

GEORGIA'S WORKFORCE CONFERENCE

# Transforming Communities Through Education

How a School District Pioneered Upskilling and Reskilling for Parents

# **Georgia's Workforce Conference**

### November 12, 2024







### Vision

The Dougherty County School System is a destination school system that, in partnership with families and community partners, provides quality educational and social development experiences that empower its graduates to be successful and impactful contributors to society.

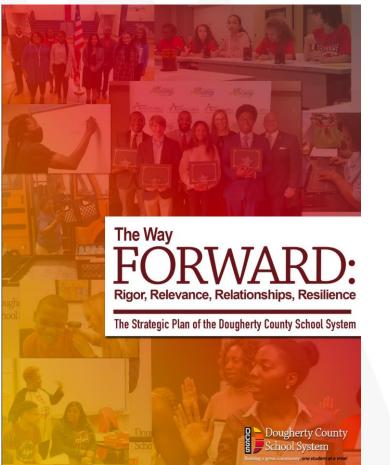




### Mission

The Dougherty County School System meets the academic and non-academic needs of its students with rigorous and relevant educational experiences that equip them to succeed in life.





#### **DCSS Priority Areas of Focus**

Guided by our Theory of Action, the Dougherty County School System has established five priority areas to direct our collective focus and resources over the next five years. This will allow us to realize our mission, to mitigate and address any obstacles, and to guide our district in utilizing our energy and resources in a more resolute manner.

#### Early Literacy

Academic Rigor and Relevance for All Students

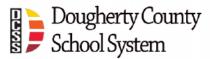
Social and Emotional Wellness

Investment in Human Capital

Family and Community Engagement



# **Priority Area**



Building a great community, one student at a time!

Family and Community Engagement

We will provide timely and purposeful communication and engagement with parents, families, and community members.

Dougherty County believes that it takes the collective efforts of an entire community to ensure that its children grow and develop in a healthy and safe environment. We will aim to foster an environment where parents, families, community members, and partner organizations are actively engaged with the district, as we know that this will ultimately ensure they become long-term advocates and partners in the education of all students. For this priority area, we will proactively communicate with parents, families, and community members so that they are well-informed of student progress, upcoming events, district initiatives, and engagement.



# **Dougherty County School System**

- Albany, Georgia sits in the county seat of Dougherty County.
  - o 82,000 (population)
  - o 29.5% poverty rate
- Dougherty County School System
  - o 13,000 students (approx.)
  - o Twenty-two schools (22)
    - 13 Elementary Schools
    - 4 Middle Schools
    - 3 High Schools
    - Alternative School
    - College and Career Academy
    - Two (2) Pre-K Sites





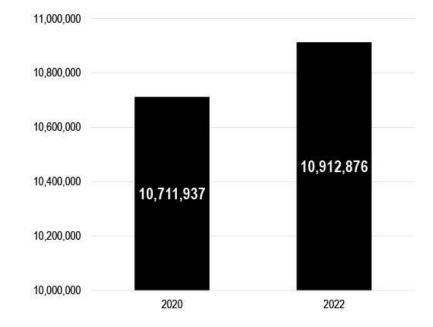
Carl Vinson Institute of Government UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

## Demographic Trends in Georgia

Georgia Fiscal Management Council 2023 Annual Training Conference September 10, 2023 Taylor Hafley, Applied Demographer



### Georgia's Population increased by 200,000 between 2020 Census and 2022 Estimates





Note: Year ends July 1, 2022 Source: US Census Bureau Population Estimates



### Georgia's growth in 2010s outpaced national average

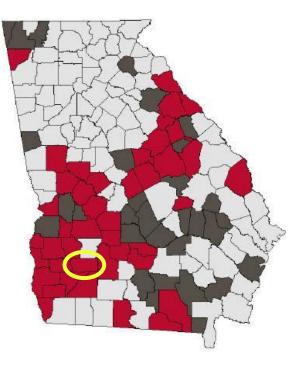
- 1. Georgia was the <u>13<sup>th</sup></u> fastest growing state
- 2. Georgia was one of only <u>four</u> states where the population increased by more than 1 million people





68 counties lost population between 2010 and 2020

43 counties have fewer people in 2020 than in 2000





Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 and 2010 Redistricting files



# "Why did we consider an upskilling and reskilling initiative for parents?"



# "Why did we consider an upskilling and reskilling initiative for parents?"

- The impact of successful reskilling and upskilling initiatives have a positive impact on educational outcomes for students in K-12.
- Increasing skills for parents create a virtuous cycle because individuals with higher skills are more likely to gain access to jobs that give them opportunities to use and practice literacy, numeracy, and problem solving skills, which in turn, reinforces and increases those skills.
- While parents benefit as these skills become an integral part of our school, family, and community interactions, ultimately, and more importantly, student learning will be positively impacted and overall academic achievement improved.





# LEVELUP

A Workforce Development & Empowerment Initiative of the Dougherty County School System





### Partnership with Georgia Power, Albany Chamber of Commerce, & the Commodore Conyers College and Career Academy

- Initiative Goals
  - This initiative targets specific careers through reskilling and upskilling of underemployed or unemployed workers.



- The goal for this strategy is to decrease the number of jobs unfilled due to the shortage of qualified workers.
- The additional outcomes of this strategy are realized through evidence of a stronger, more prepared workforce with fewer jobs left unfilled and a positive impact on the economic development of our area.



# **Georgia Power: Equity Through Education (ETE)**

- Vision (ETE)
  - Close educational gaps in communities of color to facilitate holistic generational change.
- Mission (ETE)
  - Facilitate engagement in school districts, bringing together partnerships aimed at closing educational gaps for minority students.
    - Create sustainable, community-specific solutions to build regional talent pipelines.
- Dougherty County School System (STEM, Student Internships, Reskilling & Upskilling)
  - Inform and engage parents and recent graduates.
  - Improve access to workforce training aligned with regional job demand.



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Georgia

Power

# Dougherty County School System Level UP Initiative

- We worked with Albany Technical College and the Albany Chamber of Commerce to align reskilling and upskilling opportunities with local high-demand career fields.
- We worked with credentialing agencies to ensure "short-term" credentialing (4-6 weeks) for participants.
- We worked with credentialing agencies to provide morning and evening classes (where available) to accommodate the work schedules of participants.
- We worked with local childcare and transportation providers to arrange wraparound supports, in an attempt to remove barriers.





# **Partnerships with Credentialing Agencies**

The Level Up Initiative, focuses on reskilling and upskilling parents, and is making notable progress in Dougherty County. The Dougherty County School System launched an exciting new initiative in collaboration with local "credentialing" (industry recognized) agencies.

- Integrity Healthcare Institute Certified Nursing Assistant
- Commodore Conyers College and Career Academy - Heavy Equipment Operator (credential)
- 818 Diagnostics Phlebotomy (credential)





### **Partnerships with Wraparound Partners**

- <u>Albany Transit</u> Provides transportation for participants.
- <u>Beginning Steps Daycare</u> Provides childcare for participants' children.
- <u>Family Literacy Connection</u> Provides childcare for participants' children.
- Marlee Health Scrubs Provides scrubs for completers.
- <u>ReadyTrans</u> Provides transportation for participants and family members.
- <u>Shoe Box</u> Provides work boots (steel toe) for heavy equipment completers.





### Wraparound Partnerships remove barriers to Success!















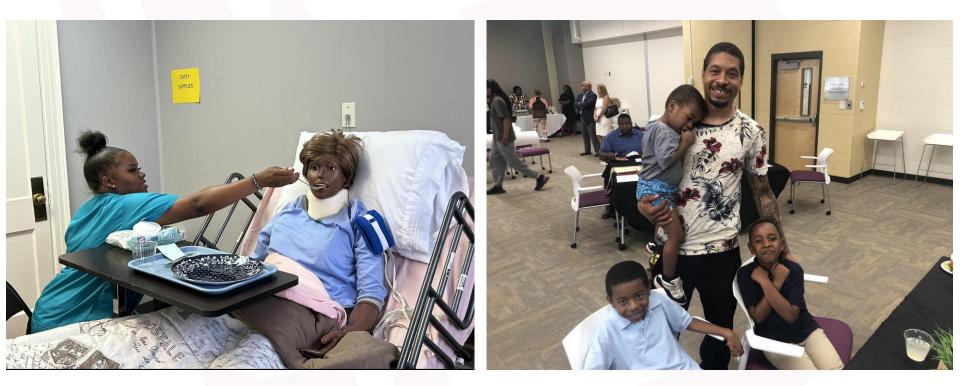
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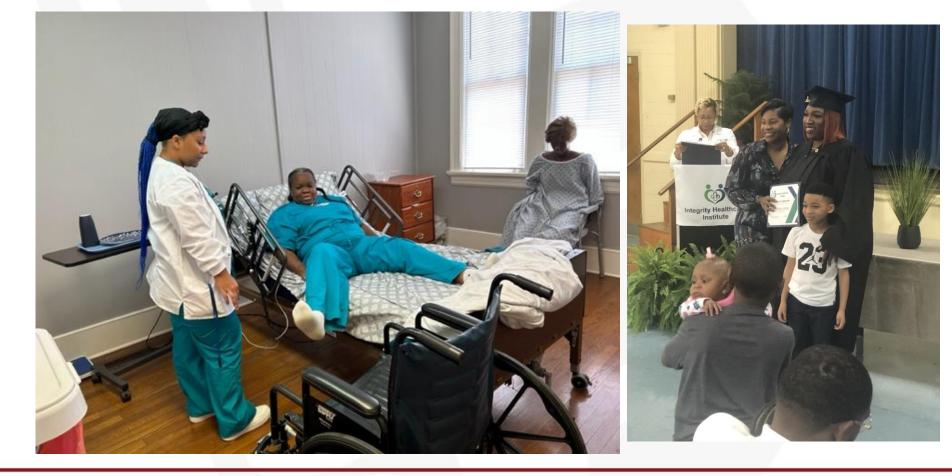














### Strategic Priority #5 - Family and Community Engagement

To date, this initiative has impacted more than one-hundred (150) households/families of Dougherty County School System students!

To date more than **121 Level UP participants have completed coursework** and graduated from the CNA program. Seventy (70) participants have earned full CNA certification (passing both the written and skills portion of the assessment). In addition five (5) Level UP participants have completed coursework and received a recognized credential in Phlebotomy.

To date there have been **twenty-seven (27)** Level Up participants who have **completed the Heavy Equipment Operator** program and received an industry-recognized credential from Caterpillar (Bulldozer and Excavator).







### **Reskilling and Upskilling Initiatives - Lessons Learned**

- <u>Align</u> credentialing opportunities with the local workforce demands.
- **<u>Provide</u>** flexible learning options that consider the busy lives of parents.
- **<u>Provide</u>** funding flexibility (look for resources that will allow flexibility).
  - Georgia Power provided funding flexibility. We did not have the restrictions and regulations associated with state or federal funds.
  - Encourage the business community to provide corporate sponsorships.
- <u>**Provide</u>** wraparound support, like offering childcare during in-person classes or supplying tools such as internet access, laptops, or subsidies for travel.</u>
  - **Develop** Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) for wraparound partners.
- **Design**, anticipating the need for, academic supports to remove barriers to success.



### **Initiative Expansions/Considerations/Next Steps**

- Incorporate a financial literacy component ("LevelUP -Money Matters") as part of the Dougherty County School System's LevelUP initiative. This component aims to empower parents with the necessary financial knowledge and skills to secure their financial futures.
- Expand the type of credentials offered in the Construction career field (i.e. Construction Ready).
- Organize a "Level UP" Job Fair for completers.
- Continue to work with area credentialing agencies and our local technical college to expand Level UP opportunities (i.e. Commercial Drivers' License).







