What’s Inside:
Throwing Shine  pg.2
Exhibits  pg.4
Family Engagement  pg.15
Student Homelessness  pg.20
Let’s Build Something Remarkable

R. K. Redding Construction has been building Georgia’s best schools for over 27 years. We are committed to creating relationships for life, establishing a new generation for a stronger community of learning. We are proudly building Georgia’s bright educational future.
WHAT'S INSIDE...

03 Exhibit Diagram
04 Exhibits Alphabetically
06 Music To Our Ears
07 Exhibit Descriptions
15 Family Engagement
20 Student Homelessness
20 Districts Engaging The Community

GMEA Executive Director Cecil Wilder was delighted to hear GSBA Executive Director Valarie Wilson describe her music education journey which started at a very early age. “My saxophone was bigger than I was,” she recalls, “but with determination I somehow managed to carry it in the marching band!” She credits her music teacher who was persistent as well as encouraging. Those experiences and lifelong lessons have stayed with her. Having taught music education for 30 years before assuming his current position, Wilder has heard numerous stories of how music has enriched lives in countless ways. He would like to hear yours. Write him at cwilder@gmea.org.

It's literally music to our ears when the Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA) attends our conference because they bring along student talent for our listening pleasure. Always a conference favorite, student performances remind us of what our young people can do with encouragement and professional guidance. Research has found that learning music helps facilitate learning other subjects and enhance skills that children inevitably use in other areas. GMEA Communications Liaison Dr. Bernadette Scruggs contacted some of GMEA's 2500 members to construct the schedule of performances found on page 7 to reflect various grades and instruments. These student showcases are clear evidence of the importance of the arts in our schools. Their music is more than entertainment in the exhibit area. Listen and applaud their music, even dance; but our real focus is and will always be on the musicians.

For the 20 Important Benefits of Music In Our Schools, go to nafme.org/20-important-benefits-of-music-in-our-schools.
Exhibits

Dec. 6, 2018
9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Dec. 7, 2018
7:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

LEGEND

78A Window Film Depot
78B Essentials in Education
79 Homelessness in America
80 Barnes and Noble
81A GMEA
81B Sturdisteele
82 GA DOE School Nutrition
83 Edmentum
84 Sports Turf
85 SmartWatt
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Space</th>
<th>Exhibitors</th>
<th>Space</th>
<th>Exhibitors</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>ABM Education Services</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>JCI Contractors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>ACG Solutions</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Joe Burton Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Altman + Barrett Architects</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Manley Spangler Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>American Fidelity Assurance</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Mobile Modular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>American Heart Association</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Musco Sports Lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Audio Enhancement</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>NetPlanner Systems, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Barnes &amp; Noble Bookseller</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Outdoor Aluminum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Beck Facility Services</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>Parker Young Constr./FireStar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Breaux &amp; Associates</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Parrish Construction Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Campus Benefits</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>PikMyKid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Carroll Daniel Construction</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Precision Turf, LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>CASIE</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>R.K. Redding Turf, LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>CDH Partners</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>RA-LIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Centegix</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>SafeGuard/IMMI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Classworks</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Schneider Electric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Coaches Leadership Network</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Securitech, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Dukes, Edwards &amp; Dukes</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>SES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Durham School Services</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>SFE Southwest Foodservice Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>EDCO Education</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Sheridan Construction Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Edmentum</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>SmartWatt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Ernie Morris Enterprises, Inc.</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Sodexo School Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>ESS</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Southern A &amp; E, LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78B</td>
<td>Essentials in Education</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>Southern Bleacher Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Excel Energy Group</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>SP Design Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>GA Dept. of Ed. - School Nutrition</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>Sports Turf Company, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81A</td>
<td>AGA Music Educators Assoc.</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>SRJ Architects Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Georgia Power Energy Services</td>
<td>81B</td>
<td>Sturdisteele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Goodwyn Mills &amp; Cawood, Inc.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Tectum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>GSBA Space - no sign please</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Terrazzo Promotion Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>GSBAtv</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>TQ Constructors, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Hecht Burdeshaw Architects</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Waterford Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Hogan Construction Group</td>
<td>78A</td>
<td>Window Film Depot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Homelessness in America</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>Yancey Bus Sales/Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Interquest Detection Canines of Georgia</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>YouScience, LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>James W Buckley &amp; Assoc.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Experience our tradition of superior customer service, built by three generations of family leadership. We are PLANNERS, BUILDERS, PARTNERS™

WWW.CARROLLDANIEL.COM
# Student Musicians Perform

## GSBAtv Stage - Garden Court

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Director/Choral Director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, Dec. 6</td>
<td>East Jackson Saxophone Quintet; Miguel Guisasola, Director</td>
<td>East Jackson Comprehensive High School, Jackson County School District</td>
<td>East Jackson Saxophone Quintet, Miguel Guisasola, Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, Dec. 6</td>
<td>Morgan County Middle School Chorale; Carisa Elam, Director</td>
<td>Morgan County Middle School, Morgan County School District</td>
<td>Morgan County Middle School Chorale, Carisa Elam, Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, Dec. 6</td>
<td>Dougherty Comprehensive High School Brass Ensemble I; Matthew Peters, Director</td>
<td>Dougherty Comprehensive High School, Dougherty County School System</td>
<td>Dougherty Comprehensive High School, Matthew Peters, Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, Dec. 7</td>
<td>Americus Sumter High School Brass Ensemble; Debra Hughes, Director</td>
<td>Americus Sumter High School, Sumter County Schools</td>
<td>Americus Sumter High School, Debra Hughes, Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:40 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Habersham Ballroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Director/Choral Director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, Dec. 6</td>
<td>Peachtree Ridge Chamber Ensemble; Victoria Enloe and Bill Scruggs, Directors</td>
<td>Peachtree Ridge High School, Gwinnett County Public Schools</td>
<td>Peachtree Ridge Chamber Ensemble, Victoria Enloe and Bill Scruggs, Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, Dec. 6</td>
<td>Americus Sumter High School Brass Ensemble; Debra Hughes, Director</td>
<td>Americus Sumter High School, Sumter County Schools</td>
<td>Americus Sumter High School, Debra Hughes, Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:40 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Grand Ballroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Director/Choral Director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday, Dec. 7</td>
<td>Roswell High School String Quartet; Sara Ann White, Director</td>
<td>Roswell High School, Fulton County School System</td>
<td>Roswell High School, Sara Ann White, Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**GTOY Awards Banquet**

- Thursday, Dec. 6
- 2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
- Dougherty Comprehensive High School Brass Ensemble I; Matthew Peters, Director
- Dougherty Comprehensive High School, Dougherty County School System

- Thursday, Dec. 6
- 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
- GTOY Awards Banquet
- Dougherty Comprehensive High School Brass Ensemble I; Matthew Peters, Director
- Dougherty Comprehensive High School, Dougherty County School System

- Thursday, Dec. 6
- 9:40 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.
- Americus Sumter High School Brass Ensemble; Debra Hughes, Director
- Americus Sumter High School, Sumter County Schools

- Thursday, Dec. 6
- 12:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.
- GTOY Awards Banquet
- Dougherty Comprehensive High School Brass Ensemble I; Matthew Peters, Director
- Dougherty Comprehensive High School, Dougherty County School System

- Friday, Dec. 7
- 9:40 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.
- Americus Sumter High School Brass Ensemble; Debra Hughes, Director
- Americus Sumter High School, Sumter County Schools

- Friday, Dec. 7
- 12:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.
- GTOY Awards Banquet
- Dougherty Comprehensive High School Brass Ensemble I; Matthew Peters, Director
- Dougherty Comprehensive High School, Dougherty County School System

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*Connections Magazine | A Guide to Supporters of Public Education | Pg. 06*
7 Southern Bleacher Company
Chandler Cruse cruse@southernbleacher.com
Stadiums, Grandstands, Outdoor Aluminum Bleachers, Press Boxes southernbleacher.com

9 James W Buckley & Assoc.
Amy Toler apt@jwbuckley.com
Full service architectural firm specializing in educational facility design. jwbuckley.com

10 Tectum
Rick Broth rbroth@bellsouth.net
The Noise Control Solution armstrongceilings.com

11 RA-LIN
Tonya Jackson Tonya.Jackson@Ra-Lin.com
RA-LIN and Associates has become one of the most respected providers of construction services in the Southeast. ra-lin.com

14 Parrish Construction Group
Scot Ethridge sethridge@parrishconstruction.com
Parrish Construction Group is comprised of talented, hard-working construction professionals, who together have built a solid reputation for providing high performance construction services throughout our Georgia community. parrishconstruction.com

18 Southern A & E, LLC
Stephen McCune smccune@southernae.com
Southern A&E is a full service architecture and engineering design firm specializing in educational facilities. southernae.com

19 Classworks
Chris Thomas cthomas@classworks.com
Classworks is online K-8 math, reading, and language arts instruction aligned to state standards. Classworks provides powerful instruction powered by high-quality assessment data to close learning gaps. facebook.com/classworks/

20 Georgia Power Energy Services
Matt Otani mmotani@southernco.com
Energy, Maintenance & Operations georgiapower.com/business/industry-services/energy-services.html

21 TQ Constructors, Inc.
Kim Corley kcorley@tqconstructorsinc.com
Since inception in 1993, TQ Constructors, Inc. has established itself as a quality General Contractor and Construction manager. We strive to be “The Benchmark” in providing Total Quality throughout the entire construction process. tqconstructorsinc.com

22 Campus Benefits
Stephen Johnson SJohnson@campusbenefits.com
Campus benefits is an employee benefits brokerage/compliance firm serving public school entities throughout the Southeast. Enjoy this years sessions. campusbenefits.com
23 JCI Contractors  
Ashby Autry aautry@jcicontractors.com  
JCI Contractors provides comprehensive Construction Management, Design-Build and General Contracting services specializing in new construction, renovation and expansion of educational facilities. jcicontractors.com

26 American Heart Association  
Kim Nickels kim.nickels@heart.org  
The American Heart Association wants all students and educators to learn the life-saving skill of CPR. The CPR In Schools Training Kit empowers students to learn the core skills of CPR, AED, and choking in one class period. heart.org/cprinschools

27 Carter Financial  
Greg Carter info@carterfinancial.us  
Our mission is to inspire individuals, families, and businesses to seek the well being and security that comes from being financially prepared now and in the future. carterfinancial.us

28 GSBAtv  
Justin Pauly jpauly@gsba.com  
Stop by and see how we take the conference beyond the walls of the hotel? gsba.com

30 GSBA  
Mark Willis/Cliff Cole mwillis@gsba.com/ccole@gsba.com  
All GSBA Services gsba.com

32 Parker Young Constr./FireStar  
Justin Keys jkeys@parkeryoung.com  
Parker Young Companies (FireStar and Parker Young Construction) is the leading mitigation and disaster repair experts have been serving the greater metro Atlanta area since 1986. Our coverage reaches the entire state of Georgia, Tennessee, South Carolina and Alabama. We also offer nationwide coverage through affiliates and third-parties. parkeryoung.com

33 EDCO Education  
David Allen david.allen@edcoeducation.com  
A systems integrator of classroom technology who partners with school districts across the country to develop technology solutions. edcoeducation.com

34 American Fidelity Assurance  
Jimmy Jackson james.jackson@americanfidelity.com  
Our goal is to provide employers and employees with benefits and services that add value, while also helping employers control costs. americanfidelity.com

35 Durham School Services  
John Ziegler J.Ziegler@nellc.com  
Durham School Services is a full service student transportation provider. durhamschoolservices.com

36 Manley Spangler Smith  
Brett McIver bmcity@mssarchitects.com  
Manley Spangler Smith Architects is an architectural firm that specializes in the design of educational facilities in Georgia. mssarchitects.com

38 Ernie Morris Enterprises, Inc.  
Adin Burchfield aburchfield@erniemorris.com  
School furniture dealer with 50 years of K12 experience with a track record of 600+ school openings. erniemorris.com

39 Carroll Daniel Construction  
Chris Erwin cerwin@carrolldaniel.com  
Construction and Construction Management carrolldaniel.com

41 Coaches Leadership Network  
Michelle Bryan michelle@maxwellcenter.com  
Formed in conjunction with the John C. Maxwell Leadership Center, we pour leadership into the coaches who pour into kids. We are building a winning team of coaches and community leaders. CoachesLeadershipNetwork.com

42 Centegix  
Brent Coleman bcoleman@centegix.com  
The leading provider of technology solutions to make schools and classrooms safe, smart and secure. centegix.com

43 Schneider Electric  
Trent Egbert trent.egbert@schneider-electric.com  
Schneider Electric bolsters expansive offerings to ENABLE Districts to accomplish their goals on long term infrastructure and technology plans in your schools. se-enable.com

44 YouScience, LLC  
Armando Garza armando@youscience.com  
YouScience gives students hope, relevance, and direction by expanding their vision of opportunities by using fun, engaging brain games. youscience.com

45 R.K. Redding Construction, Inc.  
Steven Hill sth@rkredding.com  
RKR is Building the Future by providing General Contracting & Construction Management Services throughout the Southeast. rkreddingconstruction

49 Joe Burton Company  
Lews Burton lewisburton@jburtoncompany.com  
We provide quality daylighting product options by Wasco Skylights, Part of the Velux Group, and offer consulting and installation options. jeburtoncompany.com

50 Hogan Construction Group  
Robert Cofer rcofer@hoganconstructiongroup.com  
Hogan provides general contracting, design-build, and design-bid-build services across the southeast. hoganconstructiongroup.com
51 Sodexo School Services
Chas Harris chas.harris@sodexo.com
Sodexo, leader of Quality of Daily Life Solutions, helps schools improve the learning environment by focusing on student well-being and achievement. From nutritious school meals to clean classrooms to safe playgrounds and more, Sodexo enhances every student’s ability to learn and grow. For more information, please visit sodexoUSA.com

52 Breaux & Associates
Donella Jones info@bxarch.com
Breaux & Associates Architects (BXA) is a Georgia-based full-service Architectural Firm specializing in Educational Facility Planning and Design. bxarch.com

54 Sheridan Construction Co.
Christy Cranford christy.cranford@chrisrsheridan.com
Since 1947 we have served our clients, community & employees by providing excellence, integrity and quality in every aspect of the construction process. sheridanconstructionco.com/

55 Audio Enhancement
Kevin Mitchell kevin.mitchell@audioenhancement.com
Audio Enhancement, experts in classroom cameras, audio, safety, and school-wide communication. Customize to meet the needs of your school district. AudioEnhancement.com

56 SES
Robin Blanchard rblanchard@speced.org
SES Home of ‘PaddyNet’ A full service Medicaid Consulting Firm speced.org

57 Outdoor Aluminum
Eddie Spears espears@outdooraluminum.com
Manufacturer of grandstand bleachers, custom angle frame bleacher, standard bleachers and other related seating outdooraluminum.com

58 Musco Sports Lighting
Rob Staples rob.staples@musco.com
Musco has shaped the history of sports lighting since 1976. The company’s TLC for LED technology delivers unmatched light quality, control, efficiency, and reliability. musco.com

59 SFE - Southwest Foodservice Excellence
Jason Bass jason.bass@sfellc.org
Foodservice Management sfellc.org

61 Precision Turf, LLC
Bill Pronevitch bill@pturf.com
Athletic Field Design & General Contracting. pturf.com

62 Hecht Burdeshaw Architects
Vanessa Williams vwilliams@hechtburdeshaw.com
Facility Assessment, Master Planning, Programming, Conceptual Visioning, Architecture and Interior Design uniquely suited to each client’s needs. hechtburdeshaw.com

63 Terrazzo Promotion Committee
George Hardy tpcterrazzo@gmail.com
With a membership base of terrazzo contractors & suppliers, the Terrazzo Promotion Committee actively promotes the use of the original recycled flooring choice Terrazzo! terrazzo-info.org

64 Beck Facility Services
Josh McCallister josh@becksupport.com
Beck Education Services is a leading U.S. facilities services company, delivering high quality janitorial services to K-12 systems throughout the United States for over 25 years. becksupport.com

65 Securitech, Inc.
Marantha Thompson mthompson@securitech.com
Established in New York City in 1983, Securitech is an independent manufacturer of high-security door locks. securitech.com

66 SP Design Group
Rodney Wilson rww@spdesigngrp.com
SPDG Architects & Engineers Inc is located in Macon Ga. Our firm has been serving the Georgia K-12 community for more than 50 years. spdesigngroup.com

67 PikMyKid
J.J. Roberts jj@pikmykid.com
PikMyKid provides a complete, technology driven safety platform. Automated & controlled dismissal, an Emergency Alert System, and an Anonymous Tipline are the foundation for enhancing school safety. pikmykid.com

68 SafeGuard/IMMI
Monica Coburn mcoburn@imminet.com
SafeGuard, the industry leader, provides the best protection for children on school buses with lap-shoulder belts, ICS, and portable restraints. safeguardseat.com

69 NetPlanner Systems, Inc.
Tracey Knieri tracey.knieri@netplanner.com
NetPlanner is one of the Southeast’s leading providers of communications, security, audio/visual systems, mobility solutions, and professional services for schools. netplanner.com

70 Mobile Modular
Kelly Fejfar Kelly.Fejfar@mgrc.com
Mobile Modular has been a leading provider of relocatable classrooms and modular buildings to school districts for over 30 years. mobilemodular.com

71 ABM Education Services
Randy Gehman randy.gehman@abm.com
ABM provides a full menu of facilities services for K-12 schools. ABM.com/K-12
72 Waterford Institute
Jami Marino jamimarino@waterford.org
Waterford.org seeks to blend the best aspects of learning science, mentoring relationships, and innovative technologies to form community, school, and home programs that deliver excellence and equity for all learners. waterford.org

73 Goodwyn Mills & Cawood, Inc.
Amy Bell amy.bell@gmcnetwork.com
GMC is a nationally recognized architecture and engineering firm that works with over 80 school districts across the Southeast. gmcnetwork.com

74 CASIE
John Denine john.denine@casieonline.org
CASIE works with educators to promote international understanding through education programs, research, discussion, policy planning and workshops. casieonline.org

75 ACG Solutions
Tristian Bailey tbailey@acg-solutions.com
ACG Solutions is a leading provider of information technology (IT), security, and telecommunications solutions acg-solutions.com

76 SRJ Architects Inc.
Sonya Spalinger sspalinger@srjarchitects.com
SRJ Architects Inc. is a thirteen person full-service architectural firm in Albany, Georgia. We specialize in the design of educational facilities. SRJ’s decades of experience in this challenging field enable us to deliver our clients exceptional facilities that fulfill their goals within their budget. srjarchitects.com

77 Yancey Bus Sales/Service
Shooter Roberts shooter_roberts@yanceybros.com
Yancey Bus Sales & Service is your full service provider for Blue Bird Bus sales, parts and service across Georgia...from the Appalachians to the Atlantic. YanceyBus.com

78A Window Film Depot
Shaun Olsen shaun@windowfilmdepot.com
Window Film Depot (WFD) is a national sales and installation company of 3M security window films, DefenseLite and BulletShield security panels. windowfilmdepot.com

78B Essentials in Education
Deborah Hicks deborah@essentialsineducation.org
Essentials in Education provides quality educational materials that support academic Bible study. Now available: Wisdom Literature from the Bible. teachthebibleinschools.org

79 Homelessness in America
Mark Willis mwillis@gsba.com
This exhibit is intended to stimulate discussion about homelessness in our communities and how it affects our
students and schools. It is made possible by 12Stone Church with locations in Barrow, Hall and Gwinnett Counties; HomeFirst Gwinnett Initiative of United Way of Greater Atlanta; and the Georgia School Boards Association. gsba.com

80 Barnes & Noble Bookseller
Jennifer Cobb jcobb@bn.com
Books and gifts for sale. Read to Lead! Leaders Read! barnesandnoble.com

81A GA Music Educators Assoc.
Cecil Wilder cecilw@gmea.org
Serving music educators throughout the state for over 80 years with continuing education opportunities as well as performance opportunities for school music students. gmea.org

81B Sturdisteel
Gary Wilson gwilson@sturdisteel.net
Outdoor stadium seating manufacturer, Press box manufacturer sturdisteel.net

82 GA Dept. of Ed. - School Nutrition
Jeanne Starr jstarr@doe.k12.ga.us
Be the authority and resource for Georgia school nutrition programs so that every child in school has healthy choices, every day. GaSNP.org

83 Edmentum
Greg Thompson greg.thompson@edmentum.com
Edmentum empowers educators to move education forward with proven instructional and assessment solutions to improve student outcomes. edmentum.com

84 Sports Turf Company, Inc.
Megan Roberts megan@sportsturf.net
Building Georgia's best FIELDS (natural & artificial), TRACKS (latex & polyurethane) and TENNIS COURTS for 25+ years. Experience the difference Certified Field and Track Builders make in durability, performance and safety. sportsturf.net

85 SmartWatt
Garrett Self gsself@smartwatt.com
SmartWatt is a new kind of energy optimization company, driven to maximize the financial and human outcomes of every project we undertake. We deliver the best value approach, hold ourselves to the highest standards of transparency and accountability and optimize energy systems that stand the test of time. smartwatt.com
GSBA Risk Management Services
A+ Service Through Superior Member Relationships.

EDUCATE
State-of-the-art programs that inform and educate school districts about the importance of risk management applications.

UNITE
Shared ownership of the Funds provides a stable risk-financing environment that results in long-term savings.

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Moving the Needle on Family Engagement

by Gary Hensley

Here’s what ISN’T news: family engagement is one of the most powerful predictors of a child’s success within and beyond the classroom. 60 years of research has confirmed this.

Here’s what IS news: family engagement has not been a central focus in the educational improvement or funding of many school districts. As leaders in education, we can no longer ignore what 60 years of research has told us, and instead should focus on developing strategies and practices to engage families, because this is what is going to ultimately increase the success and achievement of our students.

For districts to further their family engagement efforts, it’s important to truly understand the role that meaningful two-way communication plays, how it can be used to move the needle on family engagement and the steps involved to move through the process.

Meaningful Two-Way Communication

Meaningful two-way communication is a key underlying component of family engagement, that is often misunderstood or overlooked. Research has shown that schools who place an emphasis on effective communication actually create environments that are conducive to family engagement because in the end, it’s those relationships that promote the efficacy in families necessary to complete more homework, increase attendance and improve student attitudes toward learning.

When we take a step back, we often realize that schools and educators are communicating to families without understanding the true purpose or intention behind it. In order to engage families, the goal for any district, school or educator must be to build a relationship with the families of their students. However, in order to build a relationship, we have to first build trust which can’t be done without providing consistent opportunities to have meaningful two-way communication.

There are an abundance of ways to communicate with families, but we forget to evaluate how these methods move the needle on family engagement. Many of us are adept at one-way communication, resulting in only providing families...
with weekly folders home, website posts, newsletters, blogs, social posts, mass texts and emails, etc. But we can’t confuse these delivered messages and one-way communication channels with family engagement. In order to actually see change and create meaningful dialogue with families to improve student achievement, we must empower families and provide them the opportunities to have conversations about their child’s learning.

**Moving the Needle**

According to Dr. Steve Constantino, “family engagement is a process, not an event or a series of events.” With family engagement hinging on the relationships that we build with families, it’s important to realize that our educators are the catalysts of the relationships. Families depend on the educators of their children to keep them informed, answer their questions and involve them in the learning process.

In today’s technical society where we have new generations of families that are consistently connecting online, it’s possible to “go to” families and reach them anywhere, at their convenience. With the right online platform, educators have the opportunity not only to streamline information to families, but also open the gateway for meaningful two-way conversations and promote the active engagement of families.

To promote the active engagement of families, Dr. Constantino suggests educators can “supply [families] with information about what is happening in school before it happens; prompt them with questions...
(and answers) they can ask their children... provide a mechanism so that families can share with teachers how their children responded to questions.” Another idea is to even “integrate families into homework assignments and maybe even projects.” With a family engagement platform, educators can easily do this on a monthly, weekly, or even daily basis. Families can become involved in their child’s learning in secure space that allows them to ask questions through efficacy-based activities and respond to information and understand what their child is learning in school.

**Family engagement isn’t about improving any statistic other than the success and achievement of students.**

The Family Engagement Process

Whether family engagement is a new initiative, or years in the making, every school district is at a different step in the process. We’ve identified three steps to engage families and increase the academic outcomes of students: Awareness, Capacity Building, and Sustaining.

The first step for any school district is to lay the foundations of awareness for family engagement. This includes outlining the groundwork of family engagement, and often changing people’s perceptions. Many educators have negative ideas about family engagement, but this is often due to a lack of formal training. When we outline what family engagement actually is and what the outcomes look like, we can begin to move the needle.

The second step is to build the capability of staff. This step often incorporates specific engagement training, so that educators are equipped with the proper tools to engage families. When staff members know how to have meaningful conversations that build trust, they start the process of creating relationships that move the family engagement needle even further.

The third step is to sustain family engagement practices over time and into the future. This step of the family engagement process helps districts ensure that their best practices are continuously adapting and fit for our ever-changing population of families.

If we pursue family engagement just for the sake of family engagement, then we’ll never be able to truly change the lives of our students. Family engagement isn’t about improving any statistic other than the success and achievement of students. To improve student outcomes, educators must have the tools and technology to provide families useful information that lead to meaningful two-way conversations. At the root, providing a safe, secure space for educators and families to have these conversations is what sustains relationships that create engaged families, and ultimately, student success.

**Gary Hensley** is CEO and President of Livingtree, which provides online family engagement and fundraising platforms designed for K-12 schools and school districts.
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The Office of Federal Programs at the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) conducts an annual comprehensive analysis of available LEA McKinney-Vento program data. Data sources include GaDOE’s Student Record, the Federal Programs’ annual homeless survey, and data from other state agencies. This report provides the results of the 2016-17 program year analysis. The key trends, patterns, and relationships garnered from the analysis include:

- **Transportation** was the top-ranked service activity provided by school districts to remove barriers for students experiencing homelessness.
- **Homeless students** faced greater risk of suspension.
- **Homeless students** attended school at a lower rate than non-homeless students.

For the full report visit [gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Documents.aspx](http://gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Documents.aspx)


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*Source: Thomson Reuters SDC (True Economics to Book) senior managed negotiated K-12 transactions ranked by par.
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