AdvancED™

Institution Progress Report

DeKalb County School District
Stone Mountain, GA

Prepared for the AdvancED® Monitoring Review Team

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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 document progress and/or help prepare for the AdvancED Monitoring Team Review. 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 Review. 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 institution should list each of the Required Actions from the Special Review team report, and for each, indicate a Performance Level score and provide a detailed response describing the steps 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 as required in the Special Review Team report. If a Monitoring Review has occurred, the Institution Progress Report should also address Directives that the Monitoring Team included within the Monitoring report that are designed to help in meeting the Required Actions.

Institution Progress Report

DeKalb County School District hosted a Monitoring Review team on May 11-13, 2014. Through interviews with institution stakeholders, observations, and reviews of institution documents, the team developed a Monitoring Review Team report detailing its findings from the review.

The Monitoring Review Team report contained specific Required Actions for the institution. The institution is responsible for addressing each of the Required Actions. Below, please provide a response regarding progress made toward meeting each Required Action from the Monitoring Review Team report along with a Performance Level score for each Indicator.

Introduction

Over the past few years, it has been well-documented that the DeKalb County School District and Board of Education have faced difficult challenges that threatened the district's ability to provide a quality educational experience for the students and families of the district. However, the potential loss of accreditation from AdvancED/SACS was one of the most devastating challenges the district faced. Fortunately, the Board of Education and Superintendent Michael L. Thurmond understood the breadth and depth of the challenges and over the past 18 months have worked to correct the problems that were negatively impacting the students of this district.

On November 3, 2014, The DeKalb Chamber of Commerce recognized the progress made by the Board and Superintendent Thurmond, and in a letter to Mr. Thurmond, the Chamber highlighted the accomplishments that have brought about substantial change to the DeKalb County School District. They include the following:

- Moved the district from AdvancED Accreditation Probation to Warned
- Restored financial stability with a projected general fund surplus of $31 million at the end of FY 2014
- Demonstrated improvement in student test scores, including improved system performance in five of seven end of course tests
- Increased graduation rate from 58.9 in 2013 to 62.9 in 2014
- Added 100 teachers in 2015 to reduce class size, and provided $7 million in funds for student and school safety, including six school resource officers
- Empowered regional superintendents with more local control and decision-making authority
- Revised and implemented a five-year strategic plan with participation from the school district, post-secondary educators community and business stakeholders
- Provided professional learning and training for teachers, administrators, safety personnel and bus drivers
- Developed sustainable policies and procedures to build the infrastructure to support the district student population
- Improved technology system-wide which allowed for 21st century learning, greater student access and communication for parents
- Approved funding for dual enrollment, dual credit program that allows students to earn an associated degree while finishing high school
- Settled the lawsuit with Heery International resulting in a $7.5 million payment to the school district.

During the May 2014, AdvancED Monitoring Review Team Visit, it was noted that the team "recognized the progress of the school system to stabilize governance and operations as well as to begin to initiate actions to improve student performance." The Monitoring Review Team further noted that the leadership provided by Superintendent Thurmond and the Board of Education was also progressing in improving both organizational and instructional effectiveness. The Monitoring Team acknowledged that the district completed Required Action 6.   However, the remaining Required Actions 1, 3, 12, 13, and 14 remained In Progress and needed further work in order to be complete.

Therefore, the purpose of this report is to provide confirmation of the progress made since May 2014 to complete the remaining Required Actions. The report provides evidence of the results of the action steps taken by the Board and district to remediate and resolve concerns listed in the Required Actions and provide assurance of sustainability. Additionally, the report demonstrates

how instruction and operations are using initiatives to improve the quality of service to stakeholders and provide instructional practices that improve student performance.

Finally, in July 2013, the DeKalb County School Board approved a proposal to allow any high school within the district to seek dual accreditation from the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC) during the 2014-2015 school year. Currently, 23 DeKalb County School District high schools have applied for GAC accreditation and are engaged in ensuring compliance with GAC standards, in addition to complying with AdvancED /SACS standards.

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.*
1. Devise and implement a written, comprehensive plan for unifying the DeKalb County Board of Education.
2. Devise a policy and training plan to address concerns over the sustainability of progress made by the district since March 2013.
3. Devise and implement a plan to ensure that the policies and training of future boards will maintain a core focus on 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.

X	**Completed** – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
	In Progress – 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.
	Have Not Addressed – 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 steps taken to address the required action/directives; 2) the evidence supporting those steps; 3) the institution's next steps with regard to the Required Action; 4) the results/impact of the steps taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the steps taken.

List the Standard and Indicators Addressed in the Required Action/Directives:

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

Indicator 2:2 The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

Although the DeKalb Board of Education has policies in place to address various components of a unified plan and presented a framework for a unified plan in May 2014, the report from the May Monitoring Visit noted that the district still had not fully addressed RA 1 to devise and

implement a comprehensive plan to unify the Board of Education. Since that time; however, the Board of Education has undertaken steps to complete the required action. The Board developed and approved a comprehensive plan to unify the Board. The comprehensive plan includes two major components 1) *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook and 2) The Board Annual Agenda & Training Calendar.*

During September and October 2014, the Chair of the Board reviewed Board of Education Handbooks from school districts across the country. The Board Chair requested that the Superintendent provide assistance to develop the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook.* The Superintendent directed staff from the Superintendent's Office to assist with developing, proofreading and preparing a document for Board feedback and approval.

Handbooks from the Austin Independent School District, San Jacinto Unified School District, and Natomas Unified School District were identified as districts with similar policies and procedures as DeKalb. After comparison of the handbooks, it was determined that the Austin Independent School District –Board of Trustees Handbook (AISD) most mirrored strategies DeKalb could successfully use to develop the framework to house the DeKalb Board of Education Handbook.

In October 2014, the DeKalb County School District (DCSD,) on behalf of the Board, contacted AISD to seek permission to use their handbook as a framework. AISD immediately granted verbal permission, and then AISD provided written permission on October 24, 2014 for DeKalb to use the AISD handbook as the prototype for the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook.*

On October 23, 2014, the Board held a retreat to review and discuss a draft version of the Board of Education handbook and to ensure correlation with current practices, policies, and state law. Board members provided feedback, offered revisions, made corrections, and suggested additions /deletions to the handbook. District staff revised the handbook as directed by the Board. The revised document was returned to all Board members for additional feedback. The document was then prepared as an agenda item for the November 3, 2014 Board of Education Business Meeting.

On November 3, 2014, the Board of Education reviewed the Handbook during the monthly Board Work Session. Board members made final revisions to the document and recommended approval. During the Board Business Meeting, Board members voted to approve the Handbook as revised on November 3. Major components included: Board mission; governance; separation of roles of the Board and Superintendent; policies / protocols; Board Norms and code of conduct; Board and Superintendent evaluations; communication among and between board members, stakeholders, and the Superintendent; and a professional learning plan for Board members.

- The *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook* is a document that reflects current federal and state laws, statutes, and policies governing boards of education. It contains specific references to statutes and DeKalb Board of Education policies. It provides a plan for the Board to follow to ensure that the Board is unified as one Board working together to provide guidance for strategic planning, Board self-evaluation, and assurance of Board training. The handbook sets standards for positive Board deportment and civility, and it clarified roles of the Board and Superintendent. The handbook contains direction for effective communication with staff, community, and parents. It provides a plan of operation for current Board and future Board members that ensures sustainability and succession of effective governance practices so that current and future students are supported in their educational efforts. Additionally, the Board will review the handbook annually for needed revisions. The Board Handbook is

available on the district's website for public view and by December 8, 2014, it will contain active web links to board policies and other resources.

- The Board has committed through the development of the Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar to provide training on the handbook for new board members within the first sixty days of taking office along with veteran board members. This document provides the framework for the Board's professional learning plan. It includes two retreats that will focus on board development and board performance. The Board will also focus on monitoring the Strategic Plan to ensure alignment with the vision and goals. They will set annual priorities, complete team building workshops with the Superintendent, receive specific training on legal topics (i.e. open meetings and public information), and receive monitoring reports from key areas within the district. The work completed by the Board in the development of the DeKalb Board of Education Handbook demonstrates commitment by the Board to ensuring compliance and adherence to *AdvancED*.

Evidence to Support the Steps:

- October 23 DeKalb Board of Education Called Meeting and Board Retreat agenda
- November 3 DeKalb Board of Education Work Session agenda
- November 3 DeKalb Board of Education Business Meeting agenda
- *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook*
- Board of Education Policy BH: Board Code of Ethics

Next Steps for the Required Action:

- Train the newly elected Board members along with the experienced board members on the handbook within the first sixty days of January 2015
- Provide orientation for newly elected Board members
- Board self-monitoring of implementation

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

The statement below as posted on the title page of the DeKalb Board Member Handbook provides the results and impact of the steps taken to address the Required Action and Directives:

This handbook reflects the governance team's work on the creation of a framework for effective board governance. This involves ongoing discussions about the unity of purpose, roles, commitment to norms and agreement on protocols and formal structures that will enable the governance team to perform its responsibilities in a way that best benefits the students of DeKalb County. The Board Member Handbook outlines the practices that build and sustain a positive Board/Superintendent relationship and define a culture of quality, equity, and respect.

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

Plans for ensuring long-term sustainability as included in the handbook are (1) ensuring compliance with state law and Board policies regarding- Board member training for newly elected and current board members; (2) enforcing Board-imposed sanctions, identified in Board Policy BH: Board Code of Ethics, for any improper actions taken by individual members; and (3) conducting annual Board member evaluation processes and review of the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook*.

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.*

1. Evaluate Section B of the DeKalb County Schools Policy Manual to eliminate any Conflicts with Policy BBC-- Board Committees

Additional Directives Assigned in the January 2014 Monitoring Report

1. Eliminate the provisions noted that are in direct conflict with the roles and responsibilities of board members.
2. Create a policy review and revision process.
3. Develop and adhere to an annual professional learning plan to promote and sustain the Board's capacity to govern the school system and create the parameters for the process to become a systemic procedure.

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

X	**Completed** – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
	In Progress – 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.
	Have Not Addressed – 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 steps taken to address the required action/directives; 2) the evidence supporting those steps; 3) the institution's next steps with regard to the Required Action; 4) the results/impact of the steps taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the steps taken.

List the Standard and Indicators Addressed in the Required Action/Directives:

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

Indicator 2.2: -The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.

Indicator 2.3-The governing body ensures that the leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

During the July 2014 Monitoring Report from AdvancED, it was noted that portions of Board Policy BAB contained wording that could be construed as providing opportunities for Board interference with day-to-day operations of the district.

Since that report was received, the Board has worked to remove conflicts in Board policies that could negatively impact the Superintendent's ability to effectively manage the district. (1) Board Policies BAB and BBI were revised to ensure congruence between the policies regarding Board

communication with stakeholders. (2) Policy BAB clarified the roles and responsibilities of the Board. The Policy confirms the Superintendent's authority to manage the district. (3) Policy BBI was revised to ensure that Board communications with the Superintendent, staff, and other stakeholders are consistent Policy BAB.

The Board has also developed a Board member handbook that includes a plan for providing effective governance by a unified Board. The handbook reiterates the roles and responsibilities of Board members as stated in Board policy and state statute. The handbook lists the roles of the Superintendent. The handbook provides direction for appropriate communication among and between Board members and stakeholders. The handbook includes a professional learning plan for all Board members, whether currently serving or newly elected. The Board has developed a Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar and will discuss it at the next Committee of the Whole Board meeting on December 8, 2014 for any needed modifications. The calendar provides the commitment to a professional learning plan to ensure compliance with state law regarding Board member training and supports training to ensure effective governance.

On October 8, 2014, the Board offered revisions to Board Policy BAB and Board Policy BBI to eliminate any wording that would appear to be in conflict with roles and responsibilities of Board members and stakeholders. Then, during the November 3, 2014, Board of Education Meeting, the Board voted to approve the revisions of Policies BAB and BBI. Additionally, during the November 3, 2014 Board of Education Meeting, the Board voted to approve the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook*. The handbook provides explicit information on the roles and responsibilities of the Board and Superintendent. It also provides direction regarding the autonomy provided in Board Policy and GA statutes to the local school Superintendent to manage the district.

On October 23, 2014, in a Called Board Meeting, the Board voted to approve the state required annual training plan for Board members. The plan for 2014-2015 was based on assessment identifying areas of needed board governance improvement. The plan includes fifteen (15) hours for training for newly elected board members and nine (9) hours of professional learning for veteran board members. Training in Board Roles and Responsibilities is mandatory for newly elected Board members and may be included in other required governance training as well. The Board secretary will maintain a log of hours earned by each Board member and will annually submit the results of the training to the State as required. The *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook* and the Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar houses the professional learning plan for Board members required in Directive 3. It includes an annual training plan for newly elected Board members, veteran Board members, and whole Board governance training.

Additionally, during the March 2014 Board Retreat, the Board agreed to conducting policy review on a three year cycle. The *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook* addresses the purpose for Board policy and provides the framework for which the Superintendent and staff are authorized to take actions for the district. Board policy BDC: Policy Adoption and Policy BDF: Board Review of Administrative Regulations provides parameters for policy-making. Policy BAB also addresses policy review as part of continuous progress.

Policy BAB authorizes the Board to establish governance policies and provides for a periodic review of those policies. Policy BDC sets the plan for policy review and revision. According to the Policy, the Superintendent is to annually review the Policy Manual and report to the Board the recommended changes for the year. As a three-year plan is more fully developed, an explanation of how the review cycle will be assured will be included in a future revision of the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook*.

Evidence to Support the Steps:

- October 8, 2014 Board of Education Work Session and Business Meeting agenda
- November 3, 2014 Board of Education Work Session and Business Meeting agenda
- November 3, 2014 Board of Education Business Meeting agenda
- October 23, 2014 Called Board Meeting and Board Retreat agenda
- *DeKalb County Board of Education Handbook*
- Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar
- Board of Education Policy BAB: School Board Governance
- Board of Education Policy BBI Board-Staff Relations
- Georgia required professional learning plan form 2014-2015
- Copy of the 2014-2015 Board training log
- Board of Education Policy BDC
- Board of education Policy BDF

Next Steps for the Required Action:

- Continue to fulfill annual Board training requirements
- Continue to review the Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar
- Provide annual review of the DeKalb Board of Education Handbook
- Continue to adhere to Board Norms and Code of Ethics
- Continue development of the three-year policy review cycle

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

The development of DeKalb Board of Education Handbook provides Board members with a Board- approved guidebook and sets parameters to ensure that Board members adhere to the revised Board Policy BAB regarding Board roles. Policy BBI sets parameters for appropriate communication strategies Board members are expected to employ when interacting with various stakeholders. The revised policies are congruent in their requirements for communication and interactions between Board and staff and Board and Superintendent.

State law and DeKalb Board of Education policies have long required Board members to engage in on-going professional learning. However, the newly written Board handbook outlines an annual plan for training for new and current members. The Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar provides the actual professional learning plan. Specific state-required hours and courses can be used to guarantee that the annual plan for the DeKalb Board meets whole board and individual member needs. The annual plan ensures opportunities for growth among individual members and meets whole-board training requirements.

The *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook* provides for policy review and revision, and it outlines specific roles and responsibilities of the Board and Superintendent. The handbook clarifies exactly how the Board governs the district and how the Superintendent manages the day-to-day operations of the district.

No conflicts currently exist in Section B of the Policy Manual with Policy BBC: Board Committees.

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

The long-term plans to sustain the results or impact of the Required Action are outlined in the Board of Education Handbook and include: Board self-monitoring of Code of Conduct and Board Norms, adherence to Code of Ethics, commitment to annual Board Self-Evaluation and completion /implementation of Board training. In addition to the list above, development and implementation of Board of Education three-year policy review plan will ensure continuance of the work toward continuous progress begun by the current board and required in Board Policy.

Required Action 12: *Develop systematic and systemic processes to ensure the continued implementation and sustainability of the continuous improvement efforts of the DeKalb County Board of Education in establishing and sustaining the Board as a highly effective governing body.*

1. Eliminate the provisions in Policy BAB – School Board Governance that are in direct conflict with the roles and responsibilities of board members.
2. Develop and implement a Self- Assessment evaluation process to include Board Norms as well as to evaluate whether or not the Board's decisions and actions are in accord with board policies and procedures and the Board's defined roles and responsibilities.
3. Adopt and implement an annual professional learning plan to promote and sustain the Board's capacity to govern the school system that includes full board training in accordance with state law.
4. Develop and implement a plan to collect feedback from stakeholders at specified intervals to determine the nature of the school system's climate including the capacity to maintain trust between the system and its stakeholders. The Board and Superintendent must assess stakeholder survey results, the board's self-assessment and staff perceptions to determine how much progress is sustained over a period of time. Further, the Board and Superintendent should analyze the results of crucial decisions (such as the cluster charter petition) to determine how lingering issue of mistrust and lack of transparency surrounding issues may be effectively addressed.

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

X	**Completed** – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
	In Progress – 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.
	Have Not Addressed – 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 steps taken to address the required action/directives; 2) the evidence supporting those steps; 3) the institution's next steps with regard to the Required Action; 4) the results/impact of the steps taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the steps taken.

List the Standard and Indicators Addressed in the Required Action/Directives:

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

Indicator 2.1: The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the system and its schools.

Indicator 2.3: The governing body ensures that the leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

After reading the July 2014 Monitoring Visit Report, the Board of Education took careful steps to revise Board Policy BAB: Board Governance and Policy BBI to ensure that governance policies protect the autonomy of the Superintendent to manage the day-to-day operations of the district. The Board roles outlined in Policy BAB and communication procedures detailed in Policy BBI provide a clear distinction between roles and responsibility of Board governance and Superintendent/District Leadership of system management.

Additionally, the Board undertook the task of creating a comprehensive plan for unifying the Board of Education. The comprehensive plan which includes the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook* and the Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar provide specific instructions, details and guidance for providing effective governance. In the handbook under Section Two: Board Oversight, specific roles and responsibilities are listed for the Board and for the Superintendent. There are clearly defined instructions for the Board which guide district oversight without interference into the daily operations of the district.

Annually, the Board is committed to conducting a Self-Evaluation. The evaluation process is found in the handbook under Board Governance. Principles and protocols written into in the Board Norms and Code of Conduct, also found in the handbook, will be used as part of the evaluation process. Actually, the Board will review the handbook and actions taken during the past year as part of the process to determine the consistency of actions and protocols with Board policy, GA laws and statutes, and effective governance principles.

The handbook and annual calendar also provides a plan for continuing education requirements (professional learning plan) in accordance with GA State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.36 Local School Board Governance. The DeKalb Board plan calls for required hours and courses of professional learning for newly elected members and veteran members. In 2014-2015, the DeKalb plan requires instruction in Roles and Responsibilities of Board members and whole-board governance training, along with requirements for individual needs-based professional learning. Specifically, Board training must include Roles and Responsibilities, Governance, Hiring a Superintendent, Board and Community Relations, Policy Issues, Meetings and Ethics.

Annually, the Board must approve the Board training plan. Additionally, the DeKalb Board of Education must annually report earned professional learning hours to the state pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-51 and State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.36.

The final bullet on page 7 of the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook* states that the Board will use constructive input from students, staff, parents, and the community to unite the district around the Vision, Goals and Strategic Plan. Throughout the handbook, stakeholders are given opportunities to provide input. (1) The Board is required to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback to the Board each month during the Community Input Meeting that is held on the day of Board of Education Business Meetings. (2) The Board is committed to open government and provides opportunities for public participation in meetings during each regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Board, or during a Public Hearing. (3) Board Policies list opportunities for the Board to hear grievances from internal and external stakeholders, and the Handbook sets parameters for Board communication with all types of stakeholders. (4) The Board encourages stakeholders to actively participate in committees, such as a Strategic Planning Committee, the SPLOST Oversight Committee, a Technology Committee, School Councils, Parent Teacher Association Committees. (5) The Board and Superintendent utilize surveys for gathering stakeholder perceptions, feedback and input on a variety of topics. Once surveys are collected, the data is analyzed and used to guide the Board and Superintendent's decisions.

During September and October 2014, the Board reviewed policies regarding Board and Superintendent roles, responsibilities, and communication. They reviewed policies from a variety of school districts including: Cobb, Fulton, City of Atlanta, and Gwinnett, school districts that surround DeKalb. After a review of policies from those districts, as well as others, the DeKalb Board utilized information gained to revise Policy BAB and Policy BBI. During the October, 2014 Board of Education meeting, the Board voted to revise the DeKalb policies to ensure that the current DeKalb Policies BAB and BBI comply with GA laws and education statutes and comply with AdvancED Standard 2.3. The Board then placed the Policies on eBoard to allow for public comment and input until the November 2014 Board meeting.

On November 3, 2014, during the Board of Education meeting, the Board conducted a final discussion and review of the two Policies and voted to revise Policies BAB and BBI as currently given in the DeKalb Policy Manual.

In a Called Meeting and Board Retreat on October 23, 2014, the Board voted to approve the Annual Board training plan required by the State. During the retreat portion of that meeting the Board reviewed the contents of the first draft of the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook*. The provisions for an annual Board self-assessment were included as part of Board Governance. Protocols and procedures for the development and requirements for the annual Board professional training plan were also included in the handbook. On November 3, 2014, the Board voted to approve the current version of the DeKalb handbook. Approval of the handbook by the Board signifies a willingness by the Board to assure an annual Board self-evaluation and professional learning plan.

During the 2014 Spring Semester, the district undertook an audit of the Gifted and High Achiever Program. The audit was conducted by Beanstalk Innovation, Inc., and it included a variety of measures to gain stakeholder feedback. The district administered surveys to parents, administrators, staff, students, and community members as a way to gauge perception of the effectiveness of the programs. Beanstalk conducted interviews with teachers, district and school-based administrators, and reviewed curriculum, communication tools, and laws regarding the programs.

On July 24, 2014, DeKalb district administrators met with Beanstalk Innovation, Inc., leaders to review the results of the audit including survey results, interview results and program review results, recommendations and next steps.

On September 9, 2014, September 22, 2014, and November 7, 2014 the Superintendent held follow-up meetings with divisions of School Leadership /Operational Support and Curriculum and Instruction staff to determine the most effective ways to utilize the data to improve the gifted program. Currently, the two divisions are comparing gifted data and are in process of working together, as recommended by Beanstalk, to use the audit information to ensure appropriate identification of all gifted students and to improve the quality of service provided to parents and students identified as gifted.

During the Spring of 2014, the Board held community meetings throughout the district to provide information regarding State Flexibility Options available to school systems. The DeKalb County School District responded to this legislative requirement and established a Flexibility Advisory Committee to review the options. This committee was comprised of parents, teachers, principals, central office staff, community members, and a Board of Education representative, and it took the time to learn about the options and listen to community input. The District held five Community Engagement Sessions to obtain this input and all data was drafted into an Executive Summary to assist the Superintendent in making his decision as to which flexibility option should be pursued. On April 1, 2014, the Superintendent informed the Board of Education that the District would seek charter system status and attempt to become operational as such at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year.

The District then began the process of completing the application required of the GA DOE for charter systems. Further Community Engagement Sessions were held across the district to assist in identifying what the stakeholders deemed would be necessary to operate as a successful charter system. The District included innovative practices that would have allowed charter clusters to work collaboratively as a single unit and identified needs and waivers to address student performance, staff efficacy, student graduation rates, and increased opportunities for student success after graduation. Because community feedback showed that more time was needed to make certain that the application was written in a manner to best support the DeKalb, the District recommended to the Board of Education on October 8, 2014, that the DeKalb County School District delay its start year and seek operational status from the GA DOE for the 2016-2017 school year. The Board of Education chose to table the vote to approve the charter application so that further review by the Board could take place to make certain that the selected flexibility option has been fully reviewed.

Evidence to Support the Steps:

September 8, 2014 Community Input Meeting Agenda and 1st Charter System Public Hearing Agenda

October, 8, 2014 Board of Education Work Session and Business Meeting Agenda

October 8, 2014 Board of Education Work Session and Business Meeting Agenda

October 8, Citizen Input Meeting Agendas

October 8 Citizen Input and 2nd Charter System Public Hearing Agenda

October 23, 2013 Board of Education Called Meeting and Retreat

2014-2015 Georgia Board of Education Local Board Training Plan

November 3, 2014 Board of Education Work Session and Business Meeting Agenda

November 3, 2014 Board of Education Business Meeting Agenda

Board of Education Policy BAB

Board of Education Policy BBI

DeKalb Board of Education Handbook

Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar

Gifted Audit Executive Summary

Next Steps for the Required Action:

Log Professional Learning hours /courses completed

Utilize Policies BAB and BBI when making decisions

Follow-through with using the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook* to guide Board decisions and actions

Implement the Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar

Review the status of the Charter System Flexibility option

Continue to engage stakeholders in using appropriate, transparent, and open communication strategies

Utilize input from stakeholders when making district and system decisions

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

Each of the action steps from RA 12 that was undertaken by the Board strengthened the Board in becoming a unified body. The development and approval of the Board handbook and the Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar signifies a resolve by the Board to utilize Best Practices including: (1) using research in policy-making, (2) engaging stakeholders in decision-making, (3) pursuing expanded knowledge through professional learning, (4) and employing reflective thinking through Self-Evaluation. Each of these strategies assists the Board to ensure effective governance in DeKalb.

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

Board Self-Evaluation and adherence to policies, protocols, procedures, and utilization of sanctions as outlined in the Board's Comprehensive Plan are long-term strategies that will sustain the results and impact of Required Action 12 and Directives.

REQUIRED ACTION 13: *Develop and implement plans, policies and processes to monitor, evaluate and sustain the school systems' continuous improvement efforts.*

Directives:

1. Establish a plan to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the fiscal policies, procedures and operations of the school system, including a review of all the accounting and financial management systems and resources currently in use.
2. Routinely evaluate the policies adopted to ensure the proper adherence to the chain of command and the ongoing training implemented for the Board and staff to guarantee the sustainability of the changing culture resulting from rigorous adherence to said chain of command.
3. Adhere to plans for the implementation of a systemic change management process for system initiatives (vision, mission, strategic plan, curriculum, benchmark assessment, etc.) to facilitate continuous improvement and sustain effectiveness.
4. Incorporate in the Instructional Software Purchase (ISP) Process a systemic and systematic review and evaluation of the effectiveness of the ISPs at the school and school system levels to determine the impact of ISPs implemented in schools on student learning and achievement and ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students.
5. Develop and implement a plan for the migration to the new parent portal platform, include details and a timeline for implementation, training and communication.
6. Develop and implement the strategic plan with fidelity, maintain a systemic and systematic process of accountability based on the plan, and sustain governance and management structures designed to monitor, evaluate and communicate the school system's progress on the plan's implementation.

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

X	**Completed** – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
	In Progress – 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.
	Have Not Addressed – 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 steps taken to address the required action/directives; 2) the evidence supporting those steps; 3) the institution's next steps with regard to the Required Action; 4) the results/impact of the steps taken; and 5) the long-term plan to ensure sustainability of the steps taken.

SPECIAL NOTE: The District will respond to each of the above directives separately as:

- **Required Action 13 – Directive 1**
- **Required Action 13 – Directive 2**
- **Required Action 13 – Directive 3**
- **Required Action 13 – Directive 4**
- **Required Action 13 – Directive 5**
- **Required Action 13 – Directive 6**

Directive 1: *Establish a plan to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the fiscal policies, procedures and operations of the school system, including a review of all the accounting and financial management systems and resources currently in use.*

List the Standard and Indicators Addressed in the Required Action/Directives:

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

Indicator 2.1: The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the system and its schools.

Indicator 4.2 Instructional time, resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the school system, individual schools, educational programs, and system operations.

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

Directive #1: Systems that have been set up to monitor and evaluate fiscal policies, procedures and operations and accounting and financial management systems are:

- School Books Software; including monthly reconciliation statements from the schools.
- Monthly Financial Reports to the BOE indicating revenues collected and expenditures versus projections and prior year actuals
- Variance Analysis Report added to Monthly Financial Reports
- Vendor Spends Reports and accrual analysis to the BOE monthly
- Budget Status Reports sent out to the Unit Managers on monthly basis
- Accounts Payable issuance totals showing increases/decreases in check volume
- Payroll "live check" and manual check issuance totals by payday to indicate increases/decreases

Evidence to Support the Steps:

- School Books Software evidence are the monthly School Reconciliation statements printed out and mailed to Audit and Compliance with an electronic copy to Accounting in Finance Division
- In evidence are the Monthly Financial Reports transmitted each month to the Board and Superintendent showing in detail revenues collected and expenses incurred.

- Each Monthly Financial Report has included a Variance Analysis Report indicating actual revenues collected compared to projected collections along with actual expenses compared to projected expenses.
- Monthly a Vendor Spends Report is prepared and transmitted to the Board and Superintendent indicating payments to all vendors on an accrual accounting basis.
- Monthly Budget Status Reports are sent to each Budget Unit Manager indicating their actual expenditures as compared to Budget.
- Accounts Payable tracts its volume of checks issued on a daily/weekly basis to test against its electronic payment system utilization.
- Payroll "live" and manual check issuance totals are made available by IT to Payroll Office.

Next Steps for the Required Action:

- Finance and IT Divisions are working with HR to solicit proposals from the ERP community for a complete FMIS/HRIS software installation to update the Financial Management and Reporting and Human Resources Management and Reporting (including Payroll) into the current IT environment. This project is estimated to take 2+ years and will impact

- Monthly Financial Reporting, Vendor Spends Reporting, Budget Status Reporting, along with added detail in the Accounts Payable and Payroll areas.

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

- All of the above steps, including the installation of the School Books software, have had the effect of improving the District's ability to "manage to the budget" thereby better controlling its expenses in relation to revenue collected. This improved Budget Management enhances the District's educational management ability to better plan for resource allocation to improve student performance.

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

- The installation of new more currently technological software will assist in the continuation of better budget management practices, thereby, allowing more stability relative to controlling and directing resources in order to enhance student performance on a long-term basis.

Directive 2: *Routinely evaluate the policies adopted to ensure the proper adherence to the chain of command and the ongoing training implemented for the Board and staff to guarantee the sustainability of the changing culture resulting from rigorous adherence to said chain of command.*

List the Standard and Indicators Addressed in the Required Action/Directives:

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

Indicator 2.3 The governing body ensures that the leadership at all levels has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

In response to the July 2014 Monitoring Visit Report, the Board of Education voted to approve revised Board Policy BAB: Board Governance and Policy BBI: Board-Staff Relations on November 3, 2014, during the Board of Education Business Meeting. The Board roles outlined in Policy BAB and communication procedures detailed in Policy BBI provide a clear distinction between roles and responsibility of the Board and Superintendent. Policy BBI provides specific instructions to the Board, staff, and community regarding appropriate procedures for communications between and among the various stakeholder groups and the Board.

Additionally, during the November 3, 2014, Board of Education Business Meeting, the Board added a second layer of protection for adhering to the chain of command by including specific instructions, details and guidance for effective governance in the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook*. In the handbook under Section Two: Board Oversight, separate roles and responsibilities are listed for the Board and the Superintendent. There are clearly defined instructions for the Board to use to guide district oversight without interference into the daily operations of the district. In Section Four: Individual Board Member Protocols/Norms, the handbook includes a copy of Board Norms and Code of Conduct which includes a commitment by the Board to following the chain of command. Section Four of the handbook outlines procedures / practices Board members are expected to follow when communicating with stakeholders.

Additionally, the handbook and Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar provides a plan for professional learning for both newly elected Board members and veteran members, in accordance with GA State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.36 Local School Board Governance. The DeKalb Board plan calls for required hours and courses of professional learning for newly elected members and veteran members. The handbook requires that as part of the professional learning for newly elected Board members that the Board Chair and appropriate members of the staff provide an orientation to the district.

In 2014-2015, the Board training plan DeKalb submitted to the State of Georgia requires instruction in Roles and Responsibilities of Board members and whole-board governance training. Individual needs-based professional learning is also required. Board training during 2014-2015 will include Roles and Responsibilities, Governance, Hiring a Superintendent, Board and Community Relations, Policy Issues, Meetings and Ethics.

Annually, the Board must approve the Board training plan. The 2014-2015 professional learning plan was approved during the October 23, 2014 Board of Education Called Meeting and Retreat. Annually, the DeKalb Board of Education must report earned professional learning hours to the state pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-51 and State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.36.

Evidence to Support the Steps:

- October 23, 2014 Board of Education Called Meeting and Retreat agenda
- November 3, 2014 Board of Education Work Session and Business Meeting agendas
- *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook*
- Copy of Board approved Board of Education Professional Learning Plan submitted to the State of Georgia

Next Steps for the Required Action:

- Continue to provide on-going policy review and revision
- Fulfill the 2014-2015 professional learning plan

- Adhere to following the chain of command by providing required training and following Board of Education policies and handbook

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

The impact of the steps taken have provided clear strategies for the Board to follow to ensure that plans, procedures and policies put into place by the current Board of Education will lead to sustained effective governance and continuous improvement of the district in the future.

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

Long-term plans to sustain the results/impact of the Required Action includes a plan for professional growth for new and current board members, use of self-assessments by the Board to determine and measure the degree to which the Board is following its policies and practices, using open communication with stakeholders, and following the guidance provided in the DeKalb Board of Education Handbook.

Directive 3: *Adhere to plans for the implementation of a systemic change management process for system initiatives (vision, mission, strategic plan, curriculum, benchmark assessment, etc.) to facilitate continuous improvement and sustain effectiveness.*

List the Standard and Indicators Addressed in the Required Action/Directives:

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

Indicator 1.4: Leadership at all levels of the system implement a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

The Change Management for Continuous Improvement process is found in the District's Strategic Plan under Goal Area V: Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency. Within the Performance Objective titled "Develop an efficient organizational structure that supports a performance-based culture," the District identified an Accountability Initiative that addresses an ongoing, integrated process to manage performance, assess effectiveness, and provide support to ensure accountability across the District. A second initiative titled "Implement a Comprehensive Professional Learning Program" addresses decision making, change management, effective planning, budgeting, tracking student data, and personnel accountability – areas that are critical components in the implementation phase of the Change Management process.

Furthermore, the Performance Objective titled "Establish organizational processes that sustain a high-performance organization" includes an Organizational Effectiveness Initiative that addresses improved decision-making and change management through competence in three areas (a) making sense of information, (b) the role of collaboration in decision-making, and (c) successful execution and implementation of plans through the development of job-embedded training on the use of a decision-making model and a process of Change Management for Continuous Improvement.

In the District, divisions and/or departments have developed processes to address specific instructional or operational needs. The Change Management for Continuous Improvement is embedded in these processes. The Instructional Software Program (ISP) Process is one example— see attachment (ISP Process). The process was created by the Required Action 9 Sub-committee to ensure that there is a financial and educational return on investment. Another example is the Information Technology Change Management Process—see attachment (IT-CMP), which is an

electronic process used for new technology initiatives and to make changes in initiatives that are in-progress that may impact the entire district or sub-groups within the district.

Evidence to Support the Steps:

- Strategic Plan Goal Areas
- Instructional Software Program (ISP) Process
- IT Change Management Process (CMP)

Next Steps for the Required Action:

After finalizing all components of the District's Strategic Plan, job-embedded professional learning will take place to ensure the effective utilization of the Change Management for Continuous Improvement process throughout the organization.

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

Evidence that this process is becoming a systemic approach for initiatives going forward, is indicated through the work that is being accomplished at the Division, Regional and School levels.

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

As long as the Change Management for Continuous Improvement process remains embedded in the District's Strategic Plan, the Results/Impact of this Required Action will sustain itself.

Directive 4: Incorporate in the Instructional Software Purchase (ISP) Process a systemic and systematic review and evaluation of the effectiveness of the ISPs at the school and school system levels to determine the impact of ISPs implemented in schools on student learning and achievement and ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students.

List the Standard and Indicators Addressed in the Required Action/Directives:

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

Indicator 4.2: Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the system, individual schools,   educational programs, and system operations

Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

Indicator 5.2: Professional and support staff continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources, including comparison and trend data about student learning, instruction, program evaluation, and organizational conditions that support learning

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

Following the May 2014 Monitoring visit staff a variety of action steps were taken in order to sustain as well as enhance the work completed per Required Action 9. First, the district revisited the make-up of RA9 Committee and added/changed members as needed in order to work on RA13 Directive 4, resulting in the formation of RA13_4 Committee. Next, the new committee prepared and shared a memo with principals requesting that all schools update their existing ISP information for the 14-15 SY. In addition, the new committee prepared and shared a memo with appropriate central office staff requesting that departments update existing district-wide ISP information for the 14-15 SY. Upon receipt of the request information, the committee collaborated with the IT Division to update

ISP information shared by schools and district so the online graphic/information was current for the start of the 14-15 SY and available for all stakeholders to view.

In addition to the above mentioned action steps, the committee requested that the IT Division create a prototype of an electronic process for schools and district staff to use in order to add or renew ISPs. The prototype resulted in an "online store" where schools and district divisions/departments can go to select software from the list of 88 ISPs identified through the memo requesting updated ISPs for the 14-15 SY. Upon completion of the "online store" prototype, the committee reviewed the process employed as part of the "online store" and discussed necessary changes/enhancements.

Following review of the "online store" prototype, the committee was charged with several key action steps. First, the committee was charged with reviewing and refining the process created as part of RA9 and incorporated as part of the "online store" prototype for schools and district staff to follow in order to add or renew ISPs. Among a list of suggestions, the committee was charged with considering this new process together with the district's existing textbook review, selection, and formal adoption and refining/modifying both processes as appropriate to ensure the selection of research-based core and supplemental print and digital instructional materials and software programs.

The committee decided to refer to the new combined processes as the Instruction Materials (IM) Adoption as a way to indicate a new process that focuses on component purchases that includes print and digital core and supplemental materials. Additional action steps to be addressed by the committee as part of the IM Adoption, include, but are not limited to, the following: a.) reviewing and refining the list of 88 separate ISPs currently being used in schools and available for selection within the "online store" prototype; b.) establishing an approved list of research-based programs, inclusive of cost, that may or may not include those reported by schools as part of the list of existing 88 ISPs; c.) taking into consideration how ISPs selected and used in such areas as Title I, SPED, ESOL, interventions classes (i.e., EIP and REP), and after-school programs connect to other ISPs used in schools, both in funding and implementation; d.) developing a phase-out plan for ISPs not on the approved list, but on the list of 88 ISPs; e.) establishing guidelines and expectations that defines the roles and responsibilities of various divisions (C&I, SLO, IT, and Finance) within the selection and approval process; and f.) collaborating with appropriate divisions/departments to develop a district-level program evaluation framework that utilizes multiple data types with clear alignment to student achievement to use to review district-wide ISPs.

Evidence to Support the Steps:

- Email of memo requesting ISP updates for the 14-15 SY sent to schools/district staff
- Updated spreadsheet of ISPs currently being used during 14-15 SY
- Updated online graphic of ISPs by school and by district per RA9
- Prototype of "online store" with available 88 ISPs and process for selection
- Draft plan for refining process to add/renew ISPs per charge given to RA13_4 Committee, including but not limited to process for combining existing textbook/instructional materials review and selection process/adoption with process for adding/renewing ISPs via "online store"

Next Steps for the Required Action:

- Committee must complete action steps identified as part of its plan to add/renew ISPs per the above noted charge given to RA13_4 Committee on or before June 30, 2015

- Collaborate with IT to prepare presentation to share with principals at the December Administrators Meeting that provides an overview of the ISP "online store" prototype as well as the plan and timeline for completing the charge given to RA13_4 Committee
- Continue to revisit make-up of RA13_4 Committee throughout the process to add/change members or create sub-committees as necessary in order to establish implementation plan for district ISPs, including professional learning, technology integration, assessment/evaluation and ongoing funding requirements

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

As a result of the action steps taken to date, the district continues to refine and improve existing ISP selection process to ensure resources are identified that support student learning and achievement as well as provide equitable learning opportunities for all students. In addition, the district continues to build upon completed Required Actions and tackle related next steps necessary in order to put systems, structures and processes in place that support ongoing improvement of teaching and learning and provide equitable learning opportunities for all students.

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

Ongoing cross-divisional collaboration to ensure ISP selection, implementation, and evaluation is aligned with district strategic plan and annual budgeting process.

Directive 5: *Develop and implement a plan for the migration to the new parent portal platform, include details and a timeline for implementation, training and communication.*

List the Standard and Indicators Addressed in the Required Action/Directives:

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

Indicator 3.8: The system and all of its schools engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keep them informed of their children's learning progress.
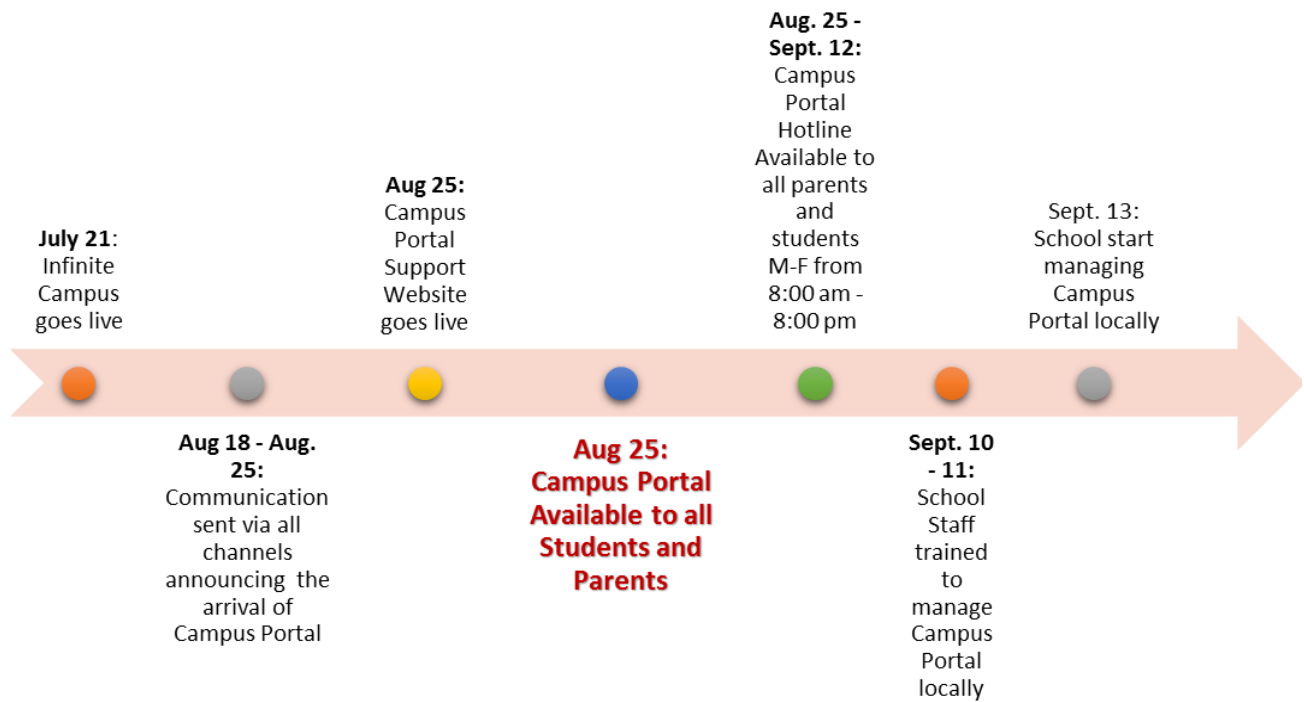
Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

In July 2014, the Division of Information Technology built the new Infinite Campus Portal accounts for all students and converted all active eSIS Parent Portal accounts. The "Stay In the Know" campaign goals were continued through extensive communication executed between July 2014 and September 2014. During this time, the Information Technology division worked with the Communications Department to announce the initial launching of Infinite Campus Portal to all stakeholders.   The communication channels utilized included the DeKalb App, PDS-TV24, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Web page banners, marquees, calling posts, Board meeting announcements, PTA/PTO meetings, and parent/guardian workshops.   On August 25, 2014, Infinite Campus Portal was made available to all students and parents.

In order to assist the schools in meeting the needs of our parents and students, Information Technology provided a Campus Portal Telephone Hotline for four weeks, Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 8:00 pm. Any parent or student could call this telephone number and receive help with setting up and using their account. Information Technology also trained local school staff on September 10 and 11 to manage this process at the local school level to ensure ongoing parental engagement and support.   Ongoing support is also provided through the Infinite Campus Portal support website which can be translated into multiple languages to provide equitable access to this tool.

The following timeline provides an overview of the Infinite Campus Portal Implementation.

Campus Portal Implementation Timeline

July 21: Infinite Campus goes live

Aug 18 - Aug. 25: Communication sent via all channels announcing the arrival of Campus Portal

Aug 25: Campus Portal Support Website goes live

Aug 25: Campus Portal Available to all Students and Parents

Aug. 25 - Sept. 12: Campus Portal Hotline Available to all parents and students M-F from 8:00 am - 8:00 pm

Sept. 10 - 11: School Staff trained to manage Campus Portal locally

Sept. 13: School start managing Campus Portal locally

Evidence to Support the Steps:

- Campus Portal Website: http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/infinite-campus
- Campus Portal Flyer
- Email to Principals
- District App Screen Shots
- Social Media Screen Shots
- Parent and Student Campus Portal Access Reports
- Campus Portal Support Training Logs for Schools
- Campus Portal Support Training Documents

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

As of November 14, 2014, all students in grades kindergarten through twelfth automatically have accounts and there were 340,517 student logins since August 25, 2014. Although there are currently 29,270 parent accounts, 37,063 students have a parent with an active Campus Portal account. Parents have logged in 657,326 times.

Research shows that a strong, school-parent-community connection is essential in building and sustaining school improvement. Infinite Campus is one of the digital tools purchased by the District to promote parental engagement and the school-home connection. Campus Parent Portal has already engaged families by keeping them informed of their children's academic progress as required **by AdvancED Standard 3:** Teaching and Assessing for Learning**; Indicator 3.8.**

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

Currently, students have the ability to monitor their academic progress and attendance using minimal steps through their current Parent Portal accounts. Infinite Campus allows parents and students to access demographics, schedules, assignments, assessment scores, grades, completed standards and credits, attendance, behavior, transportation and nutrition information, unofficial transcripts, fees, district-level and school-level notifications, classroom news, direct messaging, surveys, course registration tools, and reports in multiple languages from a computer, IOS device, and/or Android device. In an effort to ensure long-term sustainability, the Student Information System (SIS) program will automatically create a unique, student-specific activation code needed to create a user name and password within 24 hours of a student enrolling in a school. Information Technology will continue to provide training and support to empower local schools to continue to share this information upon enrollment.

Directive 6: *Develop and implement the strategic plan with fidelity, maintain a systemic and systematic process of accountability based on the plan, and sustain governance and management structures designed to monitor, evaluate and communicate the school system's progress on the plan's implementation.*

List the Standard and Indicators Addressed in the Required Action/Directives:

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

Indicator 1.1: The system engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a system-wide purpose for student success.

Indicator 1.2: The system ensures that each school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.

Indicator 1.3: The school leadership and staff at all levels of the system commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life skills.

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

Work on the Strategic Plan has continued since the May IPR report was submitted to AdvancED. After the May, 2014 Monitoring Visit concluded, the Strategic Plan Community Engagement Report was completed. Alignment of the Strategic Plan and School Improvement Plans was completed in July 2014. Drafts of 137 School Improvement Plans (SIP) were placed on e-Board in August 2014. Currently, initiatives and action plans are in the process of being refined. Finally, proposed Performance Measures have been developed and are to be presented to the Board on December 8, 2014, during the monthly Board meeting. *The proposed Performance Measures are subject to revisions by the Board.*

Additionally, during August, 2014, the former Chair of the Strategic Planning process for DeKalb Schools accepted a promotion in another school system, and new co-chairs were named to lead the Strategic Planning Process. The new co-chairs are utilizing the technical services and support of the Georgia Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) in order to ensure that on-going Strategic Planning work maintains the fidelity of the process originally begun.

Evidence to Support the Steps:

The following serves as sources of evidence to support the steps:

- Proposed Performance Measures (to be presented to the Board on December 8, 2014 and subject to revisions).
- 137 School Improvement Plans on e-Board.
- Strategic Plan Community Engagement Report.

Next Steps for the Required Action:

The following will serve as next steps for the required action:

- Presentation to the Board of the District Performance Measures (December 8, 2014).
- Continue to refine initiatives and action plans.
- Publication of the District Strategic Plan, to include the School Improvement Plans, on eBoard.
- Develop monitoring plan.
- Develop accountability system.
- Publication of brochures, posters, executive summary, and plan for public consumption, to include a Strategic Plan Webpage.

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

The impact of the steps taken is a District Plan aligned with the school improvement plans. Implementation and constant monitoring will be key in order to have successful outcomes, leading to increased student achievement. It is in this execution phase that the District must ensure that processes are carried out in order to make the vision for the future a reality.

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

The school plans are currently being implemented. With the alignment and implementation of the District's Strategic Plan, the work will be sustained through accountability, monitoring, evaluation, and continuous quality improvement. All stakeholders within the District and community will have an active role in the on-going implementation to ensure there is mutual accountability to achieve the specified performance objectives.

Required Action 14: *Continue to implement, evaluate and adapt the system's technology plan to ensure an effective and equitable distribution of technology throughout the system and its long-term sustainability.*

1. Adhere to the systemic process designed for conducting an annual technology audit to maintain a current perspective about the needs of the school system as a basis for developing the annual technology plan required by the Georgia Department of Education.
2. Create policies and procedures that facilitate the Board's consideration of the data contained in the annual technology audit to inform the equitable allocation of technology throughout the district.
3. Develop a structure to implement the Technology Training Plan as a systemic process within the school system with provisions for using data to determine progress and guide decision-making.
4. Create and implement a "stakeholder engagement" plan to collect feedback on the system's Technology Plan, including monitoring and reporting on the annual feedback received describing variables such as the nature and number of participants, timeframe, and description of the engagement.

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

X	**Completed** – All necessary and appropriate actions have been taken and evaluated. The district has documented evidence that supports completion of the required action.
	In Progress – 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.
	Have Not Addressed – 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 steps taken to address the required action/directives; 2) the evidence supporting those steps; 3) the institution's next steps with regard to the Required Action; 4) the results/impact of the steps taken; and 5) the long term plan to ensure sustainability of the steps taken.

List the Standard and Indicators Addressed in the Required Action/Directives:

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

Indicator 4.6: The system provides a technology infrastructure and equipment to support the system's teaching, learning, and operational needs.

Steps Taken to Address the Required Action/Directives:

Continued Technology Infrastructure Improvements

As outlined in the "Determine Technology Needs" phase of the district's Comprehensive Management Structure for Technology, the district continues to leverage data analysis from technology resource alignments and benchmark testing to improve the district's infrastructure.

This improved infrastructure enhances teaching and learning by directly fortifying the district's 21ˢᵗ Century Learning Environment.

- **SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax)**
  The taxpayers in the district provided $36 million to ensure the technology needs of the students, teachers and administrators are being met for the duration of the SPLOST IV period (2012 – 2017).   The projects are listed below:

  Projects and Completion Dates
    o Wireless Access for all Students – November 2013
      All schools and centers are completely wireless.
    o Telecommunications Infrastructure Upgrade - 2013
    o Desktop Refresh – August 2014
      Workstations older than two years were replaced.
    o 21ˢᵗ Century Classroom Technology – September 2014
      All classrooms have interactive whiteboards installed. This includes portable classrooms.

- **Technology for Support Digital Learning Bond**
  The district was awarded $197,000 for infrastructure improvements necessary to provide and sustain a robust network. These improvements will consistently and reliably deliver and support instruction and the administrative systems. The role of technology in this application addresses the District's initiative by seeking critical funds that allows the district to move from 1.4Gbps to 40Gbps of sustained connectivity which will have a direct impact on improved student performance through efficient and effective use of high-speed Internet connectivity in all classrooms.

  On April 1, 2014, the Board of Education approved the purchase for the identified infrastructure as identified by the grant.

- **Connections for Classrooms Grant**
  The district was awarded $8.4 million to continue the effort of infrastructure improvements so that schools will have a maximum achievable bandwidth (100Mbps per school). This will improve access to existing educational resources for students and teachers and improve communication to parents and guardians.   The award was based on a three-tier approach, where Tier 1 supported the district infrastructure, Tier 2 supported the schools' infrastructure and Tier 3 supported the classroom infrastructure. The district's award was in support of Tiers 1 and 2.

  During the November 3, 2014 Board of Education Meeting, the Chief Information Officer presented the grant award to the Board as part of the Superintendent's Report. Although over 103 districts were awarded funding through this grant, the DeKalb County School District received the highest award at $8.4 million dollars. The next highest award received was for $1.5 million. The grant assessment rubric was based heavily on the district's instructional goals for technology integration as well as the ability to prove sustainability. The goal of the grant is to provide equitable access to technology for all students throughout the district.

DCSD Technology Plan (2016 – 19)

The divisions of Information Technology, Curriculum and Instruction, School Leadership and Operations, Operations, Human Resources, Internal Affairs, and Finance met collaboratively to initialize the development of the district's technology plan for the years 2015 – 2018. The goal was to review the status of the current technology plan as well as ensure all internal needs were included based on each division's observations. As a result, five goals for the technology plan were established to guide the process.

A stakeholder engagement process has also been initialized which identifies stakeholder groups to be a part of the Technology Plan Advisory Committee. This committee will also review the status of the current technology plan as well as provide feedback throughout planning process.

DCSD Technology Academy

As outlined in the "Develop 3-Year Training Plan" phase of the district's Comprehensive Management Structure, the district will implement a Technology Academy as the structure to execute the district's Technology Training Plan as a systemic process. During the Summer Semester 2014, the Instructional Technology Department facilitated a training schedule of 22 core courses that were mandated in the district's Technology Training Plan. These courses were offered using face-to-face and online delivery methods to provide flexibility for our teachers. Further supporting implementation of the district's Technology Training Plan, the Instructional Technology Department continues to provide local school training and support on the tools identified in the district's 21st Century Learning Environment.

For the 2014 – 15 school year, the district has identified four major educational technology training focuses which are Infinite Campus (District's new Student Information System and Gradebook), ActivClassroom (Interactive Whiteboards and peripherals), Instructional Websites, and Mobile Devices. The purpose in simplifying the core or major training emphases was to allow all stakeholders to focus on mastery of the tools which are vital tools of the district's 21st Century Learning Environment.

21st Century Learning Environment Initiative

One of the district's core beliefs is that it is critical to embed an equitable and accessible 21st Century Learning Environment which is supported by the use of emerging technology throughout the curriculum. The divisions of Information Technology, Curriculum and Instruction, and School Leadership and Operations are currently developing the 21st Century Learning Environment Initiative to directly support the strategic plan goal area of Student Success with Equity and Access. Specifically, this initiative is meant to address the performance objective to increase graduation rates.

Although there are several action items within this initiative, developing the ability to provide virtual or blended learning is the initial focus. The committee has organized next steps for the district which include selecting a learning management system. This technology tool is critical to facilitating blended and virtual learning within the district's 21st Century Learning Environment. In keeping with the district's dedication to engaging stakeholders, a committee of principals, teachers, students, as well as district level instructional staff and administrators participated in a process to review several learning management system tools. The goal is to provide feedback that will ultimately drive the tool selected.

Evidence to Support the Steps:

Continued Technology Infrastructure Improvements

- *Project Status Updates:*
  http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/splost-iv-technology-projects

- *Summer Leadership Presentation:*
  http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/RA14_Artifacts_TechUpdates_SummerLeadership.pdf

- *Grant Acceptance Email ($197K):*
  http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/RA14_Artifacts_TechGrantDigitalLearning.pdf

- *Grant Acceptance Letter ($8.4 million):*
  http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/RA14_Artifacts_C4C%20GrantAwardLetter.pdf

- *Grant Press Release ($8.4 million)*
  http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/news-and-events/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2014/10/Technology-Grant-FINAL.pdf

Board Agenda Items Approvals

- *Technology Grant to Adopt Digital Learning Using High Speed Internet Connections:*
  https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/ViewMeetingOrder.aspx?S=4054&MID=36348

- *FirstClass Transitional Renewal:*
  https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/ViewMeetingOrder.aspx?S=4054&MID=37867

- *Microsoft EES:*
  https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/ViewMeetingOrder.aspx?S=4054&MID=40758

Board Agenda Items: Superintendent's Report

- *Infinite Campus Rollout:*
  https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/ViewMeetingOrder.aspx?S=4054&MID=39319

- *Connections for Classrooms Grant:*
  https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/ViewMeetingOrder.aspx?S=4054&MID=40758

Technology Academy

- *DCSD 2[1st] Century Learning Environment Framework:*
  http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/documents/advanced-sacs-accreditation-review/21st-cle-framework-proposal.pdf

- *DCSD Technology Training Plan: http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/documents/advanced-sacs-accreditation-review/dcsd-technology-training-plan-proposal.pdf*

- *Technology Academy Website:*
  http://its.dekalb.k12.ga.us/techacademy.aspx

- *Summer 2014 Course Offerings:*
  http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/RA14_Artifacts_TechAcademy2014SummerPLBrochure.pdf

- *Fall 2014 Course Offerings:*
  http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/4E89BEBC-DB9C-4F90-8CE8-C465768EBBB0/Fall2014TA_Courses_revised.pdf

- *NewsFlash for Courses:*
  http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/RA14_Artifacts_TechAcadNewsFlashes.pdf

- *Teacher Feedback:*
  http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/RA14_Artifacts_TeacherFeedback.pdf

2015 – 18 DCSD Technology Plan Development Process

- *Technology Plan (2012 -15):*
  http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/documents/management-information-systems/tech-plan.pdf

- *Internal Planning and Notes:*
  http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/RA14_Artifacts_TechPlan.pdf

21st Century Learning Environment Initiative

- *Strategic Plan Performance Objective:*
  https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/StrategicPlan/PlanDetail.aspx?S=4054&PID=2702

- *Learning Management System Selection Committee Memos:*
  http://filecabinet3.eschoolview.com/F1410886-8250-479B-879A-D519E506779B/RA14_Artifacts_LMSReviewProcess.pdf

- *Learning Management System Selection Committee Resource Website: http://esv633.eschoolview.com/orientation.aspx*

Next Steps for the Required Action:

Continue Technology Infrastructure Improvements

Information Technology will continue to make improvements to the district's technology infrastructure that support equitable access to effective teaching and learning.

Upcoming Projects (2015 – 2016)

The goal of the projects below are to update all outdated equipment as well as to fortify our existing wireless network.

- Laptop Refresh for Portable Classrooms – Winter Semester 2015
- Wireless Phase II – Summer Semester 2015
- Virtual Desktop Infrastructure Cabling Upgrade – Summer Semester 2015
- Digital Content Distribution – Spring Semester 2015
- Switches – Spring Semesters 2015

DCSD Technology Store

The DCSD Technology Store will transition the district to a new and updated system of procuring technology tools using district funds. This new tool will allow school administrators access to ordering information for district-approved technology tools that work within the district's infrastructure. The data created from this new procedure will inform several steps within the district's comprehensive management process for the effective use of technology tools.   For example, the analytics and logic will allow district administration to have immediate access to the hardware and software being purchased by school and region. Continuous access to this data will allow the district yet another measurement to monitor the technology infrastructure and ensure equitable access to all students.

Technology Academy

The district will continue to implement the Technology Academy and use data variables such as participation, mastery and stakeholder feedback to determine necessary adjustments needed for future courses. The Instructional Technology Department will continue to work with local school staff to support and expand training opportunities at the school level.

With the addition of a district learning management system, the Instructional Technology Department will work with the divisions of Curriculum and Instruction and School Leadership and Operations to develop and monitor a technology integration continuum model. This model will allow teachers to identify and acquire best practices as it pertains to blended and virtual learning.

2015 – 18 DCSD Technology Plan Development Process

The Information Technology Division will commission an advisory committee consisting of district and school level staff, parents, students, and community members to assist in the development of the 2015 – 2018 district-wide technology plan. This process will include a series of meetings and focus groups engaging all stakeholders.

21st Century Learning Environment Initiative

The district will continue to implement the 21st Century Learning Environment Initiative by developing the district's capacity to support virtual and blended learning. A learning management system will be identified, procured, and implemented. Effective training on how to use this tool will become a major focus for subsequent school years.

Results/Impact of the Steps Taken:

The district's Comprehensive Management Process enables continuous analysis of the district's technology infrastructure. This process starts with the 21st Century Learning Environment Framework which continues to keep the district grounded by focusing on the needs of all students. The technology audit and routine reviews of key performance indicators allow the district to align technology resources and continuously determine need. For example, the 21st Century Learning Environment Framework notes that students need access to a robust network, devices, and digital content to access engaging and personalized learning experiences. The Technology for Support in Digital Learning Bond and Classroom Connections Grant provides the district with the financial resources to fortify the infrastructure of all schools; thus, ensuring equitable access to all students. Implementation of the infrastructure projects funded by these grants include a full survey of each school's technology needs. Equipment will be installed based on individual school needs assessments. As an established decision-making model, the Comprehensive Management Process directly supports the Operational Effectiveness goal.

Furthermore, the Technology Academy is fully implemented and will continue to prepare all stakeholders to support the integration of technology into instruction. It is important to note that Technology Academy courses are aligned with needs identified by the Technology Audit as well as stakeholder feedback. This maintains the alignment with the district's Comprehensive Management Process.

Another major impact of the Technology Academy is that it directly supports the Staff Efficacy and Excellence goal area of the district's strategic plan. A major performance indicator of this goal area to develop a highly effective and accountable workforce. The U.S. Office of Technology Assessment cited the lack of teacher training as one of the greatest roadblocks to integrating technology into a school's curriculum. Not only is the Technology Academy aligned to internationally recognized technology standards provided by the International Society of Technology in Education, but it also addresses specific district technology integration needs as defined by the 21st Century Learning Environment Framework. The combination of these factors positions the

Technology Academy as a support system to prepare and develop a highly effective and technology savvy workforce prepared to provide equitable technology rich learning experiences for all students.

Lastly, stakeholder engagement is being supported through activities and mediums designed to provide awareness of the district's technology infrastructure and how it supports teaching and learning. Interaction with the Technology Plan Advisory Committee will continue to be an ongoing process that will yield balanced input as it pertains to the district's shared vision and technology

goals. Internally, the district staff has been instrumental in providing feedback via surveys, emails, and forums regarding the status, successes, and challenges of the district's technology infrastructure. These processes directly support the Stakeholder Engagement and Internal and External Communications goal areas of the district's strategic plan.

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

The district will continue to adhere to the Comprehensive Management Structure to manage the district's technology infrastructure effectively. The district will also continue the implementation of the Technology Training Plan through the Technology Academy. Stakeholder engagement will be facilitated by ensuring all stakeholder groups are active participants in the decisions that impact the district's technology infrastructure and instructional technology training plan.

Conclusion

In January 2013, the DeKalb County School District (DCSD) received the troubling news from AdvancED that the district was placed on Accredited Probation and was in danger of losing accreditation. As a result of that action, during the first few months of 2013, the previous Board of Education replaced the Superintendent, and the Governor of Georgia replaced six of the nine of those Board members. Since that time, the current Board and Superintendent began to use the technical assistance offered by AdvancED to support the district in its efforts to stabilize the DeKalb County School District and regain full accreditation. The Board and Superintendent focused on restoring the trust of stakeholders; rebuilding financial stability and academic credibility; repairing the damage done to the school system's reputation; and replacing ineffective organizational practices with effective sustainable practices that demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement.

The processes used to ensure district-wide improvement were deliberate. Therefore, much progress was made toward developing a culture of continuous progress that included the following: (1) writing and revising Board Policies to reflect sustainable and effective governance; (2) strengthening curriculum and instruction so that teaching and learning practices lead to improved student performance; and (3) initiating operational programs that improve the quality of service provided to stakeholders.

In 2013, AdvancED identified eleven Required Actions the district was required to address and complete in order to restore accreditation. During the following May 2013, the Visiting Team from AdvancED noted that great progress was being made by the district to complete the Required Actions. In December 2013, AdvancED noted that eight of the eleven original Required Actions had been completed, and the district was moved from Accredited Probation to Accredited Warned. AdvancED identified Required Actions 1, 3, and 6 as remaining in progress and then assigned Required Actions 12, 13, and 14 for the district to address. In May 2014, the Monitoring Team noted progress being made by the district and agreed with the district that Required Action 6 had been completed. Since May 2014, the DeKalb Board of Education and school district have worked to completely address the five remaining Required Actions. The following summary provides a review of actions taken and accomplishments made during the past six months to continue the improvement process began in 2013.

- The Board developed and approved a comprehensive plan to unify the Board and guide decision-making for the current and future Boards of Education. After a review of documents from a variety of school boards across the nation, the DeKalb Board of Education used information from the May 2013, IPR to develop the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook,* a governance guide. The handbook was drafted by staff and revised by the Board during the October 23, 2014 Retreat. During the November 3, 2014, Board Work Session, the handbook was reviewed again and final revisions were recommended. It was approved with final revisions during the November 3, 2014 Business Meeting. The Board Handbook is available on the district's website for public view and by December 8, 2014, it will contain active web links to board policies and other resources.

  The opening statements to the handbook provide a succinct summary of the purpose for the guide. "This handbook reflects the governance team's work on the creation of a framework for effective board governance. This framework involves ongoing discussions about the unity of purpose, roles, commitment to norms and agreement on protocols and formal

structures that will enable the governance team to perform its responsibilities in a way that best benefits the students of DeKalb County.

- The Board revised Board Policy BAB: Board Governance and approved the revisions on November 3, 2014. The Policy was revised to remove any language in Policy BAB that could be construed to be in conflict with the roles of the Board and the Superintendent's authority to manage the day-to-day operations of DCSD. The Board also revised Board Policy BBI: Board-Staff Relations on November 3, 2014 to ensure congruence with the language in Policy BAB regarding Board communications and stakeholders. The Board also provided clear guidelines, according to Georgia statutes and Board Policy, in the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook* regarding roles and responsibilities of the Board, Superintendent and other stakeholders. With the establishment of the handbook, the board will continue to move forward with revising policies on a three-year cycle.

- The Board has also developed the Board Fiscal Year Agenda Planning & Training Calendar which outlines annual professional learning plan. It is the foundation document for the professional learning plan. The Board of Education approved the State mandated Board Training Plan during the October 23, 2014 Called Meeting and Board Retreat. The Board training plan was approved as required by Georgia laws and statutes. The Board Training Plan included a variety of topics that Board members are required to know, learn, or review through annual Board training. Roles and Responsibilities for new and veteran Board members are a main focus for training as listed in the annual training plan in the handbook.

- During the 2013-2014 school year, the Board utilized a Georgia School Boards Association self-assessment tool to conduct a self-evaluation. The results proved to be a valuable tool for the Board to use to measure its effectiveness. The process of self-assessment by the Board is now embedded in Board Policy BAB and in the *DeKalb Board of Education Handbook*. The process is to occur annually during the late spring of each year at a retreat or other time prior to the Superintendent's final evaluation. The results will be used to gauge the Board's effectiveness, and it will serve to reaffirm Board protocols and procedures, or the self-assessment will identify policies, procedures or protocols that need to be amended.

- The Board and Superintendent are using a variety of strategies to engage stakeholder involvement and receive input regarding Board and district operations. During the spring of 2014, the Board held a series of community meetings regarding flexibility options. The community meetings included discussion regarding the Charter District as one option. In September and October 2014, the Board held two public hearings and one Committee of the Whole meeting regarding the decision to pursue the Charter District flexibility option. The option was placed on the October Board of Education agenda. The Board of Education chose to table the vote to approve the charter application so that further review by the Board could take place to make certain that the selected flexibility option has been fully reviewed.

- During the 2014 Spring Semester, DCSD partnered with Beanstalk Innovation, Inc., to conduct an audit of the Gifted and High Achiever Programs. Much of the audit included administering stakeholder surveys and conducting interviews with teachers, school administrators, and district administrators. The audit also included a review of curriculum and communication strategies used with internal and external stakeholders. Upon receiving

the results of the audit, the Superintendent began to hold meetings in July 2014 to review and determine how to use the audit data to best serve the students in DeKalb County School District. Currently, gifted program meetings are ongoing. The Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction Leaders, and School Leadership /Operations Leaders are collaborating in this effort as recommended in the final audit report.

- The district ended Fiscal Year 2014 with a budget surplus of $31million. The elimination of the $13 million deficit, coupled with the $31 million budget surplus helped to restore financial stability to the district. However, processes including the use of School Books Software, transmitting detailed monthly financial reports to the Board of Education, providing monthly budget status reports to departments, and scrutinizing Accounts Payable issuance of checks have improved the Board and district's ability to manage the budget and control expenses in relation to revenue collected. The improvement in budget management assists the district to better plan for resource allocation that will lead to improved student performance.

- The determination by the Board to adhere to the Chain of Command was enhanced when the Board of Education revised Policies BAB and BBI. The extensive details regarding chain of command that were written in the DeKalb Board of Education Handbook provide clear guidance regarding the importance of supporting the Superintendent's and authority to manage the day-to-day operations of DCSD without interference by the Board.

- The Change Management Process is being utilized within the district as evidenced by the processes used in the Informational Technology (IT) Division and in the collaboration among departments to develop the Instructional Software Process to ensure a return on investment by the district. The process is embedded in the Strategic Plan and is included as a systemic process.

- Since the May 2014 Monitoring Visit, the committee responsible for Instructional Software Purchases (ISP) has added/changed members as needed. The team also requested updates from departments regarding current software available to schools. The committee collaborated with IT to provide an "online store" so that schools would have a Web source to use to request to add or renew instructional software. Currently, the ISP committee has been collaborating with other departments /divisions to refine the "online store" to determine whether existing textbooks, instructional materials, supplemental materials and other research-based digital or print materials could be placed in the "online store." Cross-divisional committee members are also collaborating to establish guidelines and expectations that define roles and responsibilities within the selection and approval process for ISP's. The group is also working to develop a framework that uses multiple data with clear alignment to student achievement to review district-wide ISP's.

- In July 2014 the Informational Technology Division built new Infinite Campus Portal accounts. Between the months of July 2014 and September 2014 extensive communication was transmitted between IT and the Communication Department regarding the launch of the "Stay in the Know" campaign for the new Infinite Campus Portal. Communication regarding the launch was distributed through the DeKalb App, social media, PDS TV24, Board Meeting announcements, PTA/PTO meetings, school marquees, calling posts, and

Web page banners. On August 25, 2014, the Infinite Campus Portal was made available to all students and parents. For four weeks, IT manned a telephone hot line for parents to call to request assistance. IT also provided local school training. Data in the Infinite Campus Parent Portal can be translated into multiple languages. The usage by parents and students has been exceptional. At this time, there have been 340,517 student log-ins recorded and 657,327 parent log-ins recorded. There are 29,270 parents with a log-in, and they represent 37,064 students.

- The Strategic Plan vision, mission, motto, beliefs, goal areas and performance objectives were approved by the Board on December 2, 2013. Following the May 2014, Monitoring Team Visit, the Strategic Plan Community Engagement Report was completed. The report contained information gleaned from the two community meetings that were held and the one stakeholder perception online survey that was conducted. Currently, the steps being taken in the Strategic Plan process include review of proposed performance measures. The measures have been developed and are expected to be presented to the Board on December 8, 2014. However, the measures are subject to further revisions by the Board before final approval is given. Initiatives and action plans are being refined. Draft versions of 130 copies of local school improvement plans have been placed on e-board.

- The district's comprehensive management process utilized in the Technology Plan enable the district to continuously analyze technology infrastructure. The data analysis is impacting decisions regarding equity. The analysis is also providing DCSD with strategies that will ensure equity among students for technology funding. The technology Academy is being used as the main training source for implementing training required in the Technology Plan. The Academy has been fully implemented, and it is preparing teachers to function effectively in a 21st century classroom environment. Stakeholder engagement is being used to solicit information that can be used to continue improvement processes.

- On April 1, 2014, the DeKalb Board of Education (DBOE) ratified the Ad Hoc Superintendent Search Committee to develop a draft research plan to include but not limited to the following:
  - ➢ Timeline
  - ➢ Qualifications
  - ➢ Community input
  - ➢ Search firm(s) and scope of work

The committee was charged with presenting their findings at the June board meeting. However, due to the depth of research and information needed, the committee presented its findings at the August 4, 2014 meeting. The search timeline is proposed to conclude with a selection of a new superintendent by June 2015.

On August 4, 2014, the DBOE approved the ratification of a formal Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a Superintendent Search. The Purchasing Department released RFQ 15-26 on August 21, 2014. The sourcing initiative included advertisement in the District's legal organ, *The Champion Newspaper*, the District's solicitation website, email solicitation notification to 41 registered DeKalb vendors, and the Georgia Department of Administrative Services website. In addition, email solicitation notifications were sent to

vendors requested by various board members as well as vendors researched through the Ad Hoc committee from K-12 trade magazines (i.e. Education Week, District Administration) and internet search engines.

On September 17, 2014, the Purchasing Department acknowledged the receipt of (4) RFQ responses.

On October 8, 2014, the DBOE voted to cancel the RFQ and rebid the services in order to increase the number of responders. The Board discussed the evaluation committee composition, and agreed that the chair and vice chair would serve on the evaluation team.

On October 16, 2014, the Purchasing Department released RFQ 15-26R. Per request of the DBOE, the Purchasing Department strengthened the sourcing initiative in an effort to increase the number of responses. The strengthened sourcing initiative included contacting the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP) Resource Center to obtain vendor lists for other districts that have conducted executive searches around the nation, re-verification of email addresses on the DeKalb vendor list, and added additional firms specializing in superintendent searches from various states. Advertisements included the District's legal organ, *The Champion Newspaper*, the District's solicitation website, email solicitation notification to 129 registered DeKalb vendors, and the Georgia Department of Administrative Services (DOAS) website. The DOAS website registry reached over 1,100 vendors. In addition, email solicitation notifications were sent to additional vendors requested by various board members as well as vendors researched through the Ad Hoc committee from K-12 trade magazines (i.e. Education Week, District Administration) and internet search engines.

On November 12, 2014, the Purchasing Department acknowledged the receipt of (1) RFQ response. The RFQ 15-26R Evaluation Team consisting of two board members and several administrative staff members convened to evaluate the sole RFQ response.

The Evaluation Team recommended that the DeKalb Board of Education complete the evaluation process by interviewing PROACT Search in a Committee of the Whole Board. If the Board's decision is to accept the RFQ response from PROACT, then this completes the process. If the Board's decision is to reject the PROACT RFQ response, the Board may then, at its discretion, pursue the option under Board Policy DJE – Purchasing, Section III, Item B, Number 2, '*Purchases or contracts with a total estimated cost of $5,000.01 to $99,999.99 shall be made on the basis of at least two written quotations and selected based on objective criteria of performance and ability to execute*', or rebid for any potential costs that may exceed $99, 999.99.

The Board will hold next discussions at the Committee of the Whole Board on December 8, 2014 regarding the acceptance of the sole responder or the decision to seek additional quotes or rebid the search firm services.

The DeKalb County School District has been diligent in working to provide effective governance by the Board of Education and operational excellence by the Superintendent. The actions taken by the Board and Superintendent were started to ensure that students in DeKalb County School District receive outstanding educational opportunities that are provided in a culture of high performance that is focused on student achievement. The Board and Superintendent have used the opportunities provided by AdvancED to work to complete all Required Actions so that full accreditation will be restored.   When we achieve the full accreditation status that we aspire to achieve and our stakeholders expect, DeKalb County School District will then be able to take its place among the best school districts in the State of Georgia. Our students deserve nothing less.

About AdvancED®

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), Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) 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/Indicators 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 process 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 Review team at least once every five years. The team evaluates the institution's adherence to the AdvancED Accreditation Standards and policies, assesses the efficacy of the institution's improvement process and methods for quality assurance, and identifies Powerful Practices and provides 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 External Review. Monitoring Reviews may be conducted during this time to ensure that the institution is making progress toward the Required Actions.

Special Reviews

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 Accreditation Standards and 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 review.

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.