



Muscogee County School District

2960 Macon Road Columbus, GA 31906

For Immediate Release

Valerie Fuller

Director of Communications & Open Records Officer

Telephone: (706) 748-2034

www.muscogee.k12.ga.us

Release Date: July 9, 2015

MEDIA RELEASE

GaDOE 2015 Priority and Focus Schools Results

MCSO Improvement Plans Can Work for Progress and Academic Challenges

(Columbus, GA)-The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) 2015 Priority and Focus Schools list, as part of the state waiver of Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), reveals two Muscogee County Schools have been removed from the Focus and Priority Schools list, Rothschild Leadership Academy (Focus) and Fox Elementary (Priority). Baker Middle School also improved its status, moving from a Priority to a Focus School joining Kendrick High School, which was removed from the list last December. Although still on the Priority list, Jordan High School earned the highest College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) score (76.2) of any School Improvement Grant (SIG) school in the state.

The Superintendent, Dr. David Lewis says, “We would like to commend the school communities of Fox, Rothschild, Baker, Kendrick, and Jordan for their dedication and hard work leading to these improvements.”

“We are excited about our progress and must build on the momentum to ensure that all students continue to come to school excited to learn daily and exemplify the attributes of true leaders,” said Rothschild Leadership Academy Principal, Dr. Michael Forte. “We have proven that if we work together, we can continue to improve academics. Our teachers, our parents, our staff, and our administrators go above and beyond to help provide the vital support to reinforce positive expectations and we will continue to take advantage of every opportunity to help our students excel at every level.”

The following schools have been identified as *Focus* or *Priority* schools:

-Continued-

Focus Schools List

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School
- Baker Middle School
- Georgetown Elementary School
- Rigdon Road Elementary School
- Davis Elementary School

Priority Schools List

- Spencer High School
- Jordan Vocational High School

Focus Schools are identified as those among the lowest 10% of Title I schools in the state that have a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement. For the identification of Focus Schools, the bottom quartile of standardized scores for each subject assessment, the size of the achievement gap and the extent to which it is closing are considered. State assessment data from the 2013-2014 school year was utilized to calculate the Meets and Exceeds rate of a school to identify Priority Schools. Based on the definition of Priority Schools found in the ESEA Flexibility guidance, Georgia identifies Priority Schools that are among the lowest 5% of Title I schools in the state. Calculations to identify these schools are based on achievement of the *all students* group in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments that are part of the Georgia Department of Education's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system.

“The identification of both Focus and Priority school lists is based upon lagging, year-old data from the 2013-2014 school year, which we have already analyzed,” said Lewis. “While trend data reveals the longstanding challenges these schools have faced, we will address them head-on to ensure that our district achieves the high standards we have established.”

The analysis was used to implement several focused curriculum and strategic support initiatives in 2014-2015 to meet these schools' needs. Support strategies included the implementation of new reading and math curriculum frameworks, as well as the district's reorganization, which established three regional zones to help provide more focused instructional and operational support to schools.

“With these organizational structures and the availability of additional local and state resources, we have the evidence-based framework to initiate the next phase of the proposed plan to build capacity at the school and district levels in order to transform these schools and our district,” added Lewis. “Given the necessary time, structure, resources and support we are confident that these school communities and their leadership will meet our commitment to a high quality education that all students deserve.”

For more information on the proposed plan for transformation or to review the Superintendent's Recommendations Report, access www.muscogee.k12.ga.us.