

2025 Chronology SecureIT

The Department of Information and Instructional Technology (DIIT) seeks approval to enhance the SecureIT initiative, a long-term, district-wide cybersecurity program designed to protect DeKalb County School District's digital infrastructure, sensitive data, and technology users. The SecureIT chronology provides transparency while protecting digital privacy, safety, and security.

As the district increasingly relies on technology to support teaching, learning, and operational functions, the need to proactively defend against sophisticated cyber threats has become critical. School districts across the nation are facing an alarming rise in ransomware, phishing, and data breach incidents. These attacks can compromise student data, disrupt instruction, and result in costly recovery efforts. In response, SecureIT offers a comprehensive, sustainable approach to managing cybersecurity risk and ensuring the continuity of safe, secure learning environments.

SecureIT is guided by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework, a widely adopted model used by leading public and private sector organizations. The framework is built around five core functions: Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover. These pillars provide a structured approach to assessing risk, securing digital assets, monitoring threats, responding to incidents, and restoring operations. By aligning with this nationally recognized standard, the district ensures that its cybersecurity efforts are both rigorous and scalable.

SecureIT is not a one-time project but a critical, ongoing investment in the district's digital safety and resilience. Board of Education approval will help mitigate risks and ensure that DCSD students and staff benefit from a secure, stable, and future-ready digital learning environment.

Key Partners and Services:

Blue Ally – Combined Cost: \$682,300

(Secure & Protect \$148,100 plus Azure Annual Consumption \$534,200)

Secure and Protect Managed Services

Provides managed services for Microsoft Azure and Microsoft 365 environments:

- Azure management (monitoring, patching, performance tuning)
- Identity management (Active Directory, single sign-on)
- Website and application hosting support
- Microsoft 365 security hardening

- Breach detection and monitoring (MAD365)
- Additional on-demand support (100 hours)

Azure Annual Consumption

Azure is a cloud-based platform that enables organizations to build, deploy, and manage applications using scalable infrastructure services such as storage, virtual servers, networking, and cloud-based software platforms. DeKalb County School District (DCSD) uses Azure in combination with on-premises systems to support students and staff with flexible, reliable solutions. This approach reduces the burden on limited IT resources by shifting focus from hardware management to application support. Azure's pay-as-you-go model and shared responsibility structure help maximize the value of each IT investment.

Cyderes – Cost: \$723,960.00 (\$678,960 annual services & \$45,000 onboarding services)

Will provide ongoing managed security services leveraging Microsoft tools. These services offer 24/7 coverage for detection, investigation, and will respond quickly to contain them.

Managed services include:

- 24x7x365 Managed Security Operations Center (SOC)- Continuous monitoring, detection, and response to security threats around the clock.
- Platform Management and Engineering- Expert configuration, optimization, and ongoing maintenance of security platforms.
- Automated Investigation and Response with Cyderes SOAR
Use of the Cyderes Security Orchestration, Automation, and Response (SOAR) platform to streamline incident handling and reduce response times
- Threat Intelligence Platform Integration- Seamless integration of Cyderes threat intelligence into your SIEM and EDR systems for enhanced situational awareness
- Proactive Threat Hunting- Regular signature-based hunts by a specialized operations team to detect emerging threats and zero-day vulnerabilities
- Customer Success and Analyst Alignment- Dedicated support through aligned Customer Success Managers and Principal Analysts to ensure strategic guidance and continuous improvement
- Unlimited Alert Investigations and Use Case Deployment- No restrictions on the number of alerts analyzed, data sources ingested, or security use cases implemented

- Continuous Onboarding and Expansion- Ongoing integration of new data sources and deployment of additional security use cases as your environment evolves.

Dean Dorton- Cost \$250,200

Dean Dorton will assign a senior security consultant (vCISO) supported by a team of cybersecurity experts to enhance DCSD's security posture. All efforts will be aligned with management-approved initiatives and will follow a broader DCSD NIST Security Roadmap.

- Cybersecurity Strategy & Compliance - Advise the CIO on cybersecurity risks, compliance, regulations, and strategies for threat mitigation.
- Security Program Reporting - Deliver regular high-level reports summarizing the security posture, key risks, and improvement opportunities.
- Incident Response Oversight - Lead and coordinate incident response efforts and communicate directly with DCSD leadership.
- Audit Support - Act as liaison for internal and external audits, ensuring accurate and timely responses to IT audit requests.
- Security Awareness Program - Oversee and direct strategic planning for DCSD's security awareness initiatives, including tools and processes.
- Cybersecurity Assessments - Perform comprehensive or quarterly assessments to evaluate security posture and validate control effectiveness.
- Attack Surface Monitoring (ASM) - Maintain an inventory of exposed digital assets, monitor vulnerabilities, and provide early alerts and mitigation strategies for emerging threats.

VivacityTech- Cost \$412,300

Provides Google Workspace for Education Plus

- Google Workspace for Education Plus- upgrading from Standard edition which will include enhanced security tools to prevent, detect, and remediate threats. Also will provide advanced reporting and analytics in addition to improved collaboration, streamlined administration, originality reports and other advanced features

Financial Impact:

Year	Amount Approved
2022	\$2,200,000
2023	\$1,872,080
2024	\$2,372,080
2025	\$2,464,894.85
2026	\$2,068,760 <i>Amount requested</i>