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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DCSD Celebrates the Appointment of
20 New Principals for the 2024-25 School Year**

(STONE MOUNTAIN, GA)- The DeKalb County School District (*DCSD*) announces the appointment of 20 inspiring new principals who will lead their respective schools to *New Levels, New Heights*, the District's theme for the 2024-25 school year. Avondale, Bob Mathis, Briar Vista, Columbia, Dunwoody, Hawthorne, Henderson Mill, Marbut, Pine Ridge, Shadow Rock, Smoke Rise, and Woodward Elementary Schools; the International Student Center; Cedar Grove, Lithonia, Peachtree, and Stephenson Middle Schools; and Columbia, Druid Hills, and Southwest DeKalb High Schools are set to begin an exciting journey under the guidance of these exceptional educators.

DCSD Superintendent Dr. Devon Q. Horton expressed his confidence and gratitude to these outstanding school administrators.

"We are proud to welcome these outstanding leaders to their new roles. I am confident these principals will give their all to provide a high-quality education for the students in their buildings throughout the new school year and beyond," Dr. Horton said. "I thank each of them for accepting the responsibility to lead and anticipate the wonderful progress and achievements of their students, teachers, and staff members."

The incoming principals, sorted alphabetically by school name, are:

- **Avondale Elementary – Dr. Candace Sagers:** Dr. Sagers is a distinguished leader with 18 years in education. A proud DeKalb graduate of Redan High School, she has spent the past decade serving as the assistant principal at Avondale Elementary School, where her leadership has been recognized through multiple accolades.
- **Bob Mathis Elementary – Candace Wade-Blaise:** A DCSD product, Ms. Wade-Blaise has served the District as a teacher, academic coach, and assistant principal. She was previously an assistant principal at Redan Elementary School.
- **Briar Vista Elementary – Dyani Robinson:** Ms. Robinson has served as the assistant principal at Briar Vista since 2018. Her extensive background and deep commitment to educational excellence have significantly shaped the academic landscape at Briar Vista.

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- **Cedar Grove Middle – James Holloway:** Mr. Holloway is an 18-year educator with four years of experience as an assistant principal. He started his career as a teacher at Bethune Middle School in 2006 and has continued serving children at the high and middle school levels in various roles.
- **Columbia Elementary – Candace Hardy:** With over 21 years in education, Ms. Hardy has served in DCSD as assistant principal at Toney Elementary and Columbia Elementary School.
- **Columbia High – Dr. Pammy Darden:** Dr. Darden has been promoted from assistant principal to principal at Columbia High. She has more than 25 years of experience in education as a teacher, school test coordinator, assistant principal, and principal.
- **Druid Hills High – Dr. Michelle Stewart:** Dr. Stewart has been a dedicated educator for 25 years. She has served as a bus driver, transportation dispatcher, teacher, reading coach, and assistant principal.
- **Dunwoody Elementary – Kanessa Fain:** A 23-year veteran educator, Ms. Fain has served as an elementary teacher, the District’s Academic Coach for Literacy and Math, MTSS Coordinator, and assistant principal. She is a committed and dedicated educator.
- **Hawthorne Elementary – Kia Henley:** Ms. Henley has 20 years of education experience and 15 years in instructional leadership/management. She recently served as the assistant principal at John Lewis Elementary School.
- **Henderson Mill Elementary – Dr. Regina Blanton:** Dr. Blanton, a 24-year veteran educator, recently served as assistant principal at Henderson Mill. She began her career as a teacher in Yokota, Japan, and quickly advanced into leadership roles.
- **International Student Center – Gregory Wickersham:** A 28-year educator, Mr. Wickersham is returning to the International Student Center as principal. He taught at the center for two years, from 2015 to 2017. Prior to becoming principal, he was an assistant principal at Jolley Elementary and a coordinator for the District’s English Learners Department.
- **Lithonia Middle – Dr. Cornelius Polk:** Dr. Polk has been in education for over ten years. He previously worked in Fulton and Clayton County school districts before coming to DeKalb. He recently served as acting principal in Clayton County, as well as assistant principal and teacher.
- **Marbut Elementary – Dr. Tiffany Reeves:** With 22 years in education and seven years of service in DCSD, Dr. Reeves has significantly contributed to the academic success and teacher retention rates at Navie J. Harris Theme School.
- **Peachtree Middle – Dr. Jennifer Gates:** Dr. Gates brings nearly 20 years of experience in education to Peachtree and DCSD. She has served as a teacher, an academic coach, instructional and assistant principal in Canada and the Cobb County School District.
- **Pine Ridge Elementary – Lindsey Scott:** Ms. Scott, an educator for 17 years, has served as the assistant principal at Hawthorne Elementary School and has been with the District since 2003.

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- **Shadow Rock Elementary – Dr. Fricreta Rice:** Dr. Rice is entering her 15th year in education. She has previously served as an assistant principal, a Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (TAPP) curriculum mapping and planning instructor, an instructional coach, and teacher.
- **Smoke Rise Elementary – Dr. Krystye Tatum:** Dr. Tatum is a veteran educator with over 20 years of experience. She has served as a teacher, academic coach, and, most recently, assistant principal at Woodward Elementary School.
- **Southwest DeKalb High – Brandon Thompson:** Mr. Thompson is a 19-year educator who previously served as the assistant principal of instruction at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. High School.
- **Stephenson Middle – Tonya Izzard:** Ms. Izzard, who has 18 years of education experience, has served all her years in DeKalb, most recently as an assistant principal at Henderson Middle School.
- **Woodward Elementary – Kimberly Clark:** Ms. Clark, a 22-year veteran educator, has served as an assistant principal at Doraville United Elementary and Dresden Elementary.

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