

Keith L. Simmons, Ed.D.

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing to express my sincere interest in the vacant superintendent position in your school district. With a deep commitment to educational excellence, a vision for progress, and a firm dedication to principles of equity and inclusion, I believe I am the ideal candidate to lead your district to even greater heights. My extensive experience as an educational leader has provided me with the skills and insights necessary to drive positive change within school districts. I have a proven track record of creating systems and structures to foster safe and supportive learning and work environments, ensuring a climate in which all students can thrive, regardless of their background. This commitment is both a professional obligation and a personal passion that has guided my career.

As superintendent of Griffin-Spalding County Schools, I have implemented innovative initiatives and policies that led to growth and improvement at all levels. I firmly believe that a diverse student body should be met with diverse educational approaches, and I have worked tirelessly to ensure that our students and staff are given the support they need to achieve success. One of my core strengths is strategic planning. I possess a comprehensive understanding of the importance of setting clear goals, involving all stakeholders, and implementing a strategic plan that guides the district toward those objectives. My approach is not just about setting benchmarks but also about continually assessing progress, adapting strategies as needed, and ensuring that the district remains agile and responsive to evolving educational needs.

Moreover, my leadership is underpinned by a strong commitment to ethical principles and a clear vision for the future of education. I believe that an effective superintendent must focus on short-term goals and think strategically and proactively, while anticipating and addressing the evolving needs of students, educators, and the community. I am excited to work collaboratively with the governance team and school community to build on your district's strong foundation and take it to new heights. Together, we can create an educational environment that embodies the principles of equity, inclusion, and excellence you value.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss how my qualifications align with your district's vision. Thank you for considering my application.

Best Regards,



Keith L. Simmons, Ed.D.

Enclosure: Resume

Keith L. Simmons, Ed.D.

"Though not something found on résumés, I'd like to note that Keith shows up with a spirit of humility that is not always found in leaders at his level. You see it in how he serves and interacts with people at all stations in life. You see it in how he receives feedback and coaching. You see it in how he shows appreciation for those who support him."

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

- Highly skilled, executive leader with 25+ years of experience in mid-size and large urban school settings in Florida and Georgia
- Experienced district operations leader with extensive skills related to Capital Improvements, Pupil Transportation, and Safety & Security
- Awarded the 2024 President's Award by the Georgia School Superintendents Association
- Extensive skill in creating systems to advance systemwide continuous improvement, leading to increased student outcomes

PREPARATION

- **Senior Executive Leadership Program**, GA School Superintendent's Assoc. (GSSA)
- **Fellow**, Harvard University Graduate School of Education, Public Education Leadership Project (PELP)
- **National Superintendent Academy**, Long Beach, CA
- **AASA Urban Superintendent Academy**, Washington, DC
- **Fellow**, Racial Equity Leadership Network, Southern Education Foundation, Atlanta, GA
- **SPDP Alumni**, Georgia School Superintendents Association

EDUCATION

- **Doctorate in Education**, University of Georgia
- **Education Specialist**, Walden University
- **Master of Education**, Barry University
- **Bachelor of Science**, University of the Cumberlands

PROFESSIONAL and RELATED EXPERIENCE

Part-time Instructor (EdD Educational Leadership) 2022 – Present
University of Georgia

Part-time instructor in the Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy of the College of Education at the University of Georgia. The department offers a PhD, an EdD, and several Master's degrees in educational leadership. The department offers traditional, blended, and online courses. My teaching duties included Educational Leadership for Instructional Change & Improvement, Family & Community Engagement, Educational Leadership in High-Need Schools, Human Resources & Organizational Management Leadership, and Politics & Policy in Educational Leadership.

Superintendent of Schools 2021 – Present
Griffin-Spalding County Schools

Chief Executive Officer for a medium-sized school system of 1,400 employees, serving 10,000 students via 21 schools and programs, including a regional college and career academy. A high-level snapshot of my duties and responsibilities include:

- Oversee the day-to-day administration of the district

- Implementing all policies of the board, State Board of Education, Department of Education, and all federal laws
- Assuming responsibility for the overall financial planning of the board and district for the preparation of the annual budget
- Recommending education and administrative employees for employment
- Supervising and directing education and administrative employees
- Acting as the liaison between BOE and the state superintendent, GaDOE, and the local community
- Staying abreast of educational trends and developments

Strategic Leadership

- Constructed and implemented a comprehensive 5-year strategic plan that encompassed improved access, opportunities, and outcomes
- Received GSBA's Leading Edge Award in 2022 and 2023 for implementing innovative educational practices in the areas of literacy and community engagement
- Provided strategic leadership and collaboration with Delta TechOps and Middle GA State College to introduce an integrated Aviation Maintenance Program, the first of its kind in GA
- Established aggressive and transparent budgeting practices that eliminated a \$7 million deficit following the loss of ESSER funds

Organizational Leadership

- Commissioned and implemented a salary study that funded salary increases for all classified employees for the first time in more than 10 years
- Implemented the Community Eligibility Provision to ensure that all students receive breakfast and lunch at no cost
- Convened and facilitated stakeholder advisory councils that included students, teachers, parents, community leaders, and ministerial leaders
- Established a virtual school option that was cost-neutral to the district while creating additional options for students and families
- Implemented a new ERP platform that replaced a decades-old software platform for all business and HR operations
- GSCS Governance Team Awarded Exemplary status for three consecutive years (2021-2023)

Instructional Leadership

- Increased the district's CCRPI score for three consecutive years
- Facilitated the development of an instructional delivery model that resulted in improved reading performance in 3rd and 5th grades
- Instituted a comprehensive CTAE pathway completion structure that resulted in a 99% district-wide pass rate on End of Pathway Assessments in 2024
- Increased Grade level Lexile performance in 4 of 7 tested grades
- 3 of 11 Elementary Schools awarded Literacy Leaders for double-digit gains on GMAS
- Increased HS Graduation rate for three consecutive years

Chief of Staff

2015 – 2021

Bibb County School District

I was a senior leader of a school district with 36 schools and programs, 22,000 students, 3,500 full-time employees, and a general fund budget of more than \$300 million. More than 80 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

- Served as the district's senior official in the absence of the superintendent
- Provided technical insight and recommendations to help the superintendent navigate the cultural, political, and relational aspects that may affect the strategic plan's execution
- Coordinated the superintendent's cabinet to help them execute the district's strategic plan more effectively
- Provided strategic leadership to guide the district's COVID-19 school closure and reopening efforts

- Successfully provided executive leadership and planning for two E-SPLOST referenda approved by 65% of Macon-Bibb County voters totaling \$200 million of tax revenue
- Coordinated a partnership with United Way of Central Georgia to establish a Community School model in one distressed neighborhood
- Ensure coordination and coherence of the day-to-day operation of the school district
- Provided leadership and guidance for the district's charter school authorization committee
- Provided executive leadership and guidance in the construction/renovation of five school campuses, two auditoriums, and two athletic stadiums totaling more than \$185 million
- Directly supervised and evaluated the performance of three Assistant Superintendents
 - District Effectiveness and Federal Programs
 - Human Resources
 - Student Affairs
- Directly supervised the district's internal Legal Counsel
- Directly supervised district's Principal Supervisors and provided strategic advice to increase student achievement and increase graduation rates.
 - Graduation rate increased from 71% in 2015 to 79% in 2019
 - 3rd-grade reading proficiency increased from 32% in 2015 to 69% in 2019
 - 5th grade Math proficiency increased from 57% in 2015 to 78% in 2019
 - 9th grade ELA proficiency increased from 58% in 2015 to 77% in 2019
 - Algebra I proficiency increased from 44% in 2015 to 54% in 2019
 - Two Nationally recognized Title I Distinguished schools since 2017
 - Skyview Elementary
 - Sonny Carter Elementary
 - Provided instructional and leadership support for Magnet School certification at three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school
 - Provided instructional and leadership support for increasing Dual Enrollment participation from 53 students in 2015 to more than 200 students in 2018
- Directly supervise eight department directors that comprise the district's Operations Division:
 - Athletics – I coordinated a partnership between Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation, BCSD, and Atlanta Braves to construct a \$2.5 million multi-use sports complex
 - BCSD Police Dept. – provided operational leadership and support to implement a Juvenile Justice program that led to a 40% decrease in criminal charges against juveniles in our district
 - Capital Programs – provided leadership and support in developing long-term strategic planning for 48 facilities and 4 million ft² of property
 - Food Services – provided guidance and support for the implementation of several meal delivery programs such as *breakfast in the classroom* and *grab-n-go kiosks*; serve approximately 30,000 meals and snacks per day
 - Maintenance – provided leadership and support in implementing an electronic work-order system that increased service and efficiency by more than 30%
 - Safety & Risk Management – provided leadership and guidance in brokering a partnership between BCSD, local, and state emergency agencies such as Macon-Bibb EMA, North Central Health District, and GEMA
 - Technology Services – provided leadership and support to implement and oversee \$10 million 1:1 device and network infrastructure refresh.
 - Transportation – provided leadership and guidance in implementing a routing program with 90% on-time performance; traveling 8,000 square miles daily with an accident rate of ≥ 2 per month
- Support assistant superintendents, executive directors, and principals in thinking through difficult issues and decisions, anticipating problem areas, and providing alternate strategies or perspectives on issues.
- Serve as a sounding board for new ideas, goal setting, and initiative development.
- Develop the internal capacity of the organization to address known and unknown challenges

Griffin High School is an urban school that has an enrollment of 1,400 students and 100+ faculty & staff members. I provided school-based leadership for an extensive school transformation that included improving the school climate and culture, increasing student achievement, and preparing new leaders.

- Successfully implemented \$6 million School Improvement Grant
- GHS was named a National Model School for Rapid Growth by the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) in 2013
- Increased the 4-year graduation rate each year from 63% in 2010 74% in 2015
- Led an instructional improvement program that enabled GHS to exit Priority and Focus status
- Successfully established a Smaller Learning Communities initiative that led to four Wall-to-Wall Academies
- Increased student achievement on End-of-Course test results in all Math and Language Arts courses from 2010-2015
- Implemented an Advanced Placement initiative that led to the school receiving GADOE's Honors Designation for increased participation and performance
- Increased AP course offerings from 4 in 2010 to 10 in 2015
- Led the implementation of a PBIS program that yielded a four-star school climate rating by the GADOE
- Improved the school's average daily attendance from 89% in 2010 to 96% in 2015
- Reduced the out-of-school suspension rate by nearly 60% over five years

Principal

2009 – 2010

Monroe County Achievement Center, Forsyth GA

I was the principal/director of an award-winning alternative education program that served at-risk students in grades six through twelve.

- Developed one of the earliest instructional models in the region that balanced standards-based, personalized learning and whole-group learning.
- Collaborated with six local businesses to develop internships for twenty at-risk students
- MCAC students demonstrated growth or proficiency on the GHSGT in Math (58%) and English/Language Arts (76%) in 2010
- Created a behavior incentive program that reduced misconduct (25% improvement) and improved student attendance (40% improvement).
- School climate and culture improved to the degree that I worked with the high school principal and superintendent to allow students to remain at MCAC through graduation if students desired to do so.
- Worked with GADOE to create standards for alternative education programs
- MCAC students had a recidivism rate of less than 5%

AWARDS & HONORS

- 2024 President's Award, Georgia School Superintendents Association
- 2022 Excellence in Achievement Award, GA Association of Alternative Education
- 2021 Macon-Bibb Collaborative Outstanding Leadership Award
- 2016 Community Partner of the Year, Boys & Girls Club of Central GA

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- *Miles to Go, Fulfilling the Promise of Racial Equity in Education*, Southern Education Foundation Issues Forum, Charlotte, NC. 2023
- *The Pursuit of Equity*, The New Teacher Center, 2020 National Conference, Atlanta GA
- *Achieving Student Success Through Operational Efficiency*, 2019 Council of Great City Schools Conference, Columbus OH

- *Establishing a Culture of Performance to Support District-wide Improvement*, GAEL Annual Conference, St. Simons, GA, July 2017
- *Aligning District Processes to Support School Improvement*, AdvancED/COGNIA Annual Conference 2016
- *Leading for Effective School Climate* Georgia Department of Education, 2015
- *School Improvement Requires People Improvement* ASCD Ed Leadership, 2015

COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS & OUTREACH

- Kiwanis Club of Griffin (2013 – present)
- Boys & Girls Club of Central GA, Corporate Board (2018 – present)
- Southern Crescent Technical College, Board of Directors (2021 – present)
- Spalding County Health Department, Board of Directors (2022 – present)
- Wellstar Spalding Hospital, Board of Advisors (2021 – present)
- Member: AASA, GAEL, GSBA, and GSSA

Keith Simmons

- **Personal Information**

You **may not** contact my current employer.

I am available for employment after **7/7/2025**.

Current Base Salary **\$190,000**

Indicate how you prefer to be contacted confidentially: **Mobile Phone**

2. **Address**

3. **Education History**

University of Georgia

Attended from 2019 to 2022

Graduated: **Yes**

Course:

Degree: **Ed.D.**

Major Area of Study or Concentration

Minor Area of Study or Concentration

Upload transcript

Date Degree Awarded/Expected or if currently or formerly enrolled provide last date applicable

Education Leadership

Education Administration and Policy

[UGA_EdD_Official.pdf](#)

2022-05-30

Barry University

Attended from 2001 to 2003

Graduated: **Yes**

Course:

Degree: **M.Ed.**

Major Area of Study or Concentration

Minor Area of Study or Concentration

Upload transcript

Date Degree Awarded/Expected or if currently or formerly enrolled provide last date applicable

Ed Leadership

Ed Leadership

[Barry Transcript_M.Ed_Print version.pdf](#)

2003-12-30

4. **Employment History**

Griffin-Spalding County Schools

Superintendent of Schools

From 1/25/2021 to Present

Reason for leaving: Currently serving in GSCS

Supervisor Name:

Mr. Will Doss, BOE Chair

Supervisor Phone:

Supervisor Email:

Annual Salary

190,000

Check here if we may contact this employer

No

Select one

Full-time position

Key Responsibilities	Chief executive officer for a medium-sized school system serving 10,000 students and 18 schools; 75% of students are economically disadvantaged; operating an annual budget of more than \$200 million dollars
Key Accomplishments	2024 GSSA President's Award 2023 Read for the Record District of the Year 2023 GaDOE Literacy Leader Designation (3 Schools) 2022 & 2023 GSBA Leading Edge Award
Number of Persons Supervised	1400
Budget Allocated for which you are responsible	200,000,000

5. **References**

Dr. Curtis Jones, Professional and Personal reference

Reference Evaluation Form [View Evaluation Form](#)

Years Known **14**

Current Position **Superintendent (retired)**

Address

Dr. Leslie Hazle Bussey, Professional reference

Reference Evaluation Form [View Evaluation Form](#)

Years Known **5**

Organization **Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement**

Current Position **CEO/Executive Director**

Address

Dr. Stephanie Gordy, Professional reference

Reference Evaluation Form [View Evaluation Form](#)

Years Known **10**

Organization **Griffin RESA**

Current Position **Executive Director**

Address

John J-H Kim, Professional

Years Known **8**

Organization **Harvard Business School / District Management Group**

Current Position **Senior Lecturer**

Address

6. **Files**

[KSimmons Reference - S. Gordy](#) - Reference Letter

[Reference letter - C. Jones](#) - Reference Letter

[Reference Letter - J. Kim](#) - Reference Letter

7. **Certifications**

Other: 711123
Clear Renewable

McDonough, GA
United States

8. **Additional Information**

Honors and Awards

2024 GSSA President's Award
2023 Jumpstart's Read for the Record: District of the Year
2022 GAAE Excellence in Achievement Award

Interests, Hobbies, Special Talents

Culinary cuisine

Community Outreach

Member, Kiwanis Club of Griffin
Board Member, Southern Crescent Technical College
Board Member, Wellstar-Spalding Hospital
Board Member, Spalding County Department of Health
Board Member, Griffin-Spalding Chamber of Commerce
Executive Committee, Griffin-Spalding Archway Partnership

9. **Other Training**

Institution, Program or Trainer/Consultant Providing Training
GSBA Whole Board Training
Training Location

Griffin, GA
United States

Duration of Training
3 hour sessions annually
Institution, Program or Trainer/Consultant Providing Training
GSSA Senior Executive Leadership Program
Training Location

Newnan, GA
United States

Duration of Training
08/2023 - 06/2024

10. **Application Questions**

When are you available to start this position? 2025-07-07
Indicators

INDICATOR 1: EDUCATION, TRAINING AND LICENSURE - Share the superintendent training programs that you have completed and discuss the value derived from these professional development experiences in preparing you for the Richmond County superintendent role.

Each professional development program I have completed has significantly shaped my leadership approach, grounding it in equity, strategic vision, and collaborative execution. These experiences have not only prepared me for the Richmond County superintendent role but have also enabled me to lead with measurable success. Through Harvard's Public Education Leadership Project (PELP) and the Georgia School Superintendents Association (GSSA) leadership programs, I developed the ability to align resources, personnel, and strategies to drive district-wide improvement. This training directly informed my leadership in crafting a five-year strategic plan and managing complex initiatives, such as launching an integrated aviation program and overseeing a district-wide ERP system transition. My participation in the Southern Education Foundation's Racial Equity Leadership Network and the AASA Urban Superintendent Academy reflects my deep commitment to dismantling systemic barriers in education. These programs sharpened my focus on equity-driven outcomes, contributing to tangible gains in student achievement, including higher Lexile scores, expanded AP enrollment, and improved graduation rates. Additionally, these programs reinforced my belief in shared and inclusive leadership. This is evident in my facilitation of stakeholder advisory councils and the co-creation of instructional delivery models that advanced student performance across key academic areas. Whether leading multi-million-dollar capital projects or forging innovative CTAE and academic partnerships, I have drawn upon the insights and tools gained through these rigorous professional experiences.

INDICATOR 2: EXPERIENCE - What do you deem to be your major accomplishment(s) in each of the leadership roles you have held relevant to readiness for the Richmond position and describe your track record of success and professional expertise achieved in these leadership roles of increased responsibility over time.

Superintendent Griffin-Spalding County: Led the creation of a college and career ecosystem with local post-secondary institutions Launched formal agreements with Delta TechOps and Middle GA State College to create a dual enrollment Aviation Maintenance Program Implemented salary increases for classified employees—the first in over 10 years Implemented a district-wide free meal program under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Maintained Exemplary governance status for three consecutive years Twice awarded the GSBA Leading Edge Award (2022, 2023) Rebounded academic performance to pre-pandemic levels by 2024. Boosted reading levels across elementary and middle schools. Increased HS graduation rate (82% → 86%) Both high schools were recognized for their AP participation and performance growth As superintendent, I've honed my skills of being a well-rounded strategic leader who aligns innovation and infrastructure to elevate organizational effectiveness and student achievement. Chief of Staff - Bibb County School District: Oversaw \$200M in E-SPLIST referenda and \$185M in capital improvement projects Created a COVID-19 response strategy and return-to-school plan that allowed us to safely reopen 37 campuses HS graduation rate increased from 71% to 79% Significant gains in 3rd-grade reading (+37%), 5th-grade math (+21%), and 9th-grade ELA (+19%) During my tenure as Chief of Staff, I excelled as a systems-level thinker and collaborator across instructional and operational domains within the organization. I learned invaluable skills related to large-scale budgeting, infrastructure planning, and developing executive-level alignment. Principal - Griffin High School: Successfully led a \$6M School Improvement Grant to turn around school performance Increased graduation rate from 63% to 74% School was designated a National Model School by ICLE in 2013 Improved attendance (89% → 96%) and reduced suspensions by 60% As a principal, I demonstrated school turnaround expertise through instructional leadership, culture building, and community partnerships. Program design, data-informed decision making, and change management were key skills that I leveraged during this time in my leadership journey.

INDICATOR 3: VISION, MISSION AND BELIEFS - Describe a success story from your current or past leadership work that highlights the strategies you employed to align programs to a district's broader mission, vision and philosophy; and how will you go about effectively listening to and representing the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents and community members in strategic plan implementation?

When I began my tenure as superintendent, I prioritized expanding our reach and interactions with new and existing industry partners. Honoring our mission of "empowering each student to graduate college and career ready", I worked hand-in-hand with the city and county managers, the president of Southern Crescent Technical College, and executive director of the development authority to execute strategies for us to increase collaboration and outcomes related to workforce development and readiness in Spalding County. I wanted to not only diversify student opportunities but also ensure every graduate left us with marketable credentials and clear pathways to postsecondary success. Subsequently, we established formal partnerships with Delta TechOps and Middle Georgia State College and spearheaded the launch of the state's first Aviation Maintenance Program on a high school campus, the Griffin Region College and Career Academy. By aligning the CTAE curriculum with college coursework and industry standards, we now have students graduating with both high school diplomas and FAA-recognized credentials, dramatically shortening the timeframe from diploma to career readiness. Similarly, to maximize students' access to our robust CTAE offerings, we instituted a district-wide CTAE pathway completion structure. In 2024, this initiative helped our district achieve historic performances on the End-of-Pathway Assessments, with these achievements translating directly into industry certifications and articulated college credit for students. More importantly, in 2024, pathway completers posted an on-time 4-year graduation rate of 99%! These incredible achievements and partnerships were all created in part due to the solicitation and execution of inclusive stakeholder representation, structured stakeholder engagements, and informed/integrated feedback.

INDICATOR 4: ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL NORMS - Educators frequently come under close scrutiny for actions they take either as private citizens or in their professional roles. Share your views on this issue and how you ensure that your actions meet high ethical standards.

My faith is the cornerstone of my personal value system. It shapes how I view people and the world around me. I believe that most people are inherently good and genuinely want what's best for themselves and others. However, the systems and structures in which people operate often shape their behavior. When those systems create competition or conflicting interests, such as zero-sum dynamics, people may act in ways that appear self-serving or ineffective, even if that's not their intent. This belief fuels my commitment and reliance on trust. I understand that not every relationship will be built on high trust, but I'll always choose low trust over no trust at all. Trust is a foundation, not a luxury. It's essential to building the kind of professional environment where students receive the high-quality education and services they deserve. I don't believe people come to work to create harm or fail. Instead, I believe that most are doing their best within the systems they've been given. That's why we must design systems that support and amplify people's natural inclination to do good, and align that with the high performance we expect on behalf of students.

INDICATOR 5: EQUITY AND CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS - Give an example of what you have done to hold yourself accountable for the alignment and coordination of student services for addressing student needs in a manner that ensures equity and cultural responsiveness.

As Chief of Staff in the Bibb County School District, I was tasked with advancing one of our strategic priorities while maintaining our commitment to equitable outcomes and systemic improvement. A highlight for me in this critical work was providing leadership and insight into the development and implementation of a Community School model in one of our most distressed neighborhoods. Recognizing the impact of socioeconomic and environmental factors on student achievement, I facilitated a strategic partnership with the United Way of Central Georgia. Together, we launched a comprehensive Community School initiative aimed at dismantling barriers to learning by integrating academic instruction with critical wraparound services—healthcare, mental health counseling, family engagement programs, and after-school enrichment. This effort required thoughtful alignment of district operations with community-based assets, as well as coordination among school leaders, nonprofit partners, and local government agencies. My role involved building, leveraging, and navigating complex stakeholder relationships to ensure that the community school model addressed students' academic needs while also honoring the cultural contexts of the school community. Through this initiative, we anchored student support in equity and responsiveness. Services were tailored to the unique challenges and strengths of the local population, ensuring that interventions were both effective and affirming, while demonstrating respect for the community's identity. This work exemplifies my ongoing commitment to leading with accountability, fostering inclusive systems, and creating learning environments where every student, regardless of background, has the chance to thrive.

INDICATOR 6: CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT - As instructional leader, what steps will you take to ensure the alignment of rigorous curricula, research-based best practices in instruction, and comprehensive diagnostic, formative and summative assessment approaches to close achievement gaps and provide timely and accurate feedback to students and parents and inform instructional practices?

Instructional leaders impact the quality of teaching and learning across schools and the district. An effective instructional leader is committed to student success with grade-level, standards-based, rigorous content. This begins with making sure that high-quality instructional materials are research-based and aligned with the Georgia Standards. Once the High-Quality Instruction Materials (HQIM) are present, then clear expectations for the use of the HQIM are critical for an instructional leader. Teachers are expected to collaboratively engage in the intellectual preparation and internalization of the curriculum materials so they are prepared to deliver grade-level content to all students in Tier 1 instruction. The purpose of relying on HQIM is that the vetting process on sites like EdReports (edreports.org), evaluates materials for the best practices in content pedagogy. School leaders must be clear and explicit in their expectations and then monitor the preparation and delivery to ensure only grade-level content is put in front of all students in Tier 1 instruction. Assessment results are critical in helping schools identify structured opportunities for students who need specific skill gaps closed so that they can be immediately successful in grade-level content. After each formative assessment (both unit assessments and performance-based tasks), teachers in their collaborative planning should leverage assessment results to make strategic decisions about prioritizing learning activities contained within the curriculum to ensure student success and identify appropriate scaffolds that may be needed. As superintendent, I am relentless at helping staff understand that we are committed to the success of all students in grade-level content, being mindful that just-in-time support will be necessary so that students can access that grade-level content. Instructional practices that expect students to be intellectually engaged in their own learning are critical components. Teachers need to aggressively monitor students to determine who may need support at any given moment during class and then provide that immediate support. This is made possible because of the level of internalization the teachers have with the grade-level content. Once expectations are clearly and explicitly communicated, and structures and supports are provided to help with collaborative preparation and internalization, then feedback is used to close gaps in practice between the expectations and the evidence observed in practice.

INDICATOR 7: COMMUNITY OF CARE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS - As you have prepared for the superintendency or currently serve in the role, give snapshots of how you have built safe, caring environments across schools in the district that meet the social-emotional needs of each student and encourage them to be responsible and productive members of their community.

As superintendent of schools, I led several key initiatives that reflect my commitment to building a community of care and support for all students. Stakeholder Advisory Councils: I created and facilitated diverse advisory groups composed of students, educators, parents, community leaders, and faith-based partners. These councils provided meaningful, ongoing dialogue where student voices, particularly around social-emotional well-being and cultural identity, shaped district policies and programs. Universal Meal Access: To combat food insecurity and support students' ability to focus and thrive, I championed the implementation of the USDA's Community Eligibility Provision. This initiative guaranteed free breakfast and lunch for all students, removing a significant barrier to academic and emotional success. Flexible Learning Options: Recognizing the varied needs of our student population, I launched a cost-neutral virtual school program. This initiative offered personalized learning pathways that reduced the pressures of traditional scheduling and gave students greater agency over their education.

INDICATOR 8: PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY OF DISTRICT PERSONNEL - Discuss the role of activities such as coaching, creating supportive conditions, and fostering a professional learning community in developing highly effective teachers and leaders for the district.

I believe that every organization comprises three tiers of employees: those who are already capable and competent, those who are on the path to becoming so, and a small minority who lack the drive to improve. While the third group is rare, it's critical to focus on the growth and development of the first two. I recognize that the skills our employees possess today may not align with the roles they aspire to tomorrow. That's why I strongly advocate for the establishment and continued investment in a robust talent pipeline, as well as a clearly defined system for developing and retaining talent from within. To ensure meaningful, high-impact professional learning, I rely on a theory of action grounded in forward-thinking objectives and authentic problems of practice. The aim of professional learning must always be to expand an employee's knowledge and skillset in ways that are practical, transformative, and aligned with the organization's performance goals. As superintendent, I work closely with our talent development team to design professional learning experiences that are rigorous, relevant, and reflective of our strategic priorities. Given the size and complexity of Richmond County Schools, it is essential that the next superintendent remains deeply committed to sustaining and strengthening the talent pipeline across all employee groups—both certified and classified.

INDICATOR 9: PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY FOR DISTRICT STAFF - Describe what is meant by supportive workplace conditions and be specific about the conditions for promoting professional learning, collaborative practice, and mutual accountability for advancing student learning.

Safe. Supportive. Connected. Engaged. These are the adjectives that describe the ideal workplace conditions for our employees. Safe workplace conditions would encompass emotional, physical, and psychological safety. These conditions are critical for the organization's overall performance and productivity. Supportive workplace conditions are created when the organization ensures that its goals and objectives are appropriately resourced. Similarly, supportive workplace conditions are reinforced via clear, two-way communication between leadership and the staff, and leadership behaviors that demonstrate **empathy, compassion, and recognition**. A **connected workplace** is one in which **employees can see a reflection of their individual and collective values and beliefs**. What this looks like is a workplace where employees value interpersonal relationships; communication and collaboration are openly practiced; and perhaps most importantly, employees routinely (and willingly) give their talent in support of the collective group. Engaged workplace conditions include many of the attributes that have already been mentioned. The presence of accountability, when leveraged appropriately, fosters conducive conditions for an effective evaluation system. A system that is grounded in uplifting employees and advancing their performance to their highest potential. A high-performing district team is grounded in trust and respect for each other's work, as these are the precedents for mutual accountability. The presence and practice of these characteristics will enable the district to accelerate its efforts related to improving students' learning outcomes.

INDICATOR 10: MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT OF FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY - Describe a time when you successfully implemented a district-wide initiative that fostered meaningful family and community engagement.

After being appointed superintendent, I launched a formal Stakeholder Advisory Council initiative across all the district's school communities. The objective was to ensure our five-year strategic plan and day-to-day programs were truly reflective of students' and families' needs and cultural strengths. This effort highlighted inclusive representation (i.e., parents, students, teachers, faith-based leaders, civic-group representatives, and local business partners from every school zone), structured engagements (i.e., cadence for meetings, relevant discussions around academic and non-academic topics), and integrated decision-making (using feedback to inform district practices, processes, and programs). The outputs of our collaboration earned our district the GSBA's Leading Edge Award in 2022 and 2023 for innovative approaches to family and community engagement, a testament to the initiative's impact. More exciting and importantly, this collaboration gave birth to what we call "Day One in the District," where each year, more than 400 community stakeholders embark upon all of our school sites on the first day of school to welcome our students and staff back to school!

INDICATOR 11: OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT - Describe the relationship between the school board and the superintendent as it relates to school district operations and management and clearly define the role of the board and the role of the superintendent.

The Board and the superintendent are two distinct entities within the school district, each having specific roles and responsibilities. At the core, the fundamental roles of the Board and superintendent are connected. The Board has four primary duties: hire/evaluate the superintendent; establish local policy aimed at advancing student outcomes, ensure fiscal management, and community representation - in a word, governance. The practices that the Board deploys to achieve these actions can be far-reaching and impactful on how the school system performs. The superintendent, also has four primary duties: provide administrative leadership (establish direction, manage day-to-day operations, implement BOE policies, oversee school system performance, etc.); personnel management (hire/supervise/evaluate district employees, make personnel action recommendations to BOE); budget development and implementation (identify and ensure effective resource allocation strategies); and community engagement (serve as the conduit for the community, foster collaboration, and communication). I believe the relationship between the Board and superintendent should be one of interdependence and partnership. This relationship should include defined expectations related to the job performance of both entities, including desirable behaviors associated with their roles and responsibilities, respectively.

INDICATOR 12: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - Give an example of a school improvement effort you have led and pinpoint the data-driven strategies you implemented to address areas of need and what measurable outcomes resulted from your efforts.

Under my leadership in Griffin-Spalding, we embarked on an intense, highly-focused effort to improve Tier I instruction in our elementary schools. With an emphasis on the use of HQIM, standardized instructional blocks, and persistent instructional observation and data collection & analysis, several of our elementary schools demonstrated incredible improvements according to their 2024 CCRPI performance. For example: • Our elementary schools system-wide CCRPI score reached 69.9 in 2024, surpassing both 2023 (65.3) and 2019 (64.3) levels. • Our elementary schools Progress score increased to 82.5 in 2024 from 80.5 in 2019. • Our elementary schools Closing Gaps jumped significantly: from 35.9 in 2019 to 84.4 in 2024. • Reading at Grade Level in elementary schools improved from 40.34 in 2019 to 48.52 in 2024. Standout Schools: Jackson Road Elementary: Scored 99.7 in Progress and 100 in Closing Gaps in 2024. Moreland Road Elementary: Progress climbed to 98.2 in 2024. Orrs Elementary: Notable improvements with 95.1 in Progress and 66.7 in Closing Gaps in 2024.

INDICATOR 13: LEADERSHIP PERSONAL QUALITIES: Communication - Briefly describe a time when you had to communicate a complex or sensitive issue to multiple stakeholders (e.g., school board, parents, staff) and how you ensured clarity and transparency in your message.

I was tasked with speaking with our Board and several community groups on the prospect of one or more school closures due to persistent declining enrollment. While the topic was the same, the perspectives I needed to acknowledge and communicate varied according to the audience. The Board, responsible for ensuring the community's schools were resourced and operating properly, knew that operating funds was the key driver and that declining enrollment meant less revenue to operate the schools. The parents and students, full of memories, aspirations, and uncertainties, were committed to emotions and nostalgia. For me, empathy and transparency were my anchors. With both audiences, I ensured a balance of factual background information and acknowledgment of how information may or may not resonate. I also ensured a balance of analogies that depicted sacrifice in support of success and change in support of progress. With both audiences, I was persistent about the purpose of the discussions and the options that were at our disposal. The most critical action I took during those discussions was to share with both audiences the enrollment thresholds needed for the schools to maintain fiscal solvency. This removed me as the potential influencer of a decision and allowed me to maintain a neutral, non-imposing partner in whatever action/decision would occur. We ended up closing one school campus altogether and building a new, larger school campus on the site of the other impacted campus. The new campus was the first in GA to be named after the late US Rep. John Lewis - the sensitive issue turned out to be "good trouble."

INDICATOR 13: LEADERSHIP PERSONAL QUALITIES: Conflict Management - Provide an example of a time when you successfully mediated a conflict between two or more parties within a school district.

I mediated a complex conflict involving three senior central office administrators centered around a new initiative aimed at supporting schools in improving overall performance (CCRPI). The core of the disagreement stemmed from differing perspectives on why struggling schools were not meeting their improvement goals, and the perceived effectiveness of the support provided by each central office team. Through the mediation process, it became clear that although each team had developed plans to support schools, the plans were not aligned or interdependent. The lack of coordination led to fragmented efforts, placing additional burdens on schools while yielding minimal positive results. The administrators recognized that while they shared similar goals in principle, they had not established a unified or collaborative approach to achieving them. As a result, we co-created a new accountability structure that included coordinated communication at the senior cabinet level, aligned support plans, and integrated services at both the departmental and school levels. This structure ensured coherence and synergy across teams and strengthened our collective impact on school and district improvement efforts.

INDICATOR 13: LEADERSHIP PERSONAL QUALITIES: Decision-Making - What factors do you consider when making a high-stakes decision and how do you ensure your decision is aligned with student success?

When making a high-stakes decision, I'm careful to consider the following factors: potential problems with the decision, root cause(s) of the problem, my ability to show/demonstrate good will, and finally, the extent to which the decision will positively impact the most people. I will know if such decisions are aligned with student success when the systems or structures that students operate within position them for persistent access and opportunity to be successful. Said differently, student experiences and outcomes should improve because of the high-stakes decision-making efforts.

INDICATOR 14: "FIT" FOR THE DISTRICT & COMMUNITY - Describe the school communities in which you have worked in the past and briefly compare/contrast those communities with the Richmond community.

My career as an educator began as a special education teacher in the School District of Osceola County (SDOC), located in my hometown of Kissimmee, Florida. SDOC is home to more than 74,000 students who attend 85 schools. As is the case in large, complex communities throughout the state, SDOC has a large portfolio of charter schools. A recent Google search indicated a total of 25 charter schools with a collective enrollment of nearly 6,000 students. Students in the Osceola School District represent 140 different countries and speak over 98 languages. My first administrative assignment came as a member of the inaugural staff of Olympia High School in Orange County Public Schools (OCPS), located in neighboring Orlando, Florida. OCPS is the fourth-largest school system in Florida (8th nationally) with an enrollment of more than 209,000 students who attend 210 schools. OCPS also touts a diverse student population, representing 199 countries and 174 languages or dialects. Along with a large portfolio of charter schools, OCPS operates several magnet schools to better meet the diverse aspirations of students and families in the greater Orlando area. I began my tenure as an educator in Georgia as an administrator at Westside HS in Macon-Bibb County. When I began at WHS in the Bibb County School District (BCSD), there were only 5 high schools. The overall student enrollment at that time was approximately 25,000 students who attended 39 schools. BCSD's student population has little to no diversity. Macon has a relatively large number of private/parochial schools within the county - there was little to no diversity on those campuses either. My first stint in Macon-Bibb was for 1 year. Shortly after moving from Florida to Macon, I served 3 years in Monroe County Schools in Forsyth, and then I served my first stint (5 years) in Griffin-Spalding County. I've been fortunate to have served in a wide array of communities and school systems, affording me the experiences needed to lead a community and school system such as Richmond County toward its desired outcomes. In RCS, I will leverage my experiences to partner with stakeholders throughout our school system and community alike to confront our most persistent challenges and advance a common purpose for change.

Provide any additional information that you believe will support your application for the superintendent's position for which you are applying.

Throughout my leadership career in Georgia and Florida school systems, I have consistently demonstrated the ability to make data-informed, strategic decisions aligned to student success. My work reflects a clear focus on improving outcomes, closing opportunity gaps, and sustaining academic and operational efficiency. My leadership portfolio demonstrates a commitment to ensuring students and employees are given the systems and structures to be successful. My instructional and organizational leadership has advanced student achievement, improved system operations, and established replicable models for success in large and mid-sized urban districts.

Personal Affirmation

Have you ever been dismissed, suspended or terminated, resigned or given the opportunity to resign, withdrawn an employment offer, or not offered re-employment from any professional, educational or management employment position, OR while under investigation, left employment?

No

Please provide the date(s) address of the employer, fully stated reason(s), basis and circumstances for the adverse action(s).

Do you understand that because of the nature of the position for which you are applying, that the school district employer may require a background check, including a search of fingerprint, criminal records and credit history?

Yes

Please explain.

Do you agree and consent for such background search and investigation to be conducted and agree to hold the school district and Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) and all officials, representatives, and employees of the foregoing, harmless from all claims for libel, slander, invasion of privacy, intentional infliction of emotional distress and similar claims?

Yes

Please explain.

Have you ever had an adverse action (i.e. warning, reprimand, suspension, denial, voluntary surrender, disbarment, etc.) taken against a professional certificate, license or permit issued by any state agency? No

Please explaining provide dates, agency and location

Are you currently the subject of OR have you ever been the subject of any investigation involving a violation of a profession's laws, rules, standards, Code of Ethics or Conduct by any state agency and/or involving a criminal act, sexual misconduct or physical harm to a child? No

Please explain, provide dates, agency and location

Have you ever been convicted or pled to a lesser offense for any sexual offense or drug offense (felony or misdemeanor)? No

Please explain and provide dates, location and other essential information.

Have you ever received a less than honorable discharge from any branch of the armed services of the United States? No

Please explain

Please upload Form DD214

Do you have a relative(s) on the Board of Education or relative(s) employed after July 1, 2009 as a school district administrator in the district for which you are making application? No

If you answered yes, please explain