



**A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND TRANSFORMATIONAL INVESTMENT TO HELP STUDENTS RECOVER FROM LEARNING LOSS RESULTING FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC TO ENSURE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, GROWTH, AND SUCCESS.**





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# SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM

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## SUPERINTENDENT MIKE LOONEY, Ed.D.

Over the past three years, Fulton County Schools has navigated unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When we first learned of the virus, we faced uncertainty, fear, and tremendous disruption to the education of our students. We were the first district in Georgia to close schools due to a confirmed COVID-19 case, and I remember vividly the moment we gathered as a team to strategize our response. Through swift and decisive action, we implemented the **Bridge to Success** plan — a comprehensive initiative aimed at not just maintaining our district but transforming it.

At the heart of the Bridge to Success plan were seven key initiatives, each designed to ensure that our students' health, safety, and academic progress remained our top priority. Programs like **Every Child Reads**, which focused on improving literacy rates, demonstrated our commitment to creating a brighter future for every student. This program became a cornerstone of our efforts, equipping our teachers with cutting-edge strategies to ensure that reading proficiency was at the forefront of our educational goals. I am proud to say that our district has now become a recognized leader in literacy across the state.

Beyond literacy, we focused on comprehensive safety measures, leadership development, expanded learning opportunities, and dropout prevention strategies. From the enhanced counseling services and social workers to the Cultural Kaleidoscope field trip experiences, our commitment was clear: we were determined to build a bridge to success for all students. It wasn't just about getting through the pandemic; it was about preparing our district for long-term growth and excellence.

As we look toward the future, the work we accomplished through the Bridge to Success plan has laid a strong foundation for our district's strategic goals. We are now well-positioned to sustain the progress we have made, ensuring that our core values of **Teamwork, Integrity, and Accountability** remain central to our mission. We know that none of this would have been possible without the collaborative efforts of our staff, School Board members, parents, and community partners.

In reflection, I am filled with pride for what we have achieved together. The journey has been challenging, but it has also been transformative. We have built a bridge for our students to not only recover but thrive, and this work will continue to shape the future of Fulton County Schools for years to come.

**Relationships Matter,**



**Dr. Mike Looney**  
**Superintendent**  
**Fulton County Schools**

# ABOUT FULTON COUNTY SCHOOLS



## DR. MIKE LOONEY, SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Mike Looney has served as the Superintendent for the Fulton County School District in Georgia since June 2019. In the middle of his first year on the job, he became the first school leader in the state to be faced with reacting to the unknown — a confirmed, positive case of COVID-19. He immediately jumped into action and called upon his 28 years as an educator, including 15 years of previous experience as a school superintendent in Tennessee and Alabama, and as a retired marine, father and community leader, to guide the district through two years of COVID-19 protocols and safety measures, all while maintaining a focus on the mission of educating students.

## FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION



**Katha Stuart\***  
*District 1*  
*(Retired 2024)*



**Lillie Pozatek**  
*District 2*



**Katie Gregory**  
*District 3*



**Franchesca Warren**  
*Board Vice President*  
*District 4*



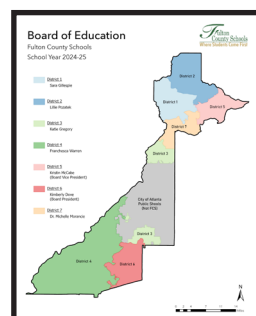
**Kristin McCabe**  
*Board President*  
*District 5*



**Kimberly Dove**  
*District 6*



**Dr. Michelle Morancie**  
*District 7*



**FCS Board Districts**

*The School Board Members listed on this page were in office at the time of the Bridge to Success plan's completion.*

# 2024-2025

# FACTS-AT-A-GLANCE

## EMPLOYEES



MORE THAN  
**10,900 FULL-TIME PERSONNEL**  
MORE THAN  
**6,900 CERTIFIED PERSONNEL**  
(those who hold teaching or administrative certifications)

## NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

**104**  
TOTAL

**58** ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS GRADES K-5  
PREKINDERGARTEN AVAILABLE IN SOME SCHOOLS

**19** MIDDLE SCHOOLS GRADES 6-8

**19** HIGH SCHOOLS GRADES 9-12

**7** START-UP CHARTER

**1** FULL-TIME VIRTUAL SCHOOL



## SYSTEM-WIDE ENROLLMENT

**87,262**

(Projected)



## DIVERSE STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

**41%**

BLACK OR  
AFRICAN AMERICAN

**25%**

WHITE

**17%**

HISPANIC

**13%**

ASIAN

**4%**

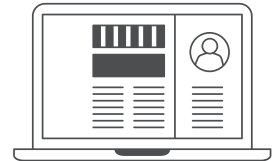
MULTI-RACIAL

**0.1%**

PACIFIC  
ISLANDER

**0.2%**

AMERICAN  
INDIAN



## STUDENT NEEDS

**21%**

TALENTED AND GIFTED  
LEARNERS

**11%**

ESOL (ENGLISH TO  
SPEAKERS OF OTHER  
LANGUAGES)

**11%**

SPECIAL  
EDUCATION

**53%**

ECONOMICALLY  
DISADVANTAGED



## BOARD OF EDUCATION

Kristin McCabe, *President*  
Franchesca Warren, *Vice President*  
Kimberly Dove • Sara Gillespie  
Katie Gregory • Michelle Morancie, Ph.D.  
Lillie Pozatek  
Mike Looney, Ed.D., *Superintendent*

## BUDGET

**FY25 General Fund Budget**  
\$1,422,055,825

**FY25 Cost Per Student**  
\$16,296 (estimated)

**FY 24 Tax Levy**

Maintenance & Operations	17.08
Debt Service	0.00
Total	17.08



## GEORGIA MILESTONES

	Fulton	State
AMERICAN LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION	52%	40%
ALGEBRA I	51%	37%
BIOLOGY	56%	47%
UNITED STATES HISTORY	40%	37%

End of Course Assessment 2022-23 School Year.

## 2024 SAT

Fulton	<b>1063</b>
State	<b>1030</b>
National	<b>995</b>

## 2024 ACT

Fulton	<b>21.9</b>
State	<b>21.2</b>
National	<b>19.4</b>



**90.7%**  
RECORD  
GRADUATION  
RATE

*Fulton*  
County Schools  
Where Students Come First

## FULTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

6201 Powers Ferry Road | Atlanta, Georgia 30339  
470-254-3600 | [www.fultonschools.org](http://www.fultonschools.org)

Equal Opportunity Agency. Compliance Coordinator: 470-254-4585 • TTY 1-800-255-0135

FultonCoSchools  
 FultonCountySchools  
 FultonSchools

# A LETTER FROM

## MARVIN DEREEF, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER



Dear Fulton County Schools Community,

As we conclude our three-year Bridge to Success initiative, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for what we have accomplished together. This journey has not only addressed the immediate challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic but has also set the foundation for a brighter, more resilient future for our students.

From the outset, our vision was clear: to utilize the Federal American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds in a way that would be transformational, prioritizing the health, safety, and academic growth of our students. The collaborative spirit and unwavering dedication of our cross-functional team have been instrumental in realizing this vision.

We navigated uncharted waters with a methodical approach, ensuring that every decision was guided by our core values of teamwork, integrity, and accountability. The result is a series of impactful initiatives, from innovative learning tools to enhanced safety protocols, that have made a tangible difference in our students' lives.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our superintendent, school board, and the entire community for their steadfast support. A special acknowledgment goes to our teachers, instructional coaches, and staff, whose extraordinary efforts and commitment have been the driving force behind our success.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to building on this momentum, continuing to innovate, and striving for excellence in all that we do. The Bridge to Success initiative has demonstrated what is possible when we come together with a shared purpose and a clear vision.

Thank you for being part of this remarkable journey. Together, we have made a lasting impact that will be felt for generations to come.

With gratitude,

*Marvin Dereef*  
*Chief Financial Officer*  
*Fulton County Schools*



# A MESSAGE FROM

## MONTREAL BELL, DIRECTOR OF GRANT SERVICES



Dear Fulton County Schools Community,

As we conclude the final chapter of the Bridge to Success initiative, I want to take a moment to reflect on the remarkable journey we have shared and express my deep gratitude for the collective efforts that have led to its overwhelming success. This transformational venture was made possible through the unwavering support of our school leaders, staff, students, families, and community partners, and it has been an honor to lead this vital work for our district.

The Bridge to Success plan was not just a response to the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic; it was a bold, forward-thinking strategy that has truly transformed the educational landscape of Fulton County Schools. With the dedicated use of federal funding, we implemented seven key initiatives, each designed to address specific needs within our schools while ensuring that every student receives the resources and support necessary to succeed in supporting students and families.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the commitment and hard work of our entire community. The Bridge to Success plan has been a collective effort, and I am deeply grateful to each of our educators, administrators, parents, students, and partners who played a role in bringing this vision to life. Together, we have navigated these challenging times and our students are thriving as a result.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to sustaining the progress we have made and building on the foundation we have established. The lessons we have learned and the foundations we have built, rooted in our core values of Teamwork, Integrity, and Accountability, will continue to shape our district's growth and success beyond 2024. As the Bridge to Success plan transitions into the district's new strategic plan, I am confident that with your continued support, we will carry forward the legacy of this transformative initiative, ensuring that every student in Fulton County Schools has the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Thank you for being part of this incredible journey. I am immensely proud of what we have accomplished together, and I look forward to the bright future that lies ahead for our students, our schools, and our community.

With sincere gratitude,

***Montreal Bell***  
***Director of Grant Services***  
***Fulton County Schools***



# INTRODUCTION

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## TO THE BRIDGE TO SUCCESS PLAN



Over the past three years, Fulton County Schools has embarked on a transformative journey through the Bridge to Success plan, leveraging federal ARP and ESSER funds to address the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. This ambitious plan aimed to ensure the health, safety, and academic progress of our students while fostering innovation and growth across the district.

A hallmark of the Bridge to Success plan was the **Every Child Reads** initiative, which demonstrated the district's long-term commitment to district-wide literacy improvement. This program focused on providing essential literacy support as well as evidence-based instruction and extensive professional development to ensure students had the opportunity to read at or above grade level. The success of this initiative continues to have a lasting impact, with literacy remaining a key focus of the district's academic agenda.

The Bridge to Success plan was designed with several key priorities in mind, including creating safe learning environments, addressing learning disruptions, and supporting academic achievement through targeted interventions. Initiatives such as **Leadership Development**, **FOCUS**, and **Expanded Programs** were critical in helping students and staff adapt to new learning environments and equipping them with the skills needed for long-term success. Leadership Development focused on fostering strong educational leaders across the district, while FOCUS accelerated student learning through extended learning opportunities and small-group interventions. Expanded Programs introduced innovative career pathways and learning opportunities, including additional Career Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) options.

Additionally, the **Textbook Adoption** initiative ensured that students had access to high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials, supporting both literacy and numeracy skills. The **Student Safety** initiative played a vital role in improving school climate by implementing the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program as well as fair discipline processes.

To ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff, the **Business Continuity** initiative made investments in personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitation efforts, and health services, which allowed for the continuity of face-to-face instruction.

Throughout the implementation of the Bridge to Success plan, Fulton County Schools remained committed to transparency and accountability. A cross-functional team of district leaders worked together to track progress, allocate resources effectively, and provide regular updates to the community. This collaborative effort ensured that the district maximized the impact of over \$168 million in funding to support the success of students and staff.

As we reflect on the achievements of the Bridge to Success plan, it is evident that the district's efforts have left a lasting impact. Fulton County Schools is now better positioned to continue supporting growth and innovation, ensuring the district is equipped to excel in the years to come.

# BRIDGE TO SUCCESS GOALS

## BRIDGE TO SUCCESS PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES:

1. Students will recover from the COVID-19 learning disruption.
2. Students will record the highest growth averages in the Atlanta Metro area.
3. Staff will demonstrate fidelity of implementation for all tiers of instruction.
4. Stakeholders will report satisfaction and approval of district performance.

## BRIDGE TO SUCCESS PRIORITIES

We will prioritize safe environments for face-to-face instruction.

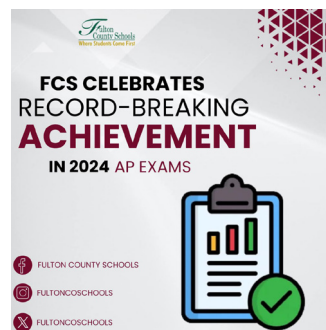
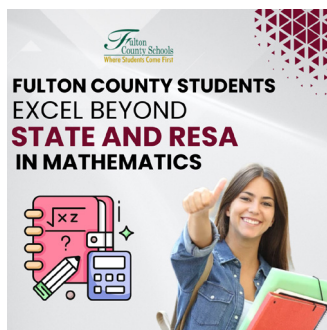
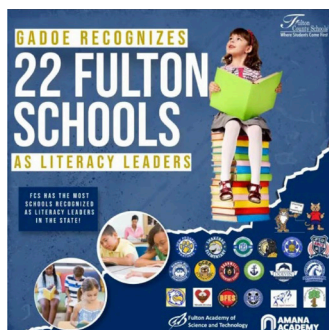
We will utilize the Bridge to Success plan to recover from learning disruption.

We will establish transformative approaches to literacy instruction.

We will develop our leaders throughout the organization using High Quality Professional Learning.

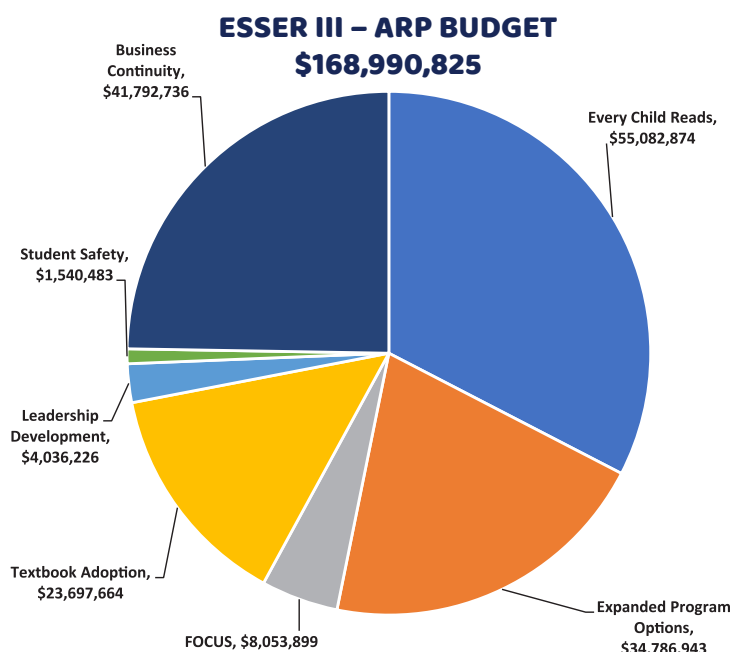
We will improve and expand existing program options for students, staff, and parents.

We will ensure continuity of district operations.



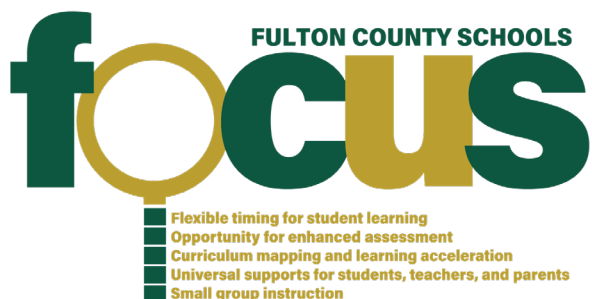
## FINANCIAL EXPENDITURES OF EACH INITIATIVE

Initiatives:	Current ESSER III – ARP Budget
Every Child Reads	\$55,082,874
Expanded Program Options	\$34,786,943
FOCUS	\$8,053,899
Textbook Adoption	\$23,697,664
Leadership Development	\$4,036,226
Student Safety	\$1,540,483
Business Continuity (includes Charter Schools)	\$41,792,736
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$168,990,825</b>



# BRIDGE TO SUCCESS 7 INITIATIVES & OUTCOMES

## FOCUS: ACCELERATING STUDENT LEARNING



**Objective:** Accelerate student learning equitably.

**Overview:** The FOCUS initiative, developed early in 2021, targeted academic recovery by expanding effective educational practices. With a \$45 million budget (60% of the CARES II funds), it involved implementation in schools across the district, with participation in extended learning programs and significant improvements in student outcomes. Feedback from students, parents, and educators highlighted the program's effectiveness.



### Key Elements:

- Extended learning time through summer school and after-school programs.
- High-dosage, small-group instruction tailored to students' needs.
- Frequent assessments to monitor progress.
- Curriculum mapping to align instruction with critical areas of learning recovery.
- Increased parent engagement for support at home.

### Success Indicators:

- Improved student achievement scores.
- Reduced learning gaps across demographics.
- Positive feedback on small-group instruction.



Face-to-Face & Virtual Options  
Technology Support  
Afternoon Enrichment



One-on-One & Small Group  
Literacy & Math Instruction  
Before/During/After-School



Pre-K – Grade 2 Literacy Units  
Oral Language, Vocabulary, Reading

# BRIDGE TO SUCCESS 7 INITIATIVES & OUTCOMES

## EVERY CHILD READS: LITERACY TRANSFORMATION



**Objective:** Ensure 95% of students read at or above grade level.

**Key Elements:**

- Teacher professional development in literacy instruction.
- Enhanced curriculum and resources aligned with the Science of Reading.
- Early intervention programs for struggling readers.

**Success Indicators:**

- Increased reading proficiency in early grades.
- Enhanced teacher skills in literacy instruction.
- Strengthened school-family collaboration.

### STORIES OF

### SUCCESS

The **Every Child Reads** initiative was a multi-year literacy strategy developed by Fulton County Schools to achieve the district's ambitious goal of having 95% of all students reading at or above grade level. The initiative was built on five key pillars: **Community Partnership, Talent**

**Acquisition, Professional Development, Resources,** and a **Multi-tiered System of Student Support**. These components worked together to reform literacy instruction across the district, ensuring that students received the comprehensive support they needed to succeed. From introducing a district-wide dyslexia screener to hiring a new Literacy Director and K-2 literacy coaches, Every Child Reads strategically invested in both human capital and instructional resources to foster a culture of literacy excellence.

Professional development was a cornerstone of the initiative, with extensive **LETRS** training (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) provided to

teachers and administrators to master essential reading skills. Literacy training and new English/Language Arts (ELA) resources were implemented district-wide, with positive trends in student reading levels..

To further enhance learning, middle and high school students benefited from targeted small-group instruction, while vocabulary resources were provided to support word learning across various subjects. These combined efforts ensured that literacy remained a priority, setting students on a path to long-term academic success.







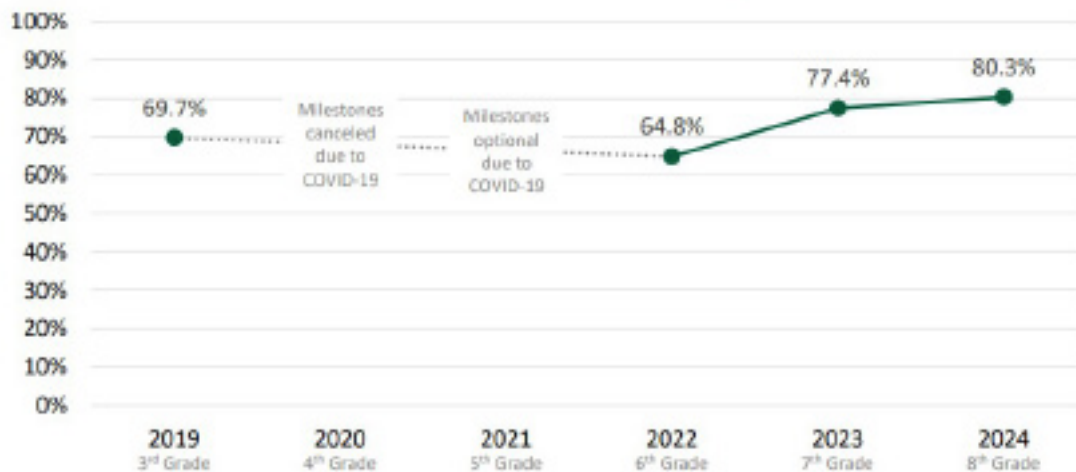
## 'Every Child Reads' literacy investment is paying off

- Fulton exceeds local and state peers in students reading on-grade level or above

## POST-COVID READING GROWTH

**THE PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN THE CLASS OF 2028 WHO ARE READING ON GRADE LEVEL HAS INCREASED BY 10.6% SINCE THE CLASS WAS IN 3RD GRADE.**

**PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN THE CLASS OF 2028  
READING ON GRADE LEVEL**



# BRIDGE TO SUCCESS 7 INITIATIVES & OUTCOMES

## TEXTBOOK ADOPTION: ALIGNING INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

**Objective:** Align instructional materials with Georgia curriculum standards.

**Key Elements:** Adoption of resources focusing on phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

**Success Indicators:**

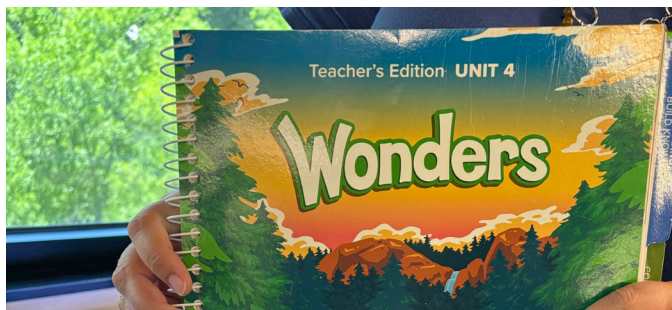
- Consistent reading resources.
- Improved reading scores.
- Positive feedback from teachers.

### STORIES OF

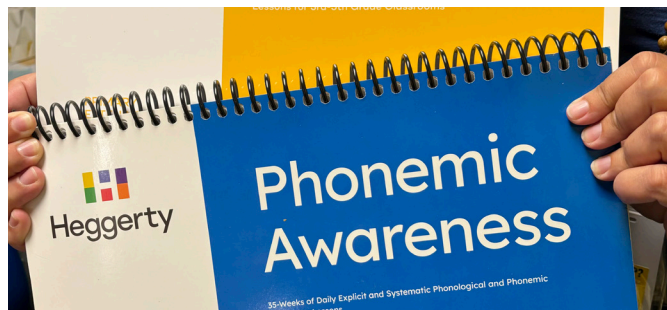
### SUCCESS

The **Textbook Adoption** initiative aimed to align instructional resources with state standards and provide teachers and students with high-quality materials to enhance literacy and learning across all grade levels. This initiative was grounded in the Science of Reading and focused on ensuring that every student received explicit, rigorous instruction tailored to their developmental needs.

As part of this initiative, Fulton County Schools adopted K-12 Reading/English Language Arts (ELA) resources for the 2022-2023 school year, which were closely aligned with the Georgia Standards of Excellence curriculum standards. These resources emphasized the five pillars of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Key materials included **Heggerty** for phonemic awareness in grades K-2, **Core 95 Phonics** for grades K-3, and **Vocabulary Surge** for grades 4-5. A core reading/ELA resource was also adopted at all levels. **Wonders by McGraw Hill** was adopted for elementary levels and **Savvas myPerspectives** was implemented for grades 6-12.



Wonders by McGraw Hill was adopted for elementary levels.



Key materials included Heggerty for phonemic awareness in grades K-2 adopted for elementary levels.



# BRIDGE TO SUCCESS 7 INITIATIVES & OUTCOMES

## EXPANDED PROGRAM OPTIONS: DIVERSE LEARNING PATHWAYS



**Objective:** Offer diverse learning pathways.

**Overview:** This initiative opened new doors for our students by offering Career Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) programs, virtual learning opportunities, mobile learning innovations, and a programmatic focus on dropout prevention.

### Key Elements:

- Career Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) expansion
- Dropout Prevention
- Virtual Learning Expansion
- Cultural Kaleidoscope & Enhanced Experiences
- Mobile Learning Experiences

### Success Indicators:

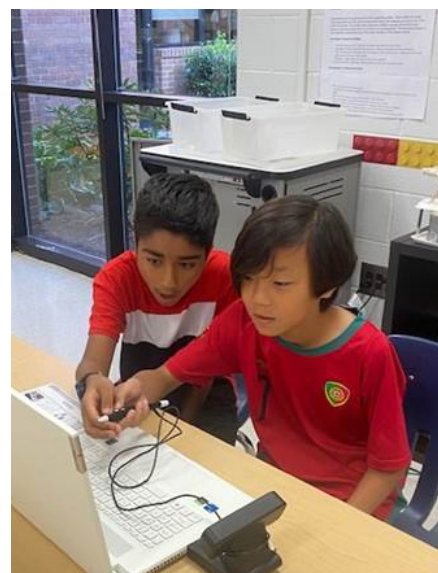
- Significant reduction in the number of dropouts.
- Increased virtual learning participation.
- Expanded access to career and technical programs, cultural experiences, and mobile learning opportunities.
- Summer learning programs grew to record levels, serving over 16,000 students in 2023, through face-to-face and virtual options.

## STORIES OF

## SUCCESS

The **Expanded Programs** initiative significantly broadened educational pathways for students by incorporating a variety of learning opportunities. This initiative included expanded Career Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) options, dropout prevention strategies, virtual learning expansion, cultural enrichment experiences, and mobile learning centers to reach underserved communities.

The **CTAE Expansion** provided both in-school and out-of-school career exploration opportunities. Highlights included the purchase of zSpace materials for eight elementary schools offering CTAE as part of their specials program, stipends for teachers completing the Computer Science Certification cohort, and the opening of **The Promise Career Institute (TPCI)** in August 2024. TPCI's launch followed 2.5 years of preparation, including the purchase of CTAE equipment and materials for certification pathways, and a shuttle bus to transport students to Atlanta Technical College. These efforts increased the number of students completing CTAE pathways and receiving industry certifications.



Students engage in virtual reality learning experience via the platform Zspace.

## EXPANDED PROGRAM OPTIONS: DIVERSE LEARNING PATHWAYS



**Dropout Prevention** strategies included **In-School Academies** aimed at reducing dropout rates and increasing graduation numbers and the expansion of **Student and Family Engagement (SAFE) Centers**. Originally launched at Banneker High School, the expansion now includes North Springs and Tri-Cities high schools and provides academic, social, and emotional support services.



The **Virtual Learning Expansion** extended the district's digital curriculum, covering

90% of courses for students in grades K-11. Middle and high school teachers received Canvas Learning Management System training to enable seamless integration of online learning. The expanded development of digital courses and technical support has ensured long-term sustainability.

The **Cultural Kaleidoscope** program provided over 41,000 elementary students with arts and cultural experiences, field trips, and study guides during the 2023-2024 school year. The initiative also introduced the **Museum Georgia Geography exhibit** and **Untying the Knot exhibit**, which engaged students in hands-on cultural and historical learning experiences.



5th graders attending a performance at the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.



Additionally, two **Mobile Learning Centers** were deployed to extend elementary science and STEM activities to students in the district and provide access to enhanced educational experiences in the community.

By embracing these diverse and innovative approaches, the Expanded Programs initiative has significantly enhanced access to high-quality education, reduced dropout rates, and increased student engagement across the district, positioning Fulton County Schools as a leader in educational innovation.

# BRIDGE TO SUCCESS 7 INITIATIVES & OUTCOMES

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: BUILDING CAPACITY



**Objective:** Develop high-quality leaders across the district.

**Key Elements:**

- Coaching and mentoring for school leaders.
- Professional Learning Communities for peer support.

**Success Indicators:**

- Enhanced leadership capacity.
- Improved school performance.
- Retention of skilled school leaders.

The **Leadership Certification Program** initiative was designed to cultivate and enhance leadership capacity across the district. With the growing need for highly qualified school leaders, this initiative offered a comprehensive program to develop current and aspiring leaders through coaching, mentoring, and high-quality professional learning opportunities.

## STORIES OF

# SUCCESS

The **Leadership Certification Program** was developed in partnership with Georgia State University (GSU) to provide a pathway for district educators to advance into assistant principal, principal, and even superintendent roles. Participants engaged in a rigorous curriculum taught by both GSU professors and district leaders, ensuring alignment with the school system's best practices. To support professional growth, Fulton County Schools covered all expenses, including tuition, textbooks, and practicum materials.

A standout feature of the program was the mentoring component, where participants were paired with experienced leaders to guide them through their certification journey. By investing in leadership development, the district ensured its schools were led by capable and visionary leaders, ready to drive student success and school performance. This not only strengthened the district's leadership capacity but also contributed to the long-term retention of highly qualified staff, setting the stage for ongoing success.





# BRIDGE TO SUCCESS 7 INITIATIVES & OUTCOMES

## STUDENT SAFETY: PROMOTING POSITIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS



**Objective:** Improve school climate through positive behavior and fair discipline.

**Key Elements:**

- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program.
- Fair discipline procedures and restorative practices.

**Success Indicators:**

- Reduced suspension.
- Improved student behavior.
- Positive feedback on PBIS and restorative practices.

### STORIES OF

### SUCCESS

The **Student Safety** initiative was designed to foster a safe and supportive learning environment for students by enhancing school climate and culture. This multi-faceted initiative aimed to improve student behavior through the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program and ensure fair discipline processes across the district.

Behavior interventions played a critical role in this initiative, offering support to students with disabilities and other behavioral needs. Academic interventionists worked closely with middle and high schools in Academic Zones 1-3, providing intense support through multi-tiered systems of support and collaborating with graduation coaches to implement the district's **Dropout Prevention** plan.



By addressing behavioral challenges and enhancing the overall school environment, the **Student Safety** initiative helped create a more positive and secure atmosphere for both students and staff. These combined efforts not only improved behavior management but also contributed to a more successful and engaging learning experience across the district.

# BRIDGE TO SUCCESS 7 INITIATIVES & OUTCOMES

## BUSINESS CONTINUITY: ENSURING STABILITY



**Objective:** Maintain district operations amid disruptions.

### Key Elements:

- Financial stability and program monitoring.
- Innovative solutions for continuous educational functions.

### Success Indicators:

- Seamless continuation of programs during the pandemic.
- Efficient use of financial resources.
- Positive stakeholder feedback.

The **Business Continuity** initiative ensured the seamless operation of district services amid the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative focused on maintaining financial stability, supporting district-wide operations, and implementing innovative solutions that allowed Fulton County Schools to continue providing high-quality education and services without disruption.



Key components of the initiative included the provision of **personal protective equipment (PPE)** for schools, clinics, and administrative buildings to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 as well as investing in employee wellness, which focused on the mental, physical, nutritional, and financial health of district staff. Programs such as mobile health units, annual health expos, and the creation of wellness rooms at school and administrative sites were expanded to promote well-being and boost morale.

The initiative also enhanced operational efficiency by introducing **school bus simulators** to train drivers, reducing accidents and providing funding for additional staffing and substitutes to support schools during reopening.

Throughout the pandemic, Fulton County Schools consistently monitored expenditures and ensured compliance with federal requirements. By addressing

the challenges of the pandemic head-on, this initiative allowed the district to safeguard the health of its students and staff, maintain essential services, and ensure the district's long-term operational stability.



STORIES OF

SUCCESS

# FUTURE PLANS AND SUSTAINABILITY:

## SUSTAINING THE PROGRESS AND INITIATIVES BEYOND FEDERAL FUNDING



As Fulton County Schools transitions out of the Bridge to Success plan and into the district's long-term strategic framework, sustaining the progress made through this initiative remains a key priority. The vision of the Bridge to Success plan served as a stepping stone and laid the foundation for the future. The success achieved using funding from the American Rescue Plan has provided invaluable experience and lessons that will guide the district moving forward.

Building on the Bridge to Success, Fulton County Schools' new strategic plan highlights its values of **Teamwork, Integrity, and Accountability**. These values serve as guiding principles as the district works to maintain the momentum created over the past three years. The cross-functional teamwork employed to manage and implement these initiatives — breaking down silos between departments — will remain a central feature of how the school system operates. Guided by data from program evaluation, the district will continue to support and build on the initiatives that focus on literacy, accelerate student learning, and prioritize student safety.

Ultimately, the Bridge to Success plan has set Fulton County Schools on a path to not only recover from the pandemic's impacts but to thrive in the years ahead. With strategic planning, careful resource allocation, and a continued commitment to core values, the progress made over the past three years will continue to benefit students, staff, and the broader community well into the future.





# SPECIAL RECOGNITION & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## LEADERSHIP & IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

*Fulton County Schools Board of Education*  
*Superintendent, Mike Looney, Ed.D.*

Marvin Dereef, Chief Financial Officer	Dr. Shannon Kersey, Assistant Superintendent, Learning and Teaching
Cliff Jones, Chief of Staff	Dr. Chris Matthews, Assistant Superintendent, Student Support Services
Brian Noyes, Chief Communications Officer	Dr. Ryan Moore, Executive Director, Strategy & Governance
Brannon Gaskins, Chief Academic Officer	Kenya Williams, Deputy Chief Information Officer
Dr. Gonzalo La Cava, Chief Human Resources Officer	Tracy Watson, Executive Director, Budget Services
Noel Maloof, Chief Operations Officer	Tim Dunn, Executive Director, Program Management
Dr. Joe Phillips, Chief Information Officer	Montreal Bell, Director, Grant Services
Julie Baldwin, Executive Director	William Graham, Project Manager
Greta Tinaglia, Deputy Chief Financial Officer	
Ynggrid Huff, Deputy Chief Operations Officer	
Dr. Eric Hollinhead, Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer	

## BRIDGE TO SUCCESS IMPLEMENTATION TEAM MEMBERS

### Every Child Reads

*Cliff Jones, Project Lead*  
Angela Parham  
Dr. Brooke Humphrey  
Keri-Ann Williams  
Dr. Chris Matthews  
Alexandra Bates

### Textbook Adoption

*Dr. Brooke Humphrey,*  
*Project Lead*  
Kelley Webb  
Angela Oldham

### Leadership Development

*Dr. Brian Keefer,*  
*Project Lead*  
Tracy Ware  
Latrina Cockrell  
Ronald Maxwell  
Dr. Chris Matthews

### Student Safety

*Dr. Chris Matthews,*  
*Project Lead*  
Dr. Tris Gilland  
Maribel Bell  
Dr. Kevin Scott

### Expanded Programs

*Brannon Gaskins, Project Lead*  
Yalanda Bell  
Dustin Davis-Austin  
Lisa Pizzuto  
Dr. Kibbey Crumbley  
Maribel Bell  
Ynggrid Huff  
Jena Sibille  
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### Business Continuity

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Lee Hill  
Dr. Eric Hollinhead  
Lynne Meadows  
Hoke Wilcox  
Noel Maloof

### FOCUS

*Yalanda Bell, Project Lead*  
Yasmine McKenzie

### ESSER Team Members

Montreal Bell  
William Graham  
Anica Golding  
Tammy McConnell  
Monica Croom  
Amanda Swerdlow

### *Additional Acknowledgments: Former Bridge to Success Team Members*

We are truly grateful to the work of this cross-functional team and appreciate the work of current and former Fulton County Schools team members who have been integral to the success of this project.

*Former School Board Members: Julia Bernath, Linda Bryant, Katha Stuart, and Katie Reeves*

Fulton County Schools Staff: Dr. Amy Barger, Jennifer Beard, Dr. Emily Bell, Jennifer Burton, Dr. Tamara Candis, Dr. Iris Im, Blake McGaha, Tara McGee, Dr. Chelsea Montgomery, Ava Sheffield, Ron Wade, and Dr. Gyimah Whitaker



The Bridge To Success Plan is Fulton County Schools' three-year comprehensive plan and transformational investment to help students recover from learning loss resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure student achievement, growth, and success.

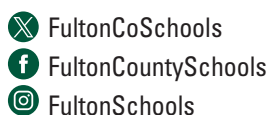
## BRIDGE TO SUCCESS PROGRAM INITIATIVES

Fulton County Schools identified the following program initiatives to support accelerated learning opportunities for students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **FOCUS** is a systematic approach to accelerate student learning through an equitable lens that includes extended time for student learning, high dosage, small group instruction, enhanced assessment, curriculum mapping and learning acceleration, universal supports, and parent engagement.
- **Every Child Reads** is a transformational, multi-year, five-pronged literacy reformed strategy to reach the district's literacy goal of 95% of all students reading at or above grade level.
- **Expanded Program Options** provides all students K-12 with innovative learning opportunities that include: CTAE expansion, enhanced learning experiences, dropout prevention strategies, virtual learning expansion, and mobile learning opportunities.
- **Student Safety** will help school staff and administrators to build capacity and restoratively improve school climate and culture through positive behavior interventions and supports and fair discipline processes and procedures.
- **Leadership Development** is high quality professional learning for principals, aspiring leaders, and other district leaders focused on coaching and developing leadership competencies.
- **Textbook Adoption** is the process of aligning K-12 Reading/ELA instructional resources to Georgia curriculum standards and the five pillars of reading.
- **Business Continuity** ensures the successful implementation of the Bridge to Success plan by supporting programs, services, and resources that prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19 and ensures the district is able to continue the work of the organization by offsetting financial losses, and monitoring program expenditures, and finding innovative ways to continue business as usual.



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## FUNDING

To fund the Bridge to Success Plan, Fulton County Schools has received financial support from three federal COVID-19 relief funding packages.

- **ESSER I - CARES Act** (Coronavirus Aid, Relief & Economic Security)
- **ESSER II - CRRSA Act** (Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriations)
- **ESSER III - ARP** (American Rescue Plan)

## LEARN MORE!



Questions about the BridgeTo Success plan can be sent to: [ARP\\_ESSER@fultonschools.org](mailto:ARP_ESSER@fultonschools.org)








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