



## **Institution Progress Report**

**DeKalb County School District  
1701 Mountain Industrial Blvd  
Stone Mountain, GA 30083**

Prepared for the AdvancED® Monitoring Visit Team

**Date Submitted: May 3, 2013**

**Date Accepted: May 3, 2013**

# About AdvancED and NCA CASI/SACS CASI

## Background

Dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide, AdvancED provides accreditation, research, and professional services to 30,000 institutions in more than 70 countries. AdvancED provides accreditation under the seals of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI).

## The Accreditation Process

To earn and maintain accreditation, an institution must:

### 1. Meet the AdvancED Standards and accreditation policies.

Institutions demonstrate adherence to the AdvancED Standards and accreditation policies, which describe the quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for educational institutions to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness.

### 2. Engage in continuous improvement.

Institutions implement a program of continuous improvement focused on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

### 3. Demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review.

Institutions engage in a planned process of ongoing internal review and self-assessment. In addition, institutions host an external Quality Assurance Review team at least once every five years. The team evaluates the institution's adherence to the AdvancED Standards and accreditation policies, assesses the efficacy of the institution's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and provides commendations and required actions to help the institution improve. The institution acts on the team's required actions and submits an Accreditation Progress Report at prescribed intervals following the Quality Assurance Review. Monitoring visits may be conducted during this time to ensure that the institution is making progress toward the required actions.

## Special Reviews and Monitoring Visits

At any point, a Special Review may be conducted in response to complaints or information about the institution and/or its system (district, board, or corporation) to determine adherence to the AdvancED Standards and accreditation policies. The institution and/or its system must respond to the required actions of the Special Review Team. Monitoring Teams may be sent to the institution and/or its system at regular intervals to ensure that progress is being made toward the Special Review Team's required actions. Both Special Review Teams and Monitoring Teams are empowered to make accreditation recommendations based upon evidence obtained during said visit.

## A Process of Continuous Improvement

The AdvancED accreditation process engages institutions in a continuous process of self-evaluation and improvement. The overall aim is to help institutions be the best they can be on behalf of the students they serve.

# Overview to the Institution Progress Report

## **Purpose**

The Institution Progress Report engages the institution in a detailed review and analysis of the steps it has taken to address the required actions outlined by the AdvancED Special Review Team. The institution uses the report to delineate progress and/or help prepare for the AdvancED Monitoring Team visit. The institution completes and submits the report within specified timelines for required progress updates and/or at least two weeks prior to a scheduled Monitoring Team visit. AdvancED reviews the completed report to ensure sufficient progress is being made toward the required actions of the Special Review Team. In addition, the report is used by the Monitoring Team, if applicable, for its on-site progress review.

## **Structure of the Report**

The Institution Progress Report is organized around the required actions in the Special Review Team report. The progress report lists the required actions from the Special Review team report, and for each, the institution must indicate a progress status and provide a detailed response describing the actions it has taken and the results obtained. It is the responsibility of the institution to address each of the required actions made by the Special Review Team within the timelines specified in the Special Review Team report.

# Institution Progress Report

DeKalb County School District (DCSD) hosted a Special Review team on October 16-17, 2012. Through interviews with institution stakeholders, observations, and reviews of institution documents, the team developed a Special Review Visit Report detailing its findings from the visit.

The Special Review Visit Report contained specific required actions for the institution. The institution is responsible for addressing each of the required actions. Below, please find the required actions from the Special Review Visit Report and the institution's response to each required action.

## **PRELIMINARY INFORMATION:**

On February 8, 2013, the DeKalb Board of Education selected Mr. Michael L. Thurmond as the new Interim Superintendent. On March 13, 2013, the Governor of Georgia appointed six new board members to replace six suspended board members. The appointed six board members joined the newly elected three board members to comprise the nine members of the DeKalb Board of Education.

The interim superintendent immediately began the work of assembling a response team to address the Eleven Required Actions. The scope of work was to identify and implement corrective action steps to address the required actions and concerns related to the accreditation standards noted in the AdvancED report dated December 17, 2012. This includes committees completing the necessary work, gathering applicable evidence, and documenting results required for the Institution Progress Report due on May 3, 2013 to AdvancED. The district is scheduled for the Monitoring Site Visit by AdvancEd on May 16-17, 2013.

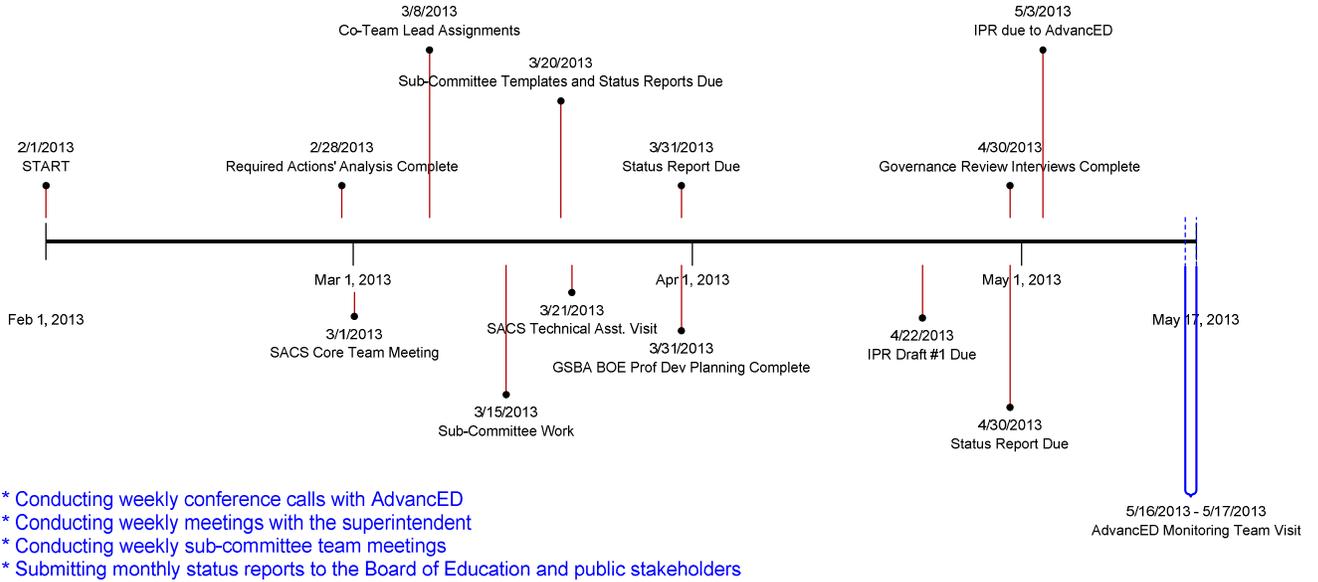
To ensure that the district adequately addressed all Required Actions, the superintendent appointed a SACS Core Team committee and solicited technical support from AdvancED. Each required action is addressed by a team led by Co-Chairs identified by the superintendent. Sub-committees for each Core Team consist of individuals across multiple divisions (Curriculum & Instruction, School Leadership & Operations (including Principals), Finance, Information Technology, Human Resources, Strategic Management & Accountability, Legal Affairs, Facilities & Operations, and Communications).

Daily attention is given to each required action by members of the core team. The progress on each of the required actions is monitored and supported through weekly meetings with the superintendent. In addition, the superintendent reinforces the charge to the core team which is documented in the high-level scope of work inclusive of expected deliverables. A status reporting schedule, team meeting schedule, and milestone timeline has been established for the SACS Core Team. Monthly status reports are published on the district's website. Committee Co-Chairs for each required action regularly schedule planning meetings with their sub-committees. The subcommittee meetings provide time for the development of a detailed action plan for assigned required actions, review of reporting and meeting schedules, and ensure an understanding of the overall process for meeting the expectations for each required action.

To provide the technical support requested by the district, on-site technical assistance support meetings were held on March 21 and May 1, 2013 with AdvancED and the SACS Core Team Co-

Chairs. As a follow up to each of the visits, weekly conference calls are held with the AdvancED Technical Assistance Support team to discuss action items and provide weekly progress updates.

A consolidated project schedule has been developed for tracking and reporting progress.



**REQUIRED ACTION 1:** *Devise and implement a written, comprehensive plan for unifying the DeKalb County Board of Education so that the focus can become serving the needs of the children of the DeKalb County School District.*

**Progress Status:** Indicate the progress the district has made toward addressing the required action.

	<b>Completed</b> – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
<b>x</b>	<b>In Progress</b> – The district is currently working to execute the actions and processes but has yet to fully implement all the necessary actions to address and/or complete the required action.
	<b>Have Not Addressed</b> – The district has not taken any action at this time.

**Response and Evidence:** Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The actions taken to address the required action; 2) the evidence to support the actions; 3) the district’s next steps for the required action; 4) the results/impact of the actions taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the actions taken.

**Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

- The following external resources have been engaged to assist with the following:
  - Georgia School Boards Association – Board Professional Development Plan
  - McKenna, Long, & Aldridge (MLA) Governance Center – Governance Review
  - The MLA Governance Center will assist DeKalb County Schools in adopting best practices used around the country at high-performing organizations in areas such as financial controls and stakeholder input in order to maintain full accreditation and ensure accountability and transparency for DeKalb citizens and taxpayers.
  - AdvancED – Technical Assistance Support
- Engaged the services of Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) to assist the board in developing a long range and sustainable professional development plan.
  - Whole Board Training Session – currently three dates are being considered (May 21, 2013, June 14, 2013), or the board may request an extension from GADOE
  - New Board Member Training – GSBA Conference (June 2013)
  - Georgia Department of Education – Finance Workshop @ GSBA Conference (June 2013)
- Developed proposed professional development plan for full board training

**Required Hours:**

- 3 hours – Local Orientation Training
- 3 hours – Whole Board Training
- 9 hours – New Board Orientation Training
- 15 hours total

Local Orientation Training by Superintendent/Chair/CFO (TBD) – 3 hours

- School finance and budgeting (must be 1 hour)
- Local board policies, board procedures, district goals

Whole Board Training by GSBA (May/June 2013) – 3 hours

- Training at the GSBA headquarters or GSBA conference (Savannah, Georgia)

- Topics covered: Roles & Responsibilities of Board, Board Ethics, Effective School Board Meetings, Superintendent's Evaluation and School Board Self-Assessment
- **New Board Orientation (June 2013) – 9 hours**
- Training at the GSBA summer conference June 12-15 (Savannah GA)
- State law requires completion by June 30, 2013
- Preconference workshops June 12-13 (mandatory attendance for new board members)
- Workshops include school law, parliamentary procedures, school finance, superintendent evaluation, etc.
- GADOE will conduct school finance training which is 5 of the 9 hours
- Developed draft of Board Norms (April 1, 2013)
- Board Approval of Board Norms (scheduled for May 6, 2013)
- Called Board Meeting with Dr. Mark Elgart, President and Chief Executive Officer of AdvancED, regarding accreditation review and board governance (April 3, 2013)

**Evidence to Support the Required Action:**

- GSBA Team Training Outline
- Governance Review Summary
- Board Norms Presentation
- GSBA Pre-Conference Workshop
- GSBA Conference Registrations for Board Members
- Board Meeting Agendas, April 3, 2013, May 6, 2013

**Next Steps for the Required Action:**

- Complete the required board training by June 30, 2013
- Consider requesting an extension from GADOE in light of DCSD unusual circumstances of a newly appointed board
- Schedule a Committee-Of-The-Whole Board of Education meeting to begin discussion on the strategic planning process
- Develop the second tier of needed board training for July-September time frame
- Topics to consider for second tier include but not limited to: Open Government Law and Board Governance
- Support the development of vision, mission, and goals

**Results/Impact of the Actions Taken:**

The Board will maintain a focus on policy and governance and where appropriate will engage with the interim superintendent in the resolution of problems. We will understand the different roles and responsibilities of board members, the superintendent, administration, and staff. We will use our board norms to govern the behaviors of board members and use accepted norms to maintain order and organization of the Board. This framework will be our professional guide for group decorum. Once we reach a decision as a board, we will each support the decision in word and deed. The Chair (or Vice Chair, as appropriate) will speak as the official voice of the Board.

Furthermore, the collaborative commitment to a vision of improved student achievement and establishment of clearly defined goals will unify the work of board members. The work of monitoring the progress toward each goal area will unify board members behind a common theme.

**Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:**

The Board will develop an annual accountability plan to monitor our progress and efforts regularly. We will prepare ourselves by engaging in ongoing professional development for board members and working cohesively and in collaboration with the Superintendent. We will develop a strategic plan that places the focus on academic achievement, establish a strong foundation based on research and data, and create a sustainable climate of trust for ourselves, the administration, and the public.

The Board's focus when taking a particular action on policy, governance, or the budget will be centered on three pillars: 1) best interests of the organization; 2) presents the organization in a positive light; and 3) is it morally and ethically appropriate.

**REQUIRED ACTION 2:** *Ensure that all actions and decisions of the DeKalb County Board of Education are reflective of the collective Board and consistent with approved policies and procedures and all applicable laws, regulations and standards, rather than individual board members acting independently and undermining the authority of the Superintendent to lead and manage day-to-day operations.*

**Progress Status:** Indicate the progress the district has made toward addressing the required action.

	<b>Completed</b> – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
<b>x</b>	<b>In Progress</b> – The district is currently working to execute the actions and processes but has yet to fully implement all the necessary actions to address and/or complete the required action.
	<b>Have Not Addressed</b> – The district has not taken any action at this time.

**Response and Evidence:** Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The actions taken to address the required action; 2) the evidence to support the actions; 3) the district’s next steps for the required action; 4) the results/impact of the actions taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the actions taken.

**Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

- The following external resources have been engaged to assist with the following:
  - MLA Governance Center – Governance Review
  - MLA conducted interviews with external and internal stakeholders from March to May 2013. Target groups included focus groups of teachers, principals, assistant principals, auxiliary staff, senior staff, support staff, parents, parent council presidents, business leaders, PTA council members, local school education foundation members, non-profits, DeKalb Chamber members, representatives from Refugee, Hispanic, Korean, and Asian organizations, and teacher organizations
  - MLA is gathering information that will assist the board and superintendent in making decisions regarding the governance structure of the district based on underlying problems facing the district raised in the special review team report, data collected from the interviews, and review of documentation and processes that are in place to govern district interactions
  - The objective of the final report is to enhance governance practices in the district which will ultimately benefit every level of the school system from the boardroom to the classroom
- Board Policy – Nepotism – new policy pending (Ready for Action May 6, 2013); the Board will waive the thirty day wait period to institute as immediate action

**Evidence to Support the Required Action:**

- MLA Interview Schedule
- MLA Interim Report (due June 2013)
- Board Policy BH – Board Code of Ethics
- Board Policy BHA – Board Member Conflict of Interest

- BCBI - Public Participation in Board Meetings
- Nepotism Policy (Pending)
- Board Policy BBI – Board Staff Communications
- Board Meeting Agendas (April 1, 2013, May 6, 2013)

**Next Steps for the Required Action:**

- The Board will review Board Policy BBI – Board Staff Communications to define in collaboration with the Superintendent the protocols for board and staff communications.
- Upon adoption of amended changes, the Superintendent will provide staff training on the policy for full implementation at all levels in the organization.
- Currently, all policy adoptions are published in the district newsletter, distributed in a mass email to ALL employees, and published on the district’s website.
- Participate in a Board of Education self-evaluation tool that will encompass the local, state, and national standards.

**Results/Impact of the Actions Taken:**

The DeKalb County School Board will emerge as a unified policy making body. The board will become a body that collaboratively works with the superintendent as a team focused on improving student achievement and process efficiencies; and act for the good of the entire school system. In doing so, the board will further demonstrate that it operates responsibly and operates effectively at all times. Finally, the Board will realize that the development and monitoring of policies will protect measures for administrative accountability for student achievement.

**Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:**

In conjunction with board training, the Board will commit to raising the quality of board operations to a higher level by continual self-assessment; researching best practices, participating in executive coaching, and incorporating a post-assessment that provides measurable data for continuous improvement. To that end we must commit to an executive board development program.

A self-evaluation based on local, state, and national standards will be conducted annually and reported to the community during the School District’s Annual Report on student achievement.

**REQUIRED ACTION 3:** *Establish and implement policies and procedures that ensure segregation of duties of the governing board and that of the administration including the elimination of Board working committees which result in board members assuming administrative functions that should be the responsibility of appropriate staff.*

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**Response and Evidence:** Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The actions taken to address the required action; 2) the evidence to support the actions; 3) the district’s next steps for the required action; 4) the results/impact of the actions taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the actions taken.

**Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

- Amended Board Policy BBC (Board Committees). Excerpt from the policy: *There shall be no standing committees of the Board. Special committees may be appointed for specific tasks and shall automatically be dissolved when the task is completed or at any time by Board action.* (February 18, 2013)
- Board policy amendments (1<sup>st</sup> read March 20, 2013, Ready for Action May 6, 2013)
  - BBFA - Local School Councils
  - BC - Board Meetings
  - BDC - Policy Adoption

**Evidence to Support the Required Action:**

- Board Policy BBC - Board Committees
- BBFA - Local School Councils
- BC - Board Meetings
- BDC - Policy Adoption
- BBI – Board Staff Communications (policy will be amended)
- Board Meeting Agendas (February 18, 2013, March 20, 2013, May 6, 2013)

**Next Steps for the Required Action:**

- The Board will review Board Policy BBI – Board Staff Communications to define in collaboration with the Superintendent the protocols for board and staff communications.

**Results/Impact of the Actions Taken:**

School districts function at an optimal level when there is an effort to eliminate tension between the governing board, administrators, and educators. Adherence to Required Action #3 will ensure

relationships of mutual respect. Further, administrators at all levels will be afforded the autonomy to meet the goals for student achievement and manage day-to-day operations.

**Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:**

The members of the Board of Education will continue to participate in professional development opportunities offered by the Georgia School Boards Association. The Board of Education and superintendent will use annual retreats to ensure consistency of expectations over time. The superintendent will develop an annual plan to collaborate with board members as they work to advance the vision of the school district. Board members will be provided detailed information about the school district by the superintendent.

The superintendent's use of a data-driven evaluation tool to monitor progress and hold staff accountable will create an atmosphere for measuring success of the district. This tool will eliminate any desire from individual board members to engage in the daily administration of school business.

**REQUIRED ACTION 4:** *Implement and adhere to fiscally responsible policies and practices that ensure the DeKalb County Board of Education will adopt and ensure proper implementation of budgets within the financial means of the school system and that support the delivery of an educational program that meets the needs of the students.*

**Progress Status:** Indicate the progress the district has made toward addressing the required action.

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**Response and Evidence:** Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The actions taken to address the required action; 2) the evidence to support the actions; 3) the district’s next steps for the required action; 4) the results/impact of the actions taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the actions taken.

**Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

- Committee of the Whole Board/Discussion on Budgets FY 2013/2014 on February 4, 2013
- Board approved the Deficit Reduction Plan (DRP) for FY 2012/2013 on February 25, 2013 and the Chief Financial Officer submitted to GADOE by the February 28, 2013 deadline
- **Budget Development Process Calendar FY 2013-2014**

1. Board Budget Work Session (Set Budget Parameters)	April 16, 2013
2. Public Budget Input Meeting	April 29, 2013
3. Public Budget Input Meeting	May 8, 2013
4. Tentative Budget to BOE for adoption	June 2013
5. BOE adopts Final Budget	June 2013
6. BOE adopts tentative property tax millage rate	June 2013
7. First Public Millage Hearing	June 2013
8. Second Public Millage Hearing	June 2013
9. Third Public Millage Hearing	June 2013
10. BOE adopts final property tax millage	June 2013
- Superintendent enacts expenditure freeze on March 13, 2013 (Expenditures direct to classroom exempted)
- Committee of the Whole Board discussion at the April 1, 2013 meeting regarding System Accountability

**Evidence to Support the Required Action:**

FY2014 Budget Development Presentation  
 Annual Operating Budget Development Process Calendar FY2013-2014  
 Deficit Reduction Plan  
 Budget Parameters  
 Interoffice Memorandum on Expenditure Freeze (expenditures direct to classroom exempted)  
 Board Meeting Agendas (February 4, 2013, February 25, 2013, April 1, 2013, April 29, 2013)

**Next Steps for the Required Action:**

The board understands the importance of having a strategic plan that will guide the work of the district for the next five to ten years. As plans for FY2014 are being made for the final stages of budget development and implementation, the Board of Education must be cognizant that the budget, impacted by the District's Strategic Plan, provides a roadmap and direction for strategic priorities. Goals of the plan are dependent on fiscal resources identified in the budget.

Therefore, the board must implement a process for ensuring fiscal responsibility, equitable allocation of resources, and ongoing monitoring and accountability in order to guarantee that strategic priorities are met. As milestones are reached and strategic priorities and goals are accomplished, the Board must communicate and celebrate the achievements with both internal and external stakeholders. In order to improve short and long-term planning as well as the execution of district priorities and goals, the Board of Education must move forward in implementing fiscally responsible policies and practices.

**Results/Impact of the Actions Taken:**

The allocation of funds and alignment of resources are necessary for improvement of student achievement. The resources include, but are not limited to, school facilities, technology, staffing, professional learning, supplies and materials, and assessment instruments.

**Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:**

The school district's budget will support the needs of the school district and align with the strategic plan and/or annual plan for improvement. Board of Education members in collaboration with the superintendent will demonstrate that instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the goals and direction of the system, individual schools, educational programs, and system operations.

Key Performance for Indicators for the budget will appear in the district's Balanced Scorecard. Also, annual audits will demonstrate fiscally responsible decision-making.

**REQUIRED ACTION 5:** *Establish and enforce a policy that board members honor the chain of command when communication with stakeholders.*

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**Response and Evidence:** Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The actions taken to address the required action; 2) the evidence to support the actions; 3) the district’s next steps for the required action; 4) the results/impact of the actions taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the actions taken.

**Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

- Board Policy BBI – Board Staff Communications will be reviewed to clarify and strengthen as necessary
- Consult with Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) and the Georgia School Superintendents Association (GSSA) to review best practices
- Full Board completed affirmation of Ethics Oath under board policy BH (Board Code of Ethics) and BHA (Board Member Conflict of Interest), April 1, 2013

**Evidence to Support the Required Action:**

- BBI – Board Staff Communications (policy will be amended)
- Board Policy BH – Board Code of Ethics
- Board Policy BHA – Board Member Conflict of Interest

**Next Steps for the Required Action:**

- Train district employees on Board Policy BBI – Board Staff Communications
- Establish agreed upon protocols for chain of command regarding constituents and community; chain of common regarding other board members; and chain of command regarding employees.
- Board of Education members will formalize a process for receiving authentic feedback from constituents.

**Results/Impact of the Actions Taken:**

Effective school districts are organized with defined responsibilities, established role definitions, and relationships. The goal of the members of the Board of Education is to lead a successful school system with clearly defined functions; providing administrative oversight. Using the appropriate chain-of-command regarding community feedback, board member interaction, and employee communication will allow the employees of the district to complete their duties and responsibilities in the most efficient manner.

A formal process for receiving feedback from community members such as focus groups, surveys, and advisory groups will enable board members to guide improvements that are aligned with the overall vision and direction of the school district relative to improving student achievement. These mechanisms also enable board members to remain visible in fulfilling the expectations of the community to provide a quality education for all students in a fiscally responsible manner.

Well defined protocol to guide board member collaboration or interactions will ensure that all members maintain high standards of decorum. Finally, adherence to Board Policy BBI establishing guidance for board member and employee communication will improve the school district's climate thus creating a culture focused on improving student achievement.

Training for employees on the expectations on the boundaries of board communication will reduce the risk of inappropriate board-employee interaction and/or interactions that are not directed by the superintendent.

**Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:**

A self-evaluation based on local, state, and national standards will be conducted annually and reported to the community during the School District's Annual Report on student achievement.

**REQUIRED ACTION 6:** *Ensure a robust district diagnostic assessment program (universal screener, progress monitoring probes, and benchmarks included) that is a systematic and a regular component of the district’s comprehensive assessment system, include a variety of formative assessment tasks and tools to monitor student progress, and provide school personnel access to the State Longitudinal Data System.*

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**Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

DeKalb began the journey of implementing Common Core in the 2010-2011 school year with the awarding of the Race to the Top Grant in the amount of \$34 million dollars. The journey began with planning how the district would approach the grant’s main components of standards and assessments, Great Teachers and Leaders, Turning Around the Lowest Achieving Schools, Instructional Support Systems, and STEM. Our planning included district- and school-based personnel, including principals and teachers, with the desired outcome of improving and sustaining student learning outcomes for all learners. DeKalb County School District (DCSD) has achieved the following in support of improving student achievement and Required Action 6:

- Training of principals and teachers in the Common Core State Standards during the summer of 2011 and during the 2011-2012 school year. The train-the-trainer model was used in conjunction with teacher participation in the state Common Core webinars hosted by the Georgia Department of Education. Teachers continue to participate in Common Core training opportunities as offered within the district and as offered by the Georgia Department of Education. (Indicators 3.5, 3.6, and 3.11)
- Development of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Professional Learning (CIAPL) teams consisting of approximately 700 teachers to write a curriculum aligned to the Common Core Standards and the embedded Anchor Standards. This work occurred during the 2011-2012 school year. The outcome has been the 2012-2013 implementation of DeKalb’s new Common Core based curriculum in ELA and Math and

new curriculum that addresses the Common Core Anchor and Literacy Standards in all content areas including Science, Social Studies, World Language, Fine Arts, Health, and Physical Education. The new curriculum was informed by staff reflecting general education, special education, gifted, and ESOL. The new curriculum is outlined yearly and includes units of study. The district used Curriculum Designers, Inc. (Heidi Hayes Jacobs) to provide external feedback and consultation during the curriculum development process. (Indicators 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5)

- Development of district-wide benchmarks directly aligned to the curriculum units of study as a means to measure student learning of the curriculum and to obtain data to inform the instructional process. The program includes district quarterly benchmark assessments that are aligned to the Common Core Standards and the new curriculum units of study. The benchmarks have been developed collaboratively by C&I staff, CIAPL teacher team members, and Pearson. Currently, the school district is preparing for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Benchmark Assessments administration. The benchmarks are available for computer administration, which resembles what will be required across the state of Georgia in 2015 when the new state assessments are introduced. DeKalb is ahead of the curve by currently implementing online assessments and working through any hurdles and challenges prior to the state's roll out in order to best prepare our students for forthcoming new state testing expectations. (Indicators 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5)
- Expansion of teacher training and capacity building throughout this school year with approximately 250 additional teachers and teacher leaders forming a professional learning Community of Practice (COP) to develop assessment items and to refine and enhance the curriculum. The COP groups meet to develop model lessons, integrate the use of technology within the units of study, and share with each other the successes and challenges they are facing implementing the new curriculum in an effort to improve it. This brings the total number of teachers trained in Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs' *Mapping to the Core* curriculum writing and lesson planning approach across the district to approximately 1000. The division's goal is to provide training and ongoing support to each of the approximately 6000 teachers and teacher leaders within the district over the next 3-5 years. The DCSD is on track to achieve this. (Indicators 3.5, 3.6, and 3.11)
- Implementation of the new Teacher Keys and Leader Keys Effectiveness System evaluations. This includes the on-going development of Student Learning Objectives (also known as SLOs). The district is implementing a variety of teacher-developed formative/informal classroom assessments to support the instructional process along with existing state and national assessments (i.e., CRCT, EOCT, SAT, AP exams). Teacher teams develop SLOs as a required component of the new Teacher Keys Effective System (TKES) evaluation process. As part of the previously mentioned curriculum work, teachers are receiving training in assessment and performance task development which also includes the use and training on formative/informal classrooms assessments to use to monitor student progress as they are teaching the units of study. (Indicators 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.11, and 4.1)

- Development and implementation of a tiered professional learning framework (known as the CIAPL Network) that provides differentiated professional learning for all teachers (i.e., Tier 1 for new/beginning teachers, Tier 2 for experienced teachers, Tier 3 for master teachers, department chairs, teacher leaders, and Tier 4 to support the development/certification of highly qualified/highly effective teachers). PD360 is an online professional learning platform that has been introduced across the district this year that supports a wide range of professional learning work within each tier of the CIAPL Network. Additionally, it supports implementation of the state's new teacher and leader evaluation systems known as Teacher Keys (TKES) and Leader Keys (LKES). Among many things PD 360 houses district-developed informal classroom observation rubrics that along with the TKES observations tools can be used to collect data from classroom observations, and more importantly, provide professional learning content (i.e., videos, articles, courses, e-books, and more) that align with the specific learning needs of individual teachers as identified from the observations. (Indicators 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.11, and 4.1)
- Implementation of the RtI Advisory Group reflective of Teachers, Counselors, School Psychologists, Social Workers, and Principals to draft an RtI process, recommend a tool for the management of the RtI process, and to identify a universal screener that will be used for progress monitoring of interventions to support students. This is the next "big rock" of the instructional framework, which is a district guide and electronic tool that supports implementation of a district-wide approach to Response to Intervention (RtI). RtI is a four-tiered approach within the state of Georgia designed to ensure that all students access and achieve the core curriculum. Tier 1 includes teaching and learning best practices to ensure all students master the core curriculum in all content areas. This tier/work has been introduced and is ongoing as described above. Tiers 2-4 exist in varying pieces and parts. The next steps for the Division of Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) include ramping up initial work around RtI in anticipation of a more targeted focus in this area during the 13-14 SY. The district is on track to realize full implementation of RtI within DCSD over the next 1-3 years. Identification of a district-wide Universal Screener will round out the district's assessment program and fulfill all requirements noted by AdvancED's most recent report. (Indicators 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.8, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, and 4.8)
- Expansion of STEM to include the development of a STEM Team to plan and support the implementation and use of STEM related resources integrated into classroom instruction using the standards of the new curriculum. The plan includes the provision of STEM related professional learning which includes sessions on lesson planning in an effort to create a STEM culture, and on-going support of schools in pursuit of STEM Certification. (Indicators 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5)

## **Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

### **Universal Screener**

- Implementation of a group to select the universal screener in spring 2012 **(Completed)**
- Discussion of choice of Universal Screener with the RtI Advisory Group **(In progress)**
- Budget request for funds to pay for Universal Screener **(Completed)**
- Development and BOE approval of a finalized budget that reflects allocation of funds to pay for the Universal Screener **(In progress)**
- Development of the recommendation to purchase the Universal Screener from Renaissance Learning **(In progress)**
- Development of the Universal Screener training, implementation, monitoring, and support plan for a 2013-2014 implementation **(In progress)**

### **Progress Monitoring**

- Implementation of the Response to Intervention (RtI) Advisory Group in 2012-2013 **(Completed)**
- Implementation of the RtI Steering Committee to help develop a comprehensive DCSD RtI manual **(Completed)**
- Develop a comprehensive RtI manual for the DCSD **(In progress)**
- Review of RtI Management Tools by the RtI Advisory Group, Principals and Teachers in February 2013 **(Completed)**
- Development of the RtI process for a 2013-2014 implementation **(In progress)**
- Development of the RtI student progress software module training, implementation, monitoring, and support plan for a 2013-2014 implementation **(In progress)**
- Develop a district level training & a district level plan for on-going monitoring of RtI **(In progress)**
- Budget request for funds to pay for RtI module **(Completed)**
- Development and BOE approval of a finalized budget that reflects allocation of funds to pay for the RtI module **(In progress)**
- Development of the recommendation to purchase the RtI Module from SchoolNet **(In progress)**
- Development of the RtI training, implementation, monitoring, and support plan for a 2013-2014 implementation **(In progress)**
- Streamline and clarify RTI and progress monitoring expectations for 2013-2014 by stating explicitly which practices from past initiatives will be abandoned (Will the progress monitoring data entry on intervention through IDMS replace level one plans, Tier II district form? Teachers should not have to record data on a form and on the computer) **(In progress)**
- Build coherence with how RTI and progress monitoring relates to TKES standards and the standards-based classroom through examples and models shared during training sessions. **(In progress)**

## **Benchmarks**

- Development and administration of Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) aligned benchmarks for Quarter 1 (Q1), Quarter 2 (Q2), and Quarter 3 (Q3) **(Completed)**
- Development and administration of CCGPS aligned benchmarks for Quarter 4 (Q4) **(In progress)**
- Weekly conference calls held with vendor to plan for improvements **(In progress)**
- Reporting of results for each quarter to Senior Leadership and then general public through the Balanced Scorecard **(In progress)**

## **State's Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)**

- Provisioning for all appropriate staff **(In-Progress)**
- Identification of SLDS facilitator at each schoolhouse **(Not Yet Started)**
- Completion of all training (including best practices) **(In-Progress)**
- Completion of SLDS website access through the electronic student information system (eSIS) **(Completed)**
- Planning for access to the SLDS website through DeKalb Discussions for select non-teaching personnel who might need access and who do not currently have access to eSIS. **(In-Progress)**

## **Evidence to Support the Required Action:**

### **Universal Screener**

- Universal Screener Presentation documentation (Agendas, PowerPoints, Minutes-Notes, and/or Signature Logs)
- Universal Screener training documentation (Agendas, PowerPoints, Minutes-Notes, and/or Signature Logs)
- Universal Screener related communication to school
- Universal Screener monitoring documentation including data and reports

### **Progress Monitoring**

- RtI Advisory Group Meeting Agendas, Minutes-Notes, and/or Signature Logs
- RtI Handbook
- RtI Training participation documentation (Agendas, PowerPoints, Minutes-Notes, and/or Signature Logs)
- RtI related communications to schools
- RtI monitoring documentation including data and reports
- RtI support documentation
- RtI Presentations at Summer Leadership Conference documentation

## **Benchmarks**

- Blueprints of benchmark assessments
- Internal Teacher review documentation (Agendas, Minutes-Notes, and/or Signature Logs)

- Virtual Reviews documentation
- Final Coordinator Review process documentation
- Benchmark results for Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4
- Memos to Principals related to Benchmarks
- Weekly conference call/communications (Agendas, Notes, Changes, Concerns Addressed)
- Balanced Scorecard Data (BSC)

#### **State's Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)**

- Provisioning Report for the SLDS for all appropriate staff
- List of SLDS facilitators for each schoolhouse
- SLDS Training documents (Agendas, Minutes-Notes, and/or Signature Logs)

#### **Next Steps for the Required Action:**

##### **Universal Screener**

- Continue planning for training and implementation upon purchase of Universal Screener

##### **Progress Monitoring**

- Continue planning for training and implementation of the RtI process upon purchase of the RtI management tool

##### **Benchmarks**

- Continue to develop and implement Q4 benchmarks and plan for the item replacement for 2013-2014
- Development of a committee of teachers to discuss planning and administration of benchmarks during the 2013-2014 school year

#### **State's Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)**

- Identification of when to use the SLDS and when to use the Instructional Data Management System (IDMS) in SchoolNet
- Development of a SLDS Training
- Development of a Support Plan for DCSD in light of the current lack of staff available and the current hiring freeze
- Implementation of the SLDS Training for Teacher Users

#### **Results/Impact of the Actions Taken:**

The results or impact of actions are identified below. Specifically, the overall outcome will be the narrowing of student achievement gaps between performing and historically underperforming groups. The use of the universal screener will result in the use of Tier I & II interventions based upon the data identifying students in need of intervention in ELA and Math. Another result will be the consistent narrowing of the student achievement gap between groups that are performing on level and groups that are historically underperforming. The results of progress monitoring, including the impact of actions taken, will be regular data team

school meetings and the use of data to inform the RtI process and bi-monthly region or cluster data team meetings to monitor and manage the RtI process. The desired impact will be students progressing with fewer students being identified in need of Tiers 2, 3, and 4 interventions. The use of a benchmark process will result in teachers using benchmark data to regularly plan for instruction and interventions. Additionally, teachers and principals will have data to inform the RtI and Gifted processes. The principals and teachers will understand and navigate the SLDS, understand how SGPs are calculated and utilized as they relate to Teacher Effective Measure, and use the use of SLDS/SGP data during the instructional planning process.

**Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:**

The long-term plans should include allocation and/or shifting of funding to support continued use of a universal screener and the RtI module. Beyond funding, in order to sustain the results, the district will employ the use of district-level monitoring teams and utilize reports using a collaborative monitoring process involving Regional Superintendents, Curriculum and Instruction, and Principals. The universal screener and progress monitoring will be monitored through monthly monitoring reports from RtI Liaisons, monthly meetings with RtI Liaisons, a district level progress monitoring plan, and a school level progress monitoring plan. Benchmarks will be monitored using district and regional reviews of benchmark implementation and use reports. Usage of the SLDS will be monitored using usage reports with issues and concerns consistently identified and addressed as the district works to advance the work of using Instructional Improvement Systems (ISS). The incorporation of the key data sets into school level and district level planning will result in sustaining the desired impact of narrowing the achievement gap and improving student learning outcomes for all students.

**REQUIRED ACTION 7:** *Establish a formal change management process for new system initiatives (vision, mission, strategic plan, curriculum, benchmark assessment, etc.) to address development, implementation, timeline, monitoring, communication and evaluation effectiveness. This process should be in accordance with state regulations and guidelines.*

**Progress Status:** Indicate the progress the district has made toward addressing the required action.

	<b>Completed</b> – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
<b>x</b>	<b>In Progress</b> – The district is currently working to execute the actions and processes but has yet to fully implement all the necessary actions to address and/or complete the required action.
	<b>Have Not Addressed</b> – The district has not taken any action at this time.

**Response and Evidence:** Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The actions taken to address the required action; 2) the evidence to support the actions; 3) the district’s next steps for the required action; 4) the results/impact of the actions taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the actions taken.

**Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

The DeKalb County School District (DCSD) recognizes the need to have a comprehensive formal change and performance management process for new system initiatives. In order for this process to be effective, it must be comprehensive and address feasibility, development, timeline, monitoring, communication, training, effectiveness, and sustainability.

- Developed an action plan to establish a change and performance management process.
- Created a survey to distribute to senior management, regional superintendents, and strategic initiative project managers. This survey assessed the current climate by gathering input/feedback with regard to establishing a change and performance management process.
- Distributed survey to senior management, regional superintendents, and strategic initiative project managers to gather input/feedback in order to establish a proposed change and performance management process.
- Researched best practice models and reviewed comparable districts’ practices for a change and performance management process. This research was completed via internet searches and through a conference call discussion with a neighboring high-performing school district.

- Met with identified subcommittee members of RA #11 which addresses the development of the district’s strategic plan. The work of the required action #11 team is a dependency to the work of required action #7 since the initiatives identified from the strategic plan will flow through the new change and performance management process.
- Collected and synthesized results to develop a summary report of the feedback obtained from the survey. (Note: there were 15 out of 22 responses to the survey.)
- Developed a preliminary draft of a proposed new change and performance management process.

**Evidence to Support the Required Action:**

- RA7 committee meeting agendas/sign in sheets
- High level action plan from work session
- Copy of email communicating and distributing survey to senior management, regional superintendents, and strategic initiative project managers
- Data report with survey responses
- Summary report based on synthesized results
- Preliminary draft of a proposed new change and performance management process
- Research and notes regarding best practice models
  - Five basic phases of Project Management
  - Prosci methodology
  - Kurt Lewin’s model
  - John Kotter’s model
  - Harold Resnick’s process
  - Deming’s model (Plan-Do-Study-Act)
  - Change Management workflow model
  - Change Management basics from the Change Management Learning Center
  - “What is Change Management?”
  - Park City School District’s Strategic Plan – Decision Making Criteria for Initiative Selection, Adoption, and Retention
  - Prince George’s County and Rock Hill, SC – Performance Management
  - Prince George’s County Public Schools Performance Management brochure
  - Los Angeles Unified School District Performance Meter
  - Gwinnett County Public Schools Cross Functional Action Team documents
  - Kepner-Tregoe Model

**Next Steps for the Required Action:**

- Refine and finalize proposed new change and performance management process
- Develop change and performance management workflow materials and documentation (templates, guidance documents, forms, etc.)
- Present new change and performance management process to the RA#7 subcommittee members and core SACS response team

- Present new change and performance management process to the superintendent
- Present new change and performance management process to the Board of Education
- Develop and execute a communications plan
- Develop and execute a professional development plan
- Develop and execute a sustainability plan

**Results/Impact of the Actions Taken:**

The survey provided meaningful information from the end-users and stakeholders with regard to the strengths and weaknesses of the former process as well as opportunities for developing a new change and performance management process. Survey participation helped to reveal there is the need to have institutional commitment from the stakeholders who will ultimately be responsible for implementing and sustaining this new process. Research conducted provided the district with a point of reference as to how the new process was envisioned and developed.

**Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:**

In order for the new change and performance management process to be effective and efficient, it is imperative and critical that the superintendent and the Board of Education members understand, embrace, and support its implementation within the district. The success and sustainability of this process is dependent upon the superintendent setting the expectations for its consistent use when establishing new district initiatives. A comprehensive and effective communications plan is essential to stakeholder commitment, use, and sustainability. This plan should ensure that all district personnel are aware of the process, why it was developed, and its short- and long-term benefits to achieving and sustaining the district's strategic priorities.

The communications plan must be supported with ongoing, job-embedded professional development opportunities for district staff to understand, utilize, and recognize the efficiency of the process in relation to implementing new initiatives. The high-level action plan for this required action encompasses all of the aforementioned tasks that must be completed in order to ensure that the district is engaged in continuous improvement.

**REQUIRED ACTION 8:** *Conduct an internal audit on the available technology across all schools in order to identify areas of need with the intent to allocate appropriately throughout the district. Support this action by researching appropriate training for teachers and staff to ensure technology’s effective use in daily instruction.*

**Progress Status:** Indicate the progress the district has made toward addressing the required action.

	<b>Completed</b> – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
<b>x</b>	<b>In Progress</b> – The district is currently working to execute the actions and processes but has yet to fully implement all the necessary actions to address and/or complete the required action.
	<b>Have Not Addressed</b> – The district has not taken any action at this time.

**Response and Evidence:** Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The actions taken to address the required action; 2) the evidence to support the actions; 3) the district’s next steps for the required action; 4) the results/impact of the actions taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the actions taken.

**Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

The Board of Education and superintendent recognize the importance of conducting an internal audit and using the results to ensure appropriate allocation of technology resources and to provide research-based training for teachers using technology in daily classroom instruction. In order to address Required Action 9, a committee was formed to develop a process for conducting an internal audit and develop a plan of action for implementing the process.

- The committee created a project schedule and divided it into four major milestones:
  1. Conduct Technology Audit
  2. Identify Technology Needs
  3. Address Allocation of Technology
  4. Create a Training Plan
- Each milestone has been divided into specific tasks. These tasks have been assigned to various committee members.
- The first milestone is to conduct a technology audit. The DeKalb County School District (DCSD) will provide an Executive Summary along with artifacts as evidence of the completed audit.
- The second milestone is to identify district technology needs. In order to provide data and insight, DCSD administered a district-wide Technology Use Survey to all staff

members. The survey was available online for two weeks, April 1, 2013 through April 19, 2013.

- DCSD is working to draft a high level outline for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Environment Model.

#### **Evidence to Support the Required Action:**

- Executive Summary: Technology Audit (Part I)  
Included in the Appendix:
  - 2012 – 13 DCSD State Technology Inventory Data
  - 2012 – 15 DCSD District Technology Plan
  - District Technology Project/Initiatives
  - DCSD District-Level Software List

#### **Next Steps for the Required Action:**

- DCSD will begin gathering and evaluating data from the Technology Audit as well as several other sources to identify technology needs.
  - **Needs Assessment: 3/20/13 – 5/31/13**  
*Executive Summary: Needs Assessment Report (Part II) – 5/31/13*
- Once the technology needs have been identified, DCSD will review funding sources and allocations.
  - **Allocation and Funding Projections: 3/20/13 – 5/31/13**  
*Executive Summary: Allocation and Funding Projections (Part III) – 5/31/13*
- Throughout the process, DCSD will identify, develop, and facilitate professional development opportunities that promote and ensure effective use in daily instruction.
  - **Technology Training Design: 3/20/13 – 10/28/13**  
*DCSD Instructional Technology Training Plan – 10/28/13*

#### **Results/Impact of the Actions Taken:**

Although the DCSD Information, Technology Department is required to complete an annual district-wide technology inventory to submit to the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE), the immediate results of the technology audit provided an opportunity to analyze current technology use and explain DCSD technology infrastructure. The Technology Use Survey gave staff members the opportunity to provide feedback on their personal technology experiences and to identify specific needs for technology tools and training offered in DCSD. The executive summary can be used by DCSD departments to support data-driven decisions regarding technology purchases, allocation of resources, and professional learning for school and district technology users.

The impact of the actions taken so far has been to place a more laser-like focus on assessing technology resources and utilizing data to identify school and district needs.

**Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:**

DCSD will continue to administer the annual district technology inventory to be submitted to GADOE. In addition, the DCSD Information Technology Department will use the data to update the audit for trend and analysis comparison.

**REQUIRED ACTION 9:** *Communicate to stakeholders the difference between programs and financial resources available to schools.*

**Progress Status:** Indicate the progress the district has made toward addressing the required action.

	<b>Completed</b> – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
<b>x</b>	<b>In Progress</b> – The district is currently working to execute the actions and processes but has yet to fully implement all the necessary actions to address and/or complete the required action.
	<b>Have Not Addressed</b> – The district has not taken any action at this time.

**Response and Evidence:** Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The actions taken to address the required action; 2) the evidence to support the actions; 3) the district’s next steps for the required action; 4) the results/impact of the actions taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the actions taken.

**Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

The Board of Education and Superintendent recognize the need to provide a clearly defined communication plan to stakeholders that will differentiate between programs and financial resources available to the DeKalb County School District (DCSD). Therefore in response to Required Action 9, committee members formed a multi-divisional team with representatives from Curriculum and Instruction (C&I), School Leadership and Operational Support (SLO), and Finance to address the Required Action. The committee adopted the following process to use to develop a plan of action: (1) define “programs”, (2) identify existing programs, (3) develop a plan for communicating the difference between programs and financial resources, and (4) implement the communication plan to stakeholders.

1. Co-chairs developed a high-level plan for addressing RA 9. The high-level plan included the following action items:
  - Form committee with representatives from C&I, SLO (including but not limited to Title I), IT, Finance
  - Define what is meant by "programs"; establish two broad categories (i.e., programs specific to student groups and/or funding sources such as gifted/high achievers, sped, EL, CTAE, Title, etc. and programs for tiered interventions & defined as core, comprehensive interventions, supplemental interventions, and whole school reforms)
  - Compile/Inventory of existing "programs" as well as associated costs and funding sources

- Divide full committee into sub-committees/focus/study groups that are charged with identifying/establishing criteria for "programs"; establishing sub-committee tasks, timelines, and outcomes
  - Work with to develop a communications plan for 1) this process and 2) for new/refined "program" identification and return on investment guidelines for continuation of "programs" (Plan may include regional round tables in which subcommittees provide "workshops" that focus on informing various stakeholder groups about existing programs, program compliance/requirements, funding costs, and allowable/available funding sources, etc.)
  - Communicate the plan
2. Committee met 4/3/12 @ 9 a.m. The following events/actions occurred:
- Co-chairs provided an overview, shared high-level action plan and established committee's purpose
  - Two sub-committees were formed (**building-base programs and district-wide programs**) and time was provided for both groups to:
    - identify additional sub-committee members, if any
    - sub-committee meeting times/dates were established
    - establish sub-committee tasks/to do list
    - create proposed timeline
    - identify proposed artifacts
  - The sub-committees determined and reported the following:

**Building-Base Programs:**

**Determined Sub-committee Members:**

Dr. Sherry Everett  
 Dr. Cynthia Hill  
 Ms. Sherry Johnson  
 Mrs. Tangel Kimber  
 Dr. Chris Robinson

**Established Tentative Timeline:**

April 5, 2013-Create a draft of the program template to distribute to principals  
 April 15, 2013- School-Based Program Committee will review document  
 April 17, 2013- Share template at whole group meeting for feedback  
 April 24, 2013-Present final draft of template to whole group  
 May 1, 2013- Email template to principals  
 May 24, 2013- Due date for completed template from principals  
 May 29, 2013- School-Based Program Committee will review submitted program list and artifacts

**Established Draft Subcommittee High-Level Action Plan:**

- Revise School Based Programs/Initiatives template for review and submission to principals.
- Principals submit School Based Programs/Initiatives template updated with current information, funding source, and time of day program or initiative is being implemented.
- Principals submit artifacts to support identified School Based Programs/Initiatives.

**District-wide Programs:**

**Determined Subcommittee Members:**

Donyell Atkinson  
Monika Davis  
Monica Gray-Mays  
Shawn McGhee

**Established Meeting Times/Dates:**

April 17, 2013  
April 24, 2013  
May 1, 2013

**Established a To Do List:**

- Created a definition to distinguish between "programs" and "services".
- Identify district-wide instructional resources.
- Email department heads in the following areas to survey and gather information regarding programs/services that their department provides.
  - Special Education
  - Career Education Technology
  - Information Technology
  - Professional Learning
  - Extra-Curricular (Athletics, Band)
  - IB Program
  - Dual Enrollment
  - AP Program
- Categorize the collected info into programs and services.

3. Committee met 4/17/13 @ 9 a.m. The following events/actions occurred:

School-Based Committee

- Continues to revise School-Based Programs/Initiatives template for review and submission to principals based on feedback for group.
- Will ask principal sample group to vet template.
- Defined a working definition of programs versus services-A planned series of events, items or performances

#### District-Based Committee

- Discussed needed to develop a timeline
- Continues to gathering data to populate survey recently submitted to specific department chairs
- Need to send to department heads who were omitted

#### **Evidence to Support the Required Action:**

- Sign-in sheets for 4.3.13 and 4.17.13 meetings
- Agendas for 4.3.13 and 4.17.13 meetings
- Revised committee list
- Progress Reports for 4.3.13 and 4.17.13
- Other meeting artifacts such as: tentative timeline, principal survey template

#### **Next Steps for the Required Action:**

Next steps were determined at the 4.3.13 meeting:

- Next meeting the committee will work to create a draft communications plan
- Next meeting each sub-committee will report out on progress of high-level action plan for their group
- Next meeting time/date is Wednesday, April 17 @ 9:00 a.m. in C&I area

Next steps were determined as follows at the 4.17.13 meeting:

- Next meeting each sub group will have definite timeline
- Next meeting district based committee will share draft results from survey
- Next meeting school- based committee will share final principal survey
- Next meeting time/date is Wednesday, April 24 @ 9:00 a.m. in M201

#### **Results/Impact of the Actions Taken:**

As a result of the work to date, the district is aware of the breadth and depth of the specific work needed to fully address this action item. The subcommittees have defined the work that is needed and are in the process of gathering necessary information. Once the results are gathered, the subcommittees will be able to organize, analyze and make informed decisions that guide the renewal, removal, purchase and more of building-based instructional programs and district-wide instructional programs. Additionally, we will be positioned to explore, develop and implement complementary processes such as guidelines for the identification, purchase, renewal, removal and return on investment (ROI) of building-based and district-wide instructional programs. Lastly, this work will allow the district to effectively communicate to all stakeholders what programs are in place as well as related information to this action item such as funding sources, ROI, and more.

#### **Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:**

To date the committee has not yet specifically addressed long-term plans for sustaining the results/impact of RA #9. This will be addressed as the sub-committees complete more of the items identified as part of their sub-committee action plans. It is the goal of the entire committee to produce a cogent final document that includes the results of the instructional

program inventories, clearly identifies the programs funding sources, and outlines a process for the identification, implementation, replacement, and/or removal of programs based on their return on investment, which includes how they clearly contribute to student achievement. Once this is determined, it will be included as part of the committees communication plan.

**REQUIRED ACTION 10:** *Enroll all students (K-12) in Parent Portal and communicate with parents this action to work more closely with them. Establish policy for timely Parent Portal updates by teachers. Also provide students with tools to monitor their success.*

**Progress Status:** Indicate the progress the district has made toward addressing the required action.

	<b>Completed</b> – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
<b>x</b>	<b>In Progress</b> – The district is currently working to execute the actions and processes but has yet to fully implement all the necessary actions to address and/or complete the required action.
	<b>Have Not Addressed</b> – The district has not taken any action at this time.

**Response and Evidence:** Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The actions taken to address the required action; 2) the evidence to support the actions; 3) the district’s next steps for the required action; 4) the results/impact of the actions taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the actions taken.

**Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

The DeKalb County School District (DCSD) provided parents/guardians and students access to students’ grades through a portal application at the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year. Although the software changed, a mainstay is the basic functionality of viewing current averages, assignment information, daily attendance, and direct messaging with teachers. Access to the *Parent Portal* is voluntary. Parents/guardians are able to utilize an on-line application to establish accounts by creating unique user IDs and passwords. Approximately 23% of our parent/guardian stakeholder group has active accounts.

- On February 21, 2013, members of the Student Information System (SIS) Department met with members of the Application Development Department to develop an action plan to respond to the charge. The team initially proposed that DCSD should create a unique account for every student’s parent/guardian. The approach quickly changed because of the custodial issues only known at the local school level, the lack of accurate email addresses uploaded in the SIS system, the amount of multiple families living at one address, and the absence of family identifiers. The group recommended that the most viable solution to enroll all K-12 students in the *Parent Portal* is to create an individual student account for every student.
- Members of the Student Information System (SIS) Department met with members of the Application Development Department on February 27, March 6, March 20, and March 21, 2013. The sub-committee discussed how the accounts would be programmatically created, the specific User ID and password for each student, and the email address tag for the accounts.

- The development tasks required to build Portal accounts have been identified. A timeline and test plan is being developed for each task.
- On March 21, 2013, the two assigned co-leads met with the sub-committee to select three Principals to serve on the sub-committee and decide next steps. The sub-committee determined that an extensive communication plan must be developed and include translating all written correspondences in multiple languages to effectively share information with all parents/guardians.
- On April 3, 2013 when the full sub-committee met, the committee reviewed policies and regulations governing teachers' grading practices from metro area school districts including Gwinnett, Atlanta and Cobb. The existing DeKalb Board of Education Policy IH: Student Achievement and Board of Education Policy IHA: Grading Systems were revised as agreed upon by the sub-committee.
- The sub-committee acknowledged the need to bridge the communication gap between the District and home and the local school and home. The suggested communication tools include, but are not limited to, PDS-TV24, K-12 alerts, posters to display in schools and communities, web-page banners, marquees, calling posts, Board meeting announcements, mass mailings, and report card messages.
- The sub-committee discussed and identified possible ways to reach parents/guardians without computer and Internet access. Committee members suggested that all schools should designate computers for parents/guardians to use in front office, libraries/media centers, or other designated areas. Also, the sub-committee's long-term goal is to partner with public libraries, community centers, and businesses to allow parents/guardians and students to use computers to access the portal. Please note that students have access to technology during the academic day.
- The sub-committee will conduct a pilot to test the individual student accounts. Initially, the targeted audience included McLendon Elementary, Bethune Middle, and Cedar Grove High. Due to standardized testing (EOCT, AP, and CRCT) parameters, the pilot will occur at selected high schools during the summer.
- On April 15, 2013 the co-lead met with the Deputy Superintendent to discuss the proposed policy changes. The Deputy Superintendent recommended that the sub-committee devise a timeline to review and revise all instructional (I) policies.

**Evidence to Support the Required Action:**

- Meeting signature logs
- Meeting agendas
- Minutes/Notes
- Document outlining each development task identified for creation of Portal accounts

- Document outlining the setup details for yearly processes necessary to manage the Portal accounts
- Policy drafts (red-lined and proposed versions)

**Next Steps for the Required Action:**

- The sub-committee will continue to meet weekly.
- The sub-committee will develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan. The initial communication includes a generic statement printed on final report cards that explains the *Parent Portal* access for all K-12 students at the beginning of the 2013-2014 academic year. Principals will receive guidance at least two weeks before the end of school.
- A timeline and test plan will be developed for each programming task that is required to create the student portal accounts.
- The Application Developer will continue to provide guidance for each identified development task to properly create the individual student portal accounts.
- The co-leads will follow-up with Deputy Superintendent again to discuss proposed policy changes.

**Results/Impact of the Actions Taken:**

The results and impact of the actions taken in response to Required Action 10 are that by mid-July 2012, all K-12 portal accounts will be created. All parents/guardians will have the ability to activate their portal accounts by September 1, 2013. Active *Parent Portal* accounts will not be impacted by this action. Parents will continue to have the functionality of creating one common account to access their children's individual accounts. All teachers will communicate academic progress to students and parents in a timely manner through the *Parent Portal* by maintaining accurate and current records. By January 2014, a Student Information System (SIS) report will be available to district-level and school-level staff to monitor usage of individual student accounts.

**Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:**

The application is being developed to create the portal accounts for all current K-12 students during the initial rollout. In order to ensure long-term sustainability, the application is designed to automatically create a portal account for every new student within 24 hours of entering student demographic information into the SIS application. School personnel will include this communication as part of the new student registration packet. The District will monitor the usage of the individual student accounts. Schools will continue to promote the concept of using the tool to monitor academic success. District-level administrators, school-level administrators, support personnel, and teachers will receive all revised policies and adhere to the regulations and guidelines set forth as a result.

**REQUIRED ACTION 11:** *Re-establish the district’s strategic planning team for the purpose of effectively implementing the DeKalb County School System Strategic Plan to guide the direction of the district.*

**Progress Status:** Indicate the progress the district has made toward addressing the required action.

	<b>Completed</b> – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
<b>x</b>	<b>In Progress</b> – The district is currently working to execute the actions and processes but has yet to fully implement all the necessary actions to address and/or complete the required action.
	<b>Have Not Addressed</b> – The district has not taken any action at this time.

**Response and Evidence:** Provide the detail to support the required action. The response should include: 1) The actions taken to address the required action; 2) the evidence to support the actions; 3) the district’s next steps for the required action; 4) the results/impact of the actions taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the actions taken.

**Actions Taken to Address the Required Action:**

The Board of Education and Superintendent recognize the need to develop a Strategic Plan that will communicate a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the school district. The Board Chair appointed three board members to serve on an Ad Hoc Committee for the purpose of developing a framework for the strategic plan. A preliminary meeting was held on April 29, 2013 to discuss the framework needed to form a committee. On May 6, 2013 the Board will ratify the Ad Hoc Committee and hold a committee of the whole board discussion on the strategic planning process and the scope of work.

The Superintendent presented the 90-Day Plan on April 30, 2013. The plan includes five major goals and objectives:

- Address AdvanceED/SACS action items and work to achieve unconditional accreditation status;
- Develop and implement a balanced budget for FY 2014;
- Prioritize student academic achievement and career readiness; strengthen parent, adult guardian and mentor involvement;
- Develop and implement a plan that will improve operational efficiency throughout the district;
- Continue to rebuild trust with internal and external district stakeholders.

The 90-Day Plan will be incorporated in the performance objectives of strategic plan.

The historical perspective is provided outlining the work regarding the “Re-establishment of the district’s strategic planning team”. This required action work began shortly after the Special Review Team’s visit January 24-26, 2011.

- In March 2011, the District's Quality Review Team (QRT) met and discussed organizing the District's Strategic Planning teams around the SACS standards, rather than the District's seven "puzzle pieces". Next, members of the Quality Review Team, later to become the Steering Committee, researched strategic plans from other school districts, as well as various models for planning. In April, the team submitted a proposal that included a framework and timeline; members of the QRT were advised that the Management Information Department (MIS) planned to purchase the eBoard Strategic Planning software.
- During the June 2011, at a DeKalb Board of Education Business meeting, the steering committee presented the proposed strategic planning process and timeline as a part of the Superintendent’s Report.
- In July 2011, the steering committee provided an update at the district-wide Summer Leadership Conference attended by all district and school-level leaders. The presenters also announced the Community Engagement Session date of September 20, 2011.
- In August 2011, almost 100,000 flyers announcing the Community Engagement Session were printed (in English and Spanish) and distributed to schools. During the week of August 22, 2011, and again during the week of September 6, 2011, announcements regarding the Community Engagement Session were sent out to internal and external stakeholders via First Class NewsFlash, email blasts, and the parent portal. The session was also announced on the district’s website and PDS TV 24.
- On September 20, 2011, community engagement sessions were conducted in which more than 300 stakeholders participated in the session. An online survey was used to collect additional feedback from stakeholders in the community. Findings from the Community Engagement Sessions were distributed to the members of the planning team prior to the two-day planning retreat.
- The Strategic Planning Team retreat was held on October 13-14, 2011. Goal Areas were developed during the two-day planning retreat. Action Teams were identified for each Goal Area.
- The Action Teams, consisting of parents, teachers, and administrators, were charged with identifying the performance objectives for each goal area.

- In December 2011, drafts of four action plans were submitted to the Superintendent’s Cabinet for review and alignment with the Theory of Action for Change and the 90-Day Entry Plan. Members of the original Action Team were replaced and as was the consulting firm facilitating the process.
- On February 10, 2012, an overview of the revised plan was publicly presented by the Superintendent to constituent groups. All feedback was then included in the final Excellence in Education Plan, which was presented to the Board of Education on February 13, 2012.
- In June, 2012, the Excellence in Education Plan was presented at the district-wide Summer Leadership Conference attended by all district and school-level leaders.
- In March, 2013, the District’s strategic planning team was re-established as a required action from AdvancED. The purpose of the current team is to provide support for the newly developed strategic plan and to ensure support for effective implementation.
- In March, 2013, a review of the district’s current strategic plan reveals misalignment of the vision, mission, goal areas, performance objectives, and resources providing evidence that a newly developed strategic plan will better serve district improvements.
- During the months of March and April, 2013, subcommittee members for Required Action #11 conducted a self-study dating back to 1947. A second subcommittee conducted demographic studies of the ELL and Special Education population in the school district; and a third subcommittee researched possible consulting firms as recommended by Dr. Mark Elgart, President and Chief Executive Officer for AdvancED.

**Evidence to Support the Required Action:**

- Board Meeting Agenda (May 6, 2013)
- Preliminary Strategic Plan Framework Agenda (April 29, 2013)
- Historical Perspective PowerPoint
- Board Policy BBC – Board Committees
- Superintendent 90-Day Plan
- Strategic Planning Historical Archives
  - High-Level Action Plan Summary
  - Detailed Action Plan Updates
  - Planning Documents, Agenda, Minutes, Sign-in Sheets
  - PowerPoint of Historical Overview of Strategic Planning
  - Strategic Planning Consultant List
  - Historical Review of the Progression of the School District (Early Years, Growth Years, Years of New Challenges)
  - Exemplars of strategic plans, flyers, presentations to the community
  - Strategic planning timeline (2011-12)

- BOE Agenda Item Request 01-09-12
- Community Engagement Notes/Surveys
- Parent Councils Support Email

**Next Steps for the Required Action:**

- Board of Education establishment of the Strategic Planning Process/Approach to develop a strategic plan that clearly defines the purpose and direction of the school district.
- The Superintendent will implement the 90-Day Plan from May through July 2013.
- Complete the historical review and/or self-study. The historical research for the DeKalb County School District will be presented in three components. The Early Years will explore the leadership, academies, funding, and school structure. The Growth Years will reflect the work to consolidate and integrate the district as well as the management of magnificent growth in the county. Finally, the Years of New Challenges will reveal the impact of court cases and efforts to reach equity on our ability to fund a Quality Basic Education.

**Results/Impact of the Actions Taken:**

The DeKalb County School District has an identified need to develop a systemic strategic process that addresses and reflects the vision, and for it to be shared with all stakeholders.

The Board of Education and Superintendent will develop a new strategic plan using best practices and industry-standard principles for developing and implementing strategic plans. The plan will include goal areas, performance objectives, and a process for continuous improvement. The plan will ensure that the vision, mission, and goals guide the work and resources of the district for improving student achievement and efficiencies in use of resources.

In addition, the Board of Education will develop and implement a plan that addresses the AdvancED Standards for Quality. Specifically indicators associated with Standard 1, Purpose and Direction, and Standard 4, Resources and Support Systems.

Standard 1 of the AdvancED Standards for Quality assures the district will maintain and communicate at all levels of the organization a purpose and direction for continuous improvement that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning. Standard 4 of the AdvancED Standards for Quality assures that the district has resources and provides services in all schools that support its purpose and direction to ensure success for all students. More specifically Standard 4 assures the following:

- The system has clearly defined policies and procedures for strategic resource management.
- The system employs a systematic, long-range, strategic planning process in the areas of budget, facilities, and other strategic system components.
- The strategic planning process is regularly evaluated for effectiveness, and improvement plans related to the process are developed and implemented when necessary.

- All strategic plans are implemented with fidelity by the governing body and system leaders and have built-in measures used to monitor and ensure successful implementation and completion.

**Long-Term Plans to Sustain the Results/Impact of the Required Action:**

The DeKalb County School District's Strategic Plan will be the direct result of the work of multiple stakeholder groups. The document will provide guidance for continuous improvement in student achievement and operational support throughout the district.

The district has various processes to ensure sustainability to include the Balanced Scorecard and the school-based Consolidated School Improvement Plan (CSIP). The final Board-led Strategic Planning document will include additional processes to address sustainability.

The Strategic Plan is the foundation of the Key Performance Indicators identified in the Balanced Scorecard. The Balanced Scorecard serves as a management tool to monitor the progress of the improvement plans. Currently, the DeKalb County Balanced Scorecard is reflective of performance indicators important to the improvement of student achievement and operational efficiencies. The Balanced Scorecard is updated regularly and published on the district's web site.

The district has a second powerful process at the local school level in that the district requires that all schools complete a Consolidated School Improvement Plan (CSIP). Each school's CSIP contains the mission, vision, and goals for that school. Regional Superintendents ensure alignment with district's strategic plan. Results are monitored throughout the school year.

## **CONCLUSION:**

The DeKalb County Board of Education and district staff have worked vigorously to address the eleven Required Actions of AdvancEd /SACS. The Board and district collaborated to develop plans that will ensure systemic progress so that all students can receive the education they so richly deserve.

- The Board of Education is fully committed to collaboration with GSBA in order to ensure completion of Tier One training. The board developed norms for behavior and will use established norms to govern themselves during Board of Education meetings. The board will ensure understanding of roles and responsibilities of the board. The board focus will be on policy and governance. Finally, the board will commit to an annual accountability plan that will drive the development of the district strategic plan.
- The Board of Education engaged the services of the MLA Governance Center and will use the recommendations by MLA to build capacity for enhancing governance practices in the district. The amended staff conflict of interest policy against Nepotism clarifies the circumstances under which family members of employees may be employed by the district. The policy provides demonstration that the board is moving toward ensuring effective and responsible operations.
- The Board of Education has taken action to amend policies to afford assurance that the Board is engaged in providing a structure for board governance that will lead to the development of relationships of mutual respect among the governing board, administrators, and educators. The Board will address board-staff communications to define collaboration between superintendent and board. The members of the Board of Education will continue to participate in on-going professional learning opportunities with the Georgia School Boards Association to further enhance understanding and effective governance. The Board and superintendent will conduct annual retreats to ensure consistency with expectations and will use an evaluation tool for measuring progress and providing accountability.
- The Board of Education recognizes the need and has taken action to align resources with the strategic plan. To that end the board has developed and provided a deficit reduction plan for FY2013. Parameters for budget development for FY 2014 have already been established, and the board will define a protocol to guide collaboration throughout the budget process. Finally, the board will establish a formal process to use for receiving feedback from stakeholders.
- The Board of Education will use policies and consultation with GSBA and GSSA to establish best practices for communication with stakeholders. The Board will establish agreed upon protocols for following chain of command regarding constituents and community; chain of command regarding other board members; and chain of command regarding employees. The Board will also finalize a process for receiving feedback from constituents that may include such activities as focus groups, surveys, or advisory groups.
- The DeKalb County School District implemented a rigorous benchmark process during the 2012-2013 school year and will continue the process during 2013-2014. A recommendation to purchase the selected universal screener for progress monitoring has been prepared for Board of Education (BOE) review and approval after the FY14 budget is approved. The Response to Intervention (RtI) process and progress monitoring plan using the universal screener is being

developed and finalized and will be shared with school teams in June during scheduled RtI and Universal Screener Familiarization Sessions with implementation planned for August. Principals have been trained in how to use the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) and how to access the State's Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) with plans to train a representative from each school to redeliver training to teachers on how and when to access the SLDS. School teams participated in data analysis training during March 2013 with plans for on-going data training.

- The DeKalb County School District is in process of developing a new change and performance management process. By using research of best practices and feedback from internal stakeholders, a preliminary process has been created that will be further vetted by a number of district and school-based individuals. Once finalized, the process will be presented to the Superintendent and the Board of Education for approval prior to developing the necessary documents and executing the professional development and communication plans required for implementation.
- The DeKalb County School District understands the significance of having a technology system that will meet the needs of the district. An Executive Summary that provides a synopsis of the technology audit has been completed. The next major milestones are to gather and analyze data from several sources to determine technology needs as well as review funding sources and allocations. Throughout this process, DCSD will continuously utilize the data from previously mentioned milestones to identify, develop, and facilitate professional development opportunities that promote and ensure effective use in daily instruction.
- DeKalb County School District staff was organized into two sub-committees, one to address building-base instructional programs and another to address district-wide instructional programs. Distinct definitions have been established to differentiate the two broad categories of existing programs and work is underway through the use of surveys to inventory, analyze, and identify funding sources for the various programs currently in use throughout the district. A draft communications plan for RA9 exists.
- DeKalb County School District acknowledges that only 23% of current stakeholders have active *Parent Portal* accounts. To guarantee access to all parents/guardians and students, DeKalb will create individual student accounts in *Parent Portal* for currently enrolled students prior to the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year. The application will automatically create an individual account for new students within 24 hours of enrolling in a DeKalb school. Teachers will communicate academic progress through the *Parent Portal* by maintaining accurate and current records.
- A historical review of the DeKalb County School District's strategic planning process over the last five to ten years has shown that the district has consistently been in reactionary mode and has not truly developed a long-term strategic plan to guide the decision-making processes of the district. This analysis has allowed district leadership to see the errors in strategic planning, and what needs to be done over the course of the next six months to establish a true strategic planning process. The district will move forward to use an established and recognized consulting group to assist the DeKalb County School District in involving parents, teachers,

students, community members, and district leadership in the development of an appropriate strategic management system.

The DeKalb Board of Education and DeKalb County School District, in a collaborative effort, will continue to address the AdvancED /SACS Required Actions and work to achieve full accreditation status. It is the goal of the board and district to create a foundation on which to build capacity and enable the district to move forward with a laser focus on continuous improvement.

The district is developing and will implement a balanced budget for FY 2014. Student academic achievement and career readiness has been prioritized and work has begun to strengthen parent, guardian, and mentor involvement in school and district business. The district will develop and implement a plan that will improve operational efficiency throughout DeKalb County School District, and continue to rebuild trust with internal and external stakeholders.