



MEETING MINUTES

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

Attendance

Voting Members

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair
Mr. Awet Eyasu, Vice Chair
Mr. Andrew Ziffer, Board Member
Ms. Whitney McGinniss, Board Member
Mrs. Deirdre Pierce, Board Member
Tiffany Hogan Ph.D., Board Member
Mr. Diijon DaCosta, Sr., Board Member

Non-Voting Members

Dr. Norman Sauce, Interim Superintendent
Carolyn Lloyd, Executive Director BOE

A. CALL TO ORDER

The DeKalb County Board of Education held its 2-Day Board Retreat and Executive Session, April 28–April 29, 2026, at the Atlanta Evergreen Lakeside Resort located at 4021 Lakeview Drive, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083.

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, convened the 1st day of the April 28–April 29, 2026, 2-day board retreat and executive session at 9:02 a.m.

1. Roster

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, noted the following were in attendance: Andrew B. Ziffer, Ms. Whitney McGinniss, Tiffany Hogan, Ph.D., and Interim Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Norman C. Sauce III. Immediate Past Chair, Mrs. Deirdre P. Pierce participated virtually and then joined the retreat in person at 9:10 am.

B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, asked if there were any objections to adopting the agenda for

the April 28–Apr 29, 2026, 2- day board retreat and executive session.

Motion made by: Tiffany Hogan Ph.D.

Motion seconded by: Ms. Whitney McGinniss

Voting results:

Yes: Ms. Allyson Gevertz

Not Present: Mr. Awet Eyasu

Yes: Mr. Andrew Ziffer

Yes: Ms. Whitney McGinniss

Yes: Mrs. Deirdre Pierce

Yes: Tiffany Hogan Ph.D.

Not Present: Mr. Dijon DaCosta, Sr.

C. WELCOME & OVERVIEW

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, provided a welcome and an overview of what to expect on the 1st day of the 2-day board retreat.

D. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ~ Day 1 ~ April 28, 2026

1. Professional Development with Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI)

Leslie Hazle Bussey, Ph.D., CEO, Executive Director, Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI), facilitated the professional development of the DeKalb board members.

E. RECESS DAY 1 ~ BOARD RETREAT

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, requested that the DeKalb County Board of Education recess day one of the April 28-April 29, 2026, 2-day board retreat. The first day of the board retreat recessed at 3:17 p.m.

Motion made by: Mrs. Deirdre Pierce

Motion seconded by: Ms. Whitney McGinniss

Voting results:

Yes: Ms. Allyson Gevertz

Not Present: Mr. Awet Eyasu

Yes: Mr. Andrew Ziffer

Yes: Ms. Whitney McGinniss

Yes: Mrs. Deirdre Pierce

Yes: Tiffany Hogan Ph.D.

Not Present: Mr. Dijon DaCosta, Sr.

F. RECONVENE BOARD RETREAT ~ Day 2 ~ April 29, 2026

At 9:00 am, Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, requested a motion to reconvene day 2 of the April 28-April 29, 2026, 2-day board retreat.

Motion made by: Mrs. Deirdre Pierce

Motion seconded by: Mr. Dijon DaCosta, Sr.

Voting results: Unanimously Approved

1. Roster

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, noted the following were in attendance: Vice Chair, Mr. Awet Eyasu, Mr. Andrew B. Ziffer, Ms. Whitney McGinniss, Immediate Past Chair, Mrs. Deirdre P. Pierce, Tiffany Hogan, Ph.D., Mr. Dijon DaCosta, Sr., and Interim Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Norman C. Sauce III.

Also in attendance was Ms. Carolyn Lloyd, Executive Director of Board Operations.

School Board Attorney, Mr. Winston A. Denmark joined the second day of the retreat at 1:35 p.m.

G. TOPICS OF DISCUSSION ~ Day 2 ~ April 29, 2026

1. DeKalb Education Foundation Update ~ Updated 4.28.2026

Dr. Cherisse M. Campbell, Chief of Community Engagement & Innovative Partnerships, Division of Community Engagement & Innovative Partnerships, Ms. Kymberlee Estis, Foundation Executive, Division of Community Engagement & Innovative Partnerships, and Mr. Munir Meghjani, Board Chair of DeKalb Schools Education Foundation, presented an update on the DeKalb Education Foundation.

2. Disconnect to Reconnect Initiative Update ~ Updated 4.28.2026

Kishia K. Towns, Ph.D., Chief of Wrap Around Services, Division of Wrap Around Services, presented an update on the disconnect to reconnect initiative.

3. DeKalb County School District Literacy Plan Development Update ~ Updated 4.28.2026

Dr. Kia Billingsley, Chief Academic Officer, Division of Teaching & Learning, presented an update on the DeKalb County School District literacy plan development.

4. Process Update to Increase Carnegie Courses in Middle Schools and Advanced Placement Courses in High Schools ~ Updated 4.28.2026

Dr. Kia Billingsley, Chief Academic Officer, Division of Teaching & Learning, and Champion Michelle Dillard, Chief of Schools, Division of Schools & Leadership presented the update on the process to increase Carnegie courses in middle schools and advanced placement courses in high schools.

5. Acknowledgements

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, led the discussion on acknowledgments.

6. Inspirations Survey

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, led the discussion on the inspirations survey.

7. Budget Changes

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, led the discussion on budget changes.

8. SY27 Budget Development Update ~ Updated 4.28.2026

Mr. Byron Schueneman, Chief Financial Officer, Division of Finance, presented an update of the SY27 budget development.

H. ADJOURN TO AN EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, informed the public that there would be two executive sessions. The board would return after the first executive to publicly vote on action items and then go back into the 2nd executive session. Ms. Gevertz informed the public that there would not be any action items to vote on after the 2nd executive session and that the board would officially adjourn the executive session and then adjourn the retreat.

Adjourn to 1st executive session:

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, requested that the DeKalb County Board of Education adjourn day two of the April 28-April 29, 2026, 2-day board retreat to an executive session for the purpose of discussing permitted matters regarding land, legal, litigation, personnel and student appeals.

Motion made by: Ms. Whitney McGinniss

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Deirdre Pierce

Voting results: 7/0 - Unanimously Approved

Adjourn to 2nd executive session:

At 2:56 pm, Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, requested that the DeKalb County Board of Education adjourn the April 28-April 29, 2026, 2-day board retreat to the 2nd executive session for the purpose of discussing permitted matters regarding land, legal, litigation, personnel and student appeals.

Motion made by: Ms. Whitney McGinniss

Motion seconded by: Mr. Awet Eyasu

Voting results: Unanimously Approved

1. ADJOURN THE EXECUTIVE SESSION

1st time to adjourn the executive session:

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, requested a motion to adjourn the April 29, 2026, executive session.

Motion made by: Ms. Whitney McGinniss

Motion seconded by: Mr. Awet Eyasu

Voting results: 7/0 - Unanimously Approved

Action items were voted on. Voting results are documented under each action item.

2nd time to adjourn the executive session:

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, requested a motion to adjourn the second April 29, 2026, executive session.

Motion made by: Mrs. Deirdre Pierce

Motion seconded by: Mr. Andrew Ziffer

| **Voting results:** Unanimously Approved

I. ACTION ITEM(S)

1. APPROVAL OF AN ITEM(S) FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

a. PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, requested a motion from the DeKalb County Board of Education to approve the hiring recommendation of Ms. Vitella Dodson to the position of Executive Administrator of High Schools, in the Division of Schools & Leadership, as discussed in the executive session.

Motion made by: Mr. Dijon DaCosta, Sr.

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Deirdre Pierce

| **Voting results:** Unanimously Approved

Unanimously Approved

b. PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair requested that the DeKalb County Board of Education approve the hiring recommendation of Dr. Keith Jones to the position of Executive Administrator of Middle Schools, in the Division of Schools & Leadership, as discussed in the executive session.

Motion made by: Mr. Dijon DaCosta, Sr.

Motion seconded by: Tiffany Hogan Ph.D.

| **Voting results:**

Yes: Ms. Allyson Gevertz

Yes: Mr. Awet Eyasu

Yes: Mr. Andrew Ziffer
Abstain: Ms. Whitney McGinniss
Yes: Mrs. Deirdre Pierce
Yes: Tiffany Hogan Ph.D.
Yes: Mr. Dijon DaCosta, Sr.

6/0/1

c. PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, requested that the DeKalb County Board of Education approve the hiring recommendation of Dr. Char-Shenda D. Dudley to the position of Executive Administrator of Specialty Schools, in the Division of Schools & Leadership, as discussed in the executive session.

Motion made by: Mrs. Deirdre Pierce

Motion seconded by: Mr. Awet Eyasu

Voting results:

Yes: Ms. Allyson Gevertz
Yes: Mr. Awet Eyasu
Yes: Mr. Andrew Ziffer
Abstain: Ms. Whitney McGinniss
Yes: Mrs. Deirdre Pierce
Yes: Tiffany Hogan Ph.D.
Yes: Mr. Dijon DaCosta, Sr.

6/0/1

d. PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, requested that the DeKalb County Board of Education approve the hiring recommendation of Mrs. Shelly Bishop to the position of Director of Wrap Around Services, in the Division of Wrap Around Services, as discussed in the executive session.

In accordance with Board of Education Policy GAGD, Section G: Mandatory Disclosure by the Superintendent. In the Superintendent's monthly report to the Board, the Superintendent shall disclose the names of relatives of the current members of the Board of Education, of the current Superintendent, and of other current employees at the Director level or above, provided such relatives are to be recommended for employment in the District by the Superintendent or are being considered by the Superintendent for a promotion or a salary increase other than a State of Georgia raise, step increase, or across-the-board raise.

Relative Disclosure

Mrs. Shelly Bishop is a candidate who has been recommended for a Director of Wrap

Around Services position.

Mrs. Bishop is the stepparent of the Principal at McNair Discovery Learning Academy in the Division of Schools & Leadership.

Motion made by: Mrs. Deirdre Pierce

Motion seconded by: Ms. Whitney McGinniss

| **Voting results:** Unanimously Approved

Unanimously Approved

J. ADJOURN

Ms. Allyson Gevertz, Board Chair, requested that the DeKalb County Board of Education adjourn the April 28–April 29, 2026, 2-day board retreat and executive session. With no objections, the retreat adjourned at 4:30 pm.

| **Voting results:** Unanimously Approved

PENDING APPROVAL