

JACKSON CLUSTER PLAN



2016-2020

Our mission is to graduate students who are
productive, caring, and lifelong learners.

STRONG STUDENTS | STRONG SCHOOLS | STRONG STAFF | STRONG SYSTEM

Letter from the Jackson Cluster Planning Team



Dear Staff, Students, Families and Partners of the Jackson Cluster,

We are excited to share our plan for the Jackson Cluster schools with you! This plan is aligned with our vision to develop inquiry, knowledge and character in every student, every teacher, every leader, every day in collaboration with every stakeholder.

Principals, parent, and community representatives from each cluster school gathered for nearly two years to develop this plan, which reflects our understanding of the needs of the Jackson community and is intended to increase the academic, emotional, behavioral and social supports necessary to prepare every student to graduate ready for college and career.

The Jackson Cluster Plan focuses on five major goals:

1. Pursue or maintain International Baccalaureate authorization in every school.
2. Strengthen and align academic programs across the cluster and forge closer relationships with early learning providers.
3. Provide high-quality professional development and collaboration for teachers.
4. Align resources, systems and stakeholders behind a common vision for all cluster schools.
5. Develop a set of cluster-wide practices to support the social emotional development of students.

We hope you will join us in supporting these cluster goals with your time, your encouragement and your belief in our students and schools!

Sincerely,
The 2015 Jackson Cluster Planning Team

The 2015 Jackson Cluster Planning Team

Dr. Vonda McKeever,
former Principal
Benteen Elementary School

David White, Principal
Burgess-Peterson Academy

Charles Turner, Local School Council
King Middle School

Caitlin Sims, Principal
Parkside Elementary School

Stephanie Johnson, Principal
Maynard Jackson High School

Lewis Cartee, Local School Council
Burgess-Peterson Academy

Katie Howard, PTA President
Parkside Elementary School

Robin Robbins, Principal
D. H. Stanton Elementary School

Kristin Moody, LSC Member
F. A. Toomer Elementary School

Paul Brown, Principal
M. L. King Middle School

Timmy Foster, Principal
Whitefoord Elementary School

Karen Brown-Collier, Principal
Dunbar Elementary School

Don Grant, Local School Council
Maynard Jackson High School

Garry Long, Local School Council
Whitefoord Elementary School

Anna Lyles, Local School Council
D. H. Stanton Elementary School

Ashley Adamo, Principal
F. A. Toomer Elementary School

Dr. Emily Massey,
Associate Superintendent

About the Jackson Cluster

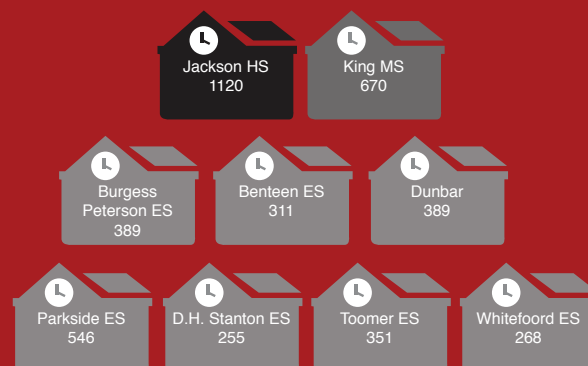
The Jackson Cluster is a collaborative, innovative family of schools planning its path to excellence. The cluster is characterized by its high attendance, growing enrollment, significant increase in graduation rate, and pursuit of International Baccalaureate authorization at every school.

Our elementary schools offer Pre-K programs (six of which are lottery-funded), and two offer early childhood programming. The cluster is also home to two innovative charter schools whose students matriculate to Maynard Jackson High School, as well as a K-12 charter school. Cooperation amongst schools and community partnerships are facilitating innovations in teacher preparation programs, leadership development, and increased early childhood education that will provide a cradle to college and career pipeline.

All cluster 6th-8th graders attend Martin Luther King Middle, which receives students from Burgess-Peterson Elementary, F.A. Toomer Elementary, Whitefoord Elementary, Benteen Elementary, D.H. Stanton Elementary, Dunbar Elementary and Parkside Elementary. All schools have begun adopting IB best practices while they work to earn IB authorization.

Jackson High currently offers one of only two IB Diploma Programmes (DP) in APS and is expanding access with pre-DP coursework. Multimillion dollar renovations to both Jackson High and King Middle afford state-of-the-art facilities to accommodate rigorous, diverse academic and extracurricular programming.

Stakeholders from all cluster schools regularly convene in school advocacy groups, like the South East Atlanta Communities for Schools, and at cluster-wide events planned to bring the community together. This collaborative, familial approach to alignment and innovation across the cluster positions every Jackson Cluster school to deliver on its mission of graduating productive, caring, lifelong learners.



Jackson Cluster Fast Facts

Student Enrollment	4,222
Elementary Schools	7
Middle School	1
High School	1
Graduation Rate	71.5%

Enrollment (2016)

Black	84.20%
Hispanic	6.87%
White	6.85%
Two or More Races	1.56%
Asian	0.38%
American Indian	0.09%
Pacific Islander	0.05%
Students with Disabilities	12%
English Language Learners	4%

Other Facts

- The graduate rate for Jackson High School grew by 17.1 percentage points from 2011 to 2015.
- Jackson High School had the largest attendance increase in the district in 2014-2015 (2.1 points).

Jackson Cluster Strengths

The Jackson Cluster is comprised of the traditional neighborhood schools and public charters within the City of Atlanta including the neighborhoods of: Benteen Park, Boulevard Heights, Cabbagetown, Chosewood Park, Custer/McDonough/Guice, East Atlanta, East Lake, Edgewood, Glenwood Park, Grant Park, Kirkwood, Mechanicsville, Ormewood Park, Peoplestown, Pittsburgh, Reynoldstown, Summerhill, Thomasville Heights and Woodland Hills.

The support of entities like the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Communities in Schools, the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, Emory University, Families First, General Electric, Georgia State University, Power My Learning, Sheltering Arms, the United Way of Greater Atlanta, the Zeist Foundation, and many others is being formalized through cluster-wide partnerships that ensure students have the resources and supports they need.



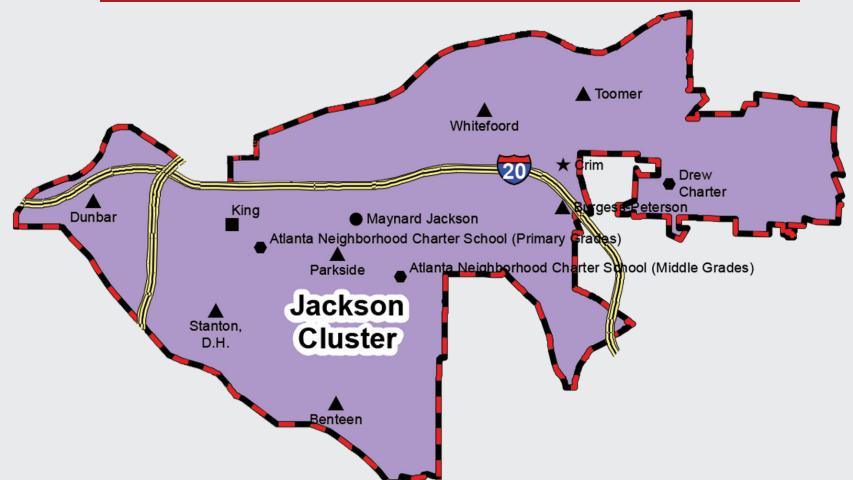
- High level of parent and community engagement and partnerships
- Strong extra-curricular programs (Fine Arts, Foreign Language, Clubs, and Sports)
- Pride in the community
- Wrap-around Services
- Resiliency
- Legacy, history and culture
- Cultural Benefits
- Location
- Higher-education
- Partnerships
- Diverse Community

Mission:

To graduate students who are productive, caring, and lifelong learners.

Vision:

To develop inquiry, knowledge, and character: Every student, every teacher, every leader, every day in collaboration with every stakeholder.



Executive Summary

The Jackson Cluster Strategic Plan serves as the roadmap for the cluster from 2015-2020 and was developed by our cluster planning team, comprised of one principal and designees from each of our schools. Team members reviewed school data, stakeholder surveys and evolving best practices to determine the priorities that will position the cluster to meet its goals. Over the past five years, stakeholders across the cluster participated in community meetings and informal conversations to describe their vision for a cluster of united, innovative community schools. Formal meetings included Atlanta Public Schools listening sessions and visioning facilitated by the New York University Metro Center's Pedro Noguera.

Staff, parents, students and neighbors all described their vision for the Jackson Cluster as a cohesive family of schools. This includes aligning community schools with the resources and decision-making authority to meet students' needs, achieving kindergarten through twelfth grade International Baccalaureate authorization, and developing early childhood education partnerships. With the creation of a feeder pattern in 2013 and subsequent organization of the cluster's planning team, the Jackson Cluster has begun delivering on the vision for its students. The mission, priorities and action steps described herein manifest the community's vision and enable each school to prepare college and career ready graduates who are productive, caring, and lifelong learners.

The work to achieve this vision requires ongoing collaboration within the cluster family. School-site GO Teams empower parents, staff and community members to make decisions for their schools. Collaborations like the CREATE teacher residency program - which partnered Georgia State University, two charter and three cluster schools in a shared teacher residency program - will continue to be leveraged to recruit new teachers to the cluster and provide them with innovative support. Alignment across schools through initiatives like the first cluster-wide Professional Development Day (held in 2014) provide teachers with resources they need to achieve the cluster mission. Although the work toward the cluster vision has only just begun, the improved student performance across all schools is an early indicator of what is yet to come!



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Jackson Cluster Student Data

An Opportunity for Change

The focus across all schools within the Jackson cluster is to improve the instructional program through the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Program. Opportunities like the IB Diploma Programme need to be widely accessed by all students within the cluster, but to do so we must position all schools and students to deliver high quality instruction, curriculum and resources that develop the necessary foundation for students to succeed. The Jackson cluster of schools have made progress over time, however, the performance across schools is inconsistent. In addition, persistent generational poverty in some communities within the cluster demands increased academic and wraparound supports as well as social emotional learning for students. Over the past year, the district and cluster continue to align early childhood providers, maximize instructional time and focus on necessary interventions for struggling learners as a critical tool for improving performance across schools.

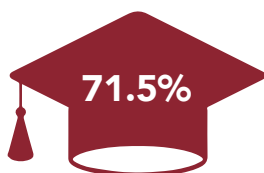
CCRPI (2015)

School Name	Achievement Points	Progress Points	CCRPI Score
Maynard Jackson High School	25.4	37.7	70.8
M.L. King Middle School	18.8	34.5	59.1
Burgess- Peterson Academy	24.6	39.4	74.3
F.A. Toomer Elementary School	22	32.8	62.7
Whiteford Elementary School	18.4	25.8	48.9
Benteen Elementary School	15.9	39.4	65.5
D.H. Stanton Elementary School	12.8	32.3	50.6
Dunbar Elementary School	16.2	28.4	48.4
Parkside Elementary School	24	39	69.3

CCRPI Description

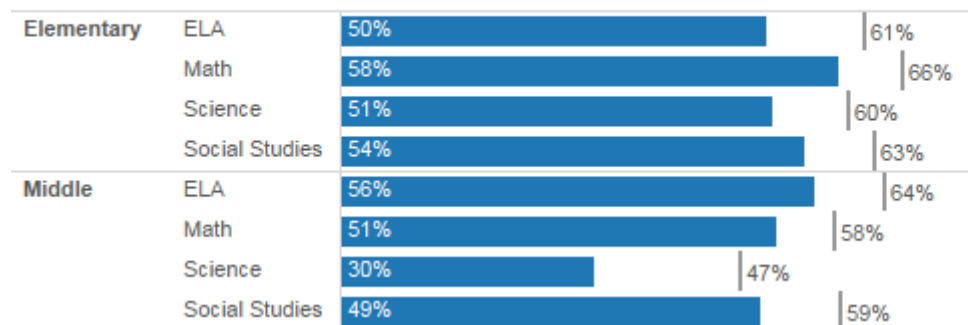
The College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) is Georgia's annual 100-point scale for measuring how well its schools are preparing students. The CCRPI includes four main components: Achievement, Progress, Achievement Gap, and Challenge Points. The table include two major components: Achievement and Progress. Achievement addresses student performance on state assessments, graduate rate, and other measures of college and career readiness. Progress measures whether students are growing compared to academically-similar students across Georgia.

Graduation Rate (2015)



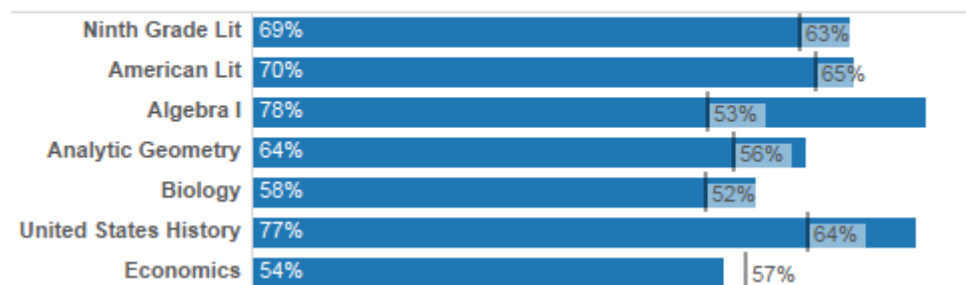
Milestones Percentage Developing or Higher: Jackson Cluster

Grey line is district average



Milestones Percentage Developing or Higher: Jackson Cluster

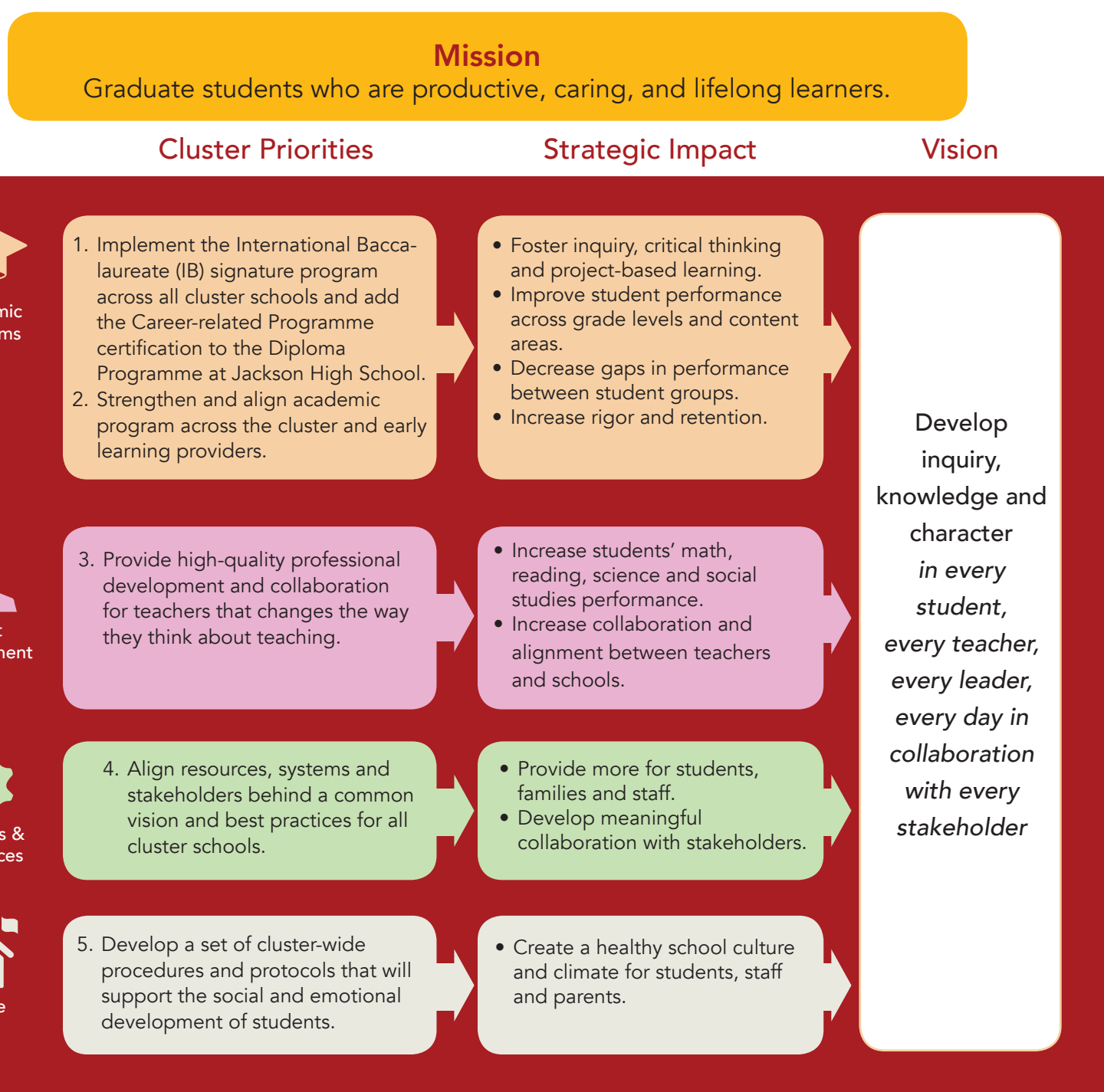
Grey line is district average



Jackson Cluster Strategy Map

The Jackson Cluster Plan is aligned to the APS 2015-2020 strategic plan through priorities in each of the following goal areas: academics, talent, resources, and culture. The strategies detailed on subsequent pages are organized under each priority to align the cluster toward a common goal for graduates.

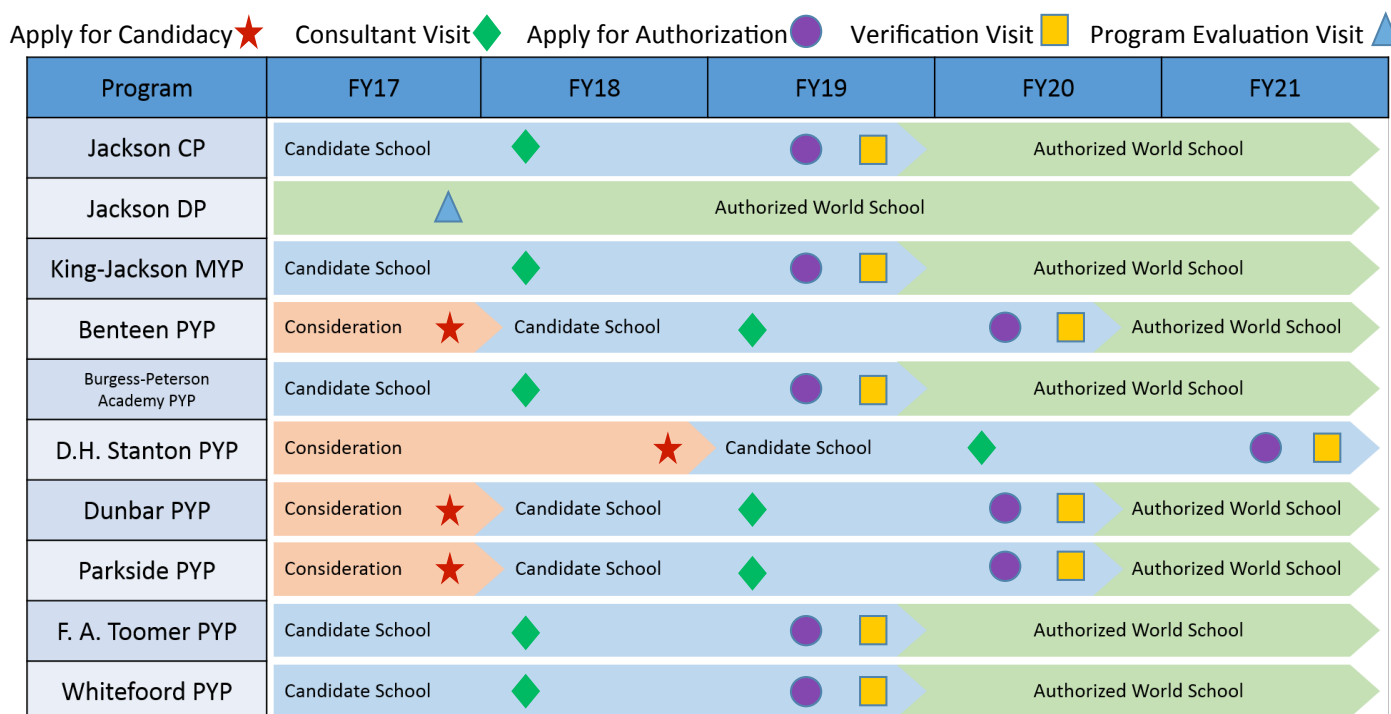
School-level GO Teams and the Cluster Advisory Team will review implementation as well as progress towards these goals.



Cluster Signature Program: International Baccalaureate

Jackson High School is one of two schools in APS that is authorized as an IB Diploma Programme, and the authorization of all cluster schools will position the Jackson Cluster to be an IB cluster of schools with aligned programming from kindergarten through 12th grade. Although the Diploma Programme (DP) and Career-related Programme (CP) are optional programs for 11th and 12th graders, every Jackson Cluster student will participate in the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and Middle Years Programme (MYP) in kindergarten through 10th grade.

All schools have sent several cohorts of teachers to the IB trainings and have begun to implement IB practices like the learner profile, essential classroom agreements, and inquiry-based lessons. The first cluster-wide professional development was held in 2014, and all schools have either earned or are working toward their No Place for Hate designation. Implementation plans are being managed by the Cluster Advisory Team, which continues to meet monthly to review progress toward cluster goals and the implementation of strategies.



Consideration phase

- Feasibility study
- IB Coordinator identified
- Principal and IB Coordinator trained to level 1
- Complete Application for Candidacy

Candidate phase

- "Trial implementation" of the program
- Begin training staff members to level 1—100% by Verification Visit
- Begin writing and teaching IB units (PYP and MYP)
- IB Consultant visit
- Application for Authorization
- Verification visit

In 2015, each school had an IB Specialist, received teacher professional development, and began using essential agreements and learner profile descriptors in classrooms.

Authorization!

- "IB World School"
- "Commendations," "Recommendations," and "Matters to be Addressed"

Program Evaluation Visit

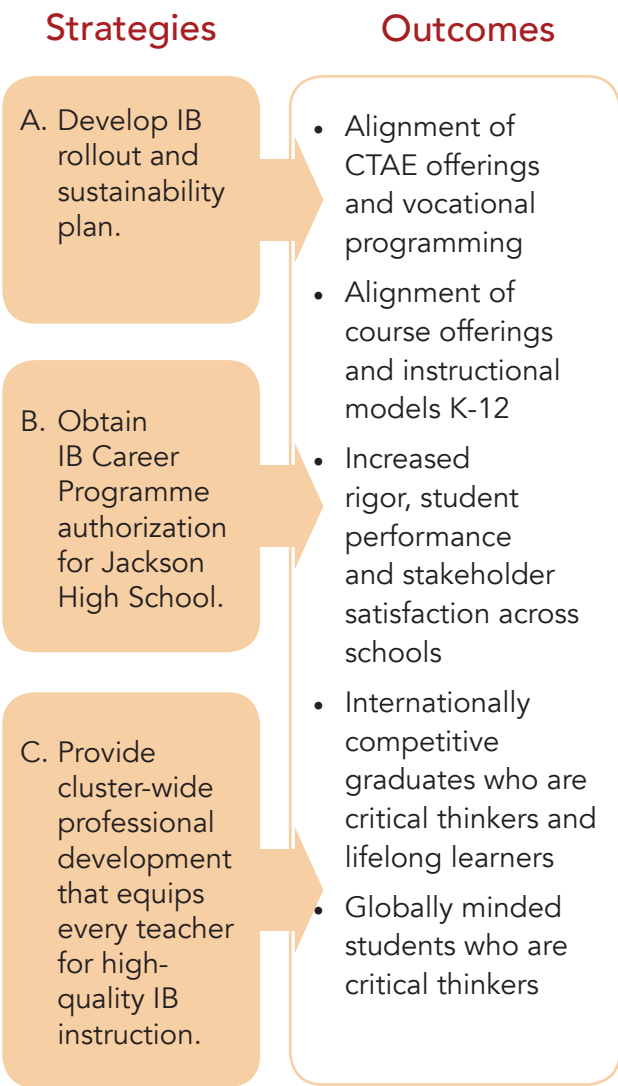
- 4 years after initial authorization
- Every 5 years thereafter for the life of the program
- "Commendations," "Recommendations," and "Matters to be Addressed"
- Ongoing IB Programme Action Plan



Priority #1: Pursue or maintain International Baccalaureate authorization in every school.

What is IB?

International Baccalaureate, or IB, is an approach to curriculum and instruction that prepares students to be inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who are motivated to succeed. The program is offered in more than 4,000 schools in 150-plus countries. Because the curriculum is globally relevant, rigorous and consistent in its approach across schools, IB exam scores are accepted for college credit throughout the world, making IB students more competitive for scholarships and college access.



All Students



Primary Years Programme

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is comprised of three key components that outline how students learn, how teachers teach, and how progress is assessed. It provides the foundation for students to become active, caring, lifelong learners.



Middle Years Programme

All students in 6-10 grade will participate in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) with the authorization of King Middle and Jackson High, proposed for 2018. The eight subject framework prepares students to pursue DP or CP in eleventh grade.

Optional for 11th and 12th Graders



Career-related Programme

The IB Career Programme provides rigorous IB coursework with concentrated study on a specific career path for 11th and 12th grades. Jackson will be applying for CP authorization in 2016 and will align CP offerings to the CTAE pathways.



Diploma Programme

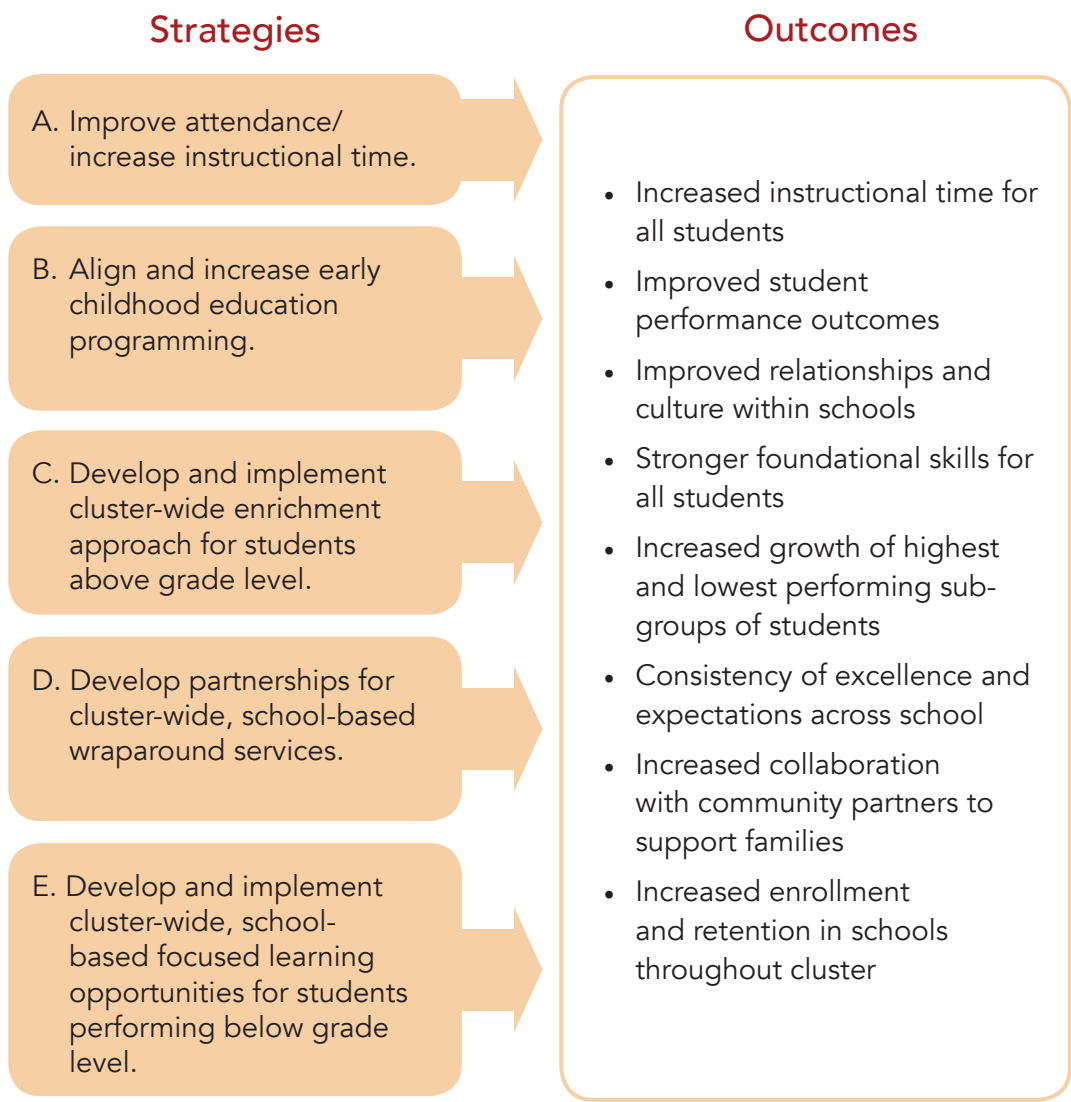
The IB Diploma Programme (DP), for which Jackson has been authorized since 2013, is a course of study that includes six subject groups as well as the DP core and culminates with the award of an internationally recognized diploma.



Priority #2: Strengthen and align academic programs and forge closer relationships with early learning providers.

In order to best leverage its resources and prepare every student to be productive, caring, and lifelong learners, the academic program across the cluster must be strengthened and aligned. Intervention strategies for students below grade level and enrichment opportunities for students above grade level will be adopted across schools to provide all students with the resources they need to accelerate their learning.

Alternatives to discipline that infringe on instructional time and initiatives to increase attendance are being promoted to ensure every student is in school every day. Collaboration with early childhood providers and increased access to pre-kindergarten programming across the cluster will provide every student with a strong foundation for the rigors of an IB education. Additional partnerships with community entities will afford wraparound services to families that eliminate barriers to attendance and educational success.





Priority #3: Provide high quality professional development and collaboration for teachers.



Excellent schools require excellent teachers, and this priority positions every teacher in the cluster to attain excellence. Through alignment and collaboration across schools, teachers can share what's working and leverage the expertise within the cluster.

The cluster team is working in collaboration to develop processes for recruiting, selecting and developing teachers, with a focus on supporting new teachers.

Cross-school collaborations like the CREATE project, a teacher residency program with Georgia State University, provide training and opportunities for teachers to develop their practice in the Jackson community. This type of innovation gives the Jackson Cluster a pipeline of excellent teachers committed to the local community.

Strategies

A. Adopt cluster-wide common practices.

B. . Develop and implement cluster-wide professional development plan.

C. . Develop and implement a cluster-wide teacher recruitment, selection, support and development approach.

D. Implement vertical, horizontal and transition years alignment and collaboration.

Outcomes

- Alignment and consistency in instructional excellence across schools
- Recruitment, retention and development of excellent teachers
- Improved student performance
- Improved teacher morale and school culture
- Dissemination of best practices across classrooms and schools
- Increased performance and retention of new teachers



Resources

Priority #4: Align resources, systems and stakeholders behind a common vision.

Alignment throughout the cluster will go beyond instructional practices and professional development to ensure every school is positioned for success. Examples of this alignment include shared staff across schools, funding for cluster-wide priorities, collaboration of stakeholders between schools, and common approaches to effective communication across schools.

GO Teams elected at each school organize a team of peer-elected stakeholders to make school site decisions with the principal. Ongoing cluster-wide planning through the Cluster Advisory Team and cluster-wide professional learning positions schools to share resources and strategies that benefit students and their families. Because the Cluster Advisory Team will continue to meet and work together in pursuit of a shared vision, every school will be better positioned to leverage its resources and the expertise throughout the cluster.



**STRONG SCHOOLS
START WITH ME!**

Strategies

A. Organize high-capacity parent, teacher and community representatives on school-site GO teams.

B. Align spending at each school to cluster priorities and school-level needs to meet cluster goals

C. Ensure schools have the resources, budget and flexibility to support an IB curriculum and support for targeted subgroups and advanced students.

D. Develop and implement cluster-wide best practices for systems.

E. Create and maintain partnerships to support cluster priorities.

Outcomes

- Resources are used in most impactful ways
- Clarity and transparency about decision-making
- Meaningful opportunities for stakeholder engagement
- Increased student success and community connection
- Alignment and efficiency across schools
- Increased autonomy and decision-making for principals and staff
- Sharpening of cluster focus through decision-making and performance measurement



Priority #5: Develop a set of cluster-wide practices to support the social and emotional development of students.

A positive, healthy school culture for every Jackson Cluster school ensures parents, students and staff have the support and climate they need to succeed. The foundation for this culture is established through the adoption of International Baccalaureate frameworks, which include the Learner Profile and Approaches to Learning. Strategies like Essential Classroom Agreements, which support a holistic, developmentally appropriate approach to character development, have already been adopted across schools as part of the Consideration phase.

Implementation of the No Place for Hate initiative, an Anti-Defamation League program committed to stopping all forms of bias and bullying, has begun across the cluster, with several schools already designated as No Place for Hate. Use of positive behavior strategies, such as disciplinary alternatives that reduce the loss of instructional time or frameworks like Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), are also being explored across schools and in cluster-wide professional learning.



Glossary of Terms

CCRPI: College and Career Readiness Performance Index — this is the score each school receives each year that considers measures like test scores, survey data and attendance to determine how well the school is preparing its students for college and career.

Charter System: The new operating model chosen by Atlanta Public Schools, which will afford each school greater decision-making autonomy as well as flexibility to innovate across the district. Atlanta Public Schools was fully transitioned to a charter system in the 2016-2017 school year.

GO Teams (Local School Governance Teams): GO Teams are the committees of three parents, three teachers, two community members, one swing seat, (one student at high schools), peer-elected for each school and governing in the 2016-2017 school year.

International Baccalaureate: The global authorization that guides the instructional, curricular and pedagogical approach of a school to align to a rigorous international standard. Graduates with an IB Career Programme or Diploma Programme diploma are recognized internationally as having completed a higher standard of coursework for which college credit, scholarships and other competitive advantages may be available. Programs within the IB include the Primary Years Programme or PYP (grades K-5), Middle Years Programme or MYP (grades 6-10), Diploma Programme or DP (grades 11-12) and Career Programme or CP (grades 11-12). All K-10 Jackson Cluster students will participate in IB curriculum, and students participate in the IB program of their choice in high school. See this link for more information: www.ibo.org

No Place for Hate: No Place for Hate is an initiative for schools designed by the Anti-Defamation League to create a welcoming community committed to stopping all forms of bias and bullying. The initiative provides resources, common language and guidance to foster a safe, bully-free environment.

Signature Program: The curricular approach adopted by a cluster to align all schools behind a common curriculum. For the Jackson Cluster, the Signature Program is IB.

Standards-based: Courses that teach the skills or standards that the state has determined are most important for students to know. Standards are assessed through the Georgia Milestones and End of Course Tests required for every student by the state of Georgia.



Jackson Cluster Contact Information

Jackson High School
801 Glenwood Ave., SE
404-802-5200

King Middle School
545 Hill St., SE
404-802-5400

Benteen Elementary School
200 Cassanova St., SE
404-802-7300

Burgess-Peterson Academy
480 Clifton St., SE
404-802-3400

Dunbar Elementary School
500 Whitehall Terrace, SW
404-802-7950

Parkside Elementary School
685 Mercer St., SE
404-802-4100

D.H. Stanton Elementary School
970 Martin St., SE
404-802-4200

Toomer Elementary School
65 Rogers St., NE
404-802-3450

Whitefoord Elementary School
35 Whitefoord Ave., NE
404-802-6900

Wesley International Academy
211 Memorial Dr., SE
678-904-9137

**Atlanta Neighborhood
Charter School**
688 Grasnt St., SE
404-624-6226

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