learning/Pre-K Programs Department, and teacher leaders from various schools throughout the district. The weeklong celebration was highlighted via a reading event with various guest readers.



PROCLAMATION

Georgia Pre-K Week, October 7-11, 2024

- WHEREAS:** DeKalb County School District is the largest provider of Pre-K within the state of Georgia, and
- WHEREAS:** Each Pre-K scholar will receive engaging and hands-on learning experiences, which develop their academic, physical, and social emotional attributes, within the DeKalb County School District, and
- WHEREAS:** It is essential that each Pre-K scholar has educators with consistently high expectations, who deploy instructional resources and impactful pedagogy within the classroom setting, to support their academic success and personal development daily, and
- WHEREAS:** Each Pre-K scholar deserves a quality education which activates their learning modalities, intellectual curiosity, and self-efficacy, and
- WHEREAS:** Stakeholders within the DeKalb County School District understand the importance that an effective early learning educational experience plays in the development of lifelong skills, and
- WHEREAS:** It is the expectation of the DeKalb County School District to provide each Pre-K scholar with developmentally appropriate and equitable learning opportunities to develop and enhance their sustainable skills to compete in a global society, and
- WHEREAS:** The DeKalb County School District and the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning support and promote early childhood education in our community.
- THEREFORE:** The DeKalb County Board of Education does hereby proclaim and celebrate October 7 - 11, 2024, as Georgia Pre-K Week. In official recognition whereof, we hereby affix our signatures, this 7th day of October, 2024.



Mr. Dijon DaCosta Sr.
Mr. Dijon DaCosta Sr.
DeKalb County School District
Board Chair

Mrs. Deirdre P. Pierce
Mrs. Deirdre P. Pierce
DeKalb County School District
Board Vice Chair

Dr. Devon Q. Horton
Dr. Devon Q. Horton
DeKalb County School District
Superintendent





Professional Learning Opportunities

The Early Learning/Pre-K Department have worked diligently to offer various (PL) opportunities to district employees on various titles ranging from Elopement Strategies, Waterford Supplemental Platform for parents and staff members, Science of Reading (SOR), Virtual Chat and Chews covering Classroom Orders, Assessment Checklists, and Class Rosters. These excellent opportunities for staff members are aligned with the DCSD Strategic Plan and the DCSD MIRACLES Framework for Continuous Improvement.

DCSD Strategic Plan

Goal Area I: Student Academic Success with Equity and Access

Goal Area III: Recruit, Develop, and Retain Talent

Goal Area V: Organizational Excellence

MIRACLES Framework

M - Motion Towards Equity

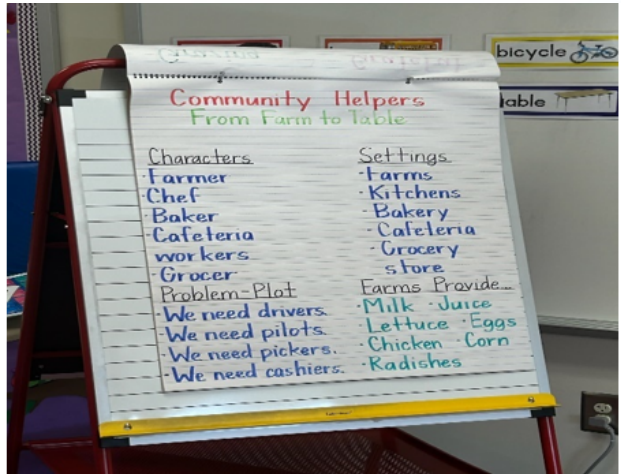
I - Improved Instructional Core

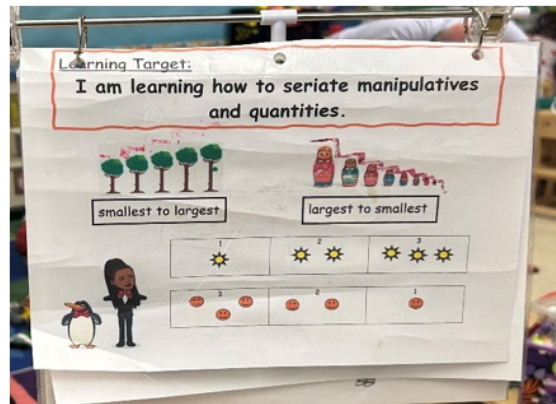
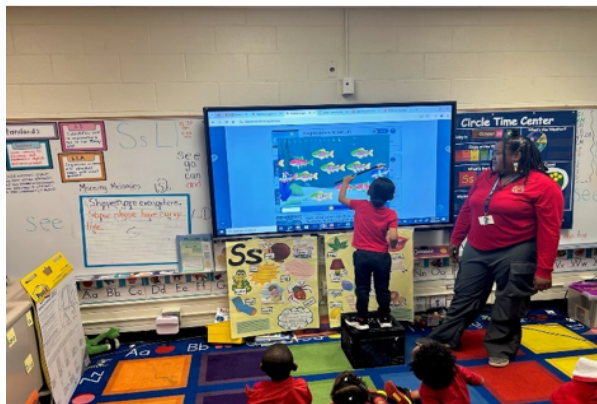
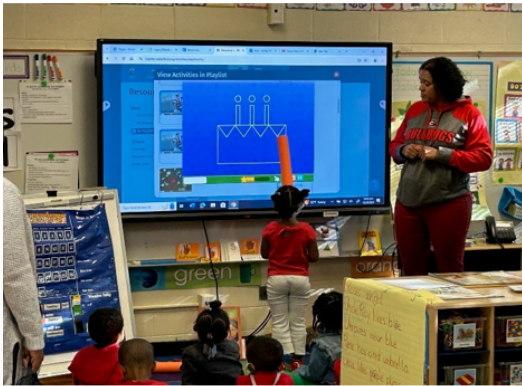
R - Relevant and Rigorous Course of Study





Instructional activities throughout the month of October at various schools centered around numerous activities that supported learning targets, community helpers, primary and secondary colors, numbers, letters, syllables, shapes, sorting, and usage of the Waterford platform.





School Supports

The Early Learning/Pre-K Department team continues to provide support to schools to assist with auditing of student files, instructional observations, providing feedback and guidance with MTSS Tier II and Tier III meetings, classroom environments, instructional planning, etc.

Department – Highlights

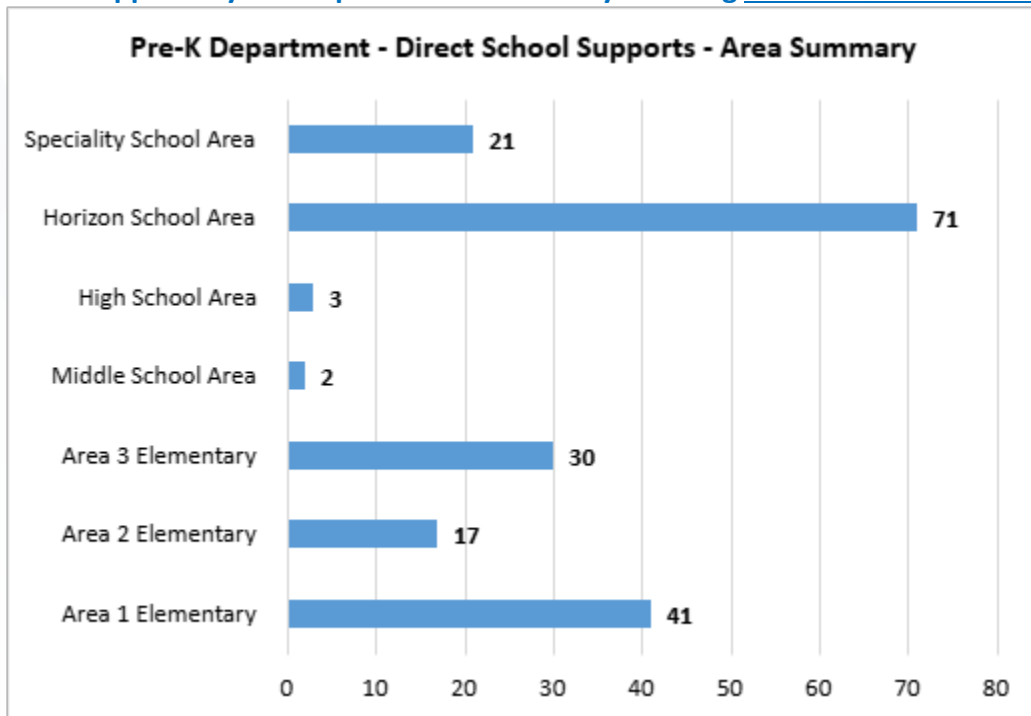
The Pre-K3 expansion classes and Pre-K4 pilot classes at the same ES locations have officially started implementing the Waterford supplemental resource within their instructional



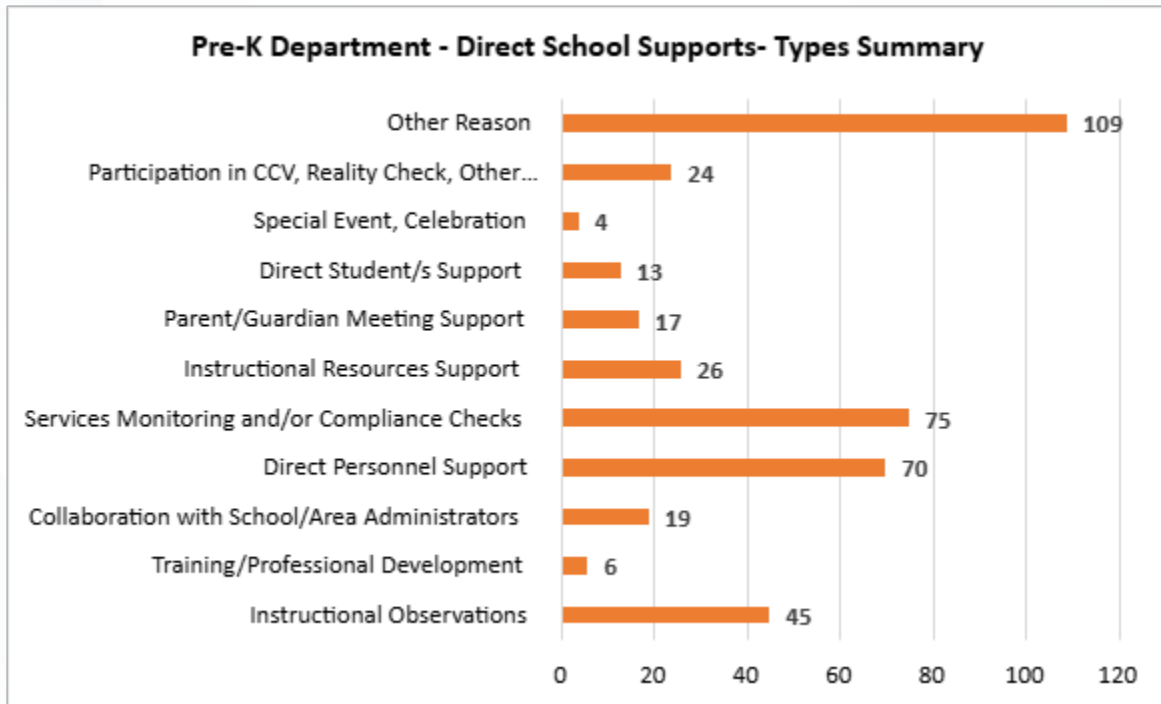
settings. This wonderful instructional resource supports various content areas ranging from Literacy, Math, Social Studies, and STEAM. Additionally, this instructional resource will support teachers and paras with planning a plethora of instructional activities that are age appropriate and aligned to the GELDS standards and Frog Street Curriculum that’s embedded within their weekly lesson plans. Waterford continues to be utilized as a supplemental resource at the

Early Learning Center. Science of Reading (SOR) stipend opportunity for Pre-K (3&4) teachers and paraprofessionals started this month. The initiative is not mandatory but highly encouraged and we had over 110 staff members signed up to participate in the learning experience via COX Campus and the Georgia Literacy Academy (SOR) modules. Our 4th Science of Reading (SOR) PL training session is scheduled to occur on Wednesday, November 20th. Additional meetings with the proposed Pre-K (3&4) lottery vendor will be facilitated in the future to finalize the launch date for the application and lottery window for the upcoming 2025-2026 SY.

Direct School Supports by the Dept. of Pre-K and Early Learning Since Start of School Year



Types of Direct School Supports by Dept. of Pre-K and Early Learning Since Start of School Year



Donyell Atkinson and Kristen Drake, *Senior Coordinators, Gifted Education*

The Gifted Education department’s continued collaboration with school leaders and staff to discuss the state approved delivery models, remedying FTE errors 30333 and 30334, classroom observations, and scheduling needs for its existing and future gifted student population has increased awareness of the district’s identification process and how to serve its gifted population. Gifted 1:1 support for gifted liaisons remains a necessity as the local schools conclude testing for gifted on November 8, 2024. Assessment training for all gifted liaisons and STCs on the NNAT3, Renzulli, GES, TTCT, and GPA are underway as local schools analyze student’s individual score reports for both ITBS and CogAT to determine next steps in the district's identification process. Step by step instructions for setting up test sessions for students that need another opportunity in the mental ability domain will be assessed with the NNAT3. Students that need another opportunity in motivation and/or creativity will also be evaluated.

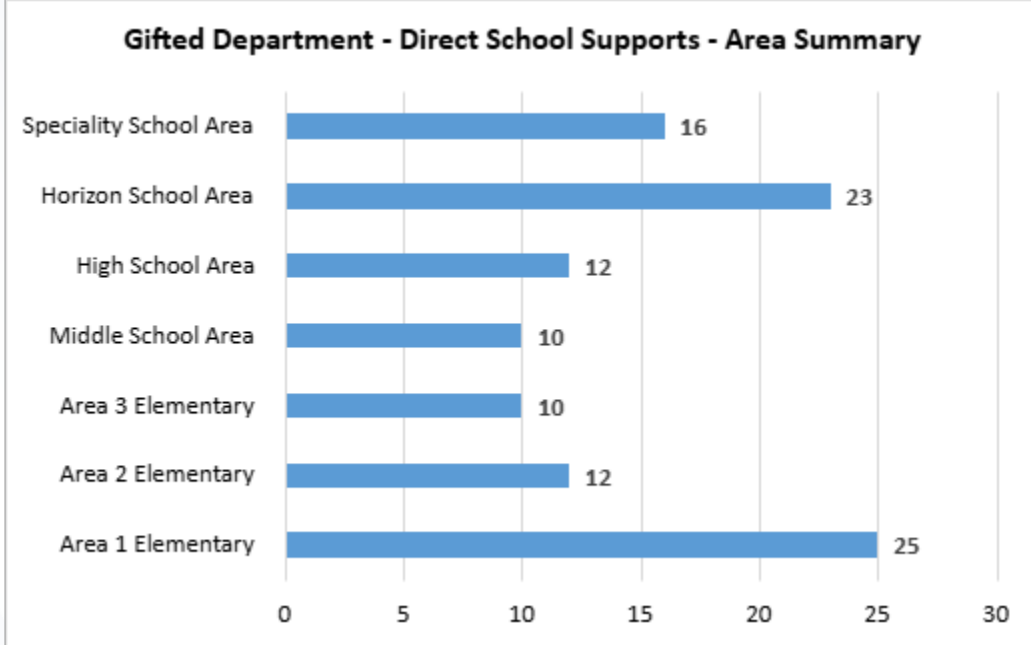
The Gifted Education Department continues to offer full-day professional learning sessions addressing gifted identification and instruction. McNair High School hosted the session on October 10 with 12 teachers. Cross Keys High School hosted the session on October 24 with five teachers and 52 of their teachers attending for a portion of the day. Instructional strategies focused on high-level questioning and vocabulary instruction. Teachers discussed how games

impact student engagement and learned how to access vocabulary resources using the Georgia Department of Education's Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) Dashboard in Infinite Campus. One teacher wrote, "I love coming to

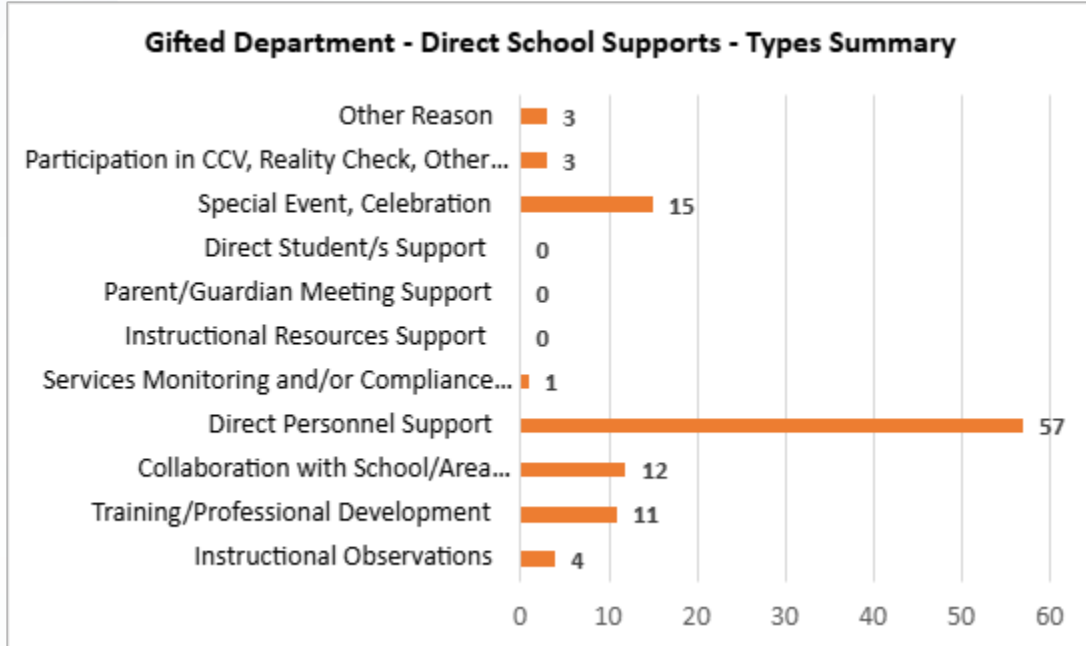
Mrs. Drake's professional development. She continues to give me new strategies that I can use in my class to create rigorous and engaging activities in my classroom. Not only does she show examples of the activity, she also gives a chance to try the activity, and then think how exactly I can use the strategies in my classroom. Taking her professional learning, you definitely will leave with a lot of knowledge and exciting to try new things in your class." Another wrote, "Everyone in the county should attend this training." Teachers can register for future sessions in Frontline.



Direct School Supports by the Gifted Education Team Since Start of School Year

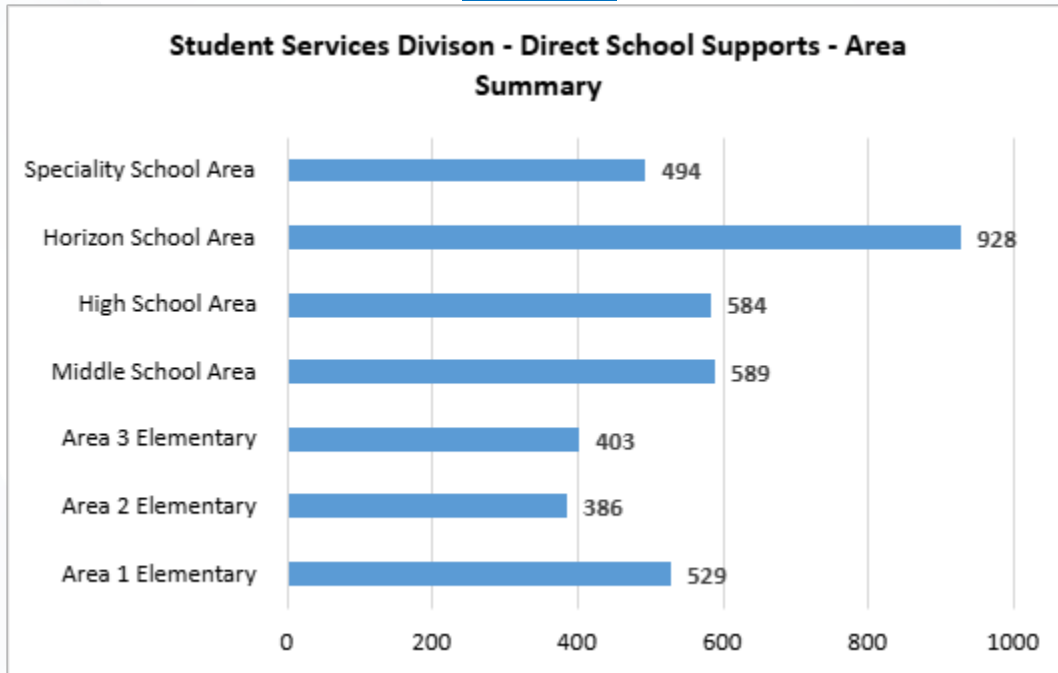


Types of Direct School Supports by Gifted Education Team Since Start of School Year

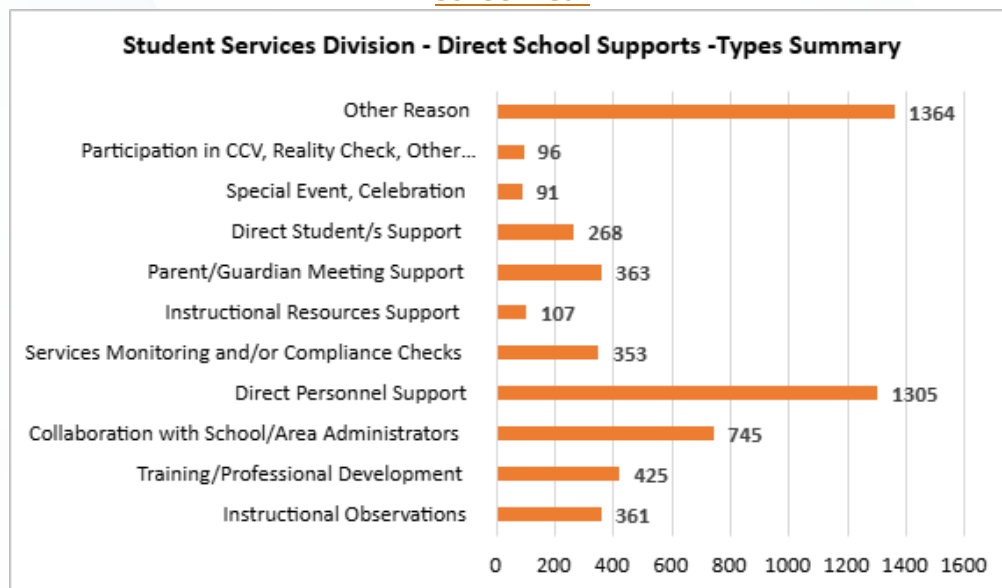


Division of Student Services - Direct School Supports Totals – Since Start of School Year

Direct School Supports by Division of Student Services' Personnel Since Start of School Year



Types of Direct School Supports by Division of Student Services' Personnel Since Start of School Year





Dr. Candace Alexander, *Chief of Continuous and Improvement Accountability*

Dr. Myisha Warren, *Executive Director of Federal Programs*

Title I Coordinators, Accounting Associates, and Budget Specialists continued meeting with public, private, and charter school staff to discuss the items listed below. These items are reviewed to ensure alignment with the Strategic Plan and goals created within the Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP):

- CSIPs
- Open POs
- FY24 closeout
- Travel
- FY25 budgets
- Tutorial
- Spending
- Ongoing training

OFP continued to review, approve, and verify extra activity packets and stipends throughout October. The funding sources were Title I, Title II, and ESSER.

The ESSER team continued working on:

- Executing and implementing the approved budget
- Regular, collaborative meetings with finance
- Met with Davis-Bacon Consultant and Operations about Davis-Bacon paperwork
- Submitted a budget amendment
- Closing out the grant

Automation of OFP Paperwork

- Collaborated with RDE on the automation of OFP technical assistance forms, proposals, and external service provider (ESP) forms
- Reviewed and tested updated forms from RDE with internal staff
- Began using the electronic Technical Assistance (TA) forms with OFP staff and school-based staff

Continuous School Improvement Plans

- Met with the CSIP Monitoring & Planning Committee
- The CSIP developer updated the strategic goals in the CSIP template
- The CSIP survey was administered to district office staff and school stakeholders
- A monitoring and implementation plan was created by the Area Superintendents to incorporate the CSIP monitoring within the CCV visits throughout October-November



Octoberfest – Parent Family Engagement Event

330 students and parents/guardians/community members were in attendance for the sessions, food, & fun zone, with collaboration with almost every division within the district.

Dr. Felicia Rhone, *Director of Assessment & Accountability*

- **DCSD School Test Coordinator’s Handbook**

The Assessment Administration Department has updated content within the DCSD School Test Coordinator’s Handbook to include additional information on student accommodations, links to “How-To” videos for managing assessment tasks in the DRC Insight Platform, and steps for generating lists of students in special populations (Students with Disabilities, English Learners, and 504 Students) in Infinite Campus to assist with assessment planning. The handbook is undergoing the final phase of revision and editing.

- **EOC:** Several high schools participated in the October MM administration for the EOC. Scores continue to populate in the DRC platform so that students’ grades and transcripts can be adequately updated. The window for the November administration is November 4-8. This is the final window for MM administrations before the first main administration for the 24-25 school year scheduled to open on December 4th. The Assessment Administration participated in the GaDOE GMAS Test Setup and Pre-Administration training on October 8 in preparation for the local district training scheduled for November 13.

- **ICT Pilot:** For SY 2024-2025, two DCSD schools were selected for participation, Cross Keys High School and Freedom Middle School. Freedom Middle School administered the assessment on October 3 as scheduled. Cross Keys administered the assessment on October 8. On October 21, both schools were sent reminders to ensure that test examiners complete the Test Examiner’s Survey as requested by the state. The deadline for completion is October 25.

- **ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs:**

- As of October 20, 2024, the Assessment Department has created 123 new accounts in the WIDA Secure Portal so new teachers and test coordinators can begin required WIDA training for the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS assessments. WIDA ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELs training modules in the WIDA Secure Portal by December 13, 2024.
- Dr. McTier participated in the following WIDA Live Webinars in preparation for the ACCESS for ELs administration:
 - ACCESS for New District Test Coordinators
 - Ordering Materials in WIDA AMS
 - ACCESS Software Updates and Tech Readiness Checklist

- Two private schools (Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School and St. Peter Claver Catholic School) will participate in the 2024-2025 ACCESS for ELs Assessment. The Assessment Department coordinated with the EL Department and the private schools to facilitate the state-required onboarding process by creating WIDA AMS accounts for the test coordinators and test administrators and providing the WIDA Checklist with training requirements.
- The ACCESS for ELs/ WIDA Alternate ACCESS window for ordering materials is open from October 3 – November 19, 2024. School Test Coordinators must submit the ordering form by October 22, 2024.
- **GKIDS:** GKIDS Readiness Check closed on September 16th. Schools were reminded and provided with an up-to-date report to ensure that all schools remained compliant in the completion of the state mandated Readiness Check. All schools completed the readiness check.
- **MAP Growth:** School Choice MAP testing took place on October 5, 2024. Approximately 56 private school and home school students tested at DeKalb Arts Academy in Reading and Math. The final School Choice MAP testing took place on October 26, 2024. A total of 80 private school students tested at DeKalb Arts Academy. The MAP Growth assessment window for DeKalb County School students will open November 11-22, 2024. Horizon Schools on all grade levels, continue to receive in-school support through NWEA facilitators on how to improve the use of MAP data to drive instruction.
- **MAP Fluency:** Area 3 Elementary Schools and Elementary Horizon Schools continue to receive onsite training from NWEA Professional Learning Facilitators.
- Some key takeaways from school visits and facilitator comments are concerns about
 - consistent school administration participation,
 - teachers using phones during workshops,
 - not bringing proper materials to the trainings (i.e., computers),
 - being disengaged, or
 - not logging into the platform correctly.

District support was provided through assistance with proper access, providing direction to training materials, assisting with progress monitoring, and providing answers to district-level expectations.

- **District Benchmarks:** Benchmark 1 testing began September 23-October 4, 2024, for traditional high schools. Benchmark 1 testing for elementary and middle schools as well as Benchmark 2 testing for block high school took place September 30-October 11, 2024. Final grading will be finalized by October 25, with parent letters scheduled for download on October 28.

Preliminary participation numbers for Benchmark 1 show the following:



Grade Level	LA	Math	Science	Social Studies
1	5501	5541	5379	5333
2	5804	5819	5555	5606
3	5977	6056	5895	5906
4	5639	5623	5392	5221
5	5861	5866	5664	5582
6	4755	4755	4413	4320
7	4838	4655	4598	4569
8	4795	4641 (Grade 8 Math) 502 (Enhanced Alg.)	4771 (Grade 8 Science) 59 (Phy Science)	4936
HS EOC	2825	3744	2741	1946

Preliminary participation numbers for Benchmark 2 show the following:

Grade Level	ELA	Math	Science	Social Studies
HS EOC	1573	795	1289	1210

Test Examiner’s Manual: The new Benchmark Test Examiner’s Manual was distributed to all School Test Coordinators for distribution to test examiners and placed on the Assessment Administration SharePoint for future access.

- PSAT 8/9, PSAT/NMSQT, SAT SD:** These assessments were administered on Wednesday, October 23, 2024. School Test Coordinators participated in the district PSAT training facilitated by district assessment coordinators on October 2, 2024. STCs have also had the opportunity to attend weekly open sessions with the district’s College Board representative to ask questions as they prepare.

The Assessment Administration department has continued to provide checklists and weekly emails to support school test coordinators in their mandatory tasks (updating their College Board accounts, assigning coordinator roles for data management, ordering and registration, distributing parent letters, inputting testing accommodations, submitting orders) to meet College Board’s deadlines to prepare for testing. The district-wide Digital Readiness Test was held October 9 for schools to identify and address any technology challenges and ensure students scheduled to test complete pre-testing requirements in the Bluebook app. Schools were advised to capture any students who did not complete the pre-testing requirements prior to test day in an effort to ensure a smooth administration on test day.



PSAT 8/9 - The number of students who were registered was 6,658. The total number of test-takers was 5,720. **Eighty-six percent (86%) of DCSD middle school students in grade 8 participated in the PSAT 8 administration.**

PSAT/NMSQT - The number of students who were registered was 7,989. The total number of test-takers was 6,066. **Seventy-six percent (76%) of DCSD high school students in grade 10 participated in the PSAT/NMSQT administration.**

SAT School Day Administration: The number of students who were registered was 5,549. The total number of test-takers was 4,127. **Seventy-four percent (74%) of DCSD high school seniors participated in the SAT SD administration.**

- AP Exam:** AP exams for SY 2024-2025 are scheduled for May 5-16, 2025. The six schools with outstanding balances from last year’s administration have been notified that they will be unable to order AP exams if payments are not received and cleared by College Board prior to the initial November 15th ordering deadline. STCs have been invited to the weekly “Chat with a Coordinator” session held by College Board every Friday through November 15. STCs continue to receive communications directly from College Board and the Assessments Administration to stay on track with upcoming deadlines and dates.
- NAEP:** For SY 2024-2025, three schools were selected from DeKalb to participate in the Long-Term Trend and will participate as scheduled. The first school scheduled to participate in the NAEP administration is Stone Mountain Middle. The school has received communications from the state representative with guidance and next steps as they prepare for the administration. The other two schools, Chestnut Elementary and Doraville United, will test during Spring semester. Schools will participate in district level training prior to their scheduled administrations, November 5, 2024, and January 20, 2025, respectively.
- CogAT:** The CogAT Fall Assessment window began on September 3rd and concluded on October 4th. The CogAT assessment was administered to grade levels K – 11. During the fall administration the following students were assessed:

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	TOTAL
1612	1758	1525	1234	1086	926	670	545	516	394	364	29	10,659

Based on these numbers, a total of 10,659 students participated in the CogAT assessment. During the administration, some students may not have completed the full battery of CogAT assessments (Verbal, Quantitative and Non-Verbal) which would explain the discrepancy between the number above and the Composite number. The larger number

listed represents the number of students in the district who participated in the CogAT assessment whether they completed the full battery or not.

During the administration, a total of six IRRs were reported for the CogAT assessment with 34 individual students affected.

- **IOWA:** The IOWA Fall Assessment window began on September 3rd and concluded on October 4th. The IOWA assessment was administered to grade levels 2 – 11. Due to the norming of the IOWA assessment, students in K and 1st grade were not administered the IOWA during this assessment cycle. During the fall administration the following students were assessed:

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	TOTAL
0	0	773	693	706	676	549	439	441	306	242	18	4,843

Based on these numbers, a total of 4843 students participated in the IOWA assessment. To receive a Composite Reading Score, students only needed to complete Reading and Vocabulary and for a Composite Math Score, students only needed to complete Math and Computation. There was some confusion during the set-up of the assessment which led to some students accidentally testing Language, Word Analysis, Listening, Written Expression and Conventions of Writing.

- Some of these incidents were reported to the Assessment Office and were resolved by the score being removed. Others were not reported resulting in a score being generated. Prior to the Winter administration, the Assessment Office will conduct another platform training for all STCs administering the IOWA and CogAT assessment to mitigate these errors which lead to the over testing of students.
- During the administration, a total of seven IRRs were reported for the IOWA assessment with 147 individual students affected.

Dr. Rebecca Braaten, Director of Research, Data and Evaluation

The fall research approval cycle is complete. The review cycle included thirteen (13) applications, nine (9) doctorate prospectuses, three (3) external agency studies, and one (1) local study. Of the nine (9) doctorate prospectuses, two (2) are resubmissions. In addition, two (2) research proposals (one external and one doctorate) were submitted after the Fall research review submission window had closed. These proposals have now been reviewed.

The Department of Research, Data, and Evaluation facilitated additional MARS-related training sessions for the following end-users since our last monthly update:

- Assistant Principals- September 25 and October 3
- Head Counselors: Excel training for MARS extracts- October 8



In addition, social workers now have access to the MARS platform, training has been scheduled for November 21, and MTSS Specialists were trained on October 31.

Fall Reality Checks were held September 27 through October 11, 2024. There were thirty (30) school level, and seven (7) area Reality Checks presentations facilitated during this timeframe.

The department processed fourteen (14) electronic online document requests during October 1-28, 2024. Of those fourteen (14), nine (9) were online registration/application forms, three (3) were event/training feedback surveys, and two (2) were stakeholder surveys. The electronic online documents were created for the following divisions/departments:

- Department of Athletics
- Division of Community Empowerment, Innovation and Partnerships
- Division of Curriculum and Instruction
- Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Department of Federal Programs
- Division of Finance
- Department of Leadership Development
- Division of Legal Services
- Department of Professional Development
- Department of Research, Data, and Evaluation

The department has completed twenty (20) data and dashboard projects for internal and external stakeholders. These projects include the following types of data: attendance, discipline, student demographics, student grades, student retentions, and local, state, and national assessments, including Fall 2024 MAP and Fall 2024 MAP Reading Fluency.

Ms. Jennifer Caracciolo, *Acting Chief of Community Engagement and Innovative Partnerships*

Jennifer Caracciolo, *Deputy Chief Communications Officer*

CEIP:

- H-Pride visits: Oakview ES, Dunwoody ES, Warren Tech, Tucker HS, Dunwoody HS, Evansdale ES, Lithonia MS, and Redan MS
- Hosted the fall Mix and Mingle – Partnerships and Grants
- Completed District 6 Town Hall @Stone Mountain HS, District 3 @ Columbia HS, District 2 at Cross Keys HS, and District 5 @ Arabia Mountain HS
- Held the Superintendent’s Parent Advisory Meeting, Druid Hills Modernization Meeting, Dr. Morley’s Courageous Conversations, Unity Fest (1,200+ in attendance)
- Planning for Safety Fair, Circling Up for SOS



Communications:

- Coverage on a variety of DCSD communication tools: School Choice Fair, Dresden ES groundbreaking, No Tricks, All Treats Event @ Columbia HS, Peak Behind the Beak @ Clarkston HS, Principals Month, Dresden ES Groundbreaking, The Flavors of DeKalb Food Festival, Safe Routes to School @ Hawthorne ES, Hightower ES International Parade, Hispanic Heritage Spirit Week @ John Lewis ES, SWD Homecoming, Rock the Vote, Breast Cancer Awareness Walk, H-Pride visits, Public Safety Appreciation, K-9 Unit, Foundation, PBIS, high school homecomings, DCSD track championships, and various communication events/programs
- Held a successful [press conference/celebration](#) at McNair HS celebrating the graduation rate results
- Continued work on updating existing district website content and collaborative meeting with Technology to determine next steps moving forward with the site
- Held the October Foundation Board meeting; secured a PO box, bank account, and fundraising/donation online platform; held 1st event – Presentation Day
- Published an episode of Te Escucha!, Initial steps in partnering with Univision
- Working on SOP for Crisis Communications
- Collaborated with HR on [Be a Difference Maker, #BeDeKalb](#)
- Filmed weekly SAP meetings
- Planning for DCSD alumni rebrand - I am a Difference Maker #DeKalbMade
- Coordinated District Office Wear Pink Day, planning for District Veterans Day
- Collaborated with SAP and Finance for survey communications
- Completed Communications survey; planning for focus groups and audit (11/12-14)
- Launched a new bi-weekly Community Partner Spotlight on socials

Dr. Marcia Oglesby, Director of Grants and Partnership

Grants

Grants Professional Learning – Creating and Sustaining Innovative Learning (CSIL), a virtual interactive grant professional learning session, will include resources for educators and will be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024. The session will highlight the science of grants and grant writing for educators, a 12-step evidence-based grant-writing process to fund school-based programs and projects and provide tools and resources for the grant writing journey. Participants registered on Frontline to attend the session.

21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Program Grant - The Grants and Partnerships team will support Dr. Walker and the Mentoring and Partnerships team by applying for the 21st CCLC grant. Additionally, Mr. Schueneman met with leaders on November 1, 2024, to hear updates about the grant.



Clean School Bus Grant and Rebate Program – A weekly meeting is facilitated by the Department of Transportation’s team to include finance, Grants and Partnerships, and other district leaders to ensure we are on track with adhering to the reporting requirements and implementation of the Clean School Bus and Rebate grant award projects.

Public Safety Grant -The quarterly report was submitted to the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement. The grant will be finalized by December 31, 2024, which is one year ahead the grant’s closeout schedule.

State Farm Grant – The district will be awarded \$100,000 by March 2025 through an invitation only grant application from State Farm to fund the following areas: \$50,000 (SAFE Centers), \$15,000 (My Brothers’ Keeper/Our Sisters’ Keeper), \$25,000 - Student Advancement – Mobile Student Success Center, and \$10,000 (Family and Community Empowerment). The grant application was submitted on October 31, 2024.

Teacher Quality Partnership Grant – Georgia State University was awarded the U.S. Department of Education’s Teacher Quality Partnership grant in partnership with the DeKalb County School District, specifically the Professional Learning department. The grant project is titled Project DEAL: Developing Educators and Leaders (DEAL) and aims to increase the number of highly qualified teachers as well as support the development of pre-baccalaureate teachers who will receive their teacher certification. Additionally, experienced teachers will benefit from the grant by having access to obtaining Tier 1 and Tier 2 Educational Leadership certification and an Educational Doctorate degree in Educational Leadership. A special thank you and kudos go to Champion Michelle Dillard and Dr. Candace Alexander for attending multiple meetings to learn more about the grant and approving the submission of the application and grant partnership with Georgia State University.

Witherite Law Firm (October 21) - The Grants and Partnerships team submitted a proposal to Witherite Law Firm to support the following initiatives: provide funding and serve as judges during the Innovative Solutions Laboratory hosted by the School Innovation team, purchase school supplies and serve as volunteers during the Back-to-School Rally, sponsor the State of the District, and provide resources and incentives for parents and ambassadors participating in programs with the Family and Community Empowerment team.

South State Bank (October 30) - South State Bank is interested in providing financial literacy support for students and parents, homebuyer education for staff and parents, a financial donation towards the State of the District, volunteers an supplies for the Back to School Rally, sponsorship of the New Teacher Orientation, and resources for the Student and Family Engagement (S.A.F.E.) Centers.

T.D. Jakes Foundation (October 31) – T.D. Jakes Foundation is expanding their outreach from Texas to Georgia since they are building residential and commercial properties in Atlanta and hosting the Green Team STEM summit for students in the metro Atlanta area. The foundation is interested in providing a financial donation to support wraparound services for students, supporting the SAFE Centers and families, and volunteering and assisting with providing resources for the Back-to-School Rally.



Partnerships

The Grants and Partnerships team has been busy meeting with current, new, and potential partners. During the month of October, we met with the following organizations to share information about the district's programs and initiatives:

University of Georgia's DeKalb County Extension (October 21) – The team met with Dr. Crystal Perry who would like to provide \$1,800 stipends to each teacher who currently sponsors the 4H program in their schools or would like to sponsor the 4-H club for students. The schools who have had or currently have 4-H clubs in the schools are as follows: Chapel Hill Elementary, Snapfinger Elementary, McLendon Elementary, Redan Middle, Chapel Hill Middle, Kittredge Middle, Clarkston High, Druid Hills Middle, and Towers High Schools.

Citizens Trust Bank (October 31) - Citizens Trust Bank, one of the largest black owned banks in Georgia has two locations in DeKalb County (2727 Panola Road Stonecrest and 5771 Rockbridge Road Stone Mountain). The representative is interested in how Citizens Trust Bank can support schools and staff with financial literacy resources and training, participate in career days, provide down payment assistance from \$2,000 - \$15,000 for first time homebuyers who commit to residing in DeKalb County for a minimum of 5 years, support the State of the District and New Teacher Orientation as a sponsor, provide resources for the SAFE Centers and the Human Resources' THRIVE program. The team also requested funds for the Just Right Reader Program.

Donations

State Farm will donate gently used office furniture to the district. There is no cost to the district to accept the donation which has a \$0 value.

ESports donated \$10,000 to Martin Luther King Jr., High School to support their eSports program for the 2024-2025 athletic year. This donation is on behalf of the Beta Psi Omega Chapter of Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. There is no cost to the district or Martin Luther King Jr., High School to accept this donation.

DeKalb County Commissioner Mereda Davis Johnson allocated \$25,000 to be donated to (5) high schools in District 5 (Arabia Mountain High School, Lithonia High School, Miller Grove High School, Martin Luther King Jr., High School, and Redan High School), at \$5,000 per school to be used specifically for youth violence prevention aimed at attracting more students to join the band program, as to provide an alternative to engaging in youth violence. There is no cost to the district or to the (5) schools to accept this donation.

Dr. Donald Porter, *Press Secretary*

Organized media interviews, gathered and shared information for such high-profile stories as:

1. Dunwoody HS Relocation due to water main break
2. Coaching Stipends Delayed
3. Cedar Grove HS Students Struck by Car – Not injured
4. DCSD Tracking of suspicious online activity on student devices



5. Foster Care Student Trauma Assessments
6. Fernbank Science Center New Additions and renovations
7. MLK HS Student Death
8. VP Harris Visit- School Early Releases and Athletic Event Changes
9. Kingsley ES Employee Arrest in 2023 and Resignation
10. Druid Hills HS Renovation Presentation
11. 11Alive Safety Survey
12. Druid Hills HS Property Deeds and Emory claim
13. Payroll Updates on October 7 Board Meeting
14. "I voted" Sticker Contest Winner
15. Cedar Grove HS Principal Change
16. Supplemental Payroll Issues for the DeKalb Youth Symphony directors
17. Air Quality Issues following Rockdale Co. Bio Lab Fire
18. Payroll Issues with Fall Sports Coaches
19. Cedar Grove HS Principal Change
20. Survey Responses for Safety and Mental Health
21. DCSD Reax to Rockdale Chemical Fire
22. Monitoring Hurricane Helene Weather Forecasts

Wrote or rewrote over X school letters and comminutions related to:

1. Cedar Grove Lockdown-Intruder
2. MLK HS Lockdown- Disturbance
3. Smoke Rise ES-No Gas Service
4. Midvale ES Student Weapon
5. Dunwoody HS Relocation
6. MLK HS Gas Leak
7. Briar Vista ES Medical Emergency
8. AMHS Staff Medical Emergency
9. McLendon ES Student Treat
10. Stone Mill ES Medical Event
11. JES Gas Leak
12. Smoke Rise ES Weapon
13. Cedar Grove HS New Principal Letter
14. Cedar Grove HS New Principal Announcement
15. Kingsley ES- New Principal
16. Chesnut ES AP Leaving
17. DeKalb International Center Lockdown
18. Cedar Grove HS Social Media Threat
19. Jolly ES Student Threat
20. Lithonia HS Teacher Death
21. SW DeKalb HS Student Death



Wrote scripts and speeches:

1. DaCosta Speech- EOY
2. Horton Speech-Graduation Rates Press Conference
3. DaCosta Speech-Graduation Rates Press Conference

Media Interviews

- Graduation Rates Press Conference-Horton Interviews
- Foster Care Assessment Screener-Revels and Bishop

Media Releases

- EOY Gala
- GSBA School Board Award
- Graduation Rate-Press Release
- Graduation Rate Press Conference
- PreK Celebrations
- McNair DLA Health Center
- GA Milestones Math Scores
- Hurricane Helene Closes DCSD Schools
- Rockdale County Biolab Fire Cancels DCSD After-School Activities and Athletic Events

Web Stories

- BOE Audit Committee Advisory Members
- Lakeside HS Senior Appointed to State Advisory Board
- DCSC Celebrates New Principals
- DCSD Graduation Rates Soar to All-Time High
- DCSD BOE Earns GSBA Quality School Board Recognition
- FY2026 Public Budget Survey
- 2nd Annual Safety Fair

Dr. Triscilla Weaver, *Chief Equity Officer*

Equity

Dr. Triscilla Weaver, *Chief Equity Officer*

The Equity Department has received Board approval to conduct a districtwide Equity Audit. To outline the audit's goals and scope of work, the department held a joint meeting with members of the Equity Steering Committee and the Equity-In-Action Committee, which will assist with data collection throughout the audit process. Additionally, the Equity Department convened a meeting with a Field Trip Committee, mainly composed of Culture and Climate Coordinators, to support our M.I.R.A.C.L.E.S. priority of creating an equitable Field Trip Policy.

The Equity Department also led a session at the Schools and Leadership Retreat, designed for district leaders to understand how each division is centering equity in its work. Furthermore, the



Equity Department participated in all Reality Checks conducted this semester. In partnership with the Office of Student Advancement, the Equity Department attended the Infinite Scholars Scholarship Fair to provide encouragement and support for our students. Our DCSD students secured thousands of dollars to pursue postsecondary education.

Athletics

Myss Johnson-Jelks, Executive Director

As we close out the Fall Sports season and gear up for Winter Sports, I want to take a moment to celebrate our teams' accomplishments. A big congratulations to the Miller Grove Softball Team for making it to the GHSA Softball Playoffs and reaching the Elite 8 for the first time in school history! Additionally, kudos to the Columbia High School Football Team for winning the Region 6-AA Football Championship for the first time since 1981. I also had the privilege of attending the ASPIRE Awards, where DeKalb Silver Streaks athlete Najee Smothers was honored as the Athlete of the Year. Najee was also selected as a member of the USA Wheelchair Team, which won a Silver Medal at the Wheelchair Handball World Championships in Egypt. An outstanding achievement!

In preparation for next year, I've met with the Budget Department to discuss our budget planning and the Allovue Budget Strategic Guide. Additionally, I've had discussions with Operations regarding the state of our facilities and the upcoming renovations of the field event stations at Godfrey. We've also worked together to identify accommodations for our GHSA officials during competitions at our stadiums. I continue to host weekly meetings with our athletic staff to discuss upcoming events, new and updated policies, and to engage in necessary professional development. We are actively updating our website and strengthening our relationship with the Communications Department. The review and update of our Athletic Handbooks and Standard Operating Procedures is an ongoing process. I am working closely with our Director of Athletics to ensure we are aligned on all fronts. Please see below for more details on the items we've been addressing.

Brandan Lane, Director

The athletics department has been wrapping up the fall season and preparing for winter sports. I've updated the high school, middle school, and elementary level handbooks to incorporate new policies and pricing and ensured clear communication of these updates. I've collaborated with the operations and facilities teams to verify that all fields, pools, and courts meet safety standards for the upcoming winter season. Also, I've reviewed the budget with external staff weekly to keep spending aligned with our budget goals.

We've also hosted and facilitated professional development sessions for our internal staff, and I've met with potential sponsors to explore alignment in the vision for future partnerships. All



stadium signage has been updated to reflect our revised policies and practices. Finally, the Executive Director and I held weekly meetings with Northside Hospital to address any athletic training concerns, ensuring smooth operations from both a safety and logistical standpoint. Additionally, I have attended various athletic events to oversee logistics and ensure everything runs smoothly. I've also held meetings with athletic liaisons and addressed parents' concerns regarding different aspects of the athletics program.

School Innovation

Kina M. Champion, *Director*

Each year, the district accepts applications from existing charter school governing boards to renew their charter contracts. On October 17, 2024, the governing board of DeKalb PATH Academy submitted a renewal petition. The charter school's current charter contract will expire on June 30, 2025. Upon initial review by the School Innovation Department, the application has been deemed complete. Per DeKalb Board of Education policy, the petition will move through the formal review and evaluation process. The petition review committee conducted site visits (which included stakeholder focus groups and classroom observations) on October 4, 9, and 10. School Innovation facilitated the Governing Board Capacity Interview for DeKalb PATH Academy on October 30. The Initial Clarification Memo, including strengths, concerns, questions, and/or recommended revisions, will be issued to the charter school's governing board on November 1. The governing board's response to the Initial Memo and final revised application materials will be due November 8. The DeKalb Board of Education is anticipated to vote on the renewal petition at its January 2025 meeting.

The School Innovation Department hosted Spotlight School visits at Stoneview Elementary School, Coralwood Diagnostic Center, and Redan High School. Registration, attendance, and feedback for the visits exceeded SY23-24 baselines. Spotlight School visit attendees seeking to replicate promising practices observed during the visits are encouraged to submit proposals to the department's Innovative Solutions Lab. School Innovation is working with Area Superintendents to identify schools for Spring 2025 Spotlight School visits.

Student Assignment

Sarita Smith, *Executive Director*

Open enrollment is underway for the Student Assignment team. We have almost 9,000 applications (as of 10/28/24), with one more week to go! We have cross-trained our registration support staff to help process applications and save money on temporary supply staff. We have attended several cluster, principal, and internal staff meetings to explain the new timeline, website, and rationale. Overall, responses have been positive. We have also created a new school choice calculator to determine open seats based on current enrollment, articulation, capacity, and available seats. We then shared the new process with the area superintendents, executive



assistants, and principals. This will be a change for principals as they are used to providing our team with numbers instead of us determining availability. Our registration team prepares the new form with the school choice lottery dates. We align these so families can register accordingly once they accept a lottery seat. Our registration support staff and coordinators have been supporting registrars with updating OOA codes in the system to ensure all students are coded correctly for programs and out-of-district.

Student Assignment Project (SAP) Committee meetings are underway. We have met with each committee team at their locations once and are excited about our members and their perspectives. We are moving into a series of informational sessions about buildings, boundaries, and programs. I have been working with the planning team to develop the slide decks and strategize for the SAP meetings. I have also begun inviting content facilitators to the meetings to provide SAP members with expertise and historical context. We are also ready to launch our SAP survey for community members and employees. We tested the survey with several staff members and created a shorter version with direction from the community, family, and engagement department.

Student Mentorship & Partnerships

Dr. Loukisha Walker, Executive Director

In the past month, I held a series of productive meetings with Lead Mentors across the district to introduce and discuss the new DCSD Mentoring Framework. By October 31st, we successfully launched the first lesson, marking an important step in providing consistent mentoring experiences across all participating schools. Additionally, I collaborated with FACE Advocates (FA) to refine and advance the FA Action Plans, incorporating recent data insights related to attendance, behavior, and academic performance. This collaborative effort resulted in tailored improvement strategies, including scheduled tutorials, makeup work deadlines, and parent engagement plans, ensuring our targeted students receive focused support to meet their individual needs.

Additionally, I held one-on-one meetings with department members, offering guidance and strategic direction to support their progress on key goals. These sessions allowed for updates and clarified next steps, enabling us to maintain a high level of alignment and accountability. Furthermore, I reviewed and provided feedback on the preliminary plans for our upcoming mentoring conference, covering venue options, proposed dates, speaker recommendations, and the event agenda. In addition to internal meetings, I actively initiated outreach to potential partners via emails, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings, strengthening our network to enhance support for our mentorship initiatives.



Dr. Kishia K. Towns, *Chief of Wrap Around Services*



The Division of Wrap Around Services has been actively involved in providing various resources and supports during the month of October.

Georgia Pre-K Week DCSD Reading Day

The Division of Wrap Around Services was delighted to have the opportunity to read to several Pre-K scholars at a variety of schools throughout DeKalb County School District for Georgia Pre-K week during October 7-11, 2024. Staff read to PreK students at the Early Learning Center, Ashford Park Elementary School, Ronald McNair Discovery Learning Academy, Princeton ES, and Wynbrooke Theme School. The scholars were extremely excited and the staff at each school appreciated the opportunity to engage students in reading books that included various cultures and ways to help build story comprehension using the storyline, the characters, and the events. Scholars were able to actively participate by child-friendly definitions to demonstrate understanding of various vocabulary words. It was an amazing event and next year will bring more staff participation to language skills are built by reading to the Pre-K scholars.

DeKalb County School District Town Hall Meetings

DeKalb County School District has been conducting town halls throughout the month of October to bring awareness to the Strategic Plan Goals and MIRACLE Priorities for each Division. While presenting at Cross Keys High School, Columbia High School, Arabia Mountain High School, and Stone Mountain High School, the priorities including Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Disconnect to Reconnect, School-Based Health Centers, SAFE Centers, Post-Secondary PUSH Plan, Drug Awareness and Prevention, and Attendance Intervention. Positive outcomes are being realized with the continued implementation of the initiatives and collaboration with other divisions.

**Christopher Key, *Executive Director of Student Advancement*
Suicide Intervention Protocol**

The school counseling team has provided critical support and intervention for students struggling with mental health challenges. According to documented Suicide Intervention protocol records, they have assisted 286 students through the comprehensive Suicide Intervention Protocol process. 111 Elementary students, 110 Middle school students, and 65 High School students. The



documented SIPs underscore the importance of addressing mental health needs at all grade levels. The core goal of this Student Intervention Protocol is to offer a multi-faceted approach to supporting vulnerable youth. This includes conducting in-depth student interviews to understand their situation fully and needs, promptly notifying parents or guardians, ensuring the immediate safety and well-being of the student, connecting them with appropriate resources and services, and developing a thorough school safety plan to monitor the student's progress and provide ongoing support. By taking this proactive, compassionate, and structured approach, school counselors play a crucial role in identifying students in crisis, addressing their mental health concerns, and putting safeguards in place to protect their safety. This vital work highlights the school district's steadfast commitment to prioritizing student wellness and providing a caring, supportive environment where all learners can thrive.

Individual Senior Advisement

As the DeKalb County School District prepares for the class of 2025, ensuring each of its 5,764 high school seniors receives comprehensive advisement has become a top priority. Beyond simply reviewing graduation requirements, the district's Senior Advisement program takes a holistic approach to supporting these students as they navigate the critical final year of their secondary education. Through one-on-one meetings, counselors work closely with every senior, regardless of their current grade level or anticipated graduation timeline. This includes not only those students on track to complete their studies in four years, but also those approved for early graduation as well as so-called "fifth year seniors" who require additional time.

During these personalized advisement sessions, counselors meticulously review each student's academic progress, identifying any gaps or deficiencies that must be addressed in order to fulfill all necessary credits and assessments for diploma eligibility. Just as importantly, they also explore the student's postsecondary aspirations, providing guidance on the college application process, scholarship opportunities, career training programs, and other pathways beyond the high school experience. By establishing a clear roadmap for success, the Senior Advisement initiative helps to ensure a seamless transition for students as they prepare to take their next steps, whether that involves immediately entering the workforce, enrolling in a two-year or four-year institution, or pursuing specialized vocational instruction. To date, an impressive 4,075 seniors have already benefited from this individualized attention, putting them on a solid footing to achieve their goals and culminate their high school journeys on a high note.

Early Graduation Request

In alignment with the DeKalb County School District's P.U.S.H Plan, the school Counselors actively supported and submitted 54 applications for early graduation from the Cohort 2025 class. These exceptional students have demonstrated the drive, academic prowess, and readiness to complete their high school requirements a full semester ahead of schedule, graduating in



December 2024 rather than the traditional May 2025 timeframe. This early graduation will open up possibilities for these young scholars, allowing them to seamlessly transition into post-secondary education or military service pathways in the spring of 2025. These **54 students** will gain a valuable head start by taking this accelerated academic track, whether pursuing college admissions, vocational training, or enlistment opportunities. The school counselors have worked closely with each individual, ensuring they have the necessary credits, test scores, and application materials to maximize their options upon graduation.

Georgia Department of Education House Bill 91

In accordance with the Georgia Department of Education's House Bill 91, the High School Counseling Coordinators have thoroughly reviewed, processed, and approved a total of **14 applications submitted** August 2024-October 2024 by previous students seeking to obtain their high school diplomas. This approval process is a crucial step in ensuring that these individuals, who may have faced various challenges or obstacles in completing their secondary education in the traditional timeframe, are now able to finally receive the academic recognition and credentials they rightfully deserve.

Georgia Department of Education Senate Bill 289 (Virtual Request)

DeKalb County School District has made significant strides in supporting its students' educational journeys through the strategic implementation of digital learning initiatives. Recognizing the immense potential of this directive, the school district's dedicated team of school counselors and high school coordinators have worked tirelessly to enroll an impressive **1,272 middle and high school students** in a variety of virtual courses required for graduation. This innovative approach not only provides students with flexible, customized learning opportunities, but also helps to boost the overall high school graduation rate within the district. By embracing the power of technology-driven education, the DeKalb County School District is empowering its students to take control of their academic journeys, tailoring their learning experiences to their individual needs and preferences.

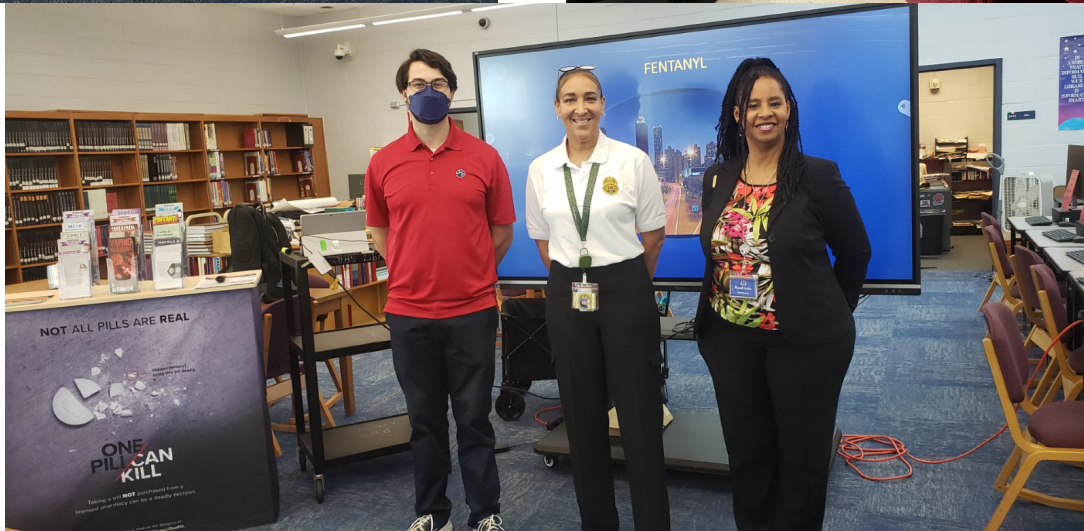
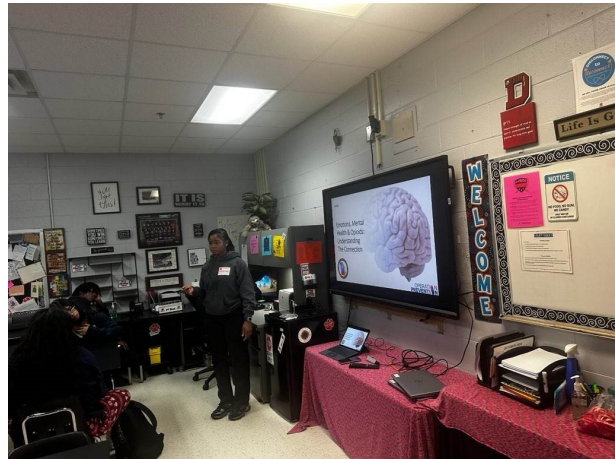
Drug Awareness and Prevention

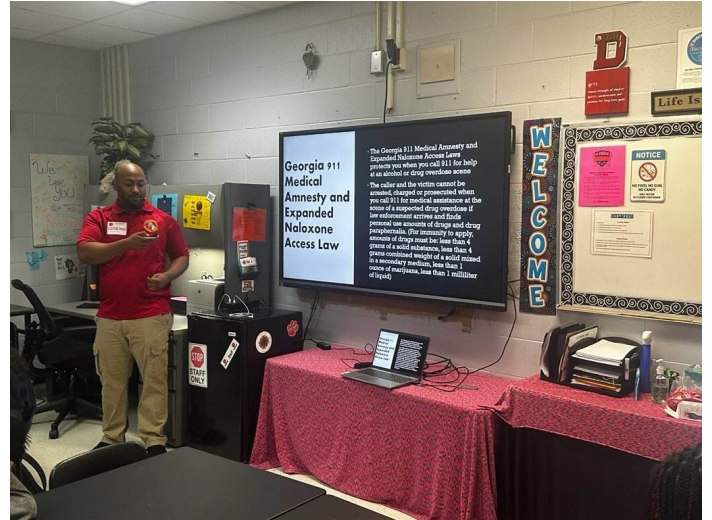
The school counselors in the DeKalb County School District have remained steadfast in their commitment to drug and alcohol prevention efforts across the district. These vital prevention initiatives have included coordinated visits from the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to several key schools, including Dunwoody High School, Oak View Elementary, Dunaire Elementary, and Bethune Middle School. The focus of these DEA visits has been to educate students on the devastating consequences of the opioid crisis, with the powerful message that "One Pill Can Kill." Complementing these DEA presentations, the school district has also hosted impactful Red Ribbon Week events at Druid Hills High School, led by the Counter Drug Task Force. Over the course of two sessions per day, teams from the Task Force have reached approximately 100

students at a time, teaching them the life-saving skill of administering naloxone, commonly known as Narcan, to help revive individuals experiencing an opioid overdose. This critical "Operation Prevention" training has empowered Druid Hills students to potentially intervene and save lives in their communities.

Furthering the district's comprehensive drug and alcohol prevention efforts, the newly launched "MIRACLE Priority" initiative has produced a powerful public service announcement (PSA) created by students at the DeKalb School of the Arts High School. This impactful PSA has been shared widely on social media, spreading an important message of awareness and prevention. Additionally, the MIRACLE Priority has incorporated a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) survey developed by Hanover Research, which aims to assess the SEL competencies and perceptions of students, parents, and staff across the DeKalb County School District communities. This data-driven approach will help the district tailor its prevention programs to the specific needs and concerns of its diverse population.









**Denise Revels, Director of Wrap Around and Support Services
Student Health Services**

Student Health Services and DCSD are continuing the partnership with Emory and MedCura Healthcare. The second School Based Health Center Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was held on October 3, 2024.

The goal of the Intergovernmental Agreement is to increase students' access to quality health care, improve academic achievement by decreasing absences related to illnesses, improve the health of students, and increase community collaboration. The overall goal is to reduce health disparities among our underserved students. This will be accomplished through the following actions:

- Decreasing communication barriers related to health issues
- Providing health promotion/disease prevention activities
- Improving immunization rates

- Reducing incidence of communicable diseases (e.g. head lice)
- Ensuring safe medication administration
- Increasing interaction and communication with parents
- Providing access to emotional/social support for secondary students
- Improving readiness for medical emergencies and critical incidents
- Increasing access to medical insurance
- Assisting families suspected of/or at risk of child maltreatment access services
- Providing and improving follow-up on failed vision and hearing screenings





In support of support GA Pre-K Guest Reader Week, the Student Health Coordinator, JoAnn Harris, attended Wynbrooke's guest reader event and read "Green Eggs and Ham" by Dr Seus to Ms. Nelson and Ms. Scotts Pre-K class.





Student Health Services

The day-to-day operations of the SBCH at McNair and Doraville now includes SBHC's providing physicals for students participating in sport activities. Parents can call the SBHC at 470 977 2668 to schedule an appointment for physicals. The parents will be responsible for bringing their student to the School Based Health Center. All emergencies will be referred to the SBHC because the SBHC is equipped to respond to emergencies. In the event 911 is needed, the staff of SBHC will call and contact parents.

New Marketing Strategies to increase parental consent for service, at McNair DLA include STEM Night, a science demonstration by Neuroscience students from Emory and MedCura's attendance at the Fall festival Friday, October 25, 2024, from 3:00-6:00.

Users and organizations that are currently interfacing with GRITS 2.0 are being asked to revert back to the original GRITS system. DCSD was scheduled to be moved on 10/21/24. On 10/21/24, we will use our previous login to access legacy GRITS. (<https://www.grits.state.ga.us>) as our access to GRITS 2.0 will have been deactivated.

Coordinator of Student Health Services, JoAnn Harris met with Dr. Jorge Bernal, Oral Health Program Manager, Division of Community Health at the DeKalb Public Health to discuss Dental Health Collaborative efforts with the district. The discussion included McNair High School and the McNair cluster schools.

Dental Education for our high school students and as a career path is available immediately. Oral health prevention programs (screenings, dental sealants, and fluoride) for elementary schools in the McNair Cluster can begin anytime. The school nurse can be the point of contact. All services require parental consent. Dental services and referrals are also available immediately at North DeKalb, 3807 Clairmont Road, NE Chamblee, GA 3034, T.O Vinson, 440 Winn Way, Decatur, GA 30030, Clifton Springs, 3110 Clifton Springs Road, Decatur, GA 30034

Atlanta Vision Lions Charities Vision Screenings will include the tier 2 and tier 3 schools. The schools that will be included in the second semester schedule are McNair HS, McNair MS Barack Obama ES, Flat Shoals ES, Kelley Lake ES, McNair DLA and Narvie Harris.

Title IV

Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis. Student Support has placed special focus on training staff members that work directly with youth, including both instructional and non-instructional staff members. The six-hour course focuses on the most common mental health concerns among adolescents and reviews a 5-step

action plan for how to provide support. The division is hopeful that participants will complete the training feeling more empowered to assist youth in crisis and follow internal processes, which include referrals to school counselors and/or social workers to provide support. Please click on the link for additional information: <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/population-focused-modules/youth/>

Title IV has increased the district's capacity to provide youth mental health training to staff members by having 14 staff members trained as Youth Mental Health First Aid trainers. Trainers are scheduling professional development for both school and district level staff members, with a goal of having 900 staff members trained between October 2024 and October 2025. Facilitators have trained 44 staff members and Student Engagement Coaches are scheduled to be trained on October 31st.



Dr. Darnell Logan, Director of Student Relations

Bullying Awareness Campaign

Bullying Awareness Facilitator personally presented the No Bullying Zone banner to the students and staff of Smoke Rise Elementary School.

Bullying Awareness Facilitator provided technical assistance and support to schools with bullying reports to the district this week.

Bullying Awareness Facilitator has received all campaign-related documents from all schools, including all startup charter schools.

Bullying Awareness Facilitator conducted initial check-in sessions with school liaisons and



bullying data entry persons. Make-up sessions were also conducted. Regular check-in sessions will be conducted each month, in conjunction with informational emails.

Bullying Awareness Facilitator is beginning collaborative conversations with related departments, such as PBIS, on strategic support to select schools based on the data.

Student Discipline/Student Reintegration

The Hearing Officers scheduled **(101)** DDP (District Due Process) Hearings; **(9)** canceled due to Discipline Team Meetings (DTM). Additionally, Student Relations cleared **(25)** students to attend their attendance zone school within DeKalb County School District.

Dr. Darnell Logan, Director of Student Relations

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

PBIS District Coordinator: Brandy Woolridge

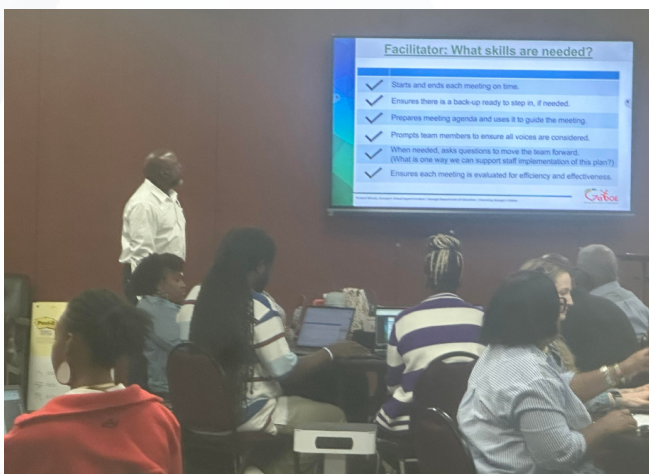
PBIS District Coaches: Shakira Bates-Shaw, Brian Bryant, Marcia Bryant-Cornelison, Dr. Dia Harden, and Kimmie Pryor

The PBIS District Team has conducted various coaching sessions, school visits, team meetings, trainings, and Principal's Check-Ins to improve the fidelity of PBIS implementation in DeKalb County School District. To integrate PBIS systems and practices with the MTSS framework and support the Whole Child, we have collaborated with other divisions and departments. This collaboration aims to improve districtwide understanding of PBIS's impact on school climate, academic achievement, discipline, attendance, and mental health. Please review the PBIS events and artifacts that detail our support and partnerships for the month of October 2024.

PBIS Cohort 9 schools completed their Tier I System Readiness Training on Tuesday, September 24, 2024. This training is designed for PBIS Cohort 9 schools. The training focuses on Teaming, Data-Based Decision Making, and Evaluations. Tier I System Team participants will learn how to integrate data and practices across academic, behavioral, attendance, and wellbeing domains to better identify and overcome obstacles to learning, by creating a more supportive and efficient educational environment.

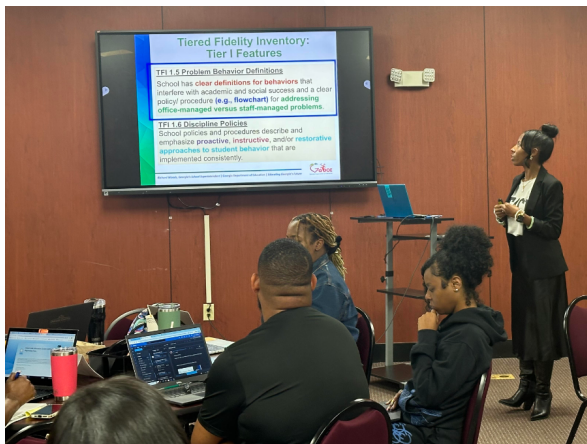
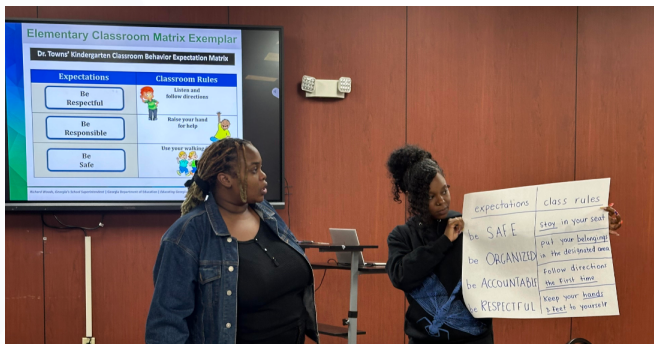
**PBIS Cohort 9 Schools
Tier I Readiness Training**

Schools	Total # of Participants	Artifacts
1. Austin Elementary School 2. Bethune Middle School 3. Chesnut Elementary School 4. Dunwoody Elementary School 5. Oak Grove Elementary School 6. Rock Chapel Elementary School 7. Stephenson Middle School 8. Stone Mountain High School	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign-In Link <p>See pics below</p>



PBIS schools receiving Tier 3 supports completed their PBIS Day 2 Retraining Session on Wednesday, September 25, 2024. This training is designed to equip existing PBIS school teams with content and resources to realign Tier 1 school-wide systems and practices in alignment with PBIS guidelines. Key PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) features covered in this session include, behavior definitions, discipline procedures, classroom procedures, professional development, faculty involvement, data-based decision-making, and more.

PBIS Tier 3 Schools		
PBIS Day 2 Retraining Session		
Schools	Total # of Participants	Artifacts
1. E.L. Miller Elementary School 2. Henderson Middle School 3. Sequoyah Middle School	20	See below



Kingsley Elementary School’s Tier I System/PBIS Team and the PBIS District Team attended Forsyth County Schools Tier I Readiness Training on Tuesday, October 1, 2024. This training designed for PBIS Cohort 9 schools. The training focuses on Teaming, Data-Based Decision Making, and Evaluations. Tier I System Team participants will learn how to integrate data and practices across academic, behavioral, attendance, and wellbeing domains to better identify and overcome obstacles to learning, by creating a more supportive and efficient educational environment.


On October 2, 2024, the PBIS District Team conducted PBIS Day 1 retraining for schools receiving Tier 3 supports. This training is designed to equip existing PBIS school teams with content and resources to realign Tier 1 school-wide systems and practices in alignment with PBIS guidelines. The goal is to enhance the fidelity of PBIS implementation and improve school culture and climate for both students and staff. During the session, key features of the PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) will be covered, including team composition, team operating procedures, behavior expectations, teaching expectations, and feedback and acknowledgment.

PBIS Day 1 Retraining Session-Wednesday, October 2, 2024	
Schools	# of Participants
Avondale Elementary School	5
Allgood Elementary School	5
Dunaire Elementary School	5
Flat Shoals Elementary School	5
McNair Discovery Learning	5
MLK High School	5
Tucker Middle School	5
Freedom Middle School	5
Total number of Participants=40	



The PBIS District Team conducted SWIS Training for PBIS school teams on Friday, October 4, 2024. This training session provides PBIS School Team Members with a comprehensive understanding of the schoolwide Information System (SWIS) application, a web-based decision-making tool for entering and analyzing behavior and discipline referrals. The SWIS application offers an efficient and effective way to capture behavior incident data, allowing school personnel to summarize and analyze this information to make informed decisions about educational environments.

The PBIS District Team conducted SWIS Training for PBIS school teams on Friday, October 4, 2024. This training session provides PBIS School Team Members with a comprehensive understanding of the Schoolwide Information System (SWIS) application, a web-based decision-making tool for entering and analyzing behavior and discipline referrals. The SWIS application offers an efficient and effective way to capture behavior incident data, allowing school personnel to summarize and analyze this information to make informed decisions about educational environments.

SWIS Training-Friday, October 4, 2024		
# of Participants	Artifact Links	Picture
25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign-In Roster Evaluation Feedback 	

Superintendent, Dr. Horton, created a DCSD PBIS Video for our schools, families, and community stakeholders.

The Student Relations PBIS District Team has hired two new PBIS District Coaches: Eva Landers and Jason Townsend.


The PBIS District Team submitted two session proposals for the Georgia Positive Behavioral Supports (GAPBS) Conference in Duluth, GA (December 12-13, 2024), and both have been accepted. The presentation titles are:

1. “Stakeholder Engagement: Making PBIS a Priority in Your District.”
2. “Transforming PBIS Implementation: Establishing Expectations with Differentiated Coaching to Develop Sustainable Systems of Support.”

The R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation has granted the DeKalb County School District (DCSD) Student Relations Department approval to use the remaining funds for school-level PBIS Coaches' registration for the GAPBS Conference. All 41 PBIS School Coaches who submitted a request will have the opportunity to attend the conference.

Dr. Dia Harden and Mrs. Shakira Bates-Shaw, PBIS District Coaches, attended the National PBIS Leadership Forum on October 9-11, 2024. The National PBIS Leadership Forum is a technical assistance event hosted by the Center on PBIS, offering an opportunity to share the latest PBIS applications. Single-topic breakout sessions and topic-specific strands provided guidance and tools for strengthening a prevention-based, multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) to address students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs, ensuring engagement. This forum is organized for state, regional, district, and school/agency leadership teams exploring, adopting, and implementing the multi-tiered PBIS framework. Participants included leadership team members, implementation coaches, district- and school-based behavior specialists (e.g., school counselors, school psychologists, special educators, coaches), PBIS/MTSS trainers, program evaluators, administrators, community and family youth-serving system partners, and district and state policymakers

On Tuesday, October 8, 2024, the PBIS District Team conducted PBIS Day 1 retraining for schools receiving Tier 3 supports. This training is designed to equip existing PBIS school teams with content and resources to realign Tier 1 school-wide systems and practices in alignment with PBIS guidelines. The goal is to enhance the fidelity of PBIS implementation and improve school culture and climate for both students and staff. During the session, key features of the PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) will be covered, including team composition, team operating procedures, behavior expectations, teaching expectations, and feedback and acknowledgment.

Schools	# of Participants	Sign-In and Evaluation Link	Picture(s)
1. Stone Mill Elementary 2. Stone Mountain Elementary 3. Stone Mountain Middle	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign-In Link Evaluation Link 	

The PBIS District Coordinator, Brandy Woolridge, conducted a Principal Check-In Meeting with Ms. Rochelle Patillo, Principal of Henderson Middle School. Ms. Patillo has done an exceptional job implementing feedback for Henderson Middle School by reestablishing the PBIS School Team, ensuring all team members attended PBIS retraining, and personally attending SWIS training with



the PBIS School Team. During the meeting, we discussed the PBIS team completing the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) by October 31st and 80% of staff completing the Self-Assessment Survey (SAS) by October 25th. Additionally, we reviewed Henderson Middle School's PBIS implementation updates, coaching and fidelity tool data, implementation barriers, and administrative support needs, and presented the PBIS Support Plan. The plan emphasizes training, coaching, and sustainability to strengthen the fidelity of PBIS TFI feature implementation.

Brandy Woolridge, PBIS District Coordinator, and Trevor Taylor, Co-Founder of Stars of Honor, met to discuss the PBIS elementary and middle schools that enrolled in the program and explore opportunities for additional schools to participate this school year. Stars of Honor celebrates the achievements of elementary and middle school students based on classroom performance (behavior and academics), kindness (good character), attendance, and commitment to a healthy lifestyle. Students selected as "Stars of Honor" will receive four free tickets to a Georgia Swarm lacrosse game for their family in the upcoming school year (1st and 2nd semester). At the game, they will receive a certificate, enjoy photo opportunities, and be recognized with an ovation from the crowd during a timeout. The program is free for students, their families, and participating schools.

Brandy Woolridge, PBIS District Coordinator, attended the Georgia Education Climate Coalition Hybrid Quarterly Meeting on Thursday, October 10, 2024. Presentations were conducted by the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities on topics including the Mental Health Continuum of Care, Early Screening and Early Intervention, Georgia Mental Health Access in Pediatrics (GMAP) core services and enrollment, Multi-Agency Treatment for Children (MATCH) and late intervention through MATCH–House Bill 1013, and the Georgia Apex Program.

The PBIS District Team held their PBIS District Leadership Meeting on Friday, October 25, 2024, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. The PBIS District Leadership Team is a dedicated group of district-level leaders and stakeholders responsible for guiding the implementation and sustainability of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) across all DCSD schools. Their primary role is to support schools in creating and maintaining positive, safe, and inclusive learning environments that foster student success. During the meeting, the PBIS District Team reviewed districtwide PBIS implementation goals, clarify the purpose of the PBIS District Leadership Team, and discuss the new Georgia Department of Education MTSS-PBIS Integrated Model. They will also outline plans to support schools in improving the fidelity of PBIS implementation. Guest speakers for the meeting include Monique Kimble, MTSS Director for DCSD, and Michelle Sandrock, Whole Child Supports Director for Metro RESA.



Brandy Woolridge, PBIS District Coordinator, and Janel Allen, the Director of Child and Adolescent Services met to discuss APEX Counselors that are assigned to work in PBIS schools, training, serving on the PBIS School Team, and the plan to utilize services for students receiving tiered supports.

Brandy Woolridge, PBIS District Coordinator, and Kenard Monroe, Student Transportation Region 7 Manager, met on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, to discuss plans to train bus drivers on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), develop a new PBIS Universal Bus Transportation Matrix for elementary, middle, and high schools, and create an evidence-based prevention and intervention toolkit with strategies for bus drivers.

Brandy Woolridge, PBIS District Coordinator, conducted Principal Check-In Meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to share PBIS implementation updates with principals, review coaching and fidelity tool data, discuss implementation barriers and administrator support needs, and share the PBIS Support Plan in the areas of training, coaching, and sustainability to improve the fidelity of PBIS TFI features implementation.

The PBIS District Team attended SWIS Facilitators Training October 15-16, 2024. This training prepares and certifies participants to provide services and supports as a SWIS Facilitator to schools in their district interested in implementation of the school-wide Information System (SWIS).

Brandy Woolridge, PBIS District Coordinator, and Monique Kimbell, MTSS Director, met to discuss a district plan to support schools in implementing the Georgia Department of Education's (GaDOE) fully integrated Georgia Multi-Tiered System of Supports (GaMTSS) model. This model requires schools to establish a Tier I System Team and complete Tier I Readiness Training before proceeding with PBIS training. By integrating data and practices across academic, behavioral, well-being, and attendance domains, schools can streamline efforts to better identify and address barriers to learning, fostering a more supportive and efficient educational environment.