



# Level Up Atlanta

Minecraft Student Build Challenge  
2025-2026

## STUDENT GUIDE



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**Welcome, innovators, designers, and future leaders, to the 2025-2026 Level Up Student Minecraft Build Challenge!** We are thrilled to launch this incredible partnership between Atlanta Public Schools, the City of Atlanta, and Microsoft. The future of our city is not just something to be talked about; it's something to be built, and we believe you are the architects of that future. We can't wait to see how you use your creativity and ingenuity within Minecraft Education to tackle real-world issues and design a more connected, equitable, and resilient Atlanta. Your fresh perspectives are exactly what our city needs, and we are excited to see your solutions for building a future where every resident can thrive. Let the building begin!

## **OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND**

Atlanta Public Schools has partnered with the City of Atlanta and Microsoft to bring an authentic real-world design challenge to all students.

The design challenge is to engage you, our students, in an authentic learning task embedded in a custom-built Minecraft world of one of Atlanta's four initiatives. The challenge itself was designed in collaboration with Atlanta Public Schools and the City of Atlanta and is aimed at inviting you to be actively involved in the future developments of Metro Atlanta.

Once the challenge is officially open for submissions from **October 27 – December 6, 2025**, your teacher will be able to work through the challenge with you and incorporate the challenge into their curriculum in a way that suits your needs. The challenge consists of four areas of focus aligned to the mayor's vision for Atlanta. You will incorporate two out of the four challenges to address in your build and will be supported by real-world experts in-game.

The City of Atlanta is seeking to further engage Atlanta's youth in developing the future of our city. There is a great deal of work being done by the city to consider and plan how we can create a future where every resident can thrive.

## **WHAT IS LEVEL UP ATLANTA STUDENT MINECRAFT BUILD CHALLENGE?**

The Level Up Atlanta Student Minecraft Build Challenge is a powerful multidisciplinary exercise that blends STEAM education with civic engagement and local history.

This initiative is an opportunity for you to not only participate in shaping our city's future, but also to connect with the City of Atlanta's vision for an "Opportunity for All." We believe your insights, unbound by traditional constraints, can offer fresh perspectives on building a more connected, equitable, and sustainable city.

### **Design Prompt:**

Building an Equitable and Resilient City: How can we create a future where every resident can thrive?

## Challenge Overview:

**Last year, we asked how you can envision a connected, equitable, and sustainable future for our city. This year, we're taking action.** The City of Atlanta is committed to creating an "Opportunity for All," ensuring every resident can thrive. Your mission is to harness the power of Minecraft to design and build a model city district that directly addresses critical challenges facing our urban environment.

- Your design must be a synthesis of creativity and thoughtful planning, demonstrating how a community can be connected, climate-ready, historically grounded, and food-secure.
- In the challenge students will use Minecraft Education to:
  - Visit and explore Atlanta Airport, downtown Centennial Park, the Stitch(Interstate 75/85 & Interstate 20), the Beltline, and Five Points.
  - Speak with and learn from a variety of experts from the City of Atlanta.
  - Design and build a model city district that directly addresses critical urban challenges. Builds must be a blueprint for an "Opportunity for All" by intentionally incorporating solutions for at least two of the following four mission areas:
    - **Connecting Neighborhoods: Bridge divides with community-focused designs for shared, public spaces.**
    - **Climate Resilience: Create sustainable, resilient spaces through green infrastructure and innovative design.**
    - **Historic Revitalization: Give new, vibrant purpose to a historically significant area while preserving its character.**
    - **Food Security: Design innovative solutions (like urban farms or distribution hubs) to ensure healthy food access for all.**
- Submit a two-minute video overview of your build.

Your teacher will guide you through the challenge and support you in submitting your work to the APS Minecraft challenge submission page. If you are working on your own or with the support of your parents and/or guardians, ask them to help you contact your teacher.

## Design Challenge Student Planning

### Challenge Prompt

We want you to build a space that answers this question:

How might we reimagine our public spaces to enrich the lives of metro Atlantans and strengthen our community?

Which two of these four options do you want to focus on?

**You will incorporate two out of four of these options into your solutions:**



- **Option A: Physical Spaces:**

- **Challenge Overview:** This prompt encourages students to think about how physical spaces can bring people together. They might consider:
  - ♣ **Community hubs:** Designing a new community center, library, or public market that serves as a central gathering place for multiple neighborhoods.
  - ♣ **Shared spaces:** Reimagining existing public spaces like parks or plazas to be more inclusive and welcoming to people from different backgrounds.
  - ♣ **Transportation equity:** Building new bridges, walkways, or public transit connections that link previously isolated communities.



- **Option B: Historic Revitalization:**

- **Challenge Overview:** This prompt challenges students to become urban planners and historians. They will need to research a specific historic location and design a new purpose for it. Potential areas could include:
  - ♣ **Old Fourth Ward:** Reimagining a new purpose for a historic building or lot that honors the area's rich history.
  - ♣ **Sweet Auburn:** Revitalizing a key section of Auburn Avenue to create new business opportunities while preserving its legacy.
  - ♣ **The Gulch:** Designing a new purpose for this historic rail yard that incorporates its past into a new design.



- **Option C: Food Insecurities:**

- **Challenge Overview:** This challenge focuses on a critical community issue—access to healthy food. Students could design:
  - ♣ **Urban farms:** Creating vertical farms, rooftop gardens, or community gardens in food deserts to provide fresh produce.
  - ♣ **Mobile Food Solutions:** Building a design for a mobile market or food pantry that can serve multiple neighborhoods.
  - ♣ **Community kitchens:** Designing a central kitchen or learning space where residents can learn to cook and share meals.



- **Option D: City Planning:**

- **Challenge Overview:** This prompt is about using nature to improve the city. Students would design a series of connected green spaces that:
  - ♣ **Connect parks:** Create a network of trails or greenways that link existing parks and public spaces.
  - ♣ **Incorporate nature:** Design new habitats for local wildlife within the urban environment.
  - ♣ **Improve air quality:** Use plants and trees to create natural air purifiers in key areas.

Make sure you're thinking about everyone in and around the city of Atlanta. Design for people of different sizes, different ages, people with disabilities, people who come from different countries, or those who speak different languages.

## **CHALLENGE WALKTHROUGH**

**Now that you have the information about the design challenge, let's learn more about the sites within Minecraft World.** The Level Up Atlanta Student Minecraft World contains five sites. The Learning Sites provide information to support student ideas. The Build sites are locations that allow you to create solutions to the design challenge.

### **World Locations**

- **Learning Sites:**
  - Atlanta Hartsfield Jackson International Airport (*Learning Site*)
  - The Stitch(Intersection of I-75/85 & I-20) (*Learning Site*)
  - Centennial Park (*Learning Site*)
- **Build sites:**
  - 5 Points(Two Peachtree Street)
  - The Beltline

## **FLOW OF THE GAME**

### **Atlanta Airport**

You will spawn into Atlanta Hartfield Jackson International airport where you will be greeted by Mayor Andre Dickens and Monica Pearson who will inform you of each location, the challenges you will face, and an overview of the build challenge.



You will then explore Centennial Park, The Stitch, Five Points and the Beltline. These nearby environments will allow you to interact with various nonplayer characters (NPCs) that will help set the stage for the challenge. You will be guided and transported between sites by the Level Up Atlanta Guide which will act as a portal. You can navigate between build-sites where you will be given the opportunity to redesign that space with a focus on building a connected, equitable and sustainable future that moves Atlanta forward.



Once completed, you will connect with your teacher to share your design. Your teacher will assist with your final submission in the form of a two-minute video.

### **Submitting Your World Build**

1. Be sure to review the Level Up Atlanta Rubric to ensure that you have answered all parts of the rubric.
2. Utilize Google Vids or your Chromebook Screen recorder to share your ideas and to display your build. Make sure your voice is clear so we can hear you share your build's details.
3. If you don't want to include your voice, you can use text on the screen.
4. Type your grade level, school name, and any other important information in the caption.
  - a. You do not need to put your name in the caption. Only include your first name if it's different from your login name.

5. Upload your recording to your Google Drive/One Drive. If you need assistance, reach out to your teacher.
6. After finishing your build and your recording, go to the Level Up Atlanta Submission Link. Click on the submission link at the end of this guide. Complete the submission form. Be sure to check the permissions of your recording so that it can be viewed by anyone.
7. All student entries must be submitted to the submission page by the deadline of **5:00 pm on December 6, 2025**
8. Your submission will be reviewed, and valid submissions will be shared on the District & Instructional Technology Social Media pages.
9. Winners will be contacted in January 2026.

You must respond to the topic to submit your video. You will present your build via a **two-minute max** screen recording as you explain your build with an emphasis on how your build is providing solutions to issues that the city is currently facing. You will also address how your Minecraft build addresses two of the four areas of the Moving Atlanta Forward Agenda (Connecting Neighborhoods, Climate Resilience, Historic Revitalization, Food Security). You can access the Submission form below and respond to the topic by uploading your screen recording of your build.

## **LEVEL UP ATLANTA SUBMISSION LINKS**

All builds will be submitted using the **Level Up Atlanta Submission Links**.

Elementary School Submission- <http://tinyAPS.com/?2025LevelUpElementarySubmission>

Middle School Submission Form- <http://tinyAPS.com/?2025LevelUpMiddleSubmission>

High School Submission Form- <http://tinyAPS.com/?2025LevelUpHighSubmission>

## **LEVEL UP ATLANTA RUBRIC**

In Level Up Atlanta, you will assume the role of Metro Atlanta Planners under the challenge theme, “Building an Equitable and Resilient City: How can we create a future where every resident can thrive?”

Review the rubric below to ensure you have prepared a solution based on two of the four options.

### **SUBMISSION RUBRIC**

	<b>Beginning</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
<b>The craftsmanship of the build reflects inclusive design for all Metro Atlanta residents (People who are different sizes, different ages, people with disabilities, people who come from different countries or those who speak different languages).</b>	The build is designed without a clear representation of inclusion. (10 points)	The build is designed with a basic representation of inclusion. (25 points)	The build is designed to clearly highlight inclusion for at least 2 groups. (40 points)	The build is designed to clearly highlight inclusion for at least 3 different groups. (50 points)
<b>The build shares reasoning/solutions of how the design responds to the chosen prompts.</b>	Build does not provide a solution to the chosen prompts (10 points)	Build provides a solution to one of the chosen prompts. (25 points)	Build provides a solution to two of the chosen prompts. (40 points)	Build provides detailed solutions that describe how the design is connected to two or more of the chosen prompts and explains a direct connection of the prompts. (50 points)

## **DESIGN CHALLENGE PLANNING DOCUMENT**

*These are questions to help brainstorm your ideas and guide your build. You don't have to specifically answer them in your video.*

What does it mean to you to have a safe, healthy, and connected neighborhood?

After reviewing the Stitch (Interstate 75/85 & Interstate 20), what are two key takeaways that could be incorporated into your build?

As you start planning and designing, think about all the people that live around you. What innovative solution would strengthen your community and make it a better, more sustainable place to live?

## **Design Challenge Student Planning Document**

Use this white space below to plan & sketch your design before you build it in Minecraft Education.

## STUDENT GLOSSARY

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Example</b>
Affordable	When something is inexpensive or reasonably priced. <u>Affordable housing</u> costs should be less than 30% of a household's monthly income. According to <u>ZipRecruiter</u> the average monthly income in Atlanta is \$5932/month.	As you travel further from the city homes typically cost less and are more affordable.
Connected	When something is connected, it is joined together.	MARTA train tracks allow North Atlanta to be connected to South Atlanta. 
Food Insecurity	The condition of not having access to sufficient food, or food of an adequate quality, to meet one's basic needs.	Nearly 1 in 8 Georgians are living with food insecurity.  <b>STOP HUNGER NOW</b>
Innovative	Means to introduce new ideas; original and creative in thinking	The auto company's new car is innovative. 
Revitalize	Means to make something grow	The mayor hopes to revitalize the city. 
Sustainable	Is the idea of preserving resources for current and future generations and reducing the impact on the environment.	Many communities have worked to become more <u>sustainable</u> by implementing recycling programs to reduce waste. 
Transform	Make a thorough or dramatic change in the form, appearance, or character of something.	Real estate investors are fixing up old, run down houses and transforming them into beautiful homes.