



Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
Interim Superintendent of Schools



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- CLARITY
- CONSISTENCY
- COHERENCE



- RELATIONSHIPS
- RECEPTIVENESS
- RESPONSIVENESS



Forward Together
Leading with Clarity, Consistency, and Coherence

Vision Casting and Transition Plan

Dr. Norman C. Sauce III
Interim Superintendent of Schools

January 21, 2026

Our North Star

Every child deserves access to excellent teaching, safe schools, strong wellness supports, and opportunities to reach their full potential.

Vision

To prepare students for success as lifelong learners and responsible global citizens

Mission

To promote the academic, social, and emotional growth of each student by fostering a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment

Leading with Clarity, Consistency & Coherence

Clarity

Ensures that families, staff, and the Board understand the rationale behind decisions.

Consistency

Ensures that schools operate with stable and predictable systems.

Coherence

Ensures that departments collaborate effectively, aligning resources and supports across the district in service of student success and Strategic Plan goals.

We will build coherence through strong relationships, active receptiveness, and timely responsiveness.

The 3 Rs: Building Trust

The 3Rs define how we build trust, learn from stakeholder voices, and respond with purpose:

Relationships

We will build and sustain trust-based relationships with students, families, staff, and community partners as the foundation for collaboration and shared accountability.

Receptiveness

We will listen intentionally to stakeholder voices and data, valuing diverse perspectives to inform learning and equitable decision-making.

Responsiveness

We will act with purpose and urgency, translating insights into aligned decisions, strategic resource allocation, and effective actions.

Strategic Priorities Overview

Strong Teaching and Learning

Strengthening literacy and math instruction with coaching, professional development, and proper resources.

Student Mental Health & Wellness

Expanding access to counselors, social workers, and mental health services.

A District That Supports Schools

Simplifying processes, improving communication, and aligning resources to empower principals.

Family & Community Engagement

Creating engagement opportunities and strengthening multilingual communication.

Literacy Support: Our Foundation

Defined District-wide Literacy Plan: Defined and widely known blueprint for standardized and matriculated approach to structured literacy instruction across the grade bands

Kindergarten Support: Paraprofessionals in every kindergarten classroom to support literacy and numeracy instruction

Reading Facilitators: Direct coaching and modeling in all elementary and middle schools (3-4 schools per facilitator)

Reading Specialists: Small group instruction (5-10 students) for below grade-level readers based on Milestones and MAP results

Science of Reading Training: Continuous access to structured literacy training for teachers and leaders

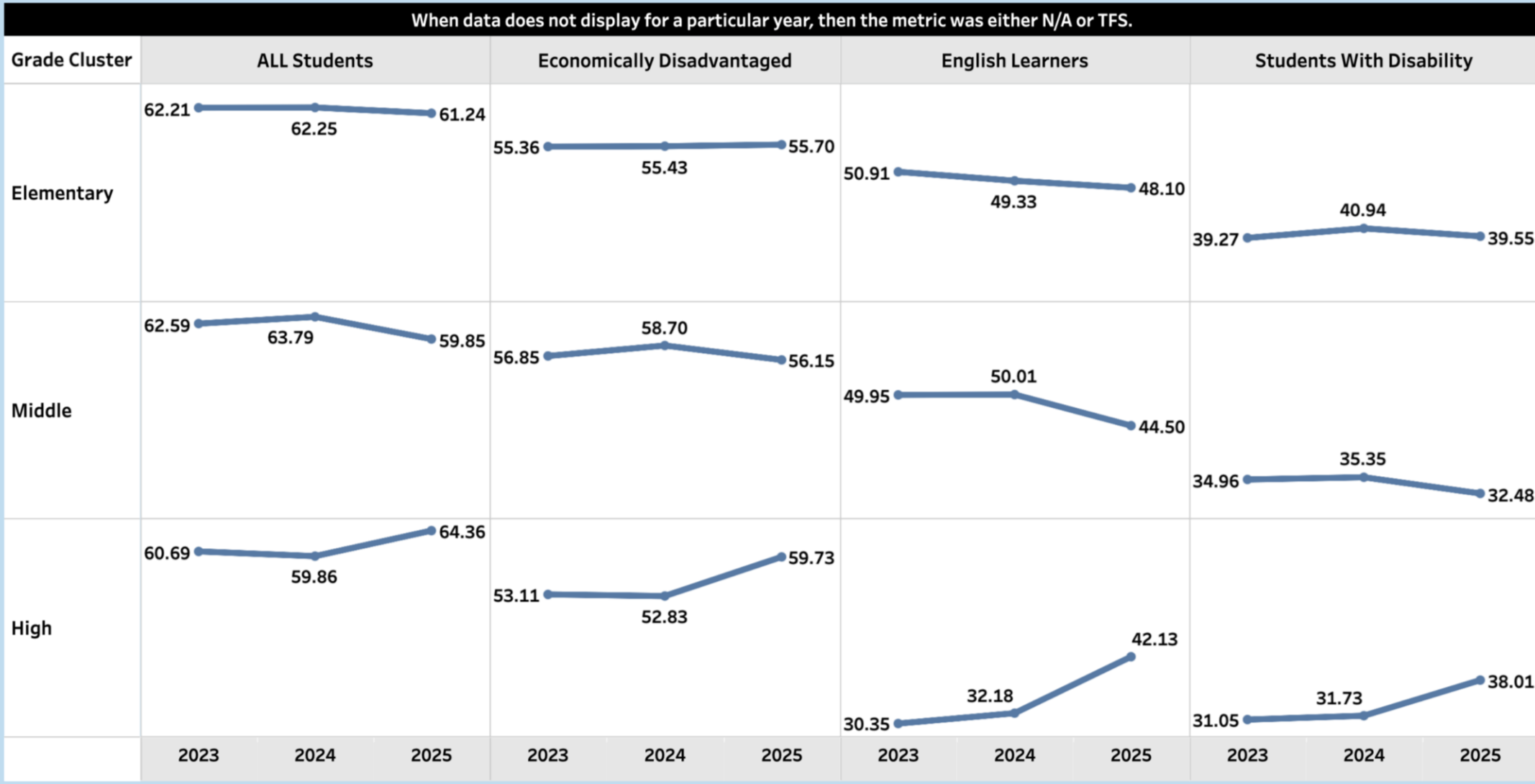
External Partnerships: Collaboration with entities providing grants, advisory support, and advocacy

Common Curriculum: Development of consistent materials for phonics, literacy, and ELA across grade bands

Literacy Readiness Indicator

At or Above Grade Level Reading All Students and Special Populations

School Name



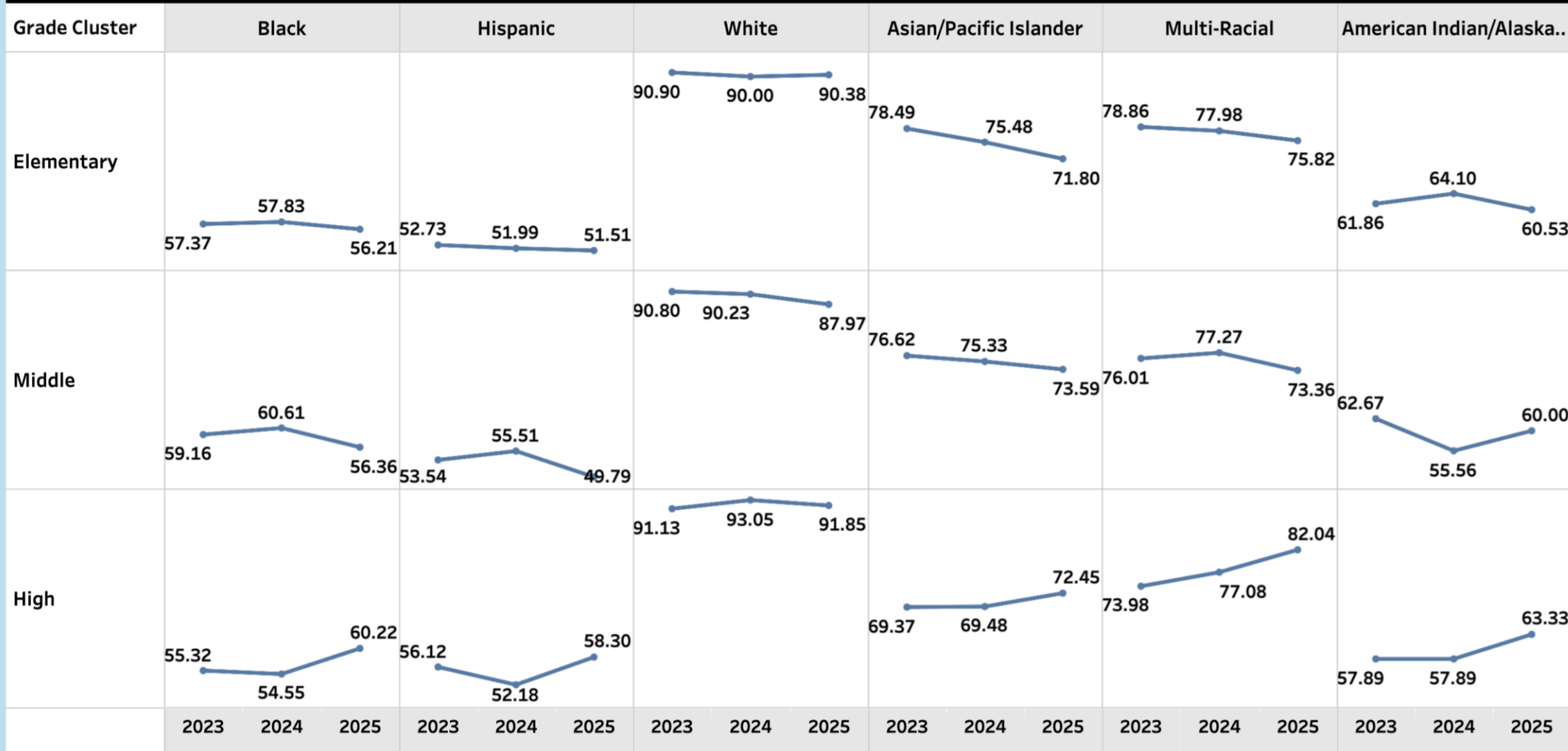
[Data Dashboard](#)

Literacy Readiness Indicator

At or Above Grade Level Reading Race and Ethnicity

School Name

When data does not display for a particular year, then the metric was either N/A or TFS.



[Data Dashboard](#)

Academic Excellence & Opportunities

Expanding Access

- All 17 career pathways geographically accessible across DeKalb County
- High school credit-bearing courses in all middle schools (e.g., Algebra, Physical Science, Foreign Language)
- Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment in underserved clusters
- 3DE programming with Junior Achievement
- Early learning access in each geographic section of DeKalb County

Supporting All Learners

- Full implementation of English Learners Master Plan
- Expanded gifted education screening and services
- Specialized classroom settings for students on the Autism spectrum
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for academic and behavioral interventions
- Timely, accurate, inclusive, and informed academic scheduling
- Academic programming options for high school students in need of alternatively timed schooling
- Adopting, training, implementing, supporting, and monitoring clear Tier I instruction across all grade bands and content areas

Personnel: Investing in People

Student-Based Budgeting Model

Allocating resources based on student needs, promoting equity by directing dollars where needs are greatest

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

- **Voluntary Incentive Transfer Program:** Fiscal incentives for experienced teachers to serve hard-to-staff schools
- **Teacher Hiring Incentive Program:** Significant longitudinal incentives for external high-performing teachers
- **Protected Planning Time:** Common practices ensuring ample time for grading, planning, and parent correspondence

Leadership Development

Cohort-based programming to identify and support high-potential employees across all divisions

Personnel: Investing in People

DeKalb Principal Pathway (DPP) is designed for experienced assistant principals and district leaders who aspire to serve as principals within DeKalb County School District.

Eligibility: Minimum of four years as an assistant principal; Tier II certification or higher

Components: Resume, leadership credentials, written instructional leadership reflection, current principal references and 90-second video detailing their leadership philosophy.

Scoring: Rubric-based, multi-review process (double blind scoring) conducted by district leadership

Selection Factors: Instructional leadership, equity-centered decision-making, collaboration, communication, systems thinking

Outcome: **Six** selected candidates notified by Leadership Development in July 2025

Early Impact (2025-2026 Cohort 2):

The 2025-2026 cohort currently has **six** aspiring principals in the program. **One** was recently selected to serve as an **elementary school principal**.

Early Impact (2024-2025 Cohort 1):

The 2024-2025 cohort had **15** participants selected for the inaugural program. **Three** have been hired as **high school principals**, and the others are actively interviewing and applying.

Personnel: Investing in People

DeKalb Leadership Institute (DLI) develops aspiring assistant principals who are committed to equity, excellence, and continuous improvement.

Applications Received: 280 educators districtwide

Eligibility: 4+ years teaching; Tier 1 or 2 certificate (or enrolled)

Components: Resume, leadership credentials, written reflection, and 90-second video

Scoring: Two-round, rubric-based, First Round blind review by 15 district level evaluators

Selection Factors: Instructional leadership, equity, collaboration, communication, and AP readiness

Outcome: 42 were accepted candidates notified July 7, 2025

Early Impact

Two DLI candidates have been promoted to assistant principal roles. These promotions reflect the strength of the DLI pipeline and its intentional focus on developing equity-driven, instructionally strong leaders prepared to step confidently into school leadership roles.

Elementary School (1)

High School (1)

Operational Excellence: Operations & Technology

Facilities and Sustainability

- Timely resolution of work orders with real-time tracking
- Integration of eco-friendly fleet (electric & hybrid vehicles)
- Solar and energy-reducing systems for district buildings
- New Division of Capital Improvements

Technology and Data

- Enhancing instructional delivery, data management, and administrative workflows with advanced technology
- IT infrastructure upgrades for reliability and security
- Public-facing data dashboards (e.g., academics, enrollment, attendance, discipline, fiscal efficiency)
- Real-time data integration with student information systems

Operational Excellence: Human Resources & Finance

Optimizing Human Resources' Processes

- Streamline recruitment, onboarding, and performance management for improved human resource efficiency
- Ensure infrastructure exists to respond to inquiries from applicants, new hires, and employees within 48 hours

Financial Integrity and Oversight

- Focus on rigorous budget oversight, transparent reporting, and strategic resource allocation to support goals
- Effectively and accurately adopt the time and attendance system

Public Safety: Protecting Our Students

Community-Based Policing Principles

Our Department of Public Safety partners with stakeholders to proactively solve safety issues, not simply react to potential crime.

Staffing and Training

- At least 95% fill rates for safety associates, campus supervisors, and school resource officers
- Elementary safety associates at all elementary schools
- Campus supervisors and SROs at all middle and high schools

Prevention and Detection

- Building trust for proactive reporting of potentially dangerous circumstances
- Implementation of weapons detection systems (hardware, software, training, personnel)
- Creating the safest learning environments possible

Wrap-Around Services & Student Wellness

Health & Mental Health

- Well-resourced school nursing personnel in every school
- Expansion of school-based health centers and SAFE centers across all grade bands
- Restorative practices and de-escalation training for staff

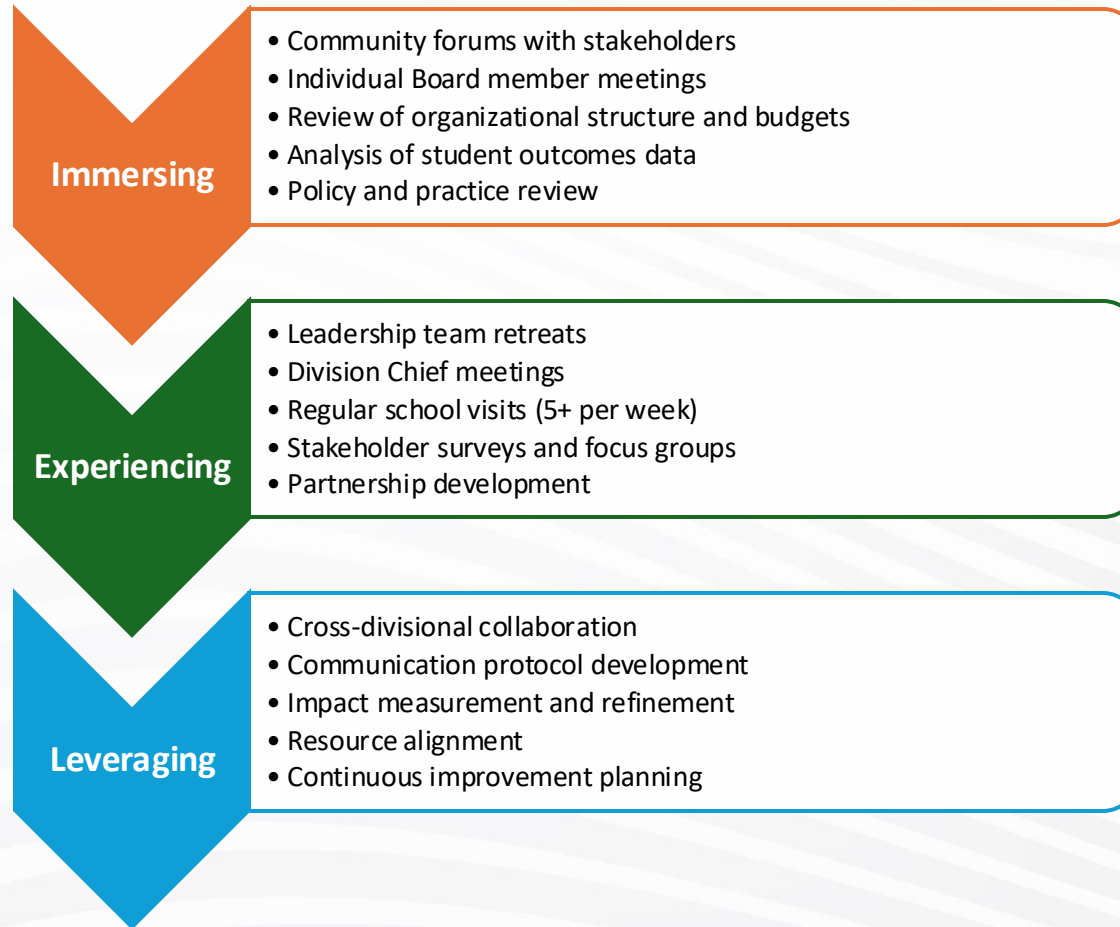
Counseling & Guidance

- Adequate access to school counselors for college and career readiness
- Expanded partnerships for scholarships, grants, and financial support
- Mentoring program options for students and/or families who need or desire formal mentors

Post-Graduation Tracking

- Systems to collect and report on former students' qualitative and quantitative outcomes after graduating from DCSD

Transition Plan: Cycle of Inquiry & Action



Moving Forward Together

"DeKalb's true identity is rooted in its people. Our passion, our perseverance, and our belief in our children define us. And together, we will move this district forward in a way that honors our children and strengthens our community."

- Dr. Norman C. Sauce III