



FY18 STRATEGIC PLAN COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strategic Plan focuses on the vision to inspire our community of learners to achieve educational excellence and the mission to ensure student success, leading to higher education, work, and life-long learning. This Executive Summary highlights the progress made during FY18, which was the District's fourth full year of plan implementation.

A systemic approach to reviewing, updating, and monitoring the Strategic Plan ensures the District is engaged in continuous improvement efforts for meeting the needs of all students. Quarterly and annual reviews help to track on-going implementation of the strategic priorities, assess progress on key performance measures, identify challenges, and develop solutions. This focus on continuous improvement keeps the District aligned, puts systems in place, and promotes sustainability. The FY18 quarterly Strategic Planning sessions for each division were held on October 12, 2017 and May 3, 2018. In addition, the FY18 Mid-Year Review was conducted on January 18, 2018. The FY18 Comprehensive Review was conducted on September 6, 2018 and information will be shared with the Board of Education. The Comprehensive Review will assist the District with reviewing practices, reporting progress, and communicating the status to all stakeholders.

Continuous Improvement System sessions were offered to all schools in October/November 2017 and February 2018. Participants engaged in learning designed to strengthen capacity for monitoring and supporting implementation of the Continuous School Improvement System with fidelity. They were also provided support with identifying evidence-based strategies linked to data informed priorities and District initiatives. These strategies will be included in the development of the Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP) and will be implemented to achieve the established goals.

The FY18 results of the strategic planning efforts yielded District achievements as well as opportunities for improvement. The highlights listed below are not meant to be a comprehensive accounting of this year's successes. Rather, it details high impact, system-level progress that moves the District closer to realizing its vision and mission.

Goal Area I: Student Success with Equity and Access

When the district leaders developed the strategic plan in 2013, they focused on student equity and access in all areas. Goal Area 1 has been a critical building block as the district has moved forward to meet the needs of all students throughout the past four years. During the FY18 school year, several critical components to the "infrastructure of student success" have been developed. Without this infrastructure in place, true student achievement would not be systemic nor possible. Our development, approval and implementation of our new district curriculum is a major hurdle to ensure all students have a high quality and consistent opportunity for teaching and learning. Digital Dreamers, developed through the Information Technology Division, created processes to ensure that every student in DeKalb County Schools District has access and training in technology equipment and tools. The work through the Curriculum and Instruction Division in the area of special education has changed the focus from simply providing services to special needs students. The new process now includes listening and learning about the needs of the family and special child, and then building services that best meet those needs. There has been great success during FY18 in the achievement of Title I students in all academic areas.

Very significant in the work of Goal Area 1, Student Success with Equity and Access, is the creation of the Office of Accountability. The district is now able to rely on accurate and consistent data to drive decision-making and track progress. While much work has to be completed, we are now grounded with the platform that will allow us to move the needle on student achievement.

Goal Area II: Stakeholder Engagement

The Student Support and Intervention Division has emphasized work in FY18 that will provide a continued impact on improving the culture and climate of the DeKalb County School District in future years. Dr. Roland Barth, renowned educator and author, has written several books on culture and climate. In his book, *The Culture Builder*, Dr. Barth says that culture and climate have more influence on life and learning in the schoolhouse than the president of the country, the State Department of Education, the superintendent, the school board, or even the principal, teachers, and parents can ever have.

Student Support and Intervention has provided extensive training and support through wrap-around services and intervention programs. Due to intervention support and training, the District has experienced a decrease in student disciplinary incidents and student consequences that impact students being taken out of the learning classroom. Intervention programs, Mental Health First Aid Training, and an effort to place certified LPNs and RNs in our schools are further supporting students and families' well-being.

Goal Area III: Staff Efficacy and Excellence

The new leadership in the Human Capital Management Division has focused on data to ensure strong and meaningful metrics that allow us to track teacher recruitment, selection, hiring and retention. Therefore, there has been an effort to redefine measures that can support an effective talent management system. We will continue to find ways to make progress in teacher and classified retention and focus on filling all vacancies with highly qualified staff.

Goal Area IV: Internal and External Communication

The Communications and Community Engagement Division has focused on customer service and digital communication throughout the past year and, through their efforts, have provided outstanding support for both our internal and external stakeholders. Their work has brought a new level of professionalism to our central office and school communications as they work with parents and the community.

Goal Area V: Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency

The Finance Division continues to provide high quality services to the district, while developing cost cutting internal strategies to ensure that funding is available to schools. The new ERP system will increase the number of electronic payments made and recorded in Accounts Payable, creating district savings.

The Operations Division continues to focus on safety and efficiency. The Operations Division has emphasized the safety of our buses and support vehicles and worked to reduce the number of hours that a bus or vehicle was off the road due to repair to ensure an efficient and safe environment for our students and staff. The Operations Division has also continued the work of increasing recycling in our schools and buildings as well as making a concerted effort to reduce the number of days for work order completion in our buildings.

Throughout the past four years, the Legal Division has worked to create a customer friendly service for the stakeholders of the DeKalb County School District. They have been working to reduce the time that Open Records are provided when requested. They have also worked to reduce the amount of time that employees are out of their building after an injury by ensuring claims are handled and closed within

twelve months. While the percentage was slightly down this year, the number of claims handled increased and the focus has been to close out high dollar cases so that they do not become more expensive for the school district.

The FY19 performance measures (SMART goals), targets, initiatives, and actions steps have been informed by the FY18 results. Rigorous monitoring and data collection cycles will assist in identifying and driving improvement efforts in the District. Assessing progress, developing plans, implementing plans, and monitoring interventions are processes that will be sustained and happen continuously. In addition, work is currently in progress with the development of the next 5-year Strategic Plan which will provide new direction for 2019-2024. This contemplative process will involve a wide range of stakeholders. It includes rethinking and reaffirming the District's mission, vision, and belief statements, as well as examination of the strengths, weaknesses, goal areas, performance measures, and strategies.