

Fulton County Schools

Using the BSC to help all employees from the School Board to school bus drivers stay focused on students, the Fulton County School System is earning straight A's.

Fulton County Schools is a large, diverse public education system covering grades K-12 located in metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia. The district serves 73,000 students in 83 schools and employs 9,500 employees. Fulton County Schools uses the Balanced Scorecard to apply business practices to its management.

With student achievement at the top of its scorecard, Fulton County students have increased their SAT scores to exceed the national average by 23 points, with 89% of all graduates taking the test compared to only 48% nationally. Their elementary and middle schools have increased 5 points annually on the state's criterion-referenced test. Eighty-two percent of Fulton County parents surveyed show a high level of satisfaction with their schools compared to the national average of 68 percent. Other results include reduced teacher attrition, new school construction that is consistently on time and under budget, and reduced administrative expenses

"One of a Board's most important tasks is the adoption of an annual budget. The Balanced Scorecard greatly assists in this area. Using the scorecard, school and system administrators make improvement recommendations and submit proposed budgets that align to the recommendations. The Board uses this input to identify items with the greatest potential for significant and immediate impact on student achievement and areas with significant room for improvement. These 'strategic imperatives' direct the Board's decision-making during the budgeting process, providing the focus we need to develop a budget that meets the needs of our organization. By annually reviewing our targets, the Board and community receive an objective evaluation of school system successes. We can easily see which objectives were met, and which fell short. This is valuable as we seek to not only plan for the future, but also measure the past."

Katie Reeves, board president