



District Academic Report Document - September 2024

Mrs. Michelle Dillard, *Chief of Schools*

September has been filled with professional learning and training. S & L Leaders were provided training in Allovue for assisting with monitoring and staff roster management, as well as the new HR process and the Title IX procedures. We have engaged in the Equity Now Book study, as well as preparing for the principal book study for Breakthrough Principals.

All Area teams and Principals “plus two” engaged in MAP growth and MAP fluency training. Leaders also attended the Title I Summit and the Principals’ and Area Learning Opportunities during the month of September with a focus on Curriculum and Instruction in ELA and Mathematics. Principals were also trained in the new MARS system within Infinite Campus to use as an early warning system for at-risk students. The Area Superintendents rolled out the Weekly Narrative Six Systems Document and Data Spreadsheet and created a streamlined document for completing and receiving feedback for each school.

Beth Kyle, *Area 1 Superintendent Elementary Schools*

September has been a busy month focusing on the district curriculum, resources, and utilizing MAP data to strength the schools’ work around systems one and two. The area team supplemented the principal learning opportunities with guided professional learning with Wonders, My View, and GA Reveal so they can ensure that materials are being properly implemented during collaborative planning and in the classroom. The team is continuing to work closely with leadership development to support the PLC and Breakthrough Principal book study outlined in our MIRACLES priorities.

Terri Brown, *Area 2 Superintendent Elementary Schools*

For September, the Area 2 team’s focus has been supporting mathematics instruction. All schools have been scheduled for an instructional walk for math focused on implementation for Georgia’s K-12 Mathematics standards, GADOE Learning Plans as High-Quality Resources, Academic Discourse among students, Mathematical Modeling & Reasoning, and Positive Mathematical Mindsets for students. On-site coaching for principals, assistant principals, academic coaches, and teachers is underway during the walks as well as practice entering quick feedback and observations in SchoolMint. Both Evansdale & Rockbridge Elementary received professional learning on how to implement the GADOE Learning Plans for Dual



Language Immersion math classes. The Area team partnered with Curriculum & Instruction to translate the GADOE Learning Plans into French.

For the Area's Principal Learning Opportunity, Georgia Milestones writing data from SY23-24 was shared to highlight an opportunity for improvement. Several on-grade level readers across all schools did not reach proficiency for writing. State rubrics for writing and sample mini lessons for instruction were modeled so principals could see the connection of instruction to distinguished writing exemplars. The Area's academic coaches received the same instruction during their professional learning too.

Attendance & Discipline data were reviewed for each school. Principals also received some instruction for proactive practices for Human Resource Management, as well as how to conduct Employee Allegation investigations.

Ateshia Lester, Area 3 Superintendent Elementary Schools

In September, Area 3 focused on ensuring all teachers worked collaboratively to deconstruct K-5 Math standards for Units 3-4. Teachers participated in professional learning "Do the Math" to explore grade-level learning plans and tasks that align with instruction. The Area Team is conducting classroom observations on teaching alignment with utilization of district resources and the curriculum. Culture and Climate are observing intervention blocks and providing feedback to leaders.

Some highlights from our local schools include Chapel Hill was H-Pride certified, Canby Lane was featured on DSTV for incorporating rhyme into instruction, and Barack Obama earned National Beta School of Distinction.

Jacqueline Taylor, Area Superintendent Middle Schools

During the month of September, the Middle School Area's focus has been on supporting teachers with collaborative planning, using the District and State's curriculum. Teachers in every middle school participated in PL on Deeper Learning and Student Engagement. Additionally, the Area team conducted math focused Learning Walks

Mental Health Coordinator has begun to follow up with counselors on all students with a SIP. Further, MHC has conducted Wellness Seminars in the schools and is scheduled to conduct parent workshops on suicide prevention. Culture & Climate Coordinators continued to work with school's Attendance and Culture & Climate Committees. They have facilitated virtual support sessions for APs and Attendance secretaries.



Thomas Glanton, Area Superintendent High Schools

In September, the High School Area made significant strides towards excellence and equity. Through the MIRACLES project, our Climate and Culture initiatives exceeded expectations, with student assemblies for Rock the Vote, the successful roll-out of Disconnect-to-Reconnect, and the establishment of infrastructures to support Project ID. In Special Education, we conducted classroom observations and provided informal feedback to teachers, while our high school area coordinator participated in various content-specific and special education-related trainings. In English Language Arts, we collaborated with Academic Coaches, Assistant Principals, and Departments to ensure the smooth roll-out of HMH resources. In Mathematics, we partnered with Metro RESA to plan for the newly adopted Georgia Standards of Excellence, with a focus on utilizing district and GA DOE resources. Our Multilingual Learner (ML) Support team provided professional learning on scaffolded and data-driven instruction and is working to incorporate multilingual learners' resources from HMH into sheltered ELA courses. The High School Area remains committed to creating engaging learning environments where all students can excel.

Derrick Hardy, Area Superintendent Horizon Schools

September was the month for planning, monitoring and support. Panola Way ES, Pine Ridge ES, Shadow Rock ES, Stone Mountain ES and Woodridge ES were spotlighted for growing students more than 73% in half a year as measured by MAP RIT scores by Growing Readers. Short Term Action Planning (STAP) as a tool for chunking the 2024-2025 Continuous School Improvement Plan fulfillment was completed in 31 of 31 Horizon Area Schools. Principals along with Horizon Leaders of Support provided peer level feedback within the 3 zone groups to align the first quarter (Q1) STAP with evidence of implementation and effectiveness. Finally, Horizon Area Leadership introduced the 2024 GADOE-DCSD District Plan of Support goals to the Divisions of Curriculum & Instruction and Student Services which highlights four collaborative SMARTIE goals for ELA content mastery, Math content mastery, Exceptional Education content mastery and Graduation rate.

Michelle Jones, Area Superintendent Specialty Schools

The focus for the Specialty Area for the month of September is Literacy. We created and shared our literacy plan with the schools this month. This includes, but is not limited to, the Early Literacy Project whereby teachers will engage in the Science of Reading modules. Our Area Support Team has provided guidance for master scheduling based on the appropriate number of minutes for the literacy block. Resources have been provided to schools, as well as on-site professional learning for select schools. Every school has been scheduled for a literacy learning walk and we have used School Mint to capture that data. School leaders have participated in the literacy walks for grades 3-5 and when appropriate grades 6-8 with a debrief after the walk. Detailed feedback for each school has been provided following the observations. This aligns to the Learning Walk and Coaching MIRACLES priorities.

Narvie J. Harris invited the local DeKalb Public Libraries to their Curriculum Night and several families received books and a library card. September is Library Sign up Month and all schools have been provided with this information as well as the local branch they can partner with to support Literacy. This aligns to the CCRPI readiness- Lexile Levels MIRACLES priority.



We concluded Pre-conferences for all Area Support Team members and principals. School data (MAP, GA Milestones, retention) were discussed, as well as CSIP priorities and professional goals. Schools within the Specialty Area are preparing for the School Expo on Saturday, September 28th.

Mike Kelly, Leadership Development

Throughout September, the Leadership Development department has been deeply engaged in initiatives to strengthen the district's leadership capacity. Our efforts have focused on providing targeted support to school leaders, advancing professional learning opportunities, and fostering collaboration with key partners. From virtual training to hands-on coaching and the development of new leadership programs, Leadership Development is committed to aligning its work with the district's strategic goals and addressing the evolving needs of all district leaders.

In September, Leadership Development, in collaboration with Crucial Learning, LLC, facilitated 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.

- **Professional Learning Facilitators Collaboration**

A work session was conducted with Professional Learning Facilitators, fostering collaboration and ensuring consistency in the 2024-2025 Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Framework rollout. This session allowed for strategic planning and alignment in professional learning delivery across the district.

PLC Development with Solution Tree

Leadership Development met with Solution Tree to review the implementation plan for services. This partnership will provide targeted PLC development for principals, assistant principals, teachers, and a cohort of 50 leaders who will participate in a National Coaching Academy.

- **Literacy Focus at the GLISI Conference**

Leadership Development collaborated with the Literacy Team at the GLISI conference to establish values, beliefs, a Theory of Action, and empathy-based questions. This effort aims to drive the district-wide focus on literacy, ensuring alignment with instructional goals and improving student outcomes.

- **Coaching and Support for School Leaders**

The Leadership Development team reviewed coaching observations of new principals and assistant principals. These reviews highlighted strengths and identified areas for growth, fostering the continuous improvement of school leaders.

- **Mission and Vision Review**

Leadership Development has initiated a comprehensive review of its mission and vision. This process involves a committee of diverse stakeholders, and a timeline has been established to gather feedback that will inform the development of an updated mission and vision for the department.

- **Support for Principals and Assistant Principals**

Leadership Development supported several principals and assistant principals throughout September, particularly with allotments and scheduling concerns. Dr. Milton Hall and Dr. Angelica Collins (Leadership Development) visited multiple schools to meet with school leaders at the principals' request, providing critical guidance and assistance.

- **DeKalb Leadership Institute (DLI) Development**

- 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 deadline for assistant principals to express interest in the program was September 20th. 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.



- **Engagement in Professional Learning**

Leadership Development has participated in multiple professional learning opportunities implemented by schools and leadership teams. In addition to these activities, team members have attended weekly leadership meetings to stay aligned with district initiatives and priorities.

Ayana Smith, *Professional Learning*

In September, the Professional Learning Department has been busy supporting schools. September highlights include over 80 Professional Learning requests from all school areas from August to September, demonstrating a strong demand for development opportunities. The department successfully conducted a Para Academy with 71 participants, focusing on professional growth opportunities as they support classroom teachers. Additionally, 95% of the PL Family has supported schools/divisions with instruction (best practices and instructional strategies related to Literacy, Math, and CCRPI), culture, and climate (Classroom Management) and developed a PLC PowerPoint presentation to guide school leaders. Our goal is to ensure instructional support is aligned with all schools' improvement plans.

The professional learning department collaborated with Curriculum and Instruction to co-facilitate PD for school leaders in Literacy and Math. We also collaborated with the Operations department to plan and develop a co-hort of professional development for classified staff for this school year (Planning stage).

The month also featured the creation and distribution of a professional learning newsletter to keep staff informed and engaged with ongoing initiatives.

Dr. Candace Alexander, *Chief of Accountability and Research*

Accountability and Research

GLISI – Literacy Implementation - At the LIT Residential event, we had an excellent discussion about literacy in Georgia, including Senate Bills such as HB 538 (GA Literacy Act), HB 468 (School Supply Bill), SB 48 (Dyslexia Legislation), and SB 211 (GA Council on Literacy). We also covered topics like implementation science, professional learning, and various approaches to coaching. The event included a Q&A session with GADOE and a Living Museum experience. I'm grateful for the chance to participate in the Six Core Principles of Improvement and look forward to sharing what I've learned with the Division and continued partnership with the divisions.

Learning Forward - In collaboration with Curriculum & Instruction Schools and Leadership, we are thrilled to have been selected to participate in the Learning Forward Academy for two years. Our goal is to establish a cohesive and rigorous educational environment within the DeKalb County School District. We aim to maintain high, consistent expectations for student learning across all grade levels and content areas. By Fall 2026, we plan to implement effective



Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) following the DuFour PLC model. This will help us foster a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement among educators. We believe that PLCs will play a key role in achieving consistent, high-quality instruction across all divisions. The collaborative, data-driven, and continuous improvement-focused nature of PLCs makes them an effective vehicle for enhancing the instructional core and ensuring equitable educational outcomes for all students, including those in special education and ESOL programs. This approach will help eliminate inconsistencies and significantly enhance overall educational outcomes.

Dr. Rebecca Braaten, Director of Research, Data and Evaluation (RDE)

The Department of Research, Data, and Evaluation (RDE) supported the Division of Human Resources and created its first public-facing dashboard. The dashboard is accessible through the following link: <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/dcsd.rde/viz/TeacherCertification/HomePage>.

RDE facilitated SLDS and MARS sessions at the monthly Accountability Clinic on September 6, 2024. The participants included handfuls of principals, APs, academic coaches, and MTSS Specialists throughout the district.

Over the last two weeks, additional MARS training has been held for the following end-user groups:

- Head high school counselors- September 10
- Area Superintendents and Executive Administrators- September 18
- All Principals- September 19

- All Academic Coaches- September 20

The fall research approval cycle is near completion. The review cycle included thirteen (13) applications, eight (8) doctorate prospectuses, four (4) external agency studies, and one (1) local study. Of the eight (8) 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 will be reviewed within the next two weeks.

The department processed eleven (11) electronic online document requests during September 1-18, 2024. Of those eleven (11), six (6) 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 Curriculum and Instruction
- Department of Federal Programs
- Department of Professional Development
- Department of Research, Data, and Evaluation
- Department of Strategic Planning



The department has completed eleven (11) 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 Spring 2024 Georgia Milestones. During September, the department collaborated with the Division of Curriculum and Instruction on data requests related to the Acceleration Academy. Additionally, data was provided to our external research partner, Georgia Policy Labs - MAPLE.

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.

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

The ESSER team continued working on:

- Executing and implementing the approved budget
- Participating in meetings with divisions that impact the remaining ESSER III carryover funds
- Regular, collaborative meetings with finance
- Submitting a budget amendment
- Closing out the grant

OFP Accounting Associates and Budget Specialists provided training on September 18 to all bookkeepers within the district. The topics included:

- Who's On Your Title I Team?
- Using Your Tools
- Title I Requisition Time
- Spending Deadlines

The Title I Coordinators provided a Budget Training to Principals and Assistant Principals during the first Accountability Clinic with the division:

- Who's on Your Title I Team
- Alignment & Spending Timeline Based on Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP)



- Monitoring the Budget - General Ledger (GL) Accounts & Requisitions
- Open Purchase Orders (POs)
- Next Steps

The Annual Title I Summit was held at Southwest DeKalb High School on September 10-12. There were over 200 participants. The purpose of the Summit was to learn more about Title I guidelines, procedures, and new updates. Topics included:

- Contracted Services
- Job-Embedded Professional Learning
- Parent & Family Engagement
- Coaching for Success

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

Professional Learning Opportunities:

- August 15, 2024 – AP Large District Training, Peachtree, GA
- August 20, 2024 – GaDOE System Test Coordinator’s Meeting
- August 21, 2024 – College Board PSAT Meeting
- August 21, 2024 – GaDOE File Rostering Report Training
- August 29, 2024 – College Board SAT School Day Training
- September 10, 2024 – State Assessment Training – Part 2-Special Populations
- September 13, 2024 – State Assessment Meeting (Lunch and Learn)
- August/September Meeting Cadences:
 - Each Wednesday – Meeting with IT (Benchmarks)
 - Wednesdays (Bi-Monthly) - Meeting with C&I and UGA K-12 Assessment Solutions
 - Thursdays (Bi-Monthly) - Meeting with Renaissance DnA

Monthly Newsletter – September newsletter completed [SeptemberNewsletter.pdf](#)

School Test Coordinator Handbook - Additional content addressing student accommodations will be added based on information received during GADOE’s training on September 10, 2024. The handbook is undergoing another phase of revision and editing.

State Assessments:

- **Georgia Milestones:** Spring 2024 End-of-Grade (EOG) and Spring End-of-Course (EOC) final reports, including individual and summary reports for Mathematics were loaded on DRC’s Interactive Reporting System. School Test Coordinators were notified to send home the Individual Student Score Report (ISR), parent letter, and score interpretation guide by Friday, September 13, 2024. Parent letters are available in multiple languages.
- **Fall EOC Mid-Months:** The window for the September administration is September 16-20. The September window provides an opportunity for Test-out and Retest.
- **ICT Pilot:** ICT Pilot will be administered at Freedom Middle School and Cross Keys High School on October 3, 2024. The ICT Pilot Assessment training is scheduled for September 20, 2024.



- **ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs** - Annual WIDA ACCESS certification period for school test coordinators and test examiners runs from September 1 – August 31. As of September 18, the Assessment Department created 93 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.
- **GKIDS:** All ES schools are 100% complete with the GKIDS Readiness Check. When viewing the report, there are 2 reasons a school will not show 0% Not Yet Assessed.
 1. Schools had the option to not test ELA due to a waiver issued by the state because grades K-3 are required to take a screener.
 2. New students are assessed as they enter the school. This means that some students will not complete the GKIDS Readiness Check.

Schools can now evaluate the data to determine where kindergarten students are ready to begin learning. GKIDS 2.0 formative assessment will begin and will continue until May 23, 2024.

District Assessments:

- **MAP Growth:** Over the past two weeks (September 3-6 and 10-13), the Assessment Administration Department and the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) offered two half-day workshops for school and district leaders. There were 402 district and school leaders who were trained--64 district-level leaders and 338 school-level principals, assistant principals, academic coaches, and MTSS Specialists.
- **District Benchmarks:** Curriculum and Instruction have reviewed Benchmark deliverables 2 and 3. These files contain 42 assessments that cover the remaining tests for Benchmark 1 for grades
 - 1-8, Enhanced Algebra, and Physical Science. It also contains Benchmarks 2 and 3 for the high school EOC courses.
 - Deliverable 4 is currently undergoing a thorough review process between UGA and C&I to ensure its quality.
 - At present, the 42 benchmark assessments have not been uploaded to the Renaissance DnA platform by Renaissance Learning. We are in touch with Renaissance daily through phone calls and emails for status updates. The window opens Sept. 23, 2024.

National Assessment:

- **PSAT 8/9 and PSAT/NMSQT: School** Test Coordinators participated in PSAT training facilitated by College Board on August 21, 2024.
 - The Assessment Administration department provided checklists and weekly emails to support school test coordinators in their mandatory tasks for test administration.
 - The Assessment Administration Department ordered tests for grades 8 and 10. School Test Coordinators ordered tests for interested students in grades 9 and 11.
- **SAT School Day:** The Assessment Administration department continues to provide checklists and weekly emails to support school test coordinators in their mandatory tasks.



- Assessments have been ordered for all seniors in DCSD.
- School test coordinators participated in training on August 29, 2024 by College Board.
- **CogAT/ITBS:** ITBS window opened on Tuesday, September 3. Following the district upload, we have completed individual teacher uploads to ensure that all schools have enough proctors to administer the assessment at their schools.

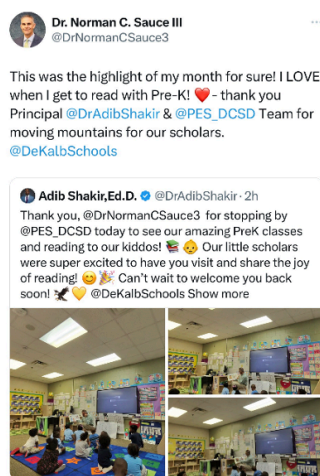
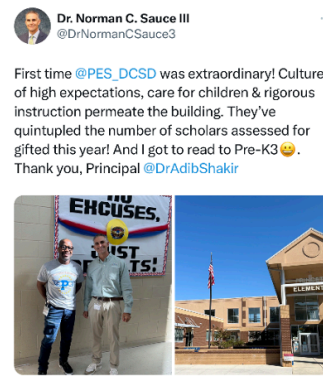
Dr. Norman C. Sauce III, *Chief of Student Services*

Throughout September, Dr. Norman C. Sauce III maintained an active and accessible presence across the District, in support of advancing educational excellence. His month included insightful drop-in school visits at Eaglewoods Academy, Shadow Rock Center, Cedar Grove Elementary, Briar Vista Elementary, John Lewis Elementary, Rockbridge Elementary, and Princeton Elementary, where he observed instruction and provided on-site support for school staffs. He also visited Columbia High School, Tucker Middle School, and Tucker High School, engaging with staff and students to assess their educational environments and needs. Dr. Sauce actively participated in the Superintendent's Principal Advisory Committee meeting, contributing to meaningful discussion on schools' needs with school leaders.

Along with other leaders from DCSD's Divisions of Schools and Leadership, Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment and Accountability, and Student Services, Dr. Sauce participated in the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement district professional development experience in September. This on-going program focuses on literacy leadership and instructional strategies for school improvement. As part of his preparations for the Principals Learning Opportunity, Dr. Sauce led discussions on English Learners and Gifted programming to ensure these departments received the necessary support. His commitment to community engagement was further demonstrated by his and other Division personnel's active participation in DeKalb County School District's School Fair on Saturday September 28 – and preparations with the English Learners Department for the upcoming ESOL Educators Conference on Saturday October 5. Dr. Sauce conducted a number of Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 classroom visits to experience our early childhood education classrooms, and their means of fostering early literacy development. His commitment to academic excellence was underscored by his participation in Science of Reading professional learning sessions for Pre-K educators at Pleasantdale Elementary.

To round out the month, Dr. Sauce participated in the Superintendent's Finance Steering Committee and Curriculum Steering Committee meetings, to provide insights and perspective on the work of these committees towards elevated conditions and experiences for our scholars. The month's highlight was the exciting DCSD School Expo, where Dr. Sauce and the Student Services team engaged the public, sharing specialized information about their departments. He also participated in the monthly MIRACLES workshop with the Superintendent and Executive Cabinet

and other District leaders, to update the team on the progress for each Division’s respective critical priorities. He was an active participant at the first evening Student Assignment Project Committee of the Whole meeting on September 18, and Principals Learning Opportunity meeting on September 19. He participated in various departments’ leadership team meetings within the Division of Student Services during the month of September. On September 24, Dr. Sauce and the Division of Student Services leadership facilitated a half day professional learning session for school leaders (principals, assistant principal, instructional coaches, MTSS specialists) on the tenements of instructional leadership through the lens of the four academic departments contained within the Division. This optional learning experience was attended by more than 30 school-based instructional leaders. He joined the Executive Director of English Learners in facilitating a professional learning session for Area Superintendents and Executive Administrators on September 25 – on implementation of instructional resources and supports for English Learner students. September was an active month for the Chief of Student Services for instructional visits of schools and professional development facilitation and participation.





Happening Now: @DeKalbSchools @ExEdDeptDCSD Parent Advisory Council meets for feedback on pertinent topics: parent rights, transition services, behavior supports for students with IEPs, communication strategies, & more! Thank you, parents for your candor.



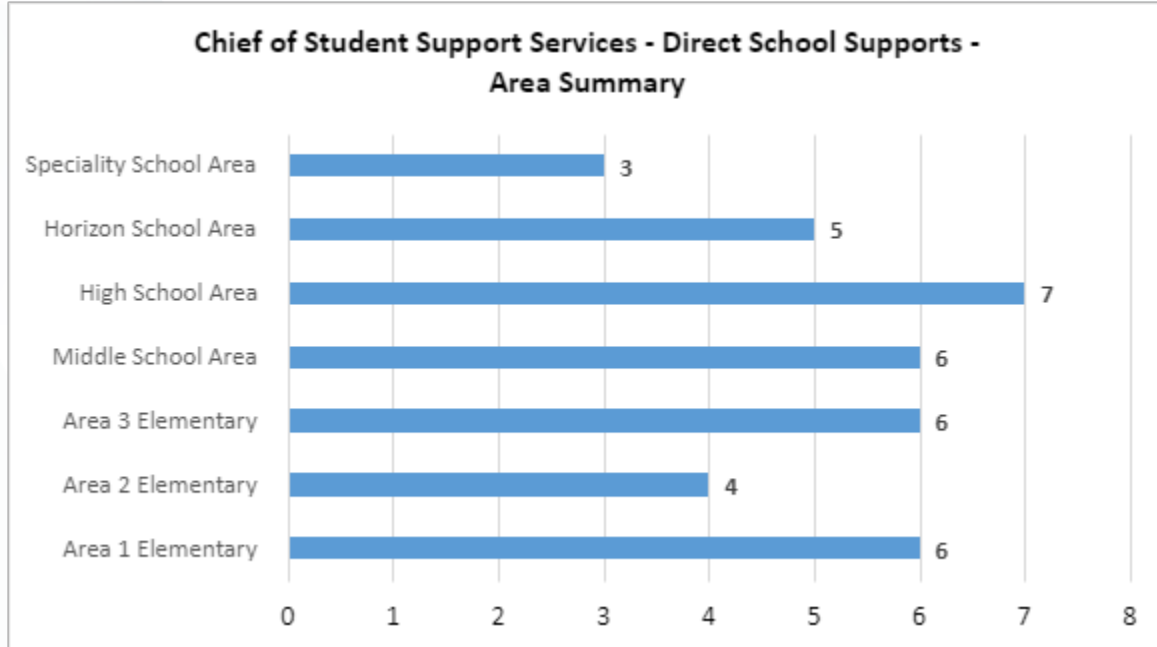
@DeKalbSchools Divisions, Chiefs & Teams had invigorating 3 days of impassioned learning on literacy leadership @GLISI LIT Camp. Remarkable collaboration on our respective plans w/ @ClarkeCoSchools Team! Thank you @hazlebussey @aschmuhl



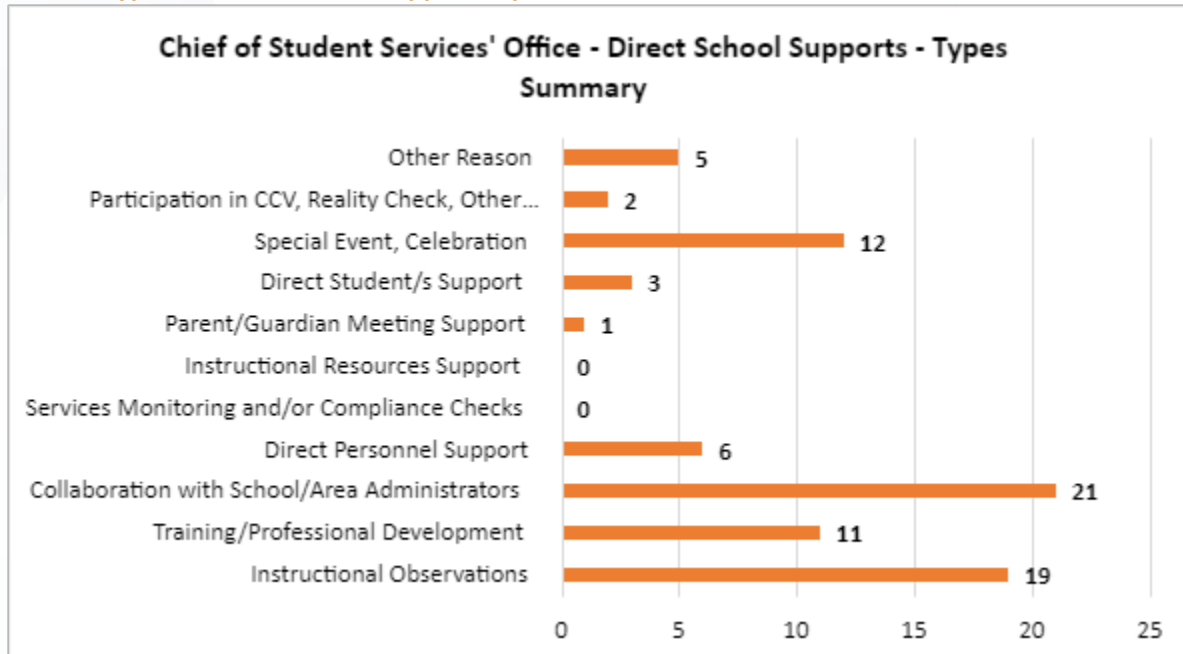
It's the honor of my life to serve @DeKalbSchools in the capacities that I do—especially with such a visionary Superintendent & incomparable colleagues. I was proud to accompany Dr. Horton & executive leaders for our town hall @DunwoodyHS to inform & engage community. #iLoveDCSD



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

LAS Links

The LAS Links allows teachers to progress monitor the English language development of newcomer students and identify areas of support and acceleration. As part of the Intensive English (IE) program for newcomers, students in the Intensive English program grades 4-12 participate in the LAS Links progress monitoring for students’ growth in English language proficiency.

2024-2025 LAS Links windows		
1 st Window: August 19 th - 30 th	Intensive English Grades 4-8	Successfully completed 
2 nd Window: November 11 th – 22 nd	Intensive English Grades 4-12	Scheduled
3 rd Window: March 17 th – 28 th	Intensive English Grades 4-12	Scheduled

Students in the Intensive English program in grades 4-8 who have been enrolled in US schools for one calendar year or scored a 2.0 or higher on the LAS Links meet the requirements to transition to the general ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) classes in October.

DCSD Strategic Plan

Goal Area I: Student Academic Success with Equity and Access

MIRACLES Framework

M - Motion Towards Equity

I - Improved Instructional Core

Registration & Interpretation

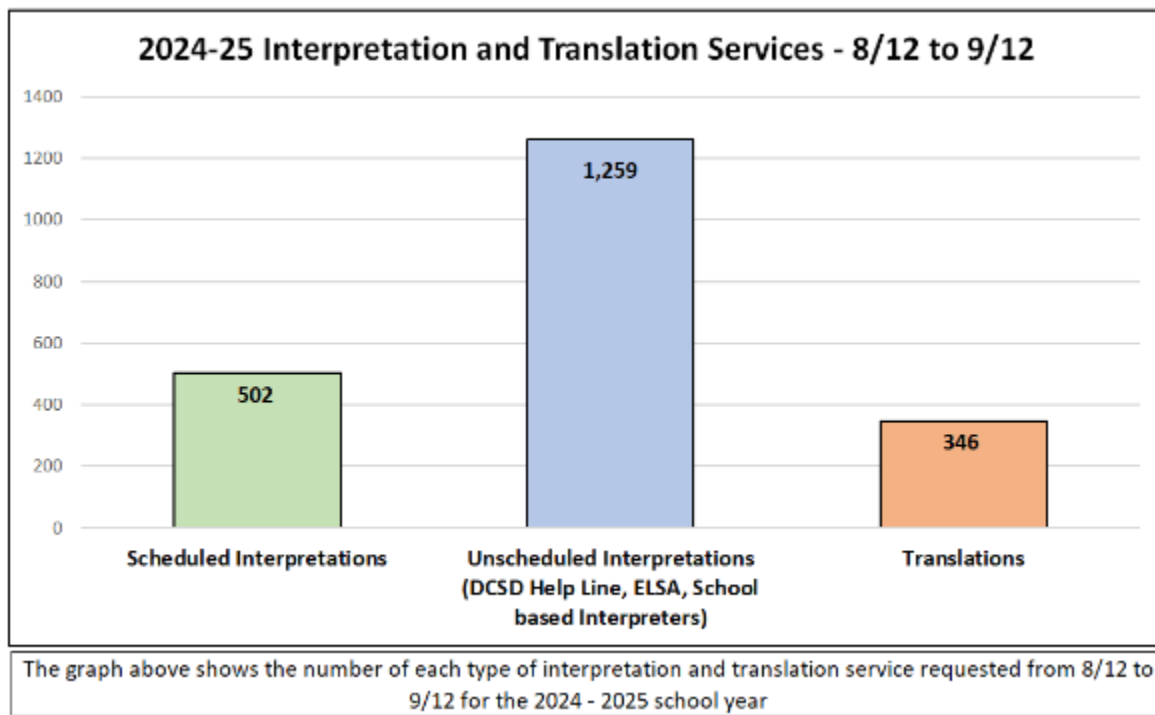
International Student Screening Center Registration

The International Student Screening Center (ISSC) continuously registers and screens students throughout the school year. This month ISSC registered and screened **473** students. In total, the ISSC has registered and screened **2,725** English learners this academic year.

Area	ISSC Registrations	Active EL Students	Active PLHOTEs
Area 1 - ES	715	3,677	4,724
Area 2 - ES	624	3,143	4,125
Area 3 - ES	88	548	750
Area Middle School	329	3,322	5,470
Area High School	241	2,352	4,858
Area Horizon	650	4,215	5,911
Area Specialty	122	1,362	2,144
No Area	12	34	99
Total	2,725	18,653	28,081

Interpretation Services

The International Student Screening Center (ISSC) provides interpretation/translation services during registration and at local schools to PHLOTE (primary home language other than English) families. During the past month, the English learners department provided 1,761 PHLOTE families with language access and translated 346 documents.



DCSD Strategic Plan

Goal Area II: School, Family, and Community Engagement

MIRACLES Framework

M - Motion Towards Equity

C – Commitment to Accountability

Professional Learning: Fall 2024 ESOL Book Studies

The EL Department offers a variety of EL focused professional learning opportunities (in-person and virtual sessions), including workshops, trainings, and book studies each semester for Teachers of English Learners, Administrators, and support staff.

The following book studies will be offered in both fall and spring semester:

- **Teaching and Supporting Intensive English Students Book Study (6 part-series)**
- **Strategies for Unlocking English Learners’ Potential Book Study (5 part-series)**
- ***New!* Co-Teaching for English Learners Book Study (6 part-series)**



English Learners Department
Fall 2024 - Book Studies



Intensive English

- ES [#5625](#)
- MS/HS [#5628](#)

First Session:
Tuesday, September 3rd

Description:
This book study provides Intensive English teachers and administrators with tools to support and welcome newcomers and their families and effectively implement instruction that is focused on language development.



Co-Teaching

- ES [#5637](#)
- MS/HS [#5640](#)

First Session:
Monday, September 9th

Description:
This book study is for all co-teachers of English learners who collaborate and teach via the Push-In Model. This session will provide participants with guidance on how to collaboratively plan, instruct via specific models, and assess ELs.



Unlocking Strategies

- ES/MS/HS [#5636](#)

First Session:
Thursday, September 12th

Description:
The focus of this book study is to support teachers of English learners with evidence-based strategies that focus on language development, academic discourse, and advocacy.



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

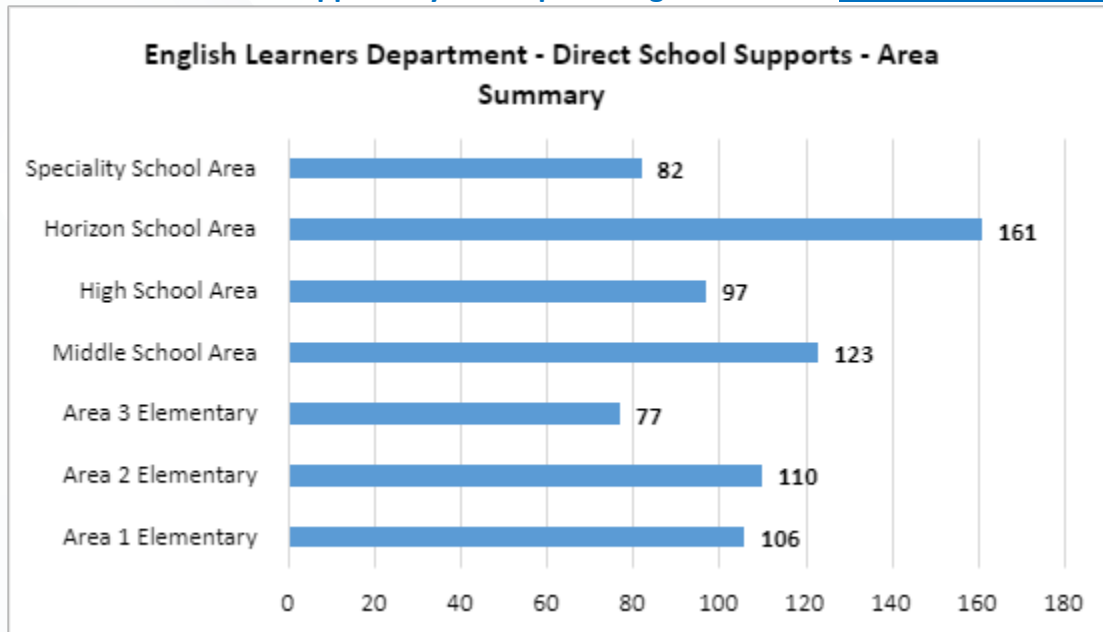
MIRACLES Framework

M - Motion Towards Equity

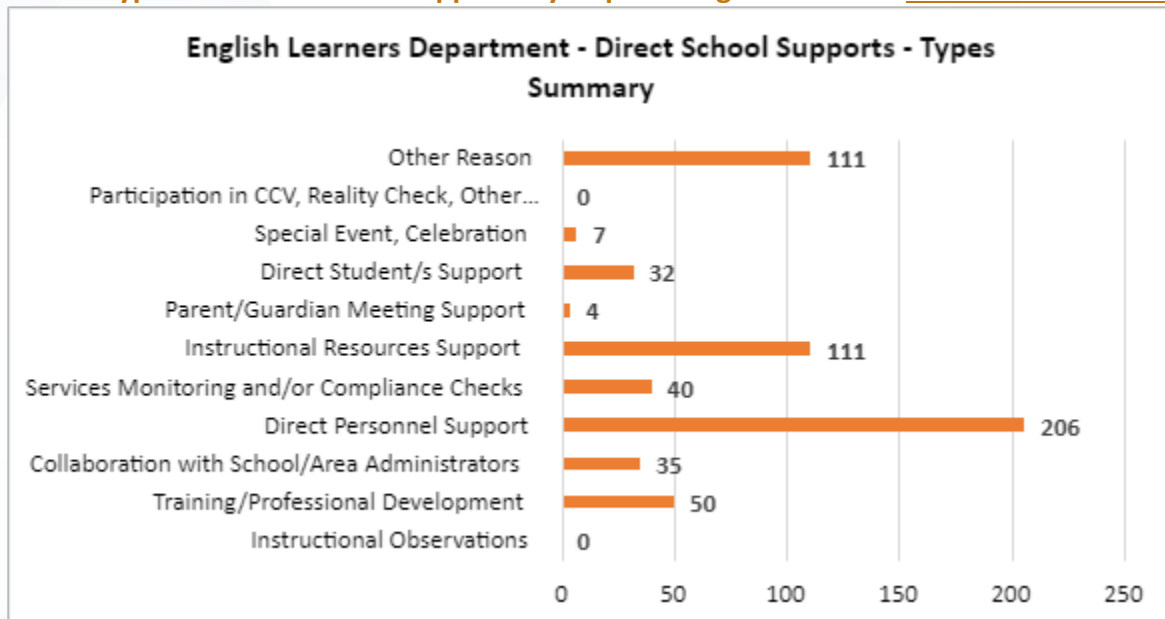
I - Improved Instructional Core

R - Relevant and Rigorous Course of Study

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

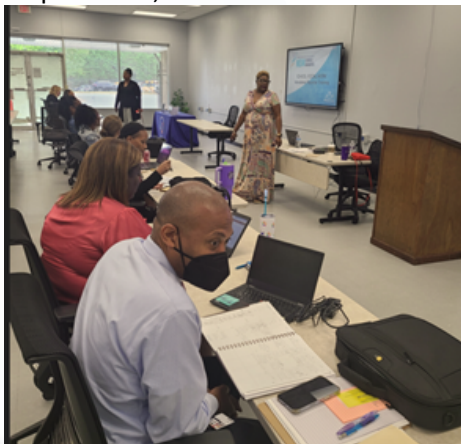


**Kiana King, Executive Director, Exceptional Education
Professional Development and School Support**

The success of Section 504 processes and overall student support relies heavily on collaboration across multiple internal departments. By working closely with key stakeholders—including the Student Relations Department, school psychologists, nursing staff, administrators, and other teams, a comprehensive and unified approach to addressing the needs of our students is achieved. We are proud to announce that over 4,800 faculty and staff members have viewed the beginning of the year training presentation, acknowledging their understanding of Section 504 obligations. This collective effort demonstrates our dedication to providing an inclusive and equitable educational experience for all students. We will continue to offer ongoing training and resources to empower faculty and staff in effectively implementing 504 plans across our schools. In addition, this month the office of school psychology and Section 504 provided training for school psychologists.



- EagleWoods Academy (EWA) is excited about the laser focus for September on Literacy Instruction. Dr. Marchell Paige (District ELA Coordinator) will facilitate observations at EWA on Tuesday, September 24. The team will observe, support, and provide feedback to Eagle Woods Academy teachers and facilitate learning walks as well. During the learning walks, observers will provide support and feedback on the use of the District’s purchased high-quality resources, implementation of the Science of Reading, and the appropriateness of reading instruction. We look forward to this collaboration with the Specialty Area as we continue to Be B.O.L.D. for our students!
- In support of the 8 ATSI schools, the Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS) has started the second Cohort providing support through the **Georgia Teacher Provider Retention Project** with fourteen new **DeKalb Special Education** teachers. The project consists of nine two-hour face to face training sessions and nice sessions with the Kennesaw AVATAR lab. In addition, each teacher receives multiple classroom coaching visits to support the instruction. The goal is to repeat the 100% retention rate demonstrated in 2023-2024.
- **Autism in the Classroom** 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 first training in the monthly series was facilitated on Tuesday September 17, 2024.
- The school psychologists have been honing their professional toolkit during the month of September. Several psychologists attended the Georgia Association of School Psychologists (GASP) Fall Conference in Jekyll Island, and received information on new psychological assessment instruments, Georgia Department of Education updates, neurology of reading, and social-emotional and behavioral symptoms. The team also provided additional training to school District staff on the WhyTry Social-Emotional & Resilience Curriculum. Additional, District collaborative training was received from our English Learners Department, Student Section 504 Services Department, and School Social Work Department.



- Metro East GLRS began the month of September with a bang! Our **Instructional Coaching Institute** was a fabulous success. Instructional Coaches, Liaisons, Coordinators and other Leadership Personnel attended four days of training on Instructional Coaching and the Jim Knight model. Participants were so enthused they appeared on day two dressed in jungle styled apparel to extend our jungle theme. All 24 participants indicated that the training was of high quality, relevant and useful. All 24 also indicated that this training would be used to change educator impact and increase student success.

Participant Feedback: “This was absolutely the best instructional coaching training I have ever received!” “This training was way more than I expected. You guys have truly given me tools I can use!”



- The Office of Special Education trained all Lead Teachers for Special Education (LTSEs) on how to mitigate student elopement. This training details the expectations of teachers and support staff to ensure awareness of student behaviors and potential elopement risks as detailed in student’s Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). LTSEs will re-deliver the elopement training to all special education staff and administrators on or before September 27, 2024.

Department Highlights and Acknowledgements

Mrs. Lisa Lake, DCSD Special Education Parent Mentor, was recently presented the 2024 Scott Crain Rookie Mentor of the Year Award for outstanding leadership presented by the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership. In addition, she was asked to present to new

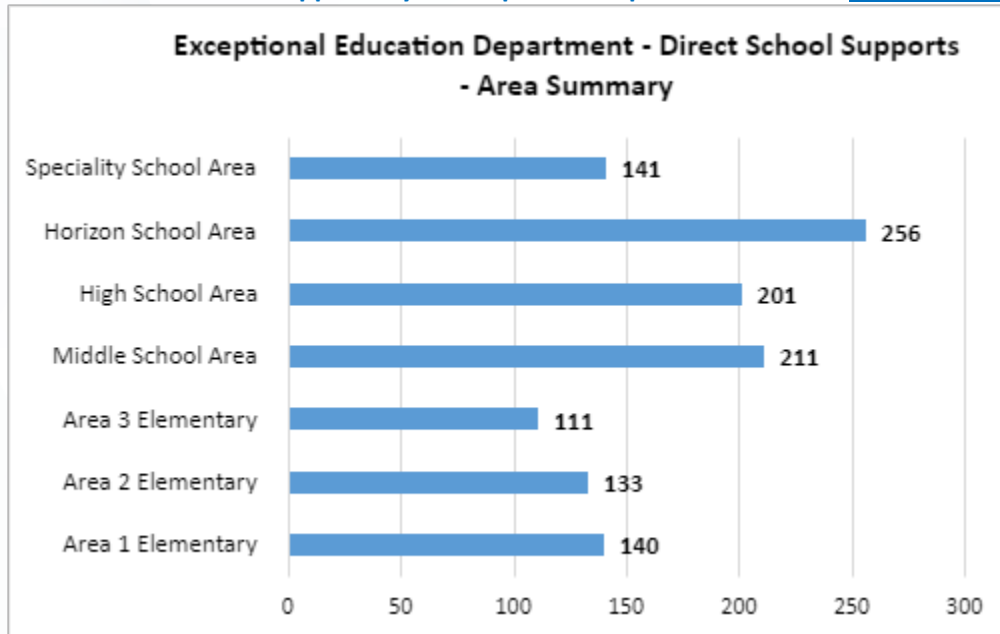
parent mentors this school year at the annual GADOE Parent Mentor Conference.



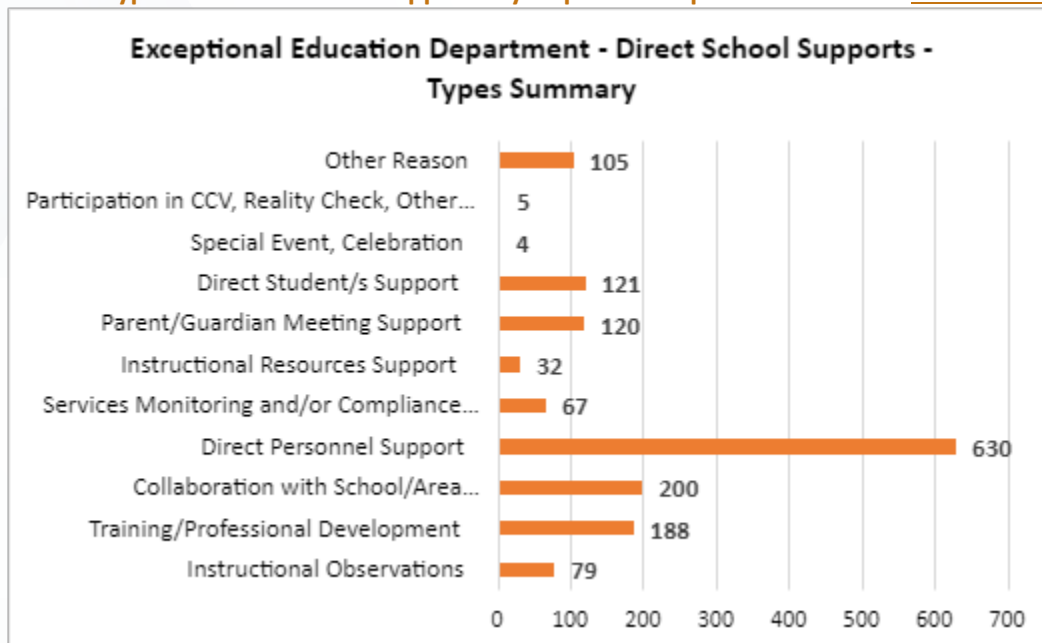
- The **DCSD Office of Psychological Services**, under the leadership of Senior Coordinator **Mrs. Kimberly Franklin**, was recently recognized by the Georgia Association of School Psychologists for implementing Innovative Practices in the field of school psychology during the state-wide Awards Ceremony. These relate to their recent efforts to implement partnerships with Georgia State University, and others, to attract a diverse school psychology workforce to DeKalb County through tuition reimbursements and a newly launched paid internship program. The crystal trophy will be displayed in their office suite. In addition, **William Crook** (psychologist), **Jenee Chalwell** (psychologist), and **Rose Shine** (intern) provided a presentation on "Understanding Gender & Gender Diversity".



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
Professional Learning Opportunities**

The Early Learning/Pre-K Department has worked diligently to offer various (PL) opportunities to district employees on various titles ranging from Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Process for Pre-K (3 & 4) scholars with district assigned MTSS Specialists and Director Kimbell, virtual Chat and Chews with Pre-K staff members covering WSO, elopement strategies for young students, State Mandated *Bright From the Start* trainings for staff members, if applicable, Waterford training for Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 staff members at the Early Learning Center, Pre-K3 expansion sites and Pre-K4 piloted classrooms, and Science of Reading training session #2 for Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 educators. These excellent opportunities for staff members align with the DCSD Strategic Plan and the DCSD MIRACLES Framework for Continuous Improvement. Also, as it relates to the DeKalb LIT initiative, Executive Director, Dr. Phillips also attended and participated in the GLIS District Professional Development Cohort in Peachtree City, Georgia.



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

School Supports

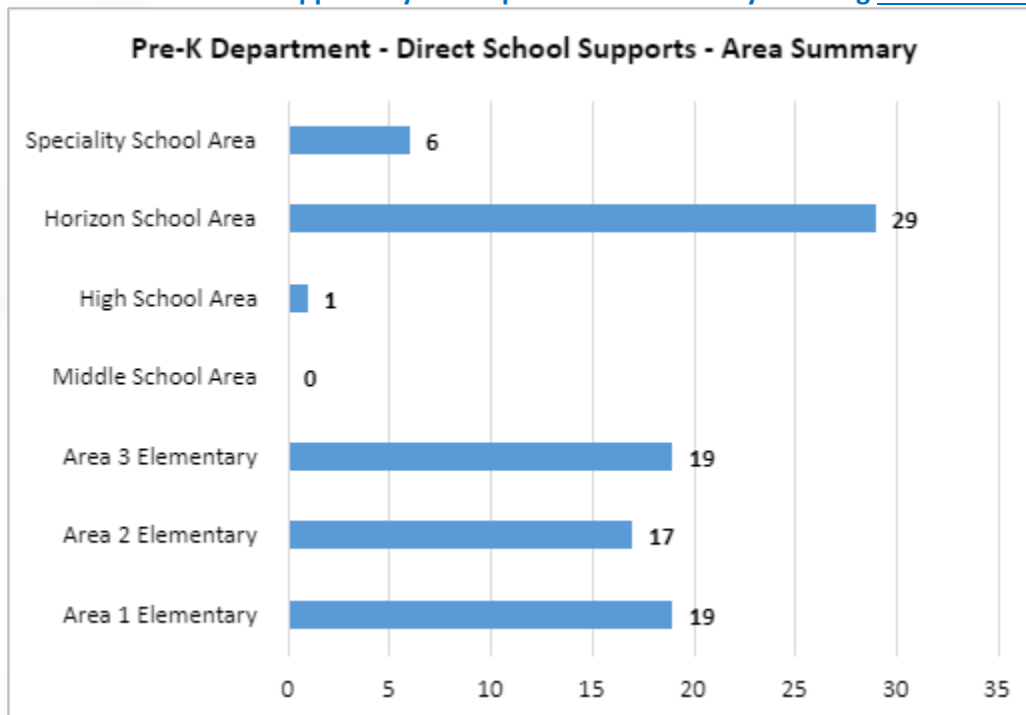
The Early Learning/Pre-K Department team continues to provide support to schools to assist with auditing of student files, instructional observations, providing feedback and guidance with MTSS

Tier II and Tier III meetings, classroom environments, instructional planning, and roster count #1 uploads per school/class with the new GA PREK platform, etc.

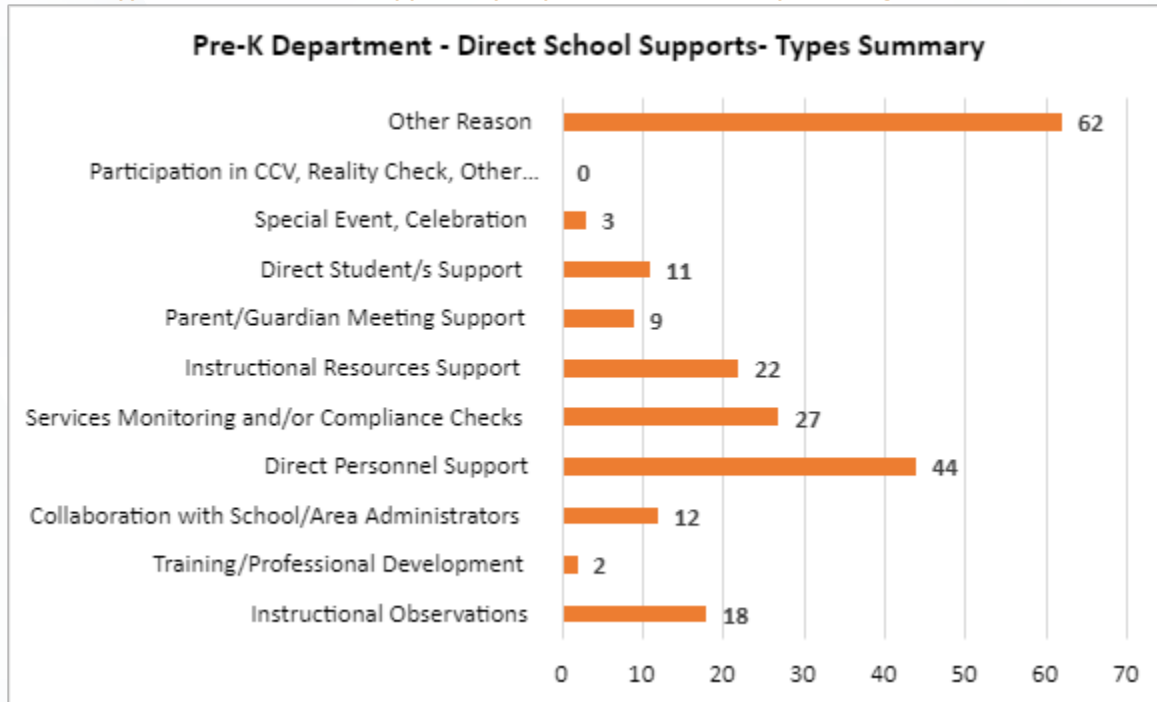
Upcoming Early Learning/Pre-K Department – Highlights

Another group of Pre-K3 and Pre-K staff members will participate in the Science of Reading (SOR) training session #2 at Pleasantdale ES on Wednesday, September 25th. The Pre-K3 expansion classes and Pre-K4 piloted classes at the same ES locations will be trained on the Waterford supplemental resource on Thursday, September 26th. 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. Additionally, all Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 staff members are being offered an opportunity to receive a stipend for completing all required (10) Georgia Literacy Academy courses and Dyslexia video in support of the Georgia Early Literacy Act, HB 538.

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

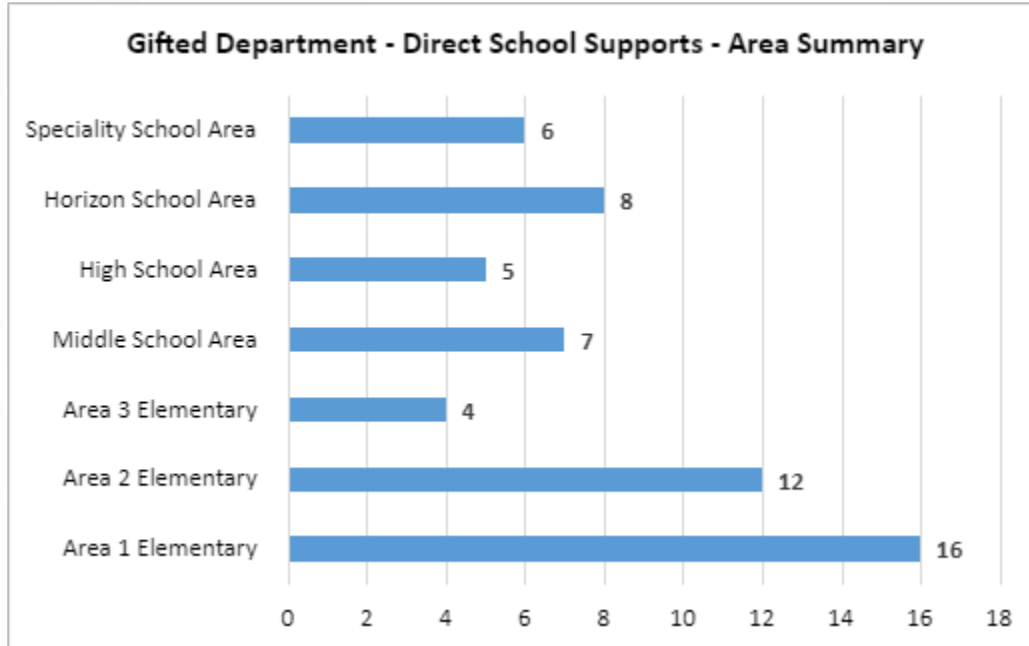


Donyell Atkinson and Kristen Drake, Senior Coordinators for Gifted Education

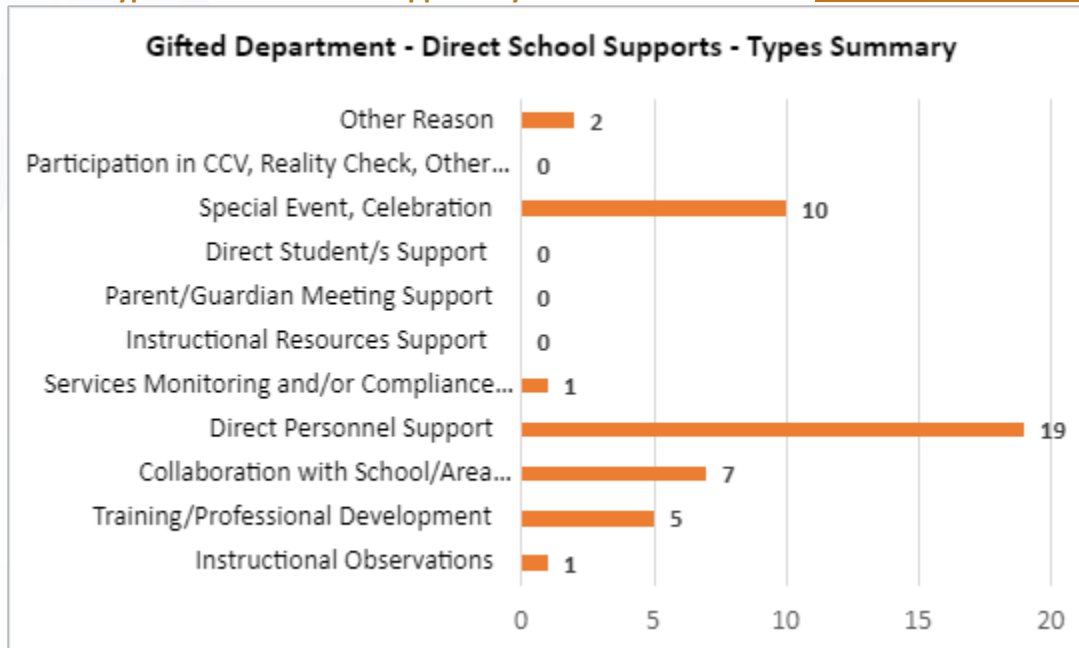
Ten teachers participated in a full-day professional learning session addressing gifted identification and instruction. Questioning and feedback were the primary focus of the session that will be repeated 11 more times throughout the school year across the district. These sessions address DCSD Strategic Plan Goal Area 3.2 as we develop high performing staff to ensure quality teaching and learning outcomes. We seek to develop a more robust process to evaluate professional development programs, measuring participant satisfaction and the effectiveness of implementation. One hundred percent of participants said they would recommend the session to a colleague. One teacher appreciated “actual hands-on participation of the topics to understand how this can be adjusted to suit your content and student levels.” Another wrote, “I like the varied activities that can be immediately implemented in my classroom.” We emphasized the benefits of collective teacher efficacy, and a participant wrote, “I learned several strategies that I can implement in my classroom and share with my teachers in my building.”

The Gifted Education department’s continued collaboration with school leaders and staff to discuss the state approved delivery models, 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 embark upon their third week of testing for gifted. Assessment training for all gifted liaisons and STCs on the NNAT3, Renzulli, GES, and GPA are underway as local schools conclude ITBS and CogAT administration. Next steps for gifted liaisons will be for them to begin analyzing these test results to determine if further testing is warranted once the Renzulli is administered.

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

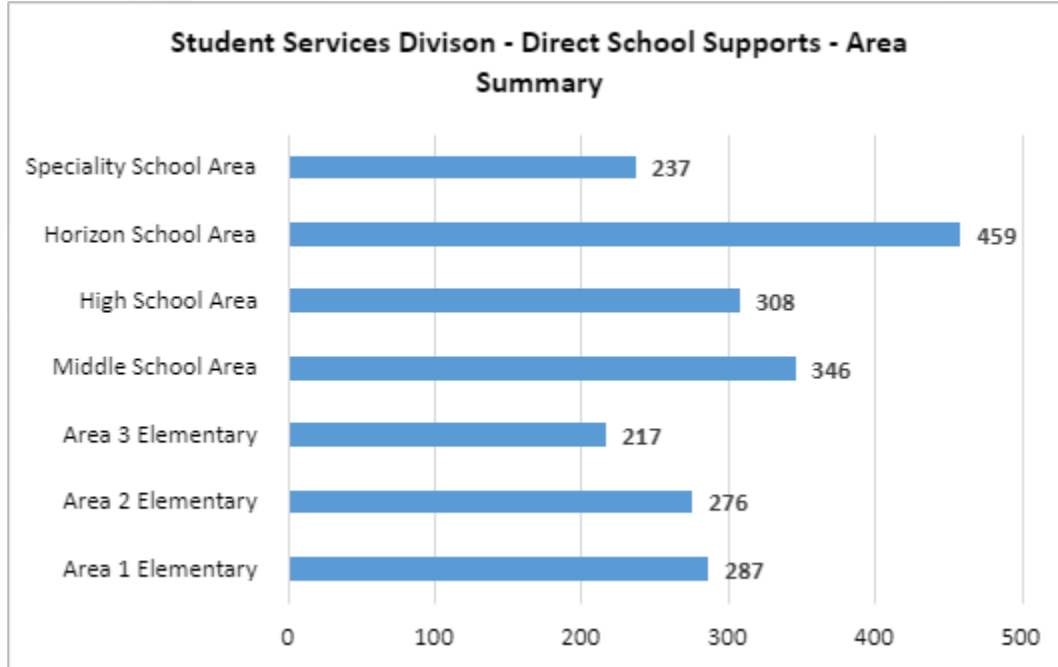


Types of Direct School Supports by Gifted Education Team Since Start of School Year

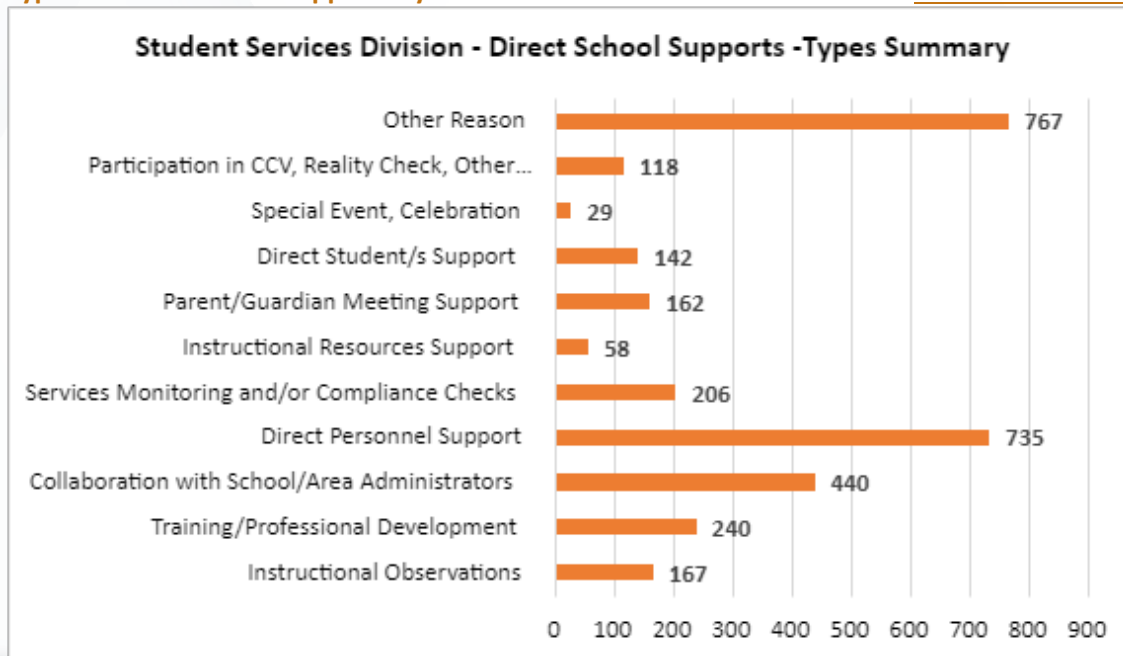


Division of Student Services - Direct School Supports Totals – Since Start of School Year

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





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 #2: Policies, Practices, & Norms that May Lead to Exclusion. During the session, leaders explored system-level policies, practices, and norms that may unintentionally lead to exclusionary literacy practices. After watching *The Influence of Society, Schools, and Students in Literacy Acquisition* video produced by the AIM Institute, potential barriers were identified that prevent systems from establishing and sustaining the optimal conditions for language acquisition. The intentional and unintentional barriers were discussed with our community of learners in small groups. Also, CFC introduced the barrier anticipation protocol to help leaders mitigate unintended consequences by creating a bridge between good intentions and strong execution. The barriers were categorized into the following three categories to guide our conversations: people and resourcing, processes and practices, and structures and systems.

GLISI Literacy Network

DCSD's GLISI Literacy Implementation Team (LIT) participated in the first residential session hosted September 9-11, 2024. The three-day intensive training focused on the theme, *Cultivating a Culture of Literacy*. On day one, GLISI began by supporting teams with analyzing and understanding their communication styles to identify strengths and challenges. Knowing our team members promoted psychological safety as the team engaged in telling our literacy stories, determining our beliefs and values about literacy, analyzing data and perceptions, and identifying barriers and opportunities to cultivate a culture of literacy. On day two, Ms. Amy Denty provided updates from GADOE pertaining to the implementation of the Georgia Early Literacy Act (HB538), new K-12 English Language Arts Standards beginning 2025-2026 school year, and dyslexia efforts (SB48). Also, participants learned how to conduct empathy interviews, which helped leaders identify barriers and opportunities, engage with other school districts, and clarify additional support needed. In preparation for day three, Mr. Clay Hunter provided coaching support as DCSD's LIT used a strategy map to develop a theory of action. On day three, the consultancy protocol allowed DCSD and Clarke County School District to ask probing questions and make suggestions for consideration as each district reflected about their unique literacy dilemma.

Academic Coaches

The 2024-2025 school year is off to a strong start for the Academic Coach Coordinators (ACC)



Team, with a focus on "The Reset" to address the influx of new coaches, to clarify misconceptions and strengthen the supportive network based on feedback and documentation from academic coaches. In September, the team worked diligently to support academic coaches, including conducting initial meetings with academic coaches at individual schools, orienting new hires, and attending job-alike meetings. They also planned and implemented the first Academic Coach Academy of the 24-25 school year in collaboration with Exceptional Education, Information and Instructional Technology, Teaching and Learning, and the Southern Region Education Board (SREB).

The ACC Team has facilitated various sessions, including "Coaching for Success" at the Title I Summit and professional learning sessions for secondary principals related to ELA updates. To ensure consistent practices across schools, the team held bi-weekly meetings and developed coverage plans to support all areas. Further, the ACC team participated in CCVs and Reality Check preparation meetings, conducted technology checks and inventories, participated in instructional rounds and learning walks, assisted with the benchmark review process, and collaborated with Metro RESA and GADOE during Tier 4 CIT meetings.

UPDATE: There are 198 Academic Coach positions of which 183 are filled, leaving 15 vacancies.

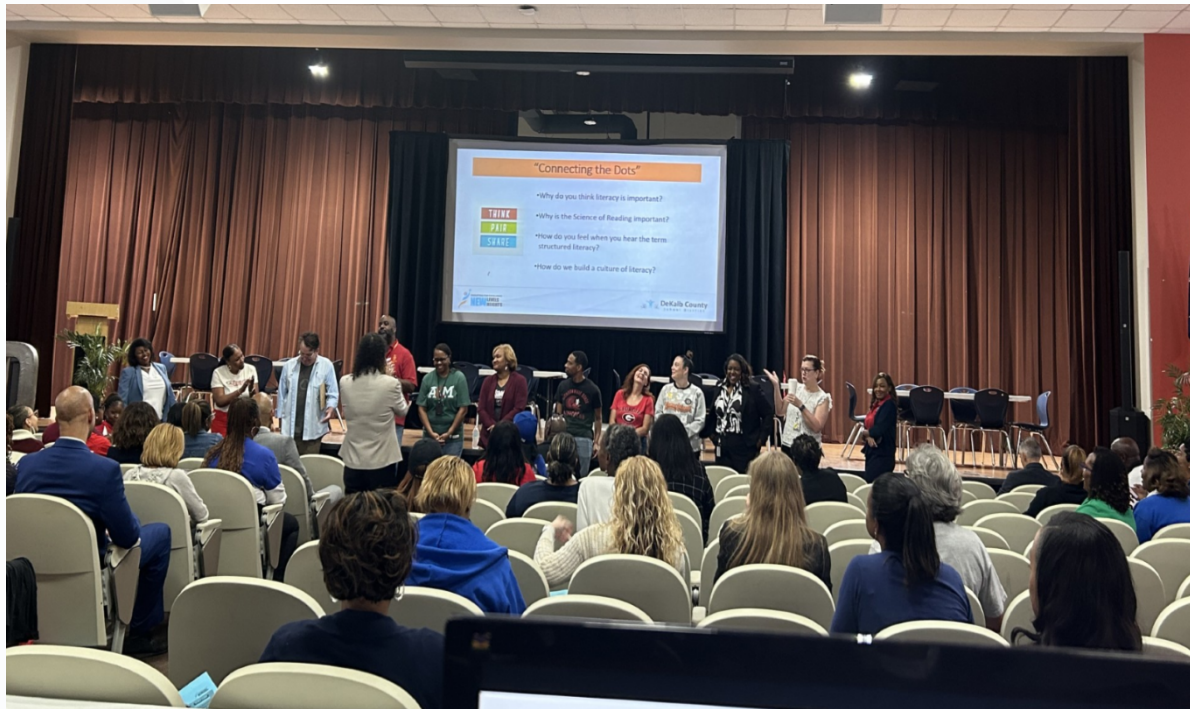
Area	# of Coaches	# of Vacancies	# of New Coaches
Area Elementary 1	5	1	0
Area Elementary 2	16	1	3
Area Elementary 3	18	1	6
Area Middle Schools	40	1	21
Area High Schools	31	3	7
Area Horizon	68	6	40
Area Specialty	5	2	4
Totals	183	15	81

Dr. Sean R. Tartt, Deputy Chief Academic Officer

Principals’ Learning Opportunity

Division of Curriculum and Instruction partnered with the Division of Schools and Leadership to plan engaging sessions aligned with Strategic Goal Area 1: Student Academic Success with Equity and Access. The planned professional learning supported leaders with monitoring instruction. The sessions included the following: Early Intervention Plan (EIP), Georgia Early Literacy Act, MAP Reading Fluency, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), instructional resources (*Wonders*,

myView, Study Sync, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Georgia Inspire/Reveal-Math). During these sessions, leaders explored the resources and engaged in a classroom lesson like a student.



The

Content Collaboration

On October 4th, the Division of Curriculum and Instruction, Division of Schools and Leadership, Division of Support Services, and Division of Student Support Services will hold the monthly Coordinators' Collaboration with coordinators in job-like roles. A significant focus for this meeting will be to unpack language arts and math instructional resources and develop a success plan for the next 30-days. Likewise, this will be an opportunity to capture observational findings from visits conducted in September. Collaborative presentations and activities will come from academic coaches, content coordinators, and professional learning facilitators.

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

The Division of Curriculum and Instruction is currently screening participants for the ChanceLight Program that serves students who are over-aged in grades 5-8. Throughout September, staff members participated in professional learning to ensure alignment to DCSD's standards of practice. In addition, four informational sessions were held to help school level leaders to better understand the purpose, processes, and procedures of the program to ensure proper communication to parents and students. The program, housed at McNair Middle School, is slated to begin serving students October 7, 2024.

Dr. Penny Mosley, Assistant Superintendent P-5

The Division of Curriculum and Instruction provided four principal support sessions. The virtual sessions were designed to assist with the implementation of the Early Intervention Program (EIP). Principals asked questions and received real-time feedback.

Dr. Lynn Angus Ramos, Director, Literacy

Literacy Campaign

The Division of Curriculum and Instruction has been engaged in a regular partnership with the Department of Parent and Family Engagement to plan the first Parent Cafe' on November 7 as well as the fall Parent Literacy Conference on November 23. Using best practices in structured literacy instruction, C&I is planning multiple engaging activities to engage both parents and students in oral language and phonemic awareness. Take-home materials will be provided in English and the top 10 home languages our families speak so that literacy support can continue beyond the school day.

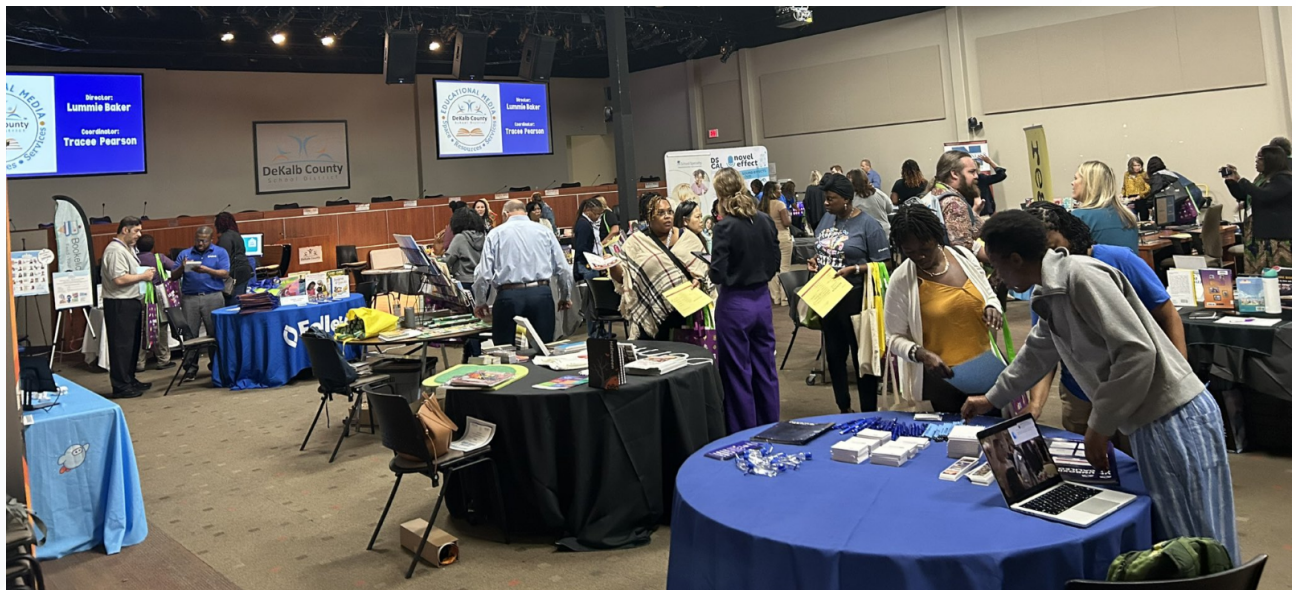
Partnerships

A cross-divisional DCSD team representing Schools and Leadership, Student Support, and Curriculum and Instruction is participating in a year-long partnership with Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI). In September, the team attended Residential I and drafted a theory of action and strategy map around literacy. DCSD will be working in consultancy sessions with Athens-Clarke County School District during the implementation of the literacy plan. Additionally, DCSD has begun a partnership with Let's Read, Georgia! (LRG) through Metro-RESA and is planning training for elementary school teachers to leverage their Tier I resources, *Wonders* and *myView*, to teach structured literacy.



**Lummie Baker, Director, Educational Media and Instructional Materials
Professional Learning – Books and Beyond Vendor Fair**

The Books and Beyond Vendor Fair was held Friday, September 13, 2024. It was an opportunity for teacher-librarians to engage and network with school library media programs and literacy vendors about books, digital resources, virtual instruction, partnerships, professional learning support, and more. In addition to vendors, teacher-librarians also had the opportunity to meet with individuals and/or receive information from departments and other organizations such as CTAE, Department of Family & Community Engagement, Fernbank Science Center, Metro East GLRS, DeKalb Professional Library (Educational Media), DeKalb County Public Library, and Kennesaw State University College of Education.





Training – School Librarian Evaluation Instrument Orientation (SLEI) for New Principals

New principals received School Librarian Evaluation Instrument (SLEI) training, to assess the teacher-librarian and the school library media program. The 10 SLEI standards set expectations for providing an exemplary school library media program. Additionally, it ensures consistency, comparability, and equitable access to the space, resources, and services necessary to provide instructional, extracurricular, and personal literacy support and enrichment.

Training – DeKalb Professional Library and the Department of Human Resources

Members of the Department of Human Resources learned about the resources and services available to all DCSD staff members – teachers, coaches, counselors, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, administrators, and other certified and classified staff. This training was requested by HR to share with prospective candidates during recruitment visits and job fairs. The DeKalb Professional Library's services include:

- Accessing and using the resources to find print and digital information
- Interlibrary loan services to obtain books and articles
- Providing GACE Study Guides for certification assessments

Stephanie Brown-Bryant, *Director, K-12 Teaching and Learning* **English Language Arts - Tier I Resource Training**

Middle and high school English Language Arts teachers across the district have engaged in introductory training to support implementation of our new instructional resources, Study Sync (grades 6-8) and Into Literature (grades 9-12). The newly adopted and purchased resources offer a blend of traditional text with multimedia components such as video lessons and interactive assignments, which helps engage a wide range of learners. The multimedia approach caters to different learning styles and encourages critical thinking and discussion.

Health and Physical Education - Integrating Literacy into Health and Physical Education

The Health and Physical Education Department (HPE) held a professional learning opportunity with secondary HPE department leaders with a focus on Marzano's vocabulary strategies and how they can use it to deepen their students' knowledge of vocabulary words for each unit. The presentation's goal was to highlight innovative strategies for connecting literacy skills with physical education activities. By incorporating interdisciplinary strategies like Marzano's vocabulary techniques, we aim to improve overall literacy while enhancing students' understanding of key concepts in health and physical education.

International Baccalaureate (IB) - IB PYP Coordinators' Collaboration

IB Coordinators from Avondale Elementary, Fernbank Elementary, Midvale Elementary, and Brockett Elementary met to learn more about ELA instructional practices focusing on interdisciplinary methods. During this collaboration, IB Coordinators at the PYP (elementary



level) began linking the new ELA resources into the PYP Programs of Inquiry at each of our DCSD IB elementary schools. This work has great promise for forging meaningful interdisciplinary connections in all grade levels, PreK-5, while also ensuring the robust and effective use of our new literacy resources for our IB elementary scholars.

Social Studies - Social Studies Competitions & Programs

The social studies team has been working closely with teachers and academic coaches to prepare for our upcoming competitions and programs. The Social Studies Fair, National History Day Competition, and Civic Engagement Diploma Seal participant sessions are all underway. Schools are excited about these enrichment opportunities that are available to students. We look forward to seeing the students' hard work and creativity shine as they engage in these enriching experiences and showcase their knowledge and skills.

Visual and Performing Arts

National and Georgia Art Education Association 2024 & 2025 Conferences

Visual and Performing Arts educators are leading the way in both state and national settings. Kendall Siddiqui, Chapel Hill Elementary School, is the recipient of the Georgia Art Education Association 2025 Outstanding Elementary Art Educator award. Dr. Amy Sery, Briarlake Elementary School, A. Denise Griffin, Vanderlyn Elementary School, and Calvester Graham, McNair High School are presenters at the National Art Education Conference in March 2025.

Plains Peanut Festival Postcard Contest Winners "Happy 100th Birthday, President Carter!"

Visual Art students from Peachtree Middle School (Margaret Newton, teacher) and DeKalb School of the Arts (Nicole Jacobs-Licht, teacher) were selected as winners of the 2024 Plains Peanut Festival Postcard Contest "Happy 100th Birthday, President Carter!". We are thrilled to announce that our students were selected from a pool of 4,417 entries submitted by students from across the country! We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments. Their creativity, attention to detail, and thoughtful interpretation of the theme have earned them a well-deserved award!

World Languages - Georgia Seal of Biliteracy

DCSD is proud to announce its fall recipients of the Georgia Seal of Biliteracy. Thirty-eight students across the district received a qualifying score on a world languages Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate (AP/IB) exam and a 3.0 GPA minimum in their ELA classes. This brings our total of 2024 Seal of Biliteracy recipients to 95, including the 67 from the spring.

Doryiane Gunter, Director, CTAE



Professional Learning

CTAE New Teacher Conference - August 28th and 29th CTAE teachers with 0-3 years' experience attended the GA CTAE New Teacher conference. At the conference, teachers received valuable information on enhancing classroom instruction, navigating credentialing and certification requirements, supporting CTSO participation, developing influential advisory committees, and using current technology in CTAE labs.

Student Engagement Activities

CTAE/STEM/Fernbank Science Center Collaboration – September 13, 2024 Robotics teams from Arabia Mountain and Chamblee high school shared STEM connectivity activities with families at the “Transformers One” movie celebration. Drone programming from DeKalb Academy Arts was also shared with families.

GA Technology Student Association (GATSA) Core – September 7th – 9th, 60 DCSD students attended the 2024 Chapter Officer Retreat for Excellence (CORE) in Clayton, GA. Student leaders were provided an opportunity to develop interpersonal and leadership skills to support their work as officers in their local school TSA chapters.

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 September, the Science Center served 5,727 DCSD students in grades PreK-12. Currently 418 DCSD students have participated in single visit programming and 5,309 DCSD students have participated in outreach programming.

DCSD four-year-old scholars attended ScienToTs this month with learning focused on recognizing patterns/characteristics between living and nonliving things. Students had the opportunity to engage in science experiential learning opportunities specifically designed for PreK students. This program supported both general and special education self-contained classrooms.

Professional Learning – School Master Gardener

On September 27, 2024, Fernbank Science Center hosted the School Master Gardner professional development for identified schools. The professional development was designed to support teachers in using outdoor experiential learning to increase learning outcomes in science. Teachers from across the district engaged in learning about composting, soil science, grant writing, and participated in Georgia Organics Farm to School campaign initiative.

Community Engagement/Cross Departmental Collaboration – Transformers One Robotics Celebration



Fernbank Science Center hosted Transformers One Robotics Celebration with the Department of CTAE and Paramount Pictures on September 13, 2024. Teachers, students, and parents had the opportunity to participate in hands-on activities focused on robotics and lunar science. There were approximately 617 visitors that attended the event. Some of the activities provided included VEX Robotics demonstrations facilitated by the Chamblee High School and Arabia Mountain High School robotics teams. The DeKalb Arts Academy also presented at the event with an engaging drone flight simulation.

Partnerships – Captain Planet Foundation Green Heart STEM Challenge/ City of Atlanta's Youth Climate Action Fund Award

Maximo Luciani, of Chamblee High School, was awarded a grant for his Bubbling Creek Erosion Garden Project which was developed during his participation in Fernbank Science Center's implementation of the Green Heart STEM Challenge. As a finalist, Maximo was invited to participate in the DCSD summer camp Idea Incubator where he refined his solution and made an actionable plan. In July, the City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Sustainability and Resilience announced Atlanta's Youth Climate Action Fund. This award was open to Atlanta youth, ages 15-24, to apply for the Bloomberg Philanthropies funded microgrants ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 to help youth develop and deliver their own climate action solutions! The Mayor's Office of Sustainability and Resilience is partnering with 21st Century Leaders, an Atlanta-based nonprofit that has been delivering youth leadership development programming in Georgia for 35 years, to serve as the fiscal sponsor to award the microgrants.

Mayor Andre Dickens Press Release:

<https://www.atlantaga.gov/Home/Components/News/News/15144/672>

Atlanta Youth Climate Action Fund Webpage: <https://www.100atl.com/youth-climate-action-fund>

Georgia Aquarium Partnership

The Georgia Aquarium Partnership kicked off on September 9, 2024, with outreach and virtual visits occurring at Oakcliff Elementary and Avondale Elementary. Instructor-led field trips to the Georgia Aquarium began September 16, 2024 with Henderson Mill Elementary. The partnership served, in the month of September, a total of 33 schools with 3,765 students.

Fernbank Science Center Planetarium and Instructional Technology Upgrades (High Level Priority)

During the month of September, Fernbank Science Center has been engaged in various installations and updates to the exhibit hall, outdoor exhibits and the planetarium. The upgrades include instructional technology and interactive learning experiences for grades K-12. Upon



completion of the installations, we are looking forward to providing new and engaging instructional opportunities for our K-12 students and community stakeholders.

Monique Kimbell, *Director, MTSS*

On September 10th, The MTSS Department completed training on how to support Pre-K students within the MTSS framework. On September 23rd, the team also participated in the Cross-Functional Training with the 504 contacts, LTSE, psychologist and MTSS with support from the Office of the Executive Director Professional Learning. This training focused on everyone's role within the framework and the importance of working collaboratively. The MTSS team is actively working on completing hearing and vision training offered through Frontline to ensure that all students in Tiers 2/3 have hearing screening completed within the first 60 days of school in collaboration with the school nurse and other team members.

School visits in September focused on supporting MTSS Specialists or administrators at Stoneview ES, Lithonia HS, Marbut ES and Princeton ES.

Keatra Wright, *Director, FLEX Academy*

FLEX Academy is excited to have partnered with Area High School and Area Horizon to enroll 339 students into courses needed to fulfill graduation requirements through FLEX Beyond the Day. FLEX Beyond the Day features accelerated paced asynchronous courses designed to give students the opportunity and flexibility to complete graduation requirements. There are 3 separate sessions offered in Fall semester 2024. This program features core academic courses as well as CTAE and World Languages.

FLEX Academy also collaborated with the Department of Exceptional Education and the Department for Student Advancement to provide course enrollment and digital content for our Incarcerated Youth Program. As of September 25, 2024, there are 16 students enrolled.

Dr. Triscilla Weaver, *Chief of Equity*

Throughout the month of September, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Division of the DeKalb County School District (DCSD) has been strengthening its foundations by communicating and executing plans relative to its M.I.R.A.C.L.E.S. priorities and goals. The Equity Department convened the inaugural meetings of two of our district committees: the DCSD Equity Steering Committee and DCSD Consultative Committee. The Steering Committee is comprised of a small group of DCSD district leaders tasked with providing diverse perspectives, guidance, goal alignment, and stakeholder feedback on DEI related plans and initiatives. Similarly, the



Consultative Committee is composed of district leaders who will support these initiatives through advocacy, engagement, and the dissemination of information throughout various departments. In addition, the DEI Division published a request for proposals seeking vendors to conduct a district-wide Equity Audit. This audit will guide the crafting of our equity policy and equity rubric which, upon Board approval, will be the north star of our continued work.

In accordance with our department's M.I.R.A.C.L.E.S. Priorities, our team convened with DCSD principals during their monthly meeting to collect information regarding school-based practices, policies, and procedures related to field trips. We also, in partnership with the Division of Wraparound Services, met with principals in Area High School and Area Horizon to share details regarding the upcoming Infinite Scholars' Scholarship Fair.

Myss Johnson-Jelks, Executive Director - Athletics

Fall sports are in full swing, and we are proud of our teams' accomplishments. I want to take a moment to recognize Lakeside senior Ellie Lenz, who became the all-time leader on the DeKalb homerun list on

Tuesday with her 26th career homer. This achievement is particularly impressive as she rebounds from a broken ankle suffered during basketball practice last year.

We are also in the process of kicking off our Adapted Sports season with the DeKalb Silver Streaks, starting with handball. I have met with the CTAE director and staff to explore ways to enhance Esports in our district. Additionally, meetings have taken place with the Partnerships and Communications team to discuss rebranding and improving coverage of DCSD Athletics. We have also collaborated with Student Support to ensure that coaches receive the necessary training to meet our students' needs. Furthermore, meetings have been held with Operations to discuss the state of our facilities and the upcoming renovations of the field event stations at Godfrey. I have toured each stadium and identified areas of concern.

We are currently reviewing our budget to ensure fiscal responsibility. We are also updating our Athletic Handbooks and Standard Operating Procedures for our department. I work closely with our Director of Athletics; please see below for more information on the items we have been working on.

Brandan Lane, Director - Athletics

The department has had a busy start with new leadership as we work to establish standard operating procedures, expectations, and goals. August has been particularly hectic; my team and I attended over 20 open houses to address athletics-related questions and to show our support.



During the first week of school, I provided support during arrival times at five different schools. Additionally, the Executive Director and I have met with district-partnered companies to ensure smooth operations, reviewing contracts to better understand their offerings and our expectations. We have also facilitated meetings with our stadium managers and coaches to set goals, clarify expectations, and gather essential feedback to enhance the game-day experience and address stadium needs. Furthermore, we have attended football, softball, volleyball, and track events, overseeing the logistics and operations. Our unwavering commitment to excellence and collaboration ensures the best possible outcomes for our stakeholders, students, staff, parents, and community members.

Athletics thrives on collaboration, especially with departments such as Public Safety, Operations and Facilities, and Finance. In our recent meeting with Public Safety, we outlined our expectations for their role during games while also understanding their needs from our department. We conducted safety inspections across all five stadiums to ensure compliance and updated our emergency plans based on their feedback. I also attended training for the Evolv security system, now implemented in all stadiums, which has significantly improved spectator flow and enhanced safety.

We maintain close communication with Operations and Facilities, meeting regularly to discuss short- and long-term goals for our athletic facilities. Our commitment to providing top-quality facilities for our student-athletes is evident. A significant project has been completed, which prepared all softball fields for game-day readiness. This involved trimming grass and trees, laying new dirt, lining the fields, and cleaning trash—work that had not been done in a decade.

In addition, the Executive Director and I met with the finance department to review our budget and ensure efficiency and responsible operations. We discussed aligning financial resources with the athletic department's priorities and goals, fostering transparency in the budgeting process, building trust between departments, identifying cost-saving opportunities, supporting fundraising efforts, and managing potential financial crises. Our commitment to transparency ensures that all stakeholders are well-informed and involved in our financial decisions.

School Innovation

Kina M. Champion, Director

The Museum School of Avondale Estates hosted the first quarterly Charter Schools Collaborative meeting of the 2024-2025 school year on September 3, 2024. Federal Programs attended to provide department updates. The meeting also allowed the School Innovation team to address charter schools' feedback on the draft Qualitative Site Review instrument—a M.I.R.A.C.L.E.S. priority. Additionally, School Innovation assembled the SY24-25 Charter Renewal Review Committee for DeKalb PATH Academy. The department will lead orientations and site visits for



petition evaluators through mid-October. DeKalb PATH Academy will submit its renewal petition on October 17.

The Fall 2024 Principal Advisory Council elections' candidate declaration window closed on September 6, with 509 parent/guardian candidates and 195 teacher candidates. The voting window is September 18-25, 2024. School Innovation will notify candidates of their status and post results on the District website by Friday, September 27. The School Innovation team will host a meet and greet for newly elected and returning PAC members at AIC on October 10. Additionally, the School Innovation Department has been planning and recruiting (1) attendees for Fall 2024 Encore Spotlight School visits, (s) applicants for Spring 2025 Spotlight Schools, and (3) applicants for the SY24-25 Innovative Solutions Lab.

School Innovation has joined the District's Administrative Policy Review Committee. The team's value-add to the committee has been ensuring alignment of DBOE policy revisions to the Strategic Waiver School System (SWSS) contract and sharing policy development best practices learned through existing partnerships with neighboring districts. School Innovation has also established regular meetings with Research, Data, and Evaluation (RDE) and Strategic Planning to ensure alignment of Year 1 implementation of the Strategic Plan and SWSS contract.

Student Assignment

Sarita Smith, *Executive Director*

September was filled with SAP school visits, kick-offs of SAP committee planning and meetings, budget balancing, and planning for district-wide TregoEd support. Our team hired an executive assistant to support SAP operations, bookkeeping, and budget tracking. We received over 300 applications for the

SAP Advisory Committee, and I am proud of how balanced they were by area (North, Central, Southwest, and Southeast). Over 100 people have confirmed their seats, and we are working on establishing the remaining committee members. Our team has planned the first meeting with the help of the planning department and a deep dive into DCSD's historical context, as it relates to SAP.

I am a TregoEd trained facilitator and have been asked to facilitate a few meetings across the district. At this time, I have three meeting requests from various departments. I am excited to welcome our department's executive assistant at the end of September, who will be instrumental in supporting both SAP logistics and our department's financial and planning needs. I was excited to learn more about how to reconcile my budget and ensure my team was allocated correctly.

Student Assignment

Dr. Char-Shenda Covington



The month of September did not disappoint. I presented at the Dunwoody High School Townhall meeting to provide updates on the student assignment project, coupled with school choice information. We hosted the largest district event, with all our schools present. This event required meticulous planning and collaboration throughout our district. Key elements included establishing clear objectives, such as showcasing educational programs, fostering community engagement, and facilitating student recruitment, to align with our superintendent's vision. We used an array of marketing strategies to attract attendees, through various channels such as social media, district mediums, and school networks. The event featured different school performances and networking opportunities, to engage participants and highlight the unique offerings of each school. By addressing these components, organizers created a dynamic and impactful expo that promoted educational excellence and community collaboration. We also shared the kickoff to open enrollment for the 25-26 school year.

Open enrollment for school choice programs is a policy that allows parents to enroll their children in public schools outside of their designated attendance zones, providing greater educational opportunities. We have successfully moved the open enrollment window to better align with the district's financial, planning, and allotment processes. This will allow the district to systematically enhance educational equity, improve academic outcomes, and accommodate family preferences for specific educational environments. We are excited to enable our scholars/families to attend schools that best meet their needs. Open enrollment can lead to more personalized and effective educational experiences for all of DeKalb's scholars.

Student Mentorship & Partnerships

Dr. Loukisha Walker, Executive Director

The Student Mentorship and Partnership department has assembled an awesome group of community members to form our MBK and OSK Advisory Boards. We know that advisory boards offer benefits such as diverse perspectives, access to expertise, expanded networks, accountability, objectivity, and inspiration. Our first meeting is scheduled for the week of September 23rd.

Speaking of mentoring, I have gathered individuals with varied experience to review our districtwide mentoring framework draft. Once their review and feedback are complete, edits will be made to submit for implementation. The framework uses essential skills needed as themes that include 21st Century Skills and employability skills. Students will be able to engage in conversations and activities to reiterate the monthly focus.

FACE Advocates have been rock stars in our schools thus far. With my assistance, FACE Advocates have developed an action plan that outlines necessary steps to ensure they are offering the targeted support needed to help students achieve their goals. At this point in the school year,

they have had Meet and Greets with parents, set short- and long-term goals with both students and parents, monitored their progress and reported 4.5-week progress data to my department. I will continue to develop appropriate action steps for monitoring and provide professional development that addresses their needs.

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. The two key objectives that will drive the work of the Division of Information and Instructional Technology are:

- Enhanced Digital Literacy: We will foster a culture of digital literacy by providing comprehensive teacher training, promoting responsible technology use, and exposing students to emerging technologies such as AI, AR, and VR.
- Secure and Accessible Digital Environment: We will invest in robust IT infrastructure, implement preventative maintenance programs, and enforce stringent cybersecurity measures to create a safe and accessible digital learning environment for all students.





Cybersecurity is a cornerstone of our district's digital literacy and digital environment objectives. As we prepare activities to support Cybersecurity Awareness Month in October, it's important to highlight cybersecurity's critical role in achieving our strategic objectives of enhanced digital literacy and an accessible and secure digital learning environment. The departments in the Division of Information and Instructional Technology play key roles:

- **Infrastructure and Operations:** Our infrastructure and operations team tirelessly maintains the integrity and security of our network infrastructure and end-user devices, ensuring that our systems are protected from unauthorized access and cyber threats.
- **Enterprise Applications and Data Services:** The enterprise applications and data services team is responsible for protecting sensitive data and ensuring the security of our applications. Data governance and application vetting ensure only approved and secure applications are deployed within our district.
- **Instructional Technology:** Our instructional technology team is vital in collaborating with all DIIT departments to educate our students and staff about cybersecurity best practices. The "Human Firewall" poses the most significant threat, and we are empowering our community to become responsible digital citizens.
- **IT Security:** Our IT security team is at the forefront of protecting our district from cyber threats. They monitor our networks for suspicious activity, investigate security incidents, and continuously work to implement proactive measures to strengthen our defenses.

By prioritizing cybersecurity, we're safeguarding our district's valuable assets and fostering a safer, more secure learning environment for our students and staff. While we celebrate Cybersecurity Awareness Month in October, our commitment to cybersecurity is unwavering throughout the year.

Dr. Kermit Belcher, Deputy Chief Technology Officer

The DeKalb County Schools Division of Information and Instructional Technology (DIIT) has actively supported school device coordinators through surveys, emails, and virtual meetings, ensuring everyone is well-informed and equipped. The team communicated the district's Always Learning shared responsibility model to principals, enhancing our collaborative efforts. The physical security team implemented an intrusion alarm and door access system at the William Bradley Bryant Center and streamlined access by consolidating two systems into one, making it easier with just one badge needed. Additionally, the network team completed vital network infrastructure work, including a proof of concept for network switches and wireless access points, and continued our network cabling project at multiple locations. We're excited about these advancements that enhance security and connectivity across our district!

Natalie Terrell, Manager of Project Management Office

The Division of Information and Instructional Technology Project Management Office continued to do site visits at HR, Finance, Public Safety, Student Support Services, and DIIT. As previously

mentioned, the purpose of the visits was to get a more detailed view of the types of records in each area. The team has provided a strategic roadmap, started building the project requirements from the onsite assessments, determined the phasing approach to this program, and has met with the legal officer and team regarding the records retention policy for the district. The team is chugging along to move this program forward and to meet some of the initial timeline.






Dr. Kyia Clark, Executive Director of Information and Innovation

The DeKalb County Schools Instructional Technology team is excited to announce that the 2024 IGNITE U Pathways Professional Learning series is now available to all DCSD educators. In the first phase of the Technology Integration Checks (TICs), teachers will set personalized learning goals to guide their growth and development in technology integration for the 2024-2025 school year.

We are also pleased to share that we have finalized the AI Awareness Professional Learning Module and are ready to launch this course for our district employees. Enrollment will begin on September 23, 2024.

Additionally, we celebrate the successful completion of our second monthly Tech Café, with approximately 180 stakeholders participating in these virtual sessions. In the first session, we provided parents with an overview of the DCSD ecosystem and guidance on accessing resources to support learning at home. The second session built on this foundation, offering valuable insights into cyber safety and practical tips for ensuring a secure and responsible online experience for their learners.

Lastly, we are excited to announce the finalization of the 2024 templates for the Digital Dreamers Hub, and we are currently connecting all students to the digital course. We're also eager to introduce our newest initiative, "Tech for Littles: DeKalb's Byte-Sized Brilliance," a unique technology competition for our youngest learners in Kindergarten through Second Grade. This event will be held at Rockbridge Elementary School on Saturday, November 16, 2024, from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM, providing students the opportunity to showcase their skills in Digital Robotics Design, Video Game Production, Multimedia Apps, and Graphic Design.




DeKalb County
SCHOOL DISTRICT

TECH FOR LITTLES

“DEKALB’S BYTE SIZED BRILLIANCE”

Join us for an exciting technology competition designed especially for K-2nd grade students!

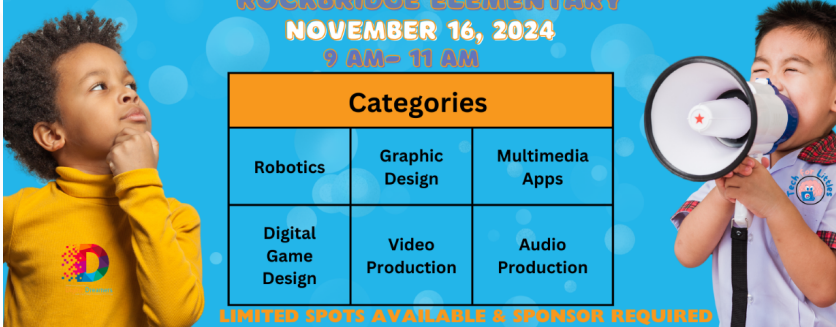
SCAN HERE



ROCKBRIDGE ELEMENTARY
NOVEMBER 16, 2024
9 AM – 11 AM

Categories		
Robotics	Graphic Design	Multimedia Apps
Digital Game Design	Video Production	Audio Production

LIMITED SPOTS AVAILABLE & SPONSOR REQUIRED



Glenn Melendez, Executive Director of Enterprise Applications and Data Services

The DeKalb County Schools Division of Information and Instructional Technology (DIIT) continues progressing with the discovery phase of a comprehensive website modernization project – aimed at elevating the district’s online presence and strengthening communication with students, families, and community members. The district continues to evaluate functionality that will enhance community engagement and ensure the website meets the evolving needs of our families. While requirements are being gathered, DIIT is collaborating with the Division of Communication to gather community input to inform required functionality.

The Division of Information and Instructional Technology continues to refine protocols for integrating new technologies into its digital ecosystem. During this reporting period, the division has begun developing a rubric for assessing new technology platforms. The division has also drafted a proposed workflow that will automate the review of newly integrated technology into the district's technology footprint.

Maintaining our commitment to prioritizing data security across the district, the Information and Instructional Technology division has developed a strategic, high-level framework to drive robust data governance practices. This framework will be a critical guide in reinforcing and scaling our ongoing focus on data governance, ensuring alignment with best practices.

Eric Logan, Director of Information and Network Security

The Division of Information and Instructional Technology Project Management Office continued the launch of the Cyber Champions program, which was announced during August's Parents Tech Café. We have received a few applications, and one of the initial Champions will give a short presentation during the September Parents Tech Café.



The ethical use of AI in literature and beyond

Rafa, Senior at Druid Hills High School
Avid Tech Enthusiast, Cyber Champion

SIGN IN Thanks for Joining Us! Please sign-in using the following link: <https://bit.ly/TechCafe24-25> SIGN IN

Preparations are being made to observe Cybersecurity Awareness Month in October to ensure that students, teachers, and other employees are security conscious and act safely online. Throughout the month, we will provide resources and information to promote security awareness. Even the smallest of actions can have huge and far-reaching consequences.

We're also making significant strides in enhancing our district's information security. By restructuring our security team, fostering collaboration across departments, and investing in key resources, we're moving towards a more proactive approach to protecting our students' data and ensuring the overall security of our systems. This will strengthen our defenses against potential threats and create new opportunities for professional growth within our team.

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

Grand “Aunt” at Peachcrest Elementary School Grandparents Day!



On September 13, 2024, the Chief of Wrap Around Services, Dr. Kishia K. Towns, served as the “grandaunt” to Abdel. Abdel, a first grader at Peachcrest Elementary School, was a delightful student who likes to play ROBLOX and Hide and Seek in the neighborhood. His favorite superhero is Captain America, and his favorite color is blue. Abdel enjoyed lunch with Dr. Towns, and they ate cookies and cake for dessert. Grandparents Day was a huge success and next year will be even better. Thanks Counselor Tijuana Lewis for the invitation. Go Peachcrest!

“Disconnect to Reconnect” in DeKalb County School District

The Division of Wrap Around Services in collaboration with School Leadership are proud to announce the “*Disconnect to Reconnect*” initiative. This innovative program aims to empower our educators and staff by encouraging a mindful approach to technology use, fostering deeper connections, and enhancing productivity. Throughout this initiative, we will explore strategies to balance digital engagement with mindful disconnection, promoting well-being and creativity in our educational environment. Together, we will embark on a journey to harness technology effectively while nurturing meaningful human connections. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. High School

has led this initiative, and we want to recognize Mr. Michael Alexander, Principal, for his commitment to this effort.



Christopher Key, Executive Director of Student Advancement

The Student Advancement Department focuses on providing awareness, access, and resources to students to assist them with graduating on time and having a post-secondary plan. The primary goal is to provide support that will lead to increased student engagement, increase graduation rate, enhance employability skills, and enhance career outcomes.

[Post-Secondary P.U.S.H. Plan Comprehensive Implementation Manual](#)

DeKalb County School District participated in the Probe College Fair, hosted by Georgia Piedmont Technical College on September 13, 2024. This was a District-wide event focused on twelfth grade scholars. In attendance were 85 colleges and military branches including the Army, Navy, National Guard, and Air Force. DeKalb County High Schools in Attendance: 23 Approx. 819 student attendees.



The Student Advancement Department would like to thank the Transportation Department Director Bernardo Brown, Transportation Manager Nadine Henry, Transportation Supervisor, Marilyn Mixon for their teamwork and amazing collaboration. 2 schools did not have buses to attend the Probe College Fair after 11:00am on the day of the event. Our team was able to plan an emergency bus route to ensure the students could attend the College Fair! Great work!



[Naviance Teacher Training September 20th](#)

[Naviance Teacher Training Manual](#)

Student Engagement Coaches

Druid Hills High School Prep Academy for Check and Connect has created a bi-weekly program for the 40 caseload students. As part of this program, each student has received a book bag filled with essential school supplies, along with breakfast provided by our generous community partner, McDonald's. This support marks the beginning of a transformative experience for our students. The goal is to provide tailored support, valuable resources, and ongoing encouragement. Student Engagement Coaches are positioning students to achieve their full potential in their academic endeavors and personal growth.



School Counseling Office:

September is Suicide Prevention Month! September SEL Newsletter as submitted to the Principal Communication on Wednesday Sept 4. [Link to September SEL & Personal Wellness Newsletter](#)
Wellness Wednesday Post focused on Suicide Prevention and Awareness. [DCSD Facebook Post on September 4 2024.](#)

Suicide Prevention Newsletter was created a distributed to Student Athletes on Suicide Prevention.

[Suicide Prevention in Student Athletics September 2024.](#) DCSD has submitted 102 Georgia Student Superintendent Council Applications.



**Denise Revels, Director of Wrap Around and Support Services
School Social Work**

September is Attendance Awareness Month!

This year, our Attendance Awareness campaign focuses on the theme **Triple A**, highlighting the critical pillars of **Attending School, Applying Yourself, and Achieving Success**. Led by a dedicated team of **7 District Attendance Specialists**, the initiative emphasizes the role of consistent and timely attendance in creating a positive, safe, and academically enriching environment for all students.

Why Attendance Matters: Regular attendance is a cornerstone of student success. Students who attend school consistently are more engaged, better prepared, and positioned to reach their full academic and personal potential. By promoting timely attendance, we aim to foster a culture of accountability and commitment, ensuring that every student can thrive.

Key Activities: Throughout the school year, we will implement various activities and events to raise awareness and encourage participation from students, parents, and the wider community:

1. **Solicitor General Tours** – Providing students and families with insights into the legal ramifications of chronic absenteeism and the role of local authorities in supporting positive school attendance.
2. **Juvenile Court TAPP (Truancy and Attendance Prevention Program) Meetings** – Collaborating with Juvenile Court Probation to address attendance issues, offering preventive interventions, and ensuring that families understand the importance of regular school attendance.
3. **EveryDay Lab Trainings** – Engaging school staff in virtual and hands-on trainings focused on effective attendance tracking, early intervention strategies, and data-driven solutions to reduce chronic absenteeism.

4. **School and Community Events** – Hosting events to bring together families, educators, and local stakeholders to discuss and support efforts around school attendance. These events have included guest speakers, and resources to help families overcome barriers to consistent attendance.

Our Vision for Success: By engaging students, parents, educators, and community partners in these activities, we aim to create a culture of success that starts with attendance. We believe that when students **attend school regularly, apply themselves**, and receive the support they need, they are on a clear path to **achieving success** both academically and personally.

Fairington ES Block Party Solicitor General Tour at Snapfinger ES



John Lewis ES Attendance Round-UP and Southwest DeKalb talks attendance at Curriculum Night



Dr. Darnell Logan, Director of Student Relations
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

Director of Student Relations: Dr. Darnell Logan

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 detailing our support and partnerships for September 2024.

The PBIS Cohort 9 Schools completed their **Tier I System Principal's Overview Training** (Wednesday, September 4, 2024). This training provides an overview of the Georgia Department of Education's (GaDOE) new Whole Child Supports Model, which integrates the MTSS and PBIS frameworks. The model requires schools to establish a Tier 1 Systems Team that represents all areas of the Whole Child: academics, behavior, mental health and well-being, attendance, and school climate.

- Austin Elementary School
- Bethune Middle School
- Dunwoody Elementary School
- Oak Grove Elementary School
- Rock Chapel Elementary School
- Stone Mountain High School
- Stephenson Middle School

The PBIS District Coordinator, Brandy Woolridge, and PBIS District Coach, Kimmie Pryor, attended **Metro RESA's Whole Child Supports Regional Meeting** on Thursday, September 5, 2024, along with representatives from the Wrap Around Student Support Services and Teaching and Learning. The meeting is designed to foster collaboration and share best practices across districts to support integrated of the Whole Child Support initiatives in academics, behavior, mental health and well-being, and attendance.

On Monday, September 9, 2024, Brandy Woolridge, PBIS District Coordinator, met with Monique Kimber, MTSS Director, to discuss the **new GaDOE MTSS-PBIS Model** to support the Whole Child.



A plan was developed to meet with executive leaders from the Division of Wrap Around Services and the Division of Curriculum and Instruction to integrate Tier I system initiatives in academics, behavior, well-being, and attendance.

The PBIS District Team attended **Metro RESA’s Restorative Conference Training** on September 10-11, 2024. Restorative Conference Training equips participants with the skills and strategies to facilitate restorative conversations between individuals involved in conflicts or harmful incidents. This training focuses on fostering accountability, promoting understanding, and repairing relationships by allowing all parties to share their perspectives in a structured, respectful environment. Participants learn how to guide discussions that address the root causes of conflict and create a pathway for reconciliation and positive outcomes.

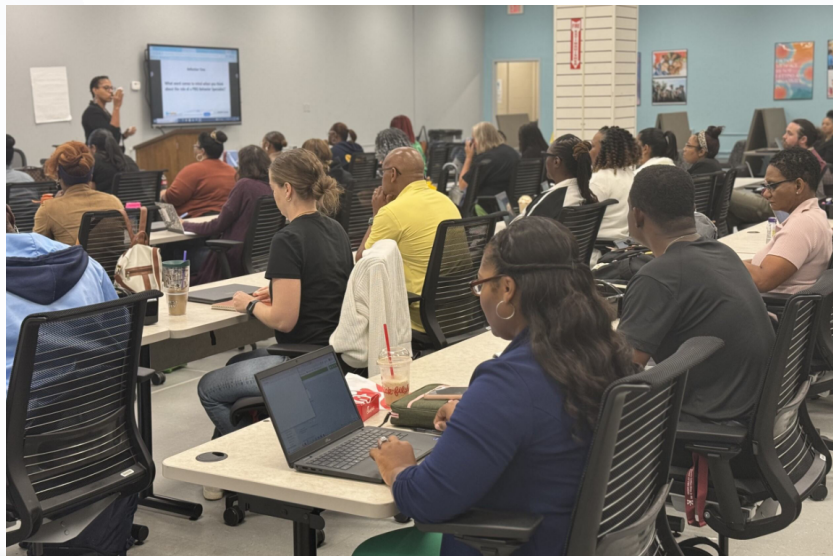
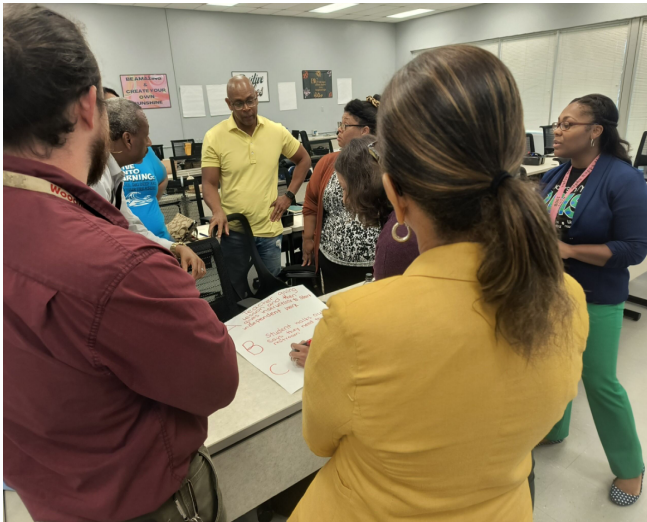
Dr. Darnell Logan, Director of Student Relations, and Brandy Woolridge, PBIS District Coordinator, met with Dr. Kishia Towns, Chief of Wrap Around Services, Area Superintendents, and Executive Administrators on Thursday, September 12, 2024, to review the new **ISS Intervention Program Manual for feedback and approval**.

PBIS District Coordinator Brandy Woolridge met with school administrators for their **Principal’s PBIS Check-In Meeting**. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the PBIS School Team’s retraining schedule, differentiated coaching supports, and sustainability plan to improve the school’s fidelity of PBIS implementation.

Principal’s PBIS Check-In Introductory Meeting			
Date	School	Participants	Artifacts Link
September 12, 2024	Stone Mountain Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marshea Warner (Principal) Eric Robinson (Assistant Principal) 	Principal's PBIS Check-In Meeting Presentation

The PBIS District Team developed a training curriculum for PBIS Behavior Specialists, offered to them on Friday, September 13, 2024. During the training session, participants learned about the form and function of behaviors, the Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence (ABC) model, data-driven decision-making, problem-solving, evidence-based intervention strategies, and collaboration with the PBIS School Leadership Team. Participants also learned techniques for addressing challenging behaviors, promoting positive student outcomes, and using data tools to monitor progress.

PBIS Behavior Specialist Training Data			
Date	# of Schools	# of Participants	Artifacts
Friday, September 13, 2024	34	46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Presentation • Sign-In link • Evaluation Feedback link



The PBIS District Team conducted the **New and Veteran PBIS School Coaches Meeting** on Wednesday, September 18, 2024. Both PBIS School Coaches and PBIS Data Analysts were invited to attend. During the professional learning session, participants learned about the role of the PBIS Data Analyst, gained knowledge on how to drill down and analyze SWIS data, reviewed the district's vision for improving PBIS implementation, explored PBIS assessments and coaching tools, became familiar with the PBIS End-of-Year Recognition Levels, and enhanced their understanding of PBIS implementation best practices. The Student Relations PBIS District Team partnered with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) to provide training on the new 2024/2025 PBIS Recognition Criteria, and Metro RESA trained participants on SWIS drill down and solution development to support data-based decision-making.

New and Veteran PBIS School Coaches Meeting Data			
Date	# of Schools	# of Participants	Artifacts
Wednesday, September 18, 2024	40	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Presentation • Sign-in Collaborator's link Evaluation Results





The PBIS District Coordinator, Brandy Woolridge, conducted **Principal’s 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.

Principal’s PBIS Check-In Meeting Data		
Dates	Schools	Participants
Thursday, September 12, 2024	Stone Mountain Middle	Marshea Warner (Principal) Eric Robinson (Assistant Principal)
Tuesday, September 17, 2024	Murphey Candler Elementary	Marsha Sears (Principal)
Tuesday, September 17, 2024	Sequoyah Middle	Sedrick Anthony (Principal) Kwame Hodge (PBIS School Coach)
Tuesday, September 17, 2024	DeKalb Alternative	Terrance Harvey (Principal)
Tuesday, September 17, 2024	Stone Mill Elementary	Alethea Mack (Principal)
Friday, September 20, 2024	Towers High	Tiffany Sims (Principal)
Friday, September 20, 2024	Peachcrest Elementary	Stephany Smith (Principal)
Friday, September 20, 2024	Avondale Elementary	Candace Sagers (Principal)
Friday, September 20, 2024	Freedom Elementary	Sabrina McCombs (Principal)

The following PBIS trainings were scheduled for September 2024, after the Academic Report submission date of Monday, September 23, 2024.

The PBIS Team will facilitate Tier I System Team Readiness Training for PBIS Cohort 9 schools on Tuesday, September 24, 2024. 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 Wednesday, September 25, 2024, the PBIS Team will conduct PBIS Day 2 Training for Tier 3 PBIS schools. The goal is to enhance the fidelity of PBIS implementation and improve school culture and climate for both students and staff. Building on the progress made in the PBIS Day 1 training session, Day 2 will guide the PBIS school team in realigning key features of the PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI), including behavior definitions, discipline procedures, classroom procedures, professional development, faculty involvement, data-based decision-making, and more.

In collaboration with the Division of Wrap Around Services, the Student Relations PBIS District Team has partnered with Metro RESA to offer “Empowering Educators: Mastering Essential Classroom Practices Training” on Thursday, September 26, 2024. This districtwide training is designed to equip Pre-K through 12th grade teachers and ISS Paraprofessionals with effective strategies centered around five essential classroom practices: building relationships, classroom structure and teaching, active engagement, responding to appropriate behavior, and responding to inappropriate behavior. Throughout the training session, participants will engage in hands-on activities and collaborative discussions to solidify their understanding and application of these practices.