



District Academic Report – March 2025

Chief Dr. Triscilla Weaver

Access and Opportunity (A&O)

During March, the department engaged in several key initiatives to advance district objectives. Department vendor E3 met with the senior cabinet on March 17, followed by a discussion with approximately 30 committee members of district leadership on March 18. The Field Trip Committee convened to refine the district's guidance document, focusing on timing, curriculum alignment, accessibility, and affordability. Additionally, the committee has begun compiling and formatting top content and processes from standard operating procedures (SOP) submitted by all schools in the district. The first draft of this document is expected to be completed by mid-April.

Furthermore, the A&O Team continued collaborating with the Public Consulting Group (PCG) to complete additional A&O Audit tasks. PCG has completed the data analysis process and is finalizing the comprehensive report. Based on their timeline, we will receive a draft of the presentation they plan to deliver at the May board meeting on April 7. They will provide the audit's executive summary to us on April 30.

We also had the honor of recognizing Sean Mouzon of Southwest DeKalb High School (HS) for being featured on *60 Minutes*. Sean auditioned and was selected as a student member of the U.S. Marine Band. He was one of only 30 students selected nationwide to perform with the prestigious ensemble in Washington, D.C. Additionally, team members demonstrated their commitment to community engagement by supporting district leadership at the opening ceremonies of the Special Olympics at Halford Stadium. These efforts reflect the department's dedication to fostering student success, refining district policies, and supporting inclusive opportunities for all students.

Executive Director Myss Johnson-Jelks

Athletics

This month has been productive, focusing on several key projects to improve departmental efficiency and planning for the upcoming year. I've been heavily involved in refining our SOPs, ensuring they align with best practices and support streamlined operations. Additionally, I've worked on vendor renewals, negotiating terms, and ensuring contracts are up to date to maintain smooth operations across various departments.

In preparation for the next year, I've been collaborating with teams to align departmental goals, ensuring success for the remainder of this year and next. On the event planning side, I've been coordinating logistics for county athletic events, ensuring everything is in place for smooth

execution. Additionally, I've led the organization of the district celebration for fall and winter sports, aiming to honor our student-athletes and their achievements in a memorable way. It's been a month of strategic planning, collaboration, and preparing for the months ahead.

Reviewing and updating our Athletic Handbooks and SOPs is an ongoing effort, and I'm working closely with our Athletics Director Brandon Lane to ensure full alignment across all areas. Below, you'll find more details on the items we've been working on.

Director Brandon Lane

Athletics

This month, I have worked diligently to enhance the efficiency and growth of our athletic department. A significant focus has been on developing SOPs to create consistency and clarity in our operations. Additionally, I have been actively pursuing sponsorship opportunities by engaging with external organizations to secure financial and resource-based partnerships. To strengthen our team's effectiveness, I have conducted one-on-one meetings with staff to clarify roles, set expectations for next year, and gather feedback from this school year. I have also collaborated closely with the Executive Director of Athletics Myss Jelks, to ensure that all high schools have athletic trainers next year while engaging with outside companies to explore ways to improve our department's overall operations.

Budget management has also been a key priority in working with Executive Director of Athletics Myss Jelks, to ensure we stay within our allocated budget while maximizing program resources. Alongside these efforts, I have provided extensive support for coordinators in organizing and executing events, ensuring smooth operations and problem-solving as needed. I have attended numerous athletic and district events to represent our department and support our programs. Overall, my work this month centers on strengthening our department's structure, securing outside resources, and ensuring the success of our athletic programs.

Director Kina M. Champion

School Innovation

Charter Schools

School Innovation conducted two Charter Schools 101 sessions for the Finance Division and scheduled the final two sessions required to meet its MIRACLES goal at the Silver Hill Administrative Complex for April. An additional session for Student Support Services will take place in May. Planning for school year (SY) 2025-2026 included confirming Qualitative Site Review (QSR) visits, quarterly charter school collaborative meetings, annual meetings, governing board observations, and a Spotlight School visit at Tapestry Public Charter School. The department submitted two proposals for the Advancement for Growth in Achievement Matters Everywhere (A-GAME) national authorizer convening in May 2025, including one workshop to share the QSR process (a MIRACLES priority). Regarding the start-up charter petition cycle, DCSD received one incomplete charter petition that did not proceed to formal

evaluation, while the State Charter Schools Commission received one petition for a medically focused charter school (grades 6-12) that would serve DCSD students if approved. The district will provide feedback to the commission on the petition. The team is also completing end-of-year charter compliance closeout tasks and hosting division-level meetings to review SY24-25 department quality survey data, revise the fiscal year (FY) 2026 department services, and gather input on the DCSD letter of assurance.

School Governance

School Innovation met with the Research, Data, and Evaluation (RDE) Team to discuss the Innovative Solutions Lab Data Dashboard. During the meeting, RDE shared academic and climate and culture (C&C) data for SY23-24 and SY24-25 Innovative Solutions Lab (ISL) awardees, which will be loaded into the draft dashboard. Efforts are ongoing to include additional data collection items for each ISL project, with a follow-up meeting scheduled in two to three weeks to continue building out the dashboard. Follow-up visits to current ISL projects are also scheduled. School Innovation extends its gratitude to RDE Student Assignment, and District Family Engagement for leading breakout sessions at the spring PAC Cross-Council meeting on March 6.

In support of Horizon Schools, School Innovation participated in the Collaborative Calibration Visits (CCV) at McNair HS and Flat Rock Elementary School (ES) to provide insights on leveraging district flexibility for school improvement. The School Innovation Team also facilitated several planning meetings with the Leadership Team at Flat Rock in preparation for its April 2 Spotlight School visit, which focused on collaborative planning. Forty-seven educators across the district attended the March 27 Spotlight School visit at Freedom Middle School (MS). Freedom MS's visit focused on academic and behavioral support for multilingual learners (System 5). School Innovation conducted professional learning (PL) on situation appraisal (TregoED) during the districtwide PL day to support school and district leaders in identifying problems of practice (for ISL) and promising practices (for Spotlight Schools).

School Innovation continues to collaborate with Legal to review HR policies for Strategic Waiver School System (SWSS) alignment. Prioritized departments for the remaining SY24-25 SWSS 101 sessions have been identified.

Executive Director Sarita Smith

Student Assignment

The Student Assignment Team has had an eventful March, culminating in completing the student assignment survey, which gathered insights from 3,294 community members and 707 staff. The team is now disaggregating the survey data across four critical categories: stakeholder, race/ethnicity, school, and board district, laying the groundwork for deeper analysis. Plans are underway to share and post the raw data along with a comparable survey crosswalk to provide transparency and enable further exploration. This data will be pivotal in

triangulating information for reimagining DeKalb's educational landscape. Concurrently, committee attendance and expectations are being reviewed to maintain engagement and productivity. Members who cannot meet attendance requirements will be replaced with new participants from the original application pool, underrepresented school communities, or board recommendations. The onboarding of new committee members will occur over the summer, aligning with plans to restructure the committee into one cohesive group meeting bi-monthly in the fall.

Additionally, the team is preparing to launch the Summer Student Assignment Project (SAP) Institute, which will assemble internal and community teams to review guiding principles, proposals, and committee suggestions. This initiative is set to explore the feasibility of various scenarios, addressing operational opportunities and challenges. Dedicated staff will contribute to this endeavor, which begins in June, demonstrating a collaborative commitment to progress. In partnership with operations, SAP leaders are also advancing redistricting projects, including a pilot of the redistricting implementation SOP with the Idlewood/Smoke Rise merger. Weekly planning sessions with a multi-disciplinary team, including school principals and district staff, ensure a seamless transition. The team is poised to share its process and outcomes with the community to finalize guiding principles by the end of May, highlighting a commitment to thoughtful planning and meaningful engagement.

Director Dr. Char-Shenda Covington

Student Assignment

The School Choice and Registration initiatives have achieved remarkable outcomes over the past month, underscored by the successful allocation of 100 percent of scholars across the 39 school choice programs. This speaks to the district's commitment to ensuring access and opportunity for all families, fostering opportunities for scholars to thrive in programs that align with their educational goals and needs. The Leadership Team's active involvement in community engagement events, including literacy activities and stakeholder information sessions, has strengthened trust and collaboration across the district. These efforts emphasize the district's dedication to fostering transparent communication and meaningful partnerships with the broader community to support educational excellence. Moreover, the director's proactive efforts in providing individualized support to principals, particularly those new to their roles and those participating in the Governor's School Leadership Academy, have proven instrumental in ensuring effective school leadership. The Seat Calculator Tool has received favorable feedback from principals, as it facilitated data-driven decision-making in student assignment and planning. This collaborative approach has yielded powerful results, enhancing the alignment of resources and priorities to meet the needs of scholars and schools alike.

Integrating summer registration hubs, satellite impact centers, and parent centers provides crucial resources that empower families to engage actively in the educational process. By ensuring that these centers are available, the district fosters inclusivity and smoother student transitions, particularly during critical registration periods. These collaborative efforts

demonstrate a proactive approach to meeting the community's diverse needs while strengthening ties between district leadership and stakeholders. Additionally, the department's initiatives to secure a residency verification system and collaborate with a new vendor for the upcoming lottery highlight a forward-thinking approach to streamlining processes and maintaining accuracy in student assignments. The residency verification system will help ensure fairness and transparency while upholding district policies and guidelines. Partnering with a new vendor for the lottery system is an important step toward optimizing operations and delivering more effective results in allocating school choice options. Together, these efforts reflect the district's dedication to innovation and continuous improvement in supporting students, families, and schools across the region.

Executive Director Dr. Loukisha Walker

Student Mentorship and Partnerships (SMP)

FACE Advocates

In collaboration with the A&O Division, I developed a foundational document titled "*FACE Advocates – A Blueprint for Success*." This guide outlines clear expectations and responsibilities for FACE Advocates, aiming to enhance program alignment and impact. It was shared with other divisions for feedback and to ensure it reflects a comprehensive districtwide perspective. Once finalized, this blueprint will serve as a guiding resource to support training, consistency, and performance standards across all FACE Advocate placements. Additionally, planning is underway for exciting FACETIME activities designed to enrich the experiences of FACE mentees beyond the classroom. Preparations have begun for a summer trip to Washington, DC, exposing 100 students to new environments, culture, and history. The formal proposal for this trip will be submitted for approval in April. In addition, we are preparing for the FACETIME Family Game Night scheduled for April 25—a joyful evening designed to strengthen family engagement through games, interactive presentations, and meaningful connections between FACE mentees and their families.

MBK (My Brother's Keeper) and OSK (Our Sister's Keeper)

As we look toward the conclusion of the academic year, planning has also begun for end-of-year celebrations to honor our MBK and OSK mentees. These celebrations will include an interactive luncheon to recognize students for their growth, learning, and community service throughout the year. This event will highlight individual and group accomplishments and reinforce the importance of mentorship and leadership among young men and women. In the meantime, MBK/OSK ES students will participate in our MBK/OSK Sneaker Ball on March 28. I am excited to see their faces as both groups come together for a festive time.

Districtwide Mentoring Framework

Throughout the month, we visited over 23 schools to observe and offer support for the Districtwide Mentoring Program. Seeing the creativity and intentionality schools bring to implement their mentoring efforts has been inspiring. From peer mentoring models to community guest engagement, schools thoughtfully embed the mentoring framework into their culture—demonstrating ownership, innovation, and a commitment to student success.

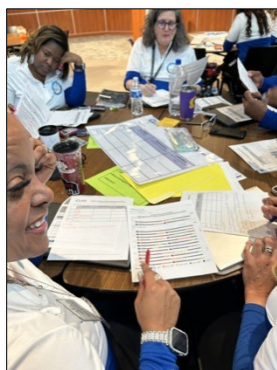
Chief of Schools Michelle Dillard

Division of Schools and Leadership

Division Summary

The Division of Schools and Leadership was active during March. At the start of the month, we hosted training for teacher leaders to implement effective Professional Learning Communities (PLC), and our team members presented all over the district for the Professional Learning Day on March 7. Our principals were given several leadership nuggets on March 14 for the Initiative One Think Tank, and we partnered with Accountability and Research for the Accountability Clinics. On March 20, we hosted our Area and Principals' Learning Opportunity (ALO/PLO) with special sessions from our Legal Team, the Division of Curriculum and Instruction (C&I), and Michael Moore. OLA provided critical legal updates and shared the new executive orders. Our C&I Team shared what leaders can expect from implementing the new English Language Arts (ELA) standards. Michael Moore taught leaders the Goal, Reality, Options, Will (GROW) model for coaching and providing feedback.

Our culminating learning for the month was the Division Spring Retreat. With the theme of March Madness: Elevating our Game in the Fourth Quarter, Champion Dillard gave the charge for consistency, coherence, and accountability. This was an opportunity to analyze data, practice the GROW model as leaders, and take a deeper dive with Specially Designed Instruction, mathematics standards, and Student Success Skills Backpack (SSSB). The theme was well executed!



Beth Kyle

Area 1 Elementary Schools

Area Team Support

March was spent finishing up CCVs and Principal Professional Learning Communities (PPLC) with our schools. Our team worked hard to support schools in quickly completing Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing to help students as we move towards End-of-Grade testing. The team also uses MAP data and other data sources to support schools as they develop their FY26 school improvement plans. ELA and math coordinators focus on being in third- and fifth-

grade classrooms and supporting daily instruction. C&C coordinators have been assisting schools with monitoring attendance and behavior data, ensuring that data gets reported accurately and that rates remain positive. They have also been spending time this month providing implicit bias training at some of our schools. Our mental health coordinator is working hard to prepare for her third mental health first aid training for the year. C&C and Mental Health have also worked collaboratively to provide Wellness Wednesday school events.

School Celebrations

Schools had a great time celebrating Pi Day, National School Breakfast Week, and Read Across America this past month! Ashford Park's celebration included therapy dogs for their students to read to. Schools also honored social workers and crossing guards this month! Sarv Dharavane, a fifth grader at Austin ES, will again represent the district and state of Georgia at the National Spelling Bee this summer. Sagamore Hills ES hosted its annual math tournament with over 200 students from 14 schools. They had over 250 parents in attendance! Krystle Gardner at Austin ES and Chana Czuper at Vanderlyn ES received the *Difference Maker Award*. Dunwoody's second graders successfully incubated and hatched three chicks! Ashford Park's Odessey of the Mind Team won second place at the state competition and will compete in Nationals this summer. John Lewis held student-led conferences. Finally, principals had a great start to the hiring season at the job fair.



Terry Brown

Area 2 Elementary Schools

Celebrations

Area 2 elementary schools celebrated the completion of second semester CCV presentations, Learning Walks, and feedback. It was also exciting to see the stronger, more authentic school artifacts and feedback from the Area Support Team improve as well.

Mathematics support continued with the Area 2 math content coordinator partnering with the Metro Regional Educational Service Agency (MRESA) to continue supporting our teachers with doing the instructional learning plans for the upcoming unit of study. Teachers could practice using the manipulatives and pay close attention to the APPLY section of the learning plans.

Consolidated School Improvement Plan (CSIP) planning and revision was also a big focus for the month. Schools use the 5 Whys Protocol, Root Cause Analysis, and the Peer Review Checklist to revise and update their school plans. A portion of the Area's Learning Opportunity was devoted to principals' discussion of Reading-ELA instructional strategies and the 3-Act Tasks for Mathematics.

For literacy, the Area 2 Support Team noticed more students knowing and using their Lexiles in the second semester. Additionally, for Reading-ELA, the Area 2 Team engaged in the New ELA standards training on March 7 across Area 2 schools to assess how redelivery was going.

A final celebration of the month was Evansdale's second-grade teacher, Ms. Gloria Bradley, who our HR Department acknowledged for the "Making A Difference Award."



Ateshia Lester

Area 3 Elementary Schools

In March, Area 3 principals completed their final PLC hosted by Bob Mathis ES and Rainbow. Leaders collaborated and received support with their problems of practice and discussed their fourth-grade reading data. Also, principals could practice the GROW coaching model for effective feedback at this month's learning opportunity. Executive administrators finished CCVs with all schools and will begin assisting leaders with CSIP support. Area content coordinators are supporting teachers with Georgia Milestone Readiness with an emphasis on math learning plans and the writing checklists to provide feedback to scholars. C&C coordinators are supporting local school attendance teams by utilizing Everyday Labs to be more intentional about monitoring scholar data. Mental Health trains families on strategies to support scholars' mental health.

Highlights in Area 3 include Bob Mathis having scholars' art pieces displayed at Avondale Arts Center. Cedar Grove ES won the School Engagement award for elementary schools at the National PBIS Conference. Princeton ES scholars won numerous events at the Science Olympiad. Barack Obama's Chorus sang the National Anthem at the Atlanta Hawks basketball game and the girls' basketball team won the district championship. Also, their scholars hosted Wall Street with 35 student vendors showcasing their goods and services.

Jacqueline Tayler

Area Middle Schools

During March, the Middle School Area Team worked on improving instructional practices, compliance, and student support.

The executive administrators facilitated CCVs, supported PPLCs and School Mint, conducted expanded learning time (ELT) walkthroughs, observed and provided feedback on collaborative planning, coached principals on their professional learning groups (PLG), and planned summer retreats for principals and assistant principals.

Student with disabilities (SWD) coordinator participated in CCVs assessing Individual Education Program (IEP) compliance, teacher guidance, and instructional strategies for SWDs. Lead Teachers for Special Education (LTSE) identified outdated IEPs and re-evaluations. Classroom observations revealed a need for PL in co-teaching models, instructional strategies, and IEP accommodations. Meetings focused on SWD discipline, behavior support, and compliance.

C&C coordinators monitored suspensions, supported schools with discipline cleanup, and conducted restorative practices. They participated in CCVs, facilitated PL for ISS paraprofessionals, and ensured stakeholder participation in the GA School Climate Survey. They also reviewed discipline, attendance, and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) data, conducted facility audits, and monitored the district cell phone initiative.

The English learners (EL) coordinator provided instructional support, compliance oversight, and test preparation for ELs. Efforts included planning for the Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS) writing support, assisting with Language Assessment Suite (LAS) Links assessments, and PL. Compliance monitoring involved CCV follow-ups and document reviews for multiple schools.

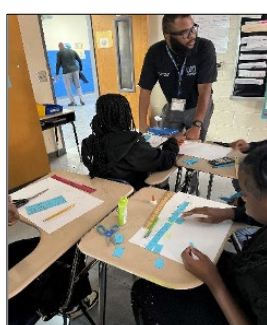


The ELA coordinator participated in CCVs, provided instructional framework feedback, and supported StudySync implementation for milestone reviews. The coordinator collaborated with C&I, facilitated PL, and worked with specific schools to refine instructional strategies and teacher support.

Math coordinators observed classrooms, provided instructional feedback, and supported PLCs. They focused on equitable learning experiences, CSIP strategies, and Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) learning plans. PL sessions helped teachers integrate instructional resources and refine their curriculum pacing.

The mental health coordinator participated in CCVs and provided professional learning on Mental Health First Aid and Connections Matters in collaboration with the high school MHC.

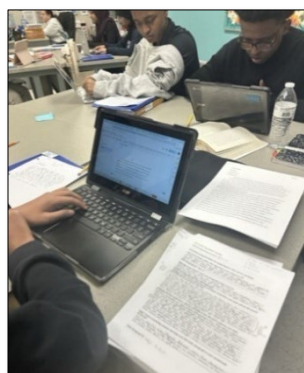
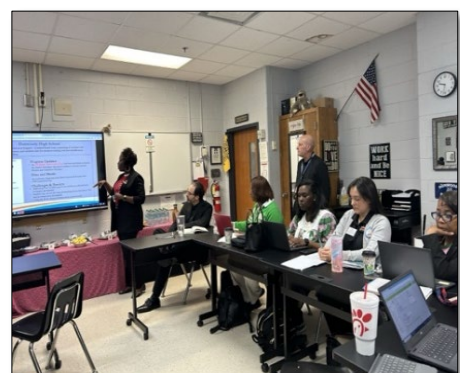
Exploring Instructional Supports for Variability and Implementation of Instructional Learning Plans (ILP)



Thomas Glanton

Area High Schools

March has been a month of significant academic progress and achievements. As we move closer to the final quarter of the academic year, the High School Area has demonstrated dedication and hard work across all content areas. This month's summary provides an overview of support, experiences and achievements. Let's take a closer look at the highlights of March!



ELA coordinators continued collaboration with C&I, Federal Programs, and school ELA Teams to ensure continued training on the new ELA standards, the inclusion of ongoing focus and training in the development of each school's CSIP, and standards resource development. Training has included new ELA standards training and redeliveries at each school, *Let's Talk ELA*, and *Lexiles in Action* (GaDOE).

The mathematics coordinator focused on supporting high schools through classroom observations, curriculum alignment, and milestone exam preparation. The coordinator led professional development sessions, facilitated PLC meetings, worked on making GaDOE algebra resources more accessible, and collaborated with schools to analyze student data, develop intervention plans, and support leadership in improving instructional strategies.

C&C coordinators continue to support Area High Schools in the areas of behavior, attendance and grade. Additionally, facilitating monthly attendance meetings and consulting with administrators decrease in-school suspensions (ISS) and out-of-school (OSS) suspensions of scholars.

- **Special education (SPED) coordinator** actively participated in several CCVs, provided coaching and support to teachers, and supported schools during IEP meetings. The coordinator also served as a liaison among departments, parents, and schools to help resolve challenges and ensure collaboration.
- **ML coordinator** collaborated with schools to implement reading plans for MLs and participated in CCVs to provide ongoing support to schools.
- **Mental health coordinator** supported schools by participating in CCVs, conducting staff wellness check-ins, and co-facilitating both Youth Mental Health First Aid training on DCSD's Professional Development Day and Connections Matter training. Additionally, the coordinator attended Restorative Conferences training, facilitated a PL session on Community Circles, and produced and distributed the Mental Health Matters newsletter.

March has been filled with academic growth, perseverance, and accomplishments. As we move forward, we encourage everyone to maintain this momentum, stay focused on their goals, and prepare for the months ahead.

Derrick Hardy

Area Horizon Schools

While March was one of the lengthier months this year, Area Horizon blew through with some impactful events.

Salem MS Hosted the "Real Men Read" parent literacy event.

Martin Luther King Jr. HS opened the [Lion's Den Grocery Store](#) on campus, providing fresh groceries for students and families.

Horizon Zone 1 (6-12 grades) hosted an ELA Knowledge Builder PL to deepen the application of new ELA standards for coaches and teachers.

Indian Creek ES hosted an Exceptional Education disproportionality PL.

McNair HS promoted safe driving habits through its “Shattered Dreams Exhibit” for juniors and seniors entering Prom season.

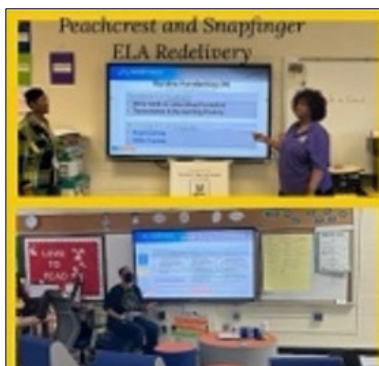
Over 200 Horizon elementary teachers participated in a math standards PL at MLK Jr. HS.

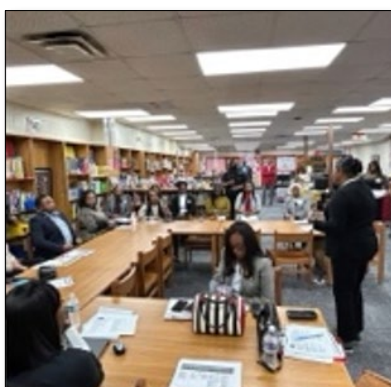
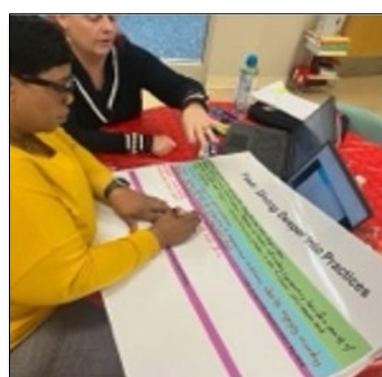
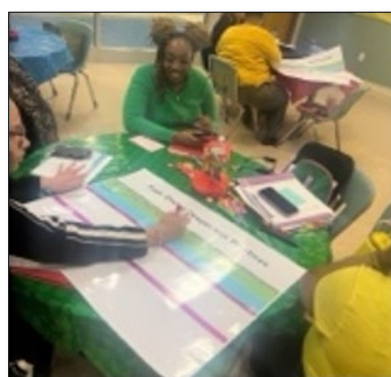
Horizon targeted support and improvement (TSI)- identified schools completed Reality Checks emphasizing SWD data analysis and support strategies.

The IGNITE Reading tutorial program launched at Pine Ridge ES.

Flat Shoals ES hosted the GaDOE State Deputy Superintendent, Board Chair Mrs. Pierce, Champion Dillard, and Dr. Horton during a Horizon Zone 2 instructional walkthrough.

Through a partnership with DCSD Human Resources, Horizon attended the MRESA Teacher Recruitment Fair and hosted our own IGNITE Teacher Resident Hiring Fair.







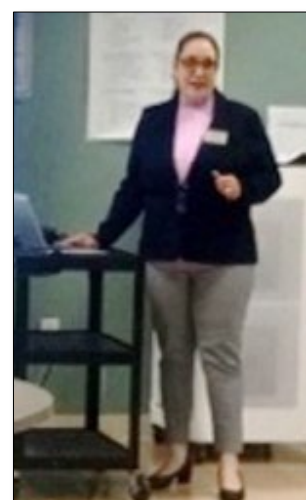
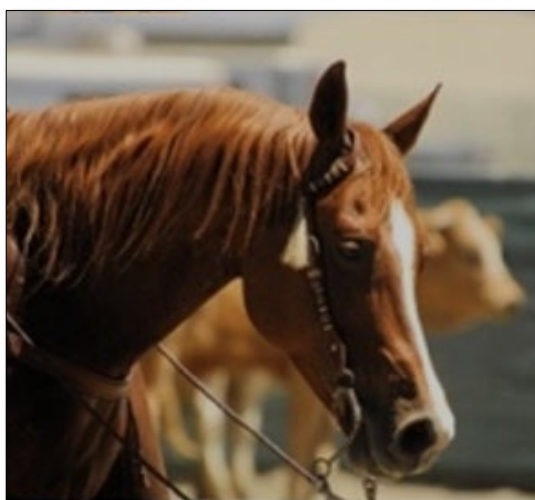
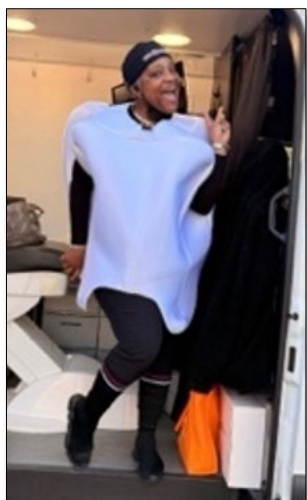
Michelle Jones

Area Specialty Schools

The focus in March was CCVs and FTEs. We completed our CCVs and district Learning Walks. Our team conducted PL for teachers and leaders for the district PL Day on March 7. In our ALO, we reviewed milestones preparation and CSIP monitoring with FY26 planning. We also offered specialized FTE support sessions for our administrators to assist with clearing errors, and we hosted our Specialty Area Assistant Principals' Academy. Fernbank Science Center (FSC) offered several events this month and even hosted the State of the District event.



During March, we celebrated several accomplishments for the Specialty Area. Robert Shaw and Wadsworth had winners advance in the Social Studies Fair. Kittredge Magnet School won the state competition for the Reading Bowl. Our bands and orchestras participated in large group performance evaluations (LGPE), representing us well with superior and excellent ratings. We also celebrated Pi Day on March 14. Several schools hosted Career Days and Read Across America campaigns, and our area team participated.



Mike Kelly, Raifa Russ, Dr. Jermain Sumler-Faison

Leadership Development

The DeKalb Principal Pathway (DPP)

Leadership Development is working with DPP Cohort participants and performance coaches to develop our aspiring principals and our consistency around how we coach our new leaders. The DPP Cohort has completed five in-person sessions since January, meeting in the evenings and on Saturdays for 6-hour sessions.

The DPP program is dedicated to building instructional leaders for our schools, emphasizing transformational change strategies. Cohort members regularly receive direct on-site coaching from performance coaches. Each member must implement a “change project” at their school using the “Plan, Do, Study, Act model.”

Project DEAL in Partnership with Georgia State University (GSU) (The federal grant is being reinstated for the doctoral program, and the Administrative Cohort portion is being reviewed for possible reinstatement)

In partnership with GSU, Leadership Development is developing a doctoral program to support five of our leaders in obtaining higher-level credentials. The candidates will receive a \$30,000 federal stipend for the doctoral program.

Leadership Development is in the design phase for a cohort to receive their Tier 1 and Tier 2 administrative certifications. If the federal grant is reinstated, each participant will receive an \$8,000 stipend from the DEAL Grant. Leadership Development is preparing to move forward with the cohort even without support from the grant. We are working with GSU to provide college credits and administrative observation hours needed to receive certification. DCSD can also develop the program and course curriculum with the university.

Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) Literacy Project

Leadership Development is represented on the GLISI Team and provides insight on how to best provide efficient implementation of structured literacy in DCSD for SY25. The GLISI Team has been collaborating with the Literacy Team from Clarke County. We observed their principal PLC in action in March. Their leadership shared their progress in implementing their literacy program. We also hosted the Clarke County GLISI Team at our PLO in March. We shared with them PL for our leaders. We met extensively with their team, sharing our progress and efforts to build model literacy classrooms across the district to implement the new literacy standards.

Professional Learning Communities

Leadership Development is growing our implementation of PLCs with the support of the Solution Tree, the leaders of PLCs’ professional development. PLC training was provided to teacher leaders on March 7, Professional Learning Day, and assistant principals on March 25 and 26. The content consisted of learning around the “four questions” more directly questions #3 and # 4; What do we do if they learn it? And What do we do if they don’t?

Principal’s Learning Opportunity

Leadership Development provided oversight and planning for the PLO on March 20. The day of learning for our leaders consisted of the following: C&I provided training around the GLISI Structured Literacy Plan for SY25-26, the GROW coaching model from Michael Moore, and a mini-legal symposium the second half of the day.

New Principals' Academies (First- and Second-Year Leaders)

Leadership Development wrapped up a year-long learning series for our new leaders about implementing change within their schools. These sessions were supported by outside administrative organizations – Dr. Massey and Dr. Jewell contracted to provide training to support our new leaders. Content included training around progress monitoring, a counselor evaluation system, and developing a living strategic vision for your school.

New Assistant Principals' Consortium

Leadership Development concluded this year's series of the New Assistant Principals' Consortium on March 18. We were excited to engage our assistant principals in learning facilitated by our Leadership Development Team, current and former assistant principals, and our district mental health coordinators. Content included Time Management (Dr. Kenyatta Arnette, CTAE coordinator), Effective Communication with Teachers and Parents (Dr. LaSonya Edwards, Doraville United), and How to Maintain Self-Care and Fight Burn-Out (Ms. Terra Johnson, mental health coordinator – Specialty Area).



Ayana S. Smith**Professional Learning Department**

During March, the PL Department supported schools and district leaders in establishing a PLC framework, including creating a guiding coalition meeting norms and agendas. On March 7, Professional Development Day, Peer Learning Facilitators (PLF) provided content based on researched instructional strategies for teachers throughout the district (feedback from the Math Desmos PL: 100 percent of session attendees agreed that the information shared during the Desmos sessions was relevant to their instruction, and they will implement Desmos activities and the Desmos calculator in their instruction – [results of the survey are linked here](#)). In addition to professional development sessions for certified staff, several sessions for classified staff were provided, such as customer service training for 110 members of the classified workforce of DeKalb County schools and over 53 classified personnel in professional growth. Furthermore, we have collaborated with the Operations Department in a 10-week executive functioning training series with the Fleet Services Department, ensuring continued development in critical workplace skills. In addition, PLFs supported Solutions Tree with the teacher leader training on questions 3 and 4 of Dufour's four essential questions, whereas approximately 350 participants attended. Our department PLFs K. Sampson and D. Armstrong, collaborated with Leadership Development to provide a series of training courses on implementing effective PLCs with DeKalb Leadership Institute participants. H-Pride is permeating throughout the district! The H-Pride Endorsement session had 139 attendees (teachers, coordinators, paraprofessionals, classified staff, principals, and district leaders) to provide a new understanding of PLCs and how the H-PRIDE core value integrity guides PLC members. **As for the department's PL requests, we have managed 219 PL requests (+23 from last month), completing 166 of those requests (+35 from last month); 53 are still in progress, with 471 total PLs provided so far this school year.**

Teacher Orientation/NETwork/Teacher Support Specialist (TSS)

In alignment with Strategic Goal Area 3 Recruit, Develop, and Retain Talent, and Essential System 6: Instructional Feedback and PL (March 6) Teacher Support and Coaching (TSC) Facilitator training. I led the facilitator in an overview of the TSC site visits (March through May). The visits are designed to observe the TSC candidates' implementation of the mentoring and coaching standards skills learned during the TSC Endorsement course (March 11), and NETwork monthly induction seminar webinar. The theme was "Reflect to Connect" (220 attendees). The goal was to engage the participants in reflecting on a strategy(ies) or resource(s) they learned during the seminars, used in their classroom, and the impact. One of the session themes was Essential Six. The facilitators guided the reflections during the PLC breakout sessions.

Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (TAPP)

A total of 36 individuals have applied to the DCSD TAPP program. If all meet the requirements, we will have a total of 50 candidates for SY25-26. As we underwent reaccreditation as an Education Preparation Provider (EPP), we hosted an advisory council meeting focused on updates, discussions, and planning related to the EPP. Each coordinator provided updates and a problem of practice for their program; members provided suggestions and strategies for improvement.



Field Experience Teachers

MRESA's Whole Child Supports Team provided pre-service teachers with a robust PLO. The session was entitled "Empowering Educators: Mastering Essential Classroom Practices." Candidates (22) registered from six different partner universities. This session also allowed the candidates to learn about other MRESA resources. These resources will be very useful for candidates as they review their feedback and make instructional adjustments to their lessons.



Chief Dr. Norman C. Sauce III

Student Services

The Chief of Student Services began the month with a McNair Discovery Learning Academy visit and participated in a virtual Gifted Teacher Liaison input meeting. He also visited English learner classrooms at Stone Mountain HS and MS. In terms of school visits, during March, Dr. Sauce spent time at the following schools, observing classroom instruction and supporting staff in various ways: McNair Discovery Learning Academy, Early Learning Center, Special Olympics (Hallford Stadium), FSC, DeKalb School of the Arts, Stone Mill, Browns Mill, Stoneview, Bob Mathis, Peachcrest, and Doraville United Elementary Schools; Stone Mountain, Redan, and Freedom Middle Schools; and Stone Mountain, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Lithonia High Schools.

On March 6, Dr. Sauce attended the Learn for Life Spring Leadership Council to represent Superintendent Dr. Horton as part of this early literacy advocacy collective for Metro Atlanta. He continued his bi-weekly meetings with the Student Services Department heads. He visited the Pre-K Teacher PL session at Lithonia HS and English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) professional development sessions at Stone Mountain HS on March 7, Professional Development Day. Dr. Sauce participated in DCSD's Special Olympics event at Hallord Stadium on March 25-26. He also joined the superintendent, senior cabinet, and distinguished guests during the state of the district event at FSC on March 27.

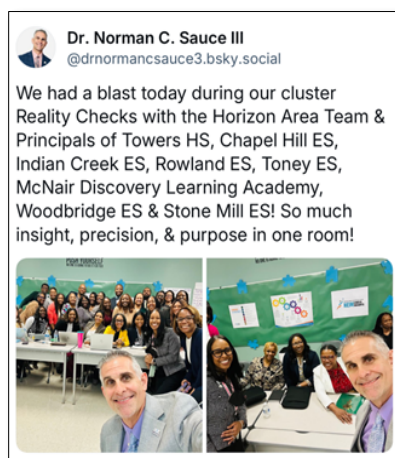
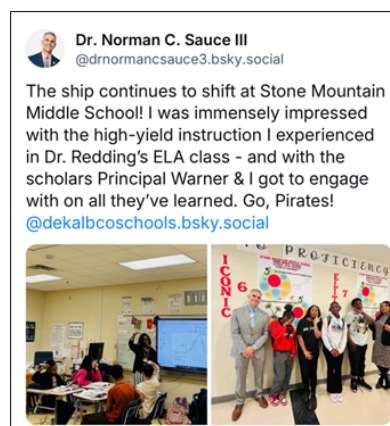
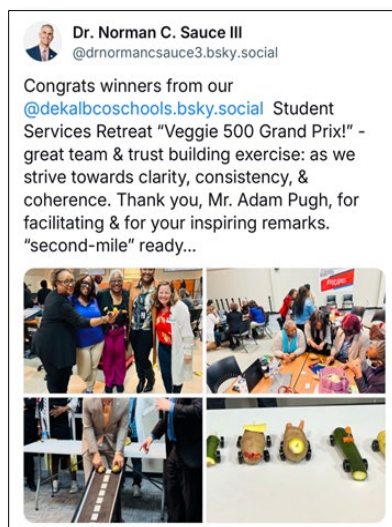
Dr. Sauce engaged in Reality Checks and superintendent staff advisory meetings, attended the districtwide LGPE at DeKalb Schools of the Arts, and facilitated the regular Federal Law Enforcement Committee meetings. He also took part in professional development for teachers of gifted-identified scholars at the Silver Hill facility and visited the leading teachers for SPED leading the learning professional development session in anticipation of Georgia Milestones in April. He also facilitated individualized direct principal support sessions with various principals during March 2025, representing principals from all three grade bands.

His classroom observation visits continued with Exceptional Education at Stone Mill ES and Redan MS. He also facilitated a collaborative discussion with the leadership of the Museum School, Gifted Education Department, School Innovation Department, and Assessment Department.

Dr. Sauce attended the Superintendent's Principals' Communication Committee meeting, where he discussed summer leadership empowerment with the Leadership Team. He attended the Initiative One session with the executive cabinet, participated in the April agenda setting, and joined the Bilingual Parent Advisory Council meeting. On March 18, Dr. Sauce, in collaboration with each department, hosted the Division of Student Services Instructional Leaders session. He visited Browns Mill ES for the Read Across DeKalb event. Together with Dr. Phillips, the Early Learning Director, Dr. Sauce met with leaders from New Life Church in Decatur to explore partnership opportunities. He attended the Continuous School Improvement Plan Technical Support Planning session and served as a panelist at the Leadership DeKalb event at DeKalb School of the Arts. Dr. Sauce also visited Salem MS, attended the United Way Workforce Development Kickoff Week event at the Early Learning Center, and participated in the senior cabinet meeting.

He further engaged with the Charter Schools' Departmental Services Guide meeting alongside the Department of School Innovation. On March 25, Dr. Sauce and several cabinet and board members attended and supported the Special Olympics opening ceremony. He participated in the final budget review for FY26 for the Division of Student Services, and attended the Schools and Leadership Retreat and the DeKalb State of the District event.

Dr. Sauce visited the EL classrooms at Doraville United, attended the Saturday Gifted Assessment for administration, and participated in the Wonderful Young Men's Conference at Freedom MS. At this event, community leaders and male school leaders mentored and spoke with a group of young men at the school. Dr. Sauce concluded the month by participating in the cabinet MIRACLES Workshop.



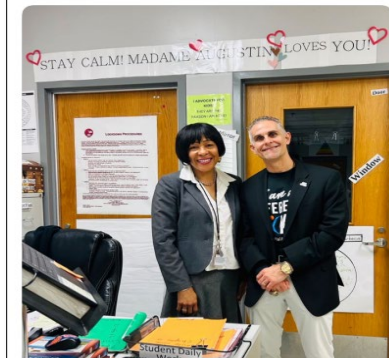
Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@drnormancsauce3.bsky.social

Nothing like reading to 1st graders! I was privileged today to join [@dekalbcoschools.bsky.social](#) Board of Education Members Dr. Tiffany Hogan & Mr. Awet Eyasu as we read to Browns Mill ES scholars as part of "Read Across DeKalb" event. Thank you, Ms. Nancy Pritchett & Principal Ellis for organizing!



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@drnormancsauce3.bsky.social

Spent time with a maestro at Dr. MLK, Jr. HS this AM: Madame Edline Augustin's intensive English ESOL classroom. She exudes language acquisition expertise, genuine care for her scholars' needs & circumstances, & inquisitive educator's resolve. Notice the banner above her desk...



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@drnormancsauce3.bsky.social

What a time hosting DeKalb Co. United Way & Chamber of Commerce at Early Learning Center! Appreciate the interest of philanthropic & business communities in extending the reach of foundational literacy & early childhood development. [#TheDeKalbDifference](#) on full display! [@dekalbcoschools.bsky.social](#)



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@drnormancsauce3.bsky.social

Let the games begin! [@dekalbcoschools.bsky.social](#) Board Vice Chair Gevertz, Supt. Horton, Senior Leaders, Exceptional Ed., Athletics, Transportation, Public Safety, & schools come together to welcome Special Olympics -celebrating scholars' teamwork, fair play, & competition. [#TheDeKalbDifference](#)



dekalbcopartners.bsky.social
@dekalbcopartners.bsky.social

DeKalb County School District is excited to announce the DeKalb Chamber Education and Workforce Development Week. This event aims to celebrate education and workforce readiness for all ages in our community. We kicked off Monday with the Early Learning Day at the Early Learning Center.

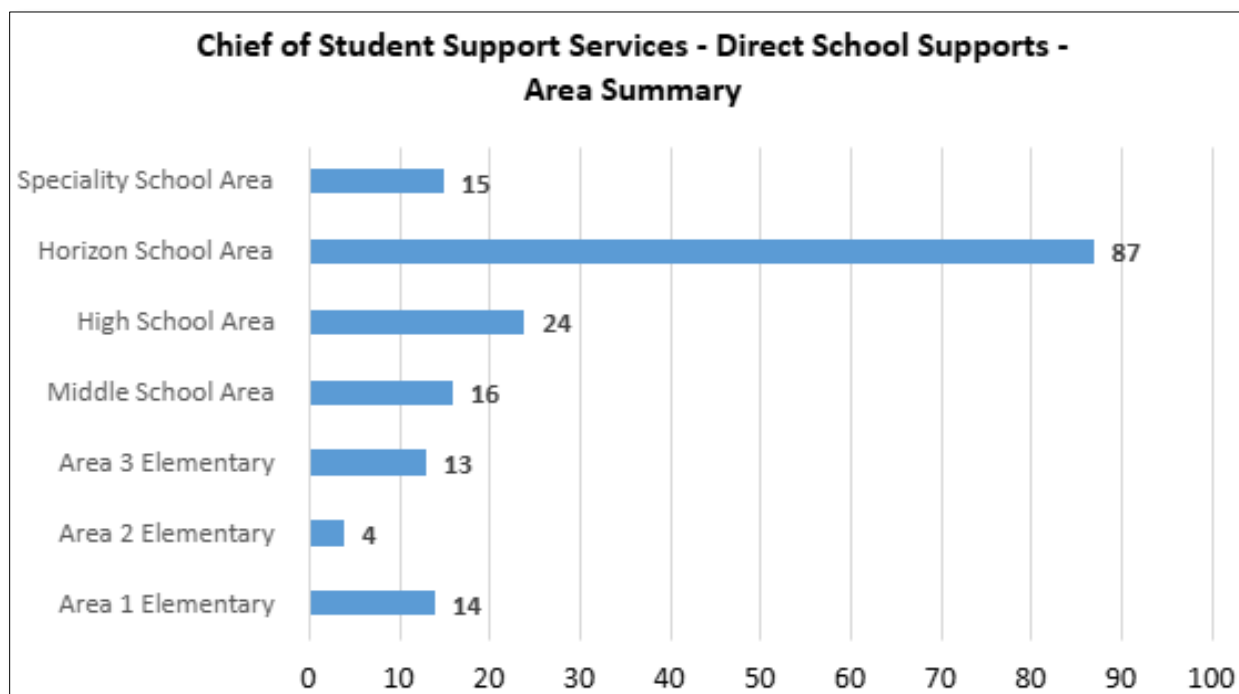


Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@drnormancsauce3.bsky.social

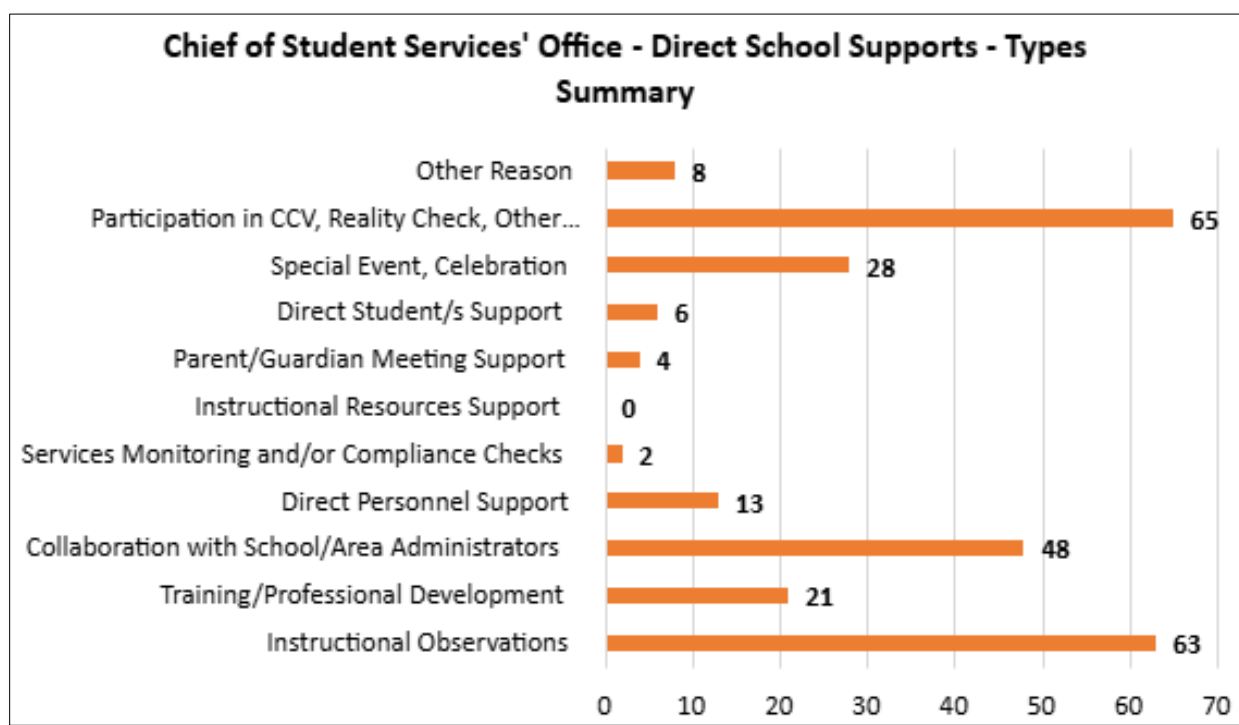
Stellar visit to Salem MS w/ Principal Mr. Marcus Wright & Co. We popped in on Academic Coaches vigorously prepping for PLC sessions & analyzing recent gains on MAP screener results. Then he broke down for me Hattie's effect size on teacher efficacy & collaboration-wow! [@dekalbcoschools.bsky.social](#)



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

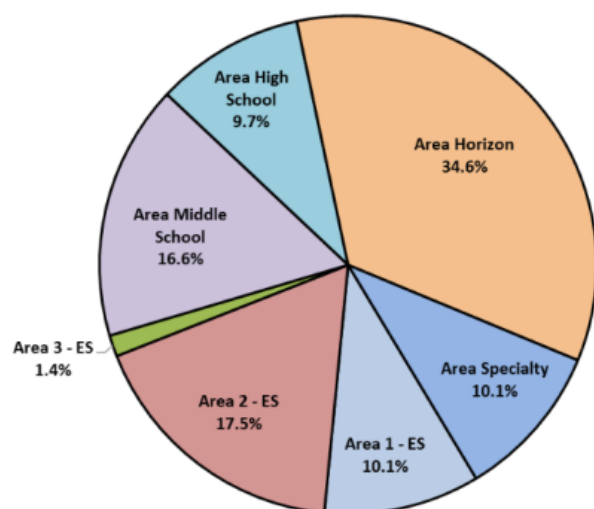
English Learners

Registration and Interpretation

International Student Screening Center (ISSC) Registration

The ISSC continuously registers and screens students throughout the school year. This month, the ISSC registered and screened **218** students. To date, the ISSC has registered and screened **4,108** English learners this academic year.

2024-2025 ISSC
Feb. 1 – Feb. 28, Registration by Area

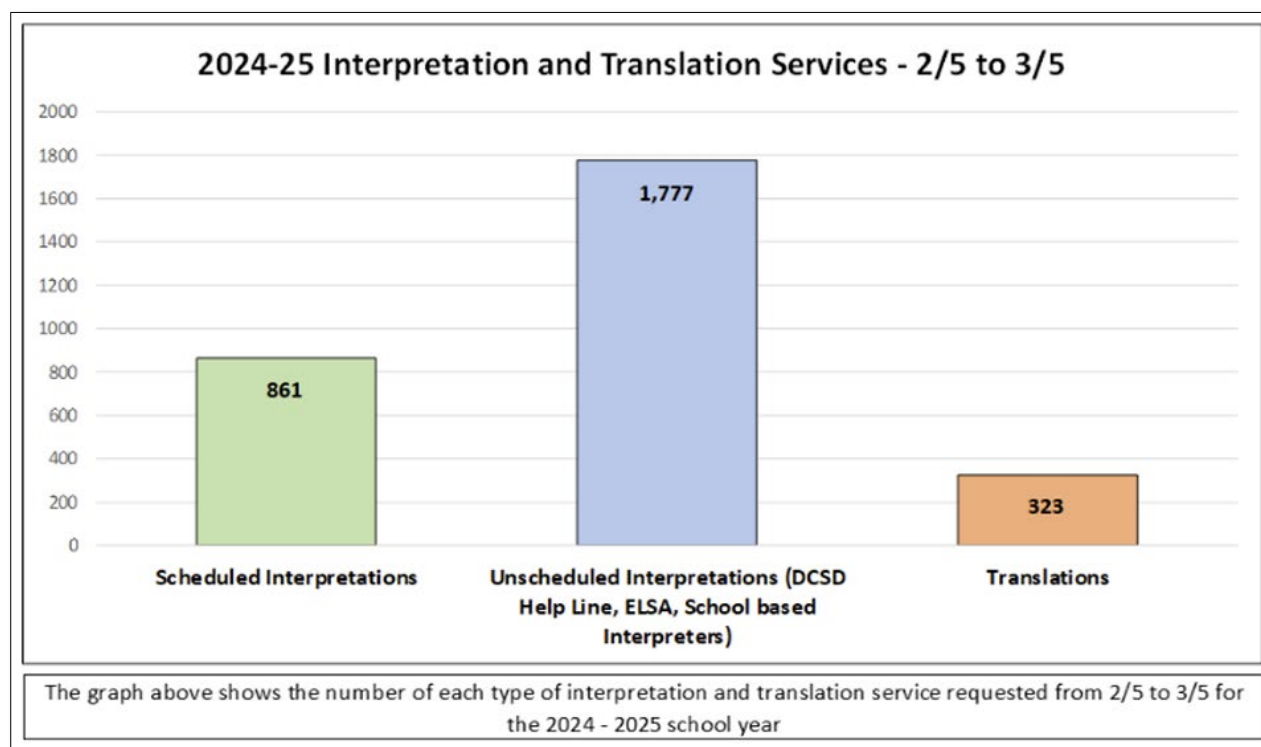


2024-2025 ISSC Registrations
Feb. 1 – Feb. 28

Area	Students
Area 1 – ES	22
Area 2 – ES	38
Area 3 – ES	3
Area Middle School	36
Area High School	21
Area Horizon	75
Area Specialty	22
No Area	1
Totals	218

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). During the past month, the English Learners Department provided 2,638 PHLOTE families with language access and translated 323 documents.



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

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

ESOL Progression Monitoring

LAS Links

As part of the Intensive English (IE) program for newcomers, students in grades 4-12 participate in the LAS Links progress monitoring assessment, which measures students' growth in English language proficiency. Our final window for the SY24-25 will be March 17 – March 28.

Intensive English students who score at level 2 or above (Overall Proficiency Level) on the LAS Links assessment meet the requirements to transition to the general ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) classes.

Professional Learning

March 7 Districtwide Professional Learning Day

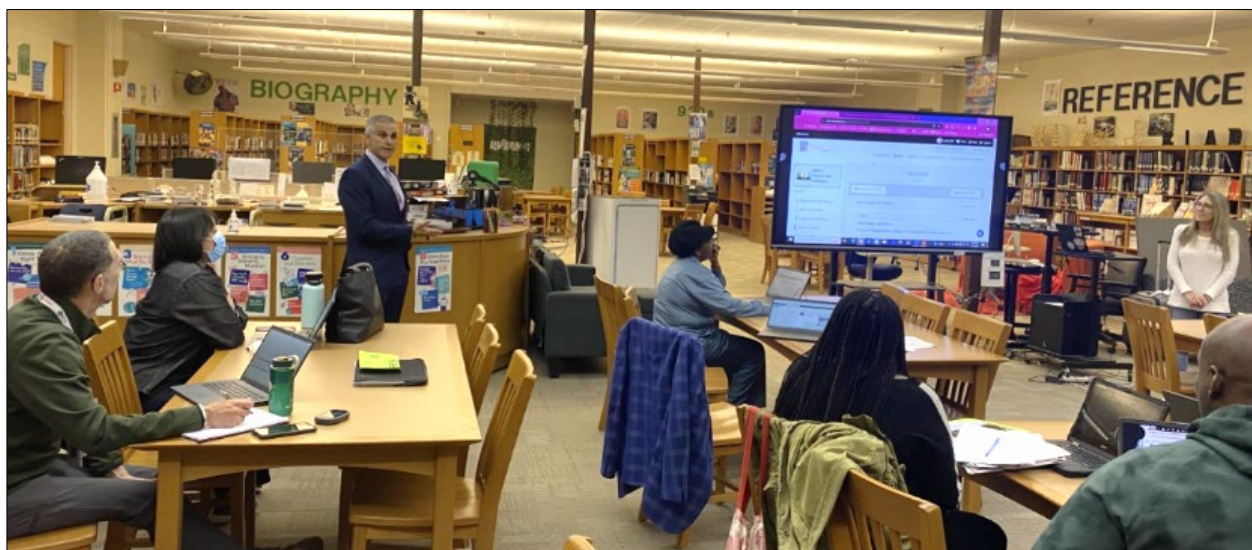
On March 8, the EL Department offered teachers of ELs the following PLOs. These PLOs support teachers with instructional strategies for language development, analyzing data to inform instruction and utilizing supplemental resources to support language development.

The sessions were provided at different times during the day, allowing teachers to attend both sessions.

Vista Higher Learning – Engage, Bridges, and Connect (Face to Face)

Teachers were provided with training on the newly adopted Vista Higher Learning supplemental resources (connect, bridge, and engage). These sessions provided them with the tools needed to implement instructional resources focusing on language development in all four language domains (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) in their classrooms.

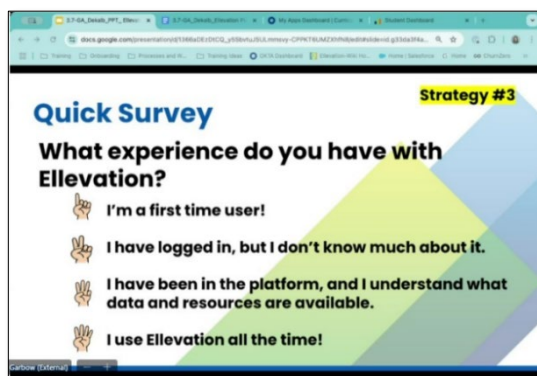
ENGLISH LEARNERS DEPARTMENT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING MARCH 7TH	
Face-to-Face	
Teachers should register in Frontline using the code associated with their grade level. All sessions will take place at: Stone Mountain High School 4555 Central Dr. Stone Mountain, GA 30083	
8:30 AM - 11:30 AM Vista Higher Learning	
Engage (HS) Frontline #7659	
Bridges (MS) Frontline #7657	
Connect (Grades 4 & 5) Frontline #7655	
12:30 PM - 3:30 PM Vista Higher Learning	
Engage (HS) Frontline #7660	
Bridges (MS) Frontline #7658	
Connect (Grades 4 & 5) Frontline #7656	
Virtual	
The virtual sessions will take place on Microsoft Teams . Participants will receive a link and calendar invitation via email.	
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM ELlevation Overview (All levels)	Frontline: #7631
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM ELlevation Overview (All levels)	Frontline #: 7632



ELlevation Overview (Virtual)

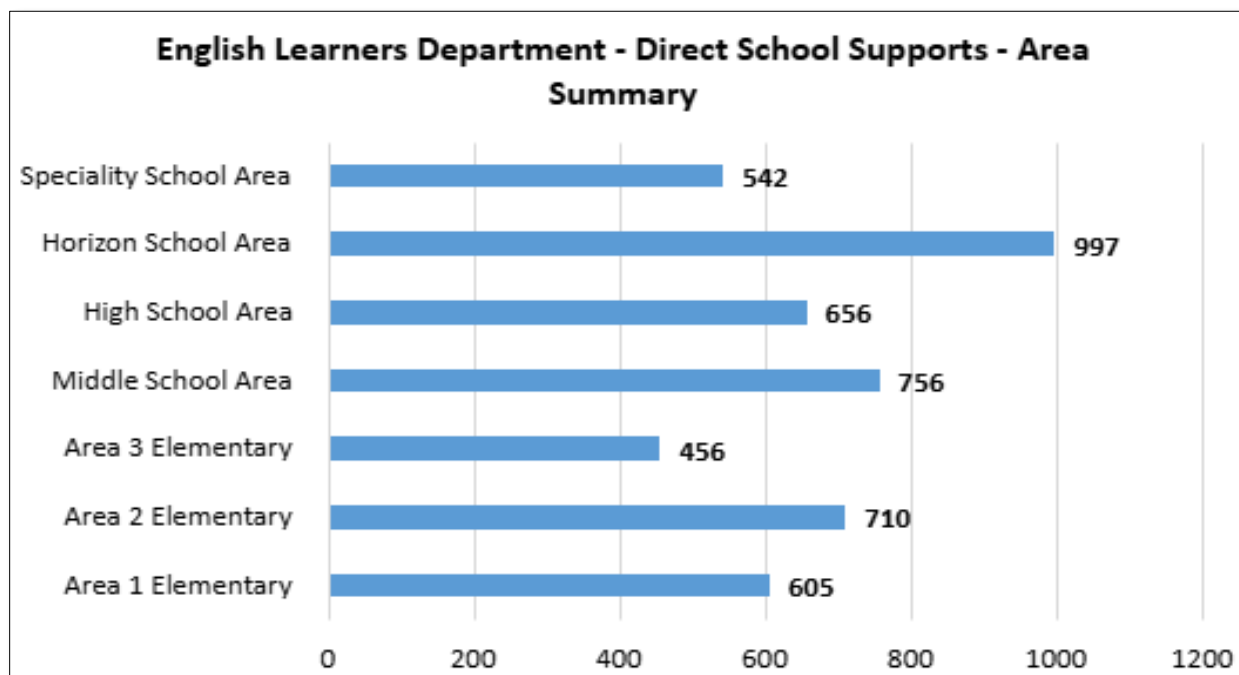
Teachers were provided an in-depth overview of utilizing ELlevation to analyze student data, develop and implement ILPs, and set student goals. These sessions allowed teachers to learn more about navigating the ELlevation platform, ask questions, and receive support using ELlevation to manage EL data and create and utilize ILPs.

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:

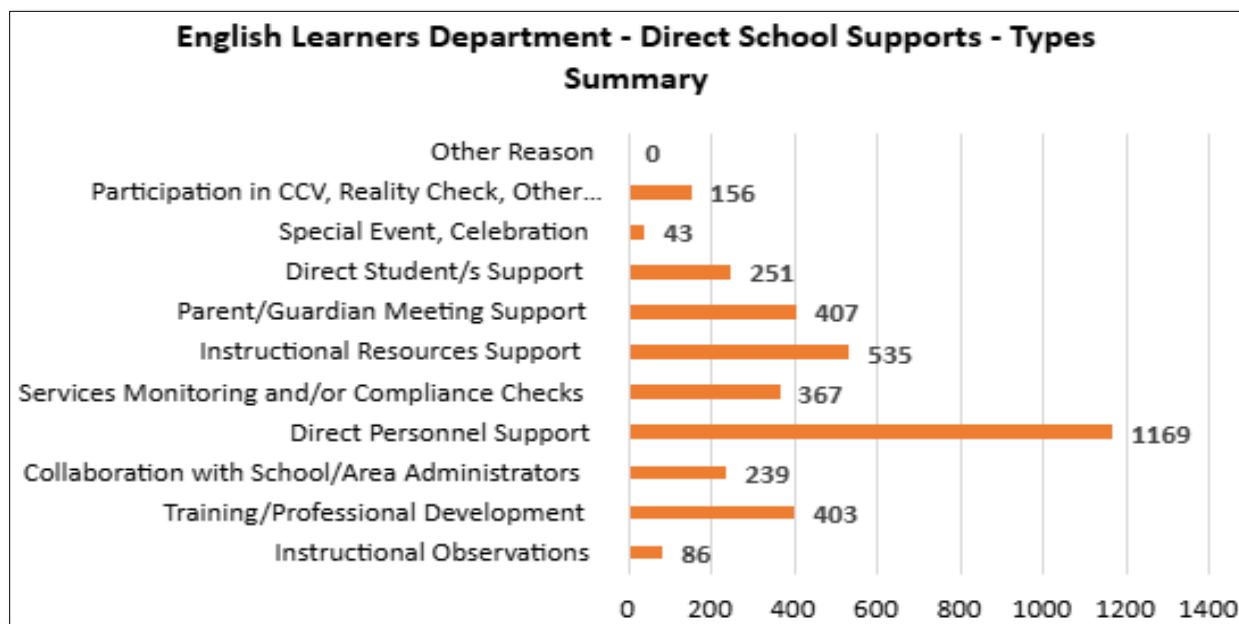


- M – Motion Towards Equity
- I – Improved Instructional Core
- R – Relevant and Rigorous Course of Study

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

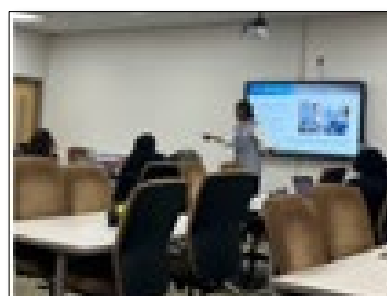
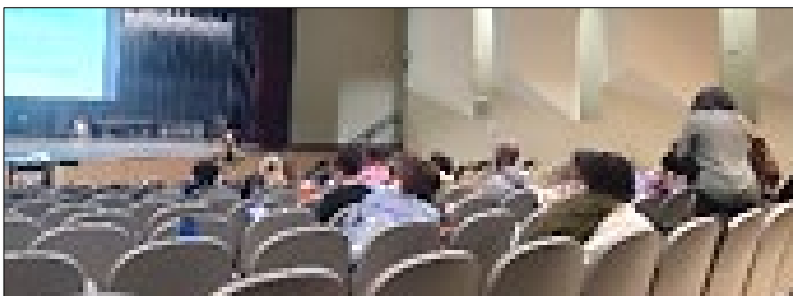


Executive Director Kiana King

Exceptional Education

Professional Development and Instructional support

- This month, we highlight the professional development opportunities for school staff on the March 7 Professional Development Day. More than 1,050 staff members participated in multiple sessions covering topics in assistive technology, classroom management/CHAMPS, instructional technology, SDI, effective evaluation measures, section 504 equity and access, and more. The team demonstrated strong leadership through professional development initiatives, system-wide training, and collaborative engagement with key stakeholders.
- Ms. Floyd (PBIS coach) and Ms. Brown (director) provided professional development sessions related to standards-based classroom expectations. This session taught teachers at Shadow Rock Center and Eagle Woods Academy (EWA) how curriculum standards are implemented and what students should be exposed to during a lesson's opening, middle, and closing.
- SPED staff have completed 3,550 school support visits to date this school year. The Office of Special Education prioritizes local school support for school administrators, LTSEs, teachers, and other school support staff with one goal of improving academic and behavioral outcomes for students with disabilities.



- New DeKalb special educators in the Georgia Teacher Provider Retention Project (GATPRP) continue to receive instruction, coaching, and support around high-leverage practices, with four sessions in March.

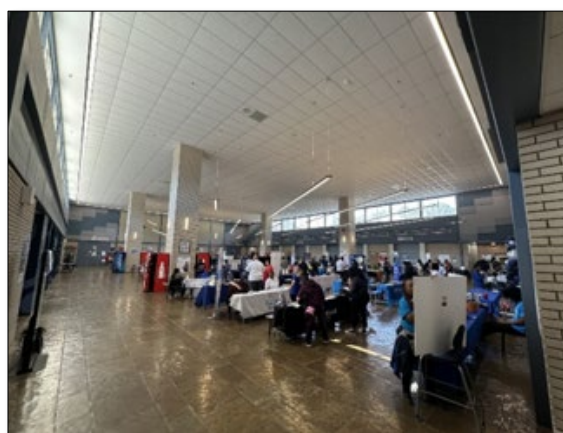
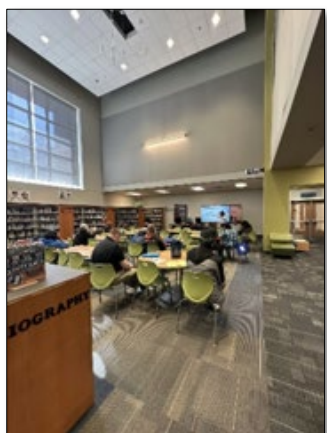
On March 7, during the districtwide Professional Development Day, the 504 Team successfully facilitated three targeted training sessions designed to enhance understanding and implementation of Section 504 and Hospital Homebound services:



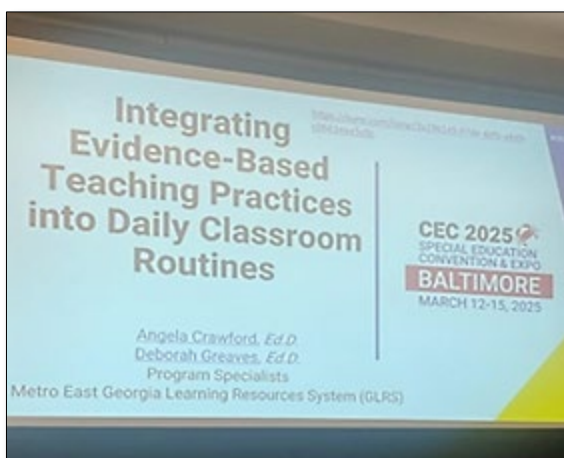
- Ensuring Equity and Access – Designed for school administrators, this session promoted equitable opportunities and access for students with disabilities.
- Section 504 Simplified – Tailored for classroom teachers and support staff, this session provided a clear and practical overview of Section 504 compliance and best practices.
- Beyond the Diagnosis (Hospital Homebound) – Presented by Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta specialists, this session provided in-depth insights into supporting students requiring hospital homebound services beyond their medical diagnosis

Departmental Celebrations

- The Office of Special Education hosted the Parent Transition Fair on March 22 at Redan HS. The event provided four sessions for parents covering pre-employment, transition, and career services, accessing Medicaid waivers, technical colleges and student support services, and guardianship. We were pleased to engage more than 205 parents, 50 community vendors, and 30 volunteers at this well-attended event.



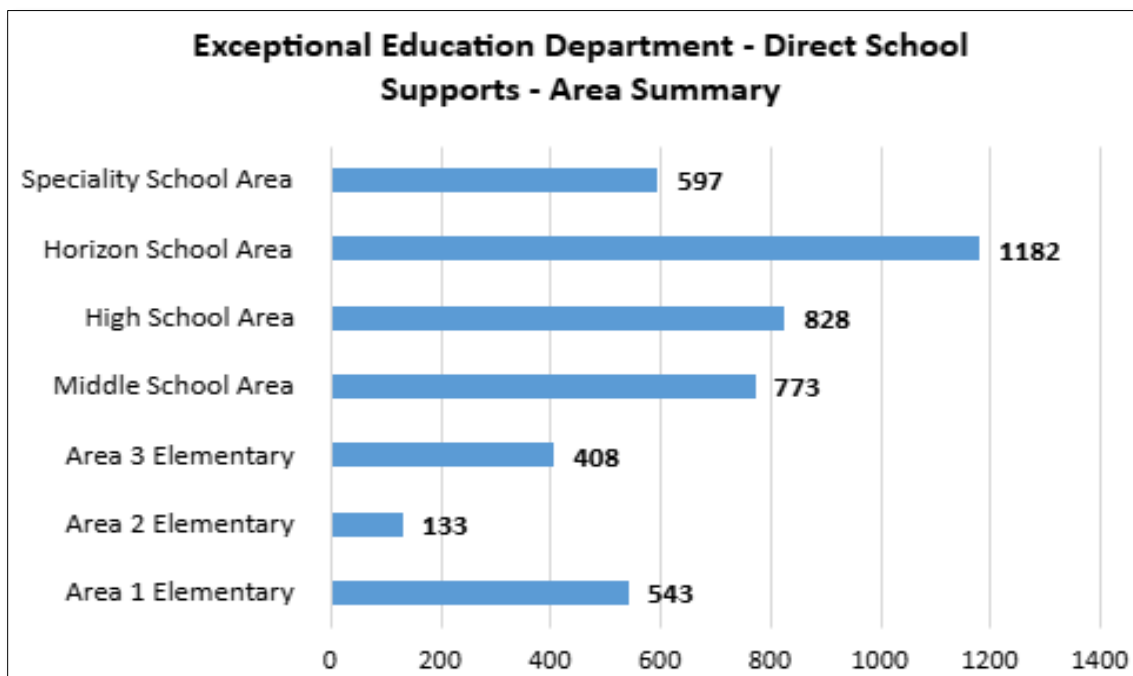
- The Georgia Learning Resources System Program Specialists, Deborah Greaves, and Angela Crawford, did an amazing job presenting this month at the National Council for Exceptional Children Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. Their audience consisted of SPED leaders and classroom teachers from all over the country. The team delivered information on integrating evidence-based practices into daily teaching routines in an informative, engaging, and energizing manner!



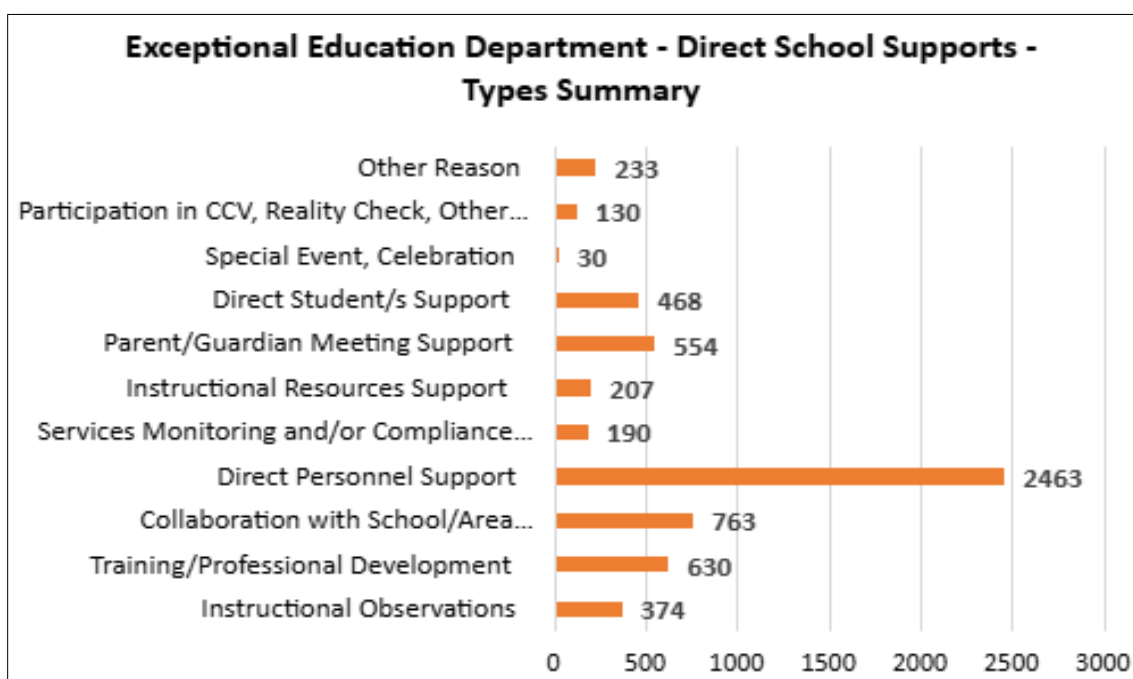
- On March 10, Shadow Rock Center and EWA were recognized at the BOE meeting for their operational designation by the state for PBIS implementation. The goal of the Georgia Network of Educational and Therapeutic Supports (GNETS) program is to accomplish the recognition of the distinguished for SY25-26.
- Shadow Rock Center and EWA completed their second CCV presentations with the Specialty Area Team. Teams shared updates on academic, discipline, and attendance data. Shadow Rock Center and EWA exhibited growth based on previous feedback provided in the fall.



**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**

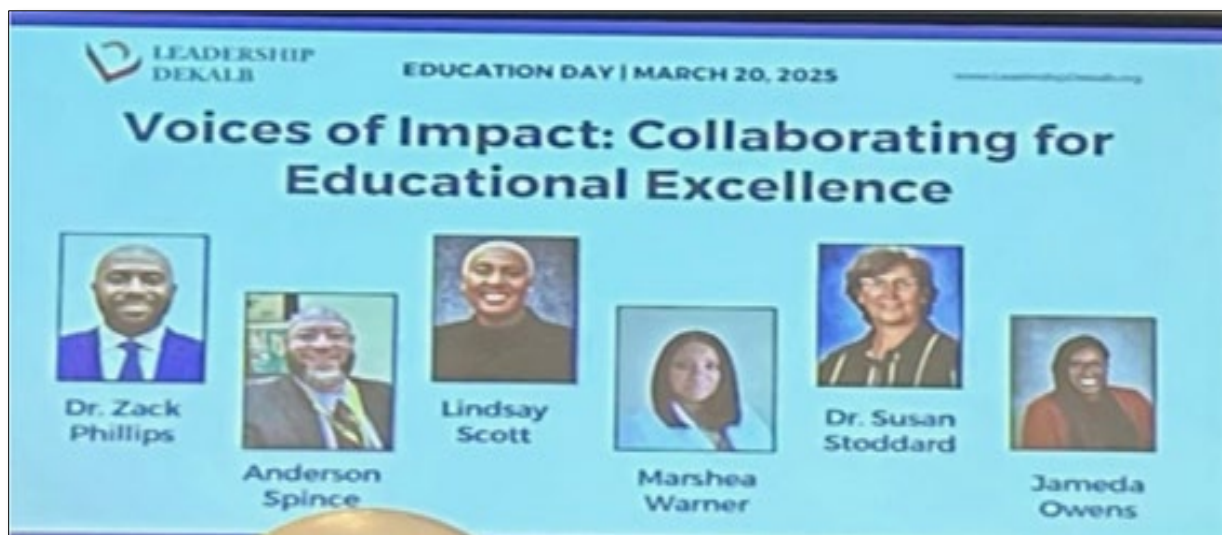


Executive Director Dr. Zack Phillips

Early Learning and Pre-K

Dr. Phillips and Department of Early Learning and Pre-K Program members have been working diligently to support district and community stakeholders during the application window and lottery, which ran from March 3 – 21. Lottery seats will be awarded on March 28 for all impacted stakeholders who completed the necessary steps by submitting their applications for vetting and approval for the lottery. Pre-K3 lead teachers and paraprofessionals were provided a concurrent PL session at the Early Learning Center, and Pre-K4 lead teachers and paraprofessionals were provided their PL session at Lithonia HS on March 7. Dr. Phillips participated in the Parent Advisory Council meeting with Dr. Sauce on March 12 to answer questions about district Pre-K (3&4) programming. Dr. Phillips participated as a DeKalb County GLISL Team member during the visit to Clarke County School District on March 18. The Department of Early Learning and Pre-K Program members participated during the fourth PL session on March 18 for district leaders, highlighting the scope of the work associated with the Division of Student Services via Exceptional Education, English Learners, Gifted Education, Pre-K, and Early Learners. Dr. Phillips participated in the Bilingual Parent Advisory Council with Dr. Sauce and members of the ELL Department on March 18. Dr. Phillips met with members of New Life Church to discuss potential partnership opportunities with Dr. Sauce within the early learning arena on March 19. Dr. Phillips served on the Voice of Impact Panel for Leadership DeKalb on March 20, and participated as a member of the DeKalb GLISL Team when representatives from the Clarke County School District visited the district to observe and debrief with our district's GLISL Team. Dr. Phillips assisted Dr. Sauce and Mr. Spince with hosting the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce for Education Week at the Early Learning Center for a school tour and Q&A session on March 24. Dr. Phillips participated in the eighth Science of Reading (SOR) Training for Pre-K (3&4) staff members at Oak View ES on March 26. Dr. Phillips conducted visits to Austin, Briar Vista, Indian Creek, John Lewis, Marbut Theme, Peachcrest, Princeton, Rainbow, Rockbridge, and Smoke Rise Elementary Schools; Coralwood Center, the Early Learning Center to support the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) audit and other planned activities.





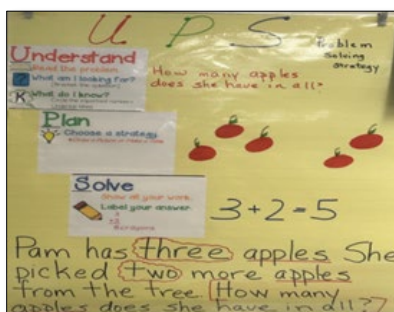
**Disrupting the
Literacy Crisis: Birth
to 3rd Grade
Strategies,
Investments and
Collaboration**



Panelist
**Dr. Zack K.
Phillips**
Executive Director of
Early Learning and Pre-K
Programs | DeKalb County
School District

Professional Learning Opportunities

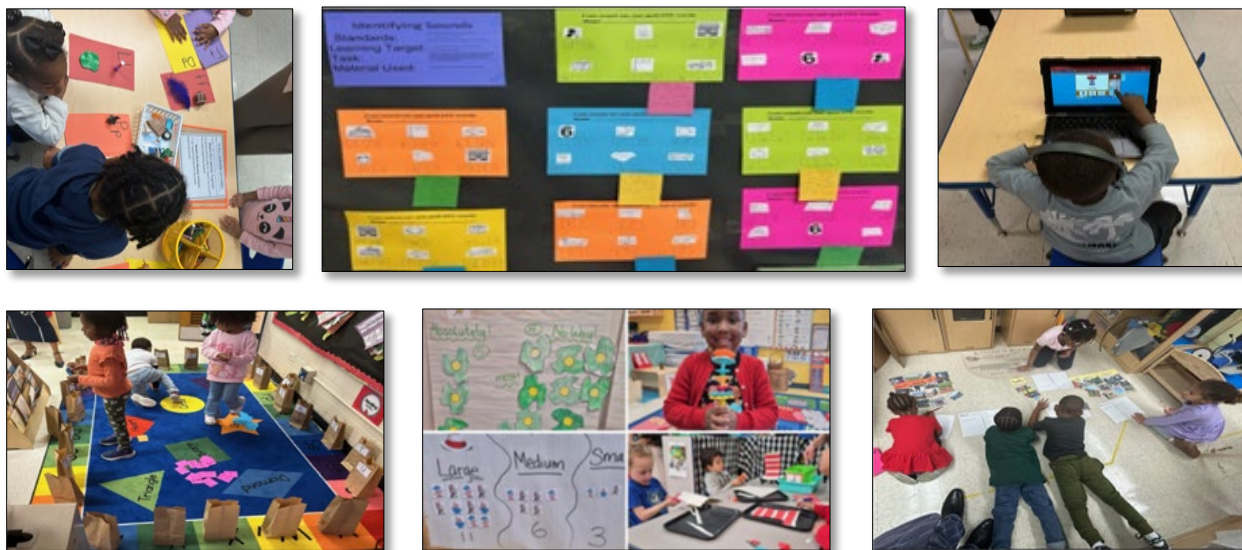
The Early Learning/Pre-K Department has worked diligently during March to offer various PL opportunities to district employees covering multiple topics: School Mint – Lottery and Application System, SOR, Virtual Chat and Chews, Better Seeking Teams, and Temp Checks related to SOR – Cox Campus Modules. 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 March in numerous Pre-K (3&4) classrooms throughout the district that support various content areas via the gallery walk.





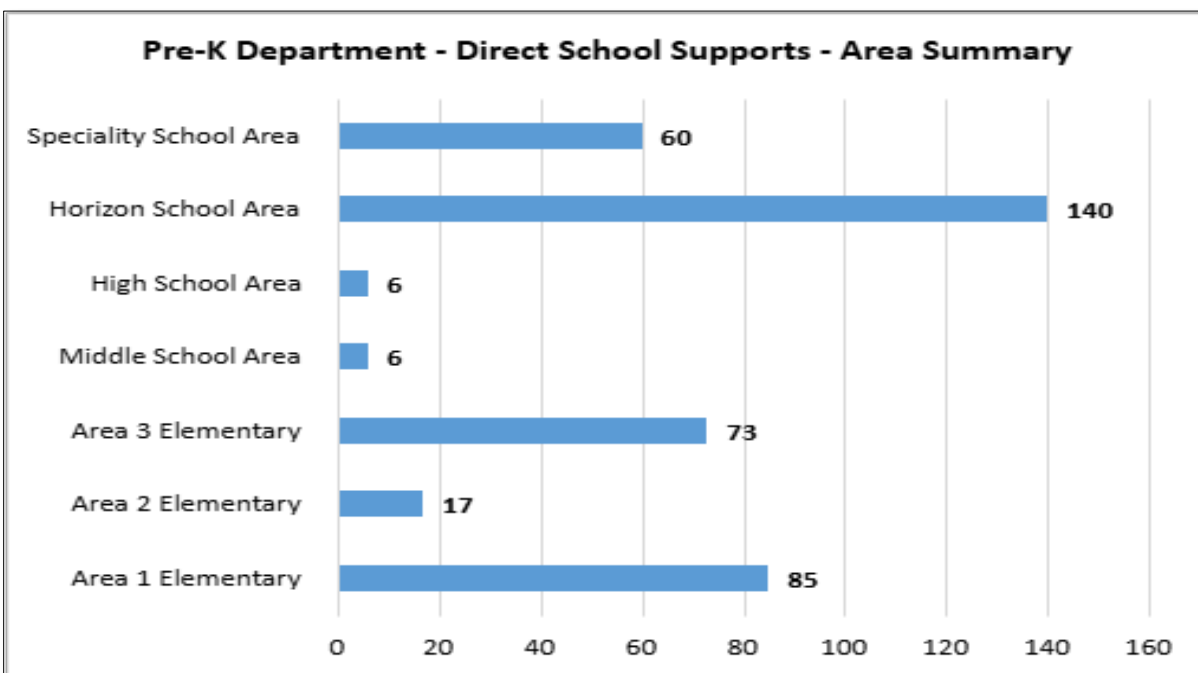
School Supports

The Early Learning/Pre-K Department team continues to support schools to assist with upcoming program visits, application/lottery support via the School Mint platform, feedback and guidance with MTSS Tier II and Tier III meetings, etc.

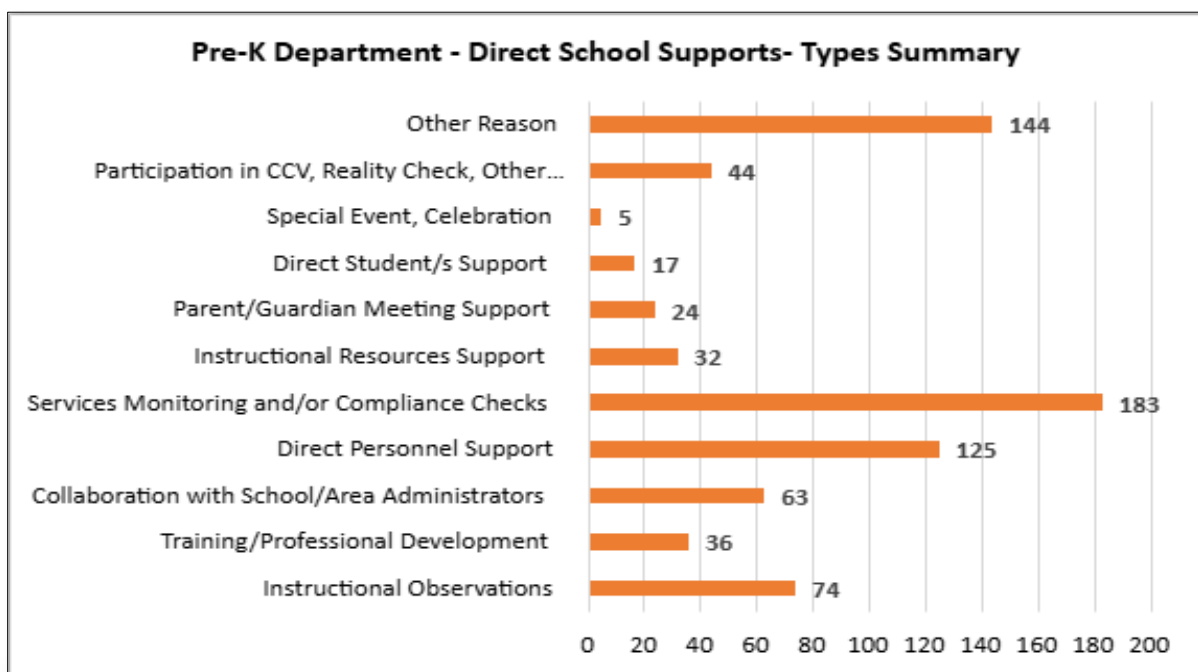
Department – Highlights

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 STEAM. Additionally, this instructional resource will support teachers and paras with planning a plethora of instructional activities that are age-appropriate and aligned to the GELDS standards and Frog Street Curriculum that's embedded within their weekly lesson plans. The SOR stipend opportunity for Pre-K (3&4) teachers and paraprofessionals continues to be offered with staff members completing online modules above and beyond the mandatory SOR training for Pre-K (3&4) employees. Our eight SOR PL training was successful and concluded on March 26. The Pre-K (3&4) application window and lottery concluded on March 21, and lottery and waitlist seats were emailed to all impacted stakeholders on March 28.

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



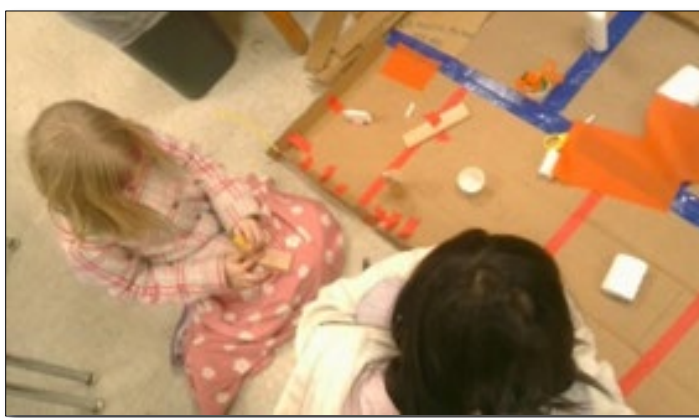
Types of Direct School Supports by Department of Pre-K and Early Learning Since the Start of the School Year



Senior Coordinators Donyell Atkinson and Kristen Drake

Gifted Education

Fourth-grade students at Livsey ES participated in a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) Day activity. The driving question was, “How can we use geometry to design an appealing and challenging mini golf course?” Students used the engineering process to design one mini golf hole using geometric elements. They created an invitation and reflected on the process. Teacher Shanelle Osbin-Baldwin created the activity as part of her participation in DeKalb’s gifted endorsement program.



Requirements:

- course hole must either be an L shape or a U shape.
- course hole must not exceed 1 meter by 15 meters.

Course hole must include a minimum 3 of the following:

- parallel lines
- intersecting lines
- perpendicular lines
- circle
- square
- rectangle
- rhombus
- triangle
- trapezoid
- diamond

Course hole must also include a minimum of 1 of the following:

- 90 degree angle
- acute angle
- obtuse angle



During the March Professional Learning Day, 111 teachers participated in Designing Learning Experiences for Gifted Students – An Introduction to Instruction with Newsela or Cross-Curricular Literacy for Gifted Students: A Deep Dive into Best Practices with Newsela. One teacher wrote, “This session was very beneficial to me. It completely expanded what I knew about Newsela and will make me more effective in the classroom, as well as improve my ability to properly differentiate and personalize student instruction and student learning/comprehension.” Another wrote, “ESOL teachers can use Newsela reading-level

materials and videos, even in Spanish, to ensure English Language Learners (ELLs) have the opportunity to engage with the same content while working on their literacy skills. This program will support literate ELs who are just transferring their existing knowledge into the target language.” Another added, “I learned a lot about virtual field trips and how to integrate them into reading and science lessons. The Newsela formative tool was also very helpful, especially for students with disabilities.” In March, 159 teachers participated in PL addressing gifted education.





Senior Coordinator Mrs. Donyell Atkinson presented at the Georgia Association for Gifted Children Conference (GAGCC) in Columbus, Georgia March 3-4. Her presentation challenged educators to rethink traditional notions of giftedness and delve deeper into recognizing the potential in every student.

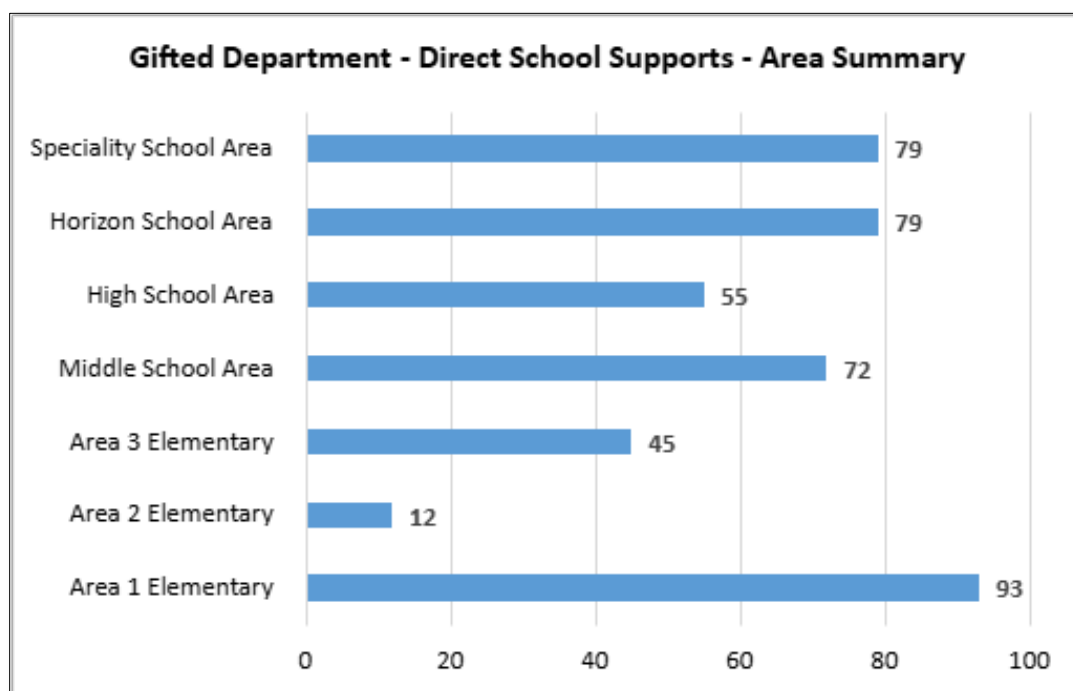


The Gifted Education Department collaborated with State Reporting Coordinator Amanda Blair to assist local schools' assistant principal with scheduling and resolving FTE errors before the principal and superintendent's sign-off by March 16.

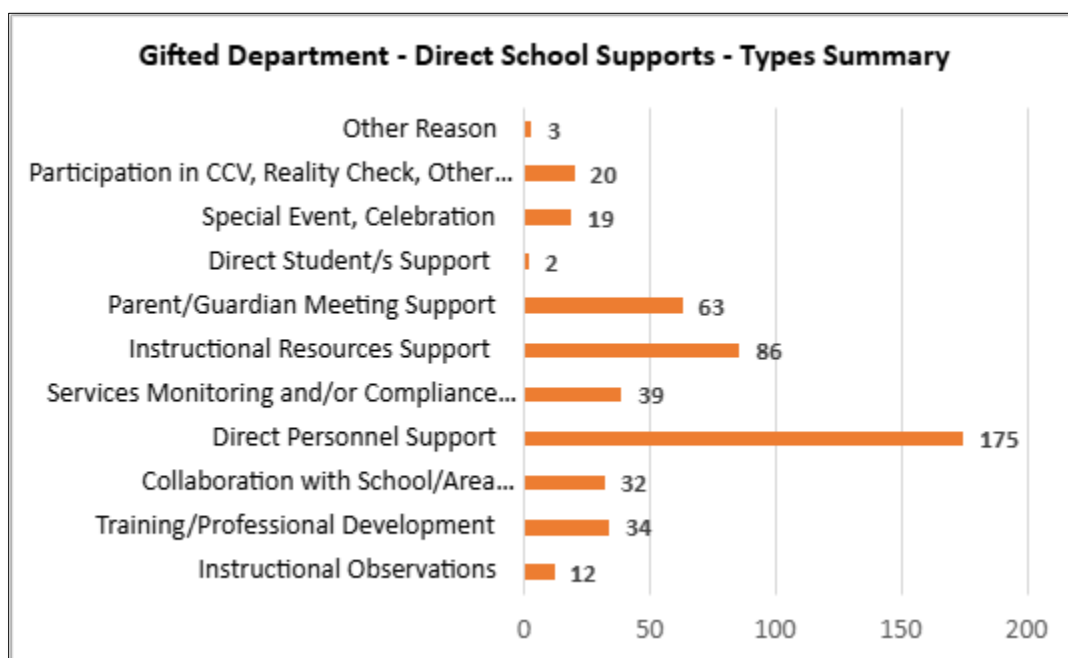
In the spirit of collaboration, the Professional Learning Department's Field Experience Coordinator Chelonnda Seroyer invited Donyell Atkinson to attend the *Empowering Educators: Mastering Essential Classroom Practices* workshop held on March 6, for student teachers currently placed in DCSD schools. At the same time, DCSD schools brought the districtwide spring testing cycle for eligible students being considered for gifted services to a close on March 11. Collection of all gifted test materials from schools began on March 24-26, from the AIC-Testing Warehouse thanks to the partnership of the Assessment Department.

The Gifted Education Department is pleased to offer Serendipity as a summer enrichment program option for grades 1-6 students. Students can expect to participate in the following enrichment opportunities: visual/performing arts, computer technology, STEM/STEAM, music, culinary arts, world language (Spanish), and health and physical education. Serendipity will be held June 9-13 at Stone Mountain MS. DCSD 2025 Summer Program student registration opened March 20. Parents interested in enrolling their child/children in any of the district-offered programs may visit the district's [website](#) for more details and [sign up](#) before the April 22 deadline!

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

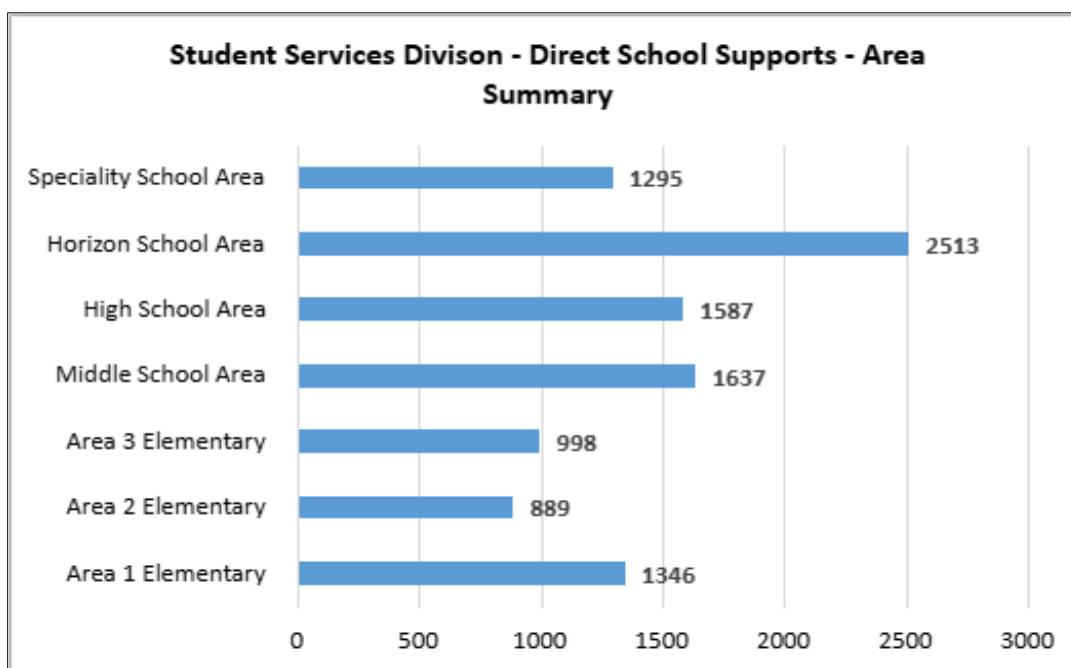


Types of Direct School Supports by Gifted Education Team Since the Start of the School Year

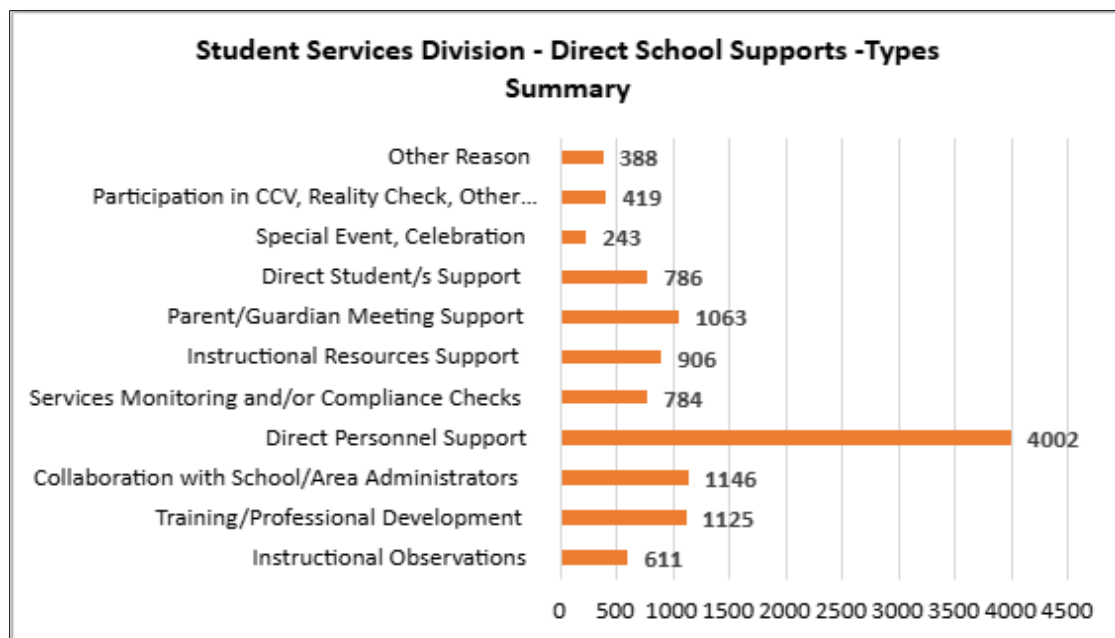


Division of Student Services – Direct School Supports Totals – Since the Start of the School Year

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

March has been exciting and full of accomplishments, including gains in attendance rates at various schools, continued successful implementation of the *“Disconnect to Reconnect”* initiative throughout the district, decreased suspensions, the creation of more safe spaces for students, and the celebration of 18 schools implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports at high levels of fidelity. As the school year quickly comes to an end, we want to continue to honor the students and work hard to accomplish the district’s strategic goals and division MIRACLES priorities for SY24-25.

Elementary Sports in Action!

Basketball season has begun in DeKalb County School District (DCSD) for elementary students, and it is an exciting time for March Madness DCSD style. On March 1, the Division of Wrap Around Services supported McClendon and Smoke Rise as they competed at Tucker MS in elementary basketball. The young boys played strong during each period of the game. Several teammates played both defense and offense to win the battle of the boards. McClendon fought a good fight, but the Smoke Rise Jaguars were the victors. A great job to both teams for the strong skills displayed at Tucker MS. Good luck to all teams during the season.



Books, Books! Everywhere!

As DCSD embarks on the social-emotional journey to address the number one concern for students, parents, staff, and community stakeholders, mental health and wellness book vending machines have been placed in several schools. Last year, six schools had the opportunity to earn a vending machine by having the highest required Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) lesson completion rate (in Naviance; 85 percent) per district area, all required lessons completed by March 31 (in Naviance), required lessons completed for each grade level, and staff completed SEL teacher in-service with teacher signature log documentation submitted.

Considering the positive response in schools, a new book vending machine has been placed in the main lobby of the Robert Freeman Administrative and Instructional Complex for the enjoyment of our staff. In order to obtain a book from the vending machine, a gold token may be given during professional development as an incentive. Facilitators can provide tokens based on various levels of participation in professional development sessions at AIC during the school year.



Leadership DeKalb visits Bethune Middle School

On March 20, the superintendents' cabinet supported school visits, including Mary McLeod Bethune MS, during Leadership DeKalb Education Day. Bethune Middle School's drum line and cheerleaders met the team as they arrived with Dr. Horton. There was a welcome from a Bethune student and a brief presentation from Principal Butler and his Administrative Team. Finally, students could tour the members of Leadership DeKalb around the school to visit classrooms, including a teacher currently participating in the IGNITE Teacher Residency Program. Bethune MS is disrupting by moving to new levels and new heights!



DeKalb County School District Special Olympics

The Division of Wrap Around Services was represented at the 2025 DCSD Special Olympics the week of March 24. It was an amazing chance to see our students with exceptionalities compete in the 25-yard dash, 50-yard dash, 100-yard dash, 400-meter relay, tug of war, shuck putt throw, and yard bowling. This exciting day also included other activities such as face painting, hula hooping, and blowing bubbles. Students carried the Olympic Torch at the beginning of the ceremony and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Overall, it was a fun time of inclusion for all involved, as the Division of Student Services and the Department of Exceptional Education provided a memorable day for our students, parents, staff, and community stakeholders.



Executive Director Christopher Key

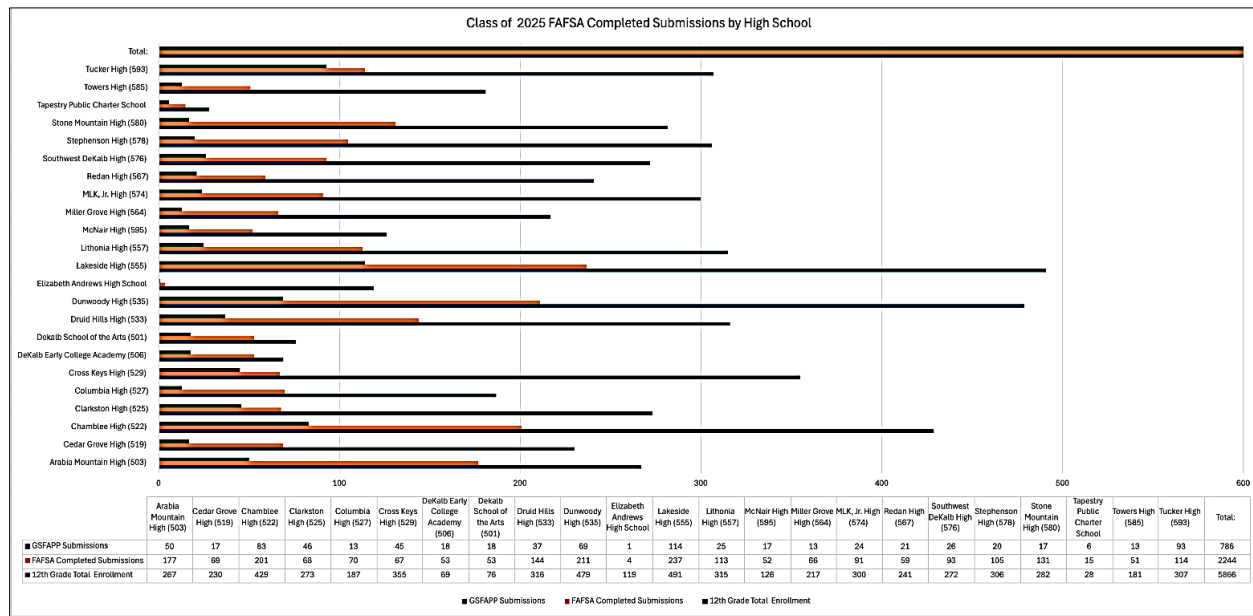
Student Advancement Department

School Counseling Office and Post-Secondary Outreach Office – Superintendent Student Advisory Committee

On March 21, the Superintendent Student Advisory Committee met with the superintendent. In attendance also were the Chief of Schools Michelle Dillard, and the Chief of Wrap Around Services Dr. Kishia Towns. During the meeting, scholars received an update related to the current shift taking place in the field of education at the federal level. Additionally, scholars received details regarding the Post-Secondary PUSH and 4E plans. Seniors interested in presenting at the Teen Summit were invited to sign up, and scholars were provided a ThoughtExchange opportunity. Committee members are presently providing updates to the ThoughtExchange in preparation for our last meeting of the year, which is planned for May.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Awareness (Enrollment Pathway)

FAFSA workshops occur in all high schools, and as of March 28, there were 2,244 completed FAFSAs, which is an increase from last month by 335 students. There are 786 completed Georgia student finance applications, an increase of 125 students.



FAFSA and GSFA Data by School

Higher to Hire (Employment Pathway)

The Division of HR is partnered with Student Advancement to recruit seniors interested in positions within our school district that require a high school diploma. Since scholars must have a high school diploma before being hired, we collect all interested candidates' names to recruit upon graduation. The recruitment team signed up for the district's HS Career and Job Expo on March 31 and continues to visit schools directly to recruit scholars.

Elementary School SEL Lesson Completion Data

The Critical Role of SEL in Elementary Education

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 the 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 students and educators thrive.

Elementary School SEL Lesson Completion Data

Following a thorough review of the raw data from the March 13 dashboard release, 46 elementary schools have been identified with lesson completion rates below 50 percent for 18 or more of the 36 required lessons (September–February 2025). A [detailed list](#) of these schools, organized by quartile and recommended actions, is [attached](#) and included below. This action plan outlines an immediate response to the March 13 SEL data release and a roadmap for the following school year.

Second Step Lesson Overview (Grades K-2)			
Lesson Title	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2
Bullying Prevention Unit Recognizing Bullying	43.74% 2,930 of 6,712 students	51.93% 3,610 of 6,944 students	57.67% 6,126 of 7,155 students
Bullying Prevention Unit Reporting Bullying	34.62% 2,324 of 6,712 students	42.15% 2,927 of 6,944 students	47.51% 3,399 of 7,155 students
Child Protection Unit The Touching Rule	8.08% 540 of 6,712 students	8.17% 567 of 6,944 students	6.44% 461 of 7,155 students
Child Protection Unit Ways to Stay Safe	13.11% 880 of 6,712 students	15.45% 1,073 of 6,944 students	16.35% 1,170 of 7,155 students
Everyone Gets Distracted		35.77% 2,484 of 6,944 students	
Feeling Proud			35.20% 2,503 of 7,155 students
How to Get Good at Something			50.99% 3,648 of 7,155 students
How to Say the Problem		2.29% 159 of 6,944 students	
Noticing Feelings		30.01% 2,084 of 6,944 students	
Sometimes We Feel Happy	26.87% 1,808 of 6,712 students		
The Power of Kind Acts		20.81% 1,445 of 6,944 students	
The Way to Say a Problem			3.91% 280 of 7,155 students
Time to Pay Attention		29.31% 2,035 of 6,944 students	
We Can Be Kind	21.05% 1,413 of 6,712 students		
We Can Say the Problem	1.95% 131 of 6,712 students		
We Watch We Learn We Think	37.80% 2,537 of 6,712 students		
What Mistakes Tell Us			38.31% 2,741 of 7,155 students
Whatta Empathy			21.45% 1,535 of 7,155 students
Why We Pay Attention	22.65% 1,518 of 6,712 students		

Second Step Lesson Overview (Grades 3-5)			
Lesson Title	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
A Good Problem Solver		2.58% 175 of 6,784 students	
Beginning to STEP			3.47% 240 of 7,057 students
Bullying Prevention Unit Bystander Power		43.60% 2,958 of 6,784 students	40.97% 2,891 of 7,057 students
Bullying Prevention Unit Recognize		53.24% 3,612 of 6,784 students	43.58% 3,079 of 7,057 students
Bullying Prevention Unit Recognizing Bullying	49.30% 3,604 of 7,310 students		
Bullying Prevention Unit Reporting Bullying	46.00% 3,394 of 7,310 students		
Changing Your Brain	48.43% 3,540 of 7,310 students		
Child Protection Unit Keeping Yourself Safe		14.83% 1,006 of 6,784 students	11.27% 795 of 7,057 students
Child Protection Unit The Private Body Parts Rule		6.94% 471 of 6,784 students	4.36% 308 of 7,057 students
Child Protection Unit The Touching Rule	9.32% 688 of 7,310 students		
Child Protection Unit Ways to Stay Safe	15.13% 1,104 of 7,310 students		
Empathy in the Community			20.69% 1,460 of 7,057 students
Getting Better With Practice	36.00% 2,778 of 7,310 students		
Kindness and Friendship	20.89% 1,527 of 7,310 students		
Making a Plan		35.57% 2,413 of 6,784 students	
My Plan			35.47% 2,508 of 7,057 students
Setting a Good Goal		48.04% 3,259 of 6,784 students	
STEP by Step	2.74% 200 of 7,310 students		
Strong Emotions			26.81% 1,892 of 7,057 students
The Balanced Brain		27.11% 1,839 of 6,784 students	
The Right Goal for Me			43.63% 3,079 of 7,057 students
The Same		22.23% 1,508 of 6,784 students	
Why Emotions	30.70% 2,244 of 7,310 students		

Counseling Student Advancement Team's Participation in the "I Need to Read" Program

The Counseling Student Advancement Team participated in the "I Need to Read" program at Princeton ES, where we engaged with first- and second-grade classes by reading various books. As we celebrate **Black History Month**, we are thrilled to collaborate with our selected elementary schools to promote literacy and cultural awareness.

Our community partners, mentors, and district office staff are committed to supporting students through various literacy initiatives. We are especially grateful for the **National Hook-Up of Black Women (NHBW), Inc.**, a dedicated partner that has generously donated books highlighting Black History. In addition, NHBW will join us in reading to students in grades PK-5, further enriching their learning experience and fostering a love for reading.



Director Denise Revels

Wrap Around and Support Services

School Social Work – Strengthening Professionals

The Social Work Department participated in a “True Colors” PLO facilitated by Professional Learning Coordinator Dr. Michelle Thompson. During the two sessions, staff explored how generational influences shape perspectives and behaviors while also learning to identify personality traits using four distinct colors: Blue, Orange, Green, and Gold. Blues are compassionate, empathetic, and relationship-oriented, thriving in supportive environments. Oranges are energetic, spontaneous, and action-driven, bringing creativity and adaptability to their work. Greens are analytical, strategic, and knowledge-seeking, excelling in problem-solving and innovation. Golds are organized, dependable, and detail-oriented, valuing structure and responsibility. Understanding these personality types allows the Social Work Department to improve teamwork, communication, and problem-solving by leveraging individual strengths.



Recognizing how different colors interact fosters stronger collaboration, enhances conflict resolution, and optimizes workflow by assigning tasks based on natural inclinations. By applying these insights, social workers can create a more cohesive and productive team, ultimately enhancing their impact on students, families, and school support services.

Attendance is Key to Academic Success

At Montclair ES, new Social Worker Natalia Valencia Zometa organized an attendance celebration for parents, recognizing students for the most improved and perfect attendance. During the event, Ms. Zometa acknowledged students' dedication to consistent school attendance and emphasized the importance of maintaining strong attendance habits. She also reviewed the attendance protocol, ensuring parents understood expectations and the resources available to support student success.

Since the start of SY24-25, Montclair ES has made notable gains in attendance. Specifically, the school saw a 4.18 percent improvement in January 2025 and a 2.26 percent increase in March 2025 compared to the SY23-24, while maintaining an average daily attendance of 93.42 percent. By fostering a positive school culture around attendance, this initiative reinforced the value of daily participation in students' academic growth and overall success.

Title IV

Parent and Community Stakeholders' Consolidated Local Education Agency (LEA) Improvement Plan Review and Input

Presenting at the 2025 Parent and Community Stakeholders' Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) Review and Input was a fulfilling experience. The event took place both virtually and in-person on March 25, with 271 participants joining online and 9 attending in person. The CLIP is essential for the district, as it outlines how DCSD will utilize federal funds per the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, updated by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, as required by the GADOE.

As Title IV coordinator II, I had the opportunity to discuss several key areas, including Goal Area I, which focuses on student academic success through equity and access, and Goal Area IV, which addresses culture and climate through various intervention programs and resources. During the in-person session, parents actively participated, posing numerous questions about supportive programs and interventions that could aid their children. I was pleased to share insights about the International Institute for Restorative Practices and how the DCSD is effectively implementing these interventions in our schools to enhance student behavior and improve the overall school climate.

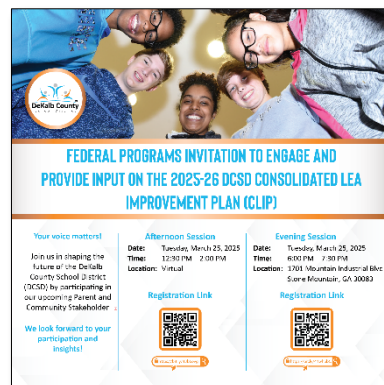
Director Dr. Darnell Logan

Student Relations

Student Discipline/Student Reintegration

Clear overview of the Department of Student Relations workload for March 3–27:

- District due process hearings:
 - Scheduled: 107
 - Canceled/withdrawn by school: 6
 - Manifested: 6
 - Held: 65
- Discipline Team meetings: 16
- Board appeals presented: 2
- Students cleared to attend DeKalb County schools: 22

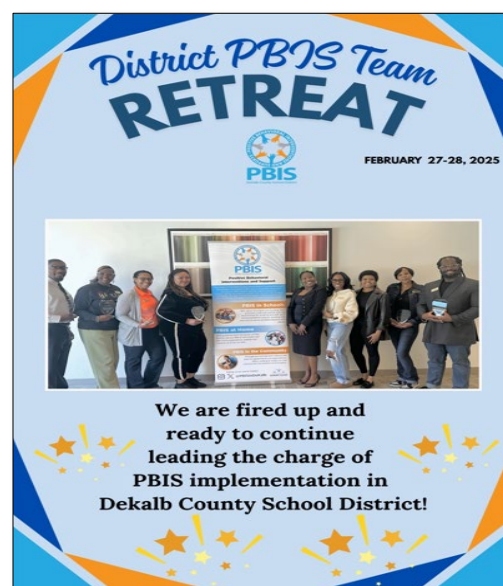


Disconnect to Reconnect

Our district has experienced tremendous success with the *Disconnect to Reconnect* initiative. Discipline infractions related to cell phone use have significantly decreased in middle and high schools implementing cell phone lockers and Yondr pouches. The Yondr pouch initiative, in particular, has proven to be highly effective. As we look ahead, however, we must consider the financial support necessary to sustain the program into the next school year and to expand it to additional high schools. For our middle schools, the consistent use of cell phone lockers remains the most effective and feasible model. Conversely, while cell phone lockers have shown limited success at the HS level, the Yondr pouches have made a substantial positive impact. Given our success, moving forward with Yondr in our high schools makes strategic sense. However, this will require thoughtful and in-depth conversations about the practicality and sustainability of funding such a program on an ongoing basis.

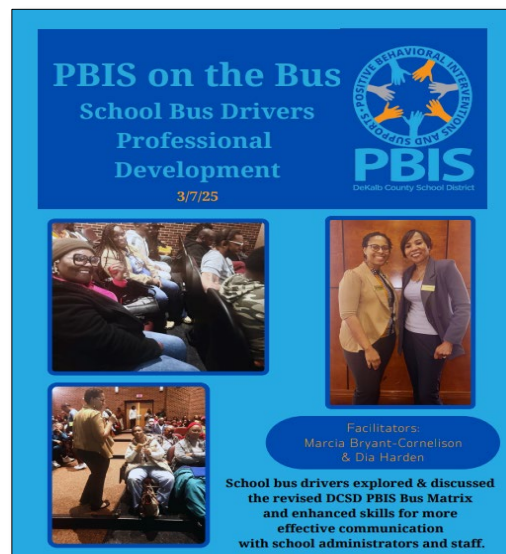
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

The PBIS District Team held a successful retreat on February 27–28, focusing on team building, professional development, planning, data analysis, and problem-solving to enhance PBIS implementation across DCSD schools. The team, consisting of seven PBIS district coaches and one PBIS district coordinator, received special recognition for their dedication to fostering positive school climates. Guest speakers included Chief of Wrap Around Services Dr. Kishia Towns, and Mrs. Bonnie Haynes from Peach State Federal Credit Union. Additionally, the team conducted a Schoolwide Information System Training on March 5, equipping PBIS School Team members with skills to utilize the web-based tool for tracking and analyzing behavior and discipline referrals. This tool enhances data-driven decision-making, helping schools develop effective strategies to improve student behavior outcomes. On March 7, the PBIS District Team facilitated PBIS Day 2 Retraining at McNair MS, training PBIS School Team members from Miller Grove HS and Peachcrest ES, with nine participants. The team also conducted PBIS Day 2 Training for the Transportation Department, engaging 201 participants, including transportation managers, bus drivers, and monitors. This session focused on implementing the finalized Bus Transportation PBIS Matrix, practicing behavior management strategies, and strengthening communication between transportation staff and school administrators.



During the DCSD BOE meeting on March 10, Superintendent Dr. Devon Horton and the BOE members recognized one Distinguished PBIS school, 15 operational PBIS schools, and two operational PBIS GNETS centers for their commitment to fostering safe, positive, and healthy learning environments. During the collaboration-integration meeting on March 14, PBIS District Coordinator Brandy Woolridge conducted a Needs Assessment with 25 participants, including culture and climate coordinators, mental health coordinators, and attendance specialists. The assessment gathered feedback to enhance future meetings, aligning them with district leadership's vision and improving school support systems.

Additionally, it identified the needs of culture and climate coordinators, mental health coordinators, and attendance specialists to strengthen their role in supporting schools while ensuring alignment with the district's strategic goals and MIRACLES priorities. Lastly, on March 19, the PBIS District Team and MRESA Whole Child Supports Director conducted PBIS Day 2 Training for 36 participants from new Cohort 9 schools, focusing on developing behavior systems, PBIS artifacts, faculty engagement, and strategies for reinforcing positive behavior practices.



Chief Stacy E. Stepney

Division

Literacy – Reading and Dyslexia Universal Screeners

The Division of C&I and the DCSD GLISI Literacy Implementation Team (GLISI LIT) organized a vendor review day on Monday, March 17, 2025, to review the following state-approved universal screeners:

- Amira ISIP
- EPS Reading Assistant
- Star Universal Reading Suite
- mCLASS with DIBELS 8th Edition
- iReady Universal Screening Suite

The GaDOE has not officially revealed the free universal screener for school districts; therefore, the DCSD GLISI LIT used a universal screener selection tool to evaluate each vendor. Evaluators considered how each tool supports the early identification of students at risk, how easily the data can be accessed to drive decision-making in real-time, PL and technical assistance available, single sign-on and rostering capabilities, integration with other platforms, communication tools for parents in multiple languages, grade-level appropriateness, and data reports for classroom teachers, school leaders, and district leaders. The DCSD GLISI LIT will meet with the top contenders in April to review intervention components available at a cost to support Tier 2 and Tier 3.

Literacy – Phonics Supplemental Instructional Resources

The Division of Curriculum and Instruction organized a vendor review day on Monday, March 24, 2025, to explore phonics instructional resources. Teachers, academic coaches, coordinators, and cross-divisional district staff were invited to attend because of their expertise and dedication to promoting a robust literacy culture throughout the school district. During the Phonics Vendor Day, participants used a rubric to examine the following four instructional resources/programs: 95 Core, UFLI, Foundations, and Heggerty. Each vendor presentation was 45 minutes, followed by a 15-minute Q&A session. Pending board approval of the SY25-26 budget, a recommendation will be made to purchase and adopt a districtwide phonics program.

Curriculum Audit

Insight Education Group and Resonant Education released the confidential teacher survey on March 11. As of March 31, 1,137 teachers have completed the short survey.

As part of the curriculum audit, Insight Education Group began facilitating focus group sessions via Zoom with different stakeholder groups on March 11. Each focus group is comprised of five to seven randomly selected stakeholders. As of March 31, 43 focus groups have convened virtually.

Academic Coaches

During March, the academic coach senior coordinators (ACC) provided tiered coaching support and technical assistance based on principal feedback, documentation of work, and on-site observations. To support the rollout of the new ELA standards, the ACCs facilitated sessions during the PLO and facilitated an all-day session with the leads and academic coaches. Also, the ACCs supported the implementation of ELA standards through coaching sessions and Literacy Lab sessions for teachers, coaches, and content coordinators.

The ACCs hosted the March Academic Coaches Academy. The team collaborated with PL, who presented the ACs' role in the PLC, emphasizing the guiding coalition, the four guiding questions, and the need to build teacher capacity to lead the discussions in the PLCs. HR also provided insight and guidance related to the Dekalb Keys Effectiveness System implementation. Further, the ACCs led ACs through a protocol related to their role in the implementation of the instructional improvement strategy in the CSIP.

ACCs participated in the curriculum audit through interviews with the Audit Team. Additionally, the team began participating in the CSIP virtual sessions and attended the Division of Schools and Leadership retreat. Members of the team participated in the district's CIT "run-of-show."

ACCs are continuing to plan the upcoming summer Coaching Institute on June 2 and 3. The team is securing keynote speakers.

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

Area	Number of Coaches	Number of Vacancies	Number of New
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

Deputy Chief Dr. Sean R. Tartt

Curriculum and Instruction Division

Academic Skills Centers (ASC)

The Division of C&I continues to support ASC staff with PL as they work to strengthen each scholar's ability to perform at higher levels. On March 18, 53 ASC staff engaged in an interactive session centered around using close reading strategies at Redan HS. ASC staff spent the second half of the session focused on effectively using the Imagine Learning platform, reviewing their

site's data, making key adjustments, and planning for continued progress. As we prepare for the testing, recruitment, and retention season of ASC staff, the Divisions of C&I, Schools and Leadership, and HR are partnering to develop a recruitment and retention plan for next year so we can continue to support scholars' growth and achievement.

Student Success Skills Backpack (SSSB)

To support the implementation of the SSSB at the pilot schools, principals, teachers, and the Division of Schools and Leadership engaged in support sessions this month. In March, six virtual teacher engagement sessions were held by grade band, including ES, MS, and HS teachers, to provide support and gain feedback about the process as the school district prepares for next year's districtwide launch. During the teacher engagement and Schools and Leadership sessions, staff received detailed examples, videos, and descriptions of how the SSSB is embedded into instruction. The examples provided were aligned and connected to each Portrait of a Graduate skill. The staff appreciated the dialogue, detail, engagement, and recognition as schools support scholars with uploading meaningful artifacts and preparing for student defenses in grades 5, 8, and 12.



Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

The District is continuing the collaborative work with AVID to support schools in developing academic habits needed for success as they matriculate through school and prepare for the collegiate experience. Currently, we are supporting the AVID schools with student recruitment and program implementation for next year. The Division of C&I and OFP are assisting principals with registration for the 2025 AVID summer leadership conference in June.

Content Collaboration

In the spirit of collaboration, coordinators from multiple divisions gather each month to engage in job-alike groups to learn, review data, share observational feedback, develop targeted PL, and plan curriculum rollout. Coordinators met on March 14 and will gather again on April 4 to discuss trends in data from the previous thirty days, instructional resource implementation, and next steps based on CCVs and Reality Checks.

Summer Learning Programs

The DCSD launched a menu of summer programs on March 20, including academic academies, enrichment camps, credit recovery, and tutoring. Registration for the summer learning programs is accessible to all stakeholders via the district website. The application for employment for staff went live on March 20. The Summer Learning Programs Committee meets regularly to discuss program enrollment, staffing for each program, transportation needs, and payroll procedures. Please [visit the following webpage to learn more about each summer learning program](#).



Assistant Superintendent Dr. Penny Mosley

P-5

Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) LIT Team

The DCSD cross-divisional Literacy Team participated in a spotlight visit to Clarke County School District on March 18. The visit allowed DeKalb's Literacy Team to collaborate on literacy initiatives such as reading campaigns, structured literacy training requirements, and the SOR supports. In turn, DeKalb hosted Clarke County on March 20 during our PLO. Clarke County participated in our ELA standards PL and a Q&A segment on DCSD's literacy journey during the PLO. Our team shared our work on campaign initiatives such as Lifting Lexiles and Portrait of an Early Reader and our initial work on the ELA instructional plan and daily schedules.

Implementation of new Georgia English Language Arts Standards 2025 and Structured Literacy

Through collaboration with the GLISI Lit Team, literacy leads, school administrators, and teachers, the instructional framework was reviewed and revised to reflect the five pillars of structured literacy: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and reading comprehension, along with writing. After researching best practices, receiving teacher feedback through surveys, and collaborating with other districts, the GLISI LIT Team determined that additional instructional time during the English Language Arts block is necessary to implement the new ELA standards effectively. As a result, the team created sample schedules to reflect a 105–120-minute literacy block for kindergarten through fifth grade.

District Continuous Improvement Team (CIT)

The Divisions of C&I, Schools and Leadership, and Student Services planned and facilitated professional development for the LTSE to support the newly state-identified schools. The virtual PL session focused on purposeful planning, intentional instruction, and preparing for the Georgia Milestones assessment. The LTSEs are left with strategies to support quality teaching and learning through experiences that prepare students while creating an equitable learning experience for all students.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Rose Prejean-Harris

6-12

Innovative Educational Opportunities (IEO)

DeKalb Acceleration Academies (DAA) increased enrollment, attendance, and course completions in March. Currently, there are 60 students enrolled. Interest in the program remains high, with 10 completed applications under review and 49 under review. The program's flexibility generates hope and creates opportunities for participants to complete their high school diplomas.

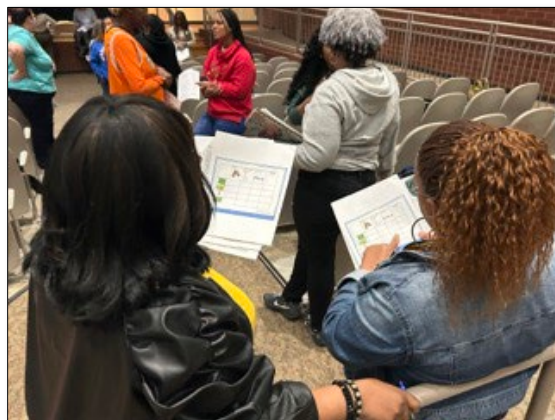
The new location for DAA is set. Beginning in July, the program will move to a renovated space in the complex where Tucker City Hall is located. We are excited to offer a centralized space where graduation candidates can receive ongoing support with easy access to the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) and the interstate.

Director Dr. Lynn Angus Ramos

Literacy

Structured Literacy and the Science of Reading

DCSD currently has 2,776 teachers taking the SOR courses through the Georgia Literacy Academy, while hundreds have completed the state-required training through other state-approved pathways. Although Georgia House Bill 538 requires training for all K-3 teachers, DCSD has focused on pre-K-5 teachers learning effective reading instruction practices. The district continues to guide teachers and stakeholders in understanding the alignment between structured literacy practices, their state-approved high-quality instructional materials, and the new Georgia ELA standards. Through our partnership with GLIS and cross-divisional feedback, the team has developed guidance extending the ELA block to ensure time for teaching all vital parts of ELA – foundational skills, reading, and writing.



Literacy Campaign

A series of videos were created to support internal and external stakeholder awareness and understanding of the literacy shifts that DeKalb is pursuing in resources, training, and instruction. The Literacy Legislation, Lexiles, and Literacy Strategies video clips are available on the DeKalb Schools' YouTube channel under the [Portrait of an Early Reader](#) playlist.



Additionally, print materials have been developed to highlight skills that early readers master. All resources were rolled out at the State of the District event on March 27 and will be highlighted on the updated website. In March, the team was able to once again partner with Family and Community Empowerment to facilitate an hour of engaging literacy strategies with over 250 parents and students.

Director Lummie Baker

Educational Media and Instructional Materials

2025 Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl (HRRB) State Winners

The 2025 HRRB state competition occurred on March 22 at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia. Sixteen teams participated in the HRRB state competition – six ES teams, five MS teams, and five HS teams. Kittredge Magnet School and Lakeside High School were the two schools that represented the DCSD. During the competition, each team competed in rounds of 60 questions against students in their grade level. All teams had to answer questions about the 10 Georgia Book Award Nominee Books (for ES and MS) or the 20 Peach Teen Award Nominee books (for HS) they read.

A special thank you is extended to the students, coaches, and volunteers for a great day of competition and demonstrating the value of literacy. Kittredge Magnet School won first place at the MS level, and Lakeside HS took second place at the HS level.

Director Stephanie Brown-Bryant

K-12 Teaching and Learning

English Language Arts

A total of 2,481 ELA teachers participated in a half-day PL session that introduced portions of the new Georgia ELA standards. The new standards will be implemented in SY25-26. Local school sessions were facilitated by teachers and academic coaches who participated in face-to-face training and support sessions to prepare. Elementary schools focused on the new foundations' domain, while secondary schools explored the new language and text domains.



Georgia Association of Educators State Spelling Bee

Sarv Dharavane, a fifth grader at Austin ES, represented DCSD for the second consecutive year at the Georgia Association of Educators State Spelling Bee. Once again, Sarv emerged as the state champion and will represent Georgia at the Scripps National Spelling Bee Championships in National Harbor, Maryland, May 26-30. After over 275 words and 14 rounds (including vocabulary), Sarv correctly spelled his final two words, "Berghaan" and "Compas," and was declared the winner.



Governor's Honors Program (GHP) Finalists and Alternates

Congratulations to our GHP winners! Twenty-eight finalists and six alternates have been selected to attend the prestigious program at Georgia Southern University this summer. The residential summer session takes place June 15–July 12. Attendees will participate in an intensive curriculum designed to provide them with academic, cultural, and social enrichment to become the next generation of global critical thinkers, innovators, and leaders. The program engages students in instruction six days a week, focusing on their major concentration in the morning and various electives, seminars, and guest speakers in the afternoons and evenings.

The DCSD had 320 students participate in our local application process in the fall of 2024 and nominated 196 students for the state-level competition. Following an extensive review process, nominees chosen as semifinalists were invited to the campus of Georgia Southern University for interviews and auditions in early March. Finalists and alternates were announced on March 21.

2025 Finalists

High School (HS)	Student First Name	Student Last Name	Major Concentration
Chamblee HS	Ava	Lowe-Pedersen	Communicative Arts
Chamblee HS	Daniel	Berry	Engineering: Civil and Environmental
Chamblee HS	Karthikeya	Vishwanatham	Mathematics
Chamblee HS	Alexander	Coursey	Science: Chemistry
Chamblee HS	Caleb	Gurbaxani	Science: Physics
Chamblee HS	Micah	Hertz	Social Studies
Chamblee HS	Avni	Chawla	Social Studies
Chamblee HS	Maven	Bolick	Theatre
Chamblee HS	Maanas	Kudrimoti	Visual Arts

High School (HS)	Student First Name	Student Last Name	Major Concentration
Chamblee HS	Miranda	Greco	Visual Arts
Chamblee HS	Alex	Lin	World Languages: Chinese
Chamblee HS	Nicholas	Jovanovic	World Languages: German
DeKalb School of the Arts	Finnbar	Tierney	Music: Jazz Guitar
DeKalb School of the Arts	Katherine	Bivins	Visual Arts
DeKalb School of the Arts	Sinaa	Tinker	World Languages: Latin
Druid Hills HS	Harper	Walton-Mouw	Communicative Arts
Druid Hills HS	Maja	Draffin	Communicative Arts
Dunwoody HS	Michelle	Rubio	Agricultural Research, Biotechnology, and Science
Dunwoody HS	Anna	Lower	Communicative Arts
Dunwoody HS	Aditya	Zaveri	Mathematics
Dunwoody HS	Anthony	Ahn	Mathematics
Lakeside HS	Amirah	Betan-Snook	Communicative Arts
Lakeside HS	Lola	Bauza	Communicative Arts
Lakeside HS	Ruby	Mellage	Social Studies
Lakeside HS	Kobe	Cohen	Theatre
Lakeside HS	Abigail	Morales-Vizcaino	Visual Arts
McNair HS	Lily	Legend	Dance
Southwest DeKalb HS	Aniyah	Dvis	Engineering: Civil and Environmental

2025 Alternates

High School (HS)	Student First Name	Student Last Name	Major Concentration
Chamblee HS	Madiha	Sayed	Science: Biology/Environmental Science
Chamblee HS	Nicholas	Cox	World Languages: German
DeKalb School of the Arts	Chameli	Govin	Communicative Arts
Druid Hills HS	Julia	Tone	Social Studies
Dunwoody HS	Anshula	Phadke	Theatre
Lakeside HS	Harrison	Keenan	Agricultural Research, Biotechnology, and Science

DeKalb Regional Science and Engineer Fair

With over 123 entries from third through twelfth graders, 38 projects were selected to advance to the Georgia Science and Engineering Fair (GSEF). Congratulations to all students who have qualified for the statewide GSEF that will take place at The Classic Center in downtown Athens, GA, April 3-5.

Anushka Sable (Chamblee HS) and Akosua Baah (Tucker HS) will compete at the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF). Regeneron ISEF 2025, the world's largest pre-college STEM competition, will occur May 10-16 in Columbus, Ohio.

Regional Social Studies Fair

On March 22, the spirit of inquiry and academic excellence was on full display as students from across the metro area gathered for the Regional Social Studies Fair. Hosted by the DCSD, with enthusiastic participation from Rockdale County Public Schools, the event brought together young scholars ready to share their research and insights.

A total of 38 outstanding projects were presented, each one a testament to the hard work, curiosity, and dedication of the students who created them. From history and economics to sociology and geography, the fair highlighted the power of student voice and the importance of understanding the world around us.

At the close of the event, nine students earned the opportunity to advance to the state level, where they will represent their districts at the Georgia Social Studies Fair. The state competition will occur on May 3 at North Cobb HS.

Their Stories, Our Voices: Honoring Women’s History Month, Celebrating Women Through Music, Dance, Poetry, and Drama

In a powerful display of talent, creativity, and cultural pride, students across the district came together to honor the legacy of excellence through a vibrant and moving arts showcase. Held on March 6 at Stephenson HS in celebration of Women’s History Month, the event featured performances from ES, MS, and HS students, each contributing their unique voices to a collective tribute to the past and present.

The stage came alive with music, dance, poetry, and drama. Students sang stirring songs that echoed meaningfully, danced passionately and purposefully, and recited original and published poems that paid homage to trailblazers and change-makers. From student-written monologues to a captivating scene from a play, every performance reflected deep thought, creativity, and a strong connection to the stories being told.

Director Doryiane Gunter

Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE)

CTAE Teacher PL and Program Success

Four graphic design teachers attended the National Arts Education Association Conference in Louisville, KY, for the first time from March 20-22. They participated in a variety of workshops and seminars centered on arts education. This event provided an excellent opportunity for teachers to network and collaborate with fellow educators and professionals, gaining valuable knowledge and insights to enhance their instructional practices.

Marketing Programs Earn Industry Certification

On March 6, the marketing programs at Cedar Grove HS and Southwest DeKalb HS successfully completed the GaDOE industry certification process. Both schools excelled in their evaluations, receiving high praise in instruction, equipment and lab upkeep, and student participation in career-tech student organizations. The GaDOE rigorously assessed these programs in collaboration with industry professionals. The visits highlighted the impressive skills of student presenters, who were the focal point of the evaluations.

Student Television Network (STN) Convention

Students and teachers from Lakeside, Chamblee, and Dunwoody High Schools recently traveled to Tampa, Florida, to participate in the prestigious national STN convention. During the event, students had the opportunity to compete against their peers from across the nation in various dynamic, hands-on filming and broadcasting challenges. These competitions allowed participants to hone their technical and creative skills while working under tight deadlines and real-world conditions.



Beyond the competitions, the convention offered invaluable exposure to the diverse aspects of the filmmaking industry, from production and editing to broadcasting and media management. Students also had the chance to engage with representatives from top post-secondary institutions and interact with a wide range of industry professionals, providing them with unique insights and networking opportunities that could shape their future careers in media and entertainment.

Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) State Leadership Conference

Over 100 students from the DCSD attended the Georgia FBLA State Leadership Conference, showcasing their skills and dedication. Cedar Grove HS distinguished itself with six top ten winners, four of whom will advance to the national competition. Southwest DeKalb High School earned the prestigious Membership REACH Award, securing second place for the largest increase in local chapter membership. Additionally, Cross Keys HS celebrated two top ten winners, with one student advancing to the national competition.

Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) State Leadership Conference

Over 125 talented students from DeKalb County showcased their skills at the FCCLA State Leadership Conference in Columbus, Georgia. Competing in various STAR (Students Taking Action with Recognition) events, students from Cedar Grove High School, Chamblee High School, Columbia Middle School, DeKalb High School of Technology South, Redan High School, Redan Middle School, Stephenson Middle School, Miller Grove High School demonstrated their dedication, creativity, and leadership in career and technical education.

By the end of the competition, students from seven DeKalb schools placed in the top five statewide, earning prestigious gold and silver medals. Several students achieved the ultimate honor—advancing to the FCCLA National Leadership Conference in Orlando, Florida, from July 5-9.

Student Engagement with Industry Professionals

On March 25, a Georgia Power representative and CTAE Advisory Board member, Terry Owens, kicked off a financial literacy partnership at Southwest DeKalb HS. Ms. Laquinta Plunkett, a business education teacher at Southwest DeKalb HS, initiated the partnership to ensure students engaged with industry professionals. Students participated in hands-on learning experiences and gained access to future mentorship opportunities.



Director Janetta Greenwood**Fernbank Science Center (FSC)****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 March, FSC served 1,394 students with single visits, 5,308 through Outreach, and 3,265 with planetarium visits. A total of 9,967 students were served through various program offerings during March.

The 2025-2026 Scientific Tools and Techniques program application has closed, and we received over 300 applications from 23 DCSD middle schools. Families will be notified of their acceptance by April 4. Applications are still open for our 2025-2026 Advanced Studies and SOAR programs.

Community Engagement – Sounds of Science

On March 22, FSC hosted a listening event with DeKalb County School District Board Member Whitney McGinnis, DeKalb County Commissioner District 6 Ted Terry, and DeKalb County Commissioner District 2 Michelle Long Spears. A science flare was added to the listening event as participants engaged in various sound-themed exploratory science activities.

Community Engagement – Atlanta Science Festival Events

FSC hosted three Atlanta Science Festival events in March. The first event, Taste of Science, was held on March 13 and attended by 123 ticketed participants. During the event, participants engaged in lectures presented by professors from Emory University, Georgia State University, and the University of Georgia, focusing on healthy and unprocessed foods aligned with science standards. Additionally, Grady Hospital Food Pharmacy and Teaching Kitchen staff presented a session focused on nutrition and health. Miller Grove HS provided healthy snacks for participants, aligning with the evening's theme.

Fernbank Goes Wild was held on March 15, and 1,463 participants attended. This event brought together various organizations, including Asheville Wild Side, Yellow River Wildlife Sanctuary, Georgia Amphibian Foundation, Georgia Aquarium, and the Georgia Reptile Association. During the event, participants engaged in animal encounters, participated in hands-on science activities aligned with biology and environmental science, viewed two new planetarium shows (Expedition Reef and Dinosaurs), and examined animal specimens.

The final Atlanta Science Festival Event, hosted by the FSC, was Unique Universe on March 21. In partnership with the High Museum of Art (HMOA), 467 guests explored the Dataverse and universe by creating STEAM-themed works of art, attending a keynote speech by the Deputy Director of Learning and Civic Engagement at HMOA, participating in observatory viewings, and watching universe-themed planetarium shows.

Community Engagement – Elementary Science Olympiad

The Elementary Science Olympiad occurred at Ronald E. McNair MS, on March 29. This event brought together 454 elementary students from across DCSD. They competed in 24 science challenges focused on geology, bridge building, star identification, and more. Through collaboration and communication, students applied their critical thinking and problem-solving skills to overcome a variety of competitive challenges.



School Master Gardener

Master Gardeners met on March 28 to receive training on harvesting and food preparation from the school garden, bog gardens, and habitat gardens. Each school received plants for student activities and lessons in their school gardens.

School Master Gardeners and DeKalb Master Gardener volunteers supported FSC's Atlanta Science Festival and DCSD Listening Events with hands-on learning activities for visitors.

Georgia Aquarium Partnership

The Georgia Aquarium Partnership continued in March. The Georgia Aquarium Partnership has served 31,143 students and 72 schools. As of March 31, 13,009 students ventured to the aquarium with teachers and chaperones to participate in instructor-led field trips. The outreach programs have served 9,491 students. Virtual programs have served 3,806 students through the end of March. The Aquanaut Express has served a total of 17 schools and 4,837 students.

Ocean Guardian Schools

During March, 282 students from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Ocean Guardian schools were supported by FSC's instructional specialists. Schools participated in exploratory and experiential labs and instruction focused on composting, planting, plant life cycles, and engineering to build raised beds. The set of critical knowledge that students learned through outreach and single-site visits will be applied to the focal points of each school's grant to ensure successful implementation.

Director Monique Kimbell

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

MTSS Professional Learning

The MTSS Team recently participated in a PL session focused on transition meetings for fifth- and eighth-grade students as they matriculate from elementary to MS and MS to HS. A checklist, sample meeting agenda, and list of potential attendees were shared with MTSS

specialists to ensure a structured and data-driven transition process occurs. The goal is to ensure that the receiving school has the critical information needed to provide the appropriate tiered support to the student prior to the first day of school. During this session, we also collaborated with an attendance specialist to review attendance data available in the EveryDay Labs platform.

Beyond transition meetings, the district MTSS Team actively provides building-level support to administrators and MTSS specialists, including those in Horizon Schools, to align interventions with identified student needs. Collaboration efforts continue with the Division of Wrap Around Services to ensure a cohesive approach supporting student success as we merge PBIS and MTSS.

To further enhance implementation fidelity, the MTSS Team is conducting data digs to evaluate the effectiveness of the MTSS framework in schools. These ongoing efforts emphasize the importance of data-driven decision-making and interdepartmental collaboration in fostering a supportive and accessible learning environment for all students.

Additionally, the district MTSS Team continues to collaborate with the Department of Exceptional Education to address student needs, ensuring that appropriate support is in place for all learners at the school level.



Director Keatra Wright

FLEX Academy

FLEX Academy Enrollment and Program Support

FLEX Academy is currently serving 186 students during the academic day. Additionally, FLEX Academy teachers provide instructional math support to 17 MS students enrolled in Chancelight.

Extended Learning Opportunity

The Divisions of C&I and Schools and Leadership are developing SOPs for extended learning opportunities (ELO). The ELO SOPs will provide consistency of language by defining terms, aligning strategies, and standardizing enrollment criteria to effectively support HS students who require additional opportunities to be successful in courses or need an option for credit recovery.

FLEX Academy Professional Learning Day

On March 7, FLEX Academy partnered with Elizabeth Andrews HS to redeliver the Georgia ELA standards. FLEX's ELA teachers provided interactive presentations that modeled how the use of technology is an asset in the classroom.



During this professional learning, teachers participated in hands-on activities that helped teachers gain a more comprehensive understanding of the standards. This collaboration equipped the teachers with practical tools and strategies to implement the new standards effectively.

FLEX Beyond the Day

FLEX Beyond the Day supports 22 DCSD high schools by enrolling their students into initial credit courses needed for graduation. There were 417 students enrolled in session one. The student success rate for session one is as follows:

Grade	No Start	Does Not Meet	Meets
9	8.57%	28.57%	62.86%
10	7.14%	12.86%	80.00%
11	4.27%	10.26%	85.47%
12	1.06%	6.35%	92.59%

Chief Dr. Candace Alexander

Continuous and Improvement Accountability

New Levels, New Heights

Team members participate in the CSIP Leader Lab in Canvas, our learning management system. Their dedication to advancing their skills and knowledge is truly commendable, demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement and excellence.

Cross-divisional collaboration has enhanced support and feedback for leaders throughout the CSIP process. Christy Crittenden from PL created this valuable workspace, fostering a culture of cooperation and shared learning. This collaborative effort highlights the power of teamwork in achieving common goals and driving success.

The Initiative One Think Tank provided insights into diverse leadership styles and approaches to strengthen teams and build capacity for greater impact. By embracing different perspectives and working together, the team can innovate and implement effective strategies that make a significant difference.

Let's celebrate the incredible teamwork and collective efforts that have led us to new heights. Every member's contribution is vital, and through unity and collaboration, we continue to achieve remarkable progress and set new benchmarks for success.

Key Events in March 2025:

- March 11: Reality Checks for TSI schools (lowest 5 percent based on subgroup performance)
- March 14: Accountability Clinic
- March 15: Title I Math Carnival
- March 18: Visit to Clarke County schools – GLISI LIT Team
- March 20: D3 dialogue with Diedre and district leaders
- March 20-21: EduSolve sessions on federal program management strategies
- March 25: Special Olympics
- March 25: CLIP stakeholder meetings
- March 27: State of the District at Fernbank
- March 28: Federal Programs alignment

Executive Director Dr. Myisha Warren**Federal Programs****Cross-Functional Monitoring (CFM):**

On March 6, the GaDOE conducted its online comprehensive monitoring of all Federal Programs. After the day's monitoring, we received word from the CFM lead that everything went smoothly and that the information/documentation provided was well organized. We hope to receive our feedback by April 7 (typically 30 days after the monitoring day).

Annual Math Carnival:

On March 15, the Federal Programs Parent and Family Engagement Team led by Mr. Cleveland Dollison hosted our annual Math Carnival at Redan HS. There were 334 parents, families, and students who participated and enjoyed math games, along with 118 volunteers for a total 452 in total attendance.

Our volunteers were DCSD math teachers (from various schools), student advancement, Decatur Alumni Chapter Kappa Alpha Psi's Kappa League, Decatur Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Mentor Program, Redan's pilot program, and their sponsors. The volunteers assisted with concessions, game attendants, and educational giveaways. DSA, Brockett ES, and Indian Creek ES provided student-created games for this year's Math Carnival. We look forward to next year's event.

Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP):

On March 24, the Federal Programs Department hosted our annual CLIP stakeholder meetings. Stakeholders could attend a virtual session at 10:00 a.m. and an in-person session at 6:00 p.m. in the AIC boardroom. Stakeholders had the opportunity to provide input on how all federal funds the district received should be spent. There were 501 online registrations, with 341 in virtual attendance and 15 in in-person attendance.

On-Going Work:

- Title I coordinators, accounting associates, and budget specialists continued meeting with public, private, and charter school staff to discuss the items listed below. These items are reviewed to ensure alignment with the strategic plan and goals created within the CSIP:
 - CSIPs
 - Open purchase orders
 - Travel
 - FY25 budgets
 - Tutorial
 - Spending
 - Ongoing training

- The Title I Team presented at the March 14 Accountability Clinics on *Springing into Summer* with the following agenda items:
 - Spending deadlines
 - Progress monitoring cycle 2
 - Professional learning
 - Travel reminders
 - Tutorial
- The Title I coordinators have begun working with their schools to complete the FY25 amendments and carryover for schoolwide, schoolwide parent and family engagement, and school improvement set-aside budgets.
- OFP continued to review, approve, and verify extra activity packets and stipends throughout February. The funding sources were Title I and Title II.
- The ESSER Team continued working on:
 - The Department of Audits meeting and information for the FY24 audit

CSIP

- All calibration meetings and training are completed.
- The individual school technical support will begin March 24 – April 4.
- The schedule is set, and divisions are ready to support

Comparability

One school is still not comparable. Additional staff members were identified and submitted to the state. We submitted the final staffing information to the GaDOE.

- Bouie – Comparable
- **Narvie – Not Comparable**
- Shadow Rock – Comparable
- Woodridge – Comparable

Director Dr. Felicia Rhone

Assessment and Accountability

SAT School Day for Juniors

The Spring 2025 SAT School Day Administration for juniors was March 19. A total of 22 schools participated, and 4,653 juniors tested. The make-up administration date was March 24, and an additional 464 juniors were assessed on the SAT, for a total of 5,117 juniors (83 percent) participating in the SAT School Day Administration.

SAT School Day Participation by School for Juniors

School Name	Students Registered	Test Started
Arabia Mountain High School	278	274
Cedar Grove High School	235	176
Chamblee Charter High School	410	369
Clarkston High School	262	207
Columbia High School	229	197
Cross Keys High School	377	276
DeKalb Alternative High School	13	5
DeKalb Early College Academy	69	57
DeKalb School of the Arts	64	64
Druid Hills High School	332	238
Dunwoody High School	461	352
Elizabeth Andrews High School	190	51
Lakeside High School	492	433
Lithonia High School	303	257
Martin Luther King Junior High School	344	307
McNair High School	145	128
Miller Grove High School	264	248
Redan High School	279	255
Stephenson High School	315	295
Stone Mountain High School	274	227
Towers High School	172	142
Tucker High School	349	321
Southwest DeKalb High School	284	212
Tapestry Public Charter School	36	26
Total	6,177	5,117

Georgia Milestone EOC

Fifteen high schools participated in the March mid-month administration March 10 -14. The March administration was the final EOC mid-month administration for spring 2025.

MAP Assessments

MAP® Growth™ and Reading Fluency™ assessments are effectively used across all grade levels. On-site support for Horizon Schools, Area 3 Elementary Schools, and select middle schools concluded in late February following the winter review. The spring review meetings are scheduled to occur March 25 through April 30, with a temporary pause for the administration of the Georgia Milestones Assessments until May 15.

The final administration of the universal screener, MAP Growth™, for the spring assessment window commenced on March 17. This window will officially close on March 28.

At the midpoint of the testing window, assessment completion rates are as follows:

- Mathematics: 57,043 students tested
- Reading: 54,428 students tested (grades K-10)
- Language Usage: 37,895 students tested (grades 3-10)
- Science: 29,163 students tested (grades 3-8)

To further support students with disabilities, a specialized training session titled Exploring the Learning Continuum was conducted on March 20 at Martin Luther King Jr. HS for lead teachers of SPED. This professional development session provided strategies for integrating MAP Growth insights into instructional planning and student support. The key learning objectives included:

- Aligning the learning continuum with instructional units within the curriculum.
- Utilizing domain- and subdomain-specific data to inform effective instructional planning.
- Developing actionable steps to incorporate additional MAP Growth reports into curriculum development and individualized student support strategies.

This structured approach ensures that educators maximize the impact of MAP Growth data, fostering targeted instruction and enhanced student outcomes.

MAP Reading Fluency

Northwest Evaluation Association MAP® Reading Fluency™ is actively utilized by kindergarten through third-grade students, providing targeted literacy support. As part of this program, students engage with AI Tutor Maya using the coach function embedded within the platform. To optimize skill development, students dedicate 30 minutes per week, spread across multiple days, to working with coach.

Teachers must submit data from the Student Tracking Report to school administrators to ensure effective implementation and accountability. This data is then compiled into a shared folder for systematic monitoring and instructional support.

The next and final administration of MAP Reading Fluency™ for the academic year is scheduled for March 31 to April 18. There will be no testing during Spring Break, April 7-11.

Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA)

A special training was held on March 25 for 20 GAA teachers. The spring 2025 test administration window opened on March 24. There are 847 students scheduled to test during the spring administration window. These 847 students will generate 3,054 scheduled test sessions. As of March 27, the district shows 23 percent of tests completed.

GaDOE Organization Status

	Scheduled	Complete	In Progress	Not Started	Percent Complete	Percent Remaining
DeKalb County-644	3,054	711	187	2,156	23%	77%

On March 27, the GaDOE sent an email stating an error in the HS social studies and the fourth-grade ELA booklets. Currently, four elementary students were administered the incorrect assessments, and one HS student was administered the incorrect assessment. These irregularities were reported to the state of Georgia. We are currently waiting on the errata sheets. Once they arrive in the district, these corrected sheets will be routed out to the affected schools.

GaDOE is still reviewing the irregularities from the 11 schools following the spring 2024 GAA forensic analysis.

Professional Learning

Georgia Milestones Training – Elementary and MS school test coordinators (STC) participated in the spring 2025 Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS) End-of-Grade (EOG) workshop on March 25 and 26, respectively, to prepare for the upcoming administrations. High school STCs participated in the spring 2025 GMAS end-of-course (EOC) on March 27.



The assessment director and coordinators conducted the following trainings:

- End of Pathway Assessments Workshop (March 7)
- GAA 2.0 Pre-Administration Workshop for all schools (March 5)
- EOG Pre-Administration Workshop for Elementary Schools (March 25)
- EOG Pre-Administration Workshop for Middle Schools (March 26)
- EOC Pre-Administration Workshop for Middle and High Schools (March 26-27)
- GAA 2.0 Test Examiner Workshop
- Gifted Alternate Assessment Administration (March 28)

The assessment director and coordinators attended the following GaDOE trainings:

- WIDA Webinar – ACCESS Data Validation
- GaDOE Georgia Milestones EOG/EOC Test Set Up and Pre-Administration Summer/Spring 2025 Workshop
- GaDOE March 2025 Assessment Lunch and Learn

Director Dr. Rebecca Braaten

Research, Data, and Evaluation

Research Review Board

The department processed three research requests for the spring review cycle. Of those three, two were doctoral research projects, and one was a local school proposal. There are now seven research proposals to be reviewed during the spring review cycle.

District Data Dashboards

The [CCRPI Climate STAR Ratings public-facing dashboard](#) has been updated and published on the district website.

Surveys and Online Forms

The department processed 12 electronic online document requests. Of those 12, nine were online forms, two were event/training feedback surveys, and one was a stakeholder survey. The electronic online documents were created for the following divisions/departments:

- Assessment Administration
- Athletics
- Community Engagement and Innovative Partnerships
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Federal Programs
- Grants and Partnerships
- Human Resources
- Professional Development

Professional Development

Research, Data, and Evaluation held several training and support sessions in March:

1. Beginning and Intermediate Excel sessions on March 3, 6, 24, 28, and 31 – District leaders and school-level Leadership Team members
2. Five Ways to Improve K-12 School Climate at the Spring PAC Cross Council on March 6 – School leaders and PAC members
3. Two Cluster Reality Checks for newly identified TSI Horizon schools on March 11

4. State reporting attendance versus the CCRPI attendance indicator at the Schools and Leadership LLO on March 12 – Area superintendents, executive administrators, executive directors, and directors
5. Live Data Verification and Discipline Progress Monitoring dashboard at the Monthly Accountability Clinic on March 14 – District leaders and school-level Leadership Team members
6. GKIDS Readiness, Milestones, and Graduation data presentation at district CLIP virtual and in-person meetings on March 25

Data Requests

The department has completed 23 data and dashboard projects for both internal and external stakeholders. These projects encompass various data types, including attendance records, disciplinary records, student demographics, student grades, and results from local, state, and national assessments.

Additionally, interactive dashboards are continually updated to monitor course completion across various programs, including elementary and MS social-emotional learning courses, elementary career lessons, middle and HS BRIDGE law courses, and GAEarns professional development literacy courses. Our Data Team is also working on projects related to monitoring at-risk populations, including homeless students, foster care youth, and FACE mentees. We are developing real-time data tools for tracking HS credits and comparative monthly attendance and discipline.

As the district prepares for EOG and EOC milestone assessments, our department provides data insights to schools and district leaders who are actively working to improve student outcomes. Lastly, we remain committed to supporting our charter schools by providing data reporting and insights to help them achieve their mission.

Chief Information Officer Dr. Kermit Belcher

Department of Information and Instructional Technology

Always Learning

DeKalb County Schools is pleased to announce that, beginning in the summer of 2025, all student and staff instructional devices will be replaced as part of the district's four-year technology replacement cycle. Through this initiative, every DeKalb County student will receive a new Chromebook, ensuring improved access to modern, reliable technology that enhances learning and instruction. Up-to-date devices will give students faster performance and greater access to online instructional resources. This upgrade will also support digital literacy, encourage collaboration, and help prepare students for college and career readiness in an increasingly technology-driven world. Teachers will benefit from enhanced tools to create engaging lessons and facilitate interactive learning experiences. The district extends its gratitude to the DeKalb County BOE and Superintendent Dr. Horton for their continued commitment to providing the best educational resources for students and staff.

Network Modernization

The district is undertaking a comprehensive network modernization initiative to support the growing demands of digital learning and administrative operations. This multi-phase approach aims to enhance connectivity, security, and overall network performance, ensuring a seamless and reliable technology experience for students, educators, and staff.

The first phase of the network modernization initiative focuses on upgrading core infrastructure components, including network switches, advanced cabling, and wireless access points. These enhancements lay the foundation for a faster, more reliable, and scalable network, ensuring seamless connectivity for students, educators, and staff. Upgrading switches increases network capacity and efficiency, reducing bottlenecks and improving overall performance. Advanced cabling supports higher data transfer speeds and future-proofs the district's infrastructure for emerging technologies. Meanwhile, deploying next-generation wireless access points expands coverage, enhances device connectivity, and enables a more robust digital learning environment, supporting key initiatives like Always Learning.

The second phase of network modernization centers on enhancing redundancy, stability, and security to create a resilient and highly available infrastructure. Implementing failover solutions ensures continuous network operations, minimizing disruptions caused by outages. A firewall upgrade will strengthen cybersecurity defenses, safeguarding sensitive data while improving network traffic management. Enhanced awareness, reporting, and communication capabilities will provide greater visibility into network performance, enabling proactive issue resolution and informed decision-making. This phase will reinforce the district's commitment to delivering a secure, high-performance network that supports the evolving needs of students and educators.

Manager Natalie Terrell

Project Management Office

Digitized Records Program

The proof of concept has begun with HR being the targeted group. A total of 1,001 boxes have been collected for scanning. The team is working on workflow processes as this phase in the project is being implemented.



Cloud-based Managed Print Services Project



This project is **complete!!**

Executive Director Dr. Kyia Clark and Manager III Terri Webb

Information and Innovation/Instructional Technology

2025 FUSE Cohort V

2025 “Let’s Get Digital” with Work-Based Learning Conference

Instructional Technology is excited to support our class of 2025 work-based learning seniors as they prepare to venture to their next path beyond HS, focusing on this year’s theme, “You’re Future, Your Way...Take Action.” We provided our Digital Dreamers with digital citizenship guidelines to audit their current social media profiles and build their digital branding while learning best practices for creating professional headshots and digital profiles on LinkedIn. With a clean digital footprint, we look forward to what the future holds for our Digital Dreamers.



Executive Director Glenn Melendez

Enterprise Applications and Data Services

Digital Resource and Technology Request Process

DCSD reinforces its leadership in technology by prioritizing integrating 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, ensuring alignment with district goals and maximizing 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.”

A streamlined workflow intake process has also been established to ensure all technology requests are systematically reviewed and prioritized. Users can 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

This initiative represents a new benchmark for digital engagement and website modernization for the district. The modernization initiative will deliver a dynamic, user-friendly website that reflects our district's commitment to innovation and excellence. This design will be informed by community surveys and focus groups led by the district's Communications Division.

As of March 2025, this effort has begun planning, and website design sessions are underway.

Data Governance

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.

The Data Governance Committee continues to make significant strides in advancing our district's data management framework. The Policy Sub-Committee has provided critical input on developing a comprehensive data management policy, ensuring alignment with best practices and district priorities. Key focus areas include clearly defining a data management policy with purpose, roles and responsibilities, data ownership, sharing protocols, AI

governance, and retention policies that align with regulatory requirements. During this reporting period, a draft policy was reviewed by a professional services firm, Gartner Inc., to align with industry best practices.

In parallel, the committee is actively enhancing our district's ability to identify and prioritize digital resources that yield the greatest impact on student outcomes. To date, we have begun analyzing select digital platforms, including iReady (reading and math), IXL, iStation, and BrainPOP, to determine effectiveness in advancing learning for our students.

We are finalizing our initial proof of concept during this reporting period using the digital resources identified above. The analysis has been shared with district leadership for input, and final revisions are being incorporated. Additionally, the district has identified a second round of high-priority digital resources for impact and utilization analysis. Data collection for this phase began in March, marking the next step in our ongoing efforts to enhance data-driven decision-making around digital resource effectiveness.

The one-year goal for this effort is to identify digital resources with the greatest impact on student outcomes in mathematics, science, ELA, and social studies. As part of this effort, external factors that may contribute to improved student outcomes, beyond the digital resources themselves, may need to be vetted.

These efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to data-driven decision-making and ensuring that our investments in digital learning platforms drive meaningful improvements in student achievement.

Director Eric Logan

Information and Network Security

Welcome, Dr. Shanique Worthey!

This month, we welcomed Dr. Shanique Worthey to the Information Security Team as the inaugural security awareness and engagement manager. This new role is responsible for developing, implementing, and managing the district's security awareness program that targets not only k-12 students but also district employees and community partners. Working closely with Mr. Logan, Dr. Worthey will be responsible for crafting training materials, organizing awareness campaigns, and assessing the program's effectiveness, along with creating metrics and reporting based on regular risk analysis of the district's cyber security posture.

Dr. Worthey will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience from her previous role with the Instructional Technology Team.

Active Directory (AD) Vulnerability Assessment

This was delayed because of recent events and a revision to the statement of work before beginning the engagement. We are expecting to kick off this engagement in early April. Again, this assessment focuses on identifying insecure AD configurations that attackers can exploit. Additionally, this assessment is designed to provide actionable recommendations to improve the overall security posture of DCSD's AD environment.

Asset Discovery and Visibility Proof of Concept

This project kicked off in March, and we are in the final stages of confirming some configuration requirements. The vendor will send two collectors, who will allow us to begin evaluating the product once it is approved by change management. 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 our environment along with improved visibility, contextual intelligence, risk insights, and vulnerability prioritization. The POC will last 6-8 weeks.