



Academic Report – June 2025

Chief Dr. Triscilla Weaver

Access and Opportunity

This month, we finalized the **Field Trip Guidance** document, enabling us to officially close out **MIRACLES Priority**. After completing all final reviews, we submitted the document to the Senior Cabinet members. Moving forward, our focus will shift to implementation logistics—specifically, ensuring a shared understanding of the document components among school-based leaders.

As part of our continued efforts to share the findings from the **Access and Opportunity Audit** with district and school-based leaders, we facilitated presentations for principals and assistant principals from each area during the **Summer Leadership Conference**. We also had the opportunity to present the findings to members of the **Curriculum and Instruction Division**. These engagement efforts will continue throughout July with various district-level departments.

Following the Summer Leadership Conference, our division participated in the **Access and Opportunity Division Retreat**, which provided an opportunity for our department to learn alongside our fellow division members. Conference facilitators guided us through learning experiences designed to deepen our commitment to **H-PRIDE**. The overarching theme, *“Who you are is how you lead,”* prompted meaningful reflection on how we can strengthen our interpersonal interactions, communication, and leadership practices.

Executive Director Myss Johnson-Jelks

Athletics

The month of June has been full of preparation for the upcoming school year. I’ve met with our Operations and Facilities teams to close out the current year and review both major projects and routine maintenance scheduled for the summer. We’ve been working diligently to complete Standard Operating Procedures and finalize major plans for Athletics for the 2025-2026 school year.

Throughout the month, we’ve hosted several camps and clinics for elementary, middle, and high school students across various sports. I also had the opportunity to attend the district Leadership Retreat, followed by the Access and Opportunity Division Retreat. These gatherings allowed our department to collaborate and grow alongside our colleagues across the division.

Additionally, I attended the Athletics Facilities Summit in Austin, Texas, where I gained valuable insights and connected with professionals in the field. The experience provided fresh ideas and perspectives that will support our continued growth and innovation in Athletics.

Director Brandan Lane**Athletics**

Throughout June, I have worked closely with our partners at Northside Hospital to ensure we are ready to place athletic trainers at all 19 high schools for the upcoming school year. These efforts have included evaluating staffing models, assessing individual school needs, and making sure support systems are aligned for effective implementation. Internally, I've collaborated with our staff and Executive Director to enhance our best practices, revise and update our standard operating procedures (SOPs), and ensure our policies reflect current district priorities and compliance standards. Also, the Executive Director and I continue to collaborate with Facilities and Operations to ensure that our sites are safe and up-to-date, prioritizing student safety above all else.

Additionally, I attended a professional conference in Austin, where I networked with directors and educational leaders from across the country. I also participated in the district-wide leadership conference and the divisional leadership retreat, both of which provided deep insight into effective leadership strategies and priorities for the upcoming year. The insight I gained will help form improvements within our department. I've also been actively involved in multiple district-hosted athletic camps, including those at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, where I help facilitate operations and ensure everything runs smoothly. I've also engaged with several potential community partners who have expressed strong interest in supporting our athletic programs and furthering opportunities for growth and innovation within the district.

Director Kina M. Champion**School Innovation**

In June, the School Innovation Department prioritized several key activities related to the oversight and management of charter schools. This included completing end-of-year, district-mandated tasks for schools' special education programs and state grants; responding to information requests related to the ongoing Georgia authorizer evaluation; and partnering with the Finance Department to prepare the initial allocations for FY26 for charter schools. Additionally, the department met with leadership from both DeKalb PATH Academy and DeKalb Preparatory Academy to review progress on their respective corrective action plans. The FY26 Department Services Guide for charter schools was revised and finalized for publication during the week of June 30, 2025. The team also collaborated with the Accounting Department to launch a new general billing system to support charter schools' buy-back services. Finally, a proposal was submitted for the 2025 Annual Convening of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA).

In preparation for the 2025–2026 Innovative Solutions Lab (ISL) cycle, the team launched several initiatives to support a successful rollout. Updates were made to the ISL website, promotional materials were refreshed, and slide decks were revised to reflect current priorities. Information sessions were scheduled to engage prospective applicants and provide insight into the upcoming cycle. To further support applicants, the department facilitated a professional learning session for

district staff on June 24, 2025, titled “Unlocking Tools for Strategic Problem Solving: Situation Appraisal.” The session was designed to help educators refine their ability to identify and define problems of practice, laying the foundation for stronger ISL project proposals. In addition, the team formally closed out all remaining projects from the 2024–2025 ISL cohorts, laying the groundwork for more impactful project proposals.

The School Governance team increased efforts to recruit candidates for the Principal Advisory Council (PAC) elections and completed final compliance checks for all schools. Preparations were also finalized for the summer orientation sessions for new principals, focused on PAC elections, compliance requirements, and expectations for meaningful engagement. Two virtual sessions and one in-person session will be offered to ensure accessibility for all attendees. Lastly, the department continued to collaborate with the leadership of Kittredge Magnet School, Freedom Middle School, and Tapestry Public Charter School in preparation for their Fall 2025 Spotlight Schools visits, which will highlight innovative practices in implementing the Six Essential Systems.

Executive Director Sarita Smith

Student Assignment

This month, we launched the SAP Summer Institute, comprised of leaders from all divisions and several SAP members. We will use this team as practice for the fall and to test some of the ideas from SAP, evaluating their guiding principles. We also closed out the “SAP at a Glance” [video](#) for the year; we will resume in the fall. Family and community surveys are back and will be posted online on the SAP [website](#). We have secured locations and dates for the FY 25/26 SAP committee and are updating our timeline based on the information shared at the board meeting. We have welcomed new members and completed the third onboarding session, with one more scheduled for July.

CLEAR is here, and we are learning a great deal. We completed a district-wide CLEAR run for all DCSD families. Using the data, we began developing a pilot year process to ensure families have the correct address in the system. We plan to share misaligned address information with all families by mid-July. Families will have until September to appeal or meet with our team about the address verification process. We are not relocating any students out of schools, but we are updating the addresses in the student information system to ensure accurate mapping of boundaries for student assignment. This will enable students to transition into the correct school for the FY26/27 school year.

Director Dr. Char-Shenda Covington

Student Assignment

In June, the Student Assignment team continued its efforts to increase access and opportunity as well as focus on family-centered service by launching four summer registration hubs at John Lewis Elementary, Martin Luther King Jr. High, McNair Middle, and Smoke Rise Elementary. We also provided Saturday hours at John Lewis and MLK Jr. High to help families during the pre-registration period. Additionally, we created an all-in-one Principals Playbook that succinctly outlines school choice policies and processes. The playbook will provide principals with an easy-to-

use resource to guide their work and support a consistent application of enrollment procedures across schools and families.

To begin preparing for the 2025–2026 school year, the Office of Student Assignment has already started the transition process to move from its previous lottery platform to SchoolMint, based on data and feedback from families who struggled to access and use the last platform. We have also started creating a calendar for FY26. In the process of completing this task, we have engaged in reflection on our planning process, identifying the need for improved collaboration with our partners in the Department of Finance. We have begun meeting with Talent Acquisition Managers to enhance our understanding and align the interpretation of the Employee Student Transfer Regulation JBCC(E). This team achieved a significant goal by completing our MIRACLES priorities, highlighted by the following key accomplishments: aligning the lottery process with the staffing and funding planning timeline and creating summer registration hubs.

Executive Director Dr. Loukisha Walker

Student Mentorship & Partnerships

In June, I had the opportunity to attend the DCSD Summer Leadership Conference, a thought-provoking and reflective experience that brought together educational leaders from across the district. The conference featured both internal and external keynote speakers who shared insights on leadership, literacy, district accomplishments, and the importance of aligning vision with action. Sessions encouraged leaders to examine their personal values and impact on students, staff, and the broader school community. The conference provided a meaningful space to realign goals and prepare for the upcoming school year with renewed purpose. I also participated in the Access and Opportunity Leadership Summit, which focused on the human-centered skills necessary for effective leadership and advocacy. Key areas of growth included strategies for delivering exceptional customer service, maintaining composure and tone during conflict, practicing reflective listening, and engaging in constructive feedback conversations. These sessions not only reinforced the importance of emotional intelligence in educational leadership but also aligned with SMP's mission to support students and staff with empathy, consistency, and professionalism.

SMP also worked to secure an MOU with another partner to utilize for FACETIME activities. Additionally, we have completed multiple mural projects as part of our Climate Improvement Project. Due to time constraints, we requested additional funding from finance to support the branding projects associated with the CIP. They will be able to begin installation in July 2025. The MIRACLES priority associated with FACE Advocates was closed, and we successfully demonstrated the effectiveness of FACE Advocates and the value they bring to DCSD.

Chief Dr. Candace Alexander**Accountability and Research****Horizon Back-to-Basics Summer 2025 Retreat**

On June 2, 2025, the Division of Accountability & Research proudly supported the Back-to-Basics Summer Retreat—a powerful launch designed to equip school leaders and teachers with the content, strategies, and systems needed to start the 2025–2026 school year strong. I led the Day 1 closing session, grounding participants in the theme “Driving Improvement Through Insight.” The message underscored the Division’s commitment to providing accurate data, aligned support, and actionable tools to accelerate learning and close opportunity gaps. With a clear mission and three guiding principles—Focus, Excellence, and Urgency—leaders were inspired to return to what matters most: reading, writing, and math. The energy and clarity of purpose set the tone for a year rooted in intentional leadership and equitable outcomes.

2025 Summer Leadership Conference

This year’s Summer Leadership Conference adopted the theme of ‘Mission Possible,’ and the Division of Accountability & Research fully embraced the spirit of the moment. Representing our commitment to Focus on Impact, our team showed up in full stealth mode—dressed in all black with sunglasses—ready for a covert operation. On Tuesday morning, when Code Name: Tasmanian Devon activated the mission, we stood and delivered three of our MIRACLES priorities for the 2025–2026 school year. With the team, we shared our priorities and embraced the mission.

2025 Cabinet Retreat – Leading Through Change

I was honored to be invited to guide our Cabinet team through a dedicated session on change management during the 2025 Cabinet Retreat. Working alongside Superintendent Dr. Devon Q. Horton and Champion Dillard, we explore what it truly means to lead change with purpose and precision. Using the “Leading Through Change” framework, we unpacked leadership styles, root causes of resistance, and the six phases of sustainable change. Together, we reflected on the importance of balancing people, process, and purpose to achieve long-term transformation. This session was not just a presentation—it was a call to action for all of us to model intentional leadership, build trust, and align our work with the district’s equity-centered mission.

Executive Director Dr. Myisha Warren**Federal Programs****Summer Professional Learning**

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

Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP)

The district is currently revising the CLIP based on updated data and stakeholder feedback.

- May 30 - June 16 – Cabinet and district leadership will provide feedback and revisions to finalize the CLIP documents.
- June 17 – June 30 – CSIP committee will finalize revisions and send to the GaDOE

Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP)

- May – June, schools are addressing the district feedback in Canvas Module 3 and making potential revisions.
- June – July 15 Areas and Federal Programs review and finalize CSIP approvals

Literacy (Lit) Camp

This summer's Literacy Camp was a tremendous success across all seven of our sites! We had the privilege of supporting an incredible team of educators who brought energy, creativity, and heart to each of the seven camp locations. Students at every site experienced an engaging and joyful learning environment where reading came to life through hands-on activities, collaborative projects, and meaningful discussions. The students' academic and social growth was genuinely inspiring. Families, staff, and students consistently expressed their enjoyment of the experience.

We are proud that our Literacy Camp is consistently recognized as one of the most impactful and well-loved summer programs in the DeKalb County School District. Year after year, we strive to create meaningful, memorable experiences, and this summer is no exception.

All the school surveys were completed (teachers, students, and site administrators). We do not have all the parents' data yet because we always keep the parent survey window open for at least two weeks. Here are some of the verbal feedback received:

Excellent! Best program ever! Always organized! I loved Lit Camp! Absolutely love all the Literacy Camp resources (Scholastic books, The EduMat backpack instructional supplies, and teacher supplies). Well organized despite the transportation challenges. Several teachers at each site shared that they only work at Lit Camp because, hands down, it is the best district-run program compared to other district-run programs.

We had 1,100 applications, with daily attendance varying from 385 to 551.

We're already looking ahead with excitement about what next year will bring!

Parent & Family Engagement (PFE)

Title I Spring Parent & Family Engagement Professional Learning:

On June 3 & 4, 2025, the Title I Parent Center Facilitators presented an empowering PL Session at Henderson Middle School. The 2025 Summer Professional Learning welcomed over 35 attendees committed to strengthening Parent and Family Engagement (PFE) across the district. The workshop featured innovative sessions, such as "Empowering Engagement Through Microsoft 365

Tools for PFE," where participants explored strategies to enhance communication and parent outreach.

Attendees learned to leverage marketing tools through Canva and unlock the full potential of their school websites as gateways to family engagement. Additional sessions focused on identifying barriers to family involvement and developing actionable strategies to increase participation. Participants actively collaborated on creating site-specific Family Engagement Plans designed to build parent capacity and foster meaningful partnerships within their school communities.

Title I & Title II Updates

Coordinators, Accounting Associates, and Budget Specialists met with staff from public, private, and charter schools to discuss the following items. They reviewed these items to ensure they align with the Strategic Plan and the goals set in the Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP).

- Open Purchase Orders
- Summer Travel
- Summer Tutorial Programs
- Spending Closeout
- Ongoing Training
- Planning for FY26

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

Director Dr. Felicia Rhone

Assessment and Accountability

Gifted Identification Saturday Administration Plans

We have established preliminary schools for administering the CogAT and Iowa assessments. Transportation identified five regions, each with three schools, for a total of 15 schools per Saturday administration. Some changes were recommended as the team considered various scenarios for students, including travel concerns and language barriers. We will be reaching out to transportation for their expert opinions regarding the new options.

The decision was made to reduce the number of students testing on the first Saturday administration (October 25) to serve as a pilot. Instead of 200 students at each site, the number would be reduced to 75 students at each site for the October 25, 2025, administration.

Security will be provided at each site. Elementary Security will be at each elementary site, and either a campus supervisor or SRO will be present at each middle and/or high school site.

2025 Spring Georgia Milestone

Preliminary System Data Files, Class Rosters, ISRs, and Teacher Reports for all spring EOCs are

available in the DRC platform, allowing schools to finalize grades and engage in data-driven decision-making. Summary reports are embargoed. GaDOE expects to release Final System Data Files and Final Individual and Summary Reports on July 22. Final Individual Student Reports will be available on August 15. Schools have been informed that due to the adoption of Georgia's K-12 ELA standards, the new Georgia Milestones ELA assessments will be administered beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. Because Part I of the latest assessment for ELA will include short audio and video files, schools will need to have an adequate number of headphones on site.

Advanced Placement (AP) Exams

Across DCSD, we had a total of 6,357 students with 12,276 enrollments in AP classes. DeKalb administered a total of 9,065 AP exams. AP score reports will be released online starting July 7, 2025, and will be accessible via College Board professional accounts. Various reports will be accessible to AP teachers, school administrators, and district administrators. Reports that will be available include Subject Score Rosters, Student Score Reports, Instructional Planning Reports, Organization Score Rosters, and Summary Reports.

Summer Georgia Milestone EOC

The window for the summer administration opened on June 23, 2025, and will close on June 26, 2025. School test coordinators participated in virtual training on June 4, 2025, and redelivered their school-level training on June 18, 2025. Across all DCSD high schools, a total of 136 registrations have been set up for students to take the test. Final testing numbers will be available after the window closes.

Director Dr. Rebecca Braaten

Research, Data, and Evaluation

Research Review Board

The department processed twenty-one (21) research requests during the spring 2025 review cycle. Of the twenty-one (21), seventeen (17) were doctoral research proposals, three (3) were from external agencies, and one (1) was a local school research proposal.

The Research Review Board (RRB) approved nine (9) proposals and denied eight (8) proposals. The four (4) remaining proposals are still pending. Of the four (4) remaining, one (1) was an incomplete submission, one (1) is working on an MOU, and two (2) were late submissions and are currently being reviewed.

Surveys and Online Forms

The department processed ten (10) electronic online document requests during June. Of those ten (10), eight (8) were online registration/application forms, one (1) was an event/training feedback survey, and one (1) was a stakeholder survey. The electronic online documents were requested by the following divisions/departments:

- Assessment Administration

- Athletics
- Leadership Development
- Schools & Leadership
- Tucker HS

Training

Rebecca Braaten and Joseph Benford facilitated three (3) sessions at the Back 2 Basics Horizon Area Summer Retreat on June 3 and 4, 2025. The session title was Georgia Spotlight Schools: High-Poverty Schools that are Raising the Bar. In the session, three themes across the thirty-four (34) schools were discussed. John Hattie's research was connected to the four (4) Professional Learning Community (PLC) questions, and participants received a PLC question-related template resource book to use next school year. The three (3) themes across the Georgia Spotlight Schools were 1) Data-driven decision-making, 2) Collaborative leadership and capacity building, and 3) Small group instruction.

Data Requests

As we concluded the 2024-2025 school year, the department completed eight (8) data and dashboard projects for both internal and external stakeholders. These projects encompass various types of data, including attendance records, disciplinary records, student demographics, student grades, and results from local, state, and national assessments.

During June, interactive dashboards were finalized for end-of-year reporting of district initiatives across various programs, including elementary and middle school social-emotional learning courses, elementary career lessons, middle and high school BRIDGE law courses, school innovation lab programs, student mentoring programs, and GAEarns professional development literacy course completion. We also provided data to external partnerships, such as the Communities in Schools and 21st Century Community Learning Grant programs, as well as data related to the gifted program evaluation (audit).

To support district summer events, such as the Area Horizon Conference, Summer Leadership Conference, and DeKalb Excellence in Education Conference, the department created interactive digital guides using the Glide development platform. To build capacity in others, we provided Glide application development training for district departments, as requested.

Our department is collaborating with district and school leaders, program directors, and administrators to deliver end-of-year data that will help them assess the impact and effectiveness of their programs during the 2024-2025 school year.

Chief Stacy E. Stepney

Curriculum and Instruction

Throughout June, the division's focus was on examining practices, analyzing data, aligning budget priorities, identifying the 2025-2026 Miracles' priorities, and facilitating professional development sessions that built capacity for teachers, academic coaches, and school-based leaders. Educators across the district participated in a series of professional development sessions designed to deepen their understanding of the new English Language Arts standards, enhance instructional strategies in mathematics, and strengthen literacy practices across content areas. With our intentional focus on school improvement, these targeted sessions provided grade-specific and/or content-specific information to improve teaching and learning practices.

Academic Coaches

June was a productive and impactful month for the Academic Coach Senior Coordinators (ACSCs). The team successfully planned and facilitated the 2025 Summer Coaching Institute, held June 2–3 at the Georgia Piedmont Technical College DeKalb Conference Center. The event welcomed over 165 participants and featured collaboration with MetroRESA, the Department of Professional Learning, and senior content coordinators. Each group led breakout sessions, and academic coaches also submitted proposals, which were selected for presentation. Survey feedback showed an impressive 97.4% approval rating for the sessions.

Immediately following the institute, ACSCs supported the Horizon Area Retreat. Their roles included assisting with registration, managing sign-in and sign-out procedures, providing technical support for coaching conversations with principals, and participating in various sessions.

In addition, the team played a key role in the Summer Leadership Conference by serving on the logistics and support team. ACSCs handled registration, welcomed attendees, supported presenters, and provided assistance to keynote speakers. Team members also partnered with colleagues from Teaching and Learning to present updates on the ELA standards for principals.

Beyond these significant events, ACSCs were present at various Area Retreats and represented the district at GaDOE MathCon and the Teaching and Learning Conference.

Currently, there are 221 academic coach positions. The chart below provides the number of coaches, vacancies, and new coaches by area.

Area	No. of Coaches	No. of Vacancies	No. of New Coaches
Area Elementary 1	5	7	5
Area Elementary 2	15	6	4
Area Elementary 3	16	3	3
Area Middle Schools	41	4	21
Area High Schools	33	6	15

Area Horizon	67	8	47
Area Specialty	10	0	7
Totals	187	34	102

Literacy - Excellence in Education

The DeKalb County School District's Division of Curriculum and Instruction proudly participated in the *Excellence in Education* panel discussion, centered on the documentary *"The Right to Read,"* which highlighted the urgent need for equitable literacy instruction. As panelists, Dr. Penny Mosley and Dr. Zack Phillips, reflected on the film's central message—that reading is a civil right—and emphasized the critical role of schools in addressing disparities in reading outcomes. The discussion highlighted key perspectives from educators, parents, specialists, and policy leaders, exploring shifts in instructional practices, challenges in implementation, and the systemic barriers that hinder progress. Leaders underscored the importance of evidence-based reading instruction, early identification of students at risk, and the need for sustained community and policy support. The event served as a call to action for the DeKalb community to unite in advancing early literacy, advocating for teacher training, and building partnerships that ensure every child has the opportunity to read proficiently.



Deputy Chief Dr. Sean R. Tartt

Curriculum and Instruction

AVID

During June, local and district AVID teams traveled to various destinations to participate in the annual AVID Summer Institute. Teams were actively engaged in sessions focused on the effective use of the AVID elective across all grade bands. Schools were able to learn and share ideas with peers from all across the country. Site leaders, teachers, and district leadership participated in practical learning opportunities to embed WICOR strategies and AVID throughout the school. All school teams took advantage of the time earmarked for team play to discuss a strategic and effective implementation of AVID.

Summer Learning Programs

DCSD engaged students in an assortment of summer learning offerings that stimulated and supported learners across the district. Students in PreK3 through 12th grade enrolled and participated in academic academies, enrichment camps, work-based learning trades, credit recovery, and tutoring. Many of the summer learning programs concluded on June 30, and stakeholders were given the opportunity to share valuable feedback with the committee via a survey. We encourage all DCSD learners to keep their passion for learning elevated high, while

enjoying all the fun things that summertime has to offer. Lastly, we are assisting all program leads with payroll documentation and completion.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Penny Mosley

P-5

Scholars Academy

During the summer of 2025, the DeKalb County School District provided academic support to over 1,000 rising 3rd through 8th-grade students through its Scholars Academy Summer Program, held at 18 different sites. Designed to run from June 4 to 18, Monday through Friday, the program offered an engaging and enriching experience tailored to accelerate learning and strengthen foundational skills. Students participated in daily lessons in English Language Arts (ELA)/Reading and Mathematics, while also benefiting from a well-rounded curriculum that included Health/Physical Education (PE) and Music and/or Visual Arts. This districtwide initiative reflects DeKalb's commitment to elevating student achievement and ensuring all learners are prepared for academic success in the upcoming school year.

Amira

DeKalb County School District has partnered with Amira as the district's official K-3 reading and dyslexia screener to strengthen early literacy efforts and ensure equitable support for all students. As part of the district's commitment to evidence-based practices, the Amira platform will be used to assess foundational reading skills and identify students at risk for reading difficulties, including characteristics of dyslexia. To support successful implementation, the Amira team facilitated a professional learning session during the Summer Leadership Conference, providing school and district leaders with a comprehensive overview of the screener. This session served as a critical launch point to jumpstart literacy instruction across all elementary schools and align screening practices with the district's broader academic goals.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Rose Prejean-Harris

6-12

Summer Planning and Professional Learning Collaboration

This summer, educators from across the district participated in a series of dynamic planning sessions and professional learning collaborations designed to enhance instructional practices and align them with the new ELA standards. The highlight of these efforts was the Summer Leadership Conference, where educators gathered to share insights and strategies for the upcoming academic year.

The conference featured a comprehensive presentation on the new ELA standards, emphasizing the importance of aligning instructional systems and practices to ensure consistency and effectiveness across all grade levels. Participants explored innovative approaches to integrate these standards into their teaching, fostering a cohesive and supportive learning environment for students.

A significant focus was placed on literacy in science, where educators discussed methods to enhance students' reading and writing skills within the context of scientific inquiry and exploration. This interdisciplinary approach aims to deepen students' understanding of scientific concepts while improving their literacy skills.

Additionally, the conference addressed literacy in the arts, highlighting the role of creative expression in developing students' reading, writing, and critical thinking abilities. Educators shared best practices for incorporating literacy activities into art lessons, encouraging students to articulate their thoughts and ideas through various artistic media.

Overall, the summer planning and professional learning collaboration sessions provided valuable opportunities for educators to refine their instructional strategies, collaborate with peers, and prepare for a successful school year focused on comprehensive literacy development.

Director Dr. Lynn Angus Ramos

Literacy

Curriculum Updates

In preparation for implementing the new GaDOE English Language Arts standards, grade-level teams of teachers and academic coaches gathered to develop unit plans for grades K-12. Team members brought their expertise in literacy instruction, as well as support for gifted and exceptional education, and English learners. A teacher librarian supported each grade band to ensure that multimodal resources were included to pair with the DCSD Tier 1 resource, thereby providing students with numerous opportunities to engage with texts similar to those they will encounter on the Georgia Milestones Assessment. A cross-divisional review team from C&I and Schools and Leadership reviewed the initial plans for consistency and clarity. The updated plans will be available in Canvas for teacher access once the review is complete.



Director Lummie Baker

Educational Media and Instructional Materials

Reading Challenge Summer Program

This summer, elementary and middle school students in grades 3-8 ignited their love of reading

during the Reading Challenge Summer Program, hosted at five elementary schools and two middle schools. Participants enjoyed engaging in literacy-based activities designed to make learning fun and encourage reading for pleasure. The programs were led by teacher-librarians and supported by library media assistants, as well as ELA, special education, and ESOL teachers from across the district.

Georgia Library Media Association Summer Institute Conference

Educational Media Coordinators attended this year's GLMA Summer Institute, where they engaged with fellow school library media professionals from across the state, including district and school-level colleagues. The conference, held in Savannah, GA, from June 15 to 17, 2025, offered dynamic sessions focused on best practices in school library media services, digital literacy integration, and instructional collaboration. Valuable insights were gained on emerging technologies, equitable access to resources, and innovative programming ideas to support student learning. This experience not only deepened participants' professional knowledge but also strengthened the Educational Media Department's commitment to fostering vibrant, inclusive school library environments through its space, resources, and services.

Director Vacant

K-12 Teaching and Learning

Investigative Science Camp 2025: A Week of Science and Career Discovery!

The Investigative Science Camp, hosted by the DCSD Science Team in partnership with CTAE and DeKalb County Fire Rescue, was nothing short of EPIC! Over 50 rising eighth through twelfth-grade students dove headfirst into the worlds of Physical Science, Biology, and Forensic Science, turning classrooms into real-life labs and career zones.

Each day was packed with hands-on action, as students stepped into the roles of firefighters, EMTs, fire investigators, and medical examiners. From analyzing mock crime scenes to handling emergency response gear, science came to life in thrilling ways. Campers even trained like professionals, completing daily physical fitness drills to prepare for the physical demands of these high-impact careers!

Additionally, students earned CPR and First Aid certifications, enhancing their real-world readiness. The week culminated in a full-on recruit-style training day at the DeKalb County Fire Academy, where students, and even their parents!) suited up and experienced fire training simulations side-by-side with real professionals.

The excitement continued with a dynamic college fair featuring Atlanta Metropolitan College, Kennesaw State University, and Faithful Guardian Training Center, providing students with a glimpse into their future academic and career paths. By the end of the week, campers left energized, empowered, and inspired with new skills, lifelong memories, and a clearer vision for their futures.



DeKalb Educators Receive Accolades at GDOE 2025 MathCON

On June 25th, the Georgia Department of Education hosted the 2025 MathCON & Computer Science CON Awards, celebrating excellence in mathematics and computer science education. The DeKalb County School District's mathematics educators were recognized, and six received prestigious awards for their outstanding contributions to the field of mathematics.

Michelle Bateman, K-12 Mathematics Senior Coordinator, was honored with the Georgia Early Numeracy Award for her innovative approaches to early childhood mathematics education. Tiffany Dillard, Senior Coordinator for K-12 Mathematics, received the Leadership Excellence in Mathematics Award for her exceptional leadership and dedication to advancing mathematics education.



From Robert Shaw Elementary, Dejana Ismaili was awarded the K-5 Mathematical Mindset Award for her efforts in fostering a growth mindset among young learners. Linda Jackson, a mathematics teacher and department chair at Cedar Grove High School, earned the High-Level of Engagement with Statistical Reasoning Award for her engaging and effective teaching methods in statistics.

Dr. Edmar Orata, mathematics teacher and department chair at Cross Keys High School, was recognized with the Language Supports Trailblazer Award for his pioneering work in integrating language supports in mathematics instruction. Lastly, Lashawn White, mathematics teacher and department chair at Wadsworth Magnet School for High Achievers, received the Outstanding Achievement in Mathematics award for her remarkable achievements and contributions to the field of mathematics education.

These awards highlight the dedication and excellence of DeKalb County's mathematics educators, who continue to inspire and lead in the field of mathematics education.

Director Doryiane Gunter

Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE)

Career Tech Student Organization (CTSOs) Competitive Events

On Wednesday, June 18, through Saturday, June 21, over 20 students from DeKalb County attended the 2025 HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) International Conference, also known as the Future Health Professionals Conference. Students from Dunwoody High School made an impressive mark at the HOSA International Leadership Conference, showcasing their talent and dedication on a global stage. The team secured 6th place in Forensic Science and 9th place in Environmental Health—two competitive events that highlight both analytical skills and scientific knowledge. Adding to the accolades, the school also received a prestigious Certificate of Merit for its HOSA Service Project—the only recognition awarded to a Georgia chapter in that category.

Culinary and Fashion Camps Inspire Creativity

During the week of June 2 – 6, DeKalb CTAE hosted Culinary Arts & Fashion Summer Camps for over 100 middle and high school students. Culinary camps were held at Redan High School and Tucker High School. The fashion camp was held at Martin Luther King, Jr. High School. Participants gained hands-on experience, crafting delicious dishes and designing stylish fashion pieces in creative, skill-building sessions.



Director Janetta Greenwood

Fernbank Science Center

School Support – Summer Camps at FSC

Fernbank Science Center (FSC) continued its commitment to science outreach across the district through a series of engaging summer camps and learning opportunities, including Marine Mavericks, Cosmic Camp, and Students Through Action and Research in Science (S.T.A.R.S.). In June, FSC served 227 students across elementary, middle, and high school levels. Each camp provided students with immersive, theme-based, problem-solving experiences that connected science learning to real-world, relevant challenges.

Georgia Aquarium Partnership

The Georgia Aquarium Partnership continued through June, serving 111 students through engaging summer camp experiences. From June 2– 6, students in grades 3–8 participated in the Marine Mavericks Camp, which offered hands-on, experiential learning in marine and ocean sciences. Campers enjoyed immersive activities at both the Georgia Aquarium and the Fernbank Science Center. They also had the unique opportunity to explore the Aquanaut Express, deepening their understanding of marine ecosystems and related scientific topics.

Director Monique Kimbell

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Supporting End-of-Year Transitions and Strategic Planning

During June, the MTSS Team continued to provide critical support to ensure the successful closeout of the 2024–2025 school year and lay the groundwork for continued progress.

In early June, the MTSS Team facilitated end-of-year (EOY) support sessions for the MTSS Specialists. These sessions provided support with completing closeout tasks, including the EOY checklist, dyslexia data reporting, intervention plans, and interval data collection. Our support was focused on ensuring compliance, data integrity, and preparedness for the upcoming school year.

Additionally, the MTSS Team co-presented at DeKalb County School District's School Leadership Conference this month. The session, titled "Aligning for Academic Success," emphasized a deep understanding of the instructional core, promoting instructional coherence, and assessing and improving instructional systems.

These activities reflect the MTSS Team's ongoing commitment to supporting schools with fidelity, compliance, and high-impact academic practices.

Director Keatra Wright

FLEX Academy

FLEX Academy Summer School

FLEX Academy continues to be a valuable academic resource for Area High Schools and Horizon Schools by providing flexible, credit-bearing learning opportunities tailored to student needs. During the academic year, 711 students were enrolled, and 676 successfully earned course credit, resulting in a notable 95% overall pass rate.

Grade Level	Students Enrolled	Students Passing	Pass Rate (%)
9th Grade	239	231	96.7%
10th Grade	226	215	95.1%
11th Grade	216	203	94.0%
12th Grade	30	27	90.0%
Total	711	676	95.1%

These results reflect the program's success in helping students across all high school grade levels remain on track academically. By offering alternative pathways to earning course credit, FLEX Academy helps ensure educational equity and promotes graduation readiness for a wide range of learners.

Chief Dr. Kermit Belcher**Information and Instructional Technology****Modernizing Digital Foundations for Future-Ready Schools**

DeKalb County School District is advancing its commitment to delivering secure, high-performance digital learning environments for students and staff. As part of the 2025 Network Modernization Plan, the district is upgrading the core infrastructure that powers instruction and operations across over 140 sites. With much of the previous network equipment nearing end-of-life, this initiative focuses on replacing outdated components, including switches, firewalls, wireless access points, and cabling, with modern, scalable solutions that meet current and future needs.

The first phase of the upgrade is already underway, laying the groundwork for the next stage of enhancements. Phase Two will introduce stronger firewall protection, expanded bandwidth, enhanced network monitoring, and increased redundancy to minimize disruptions and ensure continuity. Additional efforts include strengthening Tier 3 network support and transitioning to a more secure and reliable wireless system. These improvements position DeKalb to meet the growing demands of digital instruction while reinforcing safety, speed, and connectivity across all district facilities.

Refreshing Student and Staff Devices for a New Era of Learning

As learning continues to evolve, so must the tools that support it. DeKalb County School District is taking the next step in its digital transformation by launching a districtwide instructional device refresh during the summer of 2025. This initiative will replace all student and staff devices with newer models designed to support dynamic, modern teaching and learning practices.

By ensuring equitable access to updated technology, the district reaffirms its commitment to empowering every student and educator. These upgraded devices will foster innovation, promote collaboration, and enrich the digital classroom experience. With this investment, DeKalb continues to prepare students for the demands of a connected world while equipping educators with the tools they need to inspire and engage.

Deputy Chief Office of Technology Glenn Melendez**Digital Resource and Technology Request Process**

DCSD reinforces its leadership in technology by prioritizing the integration of innovative technology solutions that enhance teaching, learning, and operational efficiency within the DCSD technology footprint. To amplify the use of new technology, we have refined our evaluation process to more effectively assess and adopt modern tools, 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. Additionally, a streamlined workflow intake process has been established to ensure all technology requests are systematically reviewed and prioritized. Users

can also access a continuously curated database of approved technology solutions designed to meet diverse operational and instructional needs.

As of December 2024, this effort has been completed.

Website Modernization

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

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

As of the end of July 2025, UX/UI design has been finalized, while the visual and functional design phases have been completed, aligning with stakeholder requirements and accessibility standards. Content migration has also been completed – All legacy content has been successfully transitioned to the new platform, ensuring data integrity, continuity of service, and alignment with the updated site architecture.

As we look ahead, over the coming weeks, the web team will incorporate school websites, Board Docs, and additional mission-critical sub-domains into the new website ecosystem. We will deploy direct-access links to core platforms, including Incident IQ, Frontline Education, Canvas, and Infinite Campus, streamlining access via a consolidated "Employee Portal" experience for enhanced user efficiency. Our division of Communication will curate homepage content to highlight district news, upcoming events, key performance indicators ("Fast Facts"), and dynamic social media integration. Finally, we will review / format content to ensure alignment with best practices in web accessibility, readability, and UX design standards.

We remain on track to launch the new website platform by the end of the third quarter of 2025.

Data Governance Program

The district's vision for data governance is to establish a data-driven ecosystem that drives academic success by empowering educators, supporting personalized learning, informing targeted interventions, advancing equity, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement through data-informed decision-making. Our goal is to pinpoint which tools—and which usage strategies—yield the most substantial returns in terms of student learning and achievement. This evaluation will inform future decisions regarding digital resource investments and the integration of instructional resources.

During this reporting period, we are continuing to advance our work on correlating student outcomes with the digital resources used across our schools, ensuring that our investments in educational tools drive student success. The team has analyzed specific digital resources that represent considerable investments for the district. The results are consistent – using the resource as recommended yields better outcomes. Also, during this reporting period, results are being shared with the senior leadership team.

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

We anticipate completing this analysis by July 2025, which will support strategic, evidence-based decision-making in our district.

Manager III Natalie Terrell

Project Management Office

District-Wide Records Digitization Program

Current Status: The proof of concept for the Records Digitization program is still in progress and on track for completion in early September 2025. Significant progress has been made in HR box collection, processing, and scanning. The majority of HR records have been collected, with only a few cleanup tasks remaining. HR and DIIT staff have been trained on the application, which is now accessible from each trained user's desktop. The team is actively engaged in discussions regarding record retention and continues to work through workflow processes. To maintain momentum, the team has also initiated the collection of student records from the Records Center.



Key Metrics:

- Total Boxes Collected: 3,424
- Boxes Approved for Processing: 2,717
- Boxes Scanned: 2,047
- Boxes in Client Review: 958
- Boxes Accepted: 9

Executive Director Dr. Kyia Clark & Manager III Terri Webb

Information and Innovation & Instructional Technology

Summer Learning Series

Throughout June, Instructional Technology offered a comprehensive series of in-person,

synchronous, and asynchronous training sessions designed to equip educators with the skills and confidence to integrate digital tools into their instructional practices effectively. These sessions covered a wide range of platforms and applications, including Canvas Quizzes and Mastery Paths, School Messenger, ViewSonic myViewBoard, Canva for Education and Adobe Express, Microsoft Copilot, and Google Docs. These sessions were not just about tool usage—they were about transforming teaching and learning. Teachers explored how to align digital tools with instructional goals, ensuring that technology serves as a bridge to deeper engagement and improved student outcomes.



Director Eric Logan

Information and Network Security

Compromise Assessment

On June 9th, our team was presented with an executive summary of the Microsoft Incident Response (IR) team's findings and remediation recommendations. During the engagement period, Microsoft IR was responsible for providing investigative services and threat intelligence to proactively review the environment for potential evidence of Threat Actor activity and provide hardening recommendations. During this time, the team found that our environment had a medium maturity rating. While some tools and systems are in place, the Microsoft IR team indicated that there is considerable room for improvement. They provided recommendations and resources to help us make the necessary improvements.

Asset Discovery & Visibility Proof of Concept

After several conversations aimed at providing clarity and understanding between the vendor and the Networking team, we were able to move forward with this proof of concept. A slight deviation was agreed upon from the original approach for this proof of concept, and we are now able to begin evaluating this product and service.

DCSD Passphrase Requirement Updates

We continue to plan for the rollout of updated password/passphrase requirements. Some minor adjustments were made to ensure a smooth transition, while also attempting to anticipate potential obstacles.

Managed Detention and Response (MDR) Update

After months of evaluations, we concluded the review of potential MDR providers. A selection was made and preparation for presentation to the Board began. Additionally, we met with selected providers to obtain specific technical details for the rollout in the district and initiated onboarding discussions.

Chief Champion Michelle Dillard

Schools and Leadership

The Division of Schools and Leadership planned and participated in multiple conferences during the month of June. During the first week, the Horizon Area hosted its Back-to-Basics Conference at Lithonia High School for teachers and leaders. In the second week of June, Leadership Development, Professional Learning, and Schools partnered with multiple divisions to plan the Summer Leadership Conference, “Mission Possible.” Leaders heard from Superintendent Horton, Chiefs, Champion Dillard, and Keynote speakers Baruti Kafele and Dr. Gholdy Muhammad. During the third week, Senior Cabinet members and Area Superintendents participated in the Cabinet Retreat. Champion Dillard and Dr. Alexander led professional learning in Change Management. On June 17-18, our Professional Learning Department held the Next Level Learning Conference for teachers at Lithonia High School. Barbara Blackburn provided guidance to teachers on increasing rigor in their classrooms. Later that week, several leaders in Schools and Leadership had key roles in the Excellence in Education Summit held at McNair Middle School. Schools and Leadership partnered with HR to host a job fair, recruiting top talent and filling remaining vacancies.

During the last two weeks of June, several teachers and leaders participated in the Model Schools conference, GaDOE’s Georgia LitLink, Federal programs, and Math Con conferences. Several DCSD schools received banners for their exceptional progress and exiting the state lists. Several DCSD Mathematics teachers and leaders received special awards from GADOE for their work in mathematics. Areas within the division also held retreats for continuous improvement.

Superintendent Dr. Beth Kyle

Area 1 Elementary Schools

During the second week of June, Area 1 leaders shared their knowledge with peers at the Summer Leadership Conference on topics including Data-Based Leadership (System 2), Breaking Language and Literacy Barriers (System 5), and Stronger Instructional Reach (System 6). The Area Team started hosting Team Tuesdays for Principals and Assistant Principals to collaborate and prepare for the upcoming school year. Several school teams have been representing at various local conferences this June, including the Solution Tree PLC At Work Conference taking place in Atlanta during the last week of June, as well as MathCon and LitLink as a way to improve their own personal practice as they gear up to improve student achievement for the 2025-26 school year. Our Area coordinators were also able to attend the NCTM/NCTE combined conference and



bring back a wealth of ideas for integrating literacy into math instruction, which will be shared this Fall.

The area was also extremely proud to support the Governor's recognition of Sarv Dharavane from Austin Elementary School for his 3rd place finish in the National Spelling Bee.

Superintendent Terri D. Brown

Area 2 Elementary Schools

June 2025 has shaped up to be a month of continuous professional learning for the Area 2 schools and team! Representatives from each school attended GA Lit Link, a conference hosted by Georgia's Department of Education. Highlights from the conference included learning about Georgia's New K-12 ELA Standards. Guest speakers shared strategies for teaching students who are learning English and how to leverage their strengths as multilingual learners. Additionally, each school had representatives who attended Georgia's MathCon. Highlights from MathCon included strategies for strengthening the implementation of Georgia's Instructional Learning Plans (ILPs) with a focus on career pathways and development connections. Change Management was key in learning how to better lead the use of ILPs across all schools and classrooms by reflecting on our roles in the work: "participating or initiating" and our circle of influence-control, concern, influence.

In addition to conferences supported by GADOE, Area 2 staff attended DCSD's Annual Summer Leadership Conference from June 10 to 13. Additionally, on June 23, Area 2 principals and assistant principals participated in the Area 2 Retreat, which focused on the New ELA standards, the use of high-quality resources, effective co-teaching models, CSIP Monitoring with a Focus on the Concrete-Representational-Abstract (CRA) instructional strategy, and Fierce Conversations/Human Resource Management.

Close-out items this month include continuing to work on staffing, preparing for Open House/Pre-Planning, and the First Week of School. Housekeeping items underway include reviewing school schedules and handbooks.





Area 2 Elementary at DCSD's
Summer Leadership



Area 2 Elementary
Summer Retreat

Superintendent Ateshia Lester

Area 3 Elementary Schools

During June, Area 3 Leaders engaged in several professional learning opportunities. Leaders participated in the District Summer Leadership Conference, where they had a chance to engage in learning centered around this year's theme, *Disrupting for Excellence: New Level, New Heights-Mission Possible*. Leaders were reminded that greatness doesn't always come from comfort; it comes from the courage to do things differently and elevate not only ourselves, but everyone around us. Additionally, Principals and Assistant Principals participated in the Area 3 Retreat, which emphasized our focus on *Leading, Learning, and Lifting*. Principals engaged with ELA New Standards, Math Learning Plans, SDI Strategies, and Everyday Labs. Each leader was able to walk away with observation tools for collaborative planning and classroom visits. They also created feedback for Math and ELA content to share during pre-planning.

Additionally, Area 3 Coordinators participated in MathCon and Lit Link, hosted by GADOE, and returned with a wealth of new ideas and resources to support our Area 3 Staff. We also welcomed four new principals to the Area 3 Team for the new school year.





Superintendent Bridgette Allen

Area Middle Schools

In June, the Middle School (MS) Area welcomed its new area superintendent and introduced a unifying vision known as the “MS WAY.” This vision underscores a collective commitment to meeting the needs of all scholars, supporting one another and all stakeholders, working with intentionality to drive impact, analyzing data to drive continuous improvement, and striving to foster the growth of others.

The “MS Way” was introduced during the MS Area session at DCSD’s Summer Leadership Conference (SLC), which all area leaders and team members attended. In addition to participating in sessions, several area team members presented on key topics related to English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and the REAP protocol for analyzing student work during SLC.

In alignment with the area’s commitment to “learn, grow, and win together,” the MS Area hosted retreats for assistant principals and principals. These sessions focused on *Systems and Structures for Success*, rooted in the Six Systems for an Effective School Environment. During the retreats, leaders shared and learned best practices in areas such as professional learning communities (PLCs), data-driven decision-making, teacher and student support, school culture, and restorative practices. The retreats also reinforced understanding of instructional resources and leadership accountability.

Additionally, the area team engaged in a separate retreat centered on *Intentionality for Impact*. This retreat provided an opportunity to reflect on and refine differentiated support strategies for schools aligned to the district’s strategic plan, MIRACLES, and the Six Systems framework.

The team also began refining its work on middle school initiatives to promote continuous improvement. These initiatives focus on leaders’ lab, professional learning, extended learning

time, PLCs, culture and climate protocols, parent engagement, special education, EL, and restorative practices. Also, the team completed the review of all middle school Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (CSIPs).

Finally, several area coordinators attended the MathCon and ASCD conferences, where they explored innovative instructional and leadership practices designed to enhance teaching and learning and improve student outcomes.



Superintendent Dr. Thomas Glanton

Area High Schools

As we conclude the 2024–2025 school year, the month of June has served as a pivotal time for both reflection and preparation. Across our high schools, we have remained committed to fostering academic excellence, ensuring instructional rigor, and promoting student-centered practices. As a team, the High School Area Office has worked collectively to analyze data, celebrate successes, and identify strategic areas for continued growth, ensuring that every student is prepared for the future.

In alignment with our district’s focus on culture and climate, members of our team engaged in a 3-day Restorative Practices training to serve as Lead Trainers in the upcoming year. We also completed Mindset and De-Escalation training, while supporting schools with Master Scheduling and the implementation of school readiness checklists to ensure a strong and seamless opening for 2025–2026.

In the area of English Language Arts, our team participated in professional learning on Georgia’s new standards, assessments, and course offerings. We contributed to regional planning through the Metro RESA Job-Alike Initiative and collaborated with curriculum writers and instructional leaders to shape the direction for next year’s ELA curriculum units.

Our mathematics team finalized and distributed updated curriculum resources and planning guides to support instruction in the upcoming year. Collaborative efforts continued across districts to refine post assessments and strengthen alignment with instructional goals.

In support of our students with disabilities, we prioritized year-end closeout processes and planned professional learning opportunities for the 2025–2026 academic year. Participation in the Georgia CEC Conference further informed our work to ensure compliance, improve behavior supports, and strengthen communication with families.

Mental health and wellness remained a core priority in June. Our office contributed to CSIP reviews and partnered with school leaders on CCRPI climate scoring. It coordinated awareness activities for Mental Health Awareness Month—highlighting our continued investment in whole-child support.

As we officially close out the 2024–2025 academic year, we are proud of the resilience, collaboration, and dedication that define the work of our schools and our office. From successful graduations to forward-thinking planning, we enter the 2025–2026 school year with momentum and a shared commitment to excellence for every student we serve.

Superintendent Dr. Derrica Boochee-Davis

Area Horizon Schools

“Back 2 Basics” Horizon Retreat

The Horizon Area kicked off preparations for the 2025–2026 school year with the energizing “Back 2 Basics” Summer Conference. This three-day retreat brought together over 500 school leaders and educators to focus on foundational strategies, systems, and content essential for a strong start to the year. Participants engaged in targeted work sessions supporting CSIP and STAP 1 planning, reinforcing the commitment to a successful academic year.

Summer Leadership Conference

- The Annual Summer Leadership Conference was held from **Tuesday, June 10, to Friday, June 13, at Miller Grove High School. The conference was inspiring** and energizing. This year’s theme, *‘Disrupting for Excellence: New Levels, New Heights 2025,’* reminds us that greatness doesn’t come from comfort; it comes from the courage to do things differently, push boundaries, and elevate not only ourselves but everyone around us. Our very own Special Agent Superintendent, Dr. Devon Q. Horton, kicked off the conference with a Top-Secret Blueprint for the 2025-2026 school year.
- We’ve witnessed Principal Kafele ask the question, “Is my school better because I LEAD it?”. Content Coordinators and school leaders attended sessions on the Dyslexia Screener, Amira ISLIP, the REAP Protocol, and PLCs at Work. Several of our leaders were presenters (Principal Martino and Ms. Natasha Archie), and the Horizon TEAM supported each other during the sessions. This conference was our moment to reset, reimagine, and rise together.

Professional Learning Conference/Sessions

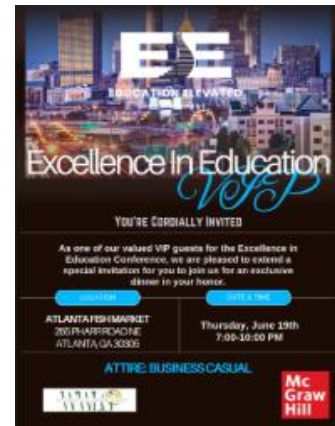
Our Professional Learning Facilitators (Mrs. Gosse and Mrs. Green) and other Content Leaders attended the DCSD Professional Learning Conference.

Excellence in Education Summit

In collaboration with the Horizon Area Team and the Wright Way Consultant Firm. Aligned with DeKalb County School District's Six Strategic Goals, the Excellence in Education Summit took place June 19–21 at Ronald E. McNair Middle School. The summit aimed to engage, empower, and elevate educators through a series of impactful events:

- June 19: Screening of "The Right to Read" documentary, emphasizing the critical role of literacy.
- June 20: Professional learning sessions and a DCSD Job Fair to attract future educators.
- June 21: Concurrent sessions, luncheon, and four \$500 scholarship presentations to celebrate rising high school seniors from the essay contest.

This summit underscored the significance of representation in education and its impact on student achievement.



GaDOE Federal Programs Conference

Held from June 24 to 26, this statewide conference emphasized a collaborative approach to preparing all students for life. Jointly hosted by several offices of the Georgia Department of Education, the event provided attendees with actionable strategies and resources to enhance academic performance, student behavior, and overall well-being. Key sessions included director training for special education and federal programs, as well as focused tracks like MathCON, CS CON, and GaLEADS. All DCSD ATSI and TSI schools were represented.

Other Noteworthy Events, Engagements, or Accomplishments

- Clarkston High School has been named the second recipient of the 2025 Georgia United Foundation School Crashers® program, a community initiative by Georgia United Credit Union Foundation that provides school makeovers to enhance learning environments. The event took place on June 6 with support from DCSD volunteers.
- June 29-July 2 (ELA Coordinators): Get Your Teach On Conference. Attend sessions such as "Get Your Lead On," designed for Leaders, including "Your School's Instructional Playbook," "High-Impact Coaching for School-wide Results," "The Green Light Shift," "Wicked Good Reading," "Wicked Good Writing," and "A Literacy Playbook."

Superintendent Dr. Michelle Jones

Area Specialty Schools

During June, the focus for the Specialty Area was reflection and retreat. Leaders had an opportunity to reflect on the school year and begin shifting their focus to improvement for the next school year. The team continued to review the school improvement plans for fiscal year 2026.

Leaders had an opportunity to attend the Summer Leadership Conference. During this time of learning, leaders were able to meet with their teams, learn about the new ELA Standards, the new state-approved dyslexia screener, phonics instruction, and view the results of the Access and Opportunity Audit. We were motivated by Dr. Horton, Champion Dillard, Principal Kafele, and Dr. Gholdy Muhammad. Leaders met in clusters, in the area, and received resources. We had multiple leaders in the Specialty Area present at SLC. The following week, several of our teachers attended the Next Level Learning Conference. Our area leaders served with excellence as conference volunteers and presenters.

Additionally, in June, we held our Specialty Area retreat, themed "Orbiting with Excellence: Leaders on a Mission." We truly experienced and explored the Fernbank Science Center. We learned about AI and about each other through team building. Leaders found the personality assessment and the tuning protocol to be valuable tools they can use and share with their own staff.

Leaders and teachers in the Specialty Area attended several conferences, such as the GADOE Lit Link, GADOE Math Con, Culture and Climate Summit, PLCs at Work, and Model Schools Conference. Ms. White from Wadsworth and Ms. Ismali from Robert Shaw received awards at MathCon for excellence in math teaching. We also welcomed our new Assistant Principals, Mr. Jefferson at DeKalb PATH and Ms. Wright at Wynbrooke Theme School. Dr. Sherry Johnson will serve as the interim principal of Oakcliff Theme School.



(Interim) Executive Director Mike Kelly

Leadership Development

Governor's School Leadership Academy

Leadership Development and the DeKalb County School District were recognized on the <https://gosa.georgia.gov/governors-school-leadership-academy> for their selection via a rigorous application and interview process into the 25-26 Cohort. GSLA is committed to developing teams of leaders who drive meaningful changes within public school districts through systems thinking and strategic development processes.

Leadership Development applied, interviewed, and was selected to participate in the Georgia School Leadership Academy (GSLA). This is truly an exciting opportunity for our district and department. Our district GSLA team will participate in this two-year cohort. The Team is preparing for the GSLA Summer Launch on July 22nd in Dublin, Ga. We are excited to have our initiatives, procedures, and goals supported through targeted professional development and team coaching by this academy, which is well-versed in leadership programs.

The DCSD Summer Leadership Conference

Leadership Development, in collaboration with other district departments, successfully planned, designed, and implemented a spectacular Summer Leadership Conference (SLC 2025) that supported the DCSD Mission/Vision and Strategic Plan. We were fortunate to hear from and engage with renowned keynote speakers, Principal Baruti Kafele and Educational Author, Ghoddy Muhammad. We were overcome with excitement and energized by the excellent presentations and charges of our district leaders. Mission Possible: Special Agent Dr. Devon Q. Horton (Superintendent) and The Champ, Champion Michelle Dillard (Chief of Schools), set the tone for the 2025-26 school year.

This 4-day conference enabled our leaders to receive the latest updates to support improved student outcomes for the 2025-26 school year. Breakout sessions included content connected to the DCSD Mission/Vision, Strategic Plan, Six Systems, and Professional Learning Communities.

The Excellence in Education Summit

Leadership Development supported the Summit by presenting the following sessions at the conference on Saturday, June 21st.

From Assistant Principal to Principal (Jermain Sumler-Faison/Sedrick Anthony)

Description: Are you an assistant principal aspiring to advance your career and become a principal? Join us for an enlightening information session facilitated by the DCSD Leadership



Development Department. This session is designed to give you a comprehensive understanding of the principal role, essential tools for success, and practical strategies for preparing for this significant career advancement.

From Teacher/Academic Coach to Assistant Principal (Raifa Russ)

Description: Are you a teacher or academic coach aspiring to advance your career and become an assistant principal? We'd like to invite you to an insightful information session hosted by the DCSD Leadership Development Department. This session is designed to provide you with a comprehensive understanding of the assistant principal role, essential tools for success, and effective strategies for preparing for this significant career step.

Empowering Educators: Effective Leadership Coaching Strategies (Kedra Fairweather)

Unlock the potential of impactful leadership in education. This professional learning session equips teachers and school leaders with proven coaching strategies to inspire growth, foster collaboration, and drive instructional excellence. Discover how to establish trust, offer constructive feedback, and foster a culture of ongoing improvement within your school community.

The DeKalb Principal Pathway (DPP)

Leadership Development completed its final DPP session on Monday, June 16th. This was the culmination of the first DeKalb Principal Pathway Cohort. The 14 DPP candidates presented their final "Change Project," which required them to lead a student-centered improvement process in a school that supported shifting academic outcomes for students through a collaborative process with school staff, students, and families as partners. The Leadership Development team, Performance Coaches, Principals, and Executive Administrators served as the audience and provided valuable feedback to the candidates on their work. It was an inspiring day for the candidates and for the Leadership Development department as these leaders represent a new standard of principal development for DCSD.

Leadership Development is currently reviewing applications for candidates who have applied for the 2025-2026 year-long cohort. Selections will take place in July, and the Summer Launch will take place in late July. The work of this cohort will continue in the evenings and on Saturdays.

The DeKalb Leadership Institute (DLI)

DLI is transitioning to a program for the 2025-2026 school year that will develop and support teacher leaders transitioning into the assistant principal's role. Leadership Development has developed a rigorous application process, complete with performance assessments. This program will be selective in nature as we work to identify our future leaders with the most skills and potential to impact student outcomes.

The program currently has 280 applicants. Through a blind scoring process, applications have been narrowed down to 84 candidates for a second-round scoring process to occur early in July. Selections for the 40-member DLI Cohort will be finalized by July 8th. The DLI Summer

Launch will take place on July 23rd and 24th. This yearlong program also takes place in the evening and on Saturdays, so as not to interfere with daily school responsibilities.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Leadership Development is collaborating directly with Professional Learning (Ayana Smith) and Area Superintendent Dr. Beth Kyle to expand the DCSD PLC Guiding Coalition to involve a cross-sectional team that will directly impact the positive implementation of PLCs across our district. This Guiding Coalition will comprise the following departments and leaders: Curriculum and Instruction, Access and Opportunity, Accountability and Research, Student Support Services, Professional Learning, Leadership Development, and Principal representation from all areas.

A sub-group to this Guiding Coalition will be the utilization of all the Teacher of the Year representatives from all schools to provide feedback around the implementation of our PLCs.

Leadership Development is collaborating closely with Solution Tree to design a professional learning plan for the 2025-2026 school year. The plan for moving forward with our PLC work and partnership includes building in-school level training to develop model PLCs in each of the seven district areas, with on-site school coaching.

Principal Hiring/Interviewing Process

Leadership Development has been supporting Area Superintendents with interviews for all principal vacancies in the district. Support is also being provided for Assistant Principal vacancies as requested.

Executive Director Ayana S. Smith

Professional Learning

During June, the Professional Learning Department demonstrated its commitment to empowering educators and leaders through impactful professional development initiatives. Our department collaborated with Leadership Development and hosted the first Next Level Learning Conference.



Collaboration with Leadership Development

We proudly partnered with the Department of Leadership Development to support the **Summer Leadership Conference**, a dynamic event fostering the growth of school and district leaders. Our team contributed through session facilitation, logistical support, and ensuring a seamless learning experience for all participants.

Inaugural Next Level Learning Conference

We hosted our inaugural **Next Level Learning Conference**, an event specifically designed for **teachers and paraprofessionals**. The conference featured engaging sessions on instructional strategies, classroom management, and professional growth. Attendees appreciated the tailored approach that addressed their unique needs and strengthened their capacity to support student success.

These efforts underscore our dedication to equipping educators with the tools and knowledge they need to excel, while fostering a collaborative and growth-oriented professional community!



[Next Level Learning Conference Video Highlights](#)

[Next Level Learning Participants' Feedback](#)

Chief Dr. Norman C. Sauce, III

Student Services

The month of June was filled with purpose, progress, and celebration for the Division of Student Services. Dr. Sauce began the month by participating in the Horizon Area Leadership Retreat, where he engaged in forward-thinking dialogue with district leaders to set the tone for the upcoming summer and school year. Dr. Sauce represented the division at the Curriculum Steering Committee, helping to shape instructional priorities across content areas. He also continued his ongoing support of internal leadership development by hosting the Bi-Weekly Division of Student Services Leadership Meeting, where department leaders came together to share updates, collaborate, and plan for continuous improvement.

A highlight of the month was the heartfelt Retiree Celebration, where Dr. Sauce joined colleagues in honoring the contributions and careers of esteemed educators and staff. He also participated in the MAP Planning Meeting for the 2025–2026 school year, laying the groundwork for data-informed instructional strategies. His commitment to supporting English Learners was evident during his participation in an ESOL site visit, which showcased instructional practices and services designed to elevate multilingual learners. He also participated in the Administrative Summer Leadership Conference and the Senior Cabinet retreat, as a means to prepare for strategic planning to ensure the District's success in the 2025–2026 school year.

In mid-June, Dr. Sauce attended the DeKalb County Board of Education's June meeting, continuing his commitment to transparency and alignment with district goals. His presence at the Summer Leadership Conference and Cabinet Retreat added momentum to leadership development and strategic planning initiatives. Another meaningful occasion was the Adult Education Graduation Ceremony, where Dr. Sauce joined other district leaders in celebrating the resilience and success of adult learners—a powerful reminder that education transforms lives at every age.

Finally, Dr. Sauce concluded the month by participating in a comprehensive working session with the RMC Research Group, reviewing the final presentation of program evaluations and master planning findings. This session was instrumental in guiding data-driven decisions for the future of student services programming.

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

Executive Director Mrs. Kiana King & Exceptional Education Department held their Field Day - & I showed up perfectly dressed for kick ball... They had DJ Dr. Logan on the 1s & 2s spinnin' the hits as folks scored goals & slid into home base! gorgeous day for outdoor team building!



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

Senior Cabinet Special Agents accepted Superintendent Horton's "Mission: Possible" assignments for us today @dekalbcoschools.bsky.social Summer Leadership Conference Day 1 @ Miller Grove HS! @principalkafele.bsky.social challenged us all to ponder if our schools are better because we lead them?...



June was truly a month to remember—marked by leadership, collaboration, and celebration across the Division of Student Service.

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

I had the most enlightening conversations today with our scholars & teachers during Summer Enrichment @ Indian Creek Elementary School. Their brilliance, resilience, & quintessence had me mesmerized! @dekalbcoschools.bsky.social Student Services Division is supporting 3,000+ scholars this summer.



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

@dekalbcoschools.bsky.social Retirement Honorees Celebration @GeorgiaTech Conference Center with my Chief colleagues- inspiring remarks, fabulous food, & one last hurrah for remarkable educators! Thank you for your service & for planting the seeds of greatness for our scholars. 🌟

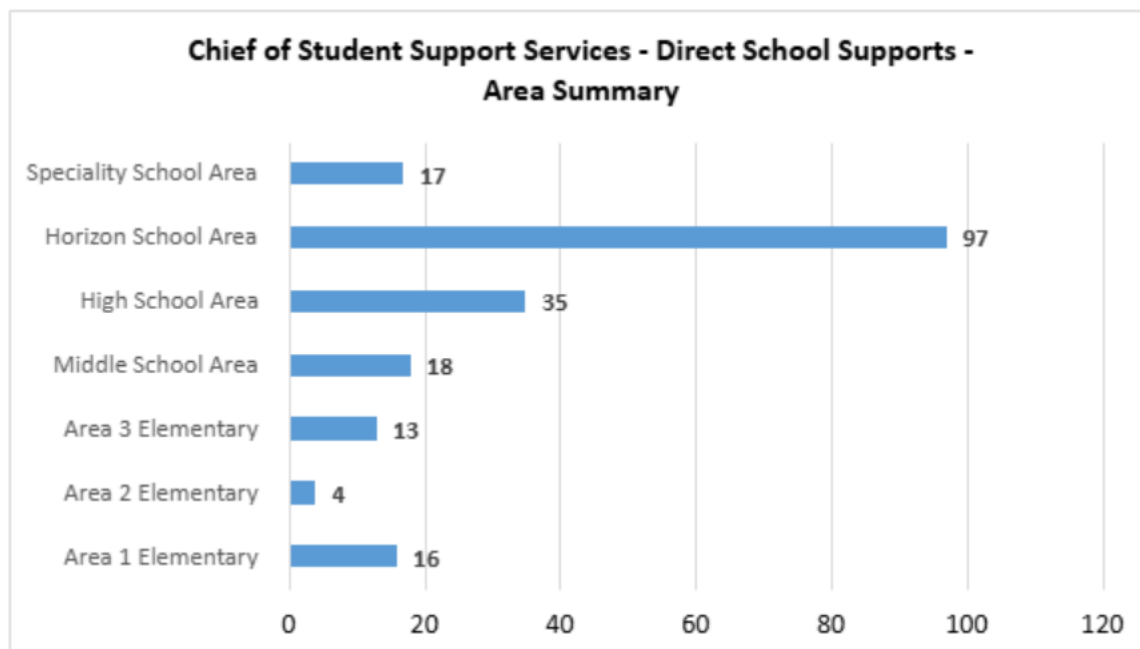


Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
@drnormancsauce3.bsky.social

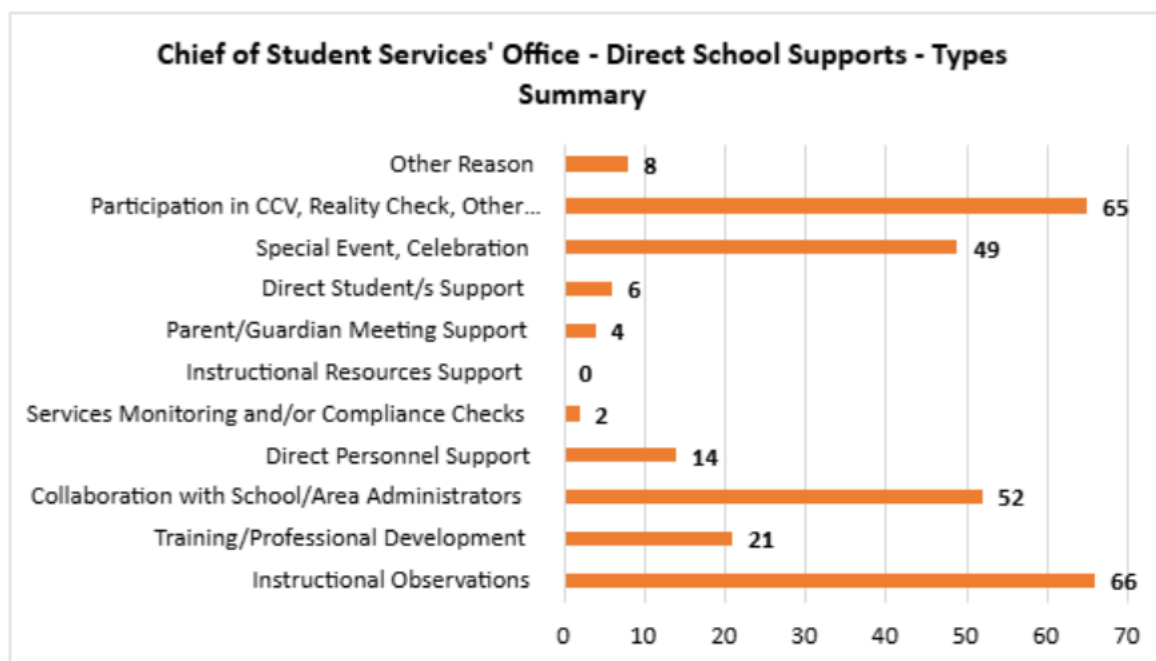
It's always great to collaborate & collectively construct new understandings with such dedicated @dekalbcoschools.bsky.social leaders @ Summer Leadership Conference 2025. @gholdym.bsky.social's keynote reminded us today to center instruction around our scholars' genius, justice, & joy for learning



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



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



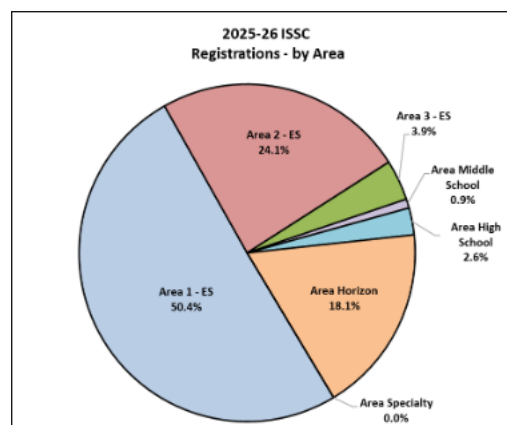
Executive Director Dr. Evelyn Hall

English Learners

International Student Screening Center Registration

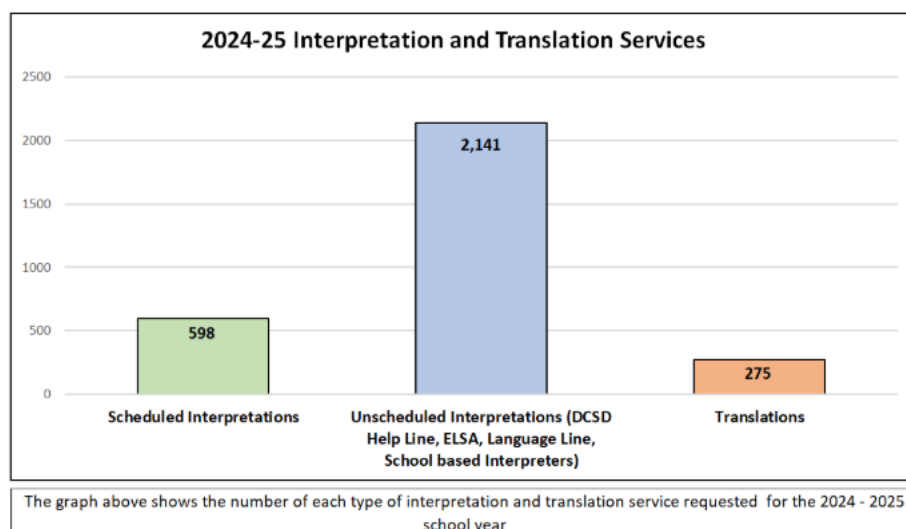
The International Student Screening Center (ISSC) continuously registers and screens students throughout the school year. This month, the ISSC has registered and screened **232** English learners.

2025-2026 ISSC Registrations	
Area	Students
Area 1 - ES	117
Area 2 - ES	56
Area 3 - ES	9
Area Middle School	2
Area High School	6
Area Horizon	42
Area Specialty	0
Totals	232



Interpretation & Translation Services

The International Student Screening Center (ISSC) provides interpretation/translation services during registration and at local schools for families with a Primary Home Language Other than English (PHLOTE). This month, the English Learners department provided **2,739** language services to PHLOTE families and translated **275** documents.



Interpretation, translation, and registration services align with DCSD Strategic Plan—Goal Area II: School, Family, and Community Engagement and the DCSD M.I.R.A.C.L.E.S. Framework for Continuous Improvement:

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

2025 Graduation – 2025 Valedictorian & Salutatorian

We are thrilled to celebrate the outstanding achievements of our recent graduates, who have excelled as former English Learners or English Learners (ELs) and were announced as the 2025 Valedictorians and Salutatorians. Their perseverance and dedication are truly inspiring.

Congratulations to all!

Name	School	Achievement	EL Status
Jannath Jamal	Chamblee HS	Valedictorian	Former English Learner
Ahmed Elboraey	Clarkston HS	Valedictorian	English Learner
Jeniffer Apata	Miller Grove HS	Salutatorian	Former English Learner
Niquitta Nijimbere	Redan HS	Valedictorian	Former English Learner
Yuko Zheng	McNair HS	Salutatorian	Former English Learner

Minh Quan Tran	Stone Mountain HS	Salutatorian	English Learner
Miriam Martinez	Towers HS	Valedictorian	Former English Learner
Yewoinhareg Gabrehana	Tucker HS	Valedictorian	Former English Learner

Graduation Ceremonies Interpretation

The English Learners Department provided interpretation services at the 2025 DCSD Graduation Ceremonies to support families of our graduates. Our interpreters provided interpretation services **in 7 languages to 650 families across all schools.**

Interpretation services align with DCSD Strategic Plan: Goal Area II: School, Family, and Community Engagement, and the DCSD M.I.R.A.C.L.E.S. Framework for Continuous Improvement:

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

Language	# of Families
Arabic	2
Burmese	5
Dari	1
French	2
Somali	3
Spanish	612
Swahili	25
Total	650



Title III EL Summer Enrichment Program

The Title III EL Summer Enrichment Program provides an extended year opportunity for English Learners in grades 1-12 to develop the academic language necessary to succeed in all content areas, with a special focus on the educational language of reading, mathematics, and science.

This program is for ELs in the Entering level (1.0-1.9) of English language proficiency. The students are also participating in hands-on activities, including a visit to the Georgia Aquarium, as well as STEM activities from High-Tech and Science for Everyone.



The Title III EL Summer Enrichment Program aligns with DCSD Strategic Plan: Goal Area 1: Student Academic Success with Equity and Access, and the DCSD M.I.R.A.C.L.E.S. Framework for Continuous Improvement:

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

Summer Professional Learning

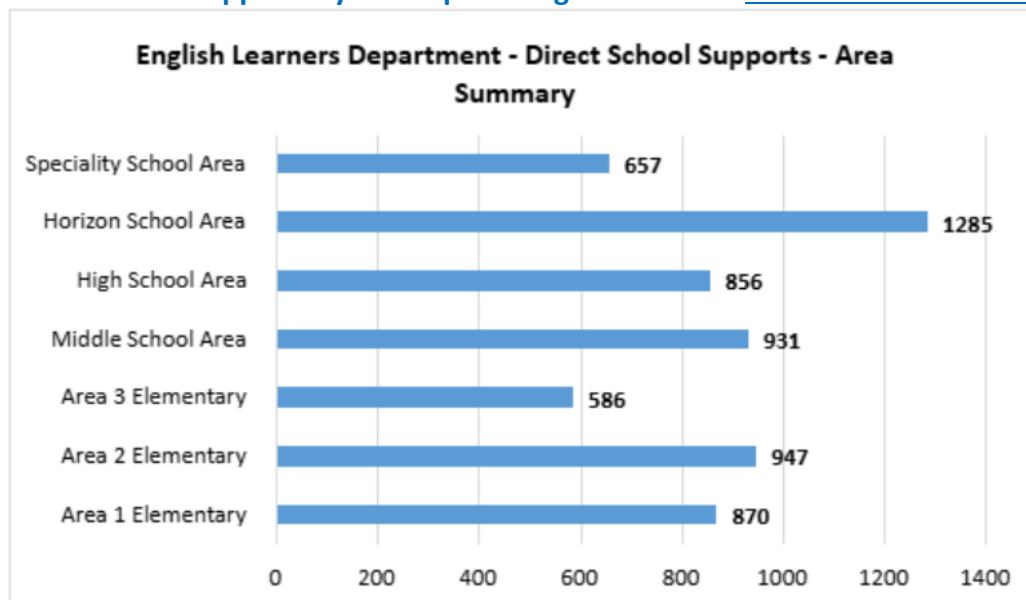
The English Learners Department is providing **13 professional learning sessions** to teachers, administrators, and DCSD staff this summer, including the following workshops:

EL Department Summer Professional Learning Opportunities	
Title	Audience
ELlevation: Monitoring Instructional Language Plans	All Teachers and Administrators
Infinite Campus: EL Panels Training	ESOL teachers and Administrators
WIDA Screener Grades 1-12	ESOL Teachers
Kindergarten WIDA Screener	Elementary ESOL Teachers
GaDOE Suitcase	All Teachers Who Serve English Learners
Co-Teaching Models for ELS	Co-Teachers of English Learners
Enrolling Newcomers and Transfers	Clerks and Registrars
Differentiation, Strategies, and Scaffolding for ELs	All Teachers Who Serve English Learners
WIDA SWIRL, ACCESS for Effective Lesson Planning	All Teachers Who Serve English Learners

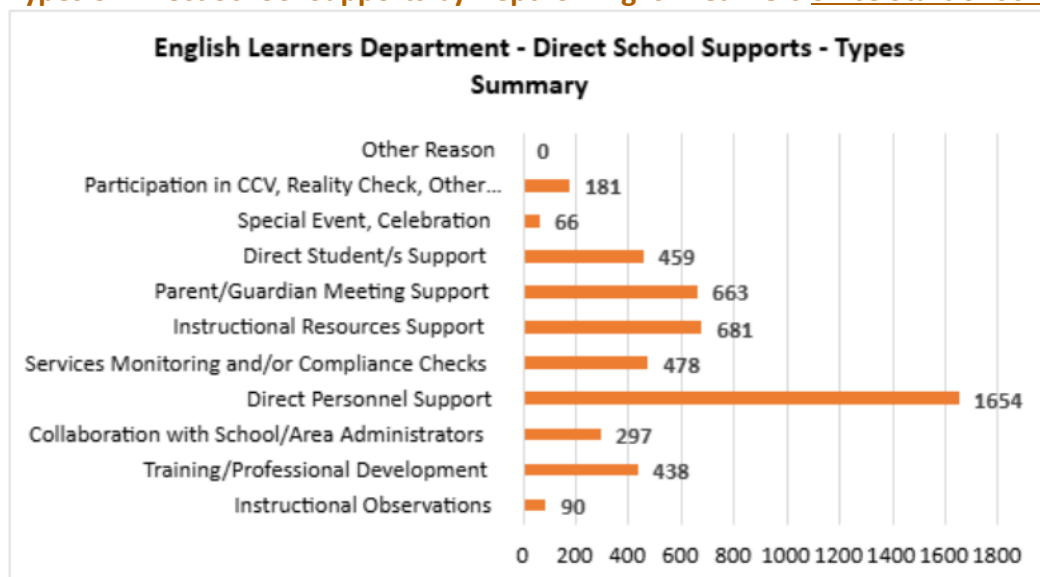
These opportunities align with the DCSD Strategic Plan: Goal Area 1: Student Academic Success with Equity and Access; Goal Area 2: School, Family, and Community Engagement; Goal Area 4: Culture and Climate; and Goal Area 6: Organizational Excellence, and the DCSD M.I.R.A.C.L.E.S. Framework for Continuous 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 Start of School Year



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



Executive Director Kiana King

Exceptional Education

Professional Development and Instructional Support

The Department of Exceptional Education proudly supported the Horizon Retreat by presenting multiple instructional sessions aimed at elevating staff knowledge of Special Education Best Practices, Section 504 Basics, and linking Specially Designed Instruction in the ELA classroom. Our team provided a total of 8 sessions during the week.



The Georgia Network of Educational and Therapeutic Supports (GNETS) team represented at the Southeast Conference on School Climate in Savannah, GA, from June 1-3, 2025. Ms. Smith (Senior Coordinator), Ms. Reid (Social Worker), and Ms. Williams (Coordinator II) from Eaglewoods Academy presented sessions on Power Struggles in Schools. Over 160 participants attended from all over the state. The team also received great feedback on their presentation, and attendees also shared requests to visit the DeKalb-Rockdale GNETS program.

Departmental Celebrations

The school psychologists had a hectic and productive school year. The charts below reflect the consultative support school psychologists provided to parents, students, professional colleagues, and student-based meetings. Additionally, the charts tracked the number of students receiving psychological evaluations and counseling support, as well as the number of presentations provided to school staff and families.

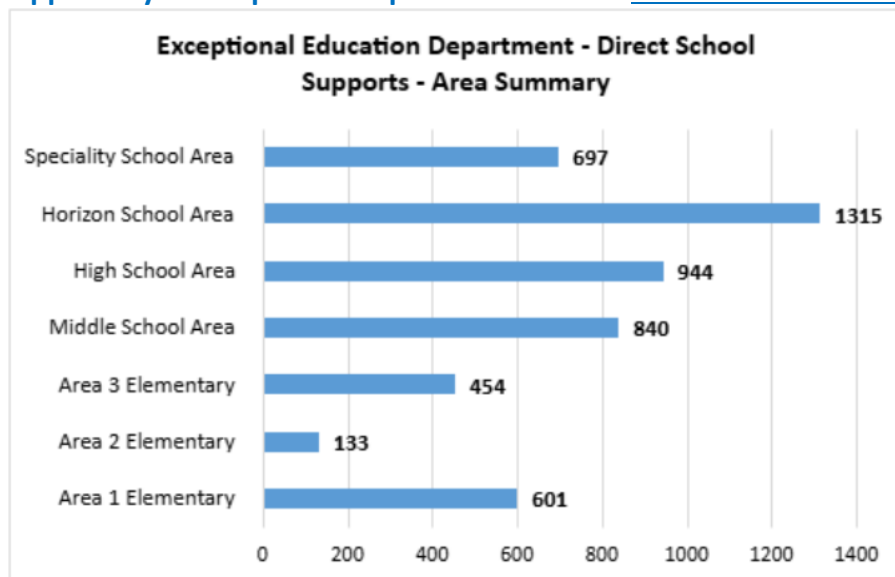


PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES CONSULTATION – DATA ELEMENTS	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER OF CONSULTATIONS
Consultations with Parents Only	Number of Consultations with Parents of Students	7,140
Consultations with Student Support Teams	Number of Consultations with Student Support Teams or Groups of Teachers/Administrators	8,256
Student Consultations	Number of Consultations with Students	6,719
Other School Consultations	Number of Other Consultations at the School Level	30,864
All Other Consultations or Services Provided	Number of Other Consultations or Services Provided	17,019
PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES EVALUATION – DATA ELEMENTS	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER OF EVALUATIONS
Total Evaluations	Number of Students Evaluated for the 2024-25 School Year	2,393

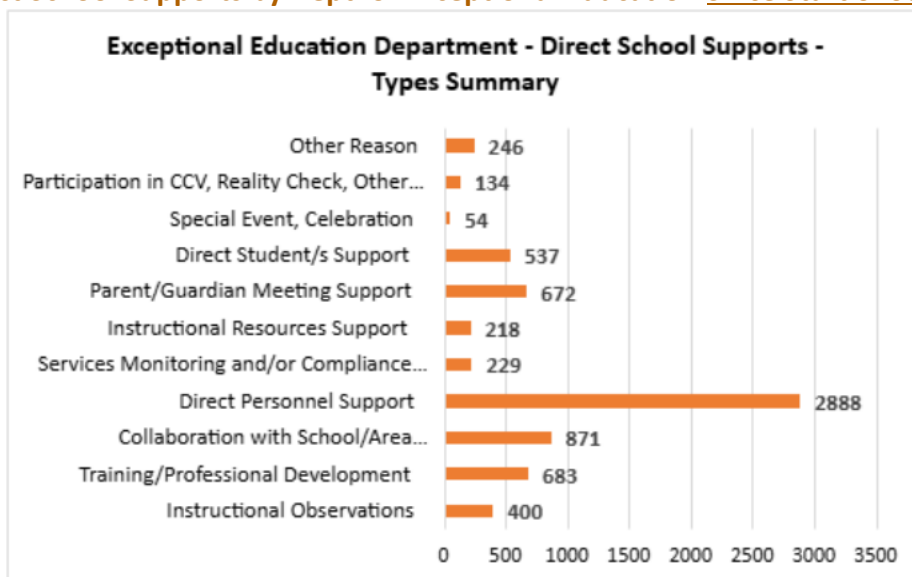
We proudly celebrate the exceptional commitment to Section 504 compliance demonstrated by several DCSD schools that have gone above and beyond in ensuring equitable access for all students, exemplified by excellence in implementing Section 504 processes. These schools consistently met and exceeded expectations in critical areas such as Child Find, timely annual reviews, accurate documentation, and adherence to procedural safeguards. Their dedication to upholding the rights of students with disabilities reflects a deep commitment to inclusive practices and educational equity. We applaud their outstanding efforts and celebrate their leadership in fostering a culture of compliance, compassion, and collaboration.

This summer, the special education department provided specialized instruction and related services to students with disabilities beyond the regular school year through the Extended School Year program, aiming to prevent skill regression. School-based in-person programs had an average attendance of 262 students through June 23, 2025. Tutorial support, as identified by individual students' needs, averaged 150 students through June 23, 2025.

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 Start of School Year



Executive Director Dr. Zack Phillips

Early Learning and Pre-K

Dr. Phillips and members of the Department of Early Learning and Pre-K Programs have been working diligently to support district staff members who are identified to work our Pre-K3 pilot and Pre-K4 Summer Transition Programs at the Early Learning Center, Barack Obama ES, and Panola Way ES. Students participating in the Pre-K3 pilot program at the Early Learning Center received instructional support from Monday, June 9, to Friday, June 27. Students participating in

the Pre-K4 programs at Barack Obama ES and Panola Way ES received instructional support from Monday, June 2nd, to Thursday, July 3rd. Dr. Phillips participated as a member of the DeKalb County Excellence in Education Conference on Thursday, June 19th, and served as a panelist, highlighting the documentary *"The Right to Read"* and the current literacy crisis in the state of Georgia and across the nation. Dr. Phillips participated in the SAP **At a Glance** recording session on Friday, June 20th, as a member of the Central SAP Committee to provide updates to district stakeholders. Professional learning sessions are being planned for current Pre-K (3&4) teachers and paraprofessionals in July, in preparation for the upcoming 2025-2026 school year.



Professional Learning Opportunities

The Early Learning/Pre-K Department has worked diligently during June to offer support to our Pre-K (3&4) summer programs for our young scholars. Additional professional learning (PL) opportunities will be provided to current Pre-K (3&4) teachers and paraprofessionals in July 2025. The topics listed below will be limited to a maximum of 40 staff members per session.

- (7/7/25) – Instructional Strategies for High-Achieving Young Scholars
- (7/7/25) – Early Learning Stages of Writing via Fine Motor Skill Development
- (7/8/25) – Differentiated Instruction for Young Scholars
- (7/8/25) – Age-Appropriate Small Group Literacy Stations
- (7/9/25) – Promoting Instructional Engagement During Center Time
- (7/9/25) – Supportive Environments that Promote Engagement

- (7/9/25) – Take a Deep Breath – Promoting Self-Regulation
- (7/10/25) – Instructional Learning Targets & Success Criteria
- (7/10/25) – Using Anchor Charts as an Instructional Tool

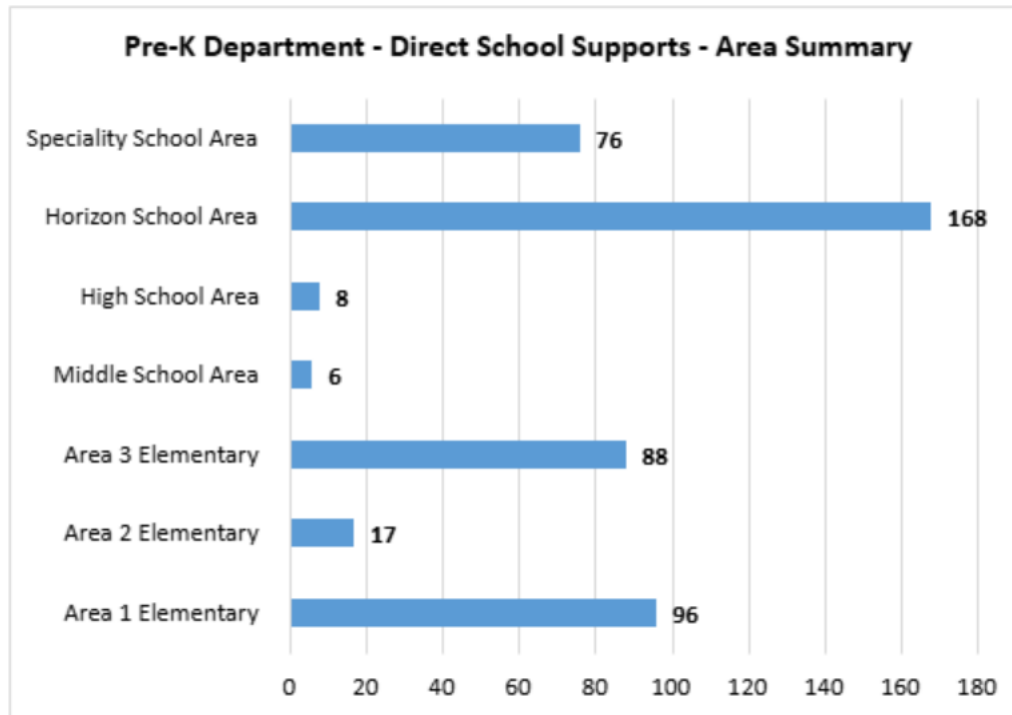
These excellent (PL) opportunities for staff members are aligned with the DCSD Strategic Plan and the DCSD MIRACLES Framework for Continuous Improvement.

Instructional Activities

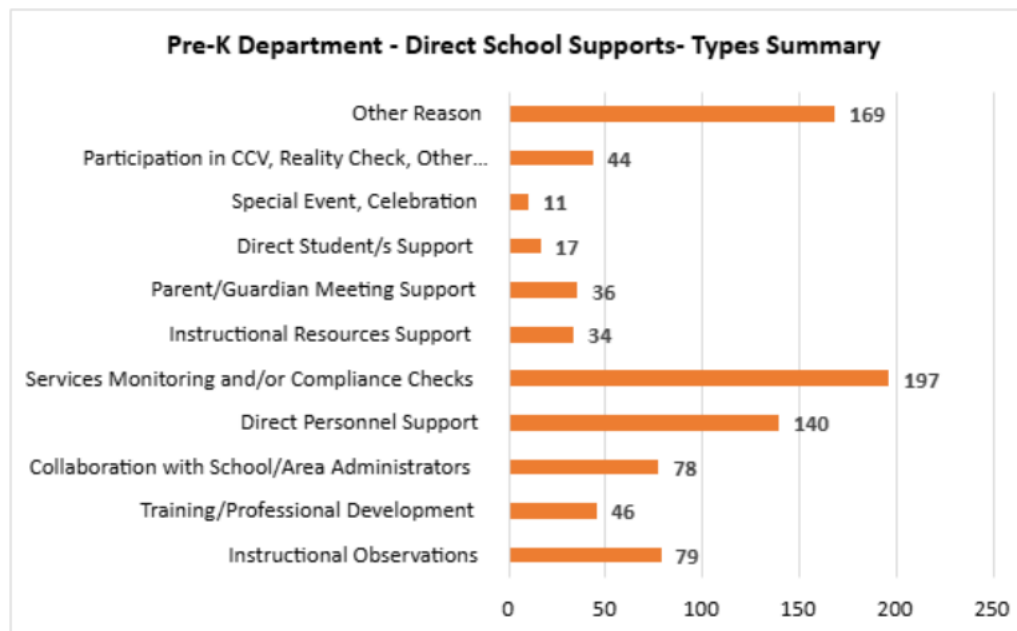
Instructional activities from our Pre-K (3&4) Summer Transition Program classrooms throughout the district are highlighted below via the gallery walk.



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



Types of Direct School Supports by Dept. of Pre-K and Early Learning Since Start of School Year



Senior Coordinators Donyell Atkinson and Kristen Drake

Gifted Education

The Gifted Education Department was excited to offer the Serendipity Summer Enrichment Program from June 9 to 13, 2025, at Stone Mountain Middle School to students in grades 1-6 who attended a school within the DeKalb County School District. During the week-long program, 237 students engaged in elective courses such as World Language (Spanish), Music, Culinary Arts, STEM, STEAM, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Computer Technology, Health, Physical Education, and Problem-Based Learning via Social Studies. At the end of camp, 14 students in grades 6 earned their CPR/First Aid certification card from the American Heart Association.



[Music Video: Bucket Drums & Ukuleles](#)

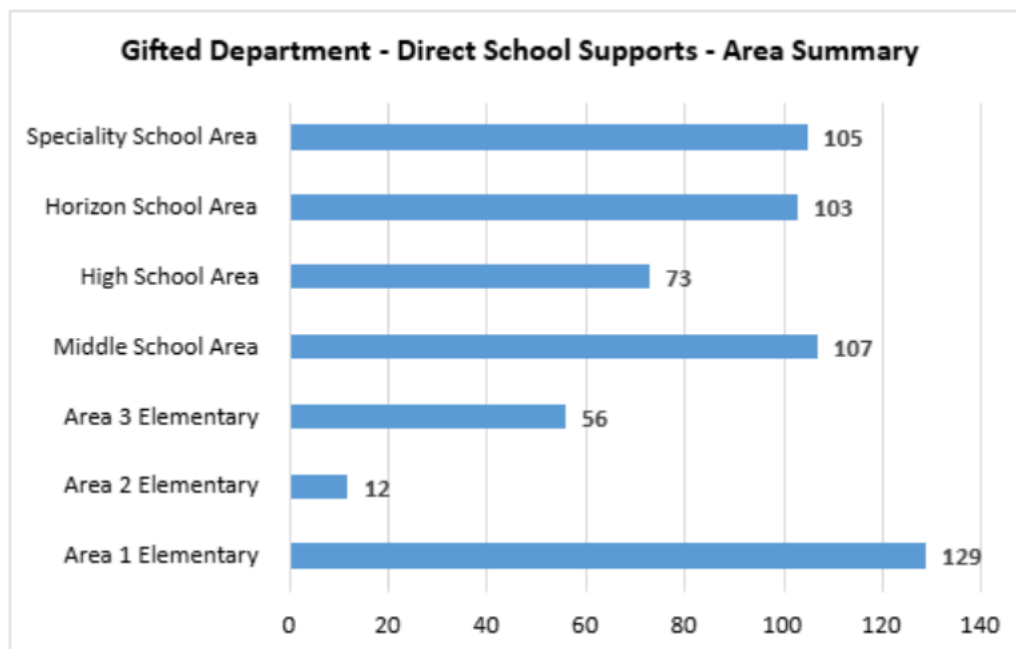


We know that the suspense is a nail-biter. Like you, the Gifted Education Department is excited to learn of the results from the spring's test cycle however due to the number of students screened for gifted and the process for data verification from all of the assessments used in the district's screening process parents and local schools' gifted liaisons can expect to know of the status of students that were screened for gifted on or before the first day of school.

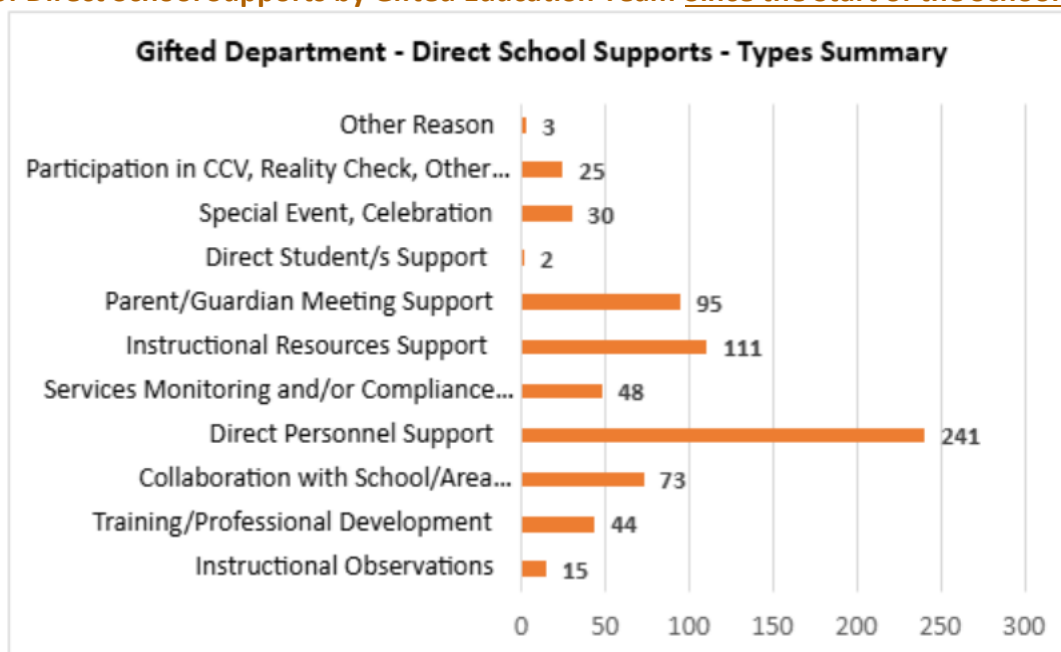
The Gifted Education Department offers summer professional learning for teachers. Teachers experience five stations that address reading, vocabulary, and critical thinking during the three-hour sessions titled "*New Levels with Newsela and Critical Thinking Books.*" Teachers utilized the instructional resources purchased by the Gifted Education Department during the 2024-25 school year. Thanks to a partnership with the Office of Federal Programs, the teachers also received books of their choice from *The Critical Thinking Co.* Additionally, our collaboration with Educational Media enabled the teacher-librarians to catalog multiple copies of critical thinking books, allowing any teacher to check out the reproducible materials from our school libraries.



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

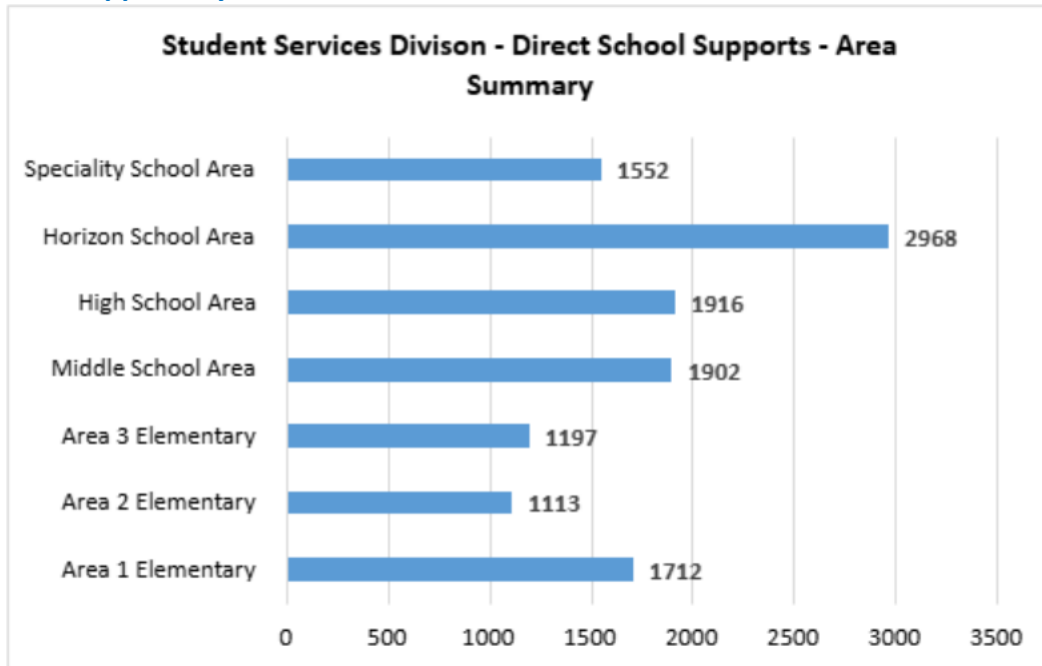


Types of Direct School Supports by Gifted Education Team Since the Start of the School Year

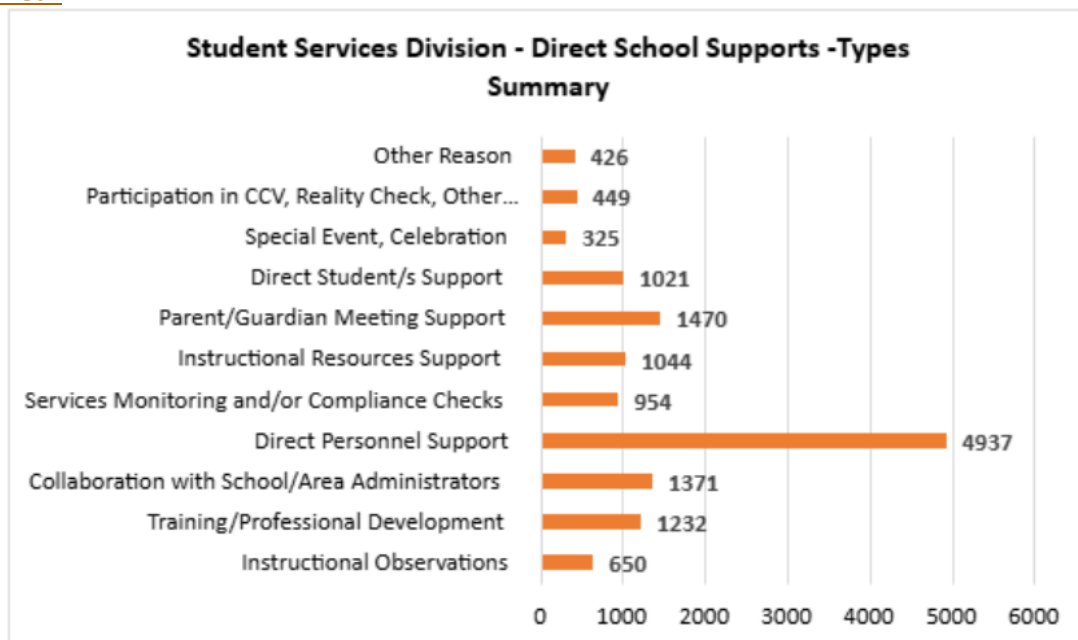


Division of Student Services - Direct School Supports Totals – Since Start of School Year

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



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



Chief Dr. Kishia Towns

Wrap Around Services

The summer months are a time to ensure that all staff members receive maximum professional development to prepare for the upcoming school year. The Division of Wrap Around Services has been working closely with school-based staff and District staff to provide various training opportunities, including Mindset Verbal De-escalation, Restorative Practices, PBIS, and Senior Advisor training. We are excited to enhance the individual knowledge, skills, and abilities of staff members, ultimately boosting their career growth and performance.



Horizon School Retreat

On June 3, 2025, Dr. Kishia Towns had the pleasure of bringing greetings to the extraordinary Horizon School educators during the Horizon School Retreat. It was an excellent opportunity to not only share salutations but also data that demonstrated our Horizon schools are on the rise. The graduating class of 2025 from the Horizon Area completed over 1500 4E plans, including entrepreneurship, enrollment, enlistment, and employment. They received more than 1,000 acceptances into colleges and universities throughout the country and earned more than \$45 million in scholarships and grants.

As we move forward during the 25-26 school year, the Department of Student Advancement, along with the counselors and senior advisors, will work harder to ensure that at least 90% of all seniors have a post-secondary plan. Additionally, the goal is to increase scholarship and grant earnings by 10% for an overall District earning of \$220 million during the 2025-2026 school year.

State of Dr. MLK Jr. High School: Building the Bridge from School to Community

The Dr. MLK Jr. High School staff and Principal Michael Alexander hosted the first community breakfast to discuss bridging the gap between the school and the surrounding community. This meeting was held in the wake of an incident that occurred during the 2024-2025 school year. The event featured Board member Dr. Tiffany Hogan, Commissioner Lorraine Cochran Johnson, and other notable community members. Principal Alexander shared a message of unity and engagement. All participants actively engaged in collaborative discussions around the School Culture Plan for MLK Jr. High School. The insights and perspectives gained were invaluable, and efforts to strengthen the school climate and community partnerships will continue through the 2025-2026 school year, as a task force will be developed to address the most prevalent issues.



Executive Director Christopher Key

Student Advancement

Post-Secondary Outreach

Senior Advisors are prepared for the Senior Summer Success Program, which is designed to address summer melt. In this phenomenon, due to complex factors, “students presumed to be headed to college fail to matriculate at any institution following graduation.” (Summer Melt by Castleman & Page, 2014. Data from the Senior Summer Success Program is as follows:

Senior Support Tasks

Senior Survey - 344

Clearinghouse Scholarships - 11

College University Application - 69

Enlistment Application Support - 6

FAFSA Applications - 62

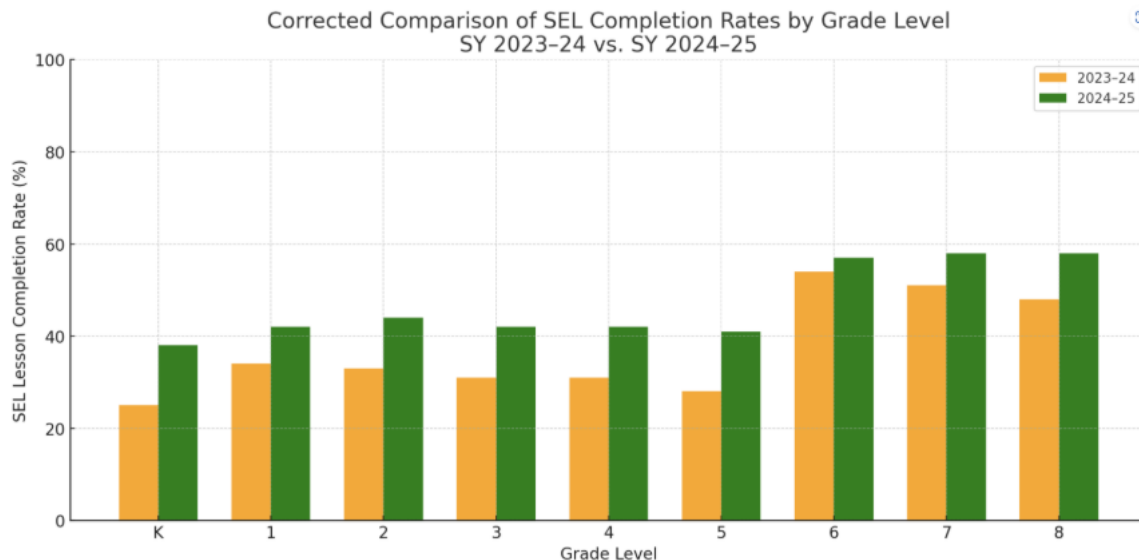
Employment Applications - 4

Entrepreneurship Support - 3

Transcript Support - 4

Georgia Student Finance Commission Applications - 12

Total Student Entries - 569

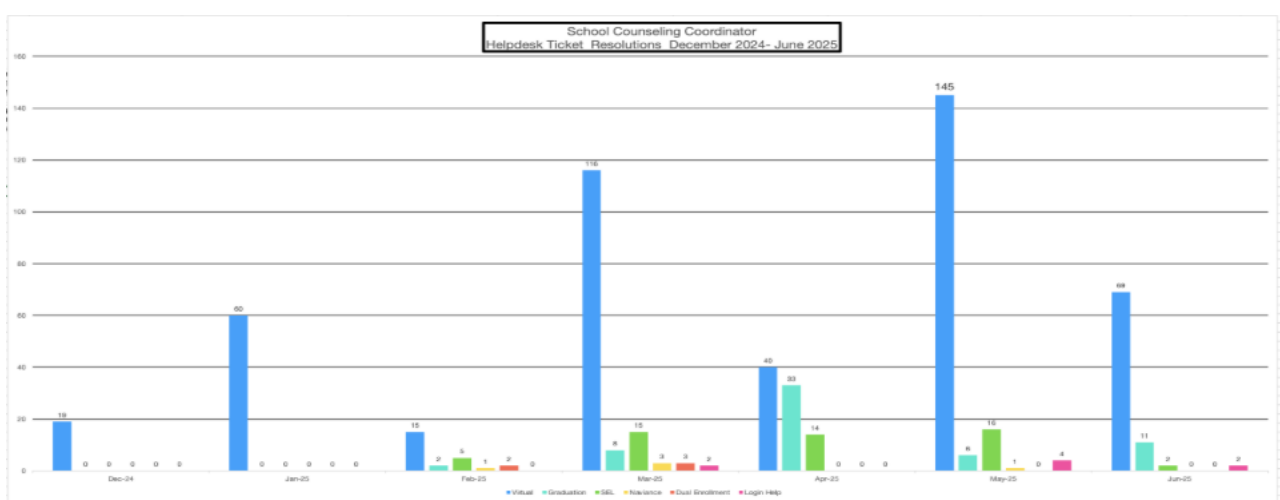
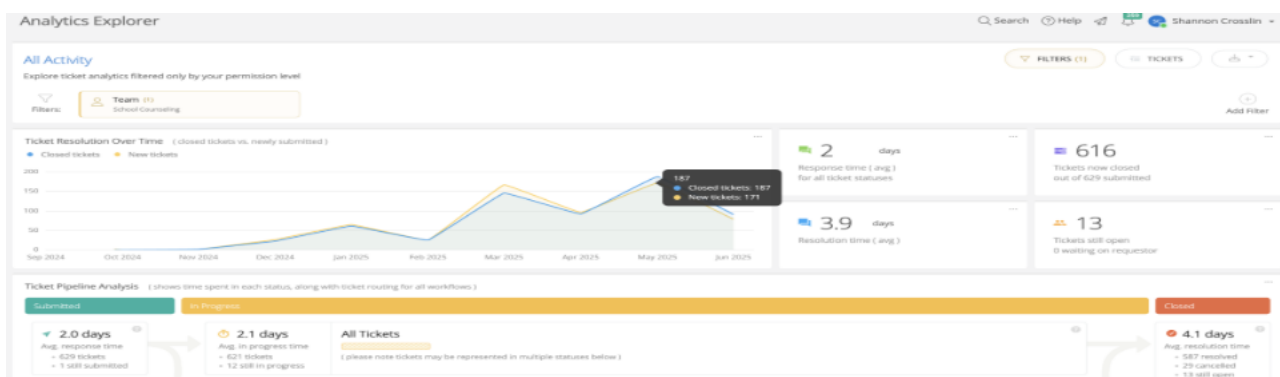


- Elementary grades show **notable growth** in completion from 2023–24 to 2024–25.
- Middle school grades **also improved across all levels**, with 8th grade showing the greatest gain.

Summary of SEL Completion Trends (SY 2023–24 vs. SY 2024–25):

- **Overall Growth:** The district experienced consistent growth in SEL lesson completion rates across all grade levels.
- **Elementary Grades (K–5):**
 - Average completion increased from **30%** in SY 2023–24 to **40%** in SY 2024–25.
 - The greatest improvements were seen in kindergarten (up 13%) and 5th grade (up 13%).
- **Middle School Grades (6–8):**
 - Average completion increased from **51%** to **58%**.
 - Seventh and eighth grades saw the largest gains (+7% and +10%, respectively), achieving the highest completion rates across all grades.
- **Key Insight:** The most significant improvements occurred in the **elementary band**, indicating stronger implementation fidelity at the foundational levels. Middle school performance remained strong and improved further, reflecting increased consistency and engagement.

iiQ Ticketing for School Counseling



From December 2024 through June 2025, **Virtual School Requests** were the dominant driver of helpdesk activity, accounting for approximately 78% of all tickets. These requests notably surged in March (116 tickets) and peaked in May at 145, likely aligning with academic term transitions, enrollment deadlines, or other virtual-learning milestones. Following these high points, the volume decreased in June to 69—still significantly higher than in the winter months.

Graduation Requests emerged from March onward, showing a sharp increase as the school year wrapped up: climbing from 8 in March to 33 in April, then tapering to 11 in June. Meanwhile, **SEL tickets** exhibited a steady rise between February and May (5 → 16), reflecting increased demand for emotional and behavioral support during the spring, before falling to 2 in June.

Lower-volume categories—**Naviance**, **Dual Enrollment**, and **Login Assistance**—contributed modestly. They each appeared sporadically, with peaks of 4–2 tickets in spring, reinforcing that most counselor-coordinator efforts centered elsewhere.

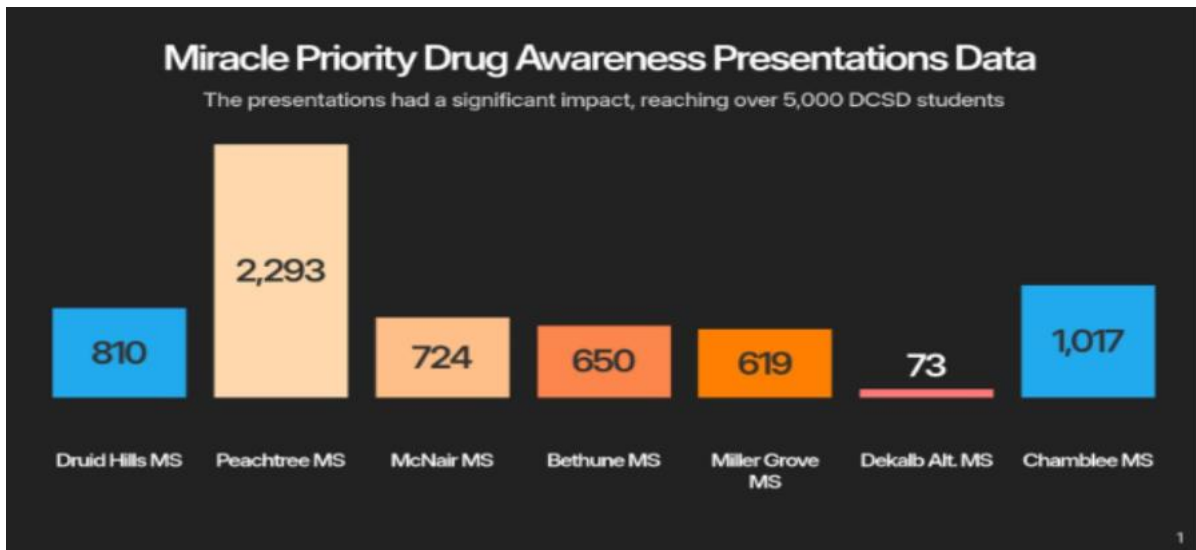
These patterns reflect broader helpdesk trends in educational settings: high-volume surges in response to academic cycles and the need for scalable triage during peak terms.

Anticipating these cycles can help optimize staffing, streamline workflows, and bolster support for SEL and graduation-related processes during the spring months.

Vaping Awareness Campaign

The rise in alcohol, vaping, and drug use among middle school students underscores the urgent need for stronger prevention education. Programs that help students understand risks, make informed choices, and resist peer pressure are essential. In DeKalb County School District (DCSD), initiatives like the Army National Guard Counterdrug Task Force's Drug Awareness Sessions support these efforts. Schools can further promote awareness by hosting workshops with healthcare professionals, organizing Red Ribbon Week, partnering with local health agencies, creating student support groups, and offering parent education sessions. These strategies encourage a drug-free lifestyle and strengthen community support. Currently, the committee is awaiting the legal review of the vape sensor contract, which is expected to be presented to the Board in August, with installation planned for September.

Year-end data below:



Director Denise Revels

Wrap Around and Support Services

After School Care Program (ASCP) Expansion

The After School Care Program is working closely with Right at School to onboard new After School Programs for the 2025-2026 school year. Dr. Barnes, Right at School Area Manager and Mr. James Hearn, ASCP Coordinator, visited all schools on June 17th, 18th, and 20th. Dr. Barnes was able to provide more information about the daily operations of the program and discuss the delivery of supplies. Preparation to launch the program in August will occur in July. The Right at School Area Manager and DCSD ASCP Coordinator will conduct final site visits prior to the start date.



DCSD School Nurse Leaders attend the Georgia Association of School Nurses (GASN)

DCSD School Nurse Leaders attended the Georgia Association of School Nurses (GASN) 2025 Conference provided a wealth of knowledge, resources, and trainings. This yearly statewide event provides school-based nurses and leaders with insight, educational tools, and valuable training to stay current with the best practices in a school setting. Hearing and vision training updates were provided, with an opportunity for nurses to become certified following a test and passing score. During the upcoming school year, vision updates will be shared with school-based nurses and other selected staff members during the hearing and vision training sessions.



Director Dr. Darnell Logan

Student Relations

Disconnect to Reconnect

The Request for Proposal (RFP) process is currently underway for the Disconnect to Reconnect initiative, specifically for identifying and selecting vendors to install cell phone lockers in schools. During the week of June 24, 2025, the Department of Student Relations and the Department of Finance hosted a joint informational session for prospective vendors. This session provided an opportunity for prospective vendors to ask live questions and receive real-time responses regarding the RFP. We are awaiting additional questions in writing from vendors, which we will address before the RFP submission window closes.

Student Discipline/Student Reintegration

During the month of June, the Department of Student Relations scheduled ten (10) District Due Process Hearings (DDPH). Of these, four (4) were withdrawn, resulting in six (6) DDPH held. Additionally, Student Relations presented two (2) Board Appeals and cleared six (6) students to attend their designated attendance zone schools within the DCSD.

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

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

PBIS District Leadership Team Meeting

On June 5, 2025, the PBIS District Team held its virtual End-of-Year PBIS District Leadership Team Meeting with 39 participants. The session focused on reviewing and celebrating 2024–2025 district goals and accomplishments, engaging in collaborative discussions to share best practices and address challenges, and providing updates on district-wide PBIS implementation and Whole Child Supports Integration priorities. The team also outlined initiatives and next steps for the 2025–2026 school year. Meeting objectives were successfully met and well received by meeting district leaders who support academic, discipline, behavior, and student well-being implementation initiatives. A link to the evaluation feedback and attendance roster is available.

GaMTSS PBIS School EOY Recognition Submissions and House Bill 268

The PBIS District Team completed all SLDS GaMTSS Recognition submission requirements for PBIS schools. Dr. Darnell Logan, Director of Student Relations, and Brandy Woolridge, PBIS Coordinator, also met with Chasity Middlebrooks-Cody from the Legal Department to review House Bill 268 and discussed next steps to support schools receiving a 1- or 2-star School Climate Rating.

Administrator Dr. Quentin Fretwell

Student Relations

The “Bullying Stops Here!” Awareness Campaign

In collaboration with the GaDOE and GEMA/HS, the GaPSC has developed a School Safety and Anti-Gang teaching certificate endorsement. This endorsement requires twenty courses and includes a course on bullying awareness. Dr. Fretwell developed this required course for the GaDOE, and his video session is now available on its website.

Dr. Fretwell presented at the Georgia Alliance of School Resource Officers and Educators (GASROE) annual GS3 School Safety Conference. His topic was The ABCs of School Safety. He is also presenting at this week’s annual CPS Parent Support Conference and the BENPRO Conference relative to mental health on August 14, 2025, at Jekyll Island. Moreover, Dr. Fretwell attended the 2025 GEMA/HS and School Safety Conference.

Dr. Fretwell is conducting final reviews of all revised bullying training materials and information. Discussions are being held to determine the most effective and efficient methods to disseminate

this information to school officials. In addition, he is scheduled to present in-person training sessions to school personnel (by request), various departments, and transportation (including all bus drivers).