



## Message from Dr. Calvin J. Watts

*Since August, I have had the honor and privilege to serve Gwinnett County Public Schools as your superintendent. As part of my entry plan, I have visited school communities, meeting with students, staff members, leaders, families, and community leaders. This has been a very important first step in the process of transitioning the leadership of the school district and beginning our strategic planning process. These visits have provided opportunities for me to listen to you and to hear your thoughts on how we can build upon the very good things we have done and are doing as we strategically plan our “Blueprint for the Future.”*

Our strategic planning process includes new ways to listen and learn from the members of our community. For example, approximately 120 students are serving on our first [Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council](#), using the power of their voice to improve their schools. We also have used a web-based platform called [ThoughtExchange](#), which has allowed different voices and views to come to light around specific topics. And, my Transition and Planning Team, representing a cross-section of our community, is engaging in a deep dive into district data as we seek to increase graduation rates and improve learning for our children. Together, we’re looking at how our schools can

better serve the whole learner in terms of what our students need to be successful academically, socially, emotionally, and behaviorally.

As we move forward in the strategic planning process, more than 160 community members are serving on the design team for our Portrait of a Graduate—helping us set the future direction of student learning in Gwinnett. Locally developed, our Portrait of a Graduate will serve as our guide for transforming our schools and redesigning the school experience. The Portrait will serve as our collective vision of what we want for our children and will help us to ensure we are providing them what they will need to be ready for their future, not our past.

A lot has happened so far this school year... and the best is yet to come. As we finalize the draft of our strategic plan later this spring, you will have additional opportunities to share your thoughts on our direction. We hope to present our strategic plan—GCPS’ Blueprint for the Future—to the School Board for final adoption this summer. On behalf of Team GCPS, I thank you for your support of our students and schools and for working with us as we focus on how we can better address the needs of each and every GCPS student.

## Spring 2022

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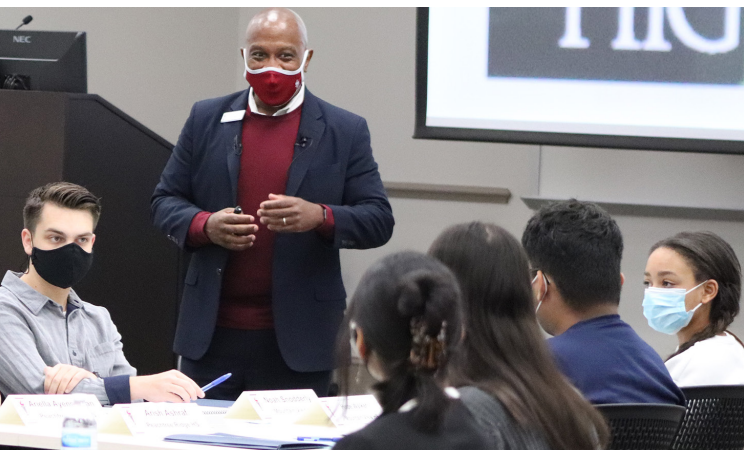
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*Middle and high school students from across the district are sharing feedback with Dr. Watts as members of the [Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council](#), which was launched in January.*

## Bulletin Board



### Congratulations, Class of 2022!

More than 13,000 GCPS seniors are preparing to take the stage to celebrate the milestone of high school graduation! Our schools will hold ceremonies for the Class of 2022 between **May 23** and **May 30!** The in-person ceremonies will be live-streamed, allowing families/friends to view the ceremonies. See the GCPS website for [dates, times, and locations of the ceremonies](#). (GCPS also will hold a Summer Graduation Ceremony on **July 8**.) Throughout the spring, watch for senior celebrations on social media and on our website. In May, look for *A Celebration of the Class of 2022!*

### Circle the date!

Reflecting input from our school communities, the 2022–23 calendar features a more compressed staggered start, but retains popular school breaks. Students in grades K, 1, 6, and 9, and students with special needs who are served in a small-group will start in-person learning on **Aug. 3**, with all other students participating in digital learning at home. (In-person instruction begins **Aug. 4** for all other grades.) The calendar includes four digital learning days (DLDs) (**Sept. 16, Nov. 8, Feb. 3, and March 17**). Other dates for students include a fall break set for **Oct. 6–10**, a week for Thanksgiving (**Nov. 21–25**), more than two weeks for Winter Break (**Dec. 19–Jan. 4**), a holiday on MLK Jr. Day (**Jan. 16**), a break in February (**Feb. 16–20**), a week scheduled for Spring Break (**April 3–7**), and an end date of **May 24**.

# AUG 3

### Earn credit in high school summer classes

GCPS offers high school students four ways to learn for credit this summer. Go to [MyPaymentsPlus](#) to register through **May 27**.

- **Online summer classes (June 6–30)** with **Gwinnett Online Campus (GOC)**.
- **Face-to-face summer classes (June 13–July 7)** offered at **Archer HS, Berkmar HS, and Lanier HS**.
- **GCPS Community Schools** summer classes, including Health and PE. Check the [Community Schools web page](#) for options.
- **Credit Recovery** for students who previously took a course and earned a final grade of 50–69. Contact the counselor for approval. Credit Recovery is available through local schools, face-to-face summer classes, and GOC.

To address COVID-related learning gaps, GCPS will pay for up to two summer classes for students needing to retake a class previously failed. GCPS students taking a course for the first time pay \$250 per course. Rising 9th graders may take Health and/or PE at **Berkmar HS**, online, and through some Community Schools. Learn about summer school programs at <http://www.gcpssummerschool.com>.



*Will your child be 5 years old by **Sept. 1**? If yes, it's time to register for kindergarten in an easy, two-step process!* First, click the Register Now! button on the [Kindergarten Registration page](#) to begin the online registration process. (If you're unsure which school your child will attend, go to "[Find My School](#)" on the website.) Then, schedule an appointment at [your child's new school](#) to verify information, complete a kindergarten readiness profile, pick up materials, and learn about exciting summer learning opportunities for your new kindergartner! GCPS' Rising K Academy is a free summer program offering fun, hands-on learning activities to help your child get ready for the first day of school. New kindergartners registered by **May 20** will be entered into a drawing for cool learning prizes—tablets, games, puzzles, books, LEGO sets, school supplies, and more! Families interested in our [Dual Language Immersion \(DLI\) program](#), available at 10 GCPS elementaries, have until **May 13** to complete [DLI registration](#) for new kindergartners.

### K–12 digital option available in 2022–23

Next school year, GCPS is offering a digital learning option for students in grades K–12 through **Gwinnett Online Campus (GOC)**, opening GOC's program to K–3 students for the first time. Digital students at all grade levels will enroll full-time at GOC rather than being enrolled at their local neighborhood/zoned school. While GOC classes are digital, students are required to participate in some face-to-face meetings to take part in hands-on labs, interactive learning labs, and testing. Transportation is not provided for in-person sessions. Online, learn more about the district's [digital learning option](#) for 2022–23.



GCPS' free Summer Learning Support + Enrichment + Acceleration (SEA) Program will serve up to 40,000 students in grades K–8 who could benefit from the additional academic focus or need support to earn promotion to the next grade. All students in SEA will participate in fun and engaging activities to explore STEM, fine arts, and more! In coming weeks, schools will be reaching out to families of students who would benefit the most from this summer learning opportunity to invite their child to take part in the three-week program.



# E-SPLOST Update

## An Update on E-SPLOST 2017–2022

<b>2018</b>	New	✓ Paul Duke STEM High School (5850 Peachtree Industrial Blvd. in Norcross)
<b>2019</b>	New	✓ McClure Health Science High School (3921 Club Dr. in Duluth)
	Addition/Renovation	✓ Lilburn Middle School
	Addition/Renovation	✓ Richards Middle School
<b>2020</b>	Addition/Renovation	✓ Chesney Elementary School
	Addition/Renovation	✓ Berkeley Lake Elementary School
	Addition/Renovation	✓ Parkview High School
	Addition/Renovation	✓ Brookwood High School
<b>2021</b>	Addition/Renovation	✓ Grayson High School
	Addition/Renovation	✓ Berkmar High School
	Addition/Renovation	✓ Benefield Elementary School
<b>2022</b>	Addition/Renovation	✓ Jones Middle School (open Aug. 2022)

## G.O. Bond

<b>2019</b>	Addition/Renovation	✓ Discovery High School
<b>2021</b>	Addition/Renovation	✓ School of the Arts (SOTA) @ Central Gwinnett High School
<b>2022</b>	New	✓ Seckinger High School (open Aug. 2022)

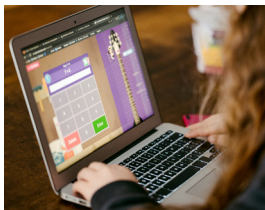


✓ indicates a completed project

Note: Capital project lists are subject to change due to funding and enrollment trends. With this in mind, plans to build new elementary schools in the Meadowcreek and Berkmar clusters and a GIVE Center South have been delayed.

## Looking Forward: 2022–2027

On November 3, 2020, Gwinnett County voters passed a resolution to continue an E-SPLOST as the primary funding mechanism for the district's next five-year capital plan. The 2022-2027 capital improvement program includes a new middle school in the Archer Cluster and seven additions and renovations (Archer High School; Central Gwinnett High School; Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology; Harbins Elementary School; North Gwinnett High School; Shiloh Middle School; and Trickum Middle School); technology upgrades systemwide, including a refresh of technology at all schools; digital instructional resources and other instructional materials and textbooks; systemwide facility improvements including roofing, HVAC and building improvements; and the purchase of school buses to replace older, less-efficient vehicles.



## District to launch 1:1 tech initiative in fall

Technology improvements to support teaching and learning have been included in past capital programs. These funds, coupled with federal funding received through Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds (often referred to as CARES funding) are allowing the district to address equity and access issues that worsened during the pandemic. To address these issues, GCPS is capitalizing on the Chromebooks and technology we already had purchased during the pandemic to ensure students had access to computers during digital learning. The district will launch a 1:1 initiative next fall that will provide digital tools to all learners. More on this exciting new initiative will be shared over the summer as we gear up for the new school year.

# Portrait of a Graduate

In GCPS, our goal is for each and every one of our students to graduate on time and ready to thrive! To reach that goal, we must create a clear vision of what success looks like for our students during their education journey—Pre-K to 12th grade—and what they will need to be lifelong learners and contributors once they leave our schools. That vision is our Portrait of a Graduate! The Portrait of a Graduate is an important step in framing a new vision for our school system.

Currently a dynamic Design Team—representing all aspects of our community, including students—is developing the Portrait that we believe positions our young people for successful, satisfying lives and a place in our global economy. Collectively, they are identifying the hopes, aspirations, and dreams that our community has for its young people, as well as the skills and mindsets that our children need for success in this rapidly changing and complex world.

Currently, our Portrait of a Graduate Design Team's work is on track to wrap up in **May**. We look forward to sharing this work and gathering feedback from our community as Gwinnett's Portrait begins to take shape. And, once we finalize our Portrait of a Graduate, the exciting work of implementing this new vision begins. The Portrait will become the foundation of our new strategic plan, our Blueprint for the Future, that we will present to our School Board for approval this summer.

Graduation... it's an important milestone in the lives of our students that acknowledges the successful completion of 13 years of education. Our Portrait of a Graduate will be a powerful, shared vision, one that will define the success that we as a community want for our children—for each and every child.



## Gwinnett County Public Schools

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THE 2022 GWINNETT COUNTY  
BOARD OF EDUCATION:

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Dr. Mary Kay Murphy

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*It is the policy of Gwinnett County Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, or disability in any employment practice, educational program, or any other program, activity, or service.*

*Gwinnett County Public Schools wishes to meet the needs of all of its students and families. If any member of your family needs assistance or has any questions regarding mobility impaired issues or handicapped access, please contact the principal of your local school.*

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## Celebrations and Honors

- **Dr. Doug Doblár** of **Bay Creek MS** is a 2022 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching honoree.
- **Dallas Gillespie** of **North Gwinnett HS** is 2022 Outstanding National Art Honor Society Sponsor of the Year. **Annie Park** of **Lanier MS** is 2022 Southeastern Region Middle Level Art Educator of the Year.
- **Teshia Stovall Dula**, a counselor at **Hull MS**, was a finalist for 2022 National School Counselor of the Year Award.
- **Mirela Kimbrough** of **Brookwood HS** is the state's 2021 German Embassy Teacher of the Year.
- **Susana Sanchez Lopez** of **Meadowcreek HS** is the 2022 Career and Technical Education Student of the Year.
- In **December**, **Lee Allen** of **Archer HS** was honored as the 2022 GCPS Teacher of the Year (TOTY), **Jamie Garcia Caycho** of **Arcado ES** as ES TOTY, and **Taniesha Pooser** of **Berkmar MS** as MS TOTY.



**Chungin "Roy" Lee** is Gwinnett County's STAR (Student-Teacher Achievement Recognition) Student. The **Peachtree Ridge HS** senior selected his Language Arts teacher, **Adam Sherman**, as his STAR Teacher. They advance to state competition.

**Katie Blum**, the 2nd grade teacher from **Sugar Hill ES** who was Gwinnett's 2021 Teacher of the Year, has been named one of 10 finalists for 2023 Georgia Teacher of the Year!



- In **February**, **Dr. Tawonda Hunter** of **Hopkins ES** was named ES Counselor of the Year (COTY), **Elizabeth Butler** of **Crews MS** was named MS COTY, **Donyale Turner** of **Duluth HS** was named HS COTY, and **Dr. Lesley Y. Pendleton** of **Berkeley Lake ES** was honored as the Administrator of the Year.
- **Jones MS' Maile Steimer** is GCPS' 2022 Library Media Specialist of the Year, and **Theresa Buckley**—also from **Jones MS**—was named Media Clerk of the Year.
- This year, district leaders honored **Christa Kirksey** as GCPS' first-ever School Social Worker of the Year.
- In **March**, GCPS named **Michelle Caballero** and **Paul Dugan** as its 2021–22 School Bus Managers of the Year, and **Sybil Djengué** has been named School Bus Monitor of the Year.

For more about GCPS' many honored students and staff, go to *Featured News* at [gcpsk12.org](http://gcpsk12.org). In **May**, watch for an online celebration of the Class of 2022, including state and national honors and scholarships!