

DCSD Highlights



2023-2025

Strategic Vision and Governance >>>

From 2023 to 2025, the DeKalb County School District (DCSD) made significant progress guided by its 2024–2029 Strategic Plan and input from over 11,000 stakeholders. The district strengthened accountability, raised graduation rates, expanded equity initiatives, and enhanced instruction, technology, and safety. Steering committees are now in place to provide clear timelines, resources, budgets, and accountability.

Access and Opportunity

- Districtwide **Access & Opportunity Audit** completed; new **Elementary Athletics Program** introduced.
- **Student Mentorship & Partnerships** Department established, supporting attendance, behavior, and grades.

Accountability, Research, and Data

- **“Reality Checks”** for continuous improvement; **27 public dashboards**, 295 data projects, and 441 surveys completed.
- **Early Warning System (MARS)** implemented to monitor at-risk students.

Community Engagement and Communications

- Launched the **DeKalb Schools Educational Foundation**, raising \$100K+ for schools; over \$56 million in new grants and donations secured by DCSD
- Redesigned **district website** after a decade; launched new **Board Report** and **Weekly Digest** newsletters; Increased bilingual outreach, positive media coverage, DSTV programming, **GED/ESL programs**, and community volunteerism.

Curriculum and Instruction

- **Graduation rate 81.4% (2025)** – highest in a decade; 18 of 23 high schools improved.
- **Early Literacy & HB 307:** K–3 universal screeners (ISIP/Amira), 95 Phonics Core Program, and 85% teacher training in structured literacy.
- **Math growth:** 24 schools named GaDOE Math Leaders; six teachers won state awards.
- **CTAE/STEAM:** 25 industry-certified pathways; EOPA pass rate up to 77%; WBL enrollment up 14%.
- **Acceleration Academy:** reclaimed 76 students (121 courses completed).

Federal Programs and Grants

- Utilized over **\$486 million (ESSER I–III)** to fund summer learning, curriculum, devices, safety upgrades, HVAC/roof repairs, and **IGNITE Interns** teacher pipeline.
- **Robert Shaw Elementary** named 2024 National Title I Distinguished School.

Technology and Cybersecurity

- Refreshed **92K student and 11.5K staff devices**; four-day repair turnaround.
- **Network upgrades:** modern firewalls, increased bandwidth, and resilient architecture; **AI Task Force** and district AI Roadmap launched.





Finance and Operations

- **Three consecutive millage rate reductions**; + 6% salary increase FY24; teacher pay structure revamped FY25.
- Improved **vendor payments** from 13% to 87% on-time; \$20 million in efficiency savings.
- **Capital Projects**: \$1.02 B investment in 100+ projects (80% of schools); \$450 M in delayed projects completed.

Public Safety

- District-wide **Centegix panic system** and **Evolv** weapons-detection system for secondary schools; **Active Shooter drills** county-wide.
- **76 Elementary Security Associates** hired; SROs in all middle and high schools.

Human Resources and Leadership

- **Zero teacher vacancies** achieved for 2025–26 SY through targeted recruitment.
- **IGNITE Teacher Residency** graduated two cohorts; third underway and **Para-to-Teacher** Program supports 27 participants toward degrees.

Legal Services

- Reconstituted **Office of Legal Affairs** with six specialized practice areas.
- Reduced outside counsel costs; completed policy revisions; internalized contract review and training programs.

Schools and Leadership

- **Robert Shaw** Title I National Distinction, **Cedar Grove ES** National PBIS School, and **Kittredge and Wadsworth Magnet Schools** ranked #1 and #2 statewide (US News).
- 96% of Horizon schools improved content mastery; **ACT** scores average 22.3 (above state and national); expanded **SAT** Prep districtwide (+1,420 participants).

Student Services and Wrap-Around Supports

- Increased by 47% population of newly identified **gifted students**
- Significantly decreased disproportionality in **gifted education** - by ethnicity and special programs
- Expanded **PreK** offerings to continue to propel the largest PreK program in Georgia
- **Early Learning**: “Cradle Through Kindergarten” Campaign; 90+ Pre-K staff trained in Science of Reading.
- **Exceptional Education**: 2,393 evaluations (91% compliance); psychologists increased to 59; SWD graduation rate +5 pts (72.3%).
- **English Learners**: New Master Plan through 2028; 1,830 students exited ESOL (+44%).
- **Gifted Education**: 100+ endorsements earned; 1,900+ parents engaged.
- **Counseling**: Class of 2025 earned \$210 M in scholarships; attendance up to 92.46%.
- **Behavior and Climate**: 32% fewer suspensions; expanded MTSS/PBIS schools (60 recognized).
- **Health and Wellness**: Two School-Based Health Centers opened with two more underway; first school grocery store opened at MLK HS.

