# DCSS Curriculum Check In

## With Tech Tools and Title 1 News

**THIS MONTH'S AGENDA**

(DCSS STRATEGIC PLAN LEARNING GOAL 2)

***November 2026***

***Curriculum Updates with Dr. Mariella Douglas, Curriculum Director***

1. **GADOE Updates**
    a. Ornaments at the GADOE
    **b.** Subscribe to the Teachers Connections Quarterly Digital Newsletter from the Office of Teaching & Learning. **LINK**

2. **Certification Updates:**
    a. Georgia educators looking to add a new teaching field to a 5-year Induction or Professional teaching certificate must pass the appropriate content assessment, and, effective July 1, 2025, the appropriate literacy assessment.
    b. Educators wanting certification in one of the fields outlined here:
        i. Elementary Education (P-5),
        ii. Special Education General Curriculum/Elementary Education (P-5),
        iii. Middle Grades Reading (4-8), and
        iv. Reading (P-12).) must meet the following:
            1. Complete a GaPSC-approved/accepted program in the specific field.
            2. Pass the required GACE content assessment and
            3. Pass the aligned literacy assessment (effective July 1, 2025).
    c. Reminder- Typically, you cannot “test down” but if you have a SPED K-12 certification, there is a way to add Elementary Education.
        i. Effective October 15, 2026, Special Education certified teachers (who completed their certification program in Special Education) must meet the following requirements if they are needing to add Elementary Education (P-5):
            1. Pass the GACE Elementary Ed assessment,
            2. pass the Application of the Science of Reading literacy assessment, and
            3. complete a GaPSC-approved Reading Endorsement program.

3. **November is Family Engagement Month**
    a. Communicate Something Positive- Send a quick positive message, email, or phone call home. Don't just contact families when there's a problem! A simple message celebrating student effort or progress builds strong relationships.
    b. Share Learning and Simple At-Home Activities- Let families know what students are learning and suggest easy ways to reinforce skills at home. For example, encourage reading together, practicing math facts, or discussing what students learned that day.
    c. Invite Families to Participate and Provide Feedback- Use quick surveys, classroom invitations, or simple questions to encourage family input. Make families feel that their opinions matter and that they are partners in their child's education.
    ***Key Message for Teachers:*** *Family engagement doesn't have to be complicated or time-consuming. Small, consistent efforts to communicate, connect, and collaborate can make a big difference in student success.*

4. **ELA- 2026-2027 is the 6th and final year for this adoption cycle. The new cycle will begin 2027-2028. Here is the current discussion:**
    a. CommonLit- (6th-12th Grades)
        i. Accessible through Clever
        ii. We still have StudySync. Please let me know your thoughts as you work with it, By Spring 2027, we will need to make a decision about the ELA curriculum. Our StudySync contract is up at the end of this year.
            1. Renew StudySync, OR
            2. Use resources we have and upgrade CommonLit
    b. K-2- Reading Wonders will continue since it is one of GADOE's recommended HiQ Material, but our focus of instruction for teaching to read and phonics will continue being UFLI
    c. 3-5- 3rd grade is also in the group for Reading Wonders, 4th and 5th will need to make a decision to continue to follow K-3rd grade, or consider what 6th-12th grade is using. This will be later in the school year.

5. **Math Matter Bill- Math matters!**

**1 | Required Math Time — Grades 4–5 (Beginning 27-28)**

- At least 60 minutes daily or 300 minutes weekly of grade-level, Tier 1 core mathematics instruction for every student.
- Whole-group, small-group, and collaborative instruction count. EIP, special education, ESOL, gifted services, and interventions must not replace core math time.

**2 | Advanced Math Access — Grades 6–10 (Beginning 27-28)**

- Students scoring Distinguished Learner on the prior year's state math EOG/EOC must be automatically enrolled in an appropriate advanced mathematics course.
- Students scoring Proficient may be considered through local measures and parent requests; parents may opt out of automatic enrollment.
- Districts must provide advanced pathways: grades 6–7 may enhance existing standards; an eighth-grade advanced course must offer high school credit (e.g., Enhanced Algebra: Concepts & Connections).

**3 | Evidence-Based Instruction — All Grades (Beginning 27-28)**

- Teach the four strands: conceptual understanding (why), procedural fluency (accurate and flexible methods), productive disposition (confidence), and real-world problem solving (application).
- Prioritize reasoning, mathematical discussion, justification, and meaningful problem solving. Timed tests are not required.

**4 | Supports, Communication & Preparation (Beginning 27-28)**

- Provide reasonable supports for students in advanced courses, such as small groups, tutoring, additional time, and technology-enabled practice; supports supplement core instruction.
- Inform families about advanced courses, postsecondary pathways, enrollment requests, and opt-out procedures. Teacher preparation standards will emphasize evidence-based math.

**DCSS PREPARATION PRIORITIES — 2026–2027**

- Review grades 4–5 schedules; map grades 6–12 advanced offerings; establish consistent placement and parent communication procedures.
- Use Georgia Milestones, course grades, and other readiness evidence; continue strong Tier 1 instruction and targeted WIN/intervention supports.

6. **RESA Contests**
    a. ART for December (Due to me by December 1)
        i. “Happiness”
        ii. Files must be saved as JPEG and named in the right format
            1. 6.DodgeMiddle.John.Smith
    b. ART for January is Artist’s Choice.
        i. Due to me by 1/11/2027
    c. ART for February is Self Portrait
    d. March is Senior’s Only (Artist’s choice)

    e. NOVEMBER
        i. Kindergarten-2nd grade submission due by 11/18. In ODF format saved like ***K.DodgePrimary.Jane.Doe***
        ii. 3rd Grade-12th Grade contest is 11/19/2026 (all day)
            1. 1 student per grade level
            2. 90 minutes to write on provided topic
            3. Email will be provided the week of contest

7. **GAPSC Standard 4: Honesty**
    a. An educator must exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice
    b. Unethical conduct under Standard 4 includes, but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:
        i. Professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credits, degrees, academic awards, and employment history (when applying for employment, certification, or recommending someone else).
        ii. Information submitted to federal, state, local school districts, or other governmental agencies.
        iii. Information regarding the evaluation of students or personnel

A teacher realizes that a student is one point away from passing a course. The student has worked hard all semester but has not demonstrated mastery of several required standards. The teacher decides to add a few points to the student's final grade so the student can pass, even though no additional work was completed.