



District Academic Report – May 2025

Chief Dr. Triscilla Weaver

Access and Opportunity

Our team spent the month of May reviewing, discussing, and presenting the findings from our Access and Opportunity Audit. On May 5, we met with senior cabinet members to share key findings from the report. Cabinet members had the opportunity to discuss the results collectively and begin considering the next steps. Each member received a full copy of the report for individual review. Superintendent Dr. Horton charged each chief with the responsibility of developing at least three **MIRACLES priorities** to address the audit findings.

The following week, representatives from Public Consulting Group (PCG) visited the district to:

- Present the audit findings to the full board, and
- Lead an action-planning session with senior cabinet members and a representative of their choice.

The purpose of the planning session was to help chiefs identify the district's most urgent needs based on the audit findings and begin developing MIRACLES priorities for their respective divisions. Additionally, we presented the audit results to leaders from the Access and Opportunity Division (6 members), the Division of Student Services (75 members), and the School Innovation Team (17 members).

We developed a phased rollout plan to ensure district-level personnel and various Advisory Councils and Committees (e.g., Bilingual Advisory Committee, Principal Advisory Council [PAC] members) have opportunities to attend sessions and learn about the audit findings. Our goal is for all internal leaders to be familiar with the findings by the end of July. Starting in August, we will host town hall meetings in each board district to allow all other stakeholders to engage with the results.

We also convened the Field Trip Committee to finalize the field trip guidance document. Members had the chance to offer final edits, comments, and recommendations. The group then discussed the next steps for implementation.

Our **E3: Consulting** learning series continued this month, focusing on best practices for presenting audit findings.

Finally, we supported the Half Cap and Graduation ceremonies.

Executive Director Myss Johnson-Jelks**Athletics**

As the academic year ends, we have successfully wrapped up all playoff and championship games. It has truly been an outstanding year in athletics! Our new elementary athletics program has taken off, with 90 percent of elementary schools (ES) participating in one or more activities. Participation in middle school (MS) athletics and a significant rise in female involvement at the high school (HS) level have also increased. Preparations for the upcoming fall sports season are well underway, including finalizing schedules, placing orders for necessary equipment and supplies, and finalizing the budget for the next year. Additionally, we have been creating processes and procedures to ensure fiscal responsibility throughout the department.

Last week, we proudly hosted our Spring Sports Awards Ceremony to recognize the achievements of our student-athletes, coaches, and special honorees.

The ongoing review and update of our Athletic Handbooks and standard operating procedures (SOP) continues. I am collaborating closely with our director of athletics to ensure consistent alignment throughout the department. Additional information about our current initiatives is outlined below.

Director Brandon Lane**Athletics**

Over the past month, I have collaborated with multiple departments to enhance athletic programming and support academic initiatives. I worked closely with our executive director and Finance Department to finalize this year's budget and begin strategic planning for next year, ensuring adequate funding and exploring sponsorship and partnership opportunities. We also met with Northside to confirm athletic trainer coverage at all 19 high schools for the school year (SY) 2025–2026. We collaborated with the Operations Division to ensure that training facilities meet the needs of student-athletes. Additionally, our department has actively supported other district programs and departments by helping spread awareness, sharing resources, and assisting with various events and campaigns across the district.

To remain connected with our students and school communities, I attended multiple sporting events—both within and outside the county—to support our athletic coordinators and ensure the smooth operation of these events. I also attended ES sports banquets and academic celebrations, such as graduations and half-cap ceremonies. These efforts reflect a commitment to supporting students not only as athletes but as well-rounded individuals, reinforcing the importance of both academic and extracurricular achievement.

Director Kina M. Champion**School Innovation****Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation**

Georgia law requires an annual review of all charter school authorizers to assess their “adherence to the principles and standards of charter school authorizing practices” approved by the State Board of Education (SBOE). The evaluation tool is based on 15 standards of quality in the *Georgia Principles and Standards for Charter School Authorizing* approved in December 2021. On May 8, evaluators from the National Association of Charter School Authorizers facilitated an orientation for charter school authorizers across Georgia. The first phase of the process—a desk audit, resource upload, and self-assessment survey—began immediately after and culminated on May 30. Subsequent phases of the process include school surveys and focus groups, a debrief for the authorizer, and rubric completion. By June 2026, the School Innovation Department will address 100 percent of the findings and recommendations from the evaluation by creating an action plan with specific tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals for each identified area. Progress will be measured by quarterly check-ins and documentation of completed tasks, with a final report summarizing actions taken and outcomes achieved.

Feedback on SY25-26 Principal Advisory Council Bylaws

PACs play a vital role in strengthening the connection between schools and the communities they serve. Ensuring that the bylaws guiding PAC operations are clear, relevant, and reflective of the district’s core values is essential to maintaining effective governance and engagement. The DeKalb County School District (DCSD) is committed to transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement. As part of this commitment, the district seeks input from PAC members and the broader community on the proposed bylaws for the SY25–26. Community stakeholders may send feedback to schoolgovernance@dekalbschoolsga.org by July 31. You can access the draft [SY25-25 PAC Bylaws](#) online.

PAC Engagement in the Principal Selection Process

The PAC's role in the principal selection process is advisory as specified in Regulation BBFA-R (1): Local School Councils. During May, the School Innovation Department facilitated 14 focus groups with PAC members as part of their schools’ principal selection processes.

Executive Director Sarita Smith**Student Assignment**

The Student Assignment Team has demonstrated exceptional commitment to strategic engagement and operational excellence throughout May. Our active participation in the Georgia Association of Black School Educators Conference showcased a dedication to professional development and collaboration with broader educational stakeholders. In alignment with systemic improvement efforts, we have successfully completed 136 school

visits, fostering direct engagement with school leaders to discuss buildings, boundaries, and programs. The Student Assignment Project (SAP) continued its momentum, holding three key meetings despite one cancellation due to graduation-related events, ensuring sustained progress toward achieving equitable access to educational opportunities. Furthermore, the team recorded Episode 3 of *SAP at a Glance*, strengthening communication strategies to enhance transparency and stakeholder understanding of student placement initiatives. The onboarding process for new SAP members commenced, reinforcing the commitment to structured transitions and continuous capacity building.

Institutional partnerships were also strengthened this month, as the team engaged with Magnet Schools of America and Decide DeKalb, securing representation from each organization in SAP meetings beginning in the fall. The conclusion of the guiding principles meeting for programs marked a pivotal step in refining student placement criteria, with the website set to reflect all guiding principles by the week of June 9. Notably, the Sequoyah groundbreaking event signified infrastructural progress, further supporting student access and educational resources. Additionally, CLEAR training commenced for SAP members, fortifying their readiness to manage verification processes with precision. Verifying student information and addresses initiated a crucial data integrity effort, ensuring accurate placement decisions. The 10-month registrar meeting provided a vital forum for stakeholder feedback, yielding constructive insights that will inform future student assignment operations. Collectively, these achievements underscore the Student Assignment Team's steadfast dedication to systemic efficiency, equity, and stakeholder collaboration.

Director Dr. Char-Shenda Covington

Student Assignment

Equitable school choice seat distribution outcomes demonstrate a strategic and data-informed collaboration between student assignment, schools and leadership, finance, and operations. The initiative successfully provided all students equal educational opportunities by combining clear allocation methods with financial and operational information. Implementing predictive enrollment models alongside stakeholder feedback enabled process refinement to combat systemic disparities, improving family decision-making capabilities. Through cross-functional collaboration, we have pinpointed infrastructure and staffing needs that match our available resources against projected demands. Our team members collaborated with stakeholders throughout May to establish sibling policy guidelines for School Choice. This unified initiative shows our dedication to equity by making school choice a feasible and efficient option for every student.

Creating Summer Registration Hubs demonstrates a groundbreaking collaboration between our department, accountability, schools, and leadership. This is an effort to improve enrollment accessibility. These hubs bridge registration process gaps through comprehensive family support and multilingual assistance while providing real-time educational resource access. The initiative improves transparency and responsiveness in student enrollment through strategically

placed hubs throughout our district, accompanied by integrated accountability measures. The Vasco translation devices were provided to all team members to reduce language barriers. By adopting this proactive approach, we have strengthened the district's approach to inclusivity while making entry easier and delivering equal and effective support to families.

Executive Director Dr. Loukisha Walker

Student Mentorship and Partnerships

Family and Community Engagement Advocates

In May, the SMP Department continued its commitment to empowering and celebrating the critical work of FACE Advocates (FA). The month began with the FA Mini-Conference themed "The Power of One in Advocacy," which provided targeted professional development, reflection, and inspiration to close out the year strong. We also finalized the FA's Blueprint for Success, a comprehensive guide that outlines roles, expectations, and best practices to ensure consistency and clarity across the program. Additionally, FAs were recognized and celebrated for their dedication to improving student outcomes in behavior, attendance, and grades (BAG). Their efforts continue to make a transformative impact in schools throughout the district.

My Brother's Keeper/Our Sister's Keeper

The SMP Department proudly hosted the MBK/OSK Ubuntu Luncheons in May, bringing together students, mentors, and community leaders for a powerful celebration of growth and brotherhood/sisterhood. The luncheons were filled with positive energy and impactful moments, including inspiring keynote speakers who poured wisdom into our youth and challenged them to pursue excellence. Students received swag bags and participated in reflective and future-focused activities designed to reinforce purpose, identity, and leadership. These events served as a culminating celebration and a launching pad for continued development and success among our MBK and OSK participants.

Chief of Schools Michelle Dillard

Division of Schools and Leadership

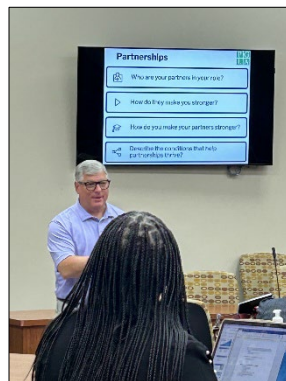
Monthly Summaries

May was filled with learning, leading, and celebrations. The Division of Schools and Leadership started the month with learning for area superintendents and executive administrators by Educational Forum's Dr. Pete Gorman. Principals and district leaders participated in Think Tank with Initiative One, where making laser sharp decisions was discussed.

May was testing season! Our division partnered with the Division of Accountability and Research to ensure a successful Georgia Milestones. We partnered with the Division of Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) to ensure the Student Success Skills Backpack (SSSB) defenses were held and the Valedictorians and Salutatorians were celebrated. We also hosted the May Principal Learning Opportunity (PLO) and Area Learning Opportunity. Leaders received awards for their school's participation in elementary athletics, this inaugural year, as well as Lifting Lexile Campaign Winners.

At the start of the month, we celebrated our 10th-grade students in their Half-cap ceremonies. We also celebrated teachers for Teacher Appreciation Week. As a team building exercise, we planned a week of derby activities. At the end of the month, we celebrated our graduates at the DCSD graduation ceremonies at the Georgia State Convention Center and the MIRACLES priorities we have completed.

The MS Area hosted a retirement celebration for Area Superintendent Ms. Jackie Taylor. She will be missed. We closed out the month and the year with an "all-clear" from every area!



Beth Kyle**Area 1 Elementary Schools**

May was a busy month helping schools prepare for the end of the year, end of grade (EOG) testing, working on Consolidated School Improvement Plans (CSIP), and planning for the summer and upcoming school year. The Area 1 Team has been busy supporting the schools to celebrate, reflect, and safely close out the year. Recent celebrations include winners from Dunwoody from in K, 1, 2, and fifth grade from Montgomery in the district Young Georgia Writers Contest. Hawthorne (1st) and Cary Reynolds (3rd) were recognized as winners in the district's "Attendance is your ticket to Success" campaign held during the second semester.

Terry D. Brown**Area 2 Elementary Schools**

Area 2 Elementary's May work focused on supporting school leadership teams with refining CSIPs for the upcoming school year. The Area 2 Support Team joined school leadership teams and worked side-by-side to clarify feedback and provide support for CSIP revision.

The Area 2 Support Team supported schools as needed with Georgia Milestones assessment preparation, joined end-of-year (EOY) celebrations, and closed out several one-on-one summative evaluation conferences. May's Learning Opportunity focused on how to better use the Georgia Climate Survey results to inform decision making and set priorities.

The Area 2 Support Team also joined in to support high school graduation ceremonies!

Ateshia Lester**Area 3 Elementary Schools**

In May, Area 3 coordinators supported schools by providing feedback on their CSIPs for SY25-26. Also, the team partnered with schools to support Georgia Milestone testing and created plans for scholars who needed to retest. The executive administrators engaged our principals in unpacking Georgia Climate Survey, Lexile and Professional Learning Communities (PLC) data to plan for the upcoming school year.

The Area 3 Team supported our local schools as they celebrated EOY activities, and we extended a job well done to Peggy Davis (Kelley Lake ES) and Dr. Keshier Smikle (Canby Lane ES) on their retirement.



Jacqueline Tayler

Area Middle Schools

In May, the MS area demonstrated strong coordination, strategic focus, and a commitment to excellence as the team worked collaboratively to support schools through critical EOY milestones. From academic planning and CSIP refinement to Georgia Milestones testing, English Learner (EL) reclassification, and leadership development, each coordinator played an essential role in ensuring schools were equipped for a successful closeout. This month's work reflects the strength of our collective efforts, with a clear focus on instructional alignment, student support, operational efficiency, and forward planning for a strong start to SY25–26.

Executive administrators played a key role in both instructional and celebratory capacities. They supported Milestones testing and participated in area CSIP reviews. At the Area Principal Meeting, they facilitated sessions on PLOs and building a culture of literacy. Their leadership was instrumental in principal and assistant principal (AP) retreat planning, and they contributed to an educational forum on principal coaching. Their presence was also felt at high school graduations and Half-cap ceremonies.

MS Area math coordinators focused on supporting schools with Georgia Milestones testing and guiding the selection of CSIP strategies tailored to each school's data. They reviewed schoolwide CSIP plans, progressing through a second round of feedback with a third round planned. In collaboration with the K–12 secondary math coordinator, they also began revising the pre- and post-assessments for grades 6–8 and prepared for summer training sessions focused on enhancing academic discourse, where they will both participate and promote teacher engagement.

Culture and climate (C&C) coordinators were actively involved in monitoring and improving school environments. They conducted monthly facility audits, participated in school attendance meetings, and supported discipline clean-up and student well-being through restorative circles and mediations. Following Georgia Milestones testing, they completed C&C meetings and continued offering support with CSIP finalization, progressive discipline planning, and parent engagement. They also volunteered at district HS graduations and supported various school events including eight-grade celebrations and field days. Weekly feedback was shared via the MS Virtual Data Dashboard to inform school improvement.

The Mental health coordinator provided consistent in-school presence and targeted assistance, particularly at four of the middle schools. Her efforts included comprehensive testing support, routine check-ins with faculty, and direct service to counseling departments. She played a key role in crisis response, attended the Principals Meeting and Think Tank, and contributed to the success of high school graduations across the district.

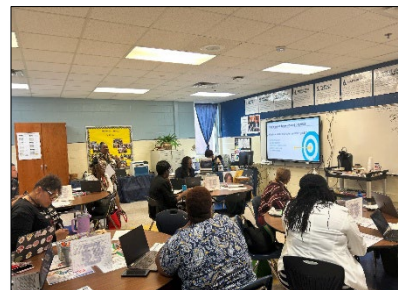
The Special education coordinator concentrated on EOY compliance and parent engagement. They supported Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS) testing, addressed parent concerns, and participated in Individual Education Program (IEP) meetings to ensure services aligned with student needs. Attendance at the monthly Lead Teacher for Special Education (LTSE) meeting allowed for collaboration on overdue IEPs and strategies to support compliance moving forward.

The English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) coordinator dedicated the month to wrapping up reclassification, testing, and documentation tasks. CSIP support was provided to 15 schools, with multiple feedback rounds to ensure alignment. Reclassification and EL documentation support was delivered to five schools, including a focused session at one school. Milestones testing was monitored at three schools. The coordinator also supported graduations, collaborated on summer retreat planning, and developed organizational checklists to guide closeout efforts. A parent meeting was held to address EL placement concerns, reflecting a holistic approach to support.

The English Language Arts (ELA) coordinator focused on content alignment, feedback, and future planning. They provided ELA-specific CSIP feedback to all 16 middle schools and supported leadership through principal and academic coach (AC) meetings at three schools. Participation in six graduation events, retreat planning sessions, and co-facilitation preparation ensured a seamless transition into summer leadership development. In collaboration with Horizon's ELA Team, she began StudySync alignment work and shared access information with schools. Additional efforts included observing classroom instruction at one school, partnering with ELA chair on department planning, and attending the Sequoyah groundbreaking. The coordinator also engaged in professional learning (PL) through a Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) literacy webinar, further enriching district ELA initiatives.

Thomas Glanton

Area High Schools



As we conclude the academic year, this summary provides a comprehensive overview of academic performance and instructional progress across our area high schools. It is intended to inform EOY planning and support data-driven decision-making as we prepare for a strong start to the upcoming school year.

Culture and Climate Coordinators

C&C coordinators delivered high-impact support to area high schools by focusing on key indicators of success: behavior, attendance, and academic performance (BAG). In addition, they played an instrumental role in coordinating field trips, processing grade change requests, and advancing Operation Graduation strategies.

ELA Coordinators

ELA coordinators supported all schools by providing timely feedback on CSIPs and Six Systems. They ensured a supportive presence at Half-cap and graduation ceremonies, participated in end-of-course (EOC) testing at assigned schools, and assisted with various EOY activities.

Mathematics Coordinator

The mathematics coordinator offered targeted support to schools, assisting directly with math priority areas identified in CSIP. Collaboration with ELA and C&I leaders helped facilitate PL sessions and led to data-driven improvements in instruction. The coordinator also conducted assessment audits, developed Milestones data projections, and assisted with graduation-related events.

Special Education Coordinator

The special education coordinator provided support to multiple high schools through IEP meetings, CSIP reviews, testing oversight, and direct collaboration with LTSEs. Additional contributions included guidance on special education procedures, active participation in graduation events, and involvement in leadership sessions, reinforcing a commitment to student outcomes and district alignment.

Multilingual Learner Coordinator

The multilingual learner coordinator supported schools through CSIP reviews, testing support, and active engagement in Half-cap and graduation ceremonies. Collaboration with ESOL leads and teachers ensured targeted assistance for at-risk multilingual learners.

Mental Health Coordinator

The mental health coordinator contributed to CSIP reviews, worked with C&C coordinators on College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) school climate scoring, and led activities for Mental Health Awareness Month. Additional responsibilities included providing crisis support, conducting wellness check-ins, assisting with graduation and Half-cap ceremonies, and publishing the monthly newsletter to maintain communication and resource sharing across the school community.

As we close the school year, the progress highlighted in this summary reflects the dedication of our students, teachers, and staff. While we celebrate our achievements, we remain committed to continuous improvement. Insights gained from this year's data will guide our planning for the upcoming academic year, ensuring a continued focus on high-quality instruction, equity, and student success.

Derrick Hardy**Area Horizon Schools**

May ushered in a season of support, recognitions and celebrations across all Horizon Area Schools.

Lithonia HS hosted its first listening and learning exchange motivated by student Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) representatives speaking at the DCSD Board of Education (BOE) meeting. This session brought together over 20 stakeholders to engage in student concerns that impact their success and progress.

Half-cap season continued for our rising 11th-grade scholars recognizing the progress they are making toward on-track cohort graduation in 2027.

Ronald E. McNair HS celebrated a scholar who earned \$3 million dollars in total scholarship calculations.

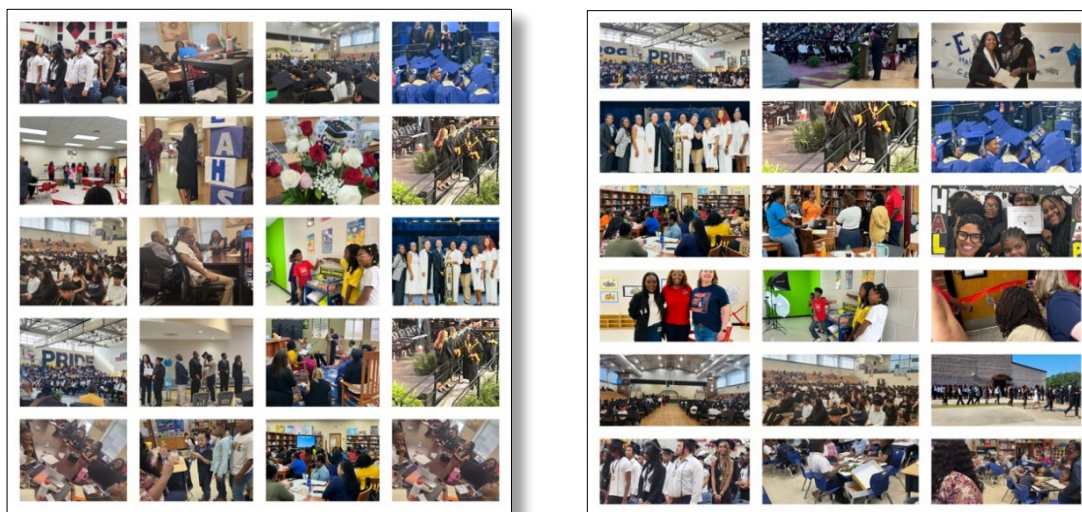
Chapel Hill ES modeled primary grades restorative practices for staff members to deepen their utilization of this critical whole child alternative to suspension.

Woodridge ES held its ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Innovate Labs-awarded Makerspace Laboratory.

Chapel Hill ES was honored with the 2nd place trophy for district-wide attendance performance.

The ELA coordinators partnered with Metro RESA to conduct a Reading professional learning session for Academic Coaches.

Lastly, we conducted eight (8.0) graduation ceremonies for each of our zone one high schools.



Michelle Jones

Area Specialty Schools

The Specialty Area has been **monitoring** and **celebrating** all month long, as these were the areas of focus for May. Our APs who serve as school testing coordinators (STC) did a great job with testing our students. Our area provided support during the Administration of Georgia Milestones Assessment. We also provided detailed feedback for CSIPs to all of our schools. We monitored the reclassification of ELs and EOY duties and responsibilities, fire drills, science of reading (SOR) completion, and evaluation completion. Our team has also supported our schools with hiring, as we monitor our vacancies.

The Specialty Area Team also supported the district's Half-cap ceremonies and the graduations throughout May. The team also provided PL during the May Area Learning Opportunity with school climate scores and CSIP planning. We even participated in the SSSB defenses for fifth grade. This will help us prepare to launch this district initiative area-wide next year.

We celebrated all month long! Our schools celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week, board recognitions, concerts, prom, field days, eighth-grade week, honors and awards programs, reading program celebrations, Moving on Celebrations, poster presentations at Fernbank Science Center (FSC), final walks, and senior Walks for those graduates returning to their elementary schools in their regalia. Kittredge competed in the state Science Olympiad and had students compete at the U.S. Chess Federation's Super National event. We celebrated Mr. David Russell receiving the "Difference Maker" Award. We also welcomed State Superintendent Richard Woods to Robert Shaw who received the first Hancock Cursive Writing Banner for the State of Georgia. On the same day, Robert Shaw also hosted their International Night.



Mike Kelly

Leadership Development

The DeKalb Principal Pathway (DPP)

Leadership Development met with the cohort on May 17. The primary focus was to provide the cohort with an opportunity to hear from our principal panel. Five principals shared their experiences and knowledge about how to make the transition from assistant principal to principal as smooth as possible. The cohort also received guidance on how to prepare for their EOY “Change Project” Presentations.

The DeKalb Leadership Institute

Leadership Development held its final monthly DeKalb Leadership Institute (DLI) session on May 1. DLI participants received training around a culmination and reflection around their learning for the SY24-25. There was also a celebration for their successful completion of the program. Lastly, DLI participants received insight on how to further develop and engage in future leadership opportunities to meet their goals of becoming a school principal.

DLI is transitioning to a program that will support teachers moving into the assistant principal’s role for SY25-26. Leadership Development has developed a rigorous application process complete with performance assessments. This program will be selective in nature as we work to find our future leaders with the most skills and potential. The program currently has 240+ applicants, and blind scoring of applications has begun.

Professional Learning Communities

Leadership Development is working closely with Solution Tree to design a plan for PL for SY25-26. The plan for moving forward with our PLC work and partnership includes building in school-level training to build model PLCs in each of the seven district areas with on-site school coaching.

Principal’s Learning Opportunity

Leadership Development provided oversight and planning for the PLO on May 15. The day of learning for our leaders consisted of the following: Lexile Awards, Access and Opportunity Awards, accountability, research federal programs and re-test/promotion/retention.



Performance Coaches Training

Leadership Development provided additional coaching on May 16 in tandem with the Leadership Academy Group to continue our coaching series for SY24-25. We focused directly on the implementation of the Goal, Reality, Options, and Will (GROW) coaching model complete with role playing practice sessions while others provided direct feedback on our work.

Graduations SY24-25

Leadership Development participated and supported the HS graduations by having all our department members work two full shifts, one weekday and one weekend shift. We were proud to support our families and students during this happy time.

MIRACLES Celebration SY24-25

Leadership Development was able to share two completed MIRACLES for SY24-25. We completed the DLI and the DPP.

Principal Hiring/Interviewing Process

Leadership Development has been supporting area superintendents with interviewing for all principal vacancies in the district.

Georgia School's Leadership Academy

Leadership Development applied, interviewed and was selected to participate in the Georgia School Leadership Academy (GSLA). This is truly an exciting opportunity. Our district GSLA Team will participate in this two-year cohort. The team is preparing for the GSLA Summer Launch in July in Dublin, Ga. We are excited to have our initiatives, procedures and goals audited by a premier agency that is well versed in this work of leadership programs.

Ayana S. Smith

Professional Learning Department

During May, the Professional Learning Department focused on Strategic Goal Area 1 (student academic success with equity and access) and Goal Area 3 (recruit, develop, and retain talent). We begin the month as a department celebrating our Educators Preparation Program (which includes DCSD Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (TAPP) and DCSD endorsement programs: EL, Teacher Support and Coaching (TSC), and Gifted) receiving reaccreditation by meeting all standards set by the Ga Professional Standards Commission! [DCSD EPP Final Report](#)



This month we finalized all PL sessions at schools and developed our department's vision and mission "Reignited Our Why: Vision and Mission Refresh with the PL Team." The session was the perfect blend of fun and purpose—reminding us of the "why" behind our work and reigniting our shared commitment to PL. PL facilitators are continuing the work of supporting schools with implementing PLCs by completing EOY surveys with all school leaders to obtain data in supporting the implementation of PLC work in their individual schools next year.

Professional Learning Facilitator (PLF) J. Fuller conducted the HB671 course in the spring with 18 participants who all completed the course and demonstrated deepened understanding and commitment to inclusive education through their final presentations and has conducted his final customer service series (session 8) with the Division of Operations. PLF C. Crittenden collaborated with the Division of Continuous Improvement, Research and Accountability to develop a CSIP Canvas platform. She created Canvas Module 3: the CSIP Peer Review Progress Monitoring Tool. Its purpose is to help schools start the year with a strong plan for continuous improvement, using structured peer feedback. A key part of this process is implementing PLCs, where educators collaborate to improve teaching and learning. This supports the MIRACLES framework's "C"—a commitment to accountability—by promoting strong leadership, teamwork, and clear expectations across the district. PLF T. Norwood mailed and delivered 100 H-PRIDE Integrity Endorsement Packages to completers across the district (35+ schools, seven departments, four divisions represented) which included a personalized H-PRIDE Integrity Certificate that documented each completers' CSIP priority area and corresponding strategies, an H-PRIDE integrity pin, and a thank you card from Champion Dillard.

Field Experience Coordinator II C. Seroyer

This month the Future Georgia Educator's Signing Day (May 7) was held in collaboration with the Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) Department. We celebrated 17 future DCSD teachers from our pathway programs, announced their college plans, and had them share with us what they would like their students to say about them in 20 years. Twenty-six (non-employee) candidates completed their final student teaching experience, and we have officially started reviewing candidate placements for fall 2025.

DCSD Teacher Academy of Pedagogy and Preparation – Coordinator II Dr. M. Thompson

DCSD TAPP had 16 completers of the program who are now fully certified! They celebrated on May 15 for their hard work! Dr. Thompson had the pleasure of facilitating a session at the Georgia Professional Standards Commission Teacher Pipeline Summit. This interactive summit focused on strengthening the educator workforce. The summit provided a forum for sharing innovative practices and strategies to recruit, prepare, and retain diverse and effective teachers, particularly teachers of color.



Teacher Support and Coaching/New Teacher Educator Team/New Teacher Orientation – Coordinator II Dr. L. Turner

TSC endorsement site visits are designed to assess the 56 TSC candidates' implementation of mentoring and coaching strategies (aligned to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GAPSC) TSC, Coaching and Service Leader Standards). I served as a member of the DCSD Georgia Future Educators Signing Day (celebrated on May 7) Committee. DCSD Teacher of the Year (TOTY) and TSC, Dr. L. Robbins, was one of the guest speakers. The EOY New Educator Team (NETwork) Induction Program Seminar (May 6) featured the participants sharing how they implemented strategies learned during the monthly induction seminars and the impact of the implementation in their classroom (including student data) during the Content Breakout Session PLCs. The TSC EOY Recognition Seminar (May 12) celebrated the mentoring and coaching accomplishments of TSC candidates and veterans.

Overall, the PL Department is springing with support this month. Supported 16 high schools' Half-cap ceremony, collaborated with four divisions and eight departments, and supported ES and MS EOY programs.



Chief Dr. Norman C. Sauce III

Student Services

May was celebratory and productive for Dr. Norman C. Sauce III, Chief of Student Services. Dr. Sauce had the opportunity to spend time at, attend special events for, and directly support the following schools during May: Chamblee, Cross Keys, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Elizabeth Andrews, Lakeside, Lithonia, McNair, Southwest DeKalb, Stone Mountain, Towers, and Tucker High Schools; Sequoyah Middle School; Dunaire, Snapfinger, and Indian Creek Elementary Schools; Margaret Harris Comprehensive School, DeKalb School of the Arts, and DeKalb Early College Academy.

He began the month by attending a Half-cap Ceremony at Tucker High School, recognizing students nearing graduation, and conducting a check-in at Southwest DeKalb High School with the principal to collaborate around exciting school initiatives underway. Shortly thereafter, he participated in Signing Day with College AIM at Clayton State University and met with Communities in Schools of Georgia around ongoing school needs and services. After participating in the Curriculum Steering Committee meeting, Dr. Sauce also attended a Half-cap Ceremony at McNair HS. His commitment to school-level engagement continued with a visit to Dunaire Elementary for school support check-in. He demonstrated appreciation for his team by hosting a lunch for the Division of Student Services leads, fostering a spirit of unity and recognition.

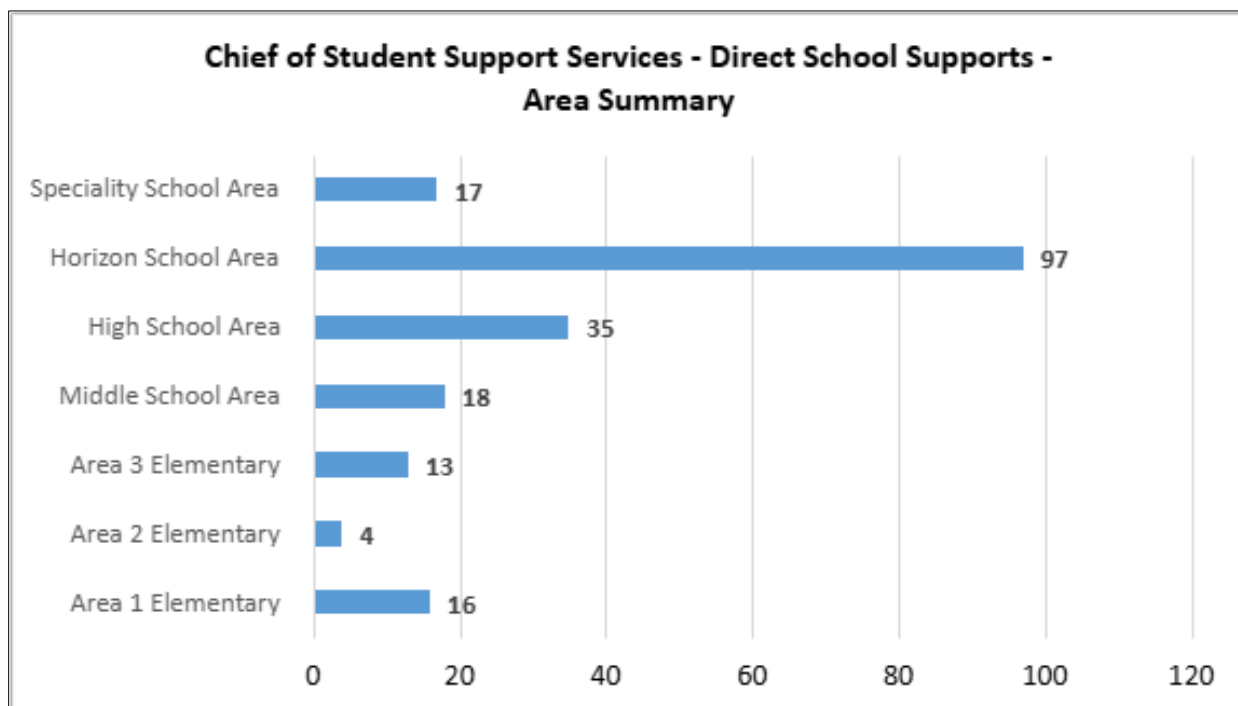
Throughout the month, Dr. Sauce remained active in broader educational conversations by attending the Department of Education's teacher focus group session, where educators across multiple levels discussed key updates and voiced important feedback. He also participated in the Access and Opportunity planning session, the Advisory Board Meeting on May 12, and the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Sequoyah Middle and High School. In his leadership role, Dr. Sauce continued conducting employee evaluation conferences with the Division Leadership Team and maintained bi-weekly department check-ins to ensure alignment and performance. He also visited a Pre-K 4 classroom at Snapfinger ES and celebrated educators by attending the TAPP Teachers' Celebration and the Margaret Harris graduation ceremony. Additionally, he contributed to district communications by participating in the Principals' Communication Committee meeting. A highlight of the month was the Division of Student Services Retreat, held on May 20, where all departments came together to review data, share updates, and reaffirm their collective mission.

As the academic year neared its close, Dr. Sauce attended moving-up ceremonies at the Early Learning Center and supported various high school graduation events across the district. On May 27, he attended the MIRACLES Closeout Workshop, where all divisions presented year-end reflections. Despite a month full of celebrations and large-scale events, Dr. Sauce consistently

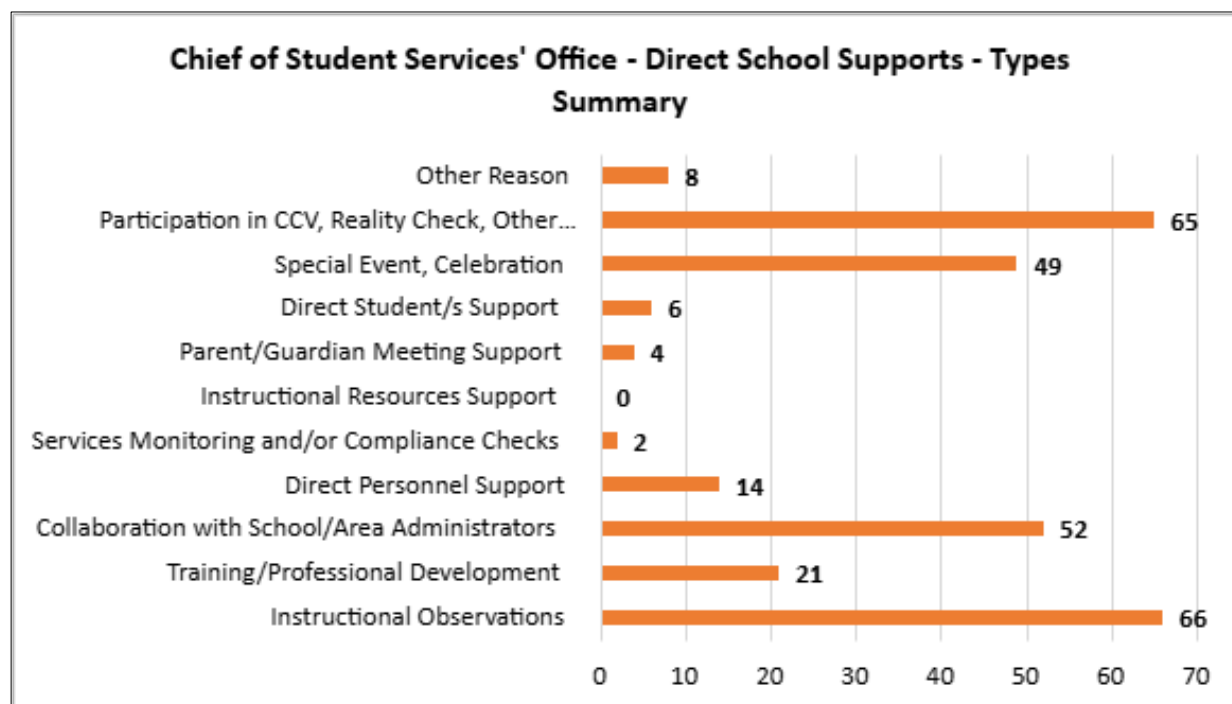
prioritized his leadership duties, continued regular check-ins with department leaders, and conducted performance evaluations through the DeKalb Keys evaluation framework. May was a month of celebration and strategic action. Dr. Sauce's presence at schools, meetings, and milestones exemplifies his dedication to serving all learners and supporting the growth and excellence of DeKalb's educational community.



Direct School Supports by Chief of Student Services' Office Since the Start of the School Year



Types of Direct School Supports by Chief of Student Services' Office Since the Start of the School Year



Executive Director Dr. Evelyn Hall

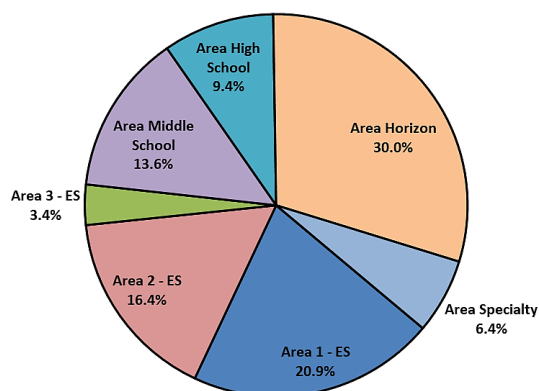
English Learners

Registration and Interpretation

International Student Screening Center Registration

The ISSC continuously registers and screens students throughout the school year. The ISSC has registered and screened **4,112** ELs this academic year.

2024-2025 ISSC Registrations by Area



2024-2025 ISSC Registrations

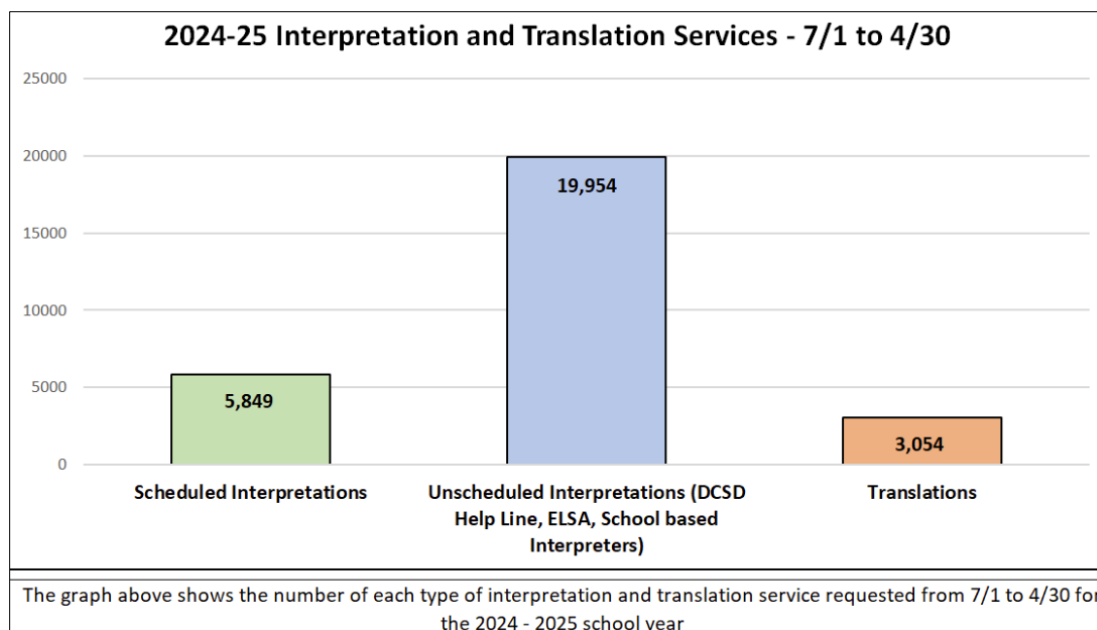
Area	Students
Area 1 – ES	858
Area 2 – ES	672
Area 3 – ES	140
Area Middle School	558
Area High School	387
Area Horizon	1,233
Area Specialty	261
School Pending	13
Totals	4,122

Top 15 Languages (non-English)

Language/Dialect	Students
Spanish	2,068
Dari	285
Swahili	168
Amharic	164
Pashto	124
Arabic	124
Rohingya	111
Somali	55
Hindi	54
French	50
Bengali	48
Tigrinya	40
Kinyarwanda	39
Burmese	37
Urdu	27

Interpretation and Translation Services

The ISSC provides interpretation/translation services during registration and at local schools for families with a Primary Home Language Other than English (PHLOTE). The EL Department provided 25,803 language services to PHLOTE families this school year and translated **3,054** documents.



Interpretation, translation, and registration services align with the DCSD Strategic Plan: Goal Area 2: School, Family, and Community Engagement and the DCSD MIRACLES framework for continuous improvement:

- M – Motion Towards Equity
- C – Commitment to Accountability

Bilingual Parent Advisory Council

The final meeting of the Bilingual Parent Advisory Council was held April 22. During this session, the EL Department presented key topics that support effective teaching and learning practices and promote the academic achievement of ELs. This meeting provided parents a valuable opportunity to engage in collaborative discussions and gain a comprehensive understanding of the district's goals and program offerings. We extend our sincere appreciation to all participants for their commitment to advancing our students' educational success.

This year we reviewed the following topics:

- Interpretation and translation services
- Instructional program for ELs
- Identification and screening Pre-K program
- Participated in a focus group
- Literacy and vocabulary support and strategies
- ESOL program evaluation
- Refugee/students with limited or interrupted formal education programs
- Access to career/post-secondary support and extracurriculars – CTAE



The Bilingual Parent Advisory Council aligns with DCSD Strategic Plan: Goal Area 2: School, Family, and Community Engagement and the DCSD MIRACLES framework for continuous improvement:

- M – Motion Towards Equity
- C – Commitment to Accountability

Professional Learning

The EL Department has provided **79** professional learning sessions to **2,521** teachers, administrators, and DCSD staff during SY24-25, including:

- Book study cohorts (Unlocking ELs' Potential, Welcoming and Engaging Newcomers, and Co-Teaching for ELs)
- Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol workshops (districtwide, school-based component enhancement sessions)
- Instructional resource and strategies support (Ellevation, language assessment system (LAS) Links, Vista Higher Learning)

- ESOL teacher support (cluster meetings, compliance support, and new teacher support)
- Support and collaboration with several departments, including Pre-K and Early Learning, Public Safety, Research and Assessment, school psychologists, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), and local schools
- ESOL Endorsement Program (90 teachers participating)



These opportunities align with the DCSD Strategic Plan: Goal Area 1: Student Academic Success with Equity and Access; Goal Area 2: School, Family, and Community Engagement; Goal Area 4: Culture and Climate; and Goal Area 6: Organizational Excellence and the DCSD MIRACLES framework for continuous improvement:

- M – Motion Towards Equity
- I – Improved Instructional Core
- R – Relevant and Rigorous Course of Study

EL Reclassification

In conjunction with our current ESOL program evaluation and master planning project, and in consultation with the GaDOE, beginning with the Spring 2025 ACCESS 2.0 scores, ELs in **grades 1-12** will be considered for exit from the ESOL program. These considerations for reclassification must align with GaDOE-approved guidelines. As such, students in **grades 1-12** who meet the criteria charted below (**Spring 2025 Clear Exit and Reclassification Criteria**) on the ACCESS 2.0 will be considered for reclassification through the DCSD process:

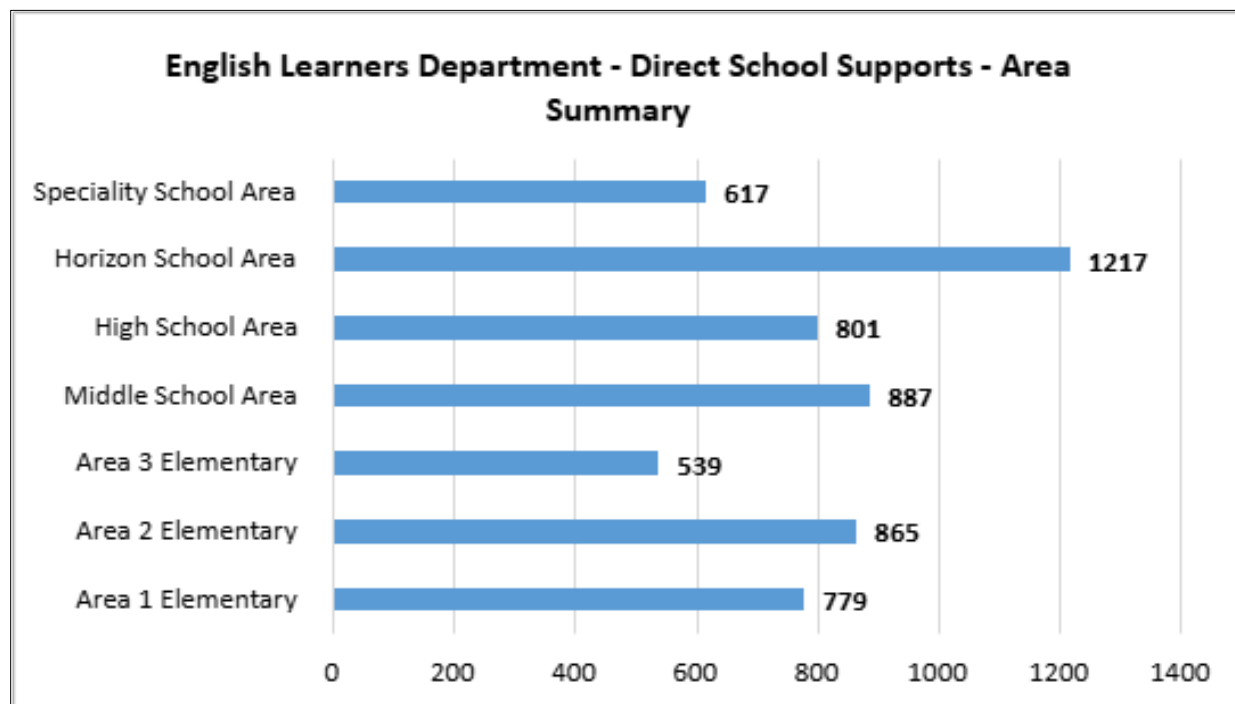
Overall Composite Proficiency Level of 4.3 to 4.9

Grade Level	Spring 2024 Clear Exit & Reclassification Criteria	Spring 2025 Clear Exit & Reclassification Criteria
K	No reclassification – DCSD adheres to GADOE clear exit criteria: - Overall CPL 5.0 or above - Listening, Speaking, & Reading 5.0 or above, - Writing 4.5 or above	No reclassification – DCSD adheres to GADOE clear exit criteria: - Overall CPL 5.0 or above - Listening, Speaking, Reading & 5.0 or above, - Writing 4.5 or above
1 st -3 rd	No reclassification – DCSD adheres to GADOE clear exit criteria: Overall CPL 5.0 or above	 Reclassification Criteria: Overall CPL of 4.3 to 4.9
4 th - 12 th	Reclassification Criteria: - Overall CPL of 4.3 to 4.9 - Literacy Composite Score of 4.3 or above - Comprehension Composite Score of 4.3 or above	 Reclassification Criteria: Overall CPL of 4.3 to 4.9

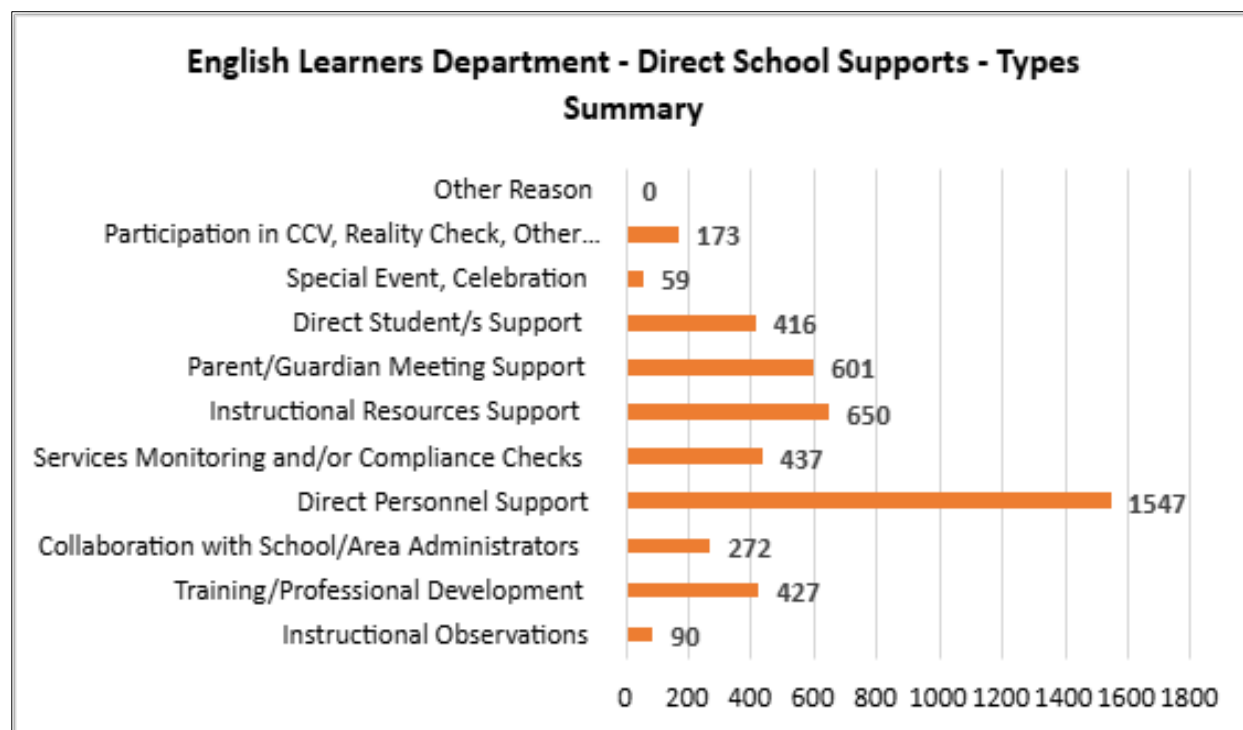
EL reclassification aligns with DCSD Strategic Plan: Goal Area 1: Student Academic Success with Equity and Access, Goal Area 6: Organizational Excellence, and the DCSD MIRACLES framework for continuous improvement.

- M – Motion Towards Equity
- I – Improved Instructional Core
- R – Relevant and Rigorous Course of Study

Direct School Supports by the Dept. of English Learners Since the Start of the School Year



Types of Direct School Supports by Dept. of English Learners Since the Start of the School Year

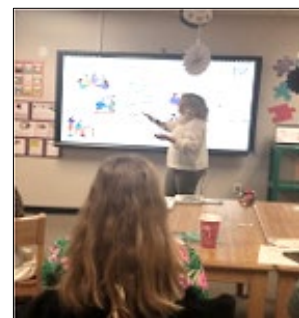


Executive Director Kiana King

Exceptional Education

Professional Development and Instructional support

- The Georgia Network of Educational and Therapeutic Supports (GNETS) Team is excited about its engagement and participation as the only program invited to participate in a cohort with GaMTSS. At the GaMTSS whole child supports regional meeting held on May 2, the team discussed the components of the GaMTSS framework and the next steps for the upcoming school year.
- Our fabulous Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS) personnel ended the school year with a bang. During May, the team led not one but two five-day Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) train-the-trainer cohorts exclusively for DeKalb County Lead Teachers for Special Education (LTSE) and special education (SPED) administrators. More than 70 DeKalb leaders are trained to deliver amazing professional learning sessions on SDI.



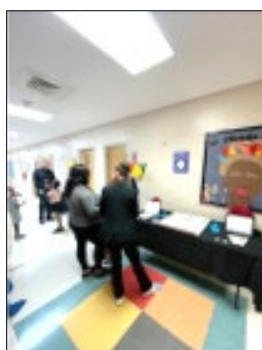
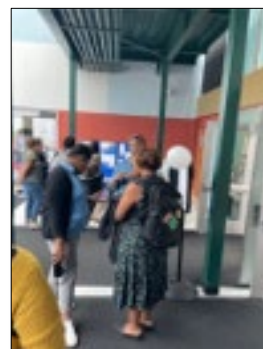
- Our GLRS Team also completed the second five-day Instructional Coaching Institute. This session consisted of DCSD Department of Exceptional Education leaders and guests from other GLRSs! Welcome to our jungle!

Departmental Celebrations

- The Department of Exceptional Education celebrates our 2025 State Special Olympics Summer Games GOLD medal winners. The unified teacher/student team brought home GOLD for DCSD! This was the first win in volleyball for DCSD in 20 years!

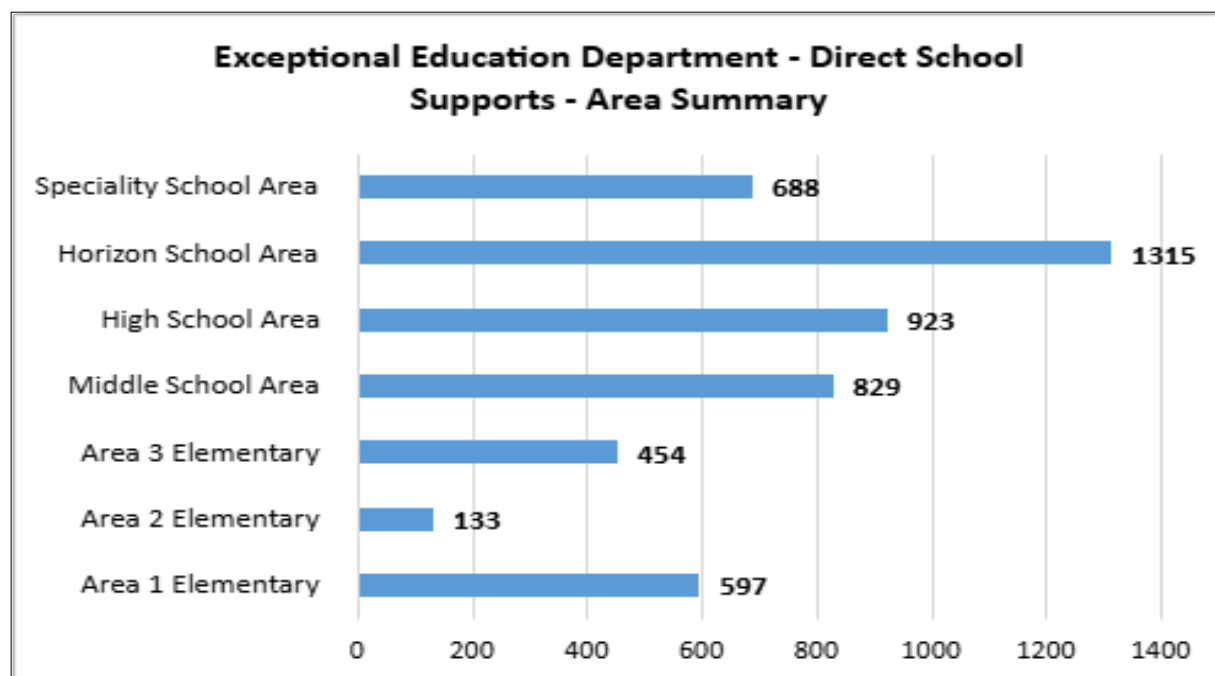


- The SPED Department's second [Annual Parent Engagement Fair](#) was a huge success! Please take a moment to view a snapshot of the amazing event our DCSD DSTV Team captured.
- The event hosted a total of **95 participants**, with **25 presenters** sharing meaningful and informative educational sessions spanning 12 Exceptional Education programs and offices (offices including Assistive Technology, Behavior Support, Dispute Resolution, GNETS, GLRS, Intellectual Disabilities, Preschool, Section 504/Hospital Homebound, Professional Development, Speech, Psychological, Transition, and related services). **Four Spanish interpreters** were available to ensure access to the sessions for any Spanish-speaking family. With the support and partnership of Food Commune, a non-profit organization, we also gave **60 pounds** of apples, oranges, Trader Joe's tortillas, and sweet potatoes to families that attended.

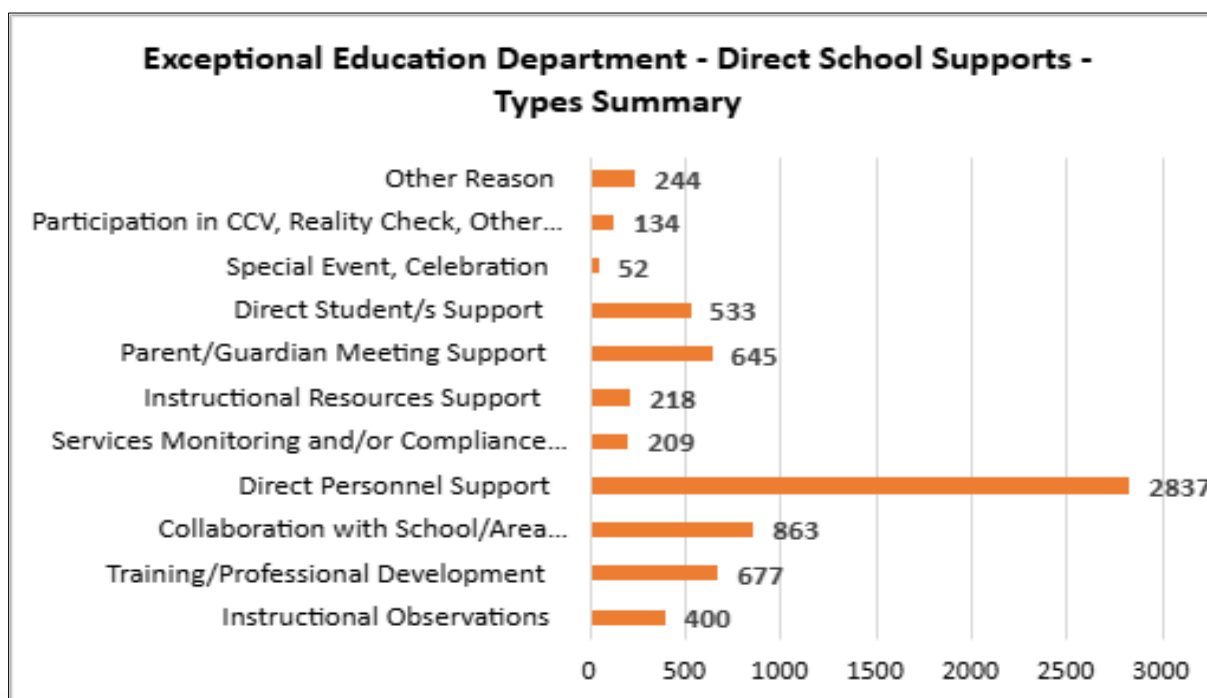


- **Graduation Alert!** On May 23, Eagle Woods Academy celebrated a special graduate. The staff and students congratulated the student on her accomplishments as she finished strong! We also celebrated the graduation of five seniors who matriculated through the GNETS program as they crossed the stage with their Southwest DeKalb HS peers on May 24. Additionally, we celebrated the graduation of seven seniors who received home instruction through the Hospital Homebound program. Congratulations to our resilient scholars!

**Direct School Supports by the Dept. of Exceptional Education
Since the Start of the School Year**



**Types of Direct School Supports by Dept. of Exceptional Education
Since the Start of the School Year**



Executive Director Dr. Zack Phillips

Early Learning and Pre-K

Dr. Phillips and members of the Department of Early Learning and Pre-K Programs have been working diligently to support district staff members and meeting with a sample size of teacher leaders on designated better-seeking teams for (non-negotiables, assessment, and instructional environment). The better-seeking teams help to serve as thought partners in the work for potential system enhancements for staff members and students within the Department of Early Learning and Pre-K Programs. Dr. Phillips served on the district's Sibling Preference Committee with other staff members and parent representatives on May 6. Dr. Phillips hosted representatives from Gwinnett County School District for a visit to the Early Learning Center and the 10th SOR PL training session on May 7. Over 300 Pre-K (3&4) lead teachers and paraprofessionals attended and completed the training session during the academic school year. Dr. Phillips attended the SAP Central Committee Meeting on May 14. Dr. Phillips participated in the MIRACLES close-out workshop with Dr. Sauce and members of the Division of Student Services. Dr. Phillips and team members attended alf-cap celebrations, Pre-K4 Moving on Celebrations, and a HS Graduation in support of our district scholars. The Department of Early Learning and Pre-K Programs will be offering nine PL sessions during July via partnership with the district's Title I Department. Also, Dr. Phillips is actively participating as a member of Cohort 3 for the Men of Color Educational Leadership (MCEL) National Leadership Institute.



Professional Learning Opportunities

The Early Learning/Pre-K Department has worked diligently during April to offer various PL opportunities to district employees covering several topics: SOR, MTSS support, virtual Chat and Chews, Better-Seeking Teams, and Temp Checks related to SOR – Cox Campus Modules. These excellent opportunities for staff members align with the DCSD Strategic Plan and the DCSD MIRACLES framework for continuous improvement.

Instructional Activities

Instructional activities and usage of the Waterford platform have occurred throughout April in numerous Pre-K (3&4) classrooms throughout the district that support various content areas via the gallery walk.



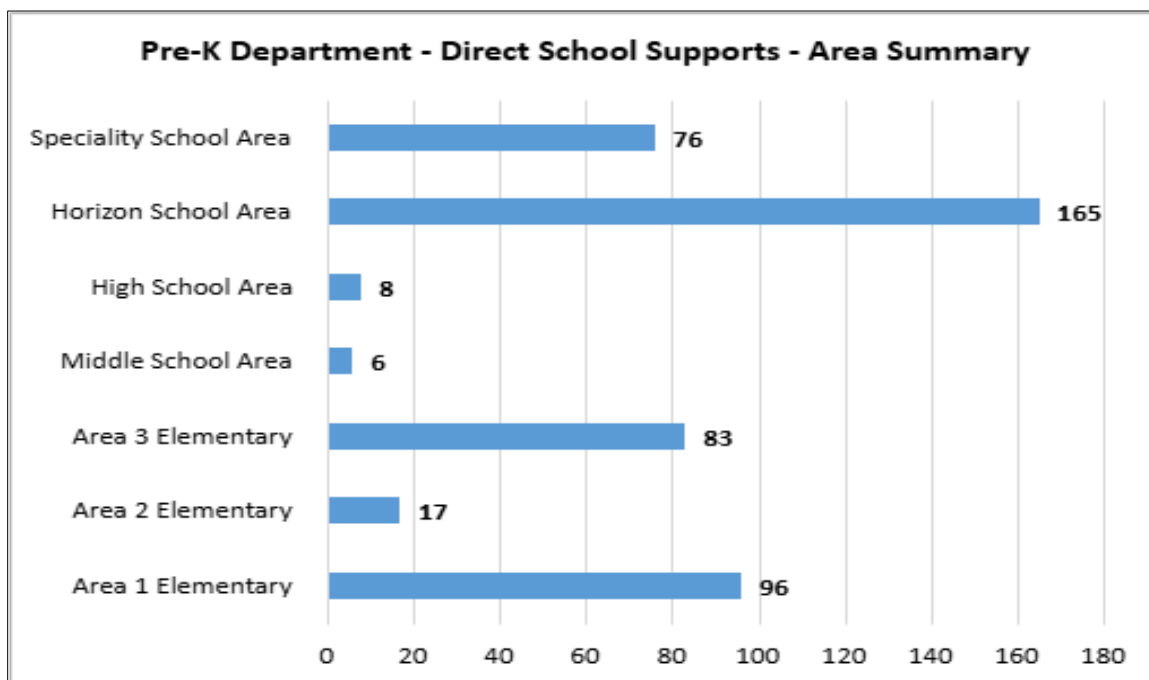
School Supports

The Early Learning/Pre-K Department has worked diligently during May to offer various PL opportunities to district employees covering several topics: SOR, MTSS support, Better-Seeking Teams, and a Temp Check related to SOR – Cox Campus Modules. These excellent opportunities for staff members align with the DCSD Strategic Plan and the DCSD MIRACLES framework for continuous improvement.

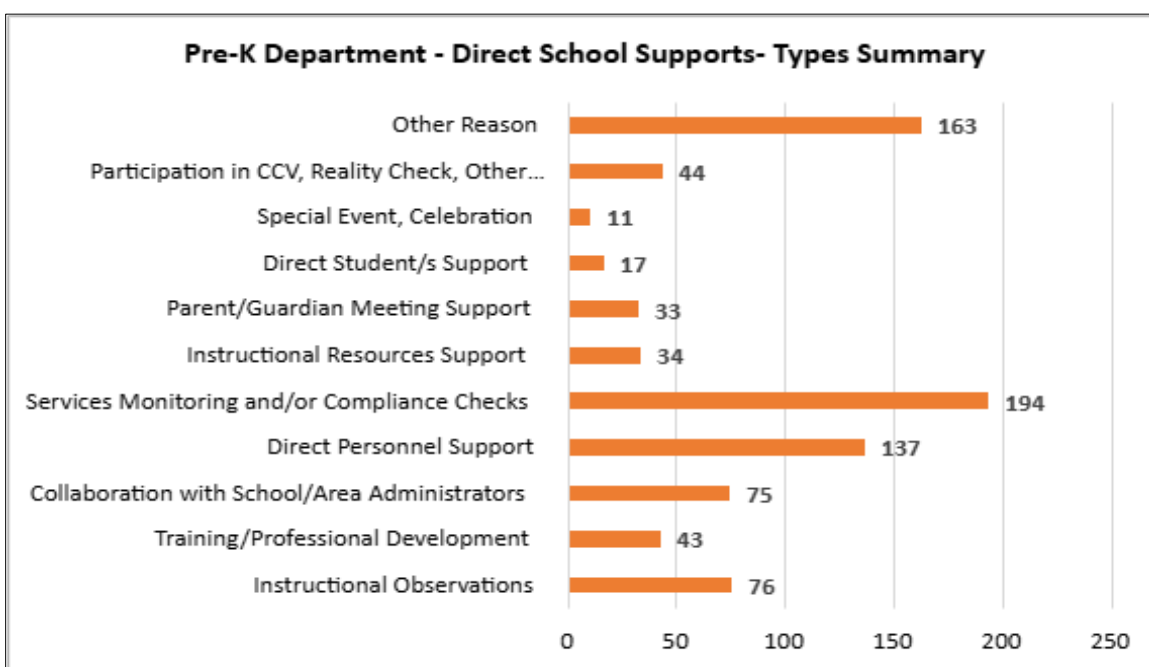
Department – Highlights

The Pre-K3 expansion classes and Pre-K4 pilot classes at the same ES locations, in addition to the Early Learning Center, continue to utilize the Waterford supplemental resource within their instructional settings. This wonderful instructional resource supports various content areas, including literacy, math, social studies, and science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics (STEAM). Additionally, this instructional resource continues to support teachers and paraprofessionals with planning many age-appropriate instructional activities that align with the Georgia Early Learning Development Standards and Frog Street Curriculum embedded within their weekly lesson plans. The SOR stipend opportunity for Pre-K (3&4) teachers and paraprofessionals continues to be offered to staff members completing online modules, which exceeds the mandatory SOR training for Pre-K (3&4) employees. Our ninth SOR PL training was a success and concluded on April 16. Dr. Phillips was recognized for being selected as a member of Cohort 3 for the MCEL National Leadership Institute.

Direct School Supports by the Department of Pre-K and Early Learning Since the Start of the School Year



Types of Direct School Supports by Department of Pre-K and Early Learning Since the Start of the School Year



Senior Coordinators Donyell Atkinson and Kristen Drake

Gifted Education

The Department of Gifted Education is pleased to share that over 90 teachers completed the gifted endorsement program. The teachers completed four courses and spent approximately 200 hours refining their craft. They observed other gifted-endorsed teachers, collaborated with colleagues, and reflected on their growth. These teachers are now able to serve gifted students.

Although the district's spring gifted screening concluded in April, we are excited to learn of this spring's testing results. However, due to the volume and the process for data verification from all assessments used in the district's screening process, parents can expect to know the status of their child/ren who was screened for gifted on or before the first day of school. If students transitioning from ES to MS attend a DeKalb County School, data sets will follow them to their new school within the district. All score reports will be shared with the new school attending so that parent communication and expectations can be succinct.

With the school year coming to a close, the Gifted Education Department celebrated our 10th-grade scholars on track for graduation by participating in the DCSD Half-cap ceremonies at Tucker and Stephenson High Schools.

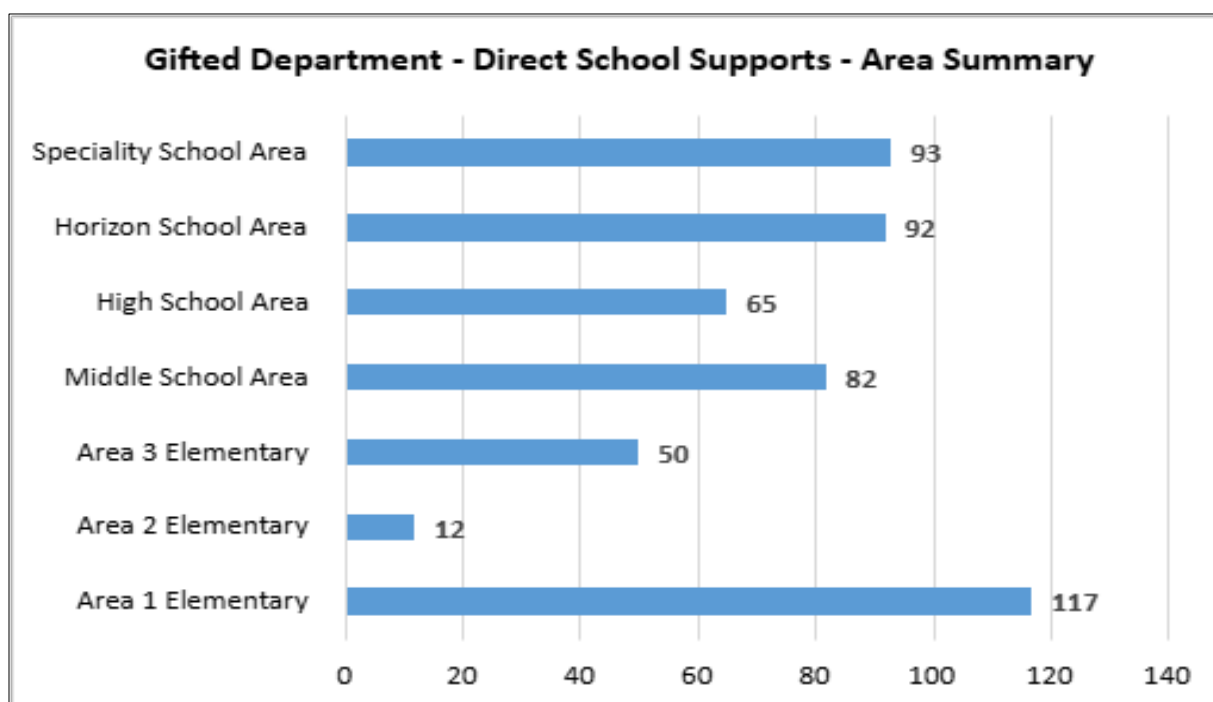
School closure would not be complete if we didn't have a field day to bring our academic school year to an official close. Senior Coordinator for Gifted Education Mrs. Donyell Atkinson was there to witness this culminating experience that invited parents, teachers, and students to work together, show good sportsmanship, and most importantly, have FUN by participating in a host of well-organized events from the 4x40 relay, tug of war, water relay, basket toss, sponge relay and so much more at Peachtree MS, Hawthorne ES, and Wadsworth Magnet School.



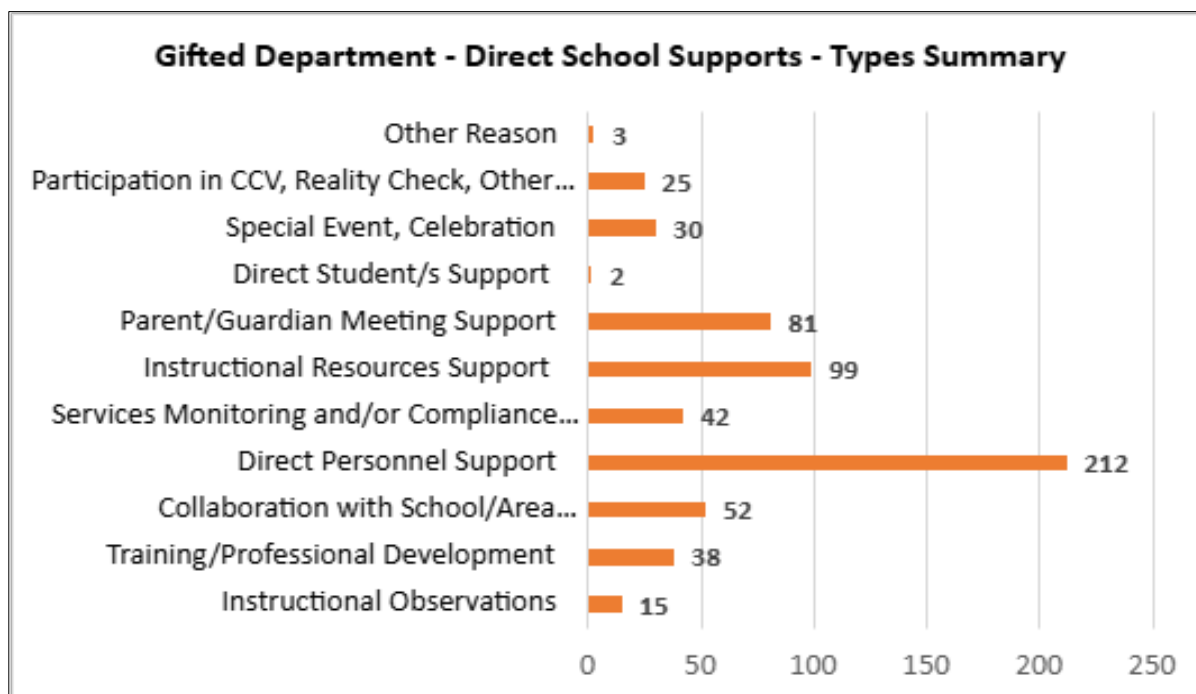
The Gifted Education Department is looking forward to seeing our gifted-identified students in grades 1-6 at Serendipity this summer on June 9-13, at Stone Mountain MS. Students can expect to be active participants in the following courses but not limited to: world language (Spanish), culinary arts, health, physical education, visual arts, music, performing arts, STEM, STEAM, and computer technology.



Direct School Supports by the Gifted Education Team Since the Start of the School Year

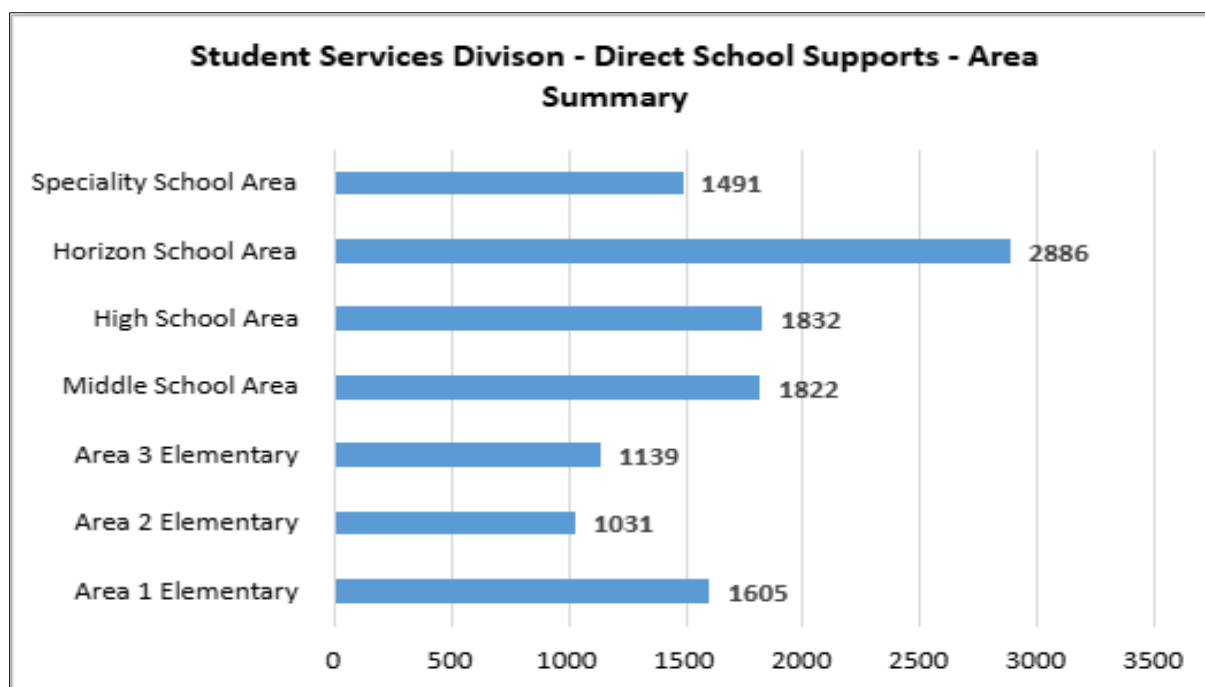


Types of Direct School Supports by Gifted Education Team Since the Start of the School Year

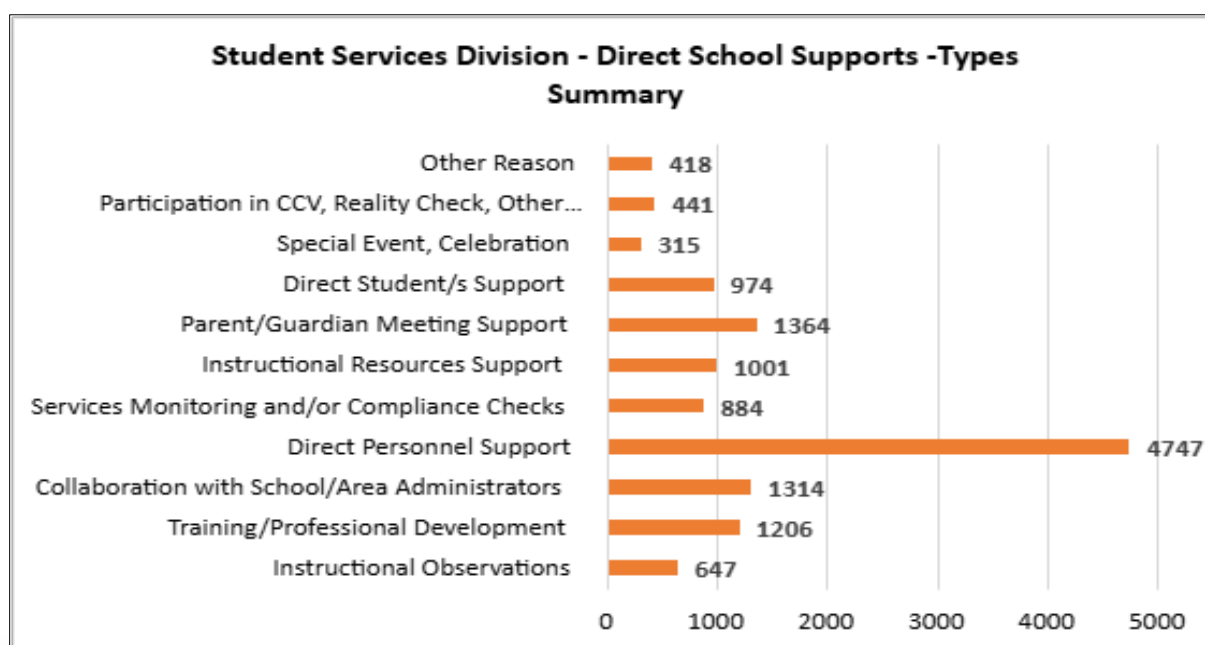


Division of Student Services – Direct School Supports Totals – Since the Start of the School Year

**Direct School Supports by Division of Students Services' Personnel
Since the Start of the School Year**



**Types of Direct School Supports by Division of Student Services' Personnel
Since the Start of the School Year**



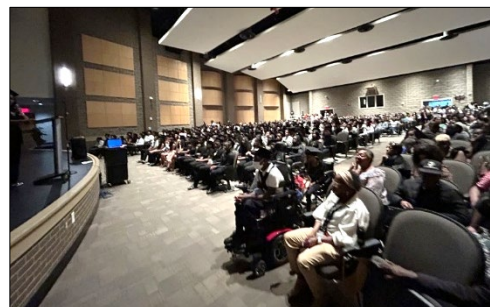
Chief Dr. Kishia K. Towns

Wrap Around Services

The Division of Wrap Around Services has been highly engaged in many EOY activities in the DCSD in each department, including School Social Work, School Counseling, Student Advancement, Student Health Services, and Student Relations.

Half-cap Ceremonies

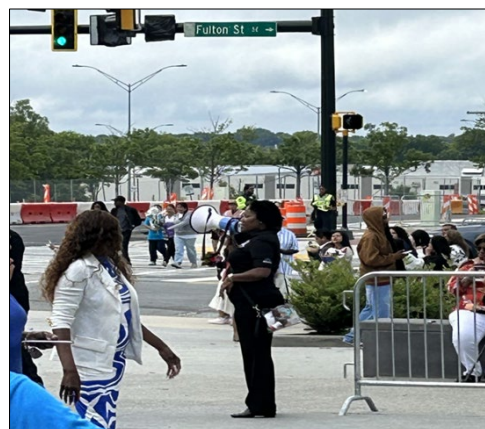
This year, the DCSD hosted Half-cap ceremonies in all high schools. The students, staff, and families were very excited for the opportunity to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of their students who are current sophomores and on track to graduate in the next two years. It is a way to acknowledge their academic progress and motivate them to continue working towards graduation. Redan HS and Southwest DeKalb HS were filled with parents, mentors, and other family members supporting the upcoming juniors. The class of 2027 spoke about their recent achievements and future endeavors. It was a delightful event to move our scholars to new levels, new heights!



*Southwest DeKalb High School
Half-cap Ceremony May 14, 2025*

DeKalb County School District Class of 2025 Graduation

This year the Class of 2025 celebrated graduations at the Georgia State University (GSU) Convocation Center. Each school had an amazing graduation unique to the student population that they serve. The Division of Wrap Around Services was in full support of the graduation ceremonies from Student Advancement, Student Relations, and Student Support Services. It was a pleasure meeting parents and family members as they entered the convocation center to commemorate the event. Wrap Around Services Chief Dr. Kishia Towns greeted parents each day to ensure that there was a smooth transition during graduation. Overall, the Class of 2025 earned over \$200M in scholarships and grants, with over 8,500 college acceptances in more than 2,500 colleges and universities. Additionally, 6,500 4E Plans were completed to ensure all scholars have an established post-secondary option once they graduate.



*Wrap Around Services
Chief Dr. Kishia K. Towns
greeting parents at the DCSD
graduation ceremony.*

New Media Center at Chapel Hill Middle School

Chapel Hill MS recently received a donation from Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl to renovate the media center. Principal Mr. Charles Barker Jr. of Chapel Hill MS invited Superintendent Dr. Devon Q. Horton, and Chief of Wrap Around Services Dr. Kishia K. Towns, to bring greetings and share a few words of encouragement to the students, staff, and parents. The Chapel Hill scholars were excited to have a fun, inviting, and modern space that will provide access to books, materials, and technology for students. The students will also have the flexibility to rearrange the media center for different activities due to the functionality of the modular and moveable furniture. Ultimately, the media center will be an innovative place where students and teachers come to learn, teach, interact, and collaborate with each other.



Chapel Hill MS Media Center



Mr. Barker expressing appreciation

Executive Director Christopher Key

Student Advancement Department

School Counseling

National Decision Day Celebrations

National Decision Day was held on May 1, and local high schools spent the first week of May celebrating Seniors and their post-secondary decisions. Each 4E Path selection was celebrated: Employment, Enlistment, Entrepreneurship, and Enrollment Decisions. Pictured are Chamblee HS scholars, senior advisors, and school counselors at the Decision Day Celebration.



Senior Summer Success Program

The DCSD Senior Summer Success Program, an intervention program designed to address "summer melt," began immediately following the last week of school. Team members planned to ensure that when HS seniors pick up their diplomas, they will be able to connect with senior advisors who will schedule a time to assist them with final tasks related to their post-secondary 4E plan. Free application for federal student Aid (FAFSA) and Georgia Student Finance Commission application support will also be provided. Outreach to rising seniors also began.



Apprenticeship/Internship Series: Teenz on Point

In our Student Success Centers, scholars interested in construction were visited by Teenz on Point, a youth construction program offering internships and apprenticeships to youth. Scholars interested in pursuing summer opportunities learned more about the options for the upcoming summer months. The organization focuses on training youth in repair and construction skills.

The Critical Role of SEL in Elementary Education

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is a cornerstone of student development, equipping young learners with essential skills in self-awareness, emotional regulation, responsible decision-making, and relationship-building. Research consistently shows that strong SEL programs improve academic performance, reduce behavioral incidents, and enhance overall school climate. Furthermore, SEL lays the foundation for early career awareness by fostering resilience, teamwork, and problem-solving—skills that directly translate into future workplace success. A school culture embedded with SEL principles promotes a supportive, inclusive, and high-achieving environment where both students and educators thrive. Following a thorough review of the raw data from May 15, 19 schools have an overall average lesson completion rate at or above 70 percent, 22 schools are between 50 and 69 percent, 24 schools are between 25 and 49 percent, and 20 schools have less than 25 percent overall lesson completion rates. When comparing this data to April 30, 63 percent of schools have demonstrated growth in their lesson completion average in just two weeks. Year-end data will be analyzed during the first week of June to include it in the subsequent academic summary.

The DCSD School Counseling Coordinator Team remains committed to providing targeted support to schools in order to strengthen SEL integration. Key initiatives include Monthly Analytics Review, Large Group Intervention, Ongoing Progress Monitoring, Professional Learning, and Product Support. This plan is designed to address immediate concerns regarding SEL lesson completion rates and establish a framework for ongoing improvement. By implementing consistent data reviews, structured interventions, targeted PL, and effective product support, the district can enhance SEL program fidelity and ensure that all students receive the full benefit of SEL instruction. By reinforcing SEL curriculum engagement, we not only empower students with essential life and career readiness skills but also cultivate a positive and productive school climate. Continued collaboration between district leadership, school administrators, and educators is essential in advancing SEL implementation and ensuring long-term success for all students.

Director Denise Revels

Wrap Around and Support Services

School Social Work

Connections Matter

New social workers have been trained through the *Connections Matter* program, gaining a deep understanding of how positive relationships and trauma-informed practices can significantly influence brain development, resilience, and overall well-being. Led by Program Specialists Dr. Vernita Byrd and Mrs. Michele Young, the training equipped these individuals to recognize the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and respond with empathy, awareness, and strategic support. Social workers also learned the importance of integrating science-based insights into their daily practice, enabling them to build trust with clients, create safe and supportive environments, and help individuals and families strengthen protective relationships. Ultimately, this training empowers them to serve as catalysts for healing and resilience within the communities they support.



Attend, Apply, and Achieve

The winners of the second semester "Attendance is Your Ticket to Success" campaign and contest have been officially announced. This initiative involved 43 participating schools, each demonstrating a strong commitment to improving and maintaining regular student attendance.

Schools across the district worked diligently to engage students, families, and staff in building a culture that prioritizes showing up every day, ready to learn. Their efforts have made a meaningful difference in student engagement and success through events, incentives, strategic communication, and consistent follow-up.

It is with great pride that the following schools are recognized for earning first, second, and third place in this inaugural second-semester campaign:

Elementary Areas

- First Place: Hawthorne ES (ES Area 2)
- Second Place: Chapel Hill ES (Horizon)
- Third Place: Cary Reynolds ES (ES Area 1)

Specialty Area

- First Place: Champion TS MS

Middle/High School Area

- First Place: Cross Keys HS (Horizon)
- Second Place: Southwest DeKalb HS
- Third Place: Miller Grove MS

Each winning school received a trophy presented by its designated attendance specialist.



Third Annual Safe Kids Day in DeKalb

The School Social Work Department partnered with the Department of Family and Community Empowerment (FACE) for its Third Annual Safe Kids Day in DeKalb, held at McNair HS May 3. This engaging and informative event provided valuable resources and fun activities for scholars and their families throughout the community. Social workers led important discussions on topics such as human trafficking prevention, personal hygiene, and promoting nonviolence through the "Be the Change" initiative. Families received informational materials, hygiene products, and other giveaway items to support their well-being.



Director Dr. Darnell Logan**Student Relations****Disconnect to Reconnect**

The Disconnect to Reconnect initiative was implemented during the SY24-25 across 18 pilot schools to address the impact of cell phone use on student engagement, discipline, and school climate. By creating “Phone-Free Zones” using Yondr pouches and cell phone lockers, the initiative led to a 17 percent reduction in combined Out of School (OSS)/In-School Suspensions (ISS) — 1,289 fewer discipline removals than the previous year. Educators reported improvements in classroom management, student attentiveness, and reductions in cyberbullying and social media-related incidents, fostering a safer and more respectful school environment.

Stakeholder feedback revealed widespread support from administrators, teachers, and students, with noted increases in student focus, authentic interpersonal interactions, and emotional safety. Aligned with district goals in C&C, Instructional Excellence, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) behavioral supports, and equity in discipline, Disconnect to Reconnect stands as a model intervention. Plans are underway to expand the initiative districtwide in 2025–2026, reinforcing its role as a strategic tool to enhance school culture and student well-being.

Student Discipline/Student Reintegration**District Due Process Hearings (DDPH):**

- DDPH scheduled: 123
- DDPH held: 63
- DDPH dismissed: 4
- DDPH canceled/withdrawn: 22
- DDPH manifested: 11
- Discipline Team Meetings (DTM): 22

Board Appeals: 2**Students cleared to attend DCSD: 10**

PBIS Coordinator Brandy Woolridge and PBIS District Coaches Shakira Bates-Shaw, Brian Bryant, Marcia Bryant-Cornelison, Dr. Dia Harden, Eva Landers, Kimmie Pryor, and Jason Townsend

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support

MIRACLES Priorities

As of April 1, the Division of Wrap Around Services and the Department of Student Relations successfully met the DCSD PBIS MIRACLES Priority Goal of increasing the number of combined PBIS schools and GNET centers from 50 to 60 by June 2025. This includes 48 PBIS schools and two GNET centers. Our ten new Cohort 9 schools completed both MTSS Tier I Readiness and PBIS Training, with 65 Leadership Team members participating.

GaMTSS-PBIS Whole Child Supports integration

On May 8, PBIS District Coordinator Brandy Woolridge Director of MTSS Monique Kimbell, met with the GaDOE and Metro Regional Educational Service Agency (MRESA) to discuss a plan, resources, and next steps for establishing a DCSD Whole Child Supports Integrated District Leadership Team.

PBIS Coordinator Brandy Woolridge, Lead Prevention/Intervention Liaison for the Division of Wrap Around services Stacy Robinson, along with MTSS Director Monique Kimbell, met with Branching Minds for a virtual demonstration on May 27, to review their behavior and well-being screener.

Chief of Wrap Around Services Dr. Kishia Towns, Director of Student Relations Dr. Darnell Logan, and PBIS Coordinator Brandy Woolridge, also met with Assistant Director of Georgia's Multi-Tiered System of Supports Jennie Morris, Office of Whole Child Supports at GaDOE. The meeting focused on House Bill 268 and its implications for DeKalb schools with a 1- or 2-Star school climate rating for SY23–24. Additional discussions addressed PBIS's role in supporting identified schools, and the new GaDOE GaMTSS Recognition System.

The PBIS District Team continues to review and provide feedback on schools' PBIS system artifacts while offering ongoing coaching and support to PBIS school coaches and leadership teams.

Chief Stacy E. Stepney

Division of Curriculum and Instruction

Literacy

As a result of teacher, coach, and district leader feedback, the elementary scheduling guidance was updated. The revised guidance positions our schools to instruct students in all components of structured literacy, including time for both whole group and small group instruction, as the new Georgia K-12 ELA standards are implemented.

The official elementary school day begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 2:15 p.m. In addition to adhering to the daily start and end times, all master schedules must align with the required instructional minutes for each subject area. Schools are using the required daily instructional models provided to ensure compliance with the school district's expectations. All required components must occur during the school day.

The required daily instructional minutes for each elementary grade level are as follows:

Kindergarten through Third Grade (Self-Contained Model)*

Subject Area	Required Daily Minutes
English Language Arts (ELA)	120 minutes
Mathematics	70 minutes
Science	40 minutes
Social Studies	40 minutes
Physical Education, Music, and Art (Specials)	45 minutes
Intervention/Enrichment	30 minutes

Fourth and Fifth Grade (Self-Contained Model)*

Subject Area	Required Daily Minutes
English Language Arts (ELA)	105 minutes
Mathematics	75 minutes
Science	45 minutes
Social Studies	45 minutes
Physical Education, Music, and Art (Specials)	45 minutes
Intervention/Enrichment	30 minutes

Third through Fifth Grade (Team Teaching Model)*

Subject Area	Required Daily Minutes
English Language Arts (ELA)	105-120 minutes
Mathematics	60-75 minutes
Science	45-60 minutes
Social Studies	45-60 minutes
Physical Education, Music, and Art (Specials)	45 minutes
Intervention/Enrichment	30 minutes

***Note:** All elementary schools are required to adhere to [GA Code § 20-2-323 \(2024\)](#) and [Board Policy IEDA Recess/Unstructured Break Time](#). Schools must schedule time for all students in kindergarten through fifth grade to have at least 15 minutes of supervised, unstructured break time. Per the law, recess is not required on any school day when a student has had physical education or structured activity time. Extenuating circumstances such as inclement weather, extended field trips, or emergencies may impact the scheduling of recess.

Academic Coaches

The academic coach senior coordinators (ACSC) continued to provide tiered support and technical assistance to ACs. Due to testing, the ACSCs canceled the May 9 Academic Coach Academy and held collaborative learning sessions within each area. In the collaborative learning sessions, academic coaches finished the final chapters of their book studies, *Learning by Doing* and *Make It Happen* and discussed ways to refine their PLC processes for SY25-26. Additionally, the ACs reviewed CSIP progress monitoring data, closed out plans of support, and ensured their documentation was current.

ACSCs continued planning for the Summer Coaching Institute by solidifying the keynote speaker, reviewing presenter proposals and presentations, providing feedback to each presenter, completing a walk-through of the conference site, and meeting collectively as a team to complete the program.

The ACSCs attended the Coaching for Change Conference in Atlanta, where they presented “Blow the Whistle: Maximizing Coaching Support to Build Teacher Capacity” and “The Case of the Missing Impact.” The conference’s closing keynote speaker’s message contributed to the development of the theme for this year’s Summer Coaching Institute: “Believe in Coaching.”

Currently, there are 201 AC positions. The chart below provides the number of coaches, vacancies, and new coaches by area.

Area	No. of Coaches	No. of Vacancies	No. New Coaches
Area Elementary 1	6	0	6
Area Elementary 2	14	1	6
Area Elementary 3	18	2	8
Area Middle Schools	41	1	24
Area High Schools	33	0	15
Area Horizon	70	5	47
Area Specialty	10	0	7
Totals	192	9	113

2025 Valedictorians and Salutatorians

The DeKalb County School District acknowledged and celebrated the outstanding academic achievements of the members of the Class of 2025 on May 8. In accordance with board policy, IHDA, the district certified **26** valedictorians and **26** salutatorians for the Class of 2025. Superintendent Dr. Horton and the BOE recognized the accomplishments of the following seniors:

High School	Valedictorian	Salutatorian
Arabia Mountain HS (Magnet)	Morgan E. Spruill	Makaylah I. Deshield
Arabia Mountain HS (Resident)	Kennedy D. Winfrey-Gay	Nzingha S. Abrams
Cedar Grove HS	Angie C. Hernandez Chavez	Ca' Tori D. Traylor
Chamblee HS (Magnet)	Yonatan A. Nemenman	Anish R. Konduri
Chamblee HS (Resident)	Jannath Jamal	Garrett C. Moore
Clarkston HS	Ahmed E. Elboraey	Justin T. Gurung
Columbia HS (Magnet)	Zachary A. Davis	Alexis D. Jackson-Hubbard
Columbia HS (Resident)	Beyoungtis E. Tarver	Dajah C. Boswell
Cross Keys HS	Hemani Purkayastha	Adriana Berduo-Roblero
DeKalb Early College Academy	Henry L. Bui	Tammy Ha
DeKalb School of Arts	Lauren C. Williams	Ruth E. Zewdu
Druid Hills HS	Ellis W. Schroeder	Amanda G. Philpot
Dunwoody HS	Anna M. Siegel	Wendell D. Rogers
Lakeside HS	Cooper R. Ruckart	Addison V. Cook
Lithonia HS	Samaya F. Awadh	Chloe N. Jarrett
Martin Luther King, Jr. HS	Keionna S. Hull	Kortney A. Williams
Miller Grove HS	Saniya R. Francis	Jeniffer S. Apata
Redan HS	Niquitta Nijimbere	Kennedi R. Hughes
Ronald E. McNair HS	Chloe R. Taverne	Yuko Zheng
Southwest DeKalb HS (Magnet)	Breannndra K. Taylor	Ahmad O. Hussein

High School	Valedictorian	Salutatorian
Southwest DeKalb HS (Resident)	Indiya E. Ray	Joy I. Moreland
Stephenson HS	Carissa D. Swope	Aissa T. Swope
Stone Mountain HS	Khadija N. Jeylani	Minh Q. Tran
Tapestry Charter	Natalie C. Toppen	Tayten K. Green
Towers HS	Miriam Martinez	Akoko M. Denke
Tucker HS	Yewoinhareg A. Gebrehana	Melissa L. Moore

Curriculum Audit

As part of the curriculum audit, the ACSCs and content senior coordinators assisted teachers with uploading their virtual observations and related instructional materials used in each lesson to the Teaching Channel platform. Insight Education Group (IEG) received 182 virtual observations. Currently, IEG is analyzing artifacts from the in-person and virtual observations in the areas of ELA; math; science; social studies; visual and performing arts; music; health and physical education; world languages; and career, technology, and agricultural education (CTAE).

IEG concluded the focus group interviews in May totaling 36 hours of engagement with stakeholder groups. IEG also provided preliminary survey results from over 1,300 respondents.

Cross-Divisional Support

In May, the C&I attended and supported Half-cap ceremonies and all graduation exercises, reviewed CSIPs and provided feedback to local schools in collaboration with area teams, provided promotion and retention guidance to district and school leaders at the May PLO, and partnered with the Assessments Department to address testing irregularities.

Deputy Chief Dr. Sean R. Tartt

Curriculum and Instruction

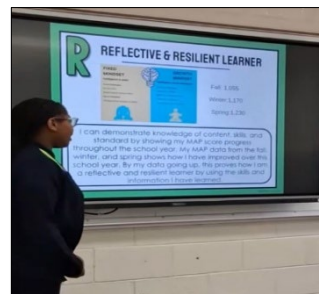
Summer Learning Programs

The DSCD will begin a summer of learning beginning June 2. Program sponsors have been working with various departments to review student enrollment, staff programs, set up position control, meet with host sites, and prepare families for a great summer of learning. DCSD is offering 25 districtwide learning opportunities that will support over 4,000 students this summer.



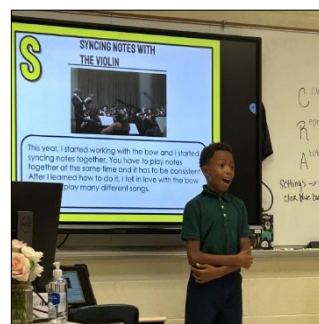
Student Success Skills Backpack

During April and May, 21 pilot schools were heavily engaged in student backpack defenses for grade 5, 8, and 12. Members from the school, district office, and community participated in the defenses to support and witness scholars as they defended their backpack. Principals, staff, students, and parents shared powerful testimonies about their journeys that will inspire others. Next year, the SSSB will launch districtwide, and there will be an archive of exemplars, thanks to the pilot group. We are indeed excited about what scholars will do and present in the future!



Content Collaboration

Content coordinators from various divisions met on May 2, 2025, at the monthly collaborative meeting to review and revise the district's learning walk tool, math content walk tool, ELA unit plans, and pacing charts. Teams developed pacing charts, and aligned district approved resources in the Curriculum at a Glance (CAAG) documents for each grade level. Leaders from across the district will be engaged in PL at the district's Summer Leadership Conference in June about these instructional guides.



Assistant Superintendent Dr. Penny Mosley

P-5

Scholars Academy

The Department of C&I is preparing to receive over 3,000 students in grades 3-8 for our Scholars Academy Summer Enrichment Program. The foundational standards-based instruction and practice will assist students with reaching proficiency levels in the areas of reading and mathematics. Additionally, Scholars Academy will provide hands-on enrichment in visual/performing arts, health and physical education, and music. Scholars Academy runs from June 4-18, 2025, at 18 different sites across DCSD.



Reading and Dyslexia Screener

The Georgia Early Literacy Act (HB538) addresses kindergarten through third grade reading in five parts: high-quality instructional materials, screeners, interventions, PL and teacher preparation. School districts are required to administer a reading screener three times per year to k-3 students and screen for the characteristics of dyslexia on an annual basis.

The GaDOE is providing Amiria ISP at no cost to districts to serve as the K-3 reading and dyslexia screener. A cross-divisional team met with Amira representatives to plan support and implementation for next year. The first district training will take place during the Summer Leadership Conference in June.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Rose Prejean-Harris

6-12

Innovative Educational Opportunities (IEO)

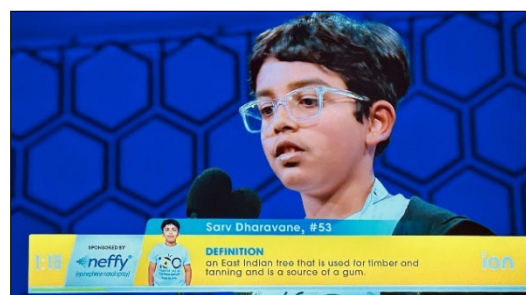
May marks the completion of the first cohort of 18 students in the ChanceLight Program. This program was designed to help students who were behind two grade levels to engage in a small learning environment with personalized support to accelerate learning. Each student embarked on a unique educational journey, tailored to their individual strengths and academic goals. They embraced the challenges and opportunities presented to them, working diligently to achieve their personal best. Their success in completing the program is a testament to the power of personalized learning and the unwavering support of the staff and their families.

Director Dr. Lynn Angus Ramos

Literacy

Scripps National Spelling Bee

Congratulations are extended to Sarv Dharavane, a fifth-grader from Austin Elementary, who emerged as the third-place winner of the 2025 Scripps National Spelling Bee out of 241 contestants. Representing Georgia Association of Educators and DCSD at the national competition for the second consecutive year, Sarv improved on his 22nd place finish in 2024. The 97th Scripps National Spelling Bee took place at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland. The competition began with 242 spellers. During a grueling three days and 18 rounds of spelling and vocabulary, as well as a written test, Sarv correctly spelled words such as “levallorphan,” “hyaline,” and “dhaura.” In the final round of competition that began with a field of nine spellers, Sarv advanced to round 19 when he missed the word “eserine.”



Round-by-round results are available at spellingbee.com. Photos from the 2025 Scripps National Spelling Bee are available on the Scripps National Spelling Bee’s official Flickr page at [flickr.com/scrippsbee/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/scrippsbee/).

Georgia Early Literacy Act

As part of DCSD’s commitment to high-quality literacy instruction aligned with Georgia HB538, all K-3 certified teachers are required to complete structured literacy PL through an approved pathway. DCSD adopted the full Georgia Literacy Academy as the required training program for all K-5 classroom teachers and the Georgia Literacy Academy for K-3 Electives option for K-5 elective teachers to meet the deadline by July 1. Principals are working to submit a final report through their Research, Data, and Evaluation folder that includes which state-approved structured literacy course each teacher completed. Teachers who do not complete the training

by the deadline will be required to develop and submit an individualized action plan for completion during SY25–26. The action plan will be formally documented in the teacher’s Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) evaluation.

Director Lummie Baker

Educational Media and Instructional Materials

Summer Reading

The DeKalb County Public Library is hosting their annual summer reading program for all residents of DeKalb County. This year’s theme is Color My World. Participants can earn free books, book bags, gift cards, Kindle Fires, journals, prize packs with books and puzzles, Bluetooth speakers, STEM boxes, and more. The program runs from June 1 - July 31. DCSD teacher-librarians have distributed registration and Beanstack logging instructions to the staff and students at their respective schools.

DeKalb Professional Library

The DeKalb Professional Library provides support and resources to support the PL journey for all district employees. Whether the employee is a classroom teacher, administrator, teacher-librarian, or support staff, the DeKalb Professional Library offers resources and services designed to help our employees grow, lead, and inspire. The following are available:

- **Print and Digital Collections:** Access professional books, journals, and digital tools on topics including instructional leadership, literacy, equity, social-emotional learning (SEL), technology integration, and more.
- **Resource Curation:** We can help you find and gather high-quality resources for school-based PL, book studies, or PLCs.
- **Research Support:** If you need help locating materials or planning a professional learning session, we are available to assist.
- **Featured Book Lists:** Monthly highlights are tied to district initiatives and instructional priorities.

Professional Learning Support

New Teacher-Librarians were celebrated during the final NETwork seminar of the school year. One hundred percent (19/19) of the new teacher-librarians received a support visit from a member of the Educational Media Leadership Team. We are excited to report that on their EOY survey, all responded “strongly agree” with the support they received and the level of communication from the department. Additionally, the new teacher-librarians and library media assistants received PL sessions virtually and in person. PL topics included:

- School library and poetry training
- Enhancing library services for 21st Century learners
- Leveraging library and digital resources to strengthen academic growth
- Beanstack training

A total of forty-four (44) PL opportunities were provided to support teacher-librarians, library media assistants, and teachers throughout SY24-25.

GALILEO Ambassador Award

Dr. Roberta "Robbie" Barber, teacher-librarian at Tucker HS, was selected as this year's GALILEO (**G**eorgia **A** **L**ibrary **L**earning **O**nline) Ambassador Award recipient. Dr. Barber was nominated by her principal, Dr. Eric Parker, in recognition of her outstanding dedication to promoting GALILEO and fostering a culture of lifelong learning within her school community. The GALILEO Ambassador Award honors educators, librarians, library staff, and literacy advocates across Georgia who go above and beyond in championing GALILEO resources and supporting educational excellence.

ALA President-Elect Visit

American Library Association (ALA) President-Elect Sam Helmick visited the state of Georgia to learn more about how the school and public libraries support the communities they serve. During the visit, the Department of Educational Media hosted a welcome reception on May 8 and a meet-and-greet with the current and former DeKalb Library Media Specialists of the Year and the current DeKalb Teacher-Librarian Advisory Council at FSC on May 9. ALA President-Elect also visited Clarkston HS, Tucker HS, and Druid Hills MS.

Director Stephanie Brown-Bryant

K-12 Teaching and Learning

Prepping and Planning

In the bustling month of May, all Senior Content Coordinators are immersed in a whirlwind of activities, meticulously preparing and planning for a series of pivotal events and tasks. Their days are filled with strategic meetings, collaborative sessions, and detailed reviews, all aimed at enhancing the quality of curriculum content and instruction. These collaboration sessions include preparation for Academic Coaches Institute, Horizon's Back to Basic Retreat, Summer Leadership Conference, review and feedback of CSIP documents, and Scholars Academy lessons development.

Science

International Science and Engineering Fair

DCSD proudly celebrates the outstanding achievements of two exceptional students who represented the district at the ISEF in Columbus, Ohio, held from May 10–16.

Anushka Sable, a ninth grader at Chamblee HS, was honored with the National Anti-Vivisection Society Humane Science Award, earning a \$3,000 scholarship for her innovative and ethically grounded research. In addition, Anushka secured third place in the biomedical and health sciences category, standing out among over 80 international competitors. She also received a \$1,200 scholarship for this award.



Akousa Baah, an eleventh-grade student at Tucker HS received a special prize of an all-expenses-paid trip to attend the prestigious 66th London International Youth Science Forum, scheduled for July 23 - August 6.

These student journeys began at the DeKalb County Regional Science and Engineering Fair, led with excellence by Dr. Jacqueline Stephens and Mrs. Cassidy Moore. Dr. Jacqueline Stephens traveled with the students and their families to Columbus, Ohio, to provide supervision, encouragement and on-site support.

We applaud Anushka and Akousa for their exceptional accomplishments and thank our educators and families for investing in the future of science, innovation, and student success. Join us in celebrating these remarkable young scholars and the team that helped elevate them to the world stage!

Fine Arts

Student Artists Spotlight

Briley Rose G., a student at DeKalb School of the Arts, will have her voice featured in the High Museum of Art's upcoming exhibition, *Faith Ringgold: Seeing Children*. Her recording of a book reading will be part of the interactive exhibit, which runs from June 27 to October 12, and celebrates the work of acclaimed artist and author Faith Ringgold. This remarkable opportunity showcases Briley's talent and brings student voice into an inspiring, world-renowned museum setting.

Miller Grove MS produced and performed its first musical, *Anne Jr.*, in partnership with the Alliance Theatre's Jump Start Theatre program, May 16 and 17. The musical was directed by Ms. Shelton, the theatre teacher, and featured Ms. Evans, the principal, as Ms. Hannigan.

Director Doryiane Gunter

Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education

Student and Program Achievement

CTAE/WBL Partnerships Celebration

On May 16, the CTAE Department hosted their annual Work-Based Learning (WBL) and CTAE partnerships celebration at FSC. This event recognized hundreds of partners and sponsors that support WBL and CTAE programs by providing employment, apprenticeship, internship, and other learning opportunities for our students.



Audio Video Technology and Film Students Selected for Summer Internships

Julian Barker (Lakeside HS) and Rasalila Das (Stone Mountain HS) have been selected from a pool of hundreds of student applicants for a summer internship at Assembly Studios in Chamblee, GA. Julian and Rasalila will work as production assistants on actual movie sets this summer to learn more about the filming industry.

Future Educator Signing Day

The CTAE Department hosted its annual Georgia Future Educators Signing Day on May 7. More than 25 students from the Teaching as a Profession CTAE pathway committed to pursuing post-secondary programs in education. This celebration aligned with the new "Teach in the Peach" initiative launched by the GaDOE. As part of this statewide effort, students also participated in a special event on May 6 at the College Football Hall of Fame, where they joined over 1,500 students from across Georgia to honor and celebrate the next generation of educators.



Director Janetta Greenwood

Fernbank Science Center

School Support – Single Visits, Outreach, Planetarium, Scientific Tools and Techniques, and SOAR

FSC continues to provide single visits and outreach in science across the district. In May, FSC served 937 students with single visits, 5,426 students through Outreach, and 3,942 students with planetarium visits. A total of 10,305 students were served through various program offerings during in May.



Georgia Aquarium Partnership

The Georgia Aquarium Partnership continued during May, and has served 36,331 students and 107 schools. As of May 23, 15,509 students ventured to the aquarium with teachers and chaperones to participate in instructor-led field trips. The outreach programs have served 9,737 students. Virtual programs have served 3,806 students through the end of May. The Aquanaut Express has served 37 schools and 7,279 students from January to May. Students will continue to be involved in the partnership through Marine Mavericks and STARS Camps held at FSC during June.

Schools involved in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Ocean Guardians Grant Program, as part of the partnership between DCSD and the Georgia Aquarium, are working on final reports to submit to NOAA to receive their Ocean Guardian School designation. An estimated 3,000 students interacted with the NOAA Ocean Guardians Program at six selected school sites.

American Library Association President Elect Visit

On May 9, FSC hosted a welcome reception at the FSC Library Media Center to welcome the American Library Association (ALA) president-elect, Sam Helmick, and other national ALA officers. During the event, ongoing initiatives at the Fernbank Science Center Library were

discussed as well as plans to collaborate on sharing the ScienTots program nationally. It was also an honor to host members of the District Teacher Librarian Advisory Council and the DCSD Library Media Specialist of the Year awardees (2012–present) during this event.

Director Monique Kimbell

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Professional Learning

The MTSS Team maintains a weekly collaboration with the Department of Exceptional Education, including the Psychologist and Section 504 Team, to ensure students with diverse learning needs are supported effectively through the tiers. These efforts align with our commitment to equitable opportunity and access for all students. Additionally, the team presented at the Job-A-Like Collaboration on May 9, sharing GaMTSS updates from GaDOE, explored the School Fidelity Tool, led a discussion around how our work intertwines, and identified key supports missing or needed to support the GaMTSS framework. At the same time, the MTSS Team continues to collaborate closely with the PBIS Team to advance the integration of GaMTSS and Whole Child Support Team initiatives. This alignment strengthens our shared commitment to supporting every aspect of student well-being—academic, behavioral, and social-emotional.

The MTSS Team facilitated virtual PL sessions designed to enhance planning and implementation of interventions aligned with the school's MTSS Implementation Plan for SY25–26, provided guidance on supporting students with a wide range of academic and behavioral needs and the collection of state-mandated K-3 dyslexia data to ensure timely and accurate reporting.

End of Year Data Collection

In support of closing out the current school year, the MTSS specialists are working to complete their EOY checklist data collection report, review implementation data, and ensure proper documentation of intervention delivery and data. The team is also finalizing intervention plans for the SY25-26 in order to ensure that supports are in place on day one. The collaboration and data shared during the transition meetings assisted with developing intervention plans that supports the whole child.

Director Keatra Wright

FLEX Academy

FLEX Academy provides an online option for students to gain academic credits towards graduation. During SY24-25, FLEX supported local HS students in grades 9-12 through three programs; FLEX Academy, FLEX Beyond the Day and FLEX Restore.

FLEX Academy

FLEX Academy is an alternative enrollment option for students of DCSD. These students have the option to take their full course load online with fully certified teachers. Courses are synchronous and teacher-led. We served 217 students throughout the SY24-25.

Grade	Enrollment
9th	8
10th	31
11th	72
12th	106
TOTAL	217

FLEX Academy student success rate

Semester	Pass	Fail
Fall 2024-2025	72.30%	27.70%
Spring 2023-	75.80%	24.2%

FLEX Beyond the Day

FLEX Beyond the Day offers students the opportunity to take full credit online courses. These courses are taken in addition to their regular schedule at the primary school. Students can enroll in up to 2.0 Carnegie units per school year. FLEX Beyond the day served 750 students.

Grade	Enrollment
9th	42
10th	89
11th	179
12th	439
TOTAL	750

FLEX Beyond the Day student success rate

Semester	Pass	Fail
Fall 2024-2025	86.05%	13.95%
Spring 2023-	86.52%	13.48%

FLEX Restore

FLEX Restore provides an opportunity for students to gain credit in courses where they were previously unsuccessful. Students must have scored between 55 and 69 in order to qualify for enrollment.

Grade	Enrollment
9th	33
10th	67
11th	97
12th	172
TOTAL	369

FLEX Restore student success rate

Semester	Pass	Fail
Fall 2024-2025	75.53%	24.47%
Spring 2023-	72.02%	27.98%

As we close out the academic year, FLEX Academy is providing two options for summer, FLEX Summer School and FLEX Restore (summer session). The current number of registration requests for FLEX Summer School is 751. The current number of registration requests for FLEX Restore (summer session) is 203.

Chief Dr. Candace Alexander

Continuous and Improvement Accountability

Graduation Central

The Division of Accountability and Research collaborated with the Division of Schools and Leadership to participate in DCSD graduations at the Georgia State Convention Center from May 16, 21-25, 2025. Parents, BOE members, scholars, valedictorians, and salutatorians shared their journeys and celebrated. Superintendent Devon Q. Horton discussed the 4Es (Enroll, Enlist, Employ, Entrepreneurship) and encouraged students to identify their post-graduation plans. All divisions contributed to the event, and I greatly appreciated supporting it with Dr. Bernetta Jones, Ms. April Caldwell, and Mr. Enis Harvey to ensure smooth operations with the volunteers.

MIRACLES Celebration

The MIRCLES Celebrations for the SY24-25 reviewed completed priorities. The Division of Accountability and Research worked on 14 priorities, of which seven were completed; three remain ongoing, and four were added following Workshop #1. For 2025-2026, the focus will be on 10 MIRACLES Priorities, with seven carried over from the previous year, along with three PL Priorities derived from the Access and Opportunity Audit. Our strategy is “Focus on Impact.” The event highlighted the work of the divisions and demonstrated collective efforts toward continuous improvement. The atmosphere and setup organized by Ms. Pamela McCloud and Chief Palmer were well executed. Appreciation was extended to the BOE members who participated throughout the year and attended this event. Simply amazing vision, Superintendent Dr. Devon Q. Horton!

Executive Director Dr. Myisha Warren

Federal Programs

Summer Professional Learning

During summer 2025, Federal Programs will sponsor 112 districtwide PL sessions aimed at enhancing instructional practices. These sessions are available to teachers, media specialists, paraprofessionals, academic coaches, and parent liaisons, with district personnel also encouraged to attend for professional development. All sessions align with the district’s strategic plan and the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) and are listed on DCSD Frontline.

Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan

The district is in the process of revising the CLIP based on updated data and stakeholder feedback

- May 21 – Titles I, II, III, IV, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Human Resources (HR), and Migrant and Homeless program continued meeting to work on CLIP revisions.

- May 30 - June 16 – Cabinet and district leadership will provide feedback and revisions to finalize the CLIP documents.

Continuous School Improvement Plan

- Ongoing CSIP Committee meetings focused on refining the Peer Review process within Canvas.
- Area teams and district staff met with schools to review CSIPs and provide targeted support.
- Schools will finalize CSIPs by May 5.
- District staff will collaborate to provide feedback on submitted CSIPs in Canvas CSIP Leader Lab – Module 3 by May 16.
- Schools finish final edits by May 30.
- Federal Programs will provide final review and sign off June 16-27.

Parent and Family Engagement (PFE)

Title I Spring Parent and Family Engagement Professional Learning:

On May 20, the Office of Federal Programs hosted the Spring Parent and Family Engagement (PFE) PL session, bringing together 21 dedicated attendees for a day of collaboration, capacity-building, and celebration. Facilitated by the Title I Parent Center Facilitators, the event focused on strengthening school-home partnerships and preparing for a successful fiscal year (FY) 2026.

The comprehensive agenda included:

- Effective communication strategies
- Maximizing your efforts: FY26 Stakeholder Input Toolkit overview
- Workshops that work: Linking family engagement to learning
- Framework your feedback for application: Turning survey data into engaging PFE

The session concluded on a high note with a recognition ceremony honoring the outstanding commitment and contributions of our parent liaisons. Awards were presented in the following categories:

- Compliance Champion
- Data Leader
- Most Supportive Liaison
- Rookie PL of the Year
- Next Level Award
- Most Creative Workshop

With energy, enthusiasm, and excellence, the Spring PL wrapped up with a renewed commitment to advancing PFE to new heights in FY26. We are excited to continue this important work and thank all participants for their service and dedication to families and communities.

Title I and Title II Updates

Coordinators, accounting associates, and budget specialists met with staff from public, private, and charter schools to discuss the following items. They reviewed these items to ensure they align with the Strategic Plan and the goals set in the (CSIP).

- Open purchase orders
- Travel
- FY25 budgets
- Tutorial programs
- Spending
- Ongoing training

Additionally, the team supported the review, approval, and processing of tutorial and PL stipends for payment.

Director Dr. Felicia Rhone

Assessment and Accountability

2025 Spring Georgia Milestone End-of-Grade Assessment

We are very proud of the Assessment Administration Department for their excellent performance in providing support throughout the year, particularly with the Georgia Milestones assessments. All examiners underwent thorough training, resulting in zero ethical violations. Furthermore, the evidence indicates enhanced oversight within testing environments' increased participation as seen in the data below.

DeKalb County School District 2025 Georgia Milestone End-of-Grade Status

Scheduled Tests	Completed Tests	Tests in Progress	Tests Not Started
242,227	238,530	5	3,692

98% Completed

DeKalb County School District 2025 Georgia Milestone End-of-Course Status

Scheduled Tests	Completed Tests	Tests in Progress	Tests Not Started
41,389	38,785	0	2,604

94% Completed

Advanced Placement Exams

The main administration window for Advanced Placement exams opened on May 12 and closed on May 23. Several schools participated in late testing the following week due to conflicts with state testing. A few schools are participating in exception testing, an additional option after late testing, due to technology challenges experienced during late testing. Final Advanced Placement testing information can be updated once all testing has concluded.

Saturday Administration of the Gifted Identification Assessments

Plans are still being made for the possibility of the DCSD offering Gifted Identification Assessments on Saturdays to increase the number of instructional days during the school year. Committees are meeting to determine registration process, security, transportation, nutrition, administration, and staff interest. On May 23, the principals of the 15 pre-selected gifted administration sites were notified of their potential use:

- North – Chamblee HS, Huntley Hills ES, Dunwoody ES
- North/Central – Henderson MS, Lakeside HS, Henderson Mill ES, Briar Vista ES
- South/Central – Stone Mountain HS, Stephenson HS, Hambrick ES, Princeton ES
- Southwest – Cedar Grove HS, Cedar Grove ES, Peachcrest ES
- Southeast – Miller Grove HS, Marbut Theme ES, Browns Mill ES

Director Dr. Rebecca Braaten

Research, Data, and Evaluation

Research Review Board

The department processed two research requests for the spring review cycle from May 1-28. Of those two, one was doctoral research and the other was an external agency research proposal. The requests came from the following universities/agencies: EVERFI and Walden University. The Research Review Board will meet on May 30, to discuss all April and May submissions. Approval and denial letters will be sent to applicants in June.

Surveys and Online Forms

The department processed 16 electronic online document requests during May. Of those 16, eight were online forms, one was an event/training feedback survey, and seven were stakeholder surveys. The electronic online documents were created for the following divisions/departments:

- Access and Opportunity
- Athletics
- Community Engagement and Innovative Partnerships
- Federal Programs
- Operations

- Professional Development
- Schools and Leadership
- Wrap Around and Support Services

Data Requests

As the school year ends, the department has completed 14 data and dashboard projects for internal and external stakeholders. These projects encompass various data types, including attendance, discipline, student demographics, student grades, and local, state, and national assessments.

During May, interactive dashboards were finalized for EOY reporting of district initiatives across various programs, including elementary and MS social-emotional learning courses, elementary career lessons, middle and HS BRIDGE law courses, school innovation lab programs, student mentoring programs, and GALearns professional development literacy course completion.

Our department is collaborating with district and school leaders, program directors, and administrators to deliver EOY data that will help them assess the impact and effectiveness of their programs during SY24-25.

Chief Information Officer Dr. Kermit Belcher

Department of Information and Instructional Technology

Network Infrastructure Enhancement

DCSD remains committed to providing a safe, secure, and reliable internet experience for all students and staff. Through the 2025 Network Modernization Plan, the district is building a resilient, scalable infrastructure that supports future-ready learning across more than 140 sites. Recognizing that much of the existing network equipment had reached end of life, the district launched a multi-phase modernization initiative to upgrade critical components such as network cabling, switches, wireless access points, and firewalls. This work strengthens the district's ability to meet growing instructional and operational demands while enhancing security, redundancy, and communication across all schools and facilities.

With Phase 1 infrastructure upgrades underway, DCSD is moving into a second phase focused on expanding bandwidth, modernizing firewalls, enhancing network monitoring, and strengthening support systems. Key initiatives include expanding Tier 3 network support, implementing redundancy for major network circuits, and transitioning to a more secure wireless environment. These upgrades are part of a comprehensive strategy to ensure the district's network remains safe, efficient, and capable of supporting innovation and learning. Protecting and empowering every student and staff member who relies on the district's digital infrastructure remains a top priority.

Instructional Device Lifecycle Management

DCSD remains dedicated to integrating technology into every aspect of teaching and learning, ensuring students have access to high-quality educational opportunities. Technology serves as a powerful tool in preparing students for success in an increasingly digital and fast-changing world. The district continues to provide students and staff with reliable, innovative instructional devices that support learning, encourages creativity, and promotes collaboration. A strong emphasis on equitable access ensures that every learner is equipped with the tools necessary to reach their full potential.

Beginning in summer 2025, all student and staff devices across the district will be replaced as part of a comprehensive refresh initiative. This upgrade will bring the latest technology to every school, supporting modern instructional practices and enhancing digital learning environments. By delivering updated, high-performing devices, this initiative invests in student success and equips educators with essential resources to deliver engaging and transformative instruction.

Manager Natalie Terrell

Project Management Office

Digitized Records Program

This project is making great progress! The proof of concept where the focus is on HR is still in progress. A total of 3,424 boxes have been collected for reviewing, getting necessary approvals from DCSD, scanning, and indexing. The team is still working on workflow processes as well as the project plan and documentation. Training for the HR Team will occur in June. The proof of concept is still tentatively planned for completion in early September. From this phase, there will be a good understanding of the implementation process for this initiative and would have collected enough information and documentation to create a comprehensive plan for the district rollout.



Executive Director Dr. Kyia Clark and Manager III Terri Webb

Instructional Technology

Congratulations FUSE Cohort V



What is FUSE?

(FURthering Student Engagement)

FUSE is an extended PD opportunity for those innovative and early adopter teachers who absolutely love technology! We want to cultivate a learning community that encourages innovation and seamless technology integration throughout the district. Becoming a FUSE is a personalized learning journey!

Congratulations to our 2025 FUSE V Cohort graduates. This year's eight-week program was designed to deepen teachers' understanding of integrating digital tools into their lessons, specifically focusing on leveraging resources within the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS). This initiative aimed to address the Digital Design Divide, a key concern highlighted in the National Educational Technology Plan, by equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to create equitable and engaging digital learning experiences for all students. Throughout the

cohort, participants fostered their technological pedagogical knowledge, ensuring lessons align with district curriculum while enhancing student engagement. A significant aspect of the program was fostering a collaborative learning environment, where teachers can share ideas, resources, and feedback on their lesson designs.

The FUSE V Cohort created a group of teachers that are proficient in designing and implementing technology-rich lessons that are aligned with the district curriculum. They also effectively utilized various Canvas LMS features, such as assignments, modules, discussions, and assessments, to deliver engaging learning experiences for our digital dreamers, which are our students. The teachers gained strategies to differentiate instruction using technology to support diverse learning needs and design lessons that are accessible and engaging for all students, thereby addressing equity challenges. The cohort structure combined synchronous and asynchronous learning activities, with each week dedicated to a specific aspect of lesson design and technology integration.

Technology Symposium



Mark your calendar for the 2025 DCSD Technology Symposium! This year's theme, "GameOn DeKalb! Bridging the Digital Divide" is geared towards engaging our DCSD educators, leaders, and district administrators in an immersive and connected environment. Our goal is aimed at promoting awareness, facilitating integration, and encouraging the expansion of instructional digital tools as they provide strategies on the use of technology to transform teaching and learning. We look forward to seeing you there!

Director Eric Logan

Information and Network Security

Compromise Assessment

On June 2, we kicked off a compromise assessment with one of our partners. The purpose of this assessment is to provide a point-in-time deep analysis of the district's IT environment to better understand the potential security risks. The initial assessment scoping was conducted on

April 7 with much of the pre-assessment work conducted during May. Our team will be presented with an executive summary of their findings and remediation recommendations on June 9.

Asset Discovery and Visibility Proof of Concept

We are in the process of moving forward with this POC, which was delayed because of the network issues that we experienced. Again, the goal of this POC is to determine if this product will be able to track which assets (e.g., computers) are deployed and their exposure to cyber risk to gain a complete picture of vulnerabilities across the district.

Cyber Champions Initiative – Year One (The Genesis)

The Cyber Champions initiative proudly concluded its inaugural year with outstanding engagement and impact. Students across the district participated in monthly virtual artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and digital safety awareness activities and discussions that empowered them to become advocates for responsible technology use.

In recognition of their efforts, the Cyber Champions were honored at the May board meeting, where their contributions to fostering a culture of cyber awareness were celebrated by district leadership.



Several Cyber Champions also shared their experiences at the [May Parent Tech Cafe](#), which aimed to inspire and recruit the next cohort of Cyber Champions. Their stories highlighted the value of student voice in cybersecurity education and the importance of community collaboration in keeping our digital spaces safe!

DCSD Passphrase Requirement Updates

We are excited to share the continued progress of the DCSD Passphrase Requirement Update, part of the Cyber Smart Essentials: Security Awareness Training Canvas course. As of the end of May, 154 Division of Information and Instructional Technology members successfully completed their passphrase updates through the Canvas course.

This milestone reflects our collective commitment to strengthening cybersecurity across the district. We appreciate the feedback and engagement from all participants, which has helped refine the course and improve the rollout process.

Looking ahead, we are now preparing to implement the passphrase update within AIC for cabinet members and administrative staff. This next phase will ensure that our leadership teams are aligned with the district's security protocols and best practices.

To support this broader rollout, we've also launched a dedicated [Cyber Smart SharePoint site](#) as an additional resource hub. This site includes FAQs, a step-by-step guide, and a direct link to the Canvas course for easy access!

Dr. Worthey Recognized as an Innovative Technology Leader

Manager of Security Awareness and Engagement Dr. Worthey, was recently honored with the [Innovative Educational Technology Specialist Award](#) at the Southeast Regional Leadership Summit, hosted by *Tech & Learning*. This prestigious recognition celebrates her leadership in launching and scaling the Cyber Champions Program, a student-led digital citizenship initiative that has quickly become a model for other districts.

In a featured article titled [5 Tips To Launching A Cyber Champions Program](#), Dr. Worthey shares practical strategies for other districts looking to replicate the program's success. The article outlines how she and Director of Information Security Eric Logan built the program from the ground up, starting with a modest goal of 25 students and quickly scaling to over 60 enthusiastic participants!

The program emphasizes monthly virtual meetings, breakout sessions by grade level, and student-led peer education on topics like cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and digital ethics.

Dr. Worthey's approach blends structured curriculum with autonomy for volunteer teachers, driven by passion and purpose. Her leadership has not only empowered students but also created a ripple effect of digital literacy across the district!

Deputy Chief Technology Officer Glenn Melendez

Enterprise Applications and Data Services

Digital Resource and Technology Request Process

DCSD reinforces its leadership in technology by prioritizing the integration of innovative technology solutions that enhance teaching, learning, and operational efficiency within the DCSD technology footprint. To amplify the use of new technology, we have refined our evaluation process to more effectively assess and adopt modern tools, ensure alignment with district goals and maximize impact.

To advance this initiative, we have implemented a comprehensive evaluation rubric to standardize the assessment of new technology for compatibility and seamless integration into our district's dynamic technology ecosystem. Additionally, a streamlined workflow intake process has been established to ensure all technology requests are systematically reviewed and prioritized. Users can also access a continuously curated database of approved technology solutions designed to meet diverse operational and instructional needs.

As of December 2024, this effort has been completed.

Website Modernization

As part of our website modernization initiative, we've conducted an in-depth scoping process to ensure the new platform aligns with the evolving expectations of our community. Key features will include a user-focused design, an intuitive Content Management System (CMS) for streamlined updates, multi-language support, compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) to ensure accessibility for all users, and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) for easy access to important information. These enhancements will deliver a dynamic, user-friendly website that reflects our district's commitment to innovation and excellence.

To gather valuable insights, we launched a digital survey in October 2024 to collect feedback on website functionality and design. Additionally, focus groups were hosted during the month of November 2024. The input from these efforts will play a crucial role in shaping our modernized website.

As of May 2025, we're excited to share that the design phase of our website modernization project is now complete, and content migration is officially underway. Staff have been trained on the new platform and are actively working to format updated content and migrate external links. This migration process will continue through mid-June. We remain on track to launch the new website platform no later than Q3 2025.

Data Governance Program

The district's vision for data governance is to establish a data-driven ecosystem that drives academic success by empowering educators, supporting personalized learning, informing targeted interventions, advancing equity, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement through data-informed decision-making.

During this reporting period, we are continuing to advance our work on correlating student outcomes with the digital resources used across our schools to ensure that our investments in educational tools are driving student success.

To date, we have identified several key digital resources that are currently under evaluation. Our analysis is focused on understanding how these tools are being utilized and identifying patterns of optimal use. We are then comparing these usage patterns with student performance data to assess impact.

Our goal is to pinpoint which tools—and which usage strategies—yield the strongest returns in terms of student learning and achievement. This evaluation will help guide future decisions around digital resource investments and instructional integration.

We anticipate completing this analysis by August which will support strategic, evidence-based decision-making in our district.