

Miller Grove Cluster Townhall Remaining Questions

Under the new pay scale for 12-month employees, we cannot see our time accumulating. Is there a way that we can access this information?
Time and attendance have not been processed in Munis since we implemented in October. We are planning on catching up January 17th.

There is only one copier per school. Is there an option to get an additional copier?
The current allocation of copiers was determined based on enrollment and building layout. In most cases, there are multiple copiers in a school. Please contact the school administrator with concerns about copiers so that the Division of Information and Instructional Technology can review. It is also important to note that planning for a competitive bidding process for managed print services is underway and will refresh all copiers by the end of the calendar year, pending Board of Education approval.

Why does it take so long to get scholars that are in need of Exceptional Education services placed?

A student is identified by the parent/guardian and/or teacher and then goes through the MTSS/RTI process. If the student does not make sufficient progress with the more intensive, evidence-based interventions provided, the student is referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education. The evaluation involves multiple service providers providing data to determine eligibility (e.g. teachers, speech pathologists, LTSE, school psychologist, etc.).

If you are a teacher on a provisional certificate, can you apply for the IGNITE Program and will you be moved from your current position once you complete the program?

Teachers who currently have a provisional certificate are not eligible for the IGNITE program. This program is for initial inductees into the classroom. Please visit our website for eligibility criteria: <https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/ignite/>

Are we considering re-opening the International School for students who are non-English speaking with parents who are also non-English speaking?

The DeKalb International Student Center did not close. The DeKalb International Student Center maintains the Lab Program for students with limited and interrupted formal education (SLIFE).

To serve our newcomer English Learner population in grades 3 through 12 more effectively, students who qualify for Intensive English (IE) are now served at their home schools beginning the 2023-2024 school year instead of the DeKalb International Student Center. DCSD's schools have an established ESOL program and are equipped to serve their own newcomer English Learners (EL).

Serving our ELs at their home schools allows local schools to directly impact their students' performance and eliminates the extensive commute experienced by some families

and students. Newcomer English Learners continue receiving the wrap-around support needed to ensure they thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

How are parents notified when there are administrative changes or teacher changes at a school?

Thus far as the High School Area office have become aware of mid-semester teacher changes, teacher leaves of absence, etc. we have advised on and provided examples for class-level parent letters to send to the families of impacted classes – to notify said-families of the relevant teacher-level change. After the beginning of the school year, middle schools inform parents of teacher changes by sending letters home of the impacted students/classes via School Messenger or class email in Infinite Campus. Schools use local communicate such as newsletters, school messenger, or Class Dojo for communicating with families about personnel changes. As far as administrative, the school Area Superintendent sends out communication when there is a principal change in the building. This is usually a letter via email. We are looking at other ways to communicate because we know all families don't have email. Examples would be sending a letter, using school messenger, social media outlets of the district etc.

Is Miller Grove a safe place for my child?

DeKalb County School District priority is to provide a safe, orderly, and positive learning environment for all students in all schools. Miller Grove High School is a safe high school that has taken specific security measures to ensure a safe learning environment by implementing the following strategies listed below.

- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS);
- Hold additional grade level meetings to discuss expectations and consequences;
- Provide opportunities to review conflict resolution strategies with all students;
- Plan to monitor social media traffic;
- School Resource Officers and Campus Security Personnel are on campus daily.
- DCSD Police Department and community resources collaborate on ways to support the students;
- Counselors, teachers, and social workers review social emotional learning (SEL) modules with all students;
- Plan of action based on root causes to assist students with better decision making and problem-solving;
- Identify students at the school that may need additional targeted assistance and support;
- Parent Meetings are held periodically to inform parents of the “State of the School”;
- District support is provided through collaboration with the area office, executive administrators, and culture and climate coordinators.

Will lockers come back to middle and high school?

At present, as we have learned this school year, at the high school level, this has been a school-by-school decision at the principal level. For example, high schools that have resumed using student lockers (since pandemic-era measures first removed student locker use across the board during the 2020-2021 school year) are: Arabia Mountain HS, Stephenson HS, Tapestry Charter School, Chamblee HS, DeKalb Early College Academy, Druid Hills HS, Southwest DeKalb HS, DeKalb School of the Arts. The remaining High School Area schools have not resumed using student lockers since pandemic-era measures were first implemented (2020-2021). Thus far, this has been a principal-level decision. To my knowledge, the Central Office has not given schools uniformed requirements on student locker use being required or prohibited since we resumed full-time in-person learning to begin the 2021-2022 school year. The Middle School Area is split 8:8. Eight schools allow their students to use lockers and eight do not. Those who do not cite the following reasons: not enough lockers, too many lockers need repair, not using them has improved tardies and minimized transition misbehavior. Eight schools that use them: Chamblee, Champion, Druid Hills, Freedom, Henderson, Miller Grove, Peachtree, Tucker Eight schools that do not use them: Cedar Grove, Chapel Hill, Columbia, Lithonia, Redan, Sequoyah, Stephenson, Stone Mountain

What accountability measures are in place to prevent recycling failed programs?

All schools develop a Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP) that is monitored throughout the academic year. Local school improvement teams analyze multiple data to identify data-informed priorities for improvement. Each school develops SMART goals, determines the measurable performance targets, selects evidence-based instructional improvement strategies, specifies action steps, and engages in progress monitoring at defined intervals to evaluate the implementation and impact of strategies, professional learning, and programs on student learning. Area Superintendents lead the monitoring cycles with support from cross-divisional team members.

Also, the DeKalb County School District is evaluating the proposals from qualified offerors with the professional qualifications, technical competence, and specialized experience to provide computer program evaluation services to include the following scope of work:

- Identify strengths and weaknesses in purchased computer applications.
- Identify successful programs and resources, and areas needing improvement.
- Identify resources that are and are not being allocated efficiently.
- Generate valuable data that can be used to identify evidence-based best practices.

- Offer recommendations that will inform future program development and implementation.
- Ensure compliance with education laws and regulations, reducing legal risks for the school district.
- Reveal disparities in program outcomes among different student populations, helping the school district to address issues of equity and fairness.
- Identify areas where programs can be improved, refined, or expanded to better serve the needs of students, teachers, and the community.
- Help ensure that taxpayer funds are being used effectively by providing an objective assessment of how well programs are meeting their intended goals.
- Develop a timeline for planning and execution of the Computer Program Evaluation Services process.

What is DCSD doing to relieve the workload of the dedicated teachers?

People: The District has hired more personnel to support the local schools. For instance, instead of having only two English Language Arts (ELA) coordinators to serve 93,000 students, there are now 14 ELA coordinators to provide intentional support within each area to fewer schools.

Policies: Under the legal guidance of Hall Booth Smith, P. C., the school district is actively reviewing all Board policies to make revisions as necessary.

Practices: Superintendent Dr. Horton has formed advisory committees to hear directly from dedicated staff. Ideas, concerns, and questions are shared during these meetings, which allow district-level and school-level leaders to adjust practices.

What professional learning is available to support teachers with behavior?

The district has provided training in the past; it has been limited to whole-group presentations. However, we recognize that individual and customized classroom observations are often needed. We are providing more of these opportunities for teachers. Last semester, Dr. Seroyer conducted whole group presentations at Tucker MS, Miller Grove MS, and Cross Keys HS, with CKHS and MGMS also having planning period meetings. CKHS also received individual classroom assistance. While she mainly works with student teachers, we offer Behavior Management through the NETWORK for teachers with 0-3 years of experience. As we receive more school requests, Dr. Seroye and the professional learning department will discuss ways to explore helping more teachers through a Classroom Management Course.

What are the financial incentives for perfect attendance for staff?

The current MARP award \$500 to employees hired on or before February 1, 2024, who miss 2 days or less between January 1, 2024, and May 15, 2024. The payout will be May 30, 2024.

What about motivational and social emotional learning for teachers?

Teachers are being trained using Second Step Social Emotional Learning (SEL) by the school-based counselors. Additionally, school social workers have been trained and will support the schools.

What should school websites include? Should they include SIP & Title I budget?

School administrators and local school webmasters are provided with a checklist of standard information to share on each school's website. The SIP and Title I budgets are not currently required in this standard. However, the school's leadership is empowered to add additional content that is relevant to each school's community.

Are you aware that an elementary school used Title I funds for employee salaries, healthcare, and insurance? Over \$200,000 was paid to employees. Are they not employees hired & paid by the district?

All staff who are hired with Title I funds are above and beyond what the district provides. They are considered supplemental staff based on the needs that are identified in the schools' comprehensive needs assessments (CNA).

Who approves the Title I budgets?

Title, I budget go through multiple levels of approval. The budgets are a part of the school's Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP). The schools review their data, determine priority areas, decide on improvement strategies to address the areas of concern, have action steps on how they will implement the improvement strategies, and determine what physical or human resources are needed (budgets). The Area Superintendent's team reviews all components of each school's CSIP. They provide feedback and recommendations. Once it is approved by the Area office, the Title I Coordinators conduct the final review and the Title I Director signs off that the CSIP has final approval.

What are the meeting requirements to discuss Title I budgets?

All Title I schools are required to have Stakeholder Engagement Meetings with internal and external stakeholders. These meetings discuss the school's comprehensive needs assessment and potential ways to address the needs through the CSIP, which includes the budget. They are required to have no less than two Stakeholder Engagement Meetings for

input. After the input, schools finalize their CSIPs, and they communicate with stakeholders through an Annual Title I meeting.

Is there a chance for 90-day probation to be re-instated for custodial staff?
Operations will work with Human Resources to evaluate.