



DIVISION OF
 SCHOOL & DISTRICT
EFFECTIVENESS
 ADVANCING LEADERSHIP | TRANSFORMING SCHOOLS

Advancing Leadership...Transforming Schools

January 2017

FROM THE DIVISION

There's a simple question that is worth considering deeply: as leadership in schools work on continuous improvement, what is it that they are improving? Student achievement? Ultimately yes. But what does it mean to improve student achievement? Kids aren't broken. It's the systems, structures, and processes that are broken or don't exist.

In essence, continuous improvement is the constant refinement of major systems in the building by improving the systems' structures and their processes. Continuous improvement is process improvement. As processes are established and improved over time, the results that these processes get will also improve.

As an example: a school is struggling with the performance of special education students. It's not the students who need "fixing." There may be a professional capacity issue. Within the system of professional capacity, there should be several structures, such as attracting quality staff to the school. And within that structure of attracting staff, there are many processes: recruiting, hiring, onboarding, placing staff, etc. One or more of those processes can be contributing to the results: the poor performance of special education students.

An improvement effort could be, then, either establishing or improving how special education teachers are recruited. If the school is not getting quality special education teachers on board, then there are not adequate processes in place to draw quality teachers to the school.

We will be diving into this approach to continuous improvement over the next year, so stay tuned. And we will be asking you to contribute your effective process to a process toolbox we are building for all schools!

[Dr. Will Rumbaugh](#)
 Director, Division of School & District Effectiveness

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PURPOSE

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

AREA INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCES

The dates and locations for the Area Instructional Leadership Conferences are below. We look forward to seeing principals and their supervisors at these events!

Metro Area:

February 2, 2017

[Courtyard Atlanta Decatur Downtown/Emory](#)

South Area:

February 15, 2017

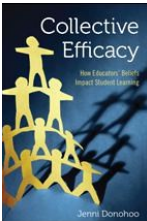
[Macon Marriott City Center](#)

North Area:

February 16, 2017

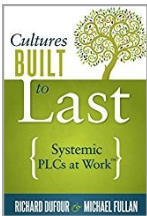
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READING AND RESOURCES



[*Collective Efficacy: How Educators' Beliefs Impact Student Learning*](#)

by Jenni Donohoo



[*Cultures Built to Last: Systemic PLCs at Work*](#)

by DuFour and Fullan



[*ASCD Quick Reference Guides*](#)

SEEKING PROPOSALS FOR 2017 IDEAS CONFERENCE

The 2017 Institute Designed for Educating All Students (IDEAS) Conference will take place June 6-9, 2017 at Epworth by the Sea in St. Simons Island, GA.

The Institute Designed for Educating All Students (IDEAS) Committee is seeking proposals that reflect best practices in education in a wide variety of topic areas. This conference is designed for special and general education teachers who work with students with disabilities. We encourage GREAT teachers to share their knowledge and expertise for best practices by submitting a proposal and attending the event. If you have practices that would benefit our teachers please consider submitting a proposal to the IDEAS committee. The proposal submission deadline is March 17, 2017.

To submit your proposal, fill out the [presentation proposal application](#).

Please refer to the [2017 IDEAS Conference webpage](#) for up to date information.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

AREA INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCES

We look forward to seeing school and district leaders at the upcoming Area ILCs. Principals and their supervisors should have received registration information earlier this month.

- **Metro Area:** February 2, 2017 at the [Courtyard Atlanta Decatur Downtown/Emory](#)
- **South Area:** February 15, 2017 at the [Macon Marriott City Center](#)
- **North Area:** February 16, 2017 at the [Macon Marriott City Center](#)

PRINCIPAL-TO-PRINCIPAL WEBINARS

Our third [Principal-to-Principal webinar](#) will be on February 9, 2017 at 10:00 AM and the topic will be [Georgia School Performance Standard Planning and Organization 1: Shares a common vision and mission](#). Our presenter will be Mr. Vinson Davis, Principal of [Monroe Comprehensive High School](#) in [Dougherty County](#). A registration email will be sent out one week prior to the webinar. Please send topic suggestions to Andrea Cruz at acruz@doe.k12.ga.us.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING WEBINARS

Our third quarterly professional learning webinar will be held on March 23, 2017 at 10:00 AM and the topic will be common formative assessments. A registration link will be sent out one week prior to the webinar.

These webinars are intended for Professional Learning Directors and will be on a variety of topics surrounding professional learning and continuous improvement. If you would like to be invited to these webinars or have topic suggestions, please contact Christy Jones at chjones@doe.k12.ga.us.

OCTOBER ILC MATERIALS

Handouts and presentations from the October 2016 Instructional Leadership Conference will remain available in EventMobi until September 2017. The access link is eventmobi.com/ilc2016. In addition, this year's Instructional Leadership Conference was filmed. Links to the session recordings can be found on the right-hand side of the [Events and Conferences webpage](#).



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SESI UPDATES

**SYSTEM FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL INSTRUCTION (SESI)
A MODEL FOR SCHOOL LEADERS TO BUILD
AN EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

Why should leadership teams develop and maintain a schoolwide instructional framework? The answer is simple...to provide a clear vision and consistent process as to how instruction should be delivered in every classroom. The [System for Effective School Instruction](#) offers resources to assist in the development of schoolwide frameworks, including the newly released GaDOE Standards-based Classroom Instructional Frameworks for all content areas ([SESI pg. 30](#)). The frameworks were developed as a tool to support the Georgia Standards of Excellence in the core content areas.

Schoolwide instructional frameworks provide a structure that assists teachers in designing and delivering effective instruction. Instructional frameworks can include both the expectations for teachers, as well as students, during each part of daily lessons. Displaying a graphic of the framework pervasively throughout the building will ensure all expectations are communicated to all stakeholders.

Guiding Questions:

- What are the schoolwide expectations for lesson delivery?
- What does data show as areas of weakness in instructional delivery across all contents? How can the Instructional Framework address these concerns?
- What are the responsibilities for teachers, as well as students, during each phase of a lesson?

The development and implementation of schoolwide instructional frameworks assist in supporting the following Georgia School Performance Standards:

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SESI (continued)

- Instruction Standards 1: Provides a supportive and well-managed environment conducive to learning
- Instruction Standard 4: Uses research-based instructional practices that positively impact student learning
- Leadership Standard 3: Uses systems to ensure effective implementation of curriculum, assessment, instruction, and professional learning practices

SIG 1003(g)

As SIG 1003(g) Cohort 4 schools work in the final year of the School Improvement Grant, it is important that time be provided to a representative team for practical planning with implementation and monitoring of a viable sustainability plan. Teams representing each Cohort 4 school and district will delve into ten elements that are critical for continuing and sustaining effective programs as launched through SIG. The emphasis of such an effort is in identifying priority areas for program sustainability while developing goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps for a successful plan. Institute II of Sustainability Training for Cohort 4 will be conducted by RMC Research Corporation in early March.

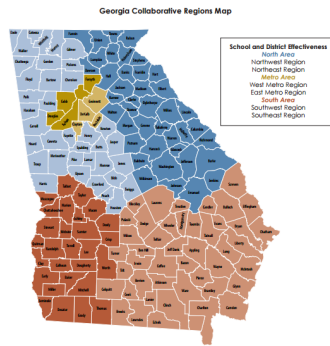
While some schools are in the final year(s) of SIG 1003(g), others are beginning this important turnaround work. The State Board of Education approved the recommendations for Cohort 5 schools on January 12, 2017. The new cohort includes the following schools:

- [Banneker High School](#), Fulton County
- [Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School](#), Dougherty County
- [Northeast High School](#), Bibb County
- [Taliaferro County K-12 School](#), Taliaferro County
- [Wilcox County High School](#), Wilcox County

The SIG 1003(g) Cohort 5 schools will receive awards for up to five years, with SY2017 being the planning or pre-implementation year followed by three years of implementation and one year of sustainability.

FROM THE REGIONS

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



NORTHWEST REGION

Happy New Year from the Northwest Region Team. We are excited to welcome two new members to our School Effectiveness Specialist team: Mr. Philip Mellor who will support SIG schools in Bibb County and Mr. Ron Fuss who will support Twiggs County as they implement their SIG State-directed model.

Our School Effectiveness Specialists (SES) hosted their third network for instructional coaches and assistant principals of instruction for our priority and focus schools in the Northwest Region. Participants engaged in a day of learning focused on formative assessment.

Peach County High School

[Peach County High School](#) has worked hard to put structures and systems in place to improve student achievement. One of their School Improvement Plan goals is to, "Ensure that all students will reach high standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics." One system they have implemented to achieve that goal is their daily Academic Focus period. Students in each class with an End-of-Course assessment (EOC) are targeted and participate in Academic Focus as a group. In addition, each EOC Academic Focus is taught by a teacher certified in that subject. Work for the Academic Focus period is selected by the EOC content area teacher and Instructional Coaches ensure that class copies of the task provided by the EOC content teacher are delivered to each Academic Focus instructor.

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NORTHWEST REGION (continued)

Students are assigned an Academic Focus class based on their individual schedule and the school uses data to identify which classes would be a priority if a child has more than one EOC course. For those students not scheduled in a course with an EOC they participate in an Academic Focus class that focuses on frontloading content and ensuring students have the prior knowledge needed to be successful in their math class next semester. Since PCHS implements a block schedule, the Academic Focus class has been modified for second semester. The school has used data to be strategic and intentional in how they identify classes needed and which students will participate in each course based on individual need. For more information on Peach County High School's Academic Focus plan, please contact Gina Clark at gclark@peachschools.org.

NORTHEAST REGION

Greetings and a Happy New Year to you! We hope you had a restful break with family and friends. Looking back at the last few months in 2016, we thank you for your time and valuable discussions during Status Reviews. Now that CCRPI scores are published, most of you have already begun fine tuning tasks in Indistar to address spotlight standards and the revisions to your continuous improvement plans.

Most of you started 2017 with professional learning for your teachers and now we're all gearing up for the home stretch! As you continue to implement your plans for professional learning and your focus on quality classroom instruction, keep in mind the valuable sessions your local RESAs offer. This is an effective way to provide instructional support to individual teachers (new or veteran), or specific departments. Teachers can also attend professional learning provided by other RESAs for a small fee.

Dianne L'Heureux from the GaDOE [Teacher and Leader Effectiveness](#) Division has supported some [Richmond County](#) schools to help teachers develop a deeper understanding of [TAPS](#).

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NORTHEAST REGION (continued)

Working directly with teachers, training focused on: A fuller, deeper understanding of the TAPS rubrics; a deeper understanding of cognitive engagement; inclusion of evidence of student engagement; objectivity in the application of the TAPS rubric; and alignment of evidence to the TAPS standards.

When teachers have a full understanding of the expectations, they respond accordingly. Additionally, it can aid teachers in self-examination of their own classroom practices and student responses, helping them to objectively identify areas of strength and weakness. We look forward to continuing our support. See you soon at our ILC in Macon on February 16th!

WEST METRO REGION

[Graduation Achievement Charter High School](#) is engaged in a mindset training program, in an effort to increase student engagement, self-motivation, and personal awareness as we work on Spotlight Standard I-8 to empower students to actively monitor their own progress. Lessons such as Recognizing Ownership and Overcoming Mental Obstacles are each delivered using multiple learning styles: visual (videos), aural (music and dialogue), and verbal (written expression). Mindset training compiles student responses to create individual profiles which highlight student strengths, career interests, and learning styles. Not only do these opportunities for learning and expression yield increased initial student impact, they also facilitate long term effectiveness in monitoring their own progress.

So far, the results have been positive. Students who completed the training during initial enrollment have attendance rates 20-30 percent higher than typical students and completed core courses on time at a rate 23% higher than the baseline. Graduation Achievement Charter High School’s objective this year is to increase engagement further by utilizing profile results and monthly training webinars to shape student goals and initiatives as part of their College and Career Readiness program.

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WEST METRO REGION (continued)

Mindset training is just one of the ways personnel at GAC work to garner student success as part of their community-minded yet individualized approach to their students.

Students and staff alike participate and benefit from the mindset training message. Read what staff and students have to say about the program:

- “Not only did the training have me laughing out loud, I knew that these lessons were the kind of core lessons all people, not just our students, need to enjoy success in life.”
- “What I want to change is the way I settle. For example, I’m okay with having a 75 on a test, as long as I pass. In order to be the best I have to ask myself, “can you do better?” The answer would of course be yes. No longer will I be settling. I will be progressing for weeks, months or years. It will be for my entire life.”

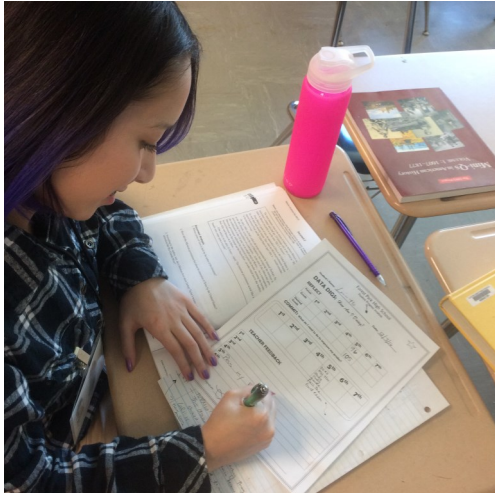
EAST METRO REGION

The Principals at [Charles A. Drew](#) and [Forest Park High Schools](#) in [Clayton County](#), Gary Townsend and Derrick Manning, have made the commitment to collaboratively approach [Georgia School Performance Standard Instruction 8](#), their common Spotlight standard. While each school has autonomy, the basic premise, to empower students to actively monitor their own academic progress, is the same. Each school has developed and enacted a series of Indistar tasks to monitor their progress.

These tasks include: Training all students to access their grades in Infinite Campus on their computers and smart phones. On a biweekly schedule, warmup time is set aside in each class to allow students to check and record their current grades. This data dig involves students reflecting on where they are, where they want to be, and how they plan to get there. These thoughts are recorded in a specifically designed format, and teachers offer written and verbal feedback. The initiative is monitored by the teachers and the administration using the data dig document and infinite campus usage reports.

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EAST METRO REGION (continued)



Students at Charles A. Drew and Forest Park High School engage in bi-weekly data digs.

As this process evolves, the next step is to create a culture where students are comfortable enough to be able to lead their own data digs in student/teacher/parent meetings and determine next steps upon reflection of their own data. Hopefully, this will also encourage parents to engage in this process with their high schooler.

SOUTHWEST REGION

The second round of Priority Status Reviews and SIG monitoring visits is underway in the Southwest Region. As we focus on the next steps/tasks identified during the first reviews, we are seeing evidence of progress towards moving to the Operational Level of implementation of the schools' spotlight standards.

The Southwest Region Team wants to thank all of our schools and districts for the hard work they are doing to improve teaching and learning. This work resulted in significant improvement in CCRPI scores for the majority of our schools.

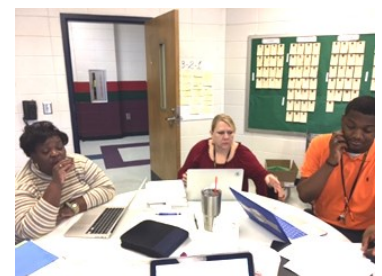
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SOUTHWEST REGION (continued)

One of these schools is [Quitman County High School](#). The [Quitman County School District](#) is one of three districts in Georgia implementing the "State-Determined Intervention Model" as part of SIG whole-school transformation. Quitman received the grant because the schools (Pre-K – 12) demonstrated the greatest need for the funds and the most capacity to use the funds to provide effective resources to substantially increase student achievement.

Quitman County instructional coaches and SIG administrators facilitate weekly study group sessions with teachers in pre-kindergarten, elementary, middle, and high schools. The purpose of the study groups is to establish common expectations among teachers for standards, curriculum, assessment, and instruction through collaborative planning. As part of their collaborative planning process, teachers identify effective instructional strategies, analyze student work, and engage in the data team process to improve student achievement. Research suggests that study groups tend to be more effective when they are an integral part of a larger school reform effort.

Implementation of the SIG reform plan has proven to be successful. Quitman County increased the 2016 graduation rate by 20 points, and the CCRPI for the high school increased each year since implementation of the grant in 2013, moving from 55.1 to 77.1.



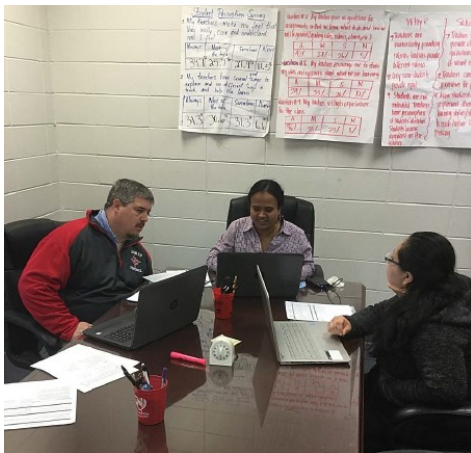
Quitman County instructional coaches and SIG administrators facilitate weekly study group sessions.

SOUTHEAST REGION

This week in the Southeast Region we are beginning our schedule of second Status Reviews in Priority Schools. Based on the progress of the work in these schools and the identified next steps, our Region Network Professional Learning continues to focus on key spotlight standards, such as C1. We are seeing tremendous growth in the collaborative planning process, both the content of the work and the fidelity of implementation in our schools.

The Principal, Instructional Coaches, and Teachers at [Macon County High School](#) are effectively implementing a weekly 3-day schedule for collaborative planning meetings. The 3-day schedule allows sufficient time for lesson planning, discussing teaching strategies, reviewing assessments, addressing struggling learners, and professional learning. Collaboration meetings are scheduled every Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday with the following focus:

- Tuesday – Standards Deconstruction and Learning Targets
- Wednesday – Instructional Activities that are aligned to the Standards and Assessments
- Thursday – Analyzing Lesson Activities/Formative Assessments/Professional Learning



Macon County High School engaged in collaborative planning.

SOUTHEAST REGION (continued)

Members of the Leadership Team have worked hard to establish norms which are followed by all participants during collaboration meetings. Adhering to the norms ensures timely meetings, full participation of all teachers, and clear expectations. Each teacher comes prepared with lesson plans, curriculum maps, and instructional materials to share in developing upcoming plans with their team members. Agendas are provided prior to the collaboration meetings. Minutes are taken and distributed. Principal Nakia Parks is committed to protecting the schedule and clearly communicates high expectations for adhering to the start/end times for all meetings.

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