DISRUPTING FOR EXCELLENCE

NEW LEVELS
NEW HEIGHTS

2024-2029

STRATEGIC PLAN

DeKalb County
School District

™

DeKalb County
School District

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FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Greetings DCSD Families, Teachers, Administrators, Staff, and Community Partners:

My fellow Board members and I are thrilled to share the new DeKalb County School District's (*DCSD*) Five-Year Strategic Plan for 2024-2029. This plan will ensure that all students in every DeKalb County neighborhood have access to nurturing, well-equipped schools providing rigorous instruction by highly qualified staff, leading to measurable student success.

Transparency and equity are the cornerstones of our leadership. We are dedicated to ensuring that every scholar receives a high-quality education, regardless of background, economic status, zip code, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Equity, engagement, and transparency are not just principles; they are the very practices we pledge to uphold for every community member.

Baseball legend Yogi Berra famously remarked, "*If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else.*" By following this comprehensive roadmap over the next five years, we have a clear destination and are more confident than ever in our scholars' academic, social, and emotional growth.

On behalf of the entire DeKalb County Board of Education, I extend our deepest thanks to everyone who tirelessly contributes to our students' success and to every individual who provided invaluable input in crafting the DCSD Five-Year Strategic Plan for 2024-2029. We appreciate your faithful support and dedication to DCSD scholars and look forward to the many future achievements we will accomplish together.

Warmest Regards,

Diijon DaCosta, Sr., *Chair*
DeKalb County Board of Education

CONTENTS

DISRUPTING FOR EXCELLENCE
NEW LEVELS HEIGHTS

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

UNVEILING OUR PATH FORWARD:
THE DCSD STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2024-2029

Dear Families, Educators, and Community Partners:

With tremendous pride, I share the DeKalb County School District (*DCSD*) Strategic Plan for 2024-2029. This enhanced five-year plan sets an extraordinary course for improved student success and achievement.

This strategic plan outlines a dynamic framework emphasizing a streamlined, focused approach to development, implementation, and accountability. It will guide our work to ensure that every district administrator, teacher, and staff member is clear about and aligned with our core teaching and learning mission. The plan charts a practical path to achieving more equitable student learning and life outcomes.

The plan's development was a collaborative effort shaped by extensive community engagement. Over the past year, we gathered insights from thousands of stakeholders, including families, students, educators, community partners, and elected officials. DCSD utilized surveys, town halls, school visits, and direct conversations. This strategic plan is a testament to their collective voice and dedication.

Nothing was off-limits. We identified long-standing challenges and inequities and sought root-cause solutions. We celebrated real successes and found ways to expand those across the district.

Since my official arrival in July 2023, I have made it my duty to ensure that DCSD is committed to fostering an environment where respect and meaningful interaction are at the forefront of our educational mission. Our dedication to the six core values of H-PRIDE—*H*umanization, *P*rofessionalism, *R*espect, *I*ntegrity, *D*ignity, and *E*mpathy—is deeply embedded in our daily operations and strategic initiatives. Through these principles, we are intentional in ensuring that every voice in our community is valued and heard, strengthening our District's culture and encouraging a more engaged and empowered community.

Another non-negotiable commitment is to fiscal responsibility. As we introduce DCSD's Strategic Plan for 2024-2029, we recognize our duty to be responsible stewards of public funds. Our pledge to practice thorough and intentional financial management assures that every dollar is allocated with a clear purpose that will directly support our strategic goals of boosting student learning and success. This careful planning and comprehensive financial oversight enable us to fulfill our promise of advancing educational excellence for every child.

This includes upgrading our facilities. As one of the largest property owners in the county, we maintain over 14 million square feet of space across 140 school sites and facilities. With a premium placed on safety, comfort, and growth, DCSD currently has 67 projects planned to enhance our learning environments within the next three years. These plans underscore the District's commitment to providing state-of-the-art facilities that promote learning, creativity, and the well-being of our students and staff.

The DCSD Strategic Plan for 2024-2029 is a living document designed to adapt to the evolving educational landscape. At its core, the strategic plan commits to building supportive structures that foster high-quality academic programs and increased achievement results, precisely what our students deserve and our community expects.

I encourage you to review it, ask questions, and actively seek opportunities to be part of the exciting future we are building at DeKalb County Schools.

Thanks to everyone who contributed their time, insights, and expertise to craft this strategic plan. Together, we are setting the stage for a brighter future, driven by our shared vision and united in our commitment to our students and our community.

Warm Regards,

Dr. Devon Q. Horton, *Superintendent*
DeKalb County School District

VISION

To prepare students for success as lifelong learners and responsible global citizens

MISSION

To promote the academic, social, and emotional growth of each student by fostering a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment
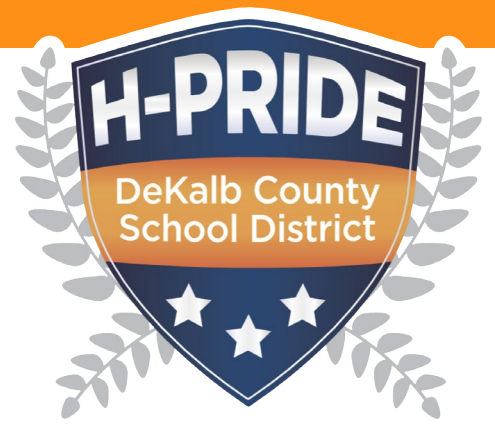
CORE BELIEFS

We believe in

Meeting each student's academic, social, and emotional needs

Supporting quality teaching and learning

Creating equitable educational opportunities for all students

Embracing cultural diversity

CORE VALUES

Humanization

Before we can address the critical work that has to be accomplished collectively in the DeKalb County School District, we must connect as human beings first. Recognizing value and worth and not viewing others solely as resources and a means to an end.

Professionalism

Should be exhibited in all phases of our professional and personal life. Our dress code, the manner in which we communicate, accountability, and punctuality are some traits that represent professionalism.

Respect

A professional work environment is built on mutual respect. We treat each other with courtesy, we value diversity, and appreciate different perspectives.

Integrity

Is closely related to professionalism but it involves honesty, truthfulness, and ethical conduct. Taking responsibility for their actions and maintaining confidentiality when required.

Dignity

Fair treatment of individuals. Not discriminating against individuals because of race, gender, age, or sexual orientation. Open and honest communication regardless of the position or title is imperative.

Empathy

Understand and share the feelings, perspectives, and experiences of others. It involves recognizing and acknowledging the emotions and concerns of others, as well as responding in a compassionate and supportive manner.

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

Reflective & Resilient Learner... *I Can*
- demonstrate knowledge of content, skills, and standards
- evaluate potential outcomes of my actions by reflecting on successes and challenges and making the appropriate shifts to accomplish personal and academic goals
- hold myself accountable by utilizing organization and project management to achieve growth
- persevere through productive failures and challenges to improve
- demonstrate readiness through active civic engagement, enrollment, employment, entrepreneurship, or enlistment

Globally Engaged Citizen... *I Can*
- respect different cultures, perspectives, and beliefs
- exercise compassion and empathy towards others
- explore community and global issues from the perspectives of those most impacted and develop plausible solutions
- employ a neutral and democratic process to arrive at decisions

Creative & Dynamic Learner... *I Can*
- demonstrate curiosity, originality, inventiveness, and innovative problem-solving to create new things
- dive deeply into an issue and consider multiple perspectives when addressing problems and developing new processes
- take the appropriate risks and make adjustments based on lessons learned
- evaluate information and challenge both my peers' thinking and my own
- generate questions and elaborate on ideas to identify new solutions

Effective Collaborator... *I Can*
- work with a diverse group to accomplish a common goal
- give and receive meaningful feedback
- own personal responsibility for team outcomes
- value and appreciate varying opinions and viewpoints of others

Effective Communicator... *I Can*
- articulate and share ideas clearly with respect
- utilize different platforms to express ideas and thoughts
- use technology effectively and responsibly
- actively listen with an open mind and respect other ideas

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2029 SUMMARY

GOAL AREA 1

Student Academic Success with Equity and Access

1.1 Increase proficiency rates in literacy on district and state assessments for all students.

1.2 Increase proficiency rates in numeracy on district and state assessments for all students.

1.3 Increase the 4- and 5-year cohort graduation rates.

1.4 Ensure all students have equitable access to and support for academic programs and career pathways.

1.5 Improve student academic growth as measured by the College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI).

1.6 Enhance student proficiency in digital literacy skills using innovative technology.

GOAL AREA 2

School, Family, and Community Engagement

2.1. Strengthen family, school, and community engagement to establish clear, accessible, and relevant communication tailored to meet stakeholders' preferences.

2.2. Create opportunities for collaboration between the district, families, community partners, and businesses to foster partnerships to support district-wide initiatives.

2.3. Improve communication processes for stakeholders to ensure the flow of clear, timely, and relevant information.

2.4. Establish clear communication channels to effectively engage with multilingual families and provide equitable access to district and school information.

GOAL AREA 3

Recruit, Develop, and Retain Talent

3.1. Recruit and hire a diverse and highly qualified workforce that reflects a world-class, innovative talent pool.

3.2. Develop high performing staff to ensure quality teaching and learning outcomes, an innovative workforce, and visionary leaders.

3.3. Retain highly effective staff in critical needs positions to ensure the sustainability and efficiency of integral district programs and services.

3.4. Develop employee pipelines for key staff positions to ensure the long-term viability of essential programs and services.

Culture and Climate

GOAL AREA 4

4.1. Ensure all schools provide a safe, orderly, and supportive learning environment for all students and staff.

4.2. Implement restorative practice structures in all schools and increase the number of schools using Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) programs each year.

4.3. Improve student attendance by creating a positive and engaging school experience.

4.4. Ensure all schools have staff trained in de-escalation techniques and Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) strategies.

Mental Health and Wellness

GOAL AREA 5

5.1. Create safe and supportive environments that promote positive mental health and wellness.

5.2. Increase awareness of factors that can impact mental health to foster well-managed learning environments.

5.3. Increase mental health support staff to improve classroom behavior and peer relationships.

5.4. Expand staff participation in mental health professional learning opportunities.

Organizational Excellence

GOAL AREA 6

6.1. Provide clean, safe, and efficient school facilities for all students.

6.2. Deliver safe and efficient transportation services to all students.

6.3. Deliver efficient school nutrition services and healthy meals to all students.

6.4. Improve and maintain a secure, accessible, and equitable digital learning environment for all students.

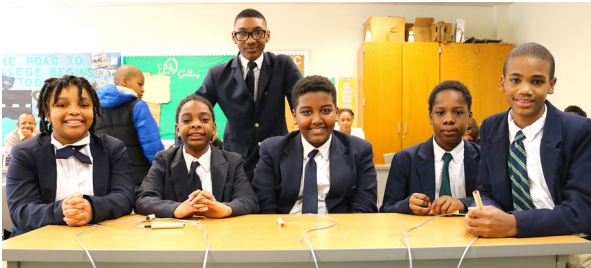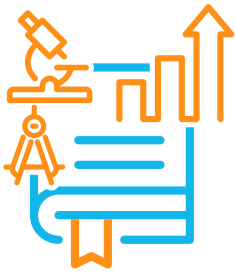**6.5.** Ensure excellent financial management of district resources.

GOAL AREA 1

STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS WITH EQUITY AND ACCESS

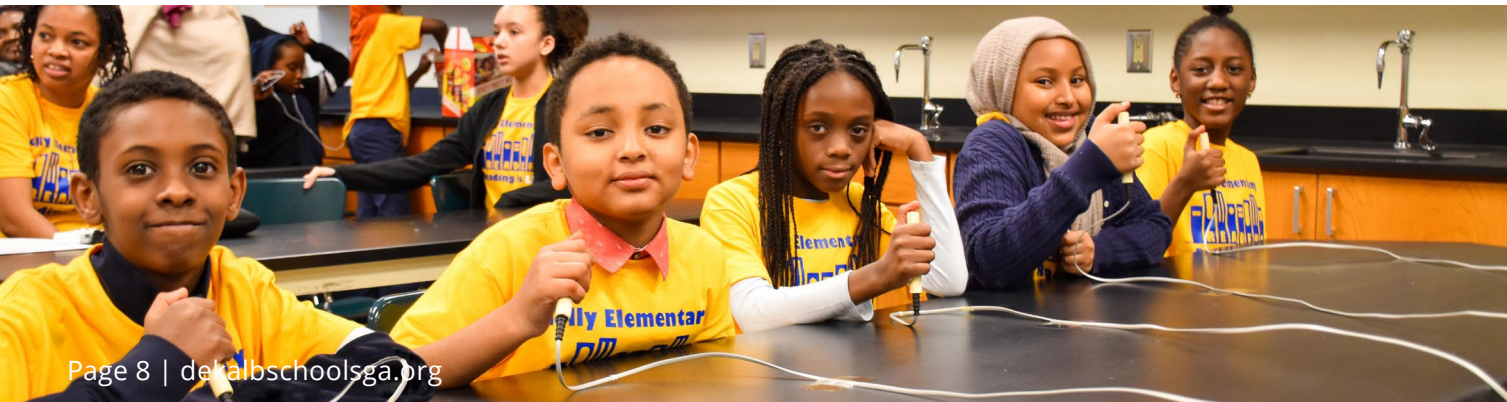| PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

1.1 Increase proficiency rates in literacy on district and state assessments for all students.

a. Implement a progress monitoring tool in grades K-3 focused on increasing early literacy skills and provide professional learning for teachers on how to use the tool.

b. Implement district-provided reading interventions for students performing below grade level, using supplemental instruction, small group support, and resources to accelerate student learning.

c. Implement evidenced-based instructional strategies that have been shown to improve literacy skills such as structured literacy, academic vocabulary development, and explicit reading and writing instruction across the curriculum.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- ELA EOG proficiency rate will be 47%.

- ELA EOC proficiency rate will be 46%.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

1.2 Increase proficiency rates in numeracy on district and state assessments for all students.

a. Implement evidenced-based instructional strategies that have been shown to improve numeracy and problem-solving skills such as number talks, math talks, three-read protocol, Polya's problem solving process, 3 Act Math Task, and Newman's Prompts.
b. Teach a comprehensive math curriculum aligned to Georgia's K-12 Mathematics Standards. Ensure the curriculum includes clear learning targets, success criteria, a coherent sequence of instruction, and a variety of instructional materials and resources.
c. Provide ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers focused on effective math instruction strategies, pedagogy, and content knowledge. Offer training on problem-solving and conceptual understanding approaches to meet the diverse needs of students.

SMART Goal by 2029:
- Math EOG proficiency rate will be 40%.
- Math EOC proficiency rate will be 37%.

1.3 Increase the 4- and 5-year cohort graduation rates.

a. Implement and monitor consistent standard operating procedures (SOPs) across all cohorts.
b. Offer a variety of targeted academic support programs to students, such as tutoring, mentoring, academic intervention classes, credit recovery opportunities, and after-school programs.
c. Increase the number of graduation pathway options by incorporating alternative opportunities.
d. Implement strategies to increase the number of students meeting the requirements for ninth-grade promotion.

SMART Goal by 2029:
- District 4- and 5-year graduation rate will increase by at least 10%.

1.4 Ensure all students have equitable access to and support for academic programs and career pathways.

a. Implement professional development to ensure educators are familiar with pathway sequences, course standards, and assessment blueprints.
b. Monitor student progress in pathway courses and provide targeted support for those at risk of not completing pathways.
c. Ensure early exposure to pathway opportunities for students to make certain they understand the sequence of courses within each pathway and the required assessments for pathway completion.
d. Offer comprehensive student guidance on pathway offerings, industry credentials, and work-based learning opportunities.

SMART Goal by 2029:
- CCRPI Pathway Completion rate will be 89%.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

1.5 Improve student academic growth as measured by the College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI).

a. Conduct districtwide formative assessments to monitor students' academic progress.
b. Analyze assessment data to identify trends, patterns, and areas where instruction can be improved.
c. Provide teachers with training and tools for data analysis and interpretation to inform instructional planning and student support strategies.
d. Provide tutoring and academic support for students before, during, and after the school day.

SMART Goal by 2029:

• 75% of students will meet greater than 40th percentile annual growth on CCRPI ELA Elementary Progress.

• 74% of students will meet greater than 40th percentile annual growth on CCRPI ELA Middle Progress.

• 66% of students will meet greater than 40th percentile annual growth on CCRPI ELA High Progress.

• 75% of students will meet greater than 40th percentile annual growth on CCRPI Math Elementary Progress.

• 70% of students will meet greater than 40th percentile annual growth on CCRPI Math Middle Progress.

• 70% of students will meet greater than 40th percentile annual growth on CCRPI Math High Progress.

1.6 Enhance student proficiency in digital literacy skills using innovative technology.

a. Increase opportunities for students to engage effectively with technology by providing training and support for teachers to integrate digital tools and technology seamlessly into their lessons.
b. Increase students' exposure to responsible technology practices, including artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and digital citizenship.
c. Expand student learning to include the use of real-world technologies such as artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and virtual reality.
d. Create opportunities for students to explore and learn about technology through initiatives like hands-on exploration and mentorship programs.

SMART Goal by 2029:

• 95% of all teachers will complete the district-wide technology integration performance objectives (IGNITE U TICs).

• 90% of all students will complete the district-wide student digital literacy module (Digital Dreamer Hub).

GOAL AREA 2

SCHOOL, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)
2.1. Strengthen family, school, and community engagement to establish clear, accessible, and relevant communication tailored to meet stakeholders' preferences. a. Establish partnerships with community organizations to access resources and support for district initiatives. b. Organize activities that encourage community involvement and build connections between stakeholders. c. Expand ThoughtExchange to include multiple questions for collecting feedback and evaluating the effectiveness of engagement efforts.	**SMART Goal by 2029:** • Response rates to district ThoughtExchange surveys will increase by 20%.
2.2. Create opportunities for collaboration between the district, families, community partners, and businesses to foster partnerships to support district-wide initiatives. a. Enhance advisory councils and other collaborative partnerships to address district-wide initiatives and challenges. b. Assist schools in securing partnerships with community organizations. c. Utilize online engagement platforms to facilitate communication and collaboration among stakeholders and the community.	**SMART Goal by 2029:** • DCSD will increase the number of community partners by 30%.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)
2.3. Improve communication processes for stakeholders to ensure the flow of clear, timely, and relevant information. 　a.　Identify and publicize the various communication channels used throughout the district (e.g., website, social media, email, newsletters). 　b.　Develop and share Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for communication across the district. 　c.　Administer a quarterly ThoughtExchange to gauge the effectiveness of the district's communication efforts and gather feedback from stakeholders. 　d.　Implement communication audits to identify areas where communication can be improved within the district.	**SMART Goal by 2029:** • DCSD will improve communication by 10% based on results from the communications audit.
2.4. Establish clear communication channels to effectively engage with multilingual families and provide equitable access to district and school information. 　a.　Provide interpreters for virtual and in-person events. 　b.　Translate all standardized documents into the most common languages. 　c.　Identify user-friendly platforms to assist in multilingual translations. 　d.　Survey stakeholders and community to evaluate the effectiveness of engagement with multilingual families.	**SMART Goal by 2029:** • DCSD will increase communication channels and programs supporting multilingual families by 10%.

GOAL AREA 3

RECRUIT, DEVELOP, AND RETAIN TALENT

| PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES | KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI) |

3.1. Recruit and hire a diverse and highly qualified workforce that reflects a world-class, innovative talent pool.

a. Implement a comprehensive recruitment plan to secure a pool of qualified candidates. This plan should identify target audiences, utilize various recruitment channels, and streamline the application process.

b. Increase investment in recruiting pipelines by marketing and communicating through all social media platforms.

c. Strengthen partnerships with traditional and non-traditional universities.

d. Offer a competitive compensation structure and employee incentive program.

e. Enhance the diversity, stability, and quality of the teaching workforce through the IGNITE Residency Program.

f. Increase the number of bilingual staff members to support student academic success.

g. Award one hundred scholarships to high school students or recent graduates pursuing careers in education who commit to returning to the district.

h. Develop career pathways for students to transition into district careers in high-demand areas such as paraprofessionals, teaching, and nursing.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- The fill rate for certified positions will be at 99% by September 1.

- The fill rate for classified positions will be at 90% by September 1.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)
3.2. Develop high performing staff to ensure quality teaching and learning outcomes, an innovative workforce, and visionary leaders. a. Implement a tiered system of competency-based, rigorous, data driven professional development. b. Offer differentiated onboarding programs to provide customized orientation, induction, and mentoring support for new teachers, leaders, and paraprofessionals. c. Develop a variety of self-paced learning options to accommodate diverse staff schedules and preferences, including online courses, peer learning groups, learning modules, and evening/weekend workshops. d. Develop a more robust process to evaluate professional development programs, measuring participant satisfaction and the effectiveness of implementation. e. Ensure all newly hired leaders receive mandatory training in engagement and performance management practices.	**SMART Goal by 2029:** • DCSD will increase the percentage of employees scoring exemplary on the TKES, LKES, and DKES evaluation instruments by 20%.
3.3. Retain highly effective staff in critical needs positions to ensure the sustainability and efficiency of integral district programs and services. a. Implement a comprehensive employee retention plan. b. Develop and implement programs that elevate, celebrate, and recognize employee experience. c. Develop and cultivate a responsive staff health and wellness program. d. Increase access to confidential mental health and counseling services for all employees. e. Conduct annual employee surveys to gauge employee perceptions of school climate, culture, and job satisfaction within the district. f. Use exit survey data to inform and develop retention strategies, identify areas for improvement, and enhance systems that impact job satisfaction.	**SMART Goal by 2029:** • DCSD will increase the teacher retention rate to 97%. • DCSD will increase Paraprofessional, SRO, Nurse, and Bus Driver retention rates to 90%.
3.4. Develop employee pipelines for key staff positions to ensure the long-term viability of essential programs and services. a. Establish clear promotional pathways for staff to develop expertise or certifications in specialized areas of need. b. Develop residency programs to cultivate a strong pipeline of future administrators. c. Expand endorsement programs to better meet the needs of students. d. Empower current and future high-quality employees to design their professional learning aligned with their career aspirations.	**SMART Goal by 2029:** • The district will develop 8 career pathway programs for employees.

GOAL AREA 4

CULTURE AND CLIMATE

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)
4.1. Ensure all schools provide a safe, orderly, and supportive learning environment for all students and staff. a. Provide school level training to support consistent discipline practices. b. Provide school level training on de-escalation practices using Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) and Mindset Training. c. Provide school level training to implement restorative practices districtwide. d. Implement a "Train the Trainer" model for district personnel on restorative practices. e. Provide Tier 1 PBIS implementation training for new school cohorts and PBIS overview interest sessions for school leadership.	**SMART Goal by 2029:** • DCSD will show a reduction in bullying and major disciplinary incidents by 10% as reported by the GADOE School Safety Report. • 71% of DCSD schools will receive 4 stars or higher on the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) School Climate Star Rating.
4.2. Implement restorative practice structures in all schools and increase the number of schools using Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) programs each year. a. Provide training on Restorative Practice Circles to Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Advocates and Behavioral Support Specialists. b. Increase the number of schools implementing the PBIS program to promote positive behavioral expectations and to provide reinforcement for desired behavior. c. Use the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI), a validated assessment tool, to measure PBIS fidelity across schools to identify areas for improvement and inform targeted support strategies.	**SMART Goal by 2029:** • 100% of DCSD schools will utilize restorative practices. • 75% of DCSD schools will implement PBIS.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

4.3. Improve student attendance by creating a positive and engaging school experience.

a. Implement positive reinforcement strategies to acknowledge good attendance, including reward programs, recognition systems, or special privileges for students with consistent attendance records.

b. Build strong relationships with families and community organizations by offering family engagement workshops, providing resources, and support services, and involving community members in school activities to boost motivation and attendance.

c. Develop a system for early identification and intervention for students with chronic absenteeism, including home visits, personalized support plans, and addressing underlying causes of absences (such as health issues or transportation challenges).

d. Frequently analyze attendance data to identify trends and patterns and use this data to target interventions and strategies for specific student groups or schools with higher absenteeism rates.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- The chronically absent rate will be reduced by 15% as reported by the GOSA Attendance Report.

4.4. Ensure all schools have staff trained in de-escalation techniques and Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) strategies.

a. Assign CPI trained district staff to train school level staff in areas/schools across the district.

b. Utilize the Train the Trainer model to train 3 or more school staff in Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) strategies.

c. Create a comprehensive training plan and calendar that outlines the specific de-escalation protocols and CPI strategies to be taught including a schedule for training all staff across the district.

d. Implement a system to track staff participation in de-escalation training and CPI certification and use this data to monitor progress and identify schools or staff members that may require additional support.

e. Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the district's de-escalation training and CPI implementation by using surveys, focus groups, and analysis of data on crisis incidents.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- DCSD will increase the number of schools with staff trained in de-escalation/ Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) by 50%.

GOAL AREA 5

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

5.1. Create safe and supportive environments that promote positive mental health and wellness.

a. Implement a standardized needs assessment for staff and students to determine the level of support needed and general awareness.
b. Provide social emotional learning (SEL) training to create safe, inclusive, and supportive spaces for students.
c. Implement the SEL curriculum to help students manage emotions, problem solve, and create positive relationships with others.
d. Increase mental health awareness by offering annual training for staff and students.
e. Develop a communication plan for reporting mental health emergencies, outlining how staff will communicate with students, parents, and first responders in the event of an emergency.
f. Develop clear and accessible channels for students to report mental health concerns.
g. Provide resources and opportunities for mindfulness practices for students and staff.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- DCSD will increase the number of student safe centers to twenty.

- DCSD will increase the number of staff safe spaces to fifteen.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

5.2. Increase awareness of factors that can impact mental health to foster well-managed learning environments.

a. Facilitate an annual mental health awareness campaign including email and social media to raise awareness and to mobilize efforts.

b. Distribute educational resources in schools to specifically address stress management strategies with students and staff.

c. Promote work-life balance, flexible schedules, and stress management programs for staff to improve employee wellness, reduce burnout, encourage personal development, reduce absenteeism, and increase productivity.

d. Provide resources and opportunities for mindfulness practices for students and staff.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- DCSD will increase awareness of factors that can impact mental health by 20% annually.

5.3. Increase mental health support staff to improve classroom behavior and peer relationships.

a. Establish partnerships with recruitment agencies to increase mental health support staff.

b. Advertise mental health career opportunities in local, state, and national publications.

c. Increase partnerships with mental health agencies to recruit potential candidates.

d. Collaborate with colleges and universities to create a pipeline of potential candidates.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- DCSD will increase mental health support staff to twenty-three district wide.

5.4. Expand staff participation in mental health professional learning opportunities.

a. Create a mandatory mental health and wellness support module for teachers.

b. Foster partnerships with external health and wellness agencies to expand staff knowledge of external mental health and wellness providers.

c. Incorporate mental health activities during staff meetings and teacher workdays.

d. Publish visible signage and electronic information throughout the district to improve staff awareness of mental health services.

e. Expand access to Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).

f. Offer workshops and resources on mindfulness practices, stress management techniques, and self-care strategies.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- 100% of DCSD staff will complete a mental health and wellness module.

GOAL AREA 6

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

6.1. Provide clean, safe, and efficient school facilities for all students.

a. Strengthen coordination between divisions to ensure alignment between procurement and program management. This will facilitate smoother project execution by reconciling timelines, budgets, and spending rates for E-SPLOST and other identified capital improvement funds, ensuring efficient use and reporting of these resources.

b. Implement standard practices for developing project scope, sequence, and design costs. Enforce adherence to internal cost controls, project plans, and financial review processes. This standardization will ensure consistency and efficiency in managing capital improvement projects.

c. Establish a quality assurance process for custodial services. This process should include frequent assessments of cleanliness, inventory control, resource allocation, and training plans to support school-based custodial teams. Regular evaluations will help identify areas for improvement and ensure a high standard of cleanliness and maintenance in schools.

d. Conduct regular safety assessments of all school facilities to identify potential hazards and vulnerabilities. This assessment is inclusive of, but not limited to: fire safety, structural integrity, security systems, and accessibility for students with disabilities.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- 100% of school facilities will be in good condition and repair as measured by the School Facility Assessment.

- DCSD will decrease construction overhead/ administrative costs by 10%.

- DCSD will decrease work order completion times (days) by 10%.

GOAL AREAS

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

6.2. Deliver safe and efficient transportation services to all students.

a. Optimize bus routes, improve on-time performance, and potentially reduce costs associated with transportation.
b. Develop and implement comprehensive bus safety programs for students including boarding/disembarking procedures, behavior expectations, and emergency drills.
c. Provide ongoing training for bus drivers to ensure they are current on safe driving practices, use of recent technologies, and student management strategies.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- All bus routes will average 95% for on time performance.

6.3. Deliver efficient school nutrition services and healthy meals to all students.

a. Streamline operations, reduce waste, and enhance the dining experience for students.
b. Implement taste testing, diverse menu options, and appealing meal presentations to improve overall customer satisfaction.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- DCSD will increase the overall rate of school lunch participation by 10%.

6.4. Improve and maintain a secure, accessible, and equitable digital learning environment for all students.

a. Ensure all students and identified staff receive new devices according to the established district refresh cycle.
b. Implement a comprehensive preventative maintenance program to minimize technology issues and improve response times for addressing infrastructure incidents to maintain reliable technology access for all users.
c. Establish a system to monitor adherence to cybersecurity policies across the district, including enforcing password complexity requirements, educating users on proper data handling procedures, and encouraging the reporting of suspicious activity.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- DCSD will increase the uptime of critical technology infrastructure to 100%.

- DCSD will replace 100% of student and staff devices.

6.5. Ensure excellent financial management of district resources.

a. Obtain clean DCSD audit reports annually.
b. Maintain a general fund balance of at least 15% throughout the year to ensure financial stability.
c. Improve relationships with vendors by streamlining payment processing.
d. Implement a robust planning and monitoring process to ensure efficient use of resources and track progress towards district goals.
e. Allocate human and fiscal resources strategically to maximize their impact on student achievement and growth.

SMART Goal by 2029:

- DCSD will achieve a low-risk designation by the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts.

- DCSD will maintain an undesignated fund balance reserve of at least 15% of annual budgeted expenditures throughout the year.

AT-A-GLANCE

138
SCHOOLS & CENTERS

91K+
STUDENTS

76%
GRADUATION RATE

14K
STAFF

172
SPOKEN LANGUAGES

Highlights

1st
Most Diverse District in GA

3rd
Largest School District in Georgia

5
High Schools ranked in the top 100 in the state of GA
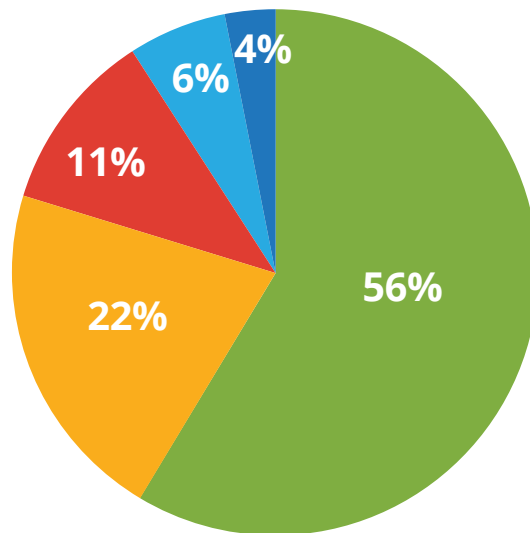(U.S. News and World Report)

19 Nineteen Georgia Title I Distinguished and Reward Schools

48.9%
FEMALE

Racial Breakdown

4%
6%
11%
22%
56%

51.1%
MALE

SCHOOLS
Elementary Schools   77
Middle Schools   19
High Schools   22
Program Schools (PK-12)   12
Charter Schools (K-12)   8

Black: 51,765   **Hispanic:** 20,542
White: 10,205   **Asian:** 5,949
Other: 3,294

STUDENTS
Elementary Students   41,727
Middle Students (6-8)   17,607
High Students (9-12)   26,701
Program Schools (PK-12)   1,626
Charter Schools (K-12)   4,094

Strategic Planning Team

Thank you for contributing your time and expertise towards Disrupting for Excellence!

Superintendent

Dr. Devon Q. Horton, Superintendent of Schools

Board of Education

Mr. Diijon DaCosta Sr.
Board Chair, District 6

Mrs. Deirdre P. Pierce
Vice Chair, District 3

Mrs. Anna Hill
District 1

Mrs. Whitney McGinniss
District 2

Ms. Allyson Gevertz
District 4

Mrs. Vickie B. Turner
District 5

Dr. Joyce Morley
District 7

## Strategic Plan Committee Members

Sherry Everett, Chair

Juana Alzaga
Trenton Arnold
Rebecca Braaten
Shakina Champion
Lorraine Cochran-Johnson
Marcia Coward
Monika Davis
Jennifer Dees
Michelle Dillard
Kedra Fairweather
Anne Ferreira

Thomas Glanton
Ebony Green
Doryiane Gunter
Manish Gupta
Evelyn Hall
Erick Hofstetter
Jecorey Jackson
Danielle Jones
Deborah Jones
Kiana King
Lisa Limoncelli

Autumn Luke
Cedric Masten
Paul Mays
Lysa Moore
Steve Overcash
Elijah Palmer
Byron Schueneman
Rachel Smith
Stacy Stepney
Kishia Towns
Triscilla Weaver

GLOSSARY OF TERMS | ACRONYMS

Vision	Describes what the district hopes to achieve or be in the future.
Mission	Articulates what is unique about who the district is, what the district does, and who the district serves.
Core Beliefs	General and fundamental assumptions/overarching truths about the world.
Core Values	Set of principles that drive all behaviors and decision-making for the district.
Performance Objective	A key measurable value that demonstrates how effectively the district is achieving their end results.
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	A measurable target that indicates how the district is performing and meeting goals.
IGNITE U TICs	IGNITE U is a professional learning program for teachers. They are required to complete TIC, which stands for Technology Integration Connections. The TIC monitors how teachers integrate technology into their instruction.
Digital Dreamer Hub	The location of the digital resources for students. This hub includes the student code of conduct, the overview of Canvas, and other resources to support digital literacy.
ThoughtExchange	The artificial intelligence engagement and experience platform that deepens engagement, enhances data, and provide faster, easier analysis and actions.
Clean Audit	An auditor's opinion that financial statements are fairly presented in all material respects and in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.
EOC	End of Course Assessment
EOG	End of Grade Assessment
ELA	English Language Arts
CCRPI	College and Career Ready Performance Index
TKES	Teacher Keys Effectiveness System
LKES	Leader Keys Effectiveness System
DKES	DeKalb Keys Effectiveness System
GOSA	Governor's Office of Student Achievement
SRO	School Resource Officer
SMART Goal	SMART stands for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound and is used to establish criteria for effective goal-setting and objective development.

STAY CONNECTED

with your **DeKalb County**
School District
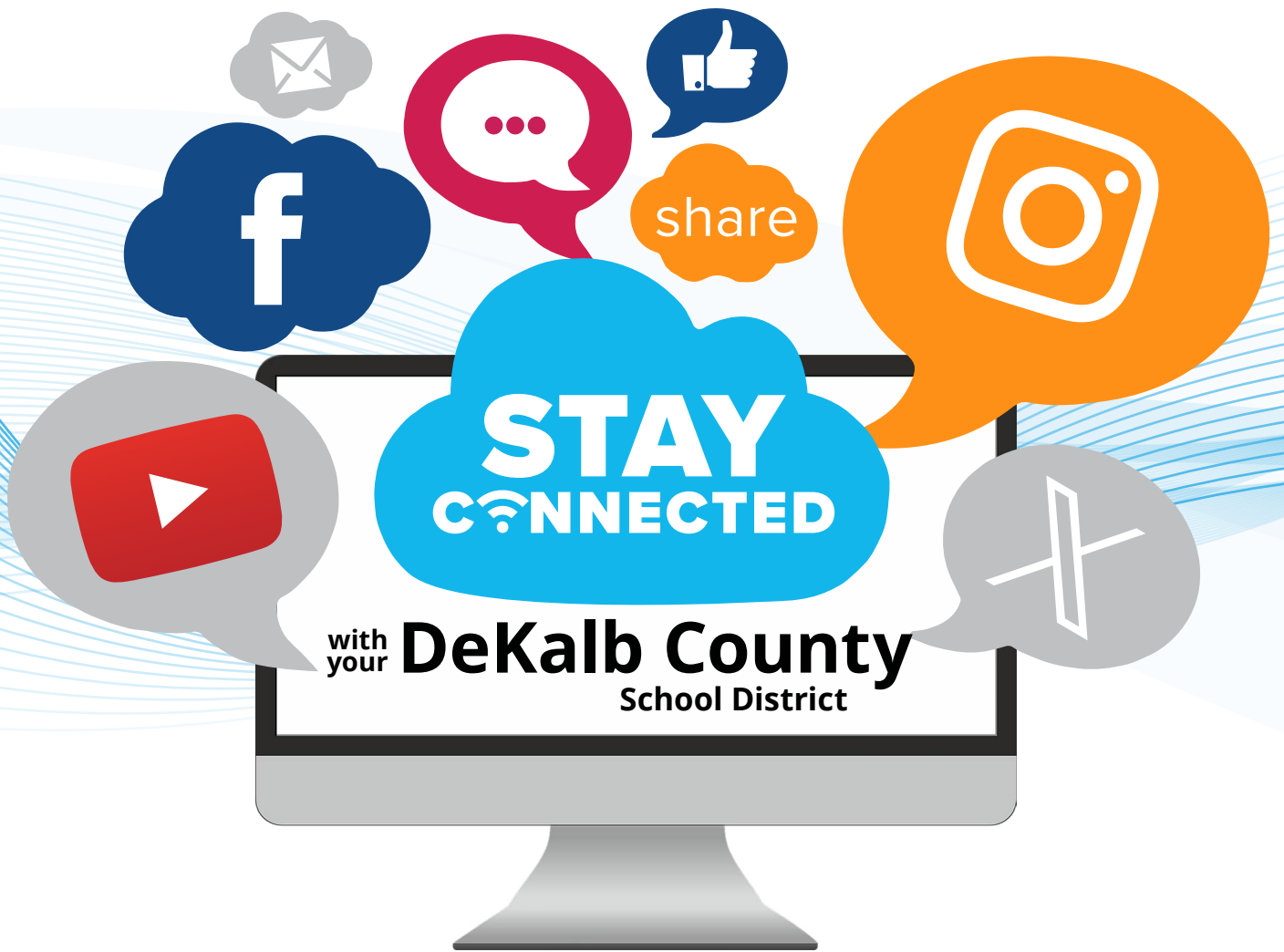
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DSTV
DEKALB SCHOOLS BROADCAST NETWORK

Watch Us on Comcast Channel 24, the District website, or download the cablecast app

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School District | **dekalbschoolsga.org**