President's Message

Who Will be the Leaders of Tomorrow?

Featured Spark Article

Innovative Education Initiative Redefines Teamwork in Carroll County

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2018 GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly

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Greetings to All of You:

The Fall of 1976 found a young student teacher at Clarke Central High School. He was learning his trade of teaching and coaching football under a legendary football coach. One day the student teacher was approached with an opportunity in a very short conversation. It went something like this:

**Coach:** I have an opportunity for you. Good news and bad news.
**Teacher:** Sure thing. Uh, what is the good news? Let me hear that first.
**Coach:** I want you to come to Touchdown Club tonight. You’ll get a free steak!
**Teacher:** Sure. Well, what is the bad news?
**Coach:** You are the GUEST SPEAKER.

The coach was the legendary Billy Henderson. The student coach/teacher was me. Coach Henderson always had a way of getting you to go from comfortable to uncomfortable. Today, it is called growth. Public speaking, at this time of my life, was not my comfort zone. He pushed me to get comfortable and today I do not fear public speaking. Coach Billy Henderson died on Valentine’s Day this year at the age of 89. His Celebration service was attended by at least 1,000 people, community members and former players. Many, I am sure, have reflected on this great leader’s contributions to the community and to young people.

I came to spend three seasons coaching with him and, on recent reflection, remembered several things that stayed with me all these years. Many were ingrained into me as daily professional habits. I am sure others may have their own particular remembrances. Some of them are:

- Always be 15 minutes early.
- Keep things simple.
- Hard work never hurts.
- Collect your thoughts and tasks on a yellow legal pad. It will keep you focused.
- Life is not fair…. You will get knocked down but you have to get up.
- People always remember how they are treated and loved.
- Focus should be on the team needs and culture.
- Always expect the best.

In the last few years, I was able to reconnect with Coach Henderson and former players over an occasional lunch. My good fortune one day was being able to privately express my gratitude for the life lessons learned in my time there with him. I was also able to say to him these same concepts were used in my professional life on a daily basis. His impact went well beyond me and the many players he coached. It was a bonding, uplifting, and inspiring experience for the community at large. There was no one like Billy Henderson as a leader. He really knew how to develop teams and a culture for success.

There are many examples of great community leaders from yesterday and today. They are impactful, visionary, supportive, inspiring, motivating, and know how to move other people to success and accomplishment. They enrich their local communities.

Ronald Reagan once said, “The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets people to do the greatest things.”

Who will be the leaders of tomorrow? Will they have dreams, goals, and plans? Will they be willing to work hard and take responsibility for moving those plans forward? Will they inspire, motivate, and love others? Will they support others and act with integrity every day? I wonder…. And I hope.
To most, that sign by the road says Parrish is a school builder.

However, what many don’t see, is the passion our team gives back to each of our communities through volunteering, mentoring, educating. Parrish is more than a builder of schools. We build futures.
As I sit in front of my computer to write this message, I am weighed down by separate occurrences that have deeply impacted me.

First, it was less than five days ago that a young man entered a high school in south Florida and took the lives of 17 people. Students left their homes that morning thinking about class assignments, team practices, seeing their valentines, college applications, and all things youthful. And likewise, educators left their homes that morning focused on lesson plans, teacher meetings, bus duty, keeping “young sweethearts” respectful, and juggling the responsibilities of professional and private lives. Neither thought the day was different from any other day; nor did they think that day would be a day of terror, so traumatic that their lives would be forever changed, but sadly, it was.

As a parent, I immediately thought of the parents and the complete horror they must have experienced. As the wife of an educator, I thought of the spouses who held on to their phones waiting for a text to say I’m okay. I listened to the superintendent, trying to wrap his head around the unbelievable, and I thought, what do you say? How do you speak to such an act? How do you get through this? What does keeping it together look like? The sadness that settled into my core on that day, and remains there as I write this article, is profound. And it is exacerbated by the ongoing debate that has marginalized the horror, terror and ongoing trauma of the students and school personnel directly and indirectly impacted.

That other impactful event I referenced was the sudden passing of a giant in Georgia’s public education landscape, Dr. Allene Magill. The news of Allene’s sudden passing was such a great shock for many rea-
sons, but especially so because we had spent time together a mere two days before, railing over what we felt was a slight to, and disrespectful of the challenges rural school districts face. She offered to buy me a roll of duct tape that we would use to tape not only my mouth, but hers too! She said that would be the only way to get us to be quiet and behave. But you see, that was why I loved Allene; she was not afraid to speak up and out on behalf of educators and students, especially those who could not do it for themselves. Her courage to say what others were afraid to say but needed to say, to demand and expect excellence, to walk with integrity, and to staunchly support public education at a time when doing so could be costly on a personal and professional level will be hard to replace. It quite honestly felt, and continues to feel, as though some of the air left the universe.

My faith is such that I try to learn from all impactful experiences, those I participate in, and those I observe; I always believe there is a message in everything that happens. For me personally, I believe the message from both events is one and the same, spend everyday living in my God-given purpose, doing my very best to be my very best. Don’t take anything or anyone for granted, and make it (whatever IT is) count.

What does this have to do with school board service? Why is this relevant to the work you, as school board members, do? Outside of the obvious role you play in providing a safe school environment, you are also responsible for providing leadership on your local governance teams that models civic engagement with a PURPOSE; civic engagement that is both intentional and urgent, driven by a desire to make the days count for every student and educator within your systems. We at GSBA are here to support you in that role; and we wake up everyday thinking about how best to do that. We feel that urgency you feel, and when events such as the ones mentioned earlier in this article occur, the urgency intensifies for us. So, while accepting that the numb, powerless, angry and depressed state is necessary for a brief moment, we are always mindful that our purpose is to assist you in your call to care for your students, teachers, and administrators.

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The Role of the Board of Education in Keeping Students Safe

By Phil Hartley, GSBA General Counsel, Harben, Hartley & Hawkins, LLC

Since the tragic events of February 14th in Parkland, Florida, few school districts in the state of Georgia have been spared the tension and fear of having to address real or perceived threats to the safety of the school environment. Since Columbine put the issue so starkly on the radar some 19 years ago, school districts have developed and implemented school safety plans, increased security practices, and held lockdown and other drills. But something about the recent incident, the number of lives lost, the number of opportunities missed, the perpetrator being a former student, and the activism of students both in Parkland and throughout the country since, has led to heightened sensitivity and more intense discussion of options to try and make sure it does not happen again.

As the elected representatives of the community and the governing body of the school district, boards of education are rightly expected to place at the top of any priority list issues of student safety. Every school district and every board of education has been, and will be, called upon to re-examine existing practices in light of recent events. Several of the issues that have attracted the most media attention deserve special notice.

1. **Arming Employees** – In 2014, the Georgia General Assembly specifically amended the statute that makes it a crime to possess weapons on a school campus. In this bill an exception was created to the criminal statute if a local board of education by policy authorized certain employees to carry weapons and met...
specific criteria set forth in the statute. When this bill was passed, the members of the policy service of GSBA received a Policy Update with a sample policy and a discussion of these issues. Members of the Risk Management Services of GSBA will shortly be receiving a newsletter specifically addressing liability and safety concerns in implementing such a policy. Very few school districts in the state have considered such a policy since the law was enacted, but recent events have caused school boards to give this option more serious consideration. This article is not the place to discuss in any depth the pros and cons of this option, but it is important that any board of education considering such a policy consult with its legal counsel, its law enforcement community, its parent representatives, its teacher and staff members, and its liability insurance company.

2. Review Memorandum of Understanding and Relationship with SROs – Whether the school district has its own POST (Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council) and thus employs School Resource Officers directly or contracts with local law enforcement agencies, a review of the memorandum of understanding or job descriptions, how SROs are utilized within a school safety plan, and what role SROs play within various potential scenarios is vital. Finger pointing after the fact rarely serves any purpose. Using the tragic recent events as a basis to better define the relationship and plan for the future is vital. This is true not only about the relationship with SROs specifically located at school sites, but also the relationship with local law enforcement agencies.

3. Safety Plans – While every school in the state of Georgia has an existing school safety plan, it is sometimes one of those documents that sits on a shelf until an emergency occurs. Now is the time to review existing plans and insure that they remain up to date given new facilities that may have been added, new technology within the school setting (including the fact that students now have their technology with them typically), and scenarios that have actually happened giving rise to copycat situations that potentially were not anticipated at the time the plan was drafted. The importance of the collaborative planning of such a document cannot be emphasized enough. Law enforcement, the emergency medical community, press, parents, staff, transportation, county and city officials, and many, many others are inevitably involved when an emergency occurs and thus must be involved in the planning as well. Two months ago, some of those officials would not have given a meeting to discuss a school safety plan high priority; today no one will refuse to be involved.

4. Planning is useless without training – Senate Bill 457 may have passed the General Assembly and even been signed by the Governor by the time this article is read. It would add to the requirement of a school safety plan that the school “conduct drills” regarding implementing the plan. Most schools already have a process whereby students, staff, and the rest of the community are trained to implement a safety plan. That training will need to be reviewed both to make it more effective and to comply with the law if it is passed.

5. Communication – An obvious part of planning and training is communication. Not only the communication that takes place at the time of the emergency, but also communication taking place now when apprehension about school safety is intensified.

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When we talk about Risk Management, what do you think about? Typically, in a school or school district setting, we often think about accidents, property damage, natural disasters and legal liabilities. One definition of Risk Management is the process of identifying, assessing and controlling threats to an organization’s capital and earnings. These threats, or risks, could stem from a wide variety of sources, including financial uncertainty, legal liabilities, strategic management errors, accidents and natural disasters. Georgia School Boards Association – Risk Management Services (GSBA-RMS) is an intergovernmental risk management agency exclusively for public school systems, offering group self-insurance plans for workers’ compensation (GSBA-WCF), property and liability risks (GSBA-RMF). GSBA-RMS assists school districts and Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) with preventing or deterring threats or risks to our students, employees and visitors through the following methods:

- **SafeSchools**: An online safety training website for all types of employees in your system;
- **Monthly Webinars**: A series of monthly webinars with topics largely chosen from membership that range from EEOC issues to large-loss prevention to sovereign immunity to use of training videos;
- **Exchange Newsletter**: Published four times a year to provide school personnel with up-to-date information on a wide variety of topics;
- **Annual Member Meeting**: The Fund pays for each Member District to have one representative attend the annual meeting to allow the Member the ability to network on a range of safety and operational issues facing school districts in Georgia;
- **School Bus Safety Company**: An online training system free to Members in the Risk Management Fund who purchase automobile liability coverage. The training is designed to help keep your bus drivers and student passengers safe.
- **Other resources include**: Safety Scenarios, Risk E-lerts and Safety Checklists.

Due to the increased frequency of acts of school violence, GSBA-RMF recently added **Crisis Response** coverage to assist schools when dealing with a crisis event. This program provides timely communication for achieving good, long-term results for the community. Currently, this coverage covers six types of events: bombing, taking of hostages, shooting or killing, terrorism, contamination of food, drink or pharmaceuticals and explosion. In case of these types of events, the Member will have access to experts as a resource to communicate with the public about investigations, causes, damage or harm estimates allowing your focus to remain on students, faculty, staff, families and functions related to the district or schools involved.

As risks change in the educational world, our goal is to be the resource of choice for Georgia public schools for managing risk; by **Delivering A+ Service through Superior Member Relationships**! To learn more about GSBA-RMS, go to GSBA website at GSBA.com and look under Risk Management Services.
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“All organizations have a culture and a climate. A proactive approach to making them both as positive as possible will provide Georgia’s educational system the greatest opportunity to achieve a high level of organizational efficacy.”

— The Georgia Vision Project
Innovative Education Initiative Redefines Teamwork in Carroll County

By Scotty Brewington, Contributing Writer, MarketJet, LLC

As a graduate of Central High School and the University of West Georgia, both in Carroll County, Amanda Wright remembers the rivalry that used to exist between the city and county high schools. But today, as the program coordinator for the university’s office of community engagement, she sees something different: teamwork.

In a time when non-profits, schools and community leaders are often working independently in silos, Carrollton City and Carroll County Schools are coming together with a new, innovative approach focused on the single goal of helping students in their districts succeed.

The Carrollton-Carroll County Education Collaborative (CCEC) is an example of how two school districts – Carrollton City and Carroll County – have partnered with leadership from the University of West Georgia (UWG), West Georgia Technical College (WGTC), Oak Mountain Academy, local school boards, the chamber of commerce, non-profits, the business community and community leaders to prepare students for life beyond the classroom. And they’re doing it together.

The Carrollton-Carroll County Education Collaborative

The CCEC began as part of a response to Georgia Governor Nathan Deal’s High Demand Career Initiative (HDCI), designed to bring Georgia’s universities and technical colleges together with the private sector to better prepare students to enter the workforce.

Born out of the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce’s Workforce Education Blue Ribbon Task Force, the CCEC is based on an integrated community response model that was created in 2014 when the presidents of UWG and WGTC, the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, local school boards and non-profit community leaders came together to create a plan to help students in West Georgia succeed in K-12 and beyond.

In July 2016, the first CCEC summit was held, taking the model to the operational level.

“What we found was there were a lot of different agencies and non-profit groups working on the same things, but they had no relationship with each other,” said Dr. John Green, an educator with over 30 years of experience as a teacher, principal, district administrator and superintendent who now serves as director of the CCEC. “Our goal was to bring everyone to the table to start working together.”

The structure of the CCEC invites the participation of a broad range of stakeholders from the business community, non-profit sector, government agencies and concerned citizens to create opportunities for students from preschool all the way to graduate programs. The goal of the collaborative is simple: work together to ensure that every child in Carroll County has the resources and opportunities to prepare them to enroll in higher education, enlist in the military, or find meaningful employment within four years of high school graduation.

Initially, the goal was to increase the number of students pursuing college or career development after high school graduation while also tracking college retention rates, dual-enrollment, and what happens during the period of time between high school and college. However, the initiative soon evolved to also include a focus on the core reasons why students are not successful, taking a closer look at how early development affects a student’s ultimate success.

“We are coming together as educational leaders and as a community to figure out how to support families so that they can support their children in those critical formative years,” said Dr. Mark Albertus, superintendent of Carrollton City Schools. “Everyone is working together to overcome some of these challenges and to give our kids the best possible chance of getting a great education, which will make this region that much stronger in years to come.”

This holistic approach to education – looking at a student’s education from birth to career – isn’t a new concept. The nation’s first P-16 council was created in Georgia by then-governor Zell Miller in 1996, designed to foster collaboration across early learning, K-12 and post-secondary institutions. The CCEC takes the state’s efforts a step further, following a P-20 model that focuses on how students in the county’s two school districts progress through the learning continuum.

The CCEC focuses on four developmental themes that follow students from birth to career and serve as catalysts for creating and sustaining community-based networks: Early Learning (birth to kindergarten), Foundations (K-8), Explorations (high school) and Independence (after graduation). Benchmarks of student success include kindergarten readiness, third grade reading level, seventh grade math performance (algebra readiness), high school graduation and whether students are enrolled, enlisted or employed within four years after high school.

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An example of the community response strategy in action is the annual Eighth Grade Career Expo, which is held on the campuses of UWG and WGTC to inspire middle school students as well as introduce them to a college campus. Over 95 percent of eighth graders from all over Carroll County – from both the public and independent school systems – participate each year.

At the Early Learning level, The Carroll County First Foundation provides developmentally appropriate books for children under the age of five and early intervention speech therapy is provided through a partnership with UWG and WGTC.

At the Foundations level, the Marine Corps League provides dictionaries to third grade students across all elementary schools and STEM acceleration opportunities are offered through Georgia Youth Science and Technology Consortium summer camps. A formal tutoring program is also being developed to connect elementary and middle school students with college students majoring in education at UWG and WGTC.

“This initiative is designed to get the best thinking from everyone. Relationships are formed and problems are solved because people are able to pick up the phone and talk to each other,” said Green. “Our school districts are the flagship model for developing the concept of what it looks like when everyone is working together. We have great momentum – and we’re just scratching the surface of what we can do.”

**Acceleration, Tutoring and Mentoring**

An important part of the CCEC model is equipping students with the skills they need to succeed beyond high school by helping them identify their interests and strengths and create a plan for what they might like to do after graduation. This includes building relationships with community leaders, non-profits and schools to share ideas and create a community network and support system.

“The CCEC aligns with those students who have challenges and are potential dropouts to students who are looking for more dual-enrollment opportunities and everyone in between,” said Green. “We are helping students who show early signs of independence as well as those who are having trouble gaining independence.”

The CCEC model fosters student success by strategically focusing on acceleration, tutoring and mentoring structures to support the personal development of each child. Acceleration is provided throughout the process and includes access to advanced content and challenging experiences such as summer camps, dual-enrollment courses, advanced placement classes and performing arts.

Strategic partnerships are also established within the community through groups like Communities in Schools (CIS), which has a site coordinator in all high schools and one middle school within the Carrollton-Carroll County region. These organizations help with tutoring as
well as addressing circumstances beyond a student’s personal control. “In our model, we have a mentoring piece, for example, that connects students with community-based non-profits to help them find the mentors and resources they need,” Wright said. “This could be anything from setting a student up with a tutor to helping them find affordable eye glasses – anything they need to succeed. When we work together, rather than duplicating what each other is doing, we can have a much larger impact on these students.”

What is Unique about Carroll County?

Carroll County has 23 county school campuses (12 elementary schools, six middle schools and five high schools), two college and career academies, and four Carrollton City Schools (an elementary, middle, junior high and high school). Additionally, it is home to the University of West Georgia and West Georgia Technical College, which have both been hyper-focused on community outreach and played an integral role in getting the CCEC initiative off the ground.

The county’s tight-knit community has also played a key role.

“The people and non-profits in our community want to make a difference and want to be a part of the change,” said Wright. “We didn’t have to sell the idea very hard. Everyone is already motivated to see our students succeed and enter the workforce and they also want to see our community grow.”

In addition to the community support, the initiative also needed buy-in from the local school systems and school boards themselves.

“We all want what is best for the kids in West Georgia. Everyone sees this collaboration as a way to ensure the success of all kids in our region, which is a good thing,” said Dr. Albertus. “We have had a lot of support from the school boards, and we have been able to remove obstacles quickly from our principals and teachers so that they can get us where we need to be.”

Scott Cowart, superintendent of Carroll County Schools, agrees that support from all involved parties is critical to success.

“We are very fortunate in Carroll County to have city and county school boards that recognize this opportunity and are willing to work very collaboratively to empower the leaders of the school systems to do everything they can to help every child in Carroll County,” said Cowart. “Together, we can do so much more than any single entity can do on their own.”

Quarterly CCEC meetings or “mini summits” are held and center on individual developmental themes of the model. School board members, policy makers and community leaders are all invited to attend to collaborate and brainstorm ideas and highlight successes.

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An annual regional summit highlights the collaborative efforts from the past year and provides an opportunity for stakeholders across the community to network and share ideas. An upcoming summit July 19-20, hosted by Carrollton City Schools, will feature a teacher institute focused on financial literacy with Kim Holder, a well-known lecturer with the University of West Georgia’s department of economics and Richards College of Business.

“Everyone is coming together to talk about developmental themes instead of just a K-12 curriculum, which is what makes this initiative unique,” said Green. “When you take this approach, then someone outside of the educational sector can also contribute. Now, you have volunteers coming in asking how they can help the schools with what they are already doing rather than relying on the schools to do it all alone.”

This countywide leadership and commitment to collaboration has created an opportunity for leaders in the schools and in the community to come together to work towards a solution that benefits everyone.

“It is the leadership and commitment from the business, education, public and private sectors that have continued to drive this effort forward. Everyone has made the commitment to do whatever it takes,” said Cowart. “We have made a commitment to a community solution and that is what sets us apart in Carroll County.”

The Results

The CCEC initiative is still in the early stages – formally launching in 2015 and becoming operational in 2017 – but school officials have already seen many positive results. Harvard University’s Pathways to Prosperity project has called the initiative one of the most innovative efforts in the country.

Both Carroll County and Carrollton City schools have seen an increase in high school graduation rates in 2017. Since the CCEC’s launch, the number of students participating in dual-enrollment courses held at local high schools offered by WGTC or on-campus courses at UWG has also significantly increased. In 2014, there were 37 students in the dual-enrollment program with the University of West Georgia. Today, there are over 700. The number of students in the dual-enrollment program at West Georgia Technical College has also increased.

By opening the lines of communication and removing scheduling and financial barriers, for example, it is now easier for high school students to participate in dual-enrollment programs.

“The CCEC began as a way for us to all communicate better, and we have made it easier for students to take advantage of dual-enrollment programs by looking at the high school and college schedules and figuring out how to make it work logistically,” said Dr. Albertus. “Just getting everyone on the same page and talking to one another has done an amazing amount to get our kids ahead.”

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Energy to Power Education

Georgia Power understands a strong educational foundation is the first step in creating a brighter future for the next generation and a prosperous economy for our state. That’s why we support organizations such as the Georgia School Boards Association and programs around the state that improve teacher quality, cultivate a talent pipeline for STEM fields and ensure a trained and motivated workforce for the future. Working together we can continue to build a state we are all proud to call home.
Georgia School Boards Association is pleased to announce the creation of the Governance Team of the Year Award. This prestigious award honors the top board and superintendent team who have achieved all around success in their school system.

This honor is deeply rooted in the eight components of the Georgia Vision Project’s research-based recommendations for Georgia’s public schools; however, a system does not have to have formally adopted the Vision for Public Education to apply.

In June of 2017 at the GSBA Summer Conference, it was announced that we would develop this high-level award to showcase best practices in Georgia’s K-12 public education. We are excited about what this award will demonstrate for the governance teams that are recognized as well as the statewide recognition it will bring to the hard work of public schools.

The application process closes Friday, June 15, 2018. The award will be presented at a special banquet the night of Thursday, December 6, 2018, at the Renaissance Waverly Hotel in Atlanta during the 2018 GSBA/ GSSA Annual Conference. During this time, we will invite the finalists to invite members of their community to attend to join them in celebrating their success.

Visit gsba.com to learn more about this new honor. Governance teams who apply will have their applications scored by a team of national education experts.

Please note, the Governance Team of the Year award is different from the board recognition program (Quality, Distinguished & Exemplary). The board recognition program still exists and will be awarded in June.
This honor is deeply rooted in the eight components of the Georgia Vision Project’s research-based recommendations for Georgia’s public schools; however, a system does not have to have formally adopted the Vision for Public Education to apply.
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On behalf of the Georgia School Boards Association, we invite you to join us in beautiful Savannah, Georgia, for the 2018 GSBA Summer Conference and Delegate Assembly! This year’s theme “Breaking Barriers: Success for All Children,” will focus on the factors that hinder a student’s progress and impedes student achievement.

Every year we look forward to bringing together local boards of education and other education leaders from all across our state to celebrate the innovations, best practices and address challenges in public education. We read your evaluations from previous conferences and workshops, and our goal for this Summer Conference is to reflect your concerns, provide support for those challenges and encourage you to be advocates for the 1.7 million public school children in Georgia. Some of the topics and discussions to look forward to this year include:

- An insider’s perspective on growing up in poverty
- Discuss the top 10 issues affecting your school district
- The power of storytelling to engage your community.
- The good, the bad, and the ugly of the recent Georgia Legislative Session
- Recognizing Exemplary, Distinguished and Quality Boards
- Much, much more

During the conference, we hope you take time to network with your colleagues and take full advantage of this time to share ideas and ongoing successes. You will find that the conference activities provided by GSBA are unmatched.

Be sure to visit the exhibitors and student presentations to not only learn all about new and improved products in the market place, but to see how the decisions you make each day affect the children in your district.

Thank you for the important work you do in your communities. Our hope is that you will return home energized with new tools to lead, inspire and engage.
Dr. Donna Beegle grew up in generational migrant-labor poverty and left school at 15 to get married and start a family. At 25, she found herself with two children, no husband, little education, and few marketable job skills. Within 10 short years, she gained the confidence to get her GED and advance through to a doctoral degree in educational leadership. All these experiences provide Dr. Beegle with an authentic voice with which to speak, write, and train across the nation to break the iron cage of poverty.

As president of Communication Across Barriers, a consulting firm dedicated to building poverty-informed communities that are armed with tools to break barriers, she works directly with children and adults currently in poverty, educators, justice professionals, health care providers, social service agencies, faith-based communities, business leaders, elected officials, and others who want to make a difference for those living in the crisis of poverty. For over 27 years, Dr. Beegle's work has spread by word of mouth to all 50 states and six countries. Dr. Beegle is also the founder of the Opportunity Community movement, which provides the foundation for a contemporary war on poverty.

Dr. Eric Thomas was selected to become the state’s first Chief Turnaround Officer. In this role he is responsible for creating and executing the strategy to support the state’s lowest-performing schools. Prior to this role, Dr. Thomas spent six years as the Chief Support Officer for the University of Virginia’s Turnaround Program. The program is widely recognized as the top turnaround program in the country. Dr. Thomas led the overarching approach on how to support districts across the country as they worked to turnaround their lowest performing schools.

Dr. Thomas’ practical turnaround experience is structured by his research, culminating in his dissertation that explored the role and practices of district leaders during turnaround. Dr. Thomas has been an instructor in the University of Cincinnati’s Educational Leadership program, a trainer at the Ohio State Fisher Business School, and has consulted with the Ohio Department of Education’s efforts to address low-performing districts. He has been a featured speaker most often with a focus on leadership development, turnaround, and strategies to support the needs of at-risk males.
Pre-Conference Workshops

- **New Board Member Orientation**
  June 6–7 | ($295) |
  (12hrs – Wed., June 6 at 10:00 a.m.)
  (9hrs – Wed., June 6 at 1:00 p.m.)
  At this workshop, school board members will be introduced to school law, school finance issues including budget, parliamentary procedure, superintendent evaluation process and much more. The workshop begins at 10:00 AM on Wednesday for those seeking more in-depth information. Lunch is included for those registered to attend the early session on Wednesday beginning at 10:00 AM. For those arriving at 1 PM, lunch is included in the registration fee for Thursday.

- **Community Engagement/Volunteer Instructional Leadership Learning Academy (VILLA)**
  June 7 ($230) | (6 hrs)
  Participants will understand the components of the GA Vision Project and VILLA; be shown examples of true collaboration between parents, board and superintendent; discuss strategic plans for districts and direction and movement for parent involvement and community engagement; discuss the Top 10 Issues in GA facing education; and a demonstration of VILLA and how to use the resources. Lunch is included in the registration fee.

- **Policy Workshop**
  June 7 ($230) | (6 hrs)
  Angela Palm, Director of Policy & Legislative Services and Attorney Phil Hartley will provide the latest information on the happenings under the Gold Dome. Lunch is included in the registration fee.

- **Rewriting the Rules for Student Success and Community Enrichment**
  June 7 | ($230) | (6 hrs)
  This workshop is being led by Dr. Joshua Starr and Dr. Gislaine Ngounou from PDK International. Learn how to leverage the power of storytelling as an effective tool for organizing and mobilizing people to action and leadership. We will also discuss how to leverage your role as board members in leading and governing stakeholders to make a difference in their communities. Participate and engage in meaningful conversations about what it means to lead and govern with an equity lens. Lunch is included in the registration fee.

Registration Information

The conference registration fee is $350. After May 18, the fee increases to $420. There are no refunds for cancellations received or postmarked after May 18.

**Late Fee Policy:** There is a $70 additional fee per registrant (not per workshop or event) for on-site registrations and those received after May 18.

Lodging Info

- **Hyatt Regency Savannah**
  Two William Street
  Savannah, GA 31401

- **Homewood Suites - Historic District**
  511 East River Street
  Savannah, GA 31401

- **Hampton Inn – Historic District**
  201 East Bay Street
  Savannah, GA 31401

- **Hotel Indigo (code=GAB)**
  201 West Bay Street
  Savannah, GA 31401

- **Hilton Garden Inn**
  321 West Bay St
  Savannah, GA 31401

- **Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort & Spa One Resort**
  Drive Savannah, GA 31421

- **Holiday Inn Express (code=SBA)**
  199 East Bay Street
  Savannah, GA 31401

Visit Exhibitors

Meet companies and organizations who are knowledgeable about products and services that address the needs of your schools and your communities. Exhibitors provide solutions for one or more of your major concerns such as: responsible financial stewardship, raising student achievement and effective school safety.
### Schedule – At – A – Glance (schedule subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wednesday, June 6</th>
<th>Friday, June 8</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>7:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registration for New Board Member Orientation (NBMO)</td>
<td>Conference Registration Opens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opens</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>7:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NBMO – Early Session Begins <em>(12hrs)</em></td>
<td>Exhibits Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>7:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NBMO – Regular Session <em>(9hrs)</em></td>
<td>Voluntary Devotional</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NBMO Adjourns for First Day</td>
<td>First General Session</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11:15 a.m.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Second General Session</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12:15 p.m.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Luncheon</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday, June 7</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registration Opens</td>
<td>Exhibits Close</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>1:45 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy, Community Engagement &amp; Rewriting the Rules of</td>
<td>Third General Session</td>
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<td>Student Success workshops begin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Delegate Assembly</td>
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<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mini-Session <em>(with Dr. Donna Beegle)</em></td>
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<td>4:00 p.m.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>First Day Concludes</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhibits Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board Chair Luncheon</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Workshops Resume</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Workshops Adjourn</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, June 9</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast General Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Conference Adjourns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GSBA TV and social media**

We are taking the conference beyond the walls of the hotel! Connect to us wherever you are and watch short videos produced on-site and posted regularly on social media. Conference speakers, staff and others will share helpful nuggets. Our video team will be taping in several areas of the hotel. Important: Go ahead and ‘Like’ and ‘Follow’ GSBA on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn now. Prior to the conference, be sure to prepare your computer and mobile devices for access to our website (gsba.com) and the GSBA mobile app. Please share your comments with us and use the conference hashtags #GSBASC18 & GSBATV
The Role of the Board of Education in Keeping Students Safe (continued from page 11)

By Phil Hartley, GSBA General Counsel, Harben, Hartley & Hawkins, LLC

(5. continued) Reassuring parents that a good plan exists and that their children are safe is obviously crucial. Communicating to parents and students the dangers of social media posts and casual comments often made by young people, but sometimes even made by adults, that can trigger an immediate panic is also a necessary part in today’s world of preparing and avoiding such safety emergencies.

Many of these security and safety items fall more in the realm of administrative duties and responsibilities. Boards of education certainly have some policy issues to consider and determine from the list above. Similarly, there are costs involved and thus budgetary considerations come into play. Boards are often faced with difficult choices of how the limited resources of the school district are to be spent. Finally, members of the board of education and the board of education as a body play a critical role of educating and reassuring the public. If children are not safe at school, nothing else really matters. To provide reassurance, boards of education have to be confident they know how the school district has planned and will respond in a real life situation.
Innovative Education Initiative Redefines Teamwork in Carroll County (continued from page 20)

By Scotty Brewington, Contributing Writer, MarketJet, LLC

(continued) The CCEC was designed as a guiding framework for building a collaborative, community-based strategy for preparing students that can be replicated in other communities beyond Carroll County.

The concept is currently being explored by surrounding school districts in Coweta, Heard, Haralson and Douglas counties, which also have a high percentage of students who end up at the University of West Georgia and West Georgia Technical College.

“We have been very cognizant of developing a model that is customizable, but at the same time has some common agreed-upon regional measures to increase the number of students who are career and college ready,” said Green. “As communities develop their own adaptation of this regional model, they will begin to build a very coordinated network of schools where people can share best practices through the lens of improving student performance.”

Can an initiative like CCEC really make a long-lasting impact? According to Wright, it already has.

“When I was in high school in Carroll County, we had a huge rivalry with the city high school. To see the collaboration and relationships the county and city schools have formed now is really mind-blowing,” said Wright.

These focused and energetic students depend on their school board.

In turn, school boards can depend on the RLR team of architects and in-house engineers to provide facilities that are functionally designed and consciously budgeted to further the mission of student education.
The mission of the Georgia School Boards Association is to ensure excellence in the governance of local school systems by providing leadership, advocacy and services, and by representing the collective resolve of Georgia’s elected boards of education.
A special thank you to our **GSBA** FY18 Associates. We appreciate all you do!

### Principal

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Web: www.edcoeducation.com

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