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Houston County School District Selected for Statewide Initiative to Design Innovative School Models

HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – The Houston County School District has been selected by the Georgia Department of Education, in partnership with the Institute for Self-Directed Learning, to participate in a new statewide initiative aimed at developing innovative school models that better meet the needs of students and families.

Houston County is one of ten school districts chosen for the inaugural cohort, which will focus on designing new approaches to education that increase flexibility, strengthen student engagement, and respond to evolving community needs. As public education continues to adapt to changing enrollment trends and family expectations, this initiative provides an opportunity for districts to proactively explore new models that prepare students for success in an ever-changing world.

In addition to model design, the district will prioritize engaging families and stakeholders throughout the process to ensure new approaches reflect community priorities. Over the course of the year, district teams will engage in professional learning and site visits to observe innovative models in action. The goal of this initiative is to meet the needs of Houston County students and families.

“We are proud for Houston County to be selected for this forward-thinking initiative,” said Dr. Richard Rogers, Superintendent of Schools. “This work will create meaningful, engaging learning experiences that prepare our students for life after graduation. By meeting the needs of our students and community, we are ensuring that the opportunities we create today will have a lasting impact on tomorrow.”

District teams will explore a variety of approaches, including learner-centered models that emphasize student ownership, real-world application, and increased flexibility. These may include hybrid learning environments, microschool structures, and redesigned in-person learning experiences.

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“This initiative allows us to think boldly about how we design learning experiences for students,” said Dr. Steven Hornyak, Chief Innovation Officer. “Innovation in education means aligning what happens in the classroom with the skills students need to be successful. Through this work, we will continue building models that are responsive, relevant, and rooted in the needs of our Houston County community.”

The Georgia Department of Education plans to use insights from this initial cohort to inform future opportunities for districts across the state. Houston County joins the following districts in the first cohort: Cartersville City Schools, Clayton County Schools, Colquitt County Schools, Greene County Schools, Henry County Schools, Muscogee County Schools, Rockdale County Schools, Savannah-Chatham County Schools, and Union County Schools.

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