

## Deputy Superintendent's Corner

### Retrospection

#### THE SCHOOL YEAR IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR

Summertime has officially arrived! I hope that before you enjoy a well-deserved break, you take a moment to look back on this year. Retrospection is surveying the past—tracing the journey you have undertaken. John Dewey stated, "We do not learn from experience; we learn from reflecting on experience." It is not always easy to see things at the moment. Retrospection is imperative for growth, professionally and personally. Through continuous reflection and course adjustments, as needed, we ensure we achieve and exceed our goals.



We believe working to reduce variability in student learning among schools is a win for our students, families, and communities. Reducing variability is challenging, but you can do it. We are committed to helping you every step of the way. I want to thank you all for the work you are doing to support schools by providing opportunities for optimal learning experiences to ensure positive outcomes for all students.

Please enjoy this quarter's newsletter, highlighting the 2021-2022 school year. Taking time to look in the rearview mirror and reflect on this year's successes will re-energize us for the 2022-2023 school year. In addition, we hope the articles on retrospection will inspire you to embrace the summer as a preparation time filled with opportunities to rest and recharge for the upcoming school year.

**Dr. Stephanie Johnson**  
*Deputy Superintendent/Chief Turnaround Officer*

School and District Effectiveness staff recently held a retreat to reflect on current practices and formulate plans of support to increase student achievement. In addition, specialists completed teambuilding activities to assist in retrospectively examining strengths and opportunities in practice. There was rich dialogue within each group, and it was inspiring to hear such thoughtful conversations about the year's highs and lows. The activities also helped establish trust and collaboration—critical components to building relationships that support school and district leaders as they positively impact student achievement. Both activities were engaging and interactive, but the purpose of intentionally devoting time


for retrospection was to continue to strengthen our collective efficacy.



Program Manager, Anthony Pack, presenting to SDE staff in Macon

**Office of School Improvement Professional Learning (PL) Needs Survey**

We appreciate everyone who completed the PL Needs Survey. Our office is working diligently to craft virtual and face-to-face offerings to meet your requests and needs. Thank you again for your valuable feedback!



**Professional Learning Events**

Upcoming virtual webinars, in-person events, on-demand content, and by-request workshop opportunities are available at <https://community.gadoe.org/events>.

## Division News

### Learning Loss Support Team

#### CRISP COUNTY VISIT

Dr. Taijuan Clayton-Brookes, Lead Academic Recovery Specialist

Since the inception of our Learning Loss Support Team, we have been hard at work giving ILC presentations, assigning regional specialists, and supporting school districts across the state of Georgia. Initiating protocols, processes, and procedures to best support non-identified schools has kept us busy and eager about the work ahead. In addition, we have committed to the work of Tier I instructional support, professional learning, and coaching for teachers and leaders. Academic Recovery Specialists (ARS) in each region have also begun work to advance the continuous improvement of schools and districts in Georgia.

The ARS team visited the Crisp County School District where we observed classrooms and conducted focus group interviews. We observed teaching and learning from a non-evaluative lens and witnessed active student engagement from the primary to the high school levels. Teaching and learning were evident through clearly written learning targets and success criteria. Students participated in independent learning activities, and teachers used stations and interactive technology tools to differentiate their lessons. These evidence-based practices fostered student-to-student collaboration and allowed teachers to evaluate how well they had taught concepts through academic discourse.

The ARS team had meaningful discussions with district leadership. As a result, the team will support Crisp County to strengthen its standards-based approach to capitalize on lesson plan internalization and build rigor in their lesson plans. These considerations have established a partnership for the 2022-2023 school year.



L to R: (back) Kevin Blampied, Dr. Clayton-Brookes, Cindy Hughes, Dr. Johnson, Jody Pate, Lisa Goodin, Krista Cannon, Dr. Brandon Williams; (front) Jenna Rhodes, LaChele Walker, Molly Nigro, Kourtney White, Demetria Clark

### Alternative Education News

#### EXCEPTIONAL WRAP-AROUND SERVICES

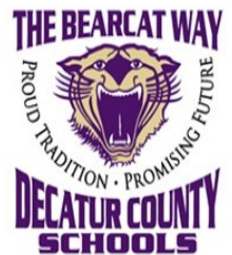
Dr. Samuel Taylor, Program Area Manager



Worth County and Decatur County School District leaders provide exceptional wrap-around services for students and families. Both districts support the success of students with access to a counseling program grounded in evidence-based practices to address the well-being and success of students by providing them access to a responsive, rigorous social work program that emphasizes intervention and prevention services.

In Worth County and Decatur County, school and district leaders improve family and community engagement by developing partnerships that provide access to needed resources, build social services network systems that help students address issues, and connect families to community services. Additionally, because of their vital outreach initiatives, they are leading the way in securing commitments from community organizations and businesses to support extracurricular activities. We applaud the stellar work of both school districts in successfully meeting the needs of the whole child.

The Worth County Achievement Center and the New Beginnings Learning Center are alternative education schools that provide students with the social services, individualized instruction, and intervention strategies needed to become successful students and good citizens in the school and community.



## Division News

## North Area News

## DAN DEWOLF'S REFLECTION &amp; FAREWELL

Anthony Pack, Area Program Manager

When I reflect on my almost 11 years as a School Effectiveness Specialist (SES), I am amazed at how quickly time elapsed. My goal was to work for GaDOE for a few years and transition back into retirement. However, something happened; I realized how enjoyable, challenging, and rewarding this work is. My years spent as an SES have been the highlight of my educational career.



As an SES, I had the opportunity to work with numerous schools in several districts (Atlanta, Bibb, Meriwether, Griffin-Spalding, and Rome City). Each school provided me with a wide array of experiences—some of which left me thinking, "What you are doing is amazing!"

During the past decade, I worked with many dedicated educators who wanted success for their students—the ultimate school improvement objective. It really is all about the students! I assisted with protocols, resources, and ideas to fine-tune what was in place to move those schools forward. Additionally, I worked with principals, teachers, and coaches to collaboratively think through problems or ideas to implement changes. During my tenure, I have learned that school improvement is challenging, but rewarding work. The keys to success are persistence and building capacity and solid relationships. If stakeholders trust their leaders and support staff, positive things will happen.

I am going to miss my colleagues more than anything! You are the most incredible, most talented group of people I've had the pleasure of working with, and I have learned so much from you. Keep pressing forward with the work. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of an organization that genuinely wants what's best for students!

## Metro Area News

## INNOVATION AT FREDERICK DOUGLASS HIGH

Susan Patrick, Area Program Manager

Frederick Douglass High School (FDHS) has a rich history of pride and excellence; however, it has recently been on the Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school list.



FDHS has seen a rise in school safety concerns, impacting the teaching and learning environment. After reviewing quantitative and qualitative data, FDHS administrators implemented interventions, including Summer Bridge Programs, Introductory Programs, and a dedicated floor for ninth-grade students. In addition, the staff learned that freshmen benefited from smaller learning communities. Furthermore, stakeholders planned the implementation of a ninth-grade STEAM Academy at an offsite location (the former Margaret Fain Elementary School building).

FDHS's STEAM Academy will open in the fall of the 2022-23 school year. It will have dedicated administrators, staff, and faculty with comprehensive wrap-around services and support to provide a smoother academic and social transition from middle to high school. In addition, it will address immediate safety concerns, rebuild the school's systems and culture, and provide students opportunities to work within smaller groups. Input from sources, including student, parent, community, and district focus groups, and alumni town halls was instrumental.

FDHS's STEAM Academy will have a lower admin-to-student ratio (1:450 to 1:150), tiered teams, and increased student interconnectedness. As a result, graduation rate tracking and interventions will be readily available. FDHS expects to improve student achievement by utilizing effective communication, strategic collaboration, creative problem solving, and thorough investigations. FDHS is changing the narrative because the administration is analyzing data, selecting interventions, and regularly monitoring student progress, but most importantly, they are putting students first.

## Division News

### South Area News

#### USING DATA ROOMS

Janie Fields, Area Program Manager

Baker County K-12 School, a rural school in southwest Georgia, utilizes an informative data process to monitor individual student performance. School leaders and teachers use the data room to track the assessment results of every student.

Students in grades K-8 take iReady assessments three times each year. According to results after the initial assessment, students' names are placed on sticky notes on the corresponding section on the wall. Green indicates the student is working on grade level, yellow indicates they are one grade level below, and pink indicates they are two or more grade levels below.

The data room also includes a chart of each student's Lexile levels. Each grade level is assigned a unique color, so teachers can easily see their students' Lexile levels. These colored notes, including stickers indicating the students' previous year GMAS score, are also moved after each assessment to track progress. Additionally, each student in the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) program has a different colored sticker to indicate the Fountas and Pinnell level kit in which they are working, to monitor further and track progress.

Also posted in the data room are every high school student's USA Test Prep data. Students take benchmark assessments in each subject area three times each semester, so teachers can examine the data to determine which students need additional support for EOC exams. Additionally, students in grades 3-8 take USA Test Prep assessments in science and social studies for progress monitoring purposes, and the school also posts that data in the room.

School leaders and teachers use this data to determine each student's tier and the interventions they will receive. After mid-year exams, they analyze the data to assess student progression. If the student has made progress, their sticky note color is changed to indicate their current level of achievement. Faculty and staff can see students

who progress from red to yellow or yellow to green, indicating that the interventions are working. Having each child's data prominently displayed in a central location allows educators to monitor students who are not making adequate progress so that interventions can be implemented or changed whenever needed. The data room provides a visual for tracking students close to the next progress point—those who need extra support to make positive achievement gains.



Baker County K-12 Data Room

Baker County K-12 School embraces data as part of its reflective teaching practices. The ultimate goal is to help their students achieve success.



#### GaDOE Community

We invite all district and school leaders to join the Office of School Improvement Community!

##### Step 1: Register

Visit [community.gadoe.org](https://community.gadoe.org), and create an account using your professional, work-provided email.

##### Step 2: Complete Profile

After your initial login, complete your user profile so others can connect with you.

## Division News

### Title I-A

#### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

The U.S. Department of Education granted Georgia's waiver request to extend the availability period for FY 20 Title I, Part A, 1003 School Improvement funds to September 30, 2022. Therefore, LEAs will have the opportunity to carry over remaining FY 21 Title I, Part A, 1003 School Improvement funds to September 30, 2022.

In addition, the deadline for the Rural Resource, GSCI, and Digital Learning Grants, including the final grant report, was extended to September 30, 2022. If you have any questions, please contact your assigned district effectiveness specialist.



### School Improvement Listserv

We are excited to share news through our Office of School Improvement listserv. Join today! We provide timely information to subscribers, including professional learning opportunities, resources, quarterly newsletters, conference information, grant opportunities, and other statewide school improvement information.

To join, send a blank email to [join-schoolimprovement@list.doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:join-schoolimprovement@list.doe.k12.ga.us).



## Office of School Improvement

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[gadoe.org/SDEvents](http://gadoe.org/SDEvents)

### About the SDE

The Division of School and District Effectiveness (SDE) provides a statewide system of supports and processes for school and district improvement. Our work is to engage with and support schools and districts' improvement efforts by providing tools, resources, and professional learning. SDE collaborates with other divisions within the Georgia Department of Education and external agencies such as the Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs), Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS), colleges, and universities to provide school and district support. While SDE works with all Georgia schools and districts, the primary focus is on schools identified as needing comprehensive or targeted support and improvement.



@GaDOESDE