



Clayton County Public Schools

Department of Professional Learning Newsletter



APRIL 2023 | DIVISION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING & STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT |

Vision/Aspiration Statement: The vision of Clayton County Public Schools is to prepare ALL graduates to have the skills to pursue and accomplish college, post-secondary training, and/or career opportunities in order to live and compete successfully in a global society.



Mission Statement: The mission of Clayton County Public Schools is to empower scholars to achieve academic, professional, and personal goals by providing equitable access and experiences that build skills in literacy, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration.

Enhancing Educator Excellence: The Vital Role of Clayton County Public Schools' Department of Professional Learning

The Clayton County Public Schools Department of Professional Learning is responsible for providing ongoing professional development opportunities to all staff members in the school district. This department is focused on enhancing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of educators and support staff to improve student achievement and success. Some of the key responsibilities of the Department of Professional Learning in Clayton County Public Schools include:

1. Professional Learning is for everyone and should be designed to meet the needs of staff and improve workplace effectiveness.
2. Providing training sessions, workshops, and other learning opportunities for teachers, administrators, and support staff in the district.
3. Developing and implementing professional learning plans that align with the district's strategic goals and objectives.
4. Supporting educators in obtaining and maintaining their professional certifications and licenses.
5. Facilitating collaboration and sharing of best practices among teachers and other education professionals.
6. Conducting research and analysis to identify emerging trends and best practices in education and professional development.
7. Evaluating the effectiveness of professional development programs and making recommendations for improvement.

Becoming a Teacher: Clayton County Public Schools' Alternative Certification Pathway

The Clayton County Public Schools Teacher Academy of Preparation and Pedagogy program is an alternative certification program designed to help individuals with a bachelor's degree in a field other than education to become certified teachers in the state of Georgia. The program is specifically tailored to provide a streamlined pathway for aspiring teachers who have a passion for education but did not complete a traditional teacher education program. It allows individuals to work as full-time teachers while completing their certification requirements, including coursework and classroom observations. The program is also designed to prepare aspiring teachers for the rigors of the classroom, and it emphasizes practical, hands-on training in real-world classroom settings.

The Clayton County Public Schools Teacher Academy of Preparation and Pedagogy program provides an opportunity for those who have a passion for teaching to enter the profession and make a positive impact on the lives of students.

To find out more on teacher certification through the Teacher Academy of Preparation and Pedagogy program, visit the [Department of Professional Learning website](https://www.clayton.k12.ga.us/departments/professional_learning)

For more updates, follow us on



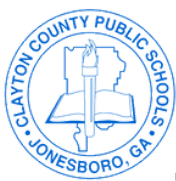
Executive Director of Professional Learning

Dr. Gloria Duncan
Clayton County Public Schools Member for 37 years

Dr. Gloria Duncan began her career as an educator in the Clayton County Public School System as a 7th Grade English teacher and English Department Chair where she served for 12 years. During her career in education, she has also served as and Instructional Lead Teacher, a middle school Assistant Principal and both a Middle School and High School Principal. She has served as a Graduate Education Instructor for Teacher Education at Mercer University and a Graduate Education Instructor in Educational Leadership for the University of West Georgia. She served as the Interim Superintendent for Clayton County Public School System and currently works in the Professional Learning Department.

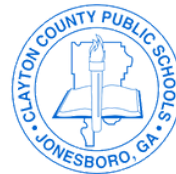
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Expand Your Teaching Horizons: Clayton County Public Schools' Endorsement Offerings for Professional Development

Are you developing your craft? An endorsement specifies additional content you are qualified to teach.

Clayton County Public Schools and the Department of Professional Learning proudly offer the following endorsements:

- Computer Science
- Dyslexia
- ESOL
- Gifted
- K-5 Math
- K-5 Science
- Online Teaching
- PBIS
- Reading
- STEM
- Teacher Leader
- Teacher Support & Coaching
- Urban Education

For more information, please attend the [annual endorsement interest meeting](#) this May.

The Professional Library and Make It/Take It Center: A One- Stop Resource for Faculty and Staff

The Professional Library and Make It/Take It Center room at the Department of Professional Learning Center offer a variety of resources for faculty and staff. A few services and resources include:

- A Large collection of die-cuts and cutting machines.
- Equipment for making spiral binders
- Unibinder machine for making clear bound binders
- Wide rotary cutters
- Copy machine
- Scanner
- Laminating machines
- Computers for use while in the center
- Large format printer for posters
- Classroom supplies, such as construction paper, binders, index cards, poster board, etc.
- Professional Library

Elevating Teaching Excellence: Clayton County Public Schools' Professional Development Training Requests

The Department of Professional Learning provides professional development courses to faculty and staff which supports growth in the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System standards. Some of the types of training and areas of support include but are not limited to:

- Assessment
- Classroom Management
- Content-Based
- CRISS
- Differentiated Instruction
- Effective Instruction
- Effective Lesson Planning
- Effective Use of Feedback in a Standard-based Classroom
- Emotional Intelligence
- Evaluating Exceptional Students
- Growth Mindset
- Individual Teacher Support
- K-5 Digital Writing
- Making the Collaborative Model Work
- Managing the LD/EBD Classroom
- Mindfulness
- Online Teaching Strategies
- Professionalism
- Restorative Practices
- Social Emotional Learning
- Student Engagement
- Raising Rigor using Google Applications
- Teaching Reading and Writing

To view course descriptions and request training, please visit the Department of Professional Learning's [Request Trainings](#) page.

*Empowering
Educators!*

Recognizing Excellence: Dr. Harmon's Journey as a Teacher Development Specialist and Contributions to Professional Learning



Teacher Development Specialist

*Dr. Stefanie Harmon
Clayton County Public
Schools Member for 15 years*

Dr. Stefanie Harmon is a Teacher Development Specialist for the Department of Professional Learning.

Dr. Harmon was nominated for the March 2022-2023 Employee & Alumni Spotlight which highlights district employees and notable alumni for contributions and achievements.

Dr. Harmon began her teaching career in the Clayton County Public School District in 2008 in the area of Early Childhood. Currently serving in the capacity of Teacher Development Specialist for the Department of Professional Learning, Dr. Harmon has over 13 years of experience in K-5 teaching and coaching and support.

Dr. Harmon is an augural, active member of the Social Emotional Learning Team, and co-wrote the Growth Mindset professional development course, as well as the proposal and curriculum for the Urban Education Endorsement. Additionally, Dr. Harmon has facilitated and developed various professional development trainings for teams and staff members, both in and outside of the district, in the areas of Classroom Management, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, Growth, and elementary Science, and Social Studies.

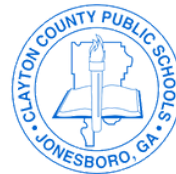
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Our Standards for Professional Learning in Clayton County Public Schools

We believe that professional learning for Clayton County Public Schools should:

- Reflect the best available research on teaching and learning;
- Align with state and national standards for content, context, and process;
- Model techniques of effective instruction, including the effective use of technology and the active engagement of participants;
- Nurture adult learners' intellectual capacity and the quest for learning in an environment of respect, dignity, care, and security;
- Reflect an appreciation of and responsiveness to the diversity that exists within the educational community;
- Include a pervasive implementation of professional learning communities that plan collaboratively and which select adult learning experiences based on student needs;
- Be designed with the understanding that learning is a continuous process;
- Engage participants during and after training in assessing the impact of the learning on employee work behaviors and student outcomes;
- Provide daily opportunities for employees to learn through job-embedded experiences;
- Include ongoing support and subsequent training as needed;
- Be relevant to the needs of the students, the employees, and the school district;
- Relate directly to student achievement.

*We believe
in YOU!*



Department of Professional Learning Staff Members

Collaborative Feedback: Strengthening Professional Learning through Educator Subcommittees

Obtaining feedback from personnel to improve professional learning within the county is our priority! The Clayton County Public Schools' Department of Professional Learning subcommittees are groups of educators who work together to plan and implement professional development opportunities for teachers and staff within the district. These subcommittees focus on a range of topics related to teaching and learning. The specific subcommittees within the department are:

- Certified Advisory Subcommittee
- Licensed and Classified Advisory Subcommittee
- Leadership Advisory Subcommittee
- Teacher Academy of Preparation and Pedagogy Subcommittee

Developing Tomorrow's School Leaders: Clayton County Public Schools' Leadership Academies for Assistant Principals



Our department provides training, leadership development opportunities and support to aspiring, novice, and veteran leaders at the school

and district level. Currently, we have an induction academy for new principals consisting of 18 leaders. Monthly face-to-face training sessions are held where various departments provide individualized training and support. Additionally, each induction principal has a Teacher Retirement System leadership coach who visits their schools weekly to provide consistent guidance as needed. We also have an induction academy for assistant principals. There are currently 40 induction assistant principals in our district. They receive support from veteran assistant principals who serve as their mentors.



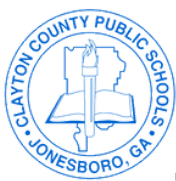
At the end of every session, each leader is afforded an opportunity to participate in an evaluative survey. The information collected is reviewed and serves as a guide for upcoming leadership development planning.

The Learning to Lead Academy prepares teachers, facilitators, specialists, and coordinators to become assistant principals. During the one-year program, participants engage in a wide variety of experiences exposing them to the responsibilities of the assistant principal's role. Prerequisites for this academy include a Master's degree, three years of successful teaching experience, and standard professional education leadership. Currently, there are 16 participants engaged in this program.

The High Performance Leadership Academy prepares assistant principals for the position of principal. Currently, there are 13 participants in this program.

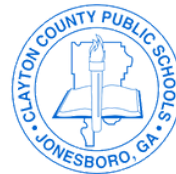
We are excited about other opportunities for leadership development training at the school and district levels in the upcoming year!

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What's New?

Prioritizing Wellness: Clayton County Public Schools Offers RethinkCare Digital Well-Being Solution to Faculty and Staff

The Department of Professional Learning is pleased to announce a new resource to promote adult wellness! The providers of our social-emotional learning curriculum, Rethink Ed, have agreed to make RethinkCare available at no charge to the district until May 31, 2023. RethinkCare is their premier digital well-being solution containing over 250 digital mini-courses, which have been clinically proven to help faculty and staff reduce stress, increase resilience, and improve their focus, sleep, and performance. Please utilize this valuable resource which has been proven to increase overall well-being in adults.

Empowering Staff Through Professional Development: A Comprehensive Training Program for Enhanced Work Skills and Personal Growth

The Professional Learning Department is proud to provide work skills training for ALL staff – both certified and classified – utilizing various delivery methods, based upon identified needs. The following topics are offered regularly and on request via face-to-face training onsite, at the Department of Professional Learning, or Zoom. Available topics include but are not limited to:

- Providing Exceptional Customer Service in the School Setting
- Professionalism
- Developing Emotional Intelligence for Personal Growth and Self-Care (Overview)
- Social-Emotional Learning Activities to Enhance and Build Staff Relationships
- Effective Communication Skills
- Conflict Resolution
- Time Management

Other Topics Offered on Request



REGISTER TO GET STARTED!

Step 1 Scan the QR Code



Step 2 Download RethinkCare from

- The App Store
- Google Play

Enter your CCPS login credentials



Step 3 Start your sessions from

- Your desktop,
- Android,
- iOS app.

WELCOME TO



RethinkCare is the leading digital well-being solution to help faculty and staff reduce stress, increase resilience, and improve their focus, sleep, and performance.

RethinkCare has 250+ digital mini-courses covering a wide array of mental & emotional well-being topics.

Get ready! Take just five minutes a day to change your life.

In over 4,500 clinical studies, participants were able to reduce their stress and improve their overall well-being. There are tremendous healing benefits from learning to calm the mind and relax the central nervous system.

YOUR APP HAS
LAUNCHED!
FOLLOW THE 3 EASY
STEPS TO GET
STARTED!

Enroll in the Classified Academy: A Comprehensive Training Program for Emerging Leaders

The Classified Academy for New and Aspiring Leaders will be offered beginning June 19, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Professional Learning Center. There will be three additional sessions on June 28, July 19, and July 26. Topics covered include: Time and Task Management, Communication Skills, Leading with Emotional Intelligence and Inclusivity, and the Manager's Role as a Coach. All sessions must be completed for full credit. Please register in PDExpress.

Enhancing Skills and Support for Paraeducators: Redesigned Training Program at Professional Learning Center

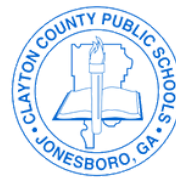
Redesigned Paraprofessional Training has been offered at the Professional Learning Center monthly during the 2022-2023 school year. These one-day sessions covered the Duties and Responsibilities of a Paraeducator, Classroom Management, Student Engagement, Supporting DES Students, and Overview of Social-Emotional Learning. Since the testing season is upon us, we will resume training dates during 2023 pre-planning. Details of dates and times will be published soon and paras who have not yet attended may register in PDExpress.

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Rethinking Faculty Wellness: Clayton County Public Schools Offers Free Access to RethinkCare Digital Well-Being Solution

On Tuesday, April 11, representatives from RethinkEd, the providers of Clayton County Public Schools' Social-Emotional Learning Curriculum, visited the district to celebrate the successes of Tara Elementary School and Elite Scholars Academy.



These schools were selected because of their consistent use of the platform and having the highest completion rates of the Spring SEL Student Assessments. As part of the visit, representatives of ReThinkEd and district leaders toured both campuses to engage with scholars. During the tour, it was noted that each school exuded a positive and orderly climate and culture!



Congratulations to both Tara Elementary and Elite Scholars on their effective implementation of the RethinkEd SEL Curriculum as they strive to promote collaboration, improve outcomes, and inspire learning by focusing on social-emotional learning competencies.



Final Remarks

The Crucial Role of Clayton County Public Schools' Department of Professional Learning in Enhancing Educator Effectiveness and Student Achievement

The Department of Professional Learning in Clayton County Public Schools plays a critical role in ensuring that educators and staff members have access to high-quality professional development opportunities that help them improve their teaching practices and support student success. We will continue to help educators stay up-to-date with the latest education trends, research, and best practices. This ensures that teachers are using evidence-based instructional strategies that are proven to be effective which ultimately benefits students and the community as a whole.

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