

## **District Operations Report Document - August**

### **Dr. Tasha Mills-Davis , *Chief Human Resources Officer***

The Human Resources Department met to discuss Phase II of the HR Assessment Action Plan with IBEX, focusing on optimizing HR processes. The plan includes training in customer service and effective communication to begin September. The HR and Finance teams, along with the Superintendent, participated in a Kepner-Tregoe Ed training to enhance collaboration and decision-making across departments.

### **Jason E. Kennedy, *Deputy Chief Human Resources***

The HR department recently implemented training registration for Central Office staff on the new Applicant Selection and Interview Process, ensuring that organizational leaders are ready for the updated hiring process. In collaboration with Public Safety, we established a new agreement with GBI and GAPS Fingerprinting, which will streamline criminal record checks for applicants.

The Employee Relations Investigation and Complaint team, aligned with the MIRACLES Goals, has conducted Code of Ethics training at various school staff meetings, including a session scheduled for September 11, 2024. They have consulted with the Legal Team to ensure compliance with District, State, and Federal guidelines concerning employee discipline and complaints. Additionally, the team is ensuring that the Progressive Discipline Process is followed for employee misconduct cases in the 2024-2025 school year.

### **Tracy Harris, *Interim Director of Employment Services***

The Employment Service Division in Human Resources has made significant progress towards achieving the MIRACLES (Making Improvements in Retention and Customer Learning Experiences) goals set by the team. Recently, the team underwent training with the Department of Educational Media to explore the resources available for teachers preparing for the GACE (Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators) exam. The information provided during the training will have a direct and substantial impact on teacher retention. Within the next two weeks, the Human Resources Department will release its first outward-facing newsletter, updating both internal and external stakeholders on changes in compensation, benefits, upcoming events, available training sessions, and more.

### **Chuck Nwagwu, *Director of Total Rewards***

The HR Compensation Team has been dealing with the paycheck error that impacted a significant number of our employees financially on the 8/30/2024 pay date. The team met and worked with all impacted employees to resolve all their concerns and ensured that all employees who did not receive their paycheck or received an incorrect paycheck were taken care of. This process was a joint effort between HR Compensation and Finance. The Compensation and Employment Services teams have ensured that all Personnel Action Entries (PAE) are

processed successfully so that situations of this magnitude do not become a norm. Going forward, we have instituted a workflow and audit process that will minimize the likelihood of any future pay errors.

The job description process is currently going through the process of gathering existing job descriptions and comparing what we have to all our current 'active' jobs/roles with incumbents. Our next step in this project is to begin working with the departments to write job descriptions that we do not have. At the end of this project, we will have a job description for every active job/role within DCSD that will be accessible to all internal staff.

**Janitrea R. Sebree-Kelly, *Director of Human Resources Information Systems***

The HRIS team has participated in a few initiatives that have assisted with meeting the needs of the HR Assessment, improved payroll processing, and overall team forward movement. Continued systematic auditing of the Munis platform and its connections to employee data has been the basis of the work being done. Through this work, FY2025 salaries have now been applied to all employees, and the first steps of the September 13, 2024, payroll are moving forward as planned. We have also begun to research how to improve other processes that support the Division of Human Resources and the school district. Streamlining the Employment Verification process and discovering the paperless tools to do so have been the highlights of this work. The outcome of the discovery will become a milestone to what this process will look like in the future.

**Kismet Sims, *Performance Evaluations Coordinator***

I'm excited to share the impressive progress and achievements of the Evaluations Team thus far:

1. **Comprehensive Evaluations Calendar:** We have successfully developed a detailed evaluations calendar for the entire district. This calendar has been instrumental in ensuring that all evaluation processes are on schedule and that the district maintains a consistent pace throughout the year.
2. **Training Initiatives:**
  - **Assistant Principals:** I have conducted training sessions for 29 Assistant Principals on the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES). This training has equipped them with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively evaluate their teaching staff.
  - **Principals:** Similarly, I have provided training for 26 Principals on the Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES). This has enabled them to better support and evaluate their leadership teams.
3. **DKES Orientation:** I have created and implemented a DKES Orientation specifically tailored for Central Office Employees and other non-instructional leaders. This orientation is designed to familiarize them with the evaluation processes and ensure they are aligned with district goals.
4. **Current Focus and Challenges**

- a. **System Integration:** One of our significant challenges has been ensuring that all individuals are properly entered into the evaluation system. I am actively working on developing alternative solutions to streamline this process and make it more seamless.
  
- b. **Promoting Feedback:** We are placing a strong emphasis on the importance of feedback within the evaluation process. I'm collaborating with various departments and divisions to highlight how effective feedback can drive growth and improvement, aligning with our evaluation objectives.
- c. **Welcome Dr. Corey Stegall:** I am excited to introduce my new partner, Dr. Corey Stegall, who has joined the Evaluations Team. Dr. Stegall brings a wealth of knowledge and experience as a building leader and has already begun making a positive impact. His enthusiasm for this new learning opportunity is evident, and I am thrilled to have him on board.

**Eric Hilton, *Office of Legal Affairs***

The Legal Department High Level Priorities for the month included refining and updating the contract administration process. This also is a Miracles Goal for the Legal Department and is in coordination with Finance and Operations. The focus is on recommendations for appropriate signing authority and recommended updates and changes to the contract administration process. The team has met on three occasions. We also have updated the Legal Request Review form and created a checklist for Board agenda items to ensure consistency. Legal Requests for Board Agenda items and contract review are emailed to the legal department with a Legal Request form or submitted through DocExpress. The Contracts administration team meets weekly and the District Attorneys meet bi-weekly to discuss active matters and related items. With regard to professional learning opportunities, continuing education courses have been approved for the attorneys in the DCSD Legal Department. The legal department interviewed applicants for the position of Legal Counsel, Contract Administration and Legal Counsel, Exceptional Education. We are expected to make hiring decisions shortly.

**Marissa Key, Esq., *Executive Legal Director, Employee Relations & Title IX Coordinator***

Continued work on Administrative and Board policies as well as monitoring of developments in the area of Title IX. The expected decision related to the applicable Title IX rules remains pending and related polices, are not expected to be amended until further direction is provided by the Court.

**Glinton Darien, Esq., *Legal Director, Risk Management & Workers Compensation***

The Risk Management Team met with Brentwood who is our plan administrator regarding the renewal and expectations. Following our discussions, we recommend proceeding with renewal.

**District Finance Report Document**  
**Byron Schueneman, *Chief Financial Officer***

Finance has been busy during August on many fronts. Now that the fiscal year has begun our budgeting department released the FY2025 board approved budget into our ERP system allowing funding access to

divisions and schools. We have also collaborated with Human Resources and moved all salaries over to the new FY2025 salary schedules. This is the first time in recent history that 12-month employees received the step increase and cost of living increase on their first check for the fiscal year!

The finance reporting team submitted two state required reports during September.

1. CS1 – Employee Salary and Travel Detail (Aug 15<sup>th</sup>)
2. FY2024 DE-046B Final – FY24 Final Budget to GaDOE (Aug 31<sup>st</sup>)

Ensuring timely and accurate reporting is at the top of our priority list and is the minimum requirement to obtain the “Distinction Award for Excellent Financial Reporting.

Over the course of the next month we will be working on closing out all purchase orders, pending journal activity and finalizing any other remaining FY24 transactions so that we can officially close and report on FY24.

Finance has many miracles in the works. A few noteworthy miracles include:

1. Implementing Munis’ Financial Reporting Module – this will assist in the monthly financial reporting to the board as well as provide uniformity to the annual financial statements. The goal is to have this implemented by December 31<sup>st</sup>.
2. Engaging “Class Wallet” - a platform to allocate supply money for teachers to use in an e-procurement marketplace. The goal is to have this in place for FY26.
3. Audit and Reconcile Position Control – Now that we are fully in Munis for payroll, we can get the full functionality out of Munis’ Position Control tool. This will assist us in providing accurate and up to date information on positions that are budgeted, filled positions and vacant positions. The goal is to have this completed and in use by December 31<sup>st</sup>.
4. Roll out Time and Attendance – utilize the clocks on the wall and other tools to capture attendance and extra activity. This will be rolled out to all DCSD locations by the end of the fiscal year.

**Lauren Scott, *Deputy Chief Financial Officer***

**Payroll:** Our second Munis payroll cycle for all 14,000 employees is complete! The District continues to work with our vendor and the Implementation Team to ensure an accurate and timely payroll. Once fully

implemented, the Munis system will help us to streamline our processes and increase efficiencies within the District. It will also empower employees to manage their personal and payroll data within the Employee Self-Service (ESS).

**Regina Bagley, Director of Budget**

**Allovue Manage** – Area Superintendents were introduced to Allovue Manage. An interactive training session for Area Superintendents is scheduled for September 18, 2024.

**Audit and Reconcile Position Control** – The audit of positions will have a four-pronged approach: Overfill, Assignment, Budget Verification, Reconciliation Results. The interface of Allovue Manage has produced a report indicating position over-fill. The position control team will begin reconciling the overfill list on September 11, 2024.

**Lance McConkey, Comptroller**

**FY23 Audit:** The Business Service teams continue to work collaboratively with the M&J audit team to finalize the FY23 audit.

**FY24 Year-End Close & Financial Statement Preparation:** The Business Service teams are completing necessary tasks to ensure the accounting records are prepared for the planned year-end close, scheduled for the week of September 16-20, 2024. Additionally, some financial statement preparation tasks are underway and/or have been completed. The focus on these tasks aligns with Finance Mircale – Distinction Award for Excellent Financial Reporting.

**Financial Reporting Procedure Updates:** FY25 started with a rebuilt Financial Reporting team of highly skilled, dedicated employees. Already, the team has improved and/or implemented procedures and communication protocols that have improved financial reporting. Currently, the team is collaborating with Federal Programs weekly in preparation for 2024 grant completion reports, due October 30, 2024. Also, the General Billing module is being implemented to track federal revenues, which aligns with Finance Mircale – General Billing – Federal Programs. Finally, the Business Service teams will receive training over the MUNIS ACFR module in October 2024, which aligns with Finance Mircale – Financial Reporting Module.

**School House Accounting Procedure Updates:** FY25 started with all schools fully functional in the MUNIS Student Activity Module. Also, the After-School programs started the school year with full abilities to take online and/or in-person payments with the new MySchoolBucks software that is integrated with MUNIS. The Local School Accounting team continues to brainstorm new and improved procedures to best assist the School Bookkeepers. Also, Bookkeeper feedback from the collaborative meeting held by Dr. Horton this summer is being considered. A pilot project across 30 schools will implement Bank of America check scanners, which will improve deposit procedures and allow quicker access to funds. The scanners have been delivered to 30 schools and the goal is for training and implementation to be completed by September 30, 2024. Finally, the Local School Accounting team, along with other Finance departments hold a monthly, week-long Finance Academy for new Bookkeepers.

**Dr. Milton Hall, Director of Allotments**

**District Balancing** – District Balancing was completed on Day 13 following the 10-Day Warm Body Count and emailed to Dr. Bernetta Jones for distribution to the Superintendent and District Leaders. The report identifies schools that are slated to lose and gain in the area of Instruction and Instructional Support. Stemming from the

submission of this report, Dr. Horton has asked that staffing remain at all Horizon schools and that we move forward with staffing moves and additions for all others.

**School Level Support and Collaboration** – With District Balancing being complete, Milton Hall, Director of Allotments, Dr. Collins, Leadership and Development, Sherika McCutcheon, Manager II – Allotments and David Yoke, Manager II – Planning have been meeting with schools slated to lose and/or gain staffing to ensure that the Master Schedule is revised in a manner that allows maximization of state funding as well as ensuring that the scheduled courses fall within the minimum and maximum class sizes so that funding is not negatively impacted.

**Early Intervention Program (EIP) Support and Collaboration** - The Office of Allotments has been collaborating with the Division of Curriculum and Instruction on implementing the Innovative delivery model in our district. This work will positively impact DeKalb County School District's Program Participation and increase the amount of available funds to our district. We have conducted one virtual meeting and two in-person meetings to develop strict guidance and support for those schools electing to implement the model. Meanwhile, Milton Hall, Director of Allotments, Dr. Collins, Director - Leadership and Development, and Sherika McCutcheon, Manager II – Allotments have been meeting with Principals and scheduling Assistant Principals assessing school data along with available staffing to assist them in selecting EIP models that will best meet the needs of students and maximize EIP funding for their buildings. The initiative has been busy and intentional to complete this work before the deadline of October 2, 2024, FTE Count Day.

**Carla Smith**

**Vendor Services Executive Level/Executive Administrative Assistant Procurement Training**

In support of procurement excellence, the Vendor Service Team held a procurement and contracts training session during the first week of August. The session was designed for Division Chiefs, Directors, Executive Directors, and Executive Administrative Assistants. In detail, we discussed vendor registration, requisition entry, purchase order processing, contract management, and accounts payable procedures.

**eProcurement Marketplace Implementation**

The testing platform for our eProcurement Marketplace is up and running. The marketplace will be used by over 300 purchasers in the district, including every staff member authorized to purchase goods for schools, centers, and departments district-wide. We currently have 10 vendors in the marketplace's test environment.

**Finance Wednesday Refresher Session for August**

These sessions are held on Wednesdays for bookkeepers, administrative assistants, and any district employee interested in staying on top of their game. The Office of Federal Programs, Human Resources and DIIT all held sessions on this TEAMS platform to share vital information for their divisions. We have over 100 SuperStars in attendance.

**Mr. Erick Hofstetter , *Chief Operating Officer***

Please click the link below to access the June/July newsletter.

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAGMb0zVNec/2H\\_gCBddKs9d7m0cBFmCjw/view?utm\\_content=DAGMb0zVNec&utm\\_campaign=share\\_your\\_design&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_source=shareyourdesignpanel](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGMb0zVNec/2H_gCBddKs9d7m0cBFmCjw/view?utm_content=DAGMb0zVNec&utm_campaign=share_your_design&utm_medium=link&utm_source=shareyourdesignpanel)

I'm excited to share some of the remarkable accomplishments the Operations Division has achieved over the past year; it's been an exceptional period of growth, collaboration, innovation, and productivity, particularly during Summer 2024.

In Fiscal Year 2024:

Capital Improvement Program and Facilities Maintenance

This Capital Improvement Program team worked tirelessly with contractors, architects, schools, and DCSD staff to achieve the following:

- Completed 19 capital projects, with an estimated cost at completion of \$36,234,114
- Had 28 capital projects begin construction, with a total estimated cost at completion of \$398,957,399
- Had 25 capital projects in design, with a total estimated cost at completion of \$293,359,600
- Awarded construction contracts for 39 capital projects for a total value of \$489,378,537
- Awarded design contracts for 7 capital projects for a total value of \$4,383,500

We sincerely thank the community for the continued support of E-SPLOST funding that allows for these improvements to be made.

Not to be outdone, during this Summer, the Facilities Maintenance team:

- Replaced flooring at 31 schools
- Performed painting at 19 schools
- Installed LED lighting at 5 schools
- Closed out over 2,000 work tickets
- Coordinated the cleaning of over 12 million square feet

I am humbled by the efforts of our team members and technicians who worked day and night, as well as through extreme weather, to complete this work in 65 calendar days so that our schools were ready for day 1. The commitment of our team members is inspiring, and I am extremely grateful for their service!

### Transportation and Fleet Department

Implemented a “register to ride” system (Spring/Summer that asks parents to select if their child will be using student transportation. This simple question greatly assists in the development of the routing schedule and identification of needed resources. The results produced a reduction of 748 routes to 696 routes to start the school year. This optimization supports alignment of safe student transportation with resource allocation.

Our Fleet Maintenance team accomplished state inspection passing scores on all school buses. Even through the extreme heat of the summer, you will always find our technicians working down in engine compartments, changing tires, and repairing items in places of the bus that seem inaccessible. Somehow, they do it and do it every day! The work of this team is paramount to providing a safe ride to and from school and their commitment can never be overlooked. Oh, and did I mention that the district recently accepted the first three fully electric maintenance vehicles in support of our sustainability efforts!

### School Nutrition Services

I’m extremely proud of the SNS team for their analysis and work on expanding the Community Eligibility Provision Program (CEP). Their efforts resulted in an increase of qualifying schools from 75 to 105 Schools where ALL children enrolled in that school now eat breakfast, lunch, and afterschool snacks at no cost to them. This commitment has provided thousands more children to benefit from healthy, nutritious meals while at school.

Additionally, new menu items are hit with the children as participation has increased tremendously, the Ramen Bowls are wildly popular and I’m particularly a fan of the Mandarin Chicken (especially with the new DCSD MIRACLES 7-Spice Blend!)

### Business Services

Thanks to the innovative efforts of this team, DCSD is the first school district in Georgia to partner with a major facility parts supplier to be located onsite. This partnership with Grainger is already showing early benefits in parts availability, reduction of “windshield time” of our technicians, inventory control, and fiscal efficiency. The team is continuing to grow this approach to seamless deployment and serve as a model for modern school operations.

Additionally, DCSD has implemented its first Sustainability Office tasked with providing efficient, environmentally responsible, and effective materials and service that our community deserves. In addition to



cost saving on utilities, the team performs a key role in the district's recent Electric School Bus Implementation project. We look forward to continuing to grow the Sustainability Office.

As we look to the future, we are excited to continue building on these successes. The Operations Division's commitment to excellence, collaboration, innovation, and production ensures that DCSD is well positioned to tackle the challenges ahead.

***Antwyn Brown, Deputy Chief Operations Officer***

The Division of Operations closed out the school year with a fantastic Employee Appreciation Lunch and Learn, celebrating numerous achievements throughout the year. One of the most memorable moments was honoring our beloved colleague, Mr. Kenneth Parmer, by creating an award in his memory dedicated to a member of the Fleet. This heartfelt tribute was a reminder of the lasting impact he had on all of us.

We also conducted a retention survey during the event to gather valuable employee feedback on the division's vision and future initiatives. One of the standout requests from our team was the desire for more learning opportunities. In response, the Administrative Team took immediate action, partnering with RESA and the Carl Vinson Institute to launch Mr. Hofstetter's initiative to bridge the Professional Development and Certification Program gap for the Division of Operations.

As we continue to reorganize and restructure, our goal remains to provide exceptional support throughout the district. This summer, the senior staff members of the Division of Operations visited every school to ensure preparations were in place for another successful year. Representatives from the department were present at each location, ready to answer questions and address any concerns. These visits also allowed us to discuss district-wide plans, such as Shared Space agreements and upcoming Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), demonstrating our commitment to open communication and visibility.

We look forward to an exciting year ahead, working together to create more professional development opportunities, fostering leadership awareness, and continuing to meet the district's needs. Thank you to everyone for your hard work and dedication, and here's to another successful school year!

***Keith Ball, Executive Director for Capital Improvements and Facilities***

As one of the newest members of the Operations Division, thank you for the opportunity to join an outstanding team that shows up daily to provide exemplary support service to enhance student growth and achievement. My experience as a classroom teacher, coach, and principal has taught me that with committed bus drivers, dedicated school nutrition workers, diligent mechanics, hardworking custodians, and devoted maintenance workers, teaching leading and learning can reach unprecedented levels. We are the team from

first light to well into the night that helps fuel the vision of preparing every student to learn and serve as a productive citizen. A tremendous sense of gratitude is extended to our Operations Division staff!

In my first 40 days, I prioritized visiting as many schools as possible to see firsthand the progress made through our capital construction projects and witness the maintenance process of getting our schools ready for this school year. I have completed 68 school visits thus far and learned that good work is done by professionals who care deeply about our district's success. At the same time, improvements can always be made to put our front-

line maintenance and custodial staff in the best position to be successful and, in turn, provide safe, clean, and welcoming schools across our district. The most enormous room in the world is the room for improvement, and the Operations Division will continue to work tirelessly to help raise DeKalb County School District to new levels and new heights.

**Raymond Stanley, *Executive Director of Transportation and Fleet Operations***

The Transportation Department is thrilled to welcome our new Executive Director, Mr. Raymond Stanley, who has made a significant impact as we kick off the school year. Thanks to the dedication and teamwork of all department staff members, we were well-prepared to ensure a smooth start to the year.

Our proactive approach this year has facilitated the successful operation of numerous bus routes. We have optimized route planning eliminated unnecessary routes, and ensured more efficient transportation for our students. We successfully implemented an improved transport design for our Special Needs Students, enhancing their safety and comfort.

We have also focused on reducing student errors within the first week of school, working diligently to promptly address and resolve any issues. Our collaboration with school principals has been vital in encouraging the use of Edulog and ensuring that all routes are updated and accurate. By closely monitoring the progress of our routes in real-time systems, we have maintained an elevated level of service and responsiveness.

We look forward to continuing to provide safe, reliable, and efficient transportation for all students throughout the school year. Thank you to everyone for your hard work and commitment to excellence.

**Dr. Connie Walker, *Executive Director of School Nutrition Services***

**School Nutrition Services Miracle Spice Blend SY 24-25**

The Miracle Spice Blend is a health forward spice blend that aligns with creating a culinary culture within School Nutrition Services.

The blend avoids adding salt directly to food which helps to keep sodium levels low. The signature flavor blend was achieved by using a variety of herbs and spices (14) without relying on salt and unhealthy additives or preservatives. The Miracle Spice Blend can encourage a conversation on wellness and healthy eating along with the benefits of limiting sodium and using a healthier alternative at any age.

Our spice blend is versatile and is suitable for a wide range of dishes, making it easy to incorporate into various recipes that will be served in our school cafeterias. The Miracle Spice Blend will be incorporated into recipes such as: Roasted Vegetables, Grilled Chicken, Soups, Rice and grain dishes. Students will experience a dynamic taste of flavors that make them look forward to the next bite. The spice blend is being prepared at our internal

training facility by our School Nutrition culinary team. The blend will be distributed to all DCSD schools as needed.

The spice blend was featured the week of August 26, 2024, on the Chicken Philly Hoagie and the seasoned potato wedges with resounding success based on student comments.

Our blend can compete against industry seasonings based on the creative seasoning profile. School Nutrition Services mission is to provide healthy meals, nutrition education, and wellness initiatives to support teaching and learning.

### **Bernando Brown, *Director of Student Transportation***

I am pleased to announce that our Transportation Managers have successfully updated and prepared the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for our department. The revised SOP has been meticulously reviewed and is now ready for submission to the district's legal department for further evaluation to ensure compliance with all applicable regulations and standards.

Additionally, as we gear up for the upcoming school year, the Transportation Managers are focused on the preparations necessary for a smooth and efficient school opening. They have prioritized the following:

1. Route Planning: Finalize and review all bus routes to optimize efficiency and safety.
2. Finalizing Route Assignments: Ensure all routes are accurately mapped and assigned to the respective drivers.
3. Driver Training: Conduct mandatory training sessions for all drivers, focusing on safety protocols and any new procedures outlined in the updated SOP.
4. Communication with Parents and Schools: Send out notifications to parents and schools regarding bus schedules and any new transportation policies.
5. Emergency Procedures: Review and update emergency procedures to ensure all staff are familiar with the protocols.

I like to also share, our New Executive Director of Transportation and Fleet Services two of our Transportation Supervisors and two Assistant Transportation recently attended their first Georgia Association for Pupil Transportation (GAPT) conference. This professional development opportunity allowed them to gain valuable insights and knowledge to enhance our department's operations.

Please join me in congratulating the following individuals on their participation:

- Raymond Stanley, Executive Director of Transportation and Fleet Services
- Demetria Larry, Transportation Supervisor
- Stephanie Clark, Transportation Supervisor

- Domineek Gilmore, Assistant Transportation Supervisor
- Yulonda Richburg, Assistant Transportation Supervisor

Their attendance at the GAPT conference demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement and professional growth within our team. We look forward to them sharing their learnings and implementing new strategies to further our mission of providing safe and efficient transportation for our students.

### **Cedric Burse, Director of Fleet & Fleet Maintenance**

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, effective communication is the cornerstone of a successful and efficient fleet operation. Our ability to communicate clearly and efficiently not only enhances productivity but also ensures safety, fosters teamwork, and builds trust. Over the past quarter, our fleet has made significant strides in communication, leading to outstanding operational achievements. This report highlights our accomplishments and celebrates the positive impact of exemplary communication within our team.

Our maintenance team's *proactive communication* has been crucial in preventing breakdowns and maintaining the fleet's health. By establishing daily maintenance meetings, we've been able to obtain immediate feedback and ensure technicians, supervisors and managers have a daily opportunity to exchange ideas.

Fleet Operations Supervisors Joseph Nichols and Franklin Scott hold daily maintenance meetings where mechanics share insights, updates, and concerns on common issues. This initiative led to the early identification of recurring maintenance issues, allowing for *preemptive repairs* that prevented potential accidents and costly repairs.

Our fleet management team has prioritized communication that fosters a positive and supportive work environment. Regular team meetings, recognition programs, and transparent communication have significantly boosted team morale and cohesion.

Dr. Chardra Carter organized a monthly lunch where team members can share positive ideas. This initiative has strengthened team bonds and enhanced mutual support, leading to a noticeable improvement in productivity, team morale and collaboration.

The remarkable progress we have made in communication is a testament to the dedication and hard work of every member of our team. Clear, consistent, and open communication has not only improved our operational efficiency but also started fostering a culture of trust, safety, and collaboration.

As we look to the future, we are committed to continuing this positive trend and exploring new ways to enhance our communication practices. Together, we will build on this foundation of excellence to achieve even greater success in the coming months.

**Richard Boyd, *Director of Design and Construction***

The Design and Construction Department, through E-SPLOST and ESSER III funding performed work at 19 schools this summer. Scope ranged from one-for-one HVAC equipment replacement; full roof tear-off and replacement; and full HVAC/mechanical piping replacement projects.

Schools where work was performed include Briar Vista ES, Car Reynolds ES at Nancy Creek, Chapel Hill MS, Chesnut ES, Columbia ES, DeKalb HS of Technology-South, Dresden ES, Druid Hills MS, Early Learning Center, Fairington ES, Hawthorne ES, Henderson Mill ES, Laurel Ridge ES, Midvale ES, Redan MS, Salem MS, Stephenson MS, Tucker HS, and Woodridge ES. Various other work was completed at each facility as part of the Summer Projects.

While a few projects have remaining HVAC and/or roof replacement work to be completed, all facilities listed above were ready for, and successfully received, students on Monday, August 5th. Our focus now is on completing those remaining scopes of work and any identified punchlist work.

This was an extremely large amount of work that was completed in a relatively short amount of time; the 65-calendar day period between the last day of school in May and teachers returning at the end of July.



DeKalb HS of Technology-South; June 14th



DeKalb HS of Technology-South; July 30th

### **Bobby Moncrief, *Director of Facilities Services***

The Facilities & Maintenance Department is excited to welcome the new school year and introduce our new Executive Director, Keith Ball. Keith hit the ground running joining the Operations Teams in conducting walk-throughs to ensure that every school in the DeKalb County School District (DCSD) received visits from senior staff members of Operations.

We are pleased to announce that most projects were completed successfully, and principals expressed satisfaction with the department's proactive presence. Throughout this process, we met various challenges with outstanding customer service and dedication, demonstrating our commitment to finding practical solutions.

To address immediate concerns, our HVAC team provided portable unit systems to schools with inoperable air conditioning units, ensuring a comfortable environment for students and staff. Senior staff members documented their visits with photographs and engaged in meaningful conversations with principals, reinforcing our commitment to listening and responding to their needs.

In our continued effort to enhance responsiveness, we have also introduced an Urgent Hotline for the Facilities Department, allowing for quicker reporting and resolution of critical issues.

We look forward to working collaboratively to make this school year a success. Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

**Keith Singleton, *Director of Business Services***

The month of August has been a busy and productive one for Business Services with significant progress made across various areas:

*Sustainability:* We have completed the draft for the District's Sustainability Vision and objectives. The following steps involve a review by senior leaders to finalize the document before publishing it on the DCSD website.

*Engagement:* Mandatory training for the Division has been completed. We continue to focus on initiatives that enhance and increase employee participation and ownership. As part of our ongoing engagement efforts, the Warehouse team hosted a fish fry, fostering camaraderie and team spirit.

*Payroll:* The rollout for 10-month employees in MUNIS has been completed. The payroll team is now focusing on improving Time and Attendance processes.

*Accounting:* The team is working on the next steps in the Net 30 process, including a comprehensive review of the current structure. We are also exploring opportunities to automate tasks manually, leveraging MUNIS to streamline operations.

*Supply Chain Operations:* We have begun the process of inventorying all assets in each school. Additionally, Grainger has successfully secured its warehouse section, which is now fully operational.

These developments reflect our ongoing commitment to efficiency, employee engagement, and sustainable growth. We look forward to continuing our efforts to support the success of the district.

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

The ESPLOST Planning Department is kicking off the school year with exciting opportunities to reimagine various school district zones and address the increase in student enrollment for the DeKalb County District compared to last year. Our team is dedicated to enhancing the learning environment for all students and ensuring that our facilities meet the highest standards of safety, quality, and accessibility.

Partnership with Student Assignment:

We are collaborating closely with the Student Assignment department to gather valuable feedback from the community. We are ready to launch surveys using the SLIDO Survey App to achieve this. This interactive platform will enable us to capture real-time opinions and insights from community members, ensuring transparency and inclusivity in our planning process. We are ready to launch surveys using the SLIDO Survey App to accomplish this.

Focus Areas for the SAP MINIS Session: Tucker Cluster & Jolly and Indian Creek Communities:

Create Equitable Learning Environments:

Our primary goal is to ensure that every student has access to high-quality education and resources, regardless of their location within the district. By reimagining our school zones, we aim to provide all students with the tools and support they need to succeed.

Balance Enrollment for Smaller Class Sizes:

We are working towards achieving optimal class sizes to enhance individual student attention and promote academic success. Balancing enrollment will help us provide a more personalized and practical learning experience for each student.

Increase Safety and Security:

The safety of our students and staff is our top priority. We are committed to implementing robust safety measures across all schools to create a secure learning environment. This includes improvements to infrastructure, security protocols, and emergency preparedness.

Removal of Modular Units:

Improving the quality of our educational facilities is a key focus. We plan to phase out outdated modular units and replace them with better infrastructure, providing students and staff with a more conducive and comfortable learning environment.

These initiatives are designed to strengthen our school communities and ensure that every student can thrive in a safe, supportive, and well-equipped environment. We look forward to engaging with all stakeholders and working together to make these improvements a reality.

**Elijah Palmer, *Chief of Staff***

**Public Safety Support:**

The focus has been on maximizing the opportunity to keep schools safe for all students in the district. The Public Safety department has made an attempt to make sure that all Centegix crisis badges are functioning properly and effectively. Each school received additional badges for new staff members and substitute teachers that will support throughout the year. In addition to the Centegix badges, we have our EVOLV weapons detectors at all middle and high schools that serve as another level of protection and support toward safety. The past few weeks, the public safety department was instructed to perform an audit to ensure that



all machines were functioning properly. Another update about our EVOLV weapons detectors is that our stadiums will now be secured with the EVOLV weapons detectors that replaced the older metal detectors that were outdated and not as efficient or effective. This addresses Tenet L of our MIRACLES Framework.

#### Elementary School Associates:

I am excited to announce that we have 10 elementary school associates that are working across the district to support elementary schools. We have made recommendations for over 50 ESA's to be hired for our district. The goal is to have an ESA at all elementary schools to help support the school community. They will be responsible for greeting parents as they are welcomed at the school building's main entrance. In addition to offering hospitality to guests and visitors, they will walk around the building's perimeter to ensure all doors are closed or unlocked. They will also make sure that no weapons are buried or hidden outdoors or close to their school building. They will be able to communicate to the public safety team so that the school administrators can focus on supporting teachers and teaching and learning. This addresses Tenet L- Learning Environment that Supports Student Success of our MIRACLES Framework.

#### Internal Audits and Compliance:

We have wrapped up our SPLOST IV and V Audit with Plante Moran and met with the team to address all findings from their Executive Summary Final Report. We are looking forward to Plante Moran to present at the upcoming

Board Meeting on September 9th, 2024. This is in support of our C Tenet from our MIRACLES Continuous Framework Commitment to Accountability where we want to be transparent with our board, community, taxpayers, and all stakeholders that play a role in the outcome of our scholars.

The ESSER and CARES audit by FORVIS is about to be completed, and we aim to have FORVIS present at the Audit Committee meeting in October and at the board meeting in November. There was a delay in this audit as the FORVIS team needed to ensure they had all the requested documents from the DCSD team to ensure a comprehensive breakdown of their findings. Now that they have received everything from the district, they are set to deliver their Executive Draft Summary to the team. We have made progress in moving this to the finish line and we look forward to sharing with all stakeholders soon. This addresses C- Commitment to Accountability from our MIRACLES Framework.

#### Strategic Plan Launch:

We have released our Strategic Plan for the school years 2024-2029 to all stakeholders across our district. We have delivered posters, booklets, and bulletins that outline our new mission, vision, core values, and strategic

goal areas. We made sure that Principals received an overview of the plan so that they could disseminate it across their school building. We had over 11 thousand survey participants play a role in creating this plan, so we feel like voices were heard and considered across the district. We have scheduled quarterly updates on where we are with our progress that will be shared at upcoming board meetings. We have focus groups scheduled that will offer an opportunity for more intimate sessions across the district about our progress with the plan. More information is forthcoming about the Portrait of a Graduate component that is also captured in the new Strategic Plan for school years 2024-2029.

**Vacant**  
**(Director of Strategic Management)**

**Joel Thibodeaux, *Director of Internal Audits & Compliance***

Internal Audits & Compliance is undertaking an internal Process Improvement and Skill Enhancement program that begins with an assessment and benchmarking of the state of our District's Internal Audit Function. From the assessment, Internal Audits management will implement Professional Development priorities identified in employee assessments. The goal is to improve the District's Internal Audit function to a best-in-class audit agency. This assessment should be completed during October 2024, with implementation of the improvement plan beginning in November 2024. This will jump-start the process of continuous improvement of the Internal Audits & Compliance function.

An evaluation and revision of policies regulating the formation and operation of Booster Clubs and PTOs, will soon be underway. Included in this project is a review of the process of accepting school donations and managing fundraising efforts that involve 3<sup>rd</sup> Party vendors and outside organizations. We expect this will lead to revisions of the District's Booster Club policy and Fundraising/Solicitation regulations being introduced in the spring of 2025.

Finally, Internal Audits & Compliance will undertake the development of an Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework – with input from the Office of Legal Affairs. An ERM framework is a monitoring and evaluation system designed to identify isolated and systemic risks to the successful operation of District systems and threats to the school district's security and overall mission.

**Tracey Whaley, *Executive Director of Public Safety***

Public Safety has been able to hire six SROs who are now in training since June 29, 2004. Once training is complete the SEO's will be assigned to schools. In addition to the 10 Elementary School Associated who have been hired, ten more will start work on September 17, 2024. In addition, 10 Campus Supervisors have been

hired and have been assigned to middle and high schools. Public safety supervisors are continuing the interview process for all positions.

Public Safety has taken delivery of two Mobile Pro Systems Security Camera Trailers and received training on use and setup. The trailers will be stationed at the Godfrey stadium bus parking lot and the MLK High Bus lot to help secure buses during the night and weekend periods.

Additionally, Public Safety is working in collaboration with Human Resources to pilot an outsource program to increase the efficiency of fingerprinting for new hires, volunteers and contractors.

**Carolyn Lloyd, *Executive Director of Board Operations***

The Board Office continues to manage the work of the school board. The Board office kicked- off its weekly staff meetings two weeks ago. The team is excited to share, and team build. Last week, the ED participated in the Miracles presentation to introduce three initiatives geared towards process improvement focused on how we communicate with the Board, Agenda Item process enhancements and building out a Constituent Service arm of the board office. Last week the Board had a virtual retreat and this week two mini sessions. Monday, August 9<sup>th</sup> is Board meeting day, and we have spent this past week preparing for it. Board meeting preparation is an ongoing process throughout the month.

As always, the Board office continues to work each month in service to the BOE, the Superintendent, DCSD students and the district.

**Jennifer Caracciolo, *Acting Chief of Community Engagement and Innovative Partnerships***  
**August 1-September 6, 2024**

**Jennifer Caracciolo, *Deputy Chief Communications Officer***

CEIP

- Held a division retreat
- Transitioned between Dr. Williamson and Ms. Caracciolo
- Welcomed Dr. Damienne Denham Shabazz, Program Administrator of Adult Education
- Worked at separating Family Engagement and Adult Education
- Family Engagement – Hispanic Heritage Month Fiesta 9/21
- Community Engagement – Coordinated the Cross Keys Community Engagement and Supt. Exceptional Ed meetings

## Communications

- Launched Are You Ready DeKalb? back-to-school campaign
- Kicked-off and supported twice-a-week H-Pride visits
- Started district website content updates
- Coordinated two DCSD Town Hall Meetings
- Transitioned the Ed Foundation to the Department
- Supported the launch of the 2024-29 Strategic Plan
- Collaborated with various divisions and departments on communications planning and tools

## **Dr. Marcia Oglesby, *Director of Grants and Partnership***

### Grants

- Transition of the Environmental Protection Agency's (Clean School Bus) grant award to finance by providing support with submitting the required grant documents
- Prepare to close out the Public Safety grant via the grant's portal and prepare to submit the final grant report
- Provided technical assistance to schools and centers to apply for grants, seek new grants, and process and/or closeout awarded grants
- September Grant Opportunities News Flash was disseminated to all district staff
- Promote the Extra Yard for Teachers/Georgia Teachers Initiative to assist teachers with obtaining resources via social media, and principals' communication through Champion Dillard

### Partnerships

- A proposal was written and submitted to request funding to support district programs and initiatives.
- Currently monitoring the results of the School Partnerships Survey to compile a comprehensive list of partnerships supporting the schools and create opportunities to engage with and recognize school and district partners.
- Met with current and potential partners
- Planning the agenda to host the October 2024 Metro Partnerships meeting

### Donations

- Prepared the September board agenda item in the amount of \$50,000 for Margaret Harris Comprehensive School to Commissioner Michelle Long Spears

## **Dr. Donald Porter, *Press Secretary***

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

- Salem MS bus accident with reported injuries
- Student overdose at Dunwoody HS
- Installation of EVOLV at our stadiums
- Backlog of psychological evaluation requests
- Late pay issues for 500 DCSD employees

Wrote or rewrote over sixty (65) school letters and communications related to:

- New/Leaving principals
- School evacuations
- Lockdowns involving intruder
- Lockdowns involving OC spray
- Lockdowns involving medical emergency
- Lockdown involving unruly parents
- Student death involving Dunwoody HS student
- Edibles-Students sick
- Physical altercations
- Bomb threats
- Social media threats

- Multiple HVAC outages

Gathered information and prepared documents:

- Interoffice Memo announcing Crowd Control Specialists
- Peachtree MS Project information for Mrs. Hill

Wrote scripts and speeches:

- Board member Anna Hill regarding the Peachtree MS athletic field.
- Mr. DaCosta's Summer School Graduation Speech
- Dr. Williamson's 8-14 Town Hall Meeting Welcome
- School Choice Expo Video Script
- DeKalb School Foundation Web Video

Media Releases

- EVOLV systems added to Sports Stadiums
- Rewrote additional DCSD principals' release

#### Web Stories

- Columbia Middle and Lakeside High Earn Prestigious 'School of Excellence' Titles from National PTA
- One Teacher's Inspiring, Full-Circle Journey at Kingsley Elementary