



DIVISION OF SCHOOL & DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS

ADVANCING LEADERSHIP | TRANSFORMING SCHOOLS

Advancing Leadership...Transforming Schools

July 2016

FROM THE DIVISION

As we look back at the past couple of years and forward to ESSA in fall 2017, we are making some Division shifts that I want to share with you. As you are continuously involved in improvement efforts, our Division must do the same. Below are some areas we are changing to better meet the needs of schools and districts in Georgia.

In Priority Schools mainly, the most important change you will notice (you may already be noticing it) is that we are shifting our focus from individual classrooms to the leadership in buildings and districts. It is you, the leaders (Principals, Assistant Principals, Leadership Teams, Central Office Leadership, etc.), who are making and sustaining change. Our role should be, and is, to come alongside school and district leadership to provide critical feedback and support as you develop, monitor, and adjust your strategic/improvement plans. We want to provide you with what it is that you need to make change happen and last in your buildings and districts.

How do we plan to do that? First, we are taking time and effort to put on leadership lenses ourselves. Our Division, along with other GaDOE and RESA staff, are in the middle of Balanced Leadership training (by McREL International). We need to see your improvement planning and work through your leadership eyes. Along the way, 20 of our staff are being credentialed to be Balanced Leadership trainers so that we can offer the same professional learning to leaders in Georgia who request it.

Second, we will be delving into collaborative teaming (i.e., PLCs), recognizing that leaders do not work in isolation but with teams of adults working together to improve student performance. We understand that several districts are getting PLC training, so we want to build our own capacity to assist your collaboration efforts and to work more ourselves as PLCs.

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide school and district leaders with just-in-time information for issues surrounding continuous improvement and to celebrate the great work occurring in the State's six [Regions](#).

ESSA UPDATE

The task of writing the ESSA plan for US ED is underway. In July, varied stakeholders from all over Georgia met in a large group and then in smaller working groups: Assessment, Accountability, Communications, Education of the Whole Child, Educator and Leader Development, and Federal Programs to Support School Improvement. The working groups will continue meeting and working.

The writing of the plan will take place in the fall and winter and should be finalized next spring. The transition to ESSA will take place next spring and summer.

With ESSA will be a different MOA (an MOU that is less legal-sounding and more supportive). Until then, we will keep the current MOA in place with no changes.

FROM THE DIVISION

(continued from page 1)

Third, we took two practices of ours, Quarterly Monitoring and GSAPS (formerly GAPSS), and looked at them anew with leadership in mind. This caused us to make significant changes, putting the two processes into one “monitoring system” and altering them so that they would benefit the end-user: school and district leadership. Your School Effectiveness Specialist, Lead, or District Effectiveness Specialist will review all the changes with you in more detail, but here are some salient adjustments we made from the previous “monitoring”:

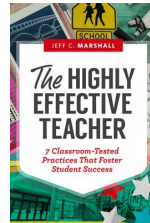
- Status Reviews (as we will call them, instead of “quarterly monitoring,” since we are going to review the status of your action plans) will be conducted three times per year.
- The purpose of the Status Reviews will be to review the focus of your improvement efforts, determine the progress and impact of the work, and collaborate on school, district, and state next steps.
- These Status Reviews will include necessary staff from the school, district, and GaDOE so that there will no longer need to be two process, an LEA monitoring and an SEA monitoring. Just one event, a Status Review.
- The Status Reviews will take place in half a day and will focus only/mainly on the current improvement efforts underway rather than a comprehensive monitoring.
- The purpose of GSAPS will be focused on determining the proficiency levels on the GA School Performance Standards in order to direct the school’s turnaround/school improvement plan.
- The event will take place on one day only, and will be slimmed down in its scope.
- Virtually all the documentation needed for the Status Review and GSAPS will be put into Indistar so that there should be very little “preparation.”

The aim in all our efforts will be to serve as a critical constructive guide, supporting you (i.e., leadership) in your efforts to improve the performance of your students.

[Dr. Will Rumbaugh](#)

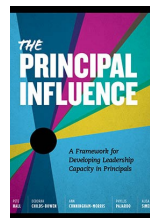
Director, Division of School & District Effectiveness

RECOMMENDED READING



[*The Highly Effective Teacher: 7 Classroom-Tested Practices That Foster Student Success*](#)

by Jeff Marshall

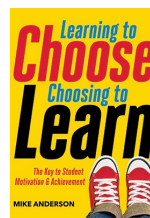


[*The Principal Influence: A Framework for Developing Leadership Capacity in Principals*](#)

by Hall, Childs-Bowen, Cunningham-Morris, Pajardo, and Simeral



[*Powerful Designs for Professional Learning, 3rd Edition*](#) by Learning Forward



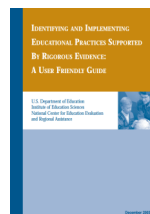
[*Learning to Choose, Choosing to Learn: The Key to Student Motivation and Achievement*](#)

by Mike Anderson



[*Standards for Professional Learning*](#) by

Learning Forward



[*Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported by Rigorous Evidence: A User Friendly Guide*](#) by U.S. Department of Education

Education

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[A MODEL SYSTEM FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL INSTRUCTION](#)

The success of students is determined by the effectiveness of the instruction throughout the school. A highly effective school leadership team not only hires good teachers, but also develops effective instructional teams through an explicit plan and process - an “instructional system.”

The [Georgia Department of Education](#) provides resources to assist schools in creating an effective instructional system:

- [Georgia School Performance Standards](#)
- [Leadership Guides](#) for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment School Performance Standards
- A [Model System for Effective School Instruction](#)
- [System for Effective School Instruction Self-Assessment Checklist](#)

As the 2016-17 school year begins, we encourage leadership teams to assess their instructional system using the Self-Assessment Checklist to identify current processes, needed modifications or additions, and monitoring practices.

Guiding questions for school leaders:

- What processes are in place to guide our instructional system?
- How are instructional processes communicated to faculty and students?
- How are instructional processes monitored and supported?
- How effective are our current instructional processes based on data analysis?

[NEW SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING TEMPLATE](#)

The updated [School Improvement Planning Template](#) can be found under the [School Improvement Planning Packet](#) section of the [SDE webpage](#). In an effort to make it more user-friendly for school leadership, this new template can accommodate the previous requirements of several plans (School Improvement, Title I, Professional Learning).

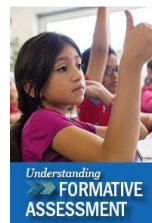
RESOURCES (continued)



[ASCD: Disrupting Poverty DVD Series](#) with William H. Parrett and Kathleen Budge



[Improvement Process Training Modules](#) by Center on Innovations in Learning



[Types of Assessments: A Head-to-Head Comparison](#) from [Understanding Formative Assessment: A Special Report](#) by Education Week

CCSSO RESOURCES FOR ESSA

The [Council of Chief State School Officers](#) has a variety of resources to support the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act. A list of these resources can be found [here](#).

WILKINSON COUNTY RECOGNIZED FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS!

Looking for an inspiring story as well as practical advice about academic success? You will certainly find it in this case study about leading learning from the central office. [Wilkinson County School District](#) shared how they faced what seemed like insurmountable challenges and took purposeful actions to ensure that all students in the community would be equipped with skills and knowledge needed to have choices for their future. This study provides clear and concrete examples of those actions. What district leaders started, they continued – every day, to this day. Click on the link below to read about their work.

[Starting With Why: How District Leaders Create a Compelling Sense of Urgency to Drive District-Wide Change](#)



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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

We look forward to your attendance at this year's statewide Instructional Leadership Conference (ILC)! Information about ILC will be sent to principals and their supervisors early next week. **Please register for the conference using the link provided in the email communication no later than August 19, 2016.**

ILC will take place on October 5 and 6, 2016 at the [Atlanta Evergreen Marriott](#) in Stone Mountain, GA. Participants will only attend one day. Please refer to next week's email communication to determine which day you should attend and who from your school/district should attend. Due to space limitations, we cannot accommodate requests for date changes or for additional personnel to attend ILC. Please contact Andrea Cruz (acruz@doe.k12.ga.us) with any questions.

PRINCIPAL-TO-PRINCIPAL WEBINARS

We are excited to continue our [Principal-to-Principal Webinar Series](#) for the 2016-2017 school year. Webinars will take place in August, November, February, and May. Our first webinar will be on August 25, 2016 at 10:00 AM and the topic will be Georgia School Performance Standard Curriculum 1: Collaborative Planning. Our presenter will be Dr. Yvette Scarborough, Principal of [Fox Elementary School in Muscogee County](#). A registration email will be sent out one week prior to the webinar.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING WEBINARS

Beginning in September 2016, we will offer quarterly professional learning webinars intended for Professional Learning Directors. These webinars will be on a variety of topics surrounding professional learning and continuous improvement. If you would like to be invited to these webinars, please contact Christy Jones at chjones@doe.k12.ga.us.

INDISTAR

Districts are invited to use Indistar in all of their schools at no cost. If you are interested in implementing Indistar district-wide, please contact the District Effectiveness Specialist for your [Region](#).

1003(a) FUNDING REMINDER

1003(a) SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FUNDING

The Title I, Part A, Section 1003(a) grants were awarded last fall for the 2015-2016 school year. The expectation is that all funds were used during 2015-2016 school year and summer 2016. All funds must be expended no later than September 30, 2016. There is no carryover of the FY16 funds.

SIG 1003(g) END-OF-YEAR

The world of [School Improvement Grants 1003\(g\)](#) is very busy this summer with the announcement of sustainability funding opportunities. Additionally, for the first time, Georgia has an approved state-directed model for use in SIG schools. The new model, Community-Based Vertical Approach, is getting much attention from the [U.S. Department of Education](#) and other states. Due to the high interest in the new model, which is based on feeder school patterns and community support, three of the Cohort 3 schools are requesting to transfer from the transformation model to the state-directed model. Those schools are [Quitman County High School](#), [Twiggs County High School](#), and [Wilkinson County High School](#). The Georgia State Board of Education reviewed the recommendations for sustainability awards and state-determined model awards in July.

Other big news with SIG 1003(g) is the recent approval by the U.S. Department of Education of Georgia's state application for additional funding. The anticipated total award is over \$32,000,000, and the awards will run through September 30, 2021. This is wonderful news for schools in Georgia that are in need of resources, professional learning, and effective best practices for turnaround efforts to ultimately improve student achievement. A new competition for Cohort 5 was recently announced, and the timeline for this round of applications, with a due date of September 5th, will certainly keep everyone working very diligently for the remainder of the summer.

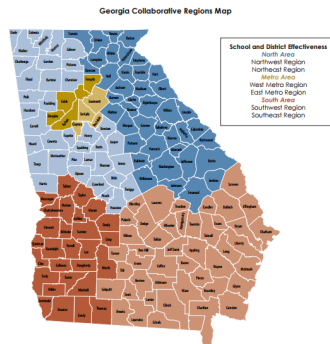


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FROM THE REGIONS

The Division of School and District Effectiveness is organized into six collaborative regions to best serve our schools and districts. Click [here](#) to view these regions. Below are news and notes from each Region.



NORTHWEST REGION

We hope that everyone has enjoyed a little rest so far this summer, although we haven't seen much evidence of that in the Northwest Region. Our schools are busy with district trainings, leadership team retreats, professional learning, assessment development, and reviewing/revising school improvement plans. We have a lot to celebrate with our SIG schools as [Hartley Elementary](#) and [Westside High School's](#) sustainability requests were sent to the State Board of Education for approval on July 14th. In addition, [Twiggs County](#) was selected to participate in the state approved model for K-12 SIG implementation.

There is a lot to highlight from our schools and districts and the work they have done over the past year. Kudos to [Bibb County](#) for their work on an annual review process. Schools went through an extensive process to align their school improvement plans with the [district's strategic plan](#), and prepared for a presentation to Senior Cabinet where they received feedback on their plans. This process, implemented by the district, resulted in schools moving from Emerging to Operational on [Georgia School Performance Standard](#) PO2 (uses a data-driven and consensus-oriented process to develop and implement a school improvement plan that is focused on student performance). Bibb County's commitment to this process has encouraged schools to look closely at their work and will have a positive impact on School Standard PO3 (monitors implementation of the school improvement plan and makes adjustments as needed) in the upcoming school year.

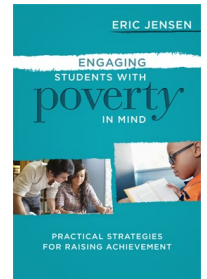
NORTHEAST REGION

In a few weeks your schools will be bustling with the energy and excitement of a brand new year! Looking back at this past year, each one of you worked hard with your teams focusing on school improvement work. Going forward, we know that same focus will be at the forefront.

We, your team of GADOE specialists, have also been busy honing our skills as well as preparing and reviewing our support and work at your schools. We have all attended training on the [McREL Balanced Leadership](#) framework to learn how to integrate its [valuable qualities](#) into our work as a Division and as support in your schools.

Butler High School in Augusta– Digging Deep!

During the spring semester, the [Butler High School](#) leadership team read, studied, and reflected on Eric Jensen's [Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind](#). In teams, they presented the strategies used within the chapters to one another and discussed how they would roll the book out to the entire faculty. The principal, Dr. Mabray, led the teachers through the opening chapters of the book during two faculty meetings after school. In early June the Butler faculty and staff, along with teachers from schools in its feeder pattern, participated in extension activities to enhance their understanding of the impact of poverty on student learning. In addition, [Dr. April Peters-Hawkins](#), Professor at the [University of Georgia](#), led the leadership team members from the schools through a poverty walk and provided teachers with "real talk" about interacting with students of poverty. Butler's faculty and the leadership teams of the feeder schools were also afforded the opportunity to participate in a poverty simulation conducted by the UGA Extension Agency in the gym at Butler High School. The faculty rotated through mini-sessions led by the Leadership Team that were focused on the strategies presented in Jensen's [Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind](#). The information learned from this entire process will help school staff understand and meet the unique needs of their students.



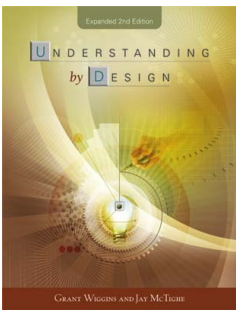
We are looking forward to another busy and rewarding year with you!

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WEST METRO REGION

Support for West Metro schools has continued this summer with valuable professional learning and planning taking place in all schools and districts. One such example is the [Fulton County](#) Achievement Zone Teacher Leaders Camp. Teacher leaders from the [Banneker High School](#) feeder pattern, also known as “The Achievement Zone,” participated in a week long summer professional learning camp in June. Under the direction of Dara Wilson, Area Superintendent, the focus was on creating a common understanding of the three stages of [Understanding by Design \(UbD\)](#) and beginning the process of writing the first unit for their grade level or content area, including a balanced assessment plan.



Participants engaged in a blended learning format, utilizing the online ASCD course, [Understanding by Design: An Introduction, 2nd Edition](#), prior to attending the summer camp. They also incorporated McTighe and Wiggins’ book [Understanding by Design](#). Achievement Zone Program Specialist, Chelsea Cohan, provided

district-created pacing guides for each grade level and course, a UbD unit plan template, and an assessment blueprint. Teacher leaders are charged with redelivering the information to their respective faculties in the fall.

The power of school and district collaboration in developing processes such as those highlighted above will move both the schools and the district to operational levels and produce positive outcomes for students.

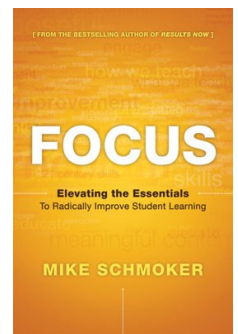
EAST METRO REGION

Congratulations to each of the East Metro schools for the completion of the 2015-2016 school year! Each of the Priority schools made progress on the 2015 CCRPI over the previous year, and we applaud the focus on instructional leadership that enabled each school to grow at such rates.

EAST METRO REGION (continued)

The foundation of our work in the East Metro region remains focused on [Curriculum Standard 1: Uses systematic, collaborative planning processes so that teachers share an understanding of expectations for standards, curriculum, assessment, and instruction](#). Our team and our schools firmly believe that mastering this standard will facilitate growth and achievement across all the priority standards. After successfully piloting a collaborative planning process diagnostic tool within DeKalb County at [Peachcrest Elementary](#), we utilized the tool at [Clarkston High School](#) and [Columbia High School](#) also. In order to support schools in using the data from this diagnostic tool to improve collaborative planning, our team is developing a series of professional development opportunities that will help school leadership teams to facilitate effective collaboration. Our goal is to roll out this support process to all of our Priority and Focus schools during the 2016-2017 school year.

Dr. Stephen Green, Superintendent of [DeKalb County Schools](#), is doing a book study with DeKalb principals. Our team elected to support our principals in this study, and is also reading the following three books recommended by Dr. Green: [Great by Choice](#) (Jim Collins and Morten Hansen), [Focus: Elevating the Essentials](#) (Mike Schmoker), and [Results Now](#) (Mike Schmoker). The East Metro team is excited to be learning alongside our DeKalb principals, and hope to extend the ideas and work of these books to the leadership teams of the rest of the _____ schools we serve.



As our schools are planning for next year, we encourage them to capitalize on the End-of-Year Monitoring feedback, and to continue to allow the key standards to inform their planning processes.

Remember- Less is More!

SOUTHWEST REGION

SOUTHWEST REGION PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

In April, the Southwest Region Support Team provided professional learning to build connections between [Georgia School Performance Standards](#), SIG Indicators, [TAPS Performance Standards](#), and the [System for Effective School Instruction \(SESI\)](#). To help schools understand how to use the SESI to improve instruction, participants studied Georgia School Performance Standard Instruction 4 (TAPS Standard 3, SIG Indicator D-4). This standard states that all teachers promote student learning by using research-based instructional strategies to engage all students in active learning. Referencing Hattie's research on the [top ten learning strategies](#), participants explored SESI links to research, templates, videos, quotes, and other resources for improving collaborative planning and classroom instruction. Instructional coaches saw the SESI as a very helpful tool to assist in differentiating professional learning for teachers as they plan for the 16-17 school year. The SESI is truly a "one-stop-shop" to support the instructional needs of teachers and leaders.

DATA TEAMS PROCESS AT SPENCER HIGH SCHOOL

Guided by the SIG-funded academic coaches at [Spencer High School](#), collaborative teacher teams engaged in the six-step data team process to identify learning targets, develop common formative assessments to monitor student progress, set goals, and implement research-based instructional strategies and interventions to address student deficits. On a weekly basis, these teacher teams met in professional learning communities to collect and analyze student achievement data and look at student work to determine if students were making progress towards mastery of the state-mandated curriculum. As a result of this data team process, teachers' attention was focused on ensuring that instruction was targeted and taught to the depth and rigor of the standards, while meeting individual student needs. As the 2015-2016 year ended, academic coaches were able to reflect on the data teams process and draw conclusions about the positive impact of data teams. Use the link below to see a video of these reflections:

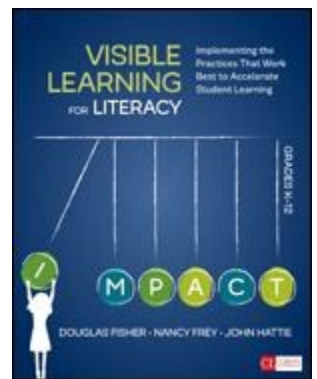
[Spencer Data Team Reflections](#)

SOUTHWEST REGION (continued)

SUMMER READING FOR LEADERS

[Visible Learning for Literacy, Grades K-12: Implementing the Practices that Work Best for Accelerating Student Learning](#) by John Hattie, Douglas Fischer, and Nancy Frey

This book details the research-based instructional practices that support students in making more than one year's literacy growth during a school year. Readers will learn how to use the most effective strategies at the right time and why they are so effective. A book study on this book, facilitated by the principal and instructional coaches, would build collective leadership capacity around



[Georgia School Performance Standards](#) I-4 and I-9. It would also address several [Balanced Leadership responsibilities](#) (intellectual stimulation; involvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment; and knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment). Teachers and leaders would benefit from learning about the latest research and how it can be used to improve their schools. This book would have a very positive impact on student achievement. Happy Reading!

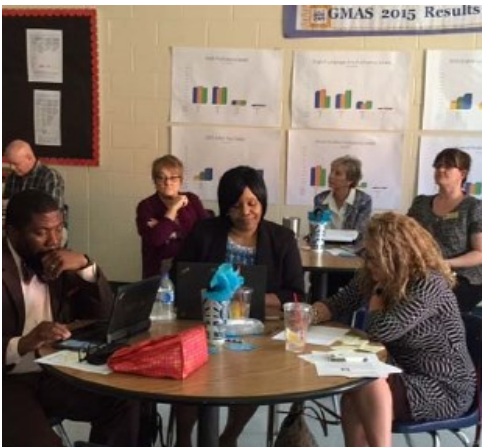
"Every student deserves a great teacher, not by chance, but by design." – Douglas Fischer, Nancy Frey, & John Hattie

SOUTHEAST REGION

The Southeast Region Team had a successful year conducting professional learning network meetings for Priority, Focus, and Opportunity schools. The team saw the need for collective group meetings when the Needs Assessments were analyzed with input from the systems and RESAs. These meetings were provided each month and the topics consisted of curriculum, instruction, and assessment with key emphasis on collaborative planning and the coaching cycle. Coaches and lead teachers redelivered the content of the sessions, which provided schools with more coherent, strategic focus to ensure instructional strategies, processes and procedures became more pervasive across the school.

SOUTHEAST REGION

One example of school success was the work at [Savannah High School](#) in implementing collaborative planning with fidelity. The coach attended the networks and redelivered how collaboration should look and sound within a high school setting. Successful results were not immediate; however, the coach kept modeling and coaching to provide feedback. The School Effectiveness Specialists followed up with observations during collaborative planning sessions once redelivery of content had taken place. The SEs provided feedback to the coach after each collaborative to reinforce strengths and to plan next steps for the next collaborative meeting to address the weak areas. Each collaborative became progressively more focused on student work. The framework will be in place for the next school term.



2015-2016 Southeast Region Professional Learning Network

One of the focus areas for [Otis Brock Elementary](#) was implementing math and writing strategies that became pervasive across the school. The goal was to have every teacher teaching students how to use specific strategies when they encountered math tasks that involved reading and how to respond in writing to specific content prompts. The System School Improvement Specialist used the coaching cycle to implement this change in practice. She modeled and practiced with the teachers and students. She provided feedback to enable teachers

SOUTHEAST REGION (continued)

to be successful by differentiating her professional learning based on the need of the teachers as they progressed with the implementation of the strategies. At the end of the year, the data collected during focus walks showed that the practices had become pervasive across the school.

Network evaluations showed that schools felt more confident in addressing issues and becoming more pervasive in their endeavors due to the guidance of the network meetings. For example, having processes and procedures in place addressed the issue of time on task and late arrivers. The [Tuning Protocol](#) addressed how to analyze student work. Coaches and lead teachers responded positively to the implementation of the coaching cycle and its role in providing support to teachers. It was stated that the coaching cycle made them stop and consider their audience and the practice needed before a strategy became standard practice.

Plans are already being developed for Network Meetings to take place in the upcoming school year. Leaders will be included and have the opportunity to participate in sessions. An example would be for the morning session to focus on the effective elements of collaboration with role playing. After lunch, the coaches and lead teachers would continue to work and plan collaborative sessions. The leaders would meet separately to identify how to monitor collaborative sessions and the role of the leader and coach.

We want to hear from you! Please send your ideas for future editions of the newsletter to Andrea Cruz at acruz@doe.k12.ga.us.