



District Accountability System Goal 4, Objective C
Engaging Neighborhoods & Communities
Annual Report – July 2013
Executive Summary

The purpose of the District Accountability System's Goal 4, Objective C is to develop direct contacts between school principals and the communities / neighborhoods they serve. This also includes our military community. The target related to this goal will have every principal making a presentation or participating in at least two civic or community events by the end of the 2014 school year. During the 2012-2013 school year, 52 administrators out of 54 met the goal. See tables 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

During the 2012-13 school year, principals stayed actively engaged in our community. Many connections were made during visits with neighborhood leaders, faith-based organizations, and non-profit groups. School principals were often found making presentations at rotary clubs, neighborhood associations, and youth seminars, or strengthening contacts with post-secondary institutions, the military community, and community centers.

Many of our school leaders served on advisory boards or directly participated in local events related to civic organizations. Relay for Life, KISS-A-PIG, Backpack Buddies, 100 Black Men of Savannah, and Healthy Savannah included some of the organizations where principals were actively engaged. Many made presentations to the neighborhood associations located within their school zone, while some made connections with neighborhood watch associations or attended city council meetings within their municipality.

As civic leaders themselves, school principals have the opportunity to foster connections that strengthen the educational environment, while advocating for stronger communities that support the continued development of the students we serve. These connections serve as a foundation that will support the additional objectives related to community engagement. Neighborhood connections provide access to business partnerships, mentor resources, and help to develop stronger relationships with parents. The community connections often result in initiatives that enhance safety, school beautification, and neighborhood development.

Some examples include the DeRenne Middle principal addressing members during the Liberty City Neighborhood Association's Annual Banquet, West Chatham Middle's principal attending Pooler City Council meetings, or the Hesse K-8 principal speaking at a breakfast meeting hosted by the Skidaway Island Kiwanis Club. The principal from Woodville-Tompkins was on hand during the Hunter Army Spring Education Forum to help military families understand the offerings found at Woodville-Tompkins, Haven's principal presented at multiple Tatemville Community Meetings, the principal at Windsor Forest Elementary school attended a meeting with the Windsor Forest Neighborhood Association to discuss concerns regarding neighborhood crime, and Low's principal made a number of presentations at area churches to reach parents with kindergarten age children in an effort to promote school readiness.

Schools also found successful engagement within their communities by opening their doors. In these instances, schools hosted or organized community events that brought civic organizations, business partners, parents, and community members together. At Islands High School the community was invited to the “Smiling Island Festival” and at Georgetown K-8 community members were encouraged to take part in the “Georgetown Spring Fling.”

The “open your doors” concept was also utilized as a way to engage the community with the first-ever SCCPSS “Spring Tour of Schools.” This tour provided an opportunity for community members to connect with our schools and gain a broader understanding of the educational climate and academic opportunities found throughout the school district. More than 20 community members who represented the business, realtor, and post-secondary segments participated in a tour that took them through Islands High School, Gadsden Elementary, the Garrison Visual and Performing Arts School, and New Hampstead High School. At each stop principals addressed the group, gave a presentation about their school, and offered a guided tour. Participants left with a greater understanding of the quality education offered across the district and were impressed by the fine administrators and faculty working within Savannah-Chatham County. Of the experience, one of the participants from the realtor community stated, “I can now tell my clients first hand, of all that Savannah Public Schools can offer their children. I can also brag to my former colleagues about Savannah’s fabulous schools!”

In addition to creating an opportunity for community connections, these engagements serve to inform stakeholders of the many options that provide a quality education for all students in Savannah-Chatham County.

While we are close to attainment of the targeted goal, there is work to be done. Greater awareness must be generated with a specific focus on those schools where new leadership is found. With the expansion of new schools such as the STEM Academy, employee turnover, and retirement, the 2013-14 school year will see a number of schools where new principals will take the helm. Awareness of this goal, early and often, will prove to be instrumental as we seek to attain the 2014 target.

Table 1: **Elementary Schools**

School	Achieved Annual Objective?
Bartow	Yes
Bloomingtondale	Yes
Butler	Yes
Coastal Empire Montessori	Yes
Gadsden	Yes
Garden City	Yes
Gould	Yes
Haven	Yes
Heard	Yes
Hodge	Yes
Howard	Yes
Largo-Tibet	No
Low	Yes

Marshpoint	Yes
Pooler	Yes
Port Wentworth	Yes
Pulaski	Yes
Shuman	Yes
J.G. Smith	Yes
Southwest	Yes
Spencer	Yes
Thunderbolt	Yes
West Chatham	Yes
White Bluff	No
Windsor Forest	Yes

Table 2: **K-8 Schools**

School	Achieved Annual Objective?
East Broad	Yes
Ellis	Yes
Georgetown	Yes
Godley Station	Yes
Garrison	Yes
Hesse	Yes
Isle of Hope	Yes

Table 3: **Middle Schools**

School	Achieved Annual Objective?
Bartlett	Yes
Coastal	Yes
DeRenne	Yes
Hubert	Yes
Mercer	Yes
Myers	Yes
Oglethorpe	Yes
Southwest	Yes
West Chatham	Yes

Table 4: **High Schools**

School	Achieved Annual Objective?
Beach	Yes
Groves	Yes
Islands	Yes
Jenkins	Yes
Johnson	Yes
New Hampstead	Yes
Savannah Arts	Yes
Savannah High	Yes
Windsor Forest	Yes
Woodville-Tompkins	Yes

Table 5: **Other Sites**

School	Achieved Annual Objective?
Coastal GA Comprehensive	Yes
Early College	Yes
Ombudsman	Yes