



# DIVISION OF SCHOOL & DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS

ADVANCING LEADERSHIP | TRANSFORMING SCHOOLS

*Advancing Leadership...Transforming Schools*

October 2016

## FROM THE DIVISION

I know football isn't life; however, it can make for good analogies. For instance, I was watching this past Sunday as the Falcons were winning AGAIN.

At the end of the 1st quarter, I thought about all that the team was doing during the timeout: they were looking at data (the score, statistics from the first quarter, who was hurt, film on their i-Pads of plays that were run, etc.); they were talking in a huddle (the players and the leaders/coaches together) about what they saw, how their game plan was working so far, and small changes they were going to make until halftime; they were regrouping and taking care of some needs (water, taping ankles, etc.); and the coaches got the players they wanted back in the game to start the second quarter, gave them their instructions, and psyched them up. I'm sure more was going on as I was forced to watch commercials, but I started thinking about you.

It's the end of the first quarter (actually further, but you get the idea). You had a plan going into this year. Are you: looking at current data, leading indicators that will tell you how your plan is turning out? Reviewing what you are seeing in classrooms (particularly with what the students are doing) as a result of your plan? Working alongside your teachers so they know what the plan was, how it's coming along, and can contribute going forward? Identified some tweaks that can be made now, to course-correct quickly? Publicly recognizing accomplishments so far related to the plan, and making sure any known needs of your staff are being attended to? Making sure EVERYONE knows exactly what to do until winter break? Encouraging staff to persist in the best practices you have developed in them, not allowing anyone to fall back into old habits and patterns?

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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](#).

## FROM THE DIVISION (continued)

You don't have a referee with a whistle and a TV timeout to force you to stop briefly, but you are the instructional leader who can be intentional about pausing briefly and being strategic with your next several weeks. And you can be thinking and planning now for the next pause you will have during winter break, and how that "timeout" can be used strategically to make the second semester even better than the first!

Go Falcons!

Dr. Will Rumbaugh  
Director, Division of School & District Effectiveness  
Georgia Department of Education  
[wrumbaugh@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:wrumbaugh@doe.k12.ga.us)

## SDE 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:

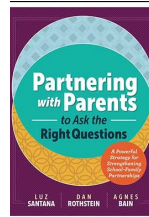
- [Georgia School Performance Standards](#)
- [Leadership Guides](#) for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment School Performance Standards
- A [Model System for Effective School Instruction](#)
- [System for Effective School Instruction Self-Assessment Checklist](#)

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?

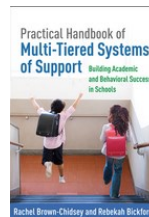
## READING AND RESOURCES



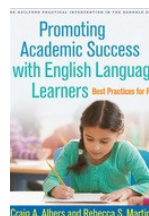
[Partnering with Parents to Ask the Right Questions: A Powerful Strategy for Strengthening School-Family Partnerships](#) by Luz Santana, Dan Rothstein, and Agnes Bain



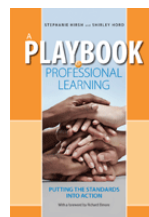
[Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change](#) by Grenny, Patterson, Maxfield, McMillan, and Switzler



[Practical Handbook of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support: Building Academic and Behavioral Success in Schools](#) by Rachel Brown-Chidsey and Rebekah Bickford



[Promoting Academic Success with English Language Learners: Best Practices for RTI](#) by Craig A. Albers and Rebecca S. Martinez



[A Playbook for Professional Learning: Putting the Standards into Action](#) by Stephanie Hirsh and Shirley Hord



Updated [What Works Clearinghouse](#)

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

### INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

We want to thank everyone for attending the 2016 Instructional Leadership Conference (ILC)! Your participation and active engagement made the event particularly powerful. We are especially grateful to the following school leaders for presenting during the breakout sessions:

- Dr. Michelle Jones, *Clarkston High School*
- Ms. Stephanie Johnson and Dr. Faya Paul, *Maynard H. Jackson High School*
- Dr. Julia Daniely, *Westside Pre-Engineering Magnet High School*
- Ms. Aleph Fore and Mr. Nathan Gibbs, *Wilcox County High School*



*Dr. Will Rumbaugh welcomes participants to the 2016 Instructional Leadership Conference.*

Handouts and presentations will remain available in EventMobi until September 2017. The access link is [eventmobi.com/ilc2016](http://eventmobi.com/ilc2016). In addition, this year's Instructional Leadership Conference was filmed. We will send a link to the session recordings once they are ready.



*Ms. Stephanie Johnson, Principal of Maynard H. Jackson High School and 2017 National Principal of the Year Finalist, shares how a focus on academics, achievement, and accountability has led to increased student achievement at Maynard H. Jackson High School*

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (cont.)

### 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 second webinar will be on November 3, 2016 at 10:00 AM and the topic will be [Georgia School Performance Standard](#) Assessment 2: Using a balanced system of assessments. Our presenter will be Dr. LouKisha Walker, Principal of [McNair High School](#) in DeKalb County. A registration email will be sent out one week prior to the webinar.

### PROFESSIONAL LEARNING WEBINARS

The first quarterly professional learning webinar was held on September 29, 2016, on the topic of McREL's [Balanced Leadership](#) framework. Our next webinar will be held on December 8th. These webinars are intended for Professional Learning Directors and 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](mailto:chjones@doe.k12.ga.us).

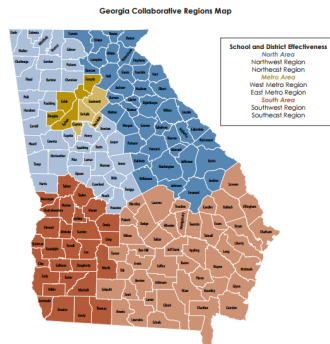
## SIG 1003(g)

The good work of turning around low performing schools in Georgia continues with Cohorts 3 and 4. Cohort 3 schools are involved in sustainability work this year as the schools plan for continuing the work beyond this school year. Three of the Cohort 3 schools will continue for an additional year due to transferring to the state-determined model, *A Community-Based Vertical Approach*. Cohort 4 schools are working with the final year of implementation while studying sustainability planning throughout the school year.

A new competition for SIG 1003(g) Cohort 5 was announced in July with applications arriving in the office of School and District Effectiveness by September 6th. Twenty-five applications were reviewed for Round 1 of the approval process. Announcements for approved applications will come after the State Board of Education votes in December. Schools in Cohort 5 will begin planning and pre-implementation in January 2017.

## 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

The Northwest Region team wants to welcome you to the 2016-2017 school year. We know everyone had a busy summer attending professional learning, working on developing and refining processes, and preparing for a successful school year.

The Northwest Region GaDOE and RESA team spent time this summer planning for a Coaching Network for Priority and Focus School Instructional Coaches for the 2016-2017 school year. Our first of four networks was held at the Bibb County Board of Education office on September 8th. We had over 50 people in attendance with Instructional Coaches from Bibb, Houston, Meriwether, Peach, Polk, and Twiggs County. GaDOE and RESA staff shared content around being strategic and intentional in their work and support of teachers. The agenda included:

- The coaching cycle
- Relationship building
- Collaborative vs. directive coaching
- Collaborative/instructional planning
- Differentiating support for teachers
- Creating a strategic calendar for support

Coaches left the training with specific strategies and processes to support them in their work and GaDOE School Effectiveness Specialists and RESA School Improvement Specialists will provide on-site support to the coaches around content shared during the session.

## NORTHWEST REGION (continued)



*Participants engaged in the Northwest Region Coaching Network held on September 8, 2016.*

The next Northwest Region Coaching Network will be held on November 3rd. Instructional Coaches interested in attending can register [here](#).

## NORTHEAST REGION

It's hard to believe that we have already completed our first month of school! All of you worked so hard preparing for that crucial first day of school for your students. CONGRATULATIONS on a smooth start to your school year!

The leadership team at [Johnson County High School](#) had a very productive planning day. Their work centered around processes for efficient school-wide collaboration and digging into their key school standards. Their next steps are to develop relevant tasks that will shape their school improvement work.



*Johnson County High School Leadership Team discussing school standards*



## NORTHEAST REGION (continued)

### [Meadowbrook Elementary School](#)

The leadership team spent a productive day digging into data and developing a 30-day plan for themselves! Their focus was on establishing consistent rituals and routines the first few weeks of school. They also developed strategies specific to each grade level to address reading and math instruction. This work provided the entire staff and students a common language, common set of expectations, and targets on which to focus. It made for a smooth start to their school year—way to go, Meadowbrook Elementary!



*Mr. Kenneth Johnson, Principal of Meadowbrook Elementary School in Richmond County, discussing data with his leadership team.*

We have delivered [Indistar](#) training to all our Priority school principals and those Focus school principals who were new to their positions. The training focused on developing meaningful and relevant tasks to address school standards as well as using an efficient instructional monitoring process. Do keep this process in the forefront as you continue to meet with your leadership teams. Your RESA and GaDOE teams are always available to support you in this work.

## WEST METRO REGION

All [Metro RESA](#) School Improvement Specialists and GaDOE School Effectiveness Specialists are active in continuing the support of the Priority and Focus Schools. It has been a pleasure to see the collaborative efforts among the school, district, and state leaders throughout the West Metro Region during the first few weeks of the school year.

## WEST METRO REGION (continued)

Commendations to [Atlanta Public Schools](#) where support and leadership is making a difference! During the recent Leadership Retreat, under the auspices of Dr. Donyall Dickey, Chief Schools Officer, and his team, district and school leaders developed a deeper understanding of high-leverage actions (HLAs), instructional practices, and units of study. The high-leverage actions, which include guiding questions, instructional practices, and leadership prompts, are tools that educators are using to increase clarity on how instructional expectations impact student learning. The instructional coaches and school administrators will continuously monitor, model, and provide concise feedback to teachers as an impetus for providing quality instruction.



*Talk about collaboration! Dr. Emily Massey, Associate Superintendent in Atlanta Public Schools, takes a selfie with the GaDOE and Metro RESA team.*

Special recognition is extended to the [Fulton County School District](#) and the [South Learning Community](#) for kicking off the school year with an inspiring School Leadership Retreat. The shared leadership style and collaborative spirit of the Area Superintendent, Dara Jones-Wilson, positively impacts this learning community, as she and her team encourage everyone to work together to find authentic ways to solve challenging achievement issues. As leaders continue to engage in the challenging work of school improvement and find creative ways to overcome obstacles, we can gain strength and inspiration from the mission of the Achievement Zone: *“... to accelerate and concentrate research-based reform efforts, offering a wide range of supports and opportunities to remove obstacles that make it difficult for schools to focus on student achievement and provide access for all families to receive a high-quality education.”*

## EAST METRO REGION

A warm East Metro Region WELCOME to Dr. Christopher LeMieux, our new Program Assessment Specialist, who will be working with identified schools on the [Georgia School Assessment on Performance Standards](#) (GSAPS) to determine the proficiency level on the [Georgia School Performance Standards](#). Dr. LeMieux is a lifetime educator of 28 plus years who recently finished his 15th year as a middle/high school principal in Pickens County. Dr. LeMieux is a firm believer in the continuous improvement process, and he thoroughly enjoys working with other educators in this important endeavor.

The East Metro team is supporting the work of the DeKalb Continuous Improvement Planning System that has been developed with the support of Dr. Mary Hooper, the primary consultant through [The Wallace Foundation](#). [DeKalb County Schools](#) is engaged in “supporting the implementation of a refined approach to continuous improvement planning in the DeKalb County School District.”



*Dr. Mary Hooper of The Wallace Foundation working with DeKalb County principals and district leaders.*

The process for principals has been threefold: developing a Continuous Improvement Planning System for each school, understanding the uses of various types of sources of data, and engaging in a collaborative process with the development of the plan. The Continuous Improvement Planning System consists of seven stages: validating the need for improvement; clarifying purpose, goals and measures; adopting evidence-based strategies; defining and translating the strategies to aligned actions; review; reflect; and refine. Continuous improvement efforts will be documented within Indistar across the entire district. Our Priority schools are receiving support with identifying “multiple measures of data,” including school process data, demographic data, student learning data, and perception data.

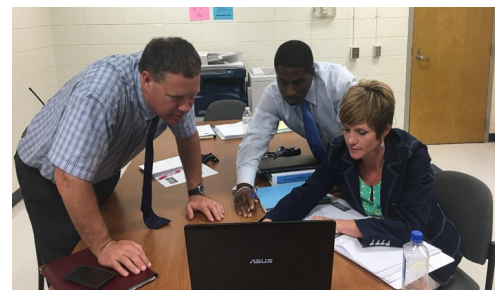
## EAST METRO REGION (continued)

DeKalb County Schools are using the Georgia School Performance Standards in the areas of Instruction, Leadership, and Planning and Organization to help frame the work of the Continuous Improvement Planning System. We are very excited to partner with DeKalb on this focused and strategic effort to support schools in continuous improvement.

## SOUTHWEST REGION

The 2016-2017 school year has gotten off to a great start and many great practices are happening in the Southwest region!

The Administrative Team at [Americus Sumter High School](#) has started a weekly meeting to review lesson plans and other curriculum documents. The goal is to increase the capacity of the leaders in the building, and to make sure they have a shared understanding of what quality looks like in order to communicate the same goals to the teachers. The team reviews lesson plans together and uses a rubric for quality. They then discuss what they are seeing, develop a common vocabulary of what quality looks like, and identify what kind of feedback is necessary to increase capacity of their teachers. The team also discusses classroom observations and compares lesson plans to actual instruction.



*Administrative Team at Americus Sumter High School looking at lesson plans together and providing feedback to teachers.*

The goal is to build a knowledge base for administrators and to provide consistent, high quality feedback to teachers. Their School Effectiveness Specialist assists them in this process and provides high quality exemplars as well as feedback to build the capacity of the team as instructional leaders. This is a great practice that could be used as a model for other schools in the Region.

## SOUTHWEST REGION (continued)

[Monroe High School's](#) instructional coaches and assistant principal shared their revised collaborative planning process at the September Southwest Region Professional Learning Networks. The process supports teachers as they improve the effectiveness of their instructional planning. Coaches participate in collaborative planning with each content team throughout the week. Individual feedback on lesson plans and assessments is provided with an emphasis on alignment to the expectations of the standards.



*Coaches assembled notebooks (“tool kits”) for each content area with the resources teachers need for effective instructional planning. These tools include content standards, Achievement Level Descriptors, curriculum maps and pacing guides, GaDOE content Study Guides, assessments, a protocol for examining student work, suggested instructional strategies, a process for data analysis, and revised lesson plans. These resources are used at every instructional planning session.*

The instructional coaches tiered teachers for support, based on established criteria. For example, the criteria for tier-4 (maximum support) are: new teacher, administrative recommendation, and requires full TKES implementation. A tier-4 teacher receives a minimum of four one-on-one support sessions with the coach per week. Support consists of modeling, observations with feedback, planning, and/or providing resources. Artifacts (minutes from each session, samples of student work, and revised lesson plans) are kept in crates, by content, in the data room and are reviewed periodically.

Coaches report to administration weekly regarding progress, celebrations, and barriers. Next steps are collaboratively developed. Implementing and monitoring an effective collaborative planning process is resulting in improved instruction and better student outcomes.

## SOUTHEAST REGION

### Spotlight on Changes at Moore Street School

[Moore Street School](#), a middle-high alternative school in [Dublin City](#) has a new leader at the helm. Mr. Brian Howell comes to Moore Street with previous experience as an alternative school principal. He began his tenure this summer by visiting students in their homes to introduce himself and get to know them and their families. In addition to the new principal, a much needed part-time counselor has been added to the staff. Due to teacher retirements at the end of last year, two of the four content teachers are also new. In the area of curriculum a new computer program designed for instruction and credit recovery, more closely aligned to our [Georgia Standards of Excellence](#) than the former program, has been installed. There are new members assigned to the school Leadership Team, and a newly appointed process manager for Indistar. The school staff is focusing on spotlight standards C-1 and I-4 for this year.

Mr. Howell recognizes the need for direct instruction in addition to the computer program. The counselor, assisted by teachers, was able to assign students to classes according to subject matter. This allows the core teacher to provide direct instruction a minimum of two days a week addressing additional needs of the GSE. Mr. Howell also has been instrumental in establishing a school-wide discipline plan. Many of the students are assigned to Moore Street due to disciplinary reasons. Once the discipline plan was created, Mr. Howell designed a student handbook outlining the rules, procedures, expectations, and consequences when rules are broken. Additionally, a parent council has been created to assist with any issues that arise at the school. When you enter the halls of Moore Street School you now see a cultural change in both the academics and self-discipline of students.

Huge kudos to the leadership and collaborative effort among the district, principal, staff, students and parents of Moore Street School to provide an improved, quality education for the students of Moore Street School.