



GLISI

Strong leaders transform lives.

2014

ANNUAL REPORT



Students' trajectories can be forever altered by the adults they encounter at school.

Our work is to develop strong leaders from the boardroom to the classroom who create the conditions for all children to thrive.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR



Gale D. Hulme, Ed.D.
CEO/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Loren M. Starr
BOARD CHAIR

Flourish. Benefit. Improve. Grow! In FY2015, educators across Georgia charted growth with GLISI. In this annual report of our impact:

- Look for how GLISI's personalized approach to professional learning contributed to the growth of an aspiring leader in Forsyth;
- Read about how learning improved for a high school team in DeKalb due to team-based learning and coaching at Base Camp and Leadership Summit; and
- Explore how GLISI's performance-based consulting support helped a learning culture to flourish in Tattall County Public Schools.

Each of GLISI's services—from training, to coaching, to consulting support—is designed to enhance our district partners' growth and ultimately prepare more Georgia students for success.

This year was one of tremendous growth for GLISI as an organization as well. We broadened our reach to serve innovative leaders from across the country and shared lessons learned from our consulting work and research with leaders in Georgia and beyond. Our growth has allowed us to serve more districts than we did last year, while also increasing our partners' brand loyalty and our national reputation as experts on leadership development and adult learning.

Although we presided over a year of tremendous growth, we aspire to greater heights. We know that Georgia's schools are experiencing unprecedented turnover in the superintendency and principalship. Public opinion regarding education and teaching as a profession is discouraging to teachers and students. Fewer and fewer educators aspire to lead schools in this climate; yet, now more than ever, Georgia's children need strong leaders at the helm. Our children need leaders to advocate for rigorous instruction, to enlist broad community support, and to create a nurturing school environment that connects with each child. They need courageous leaders who will challenge people and institutions that enable neighborhood, income, race, or family background to determine a child's future. They need leaders who are relentless in their commitment to continuous improvement and who inspire that same commitment in others.

We invite you to learn about the extraordinary growth of GLISI and our FY2015 partners in the pages that follow. We think you'll agree: When learning is personalized, leaders flourish. When learning is team-based, culture shifts. When learning is performance-based, practice improves. And when GLISI broadens our reach, our partners benefit.

Gale D. Hulme, Ed.D.
Executive Director

Loren M. Starr
Board Chair

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WHEN LEARNING IS PERSONALIZED, LEADERS FLOURISH

Becky Cahill was entering her 12th year as a teacher in Forsyth County Schools (FCS) when she decided to apply for the Aspiring Leaders Program. Her motivation was simple: She saw the program as an opportunity to become a more effective leader. Cahill recognized a tendency within herself to “tell people how it is” and realized that her self-assuredness was sometimes a hindrance to working effectively with others. She was hopeful that the program would help her become a more collaborative and empathetic leader.

After successfully navigating a rigorous selection process designed by GLISI and FCS leaders, Cahill was one of nine leaders admitted to the 2015 cohort. The program’s curriculum was created with a design team of school and district leaders; facilitated by GLISI experts; and aligned to Georgia’s Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES), cutting-edge research on leader dispositions, and FCS leader competencies and expectations.

After completing the 12-month course, Cahill was promoted to Assistant Administrator at West Forsyth High School. Reflecting on the experience, she identified three aspects of the program that helped her grow personally and professionally. First, the cohort model broadened her perspective on leadership. “The

program exposed me to people whose experiences and perspectives differed vastly from my own. I formed a bond with an elementary teacher who taught me the importance of empathy when coaching teachers and working with students. In turn, I think she learned how to be a more assertive advocate of student needs from me.” Second, the role played by current principals in the program helped her become more knowledgeable about what’s required to be a successful leader in the district. “Seasoned leaders from our district were an integral part of the design of the course. They were also available throughout the year to answer questions about what it’s really like to lead schools—answers you won’t find in a textbook. That access, and their

FROM ASPIRING TO PRACTICING...

62%

OF FORSYTH’S ASPIRING LEADERS WERE PROMOTED TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS WITHIN THE DISTRICT 12 MONTHS AFTER COMPLETING THE PROGRAM.



“GLISI’s personalized coaching and guidance helped me bridge the knowing/doing gap. I’m a more effective leader as a result.”

-Becky Cahill, Assistant Administrator, Forsyth County Schools

involvement in co-developing the curriculum, was invaluable.” Third, the activities, discussion, and feedback she received were personalized to the areas where she most needed support. “It is one thing to know what servant leadership is—it’s another to practice it and embrace it.” During the Aspiring Leaders Program, Cahill and her cohort peers completed performance tasks that allowed them to work on problems of practice together under the watchful eye of GLISI’s experienced coaches—leaders with a track record of success growing others and leading school improvement. For Cahill, the ability to learn—and then apply that learning—was instrumental to her growth. “If I had to sum up what GLISI’s support did for me, it’s that their coaching and guidance helped me bridge the knowing/doing gap. I’m a more effective leader as a result.”

“GLISI BRINGS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EXPERTISE AND A DEEP KNOWLEDGE OF THE GEORGIA CONTEXT TO THE TABLE, BUT WHAT WE VALUE MOST IS THE TIME THEY INVEST IN PERSONALIZING LEARNING FOR OUR PEOPLE.”

—Jeff Bearden,
Superintendent, Forsyth County Schools



Cahill began her new role in August 2015, and she has already noticed the impact of the program on her leadership practice. “I’ve been meeting with teachers frequently, and I’m handling those meetings differently than I would have a year ago. I recognize the importance of listening to teachers and supporting them. Instead of walking in with all the answers, I’m helping teachers reflect on problems and working collaboratively with them to develop solutions.”

GLISI will begin its third year of partnership with Forsyth County Public Schools in FY2016 and is looking forward to supporting a new group of leaders like Cahill. Lynn Seay, Director of Professional Learning for FCS, sees the need for the Aspiring Leaders Program now more than ever. “We are opening

a new school almost every year in response to county-wide growth. GLISI’s continued partnership is vital to building a pipeline of highly effective leaders at the pace required to keep up with our expanding community.”



A GLISI hallmark is team-based learning that gets teams highly engaged. Our partners grow together and grow in the same direction.



“It would be easy for our staff to rest on our laurels. But I wanted to challenge us to do better and be better.”

–Brittany Cunningham, Principal, Druid Hills High School

WHEN LEARNING IS TEAM-BASED, CULTURE SHIFTS

The charming red brick facade and tree-lined streets surrounding Druid Hills High School mask the sea change happening inside. The school's newsletter from 1934 boasts an enrollment of 336 students from 12 states. Today, Druid Hills is responsible for preparing more than 1,300 students hailing from 24 nations to be college and career ready in a global economy. While the student body and external expectations of the school have radically changed, the culture and practices of teachers inside have remained largely the same—and the data, especially in reading, called for a sense of urgency around crafting a new vision for student success. Principal Brittany Cunningham decided to bring a team to GLISl's Base Camp and Leadership Summit (BCLS) to address the gap between the supports the student body required and the supports her team was providing.

**IN 2015, BCLS WAS
REDESIGNED TO FOCUS ON
YOUR TEAM, YOUR TIME, AND
YOUR DATA.**

**THE 26 TEAMS THAT
ATTENDED COHORTS 43–45
ENJOYED MORE BREAK-
OUT TIME, PERSONALIZED
LEARNING, AND EXPERT
COACHING THAN EVER
BEFORE.**

In her second year as principal of Druid Hills High School, Cunningham saw BCLS as an opportunity to unite her staff around a common purpose, to build trust across her staff, and to inspire change. “It would be easy for our staff to rest on our laurels—to be comforted by the success, awards, and recognition we’ve received in the past. But I wanted to challenge us to do better and be better.” She knew if her team was willing to use BCLS as an opportunity to scratch below the surface, identify areas where students were struggling, and openly discuss the root cause of those struggles, they could improve.

The eight-person team that accompanied Principal Cunningham included a mixture of new and veteran teachers from diverse content areas, as well as members of her leadership team. Many arrived at Base Camp unsure of what to expect and wary of the investment in professional learning that would take them out of their classrooms. The team's initial resistance was softened by GLISl's performance consultant, who worked alongside the

team to connect the dots between BCLS training and the literacy challenges Druid Hills was facing. Carrie Staines, a passionate teacher of world history, was one of the initial resisters who was able to open up because of the hands-on, personal support her team received. “GLISI’s performance consultant listened so she could understand our context, but she was also willing to push. She challenged me to get to the heart of what the learning was all about—which was to embrace my responsibility as a change leader.” Vashti Ward, a veteran math teacher, agreed. “Our coach encouraged us to get specific: How were we going to change our adult behavior and team culture to better serve our students?”

Persistence and a willingness to dig deep paid off. The Druid Hills team members left BCLS with a plan to improve student literacy and with a greater sense of personal responsibility for achieving their goals. Six months later, they are hard at work implementing their



“I’VE ALWAYS SEEN MYSELF AS A TEACHER—BUT SEEING MYSELF AS A LEADER WAS A STRUGGLE. GLISI HELPED ME SEE IT.”

—Carrie Staines,
10th Grade Social Studies Teacher

plan. Although Cunningham acknowledges that their work is far from complete, she already sees growth in the individual leaders who attended, the focus of staff meeting time, and the culture in the building. “Even though I was only able to bring eight people to BCLS, our whole staff is benefiting. The GLISI protocols have transformed our meetings, which are now more focused on our instructional goals. Our team has become more communicative, collaborative, and effective as a result of this experience.”

Despite the tremendous progress Druid Hills has made, change does not happen overnight. Continuing to break down resistance to change is at the forefront of Cunningham’s leadership agenda, and she sees BCLS as a resource that can support her efforts. “Druid Hills is attending BCLS again next year. Our focus this time around will be on removing the road blocks that stand between us and our literacy goals and on giving a new group of teacher leaders the skills they need to help push us forward.”

BASE CAMP AND LEADERSHIP SUMMIT LEARNING GAINS

WHAT LEARNING GAINS DID OUR 461 PARTICIPANTS EXPERIENCE?

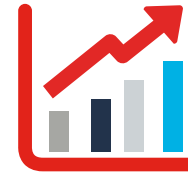
HOW MUCH DID PARTICIPANTS LEARN?

Pre/Post evaluation results indicate that teams experienced statistically significant, positive growth in learning.



100%

statistically significant increases on **all** learning indicators after Base Camp and Leadership Summit



91%

have changed how they **teach** and **lead** after Base Camp and Leadership Summit



HOW MUCH DID PARTICIPANTS GROW?

Evaluation of participants six months after the experience indicates that 91% of survey respondents have changed the way they teach and lead as a result of Base Camp and Leadership Summit.

HOW WELL WERE PARTICIPANTS EQUIPPED?

Nearly all participants said Base Camp and Leadership Summit equipped them with the necessary skills to drive instructional improvement in their schools and districts.



99%

have skills needed to drive instructional improvement after Base Camp and Leadership Summit



WHEN LEARNING IS PERFORMANCE-BASED, PRACTICE IMPROVES

Not all growth is explosive, dramatic, or sudden. Just as the growth of our young children goes undetected each day, until one day they tower over us, adult growth also occurs quietly and over time. And although seemingly insignificant when plotted on a graph, small, incremental growth often contributes to dramatic, positive, and lasting change. This is the story in Tattnall County, where in 2015 GLISI initiated an ongoing partnership with Superintendent Gina Williams to induce the kind of incremental change that would establish a professional learning culture district-wide.

Tattnall County Public Schools is a sprawling school district covering 488 square miles of southeast Georgia, but serving only 3,600 students in six schools. At the start of the district's partnership with GLISI, the culture of the district was similar to that of many districts: compliance with tradition was more typical than questioning tradition. Drawing on the results of a rigorous needs assessment, GLISI and Tattnall district leaders concluded that the most powerful lever to improve student outcomes would be to change culture

IN 2015, GLISI'S EVALUATION TEAM DESIGNED A RIGOROUS NEEDS ASSESSMENT TO IDENTIFY OUR PARTNERS' MOST PRESSING LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES. WE APPLIED THE ASSESSMENT IN TATTNALL TO HELP OUR TEAM KNOW THE CHALLENGES, KNOW THEM WELL, AND CUSTOMIZE OUR SUPPORT TO DRIVE TATTNALL'S LEADERSHIP GROWTH.

system-wide to be transparent, open, and instructionally-focused.

To plant the seeds for that culture change, GLISI delivered a combination of custom training and on-site coaching, designed to break down communication barriers and to provoke courageous conversations among teachers, principals, and central office staff. GLISI's expert coaches facilitated whole-group learning as well as small-group learning at individual schools. At first, teachers deferred to school and district leaders during sessions, as was the prevailing custom in the district. However, through practicing the use of guided protocols

with guidance and encouragement from expert coaches, and by being grouped in job-alike professional learning opportunities to scaffold their comfort in making the cultural leap to more open sharing, teachers are becoming more confident, open, and willing to give voice to their ideas for improving teaching and learning.

Likewise, leaders are learning strategies for making the school environment more comfortable and welcoming for collaboration—including making their own learning and growth transparent for teachers.

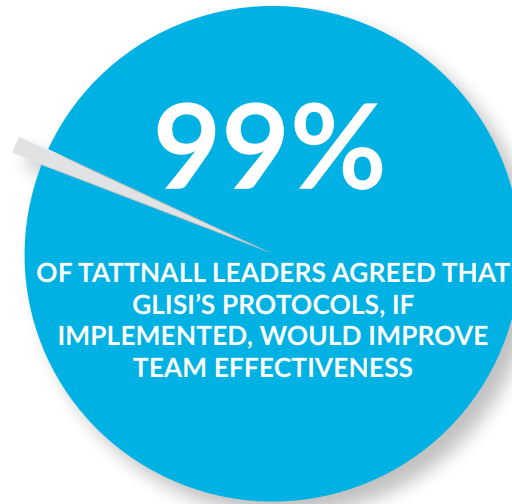


“If you looked at our calendars before our partnership with GLISI, you’d see the same number of meetings you see now. What’s changed is what is happening in those meetings.”

-Gina Williams, Superintendent, Tattnall County Schools

Toward the end of our first year of partnership, GLISI transitioned from facilitating professional learning to coaching and support, helping Tattnall leaders to take ownership for teachers' job-embedded learning. In one school, a principal and her staff have embraced the protocols they learned and are applying them to examine student work and identify necessary changes in instruction and assessment. In another, teacher meetings have morphed from an emphasis on the logistics of "holding school" to a focus on instructional methods, review of student data and work, and discussion of how instruction can be adapted to address student learning challenges. In the central office, Williams has observed a willingness among her district team to have courageous conversations about performance. "It's not that there was a lack of collegial interaction before—but the percentage of interaction that was instructionally focused was low. If you looked

APPLYING GLISI PROTOCOLS TO DRIVE CHANGE ...



specifically, GLISI's role in leading learners to make small changes in adult practice. It is these small changes that have big growth implications for students—and point to even more dramatic growth in the future. 📈

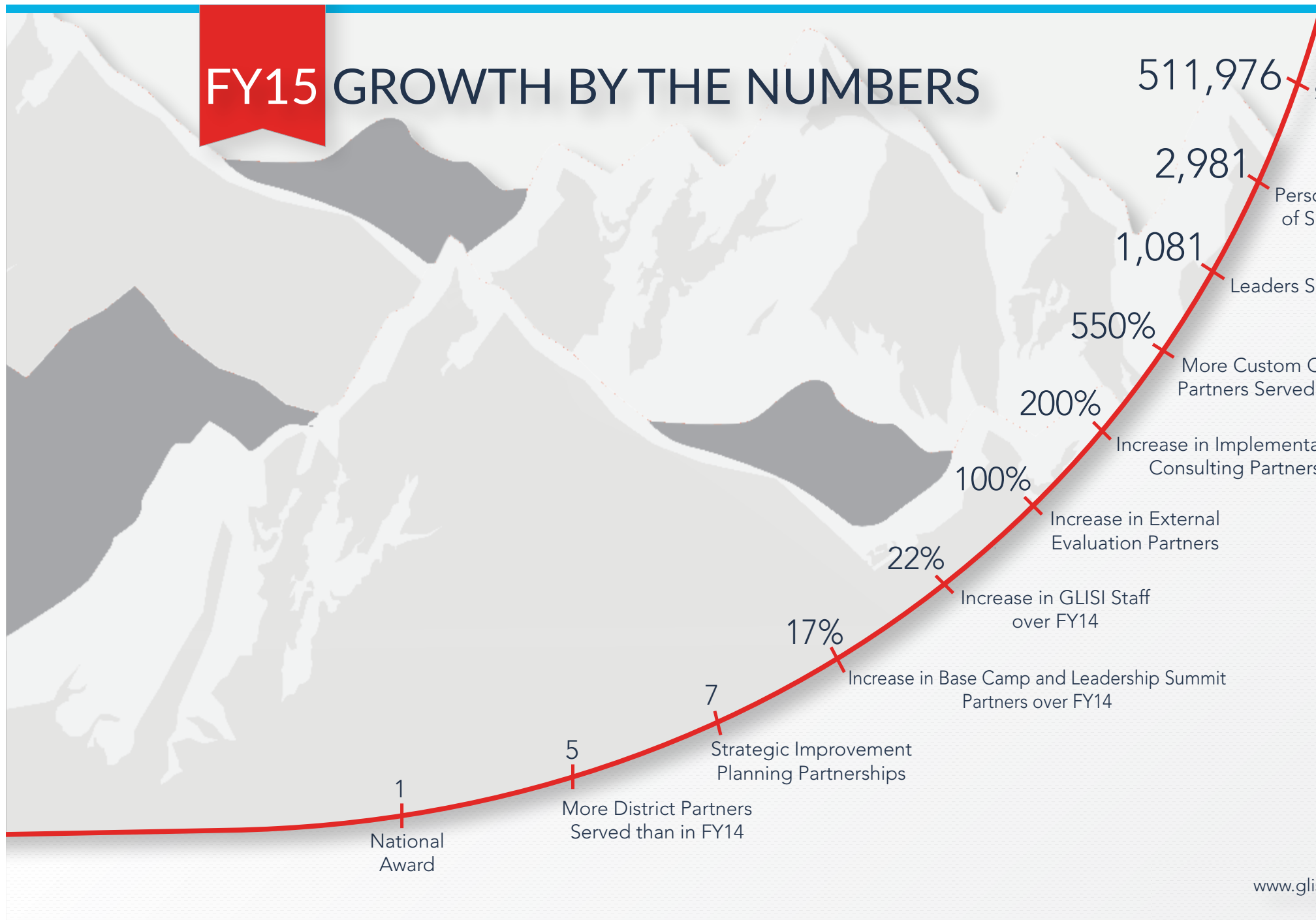
at our calendars before our partnership with GLISI, you'd see the same number of meetings you see now. What's changed is what is happening in those meetings."

These small shifts in educator behavior are deceptively difficult to achieve, but they are also game changers that can lead to dramatic improvements in teaching effectiveness and, ultimately, student learning. Tattnall's cohort graduation rate data are already showing exciting growth: Their most recent data show an increase from 60 percent in SY2014 to 78 percent in SY2015. Superintendent Williams sees the district's partnership with GLISI as instrumental to this growth—more



We help teams break down communication barriers and work together to drive improvement.

FY15 GROWTH BY THE NUMBERS



WE ARE SERVING MORE DISTRICTS IN BETTER WAYS

Increase in Our Brand Equity

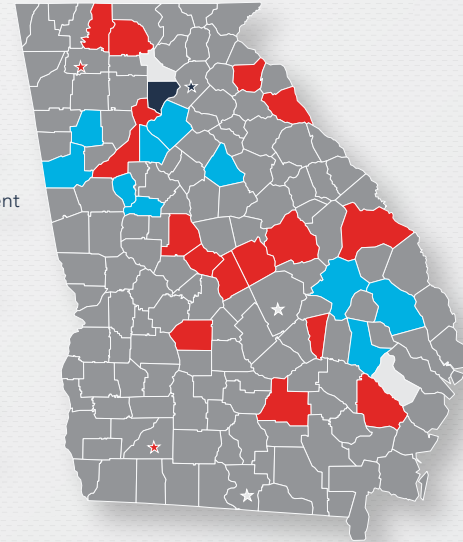


Deepening our Service Through Partnerships

- Governor's Office of Student Achievement
- Georgia School Boards Association
- Georgia School Superintendent Association
- The Wallace Foundation

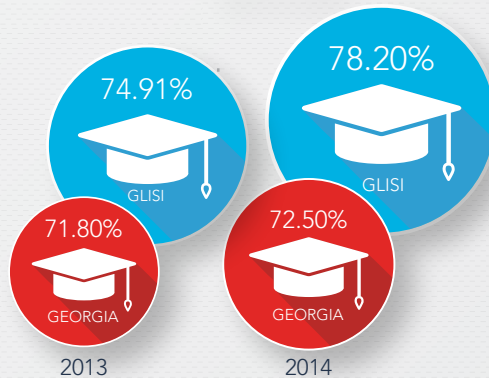
District Partners by Service Type

- Base Camp and Leadership Summit
- Strategic Improvement Planning
- Custom Consulting
- Multiple Services
- Non-GLISI Districts
- City School Districts

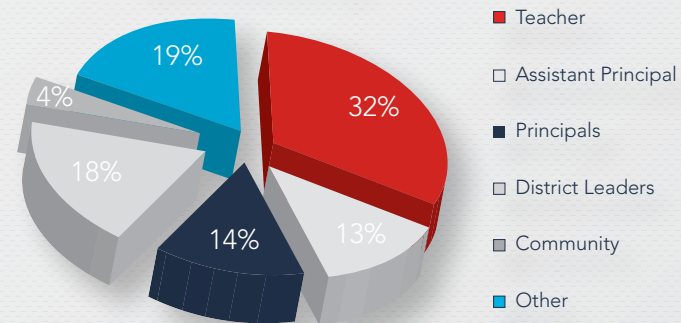


OUR GROWTH, YOUR RESULTS

Improvement in Cohort Graduation Rates from 2013 to 2014



Leaders Served by Type



1,081 Leaders Touched by GLISI, Serving 511,976 Students

WHEN BEST PRACTICES ARE SHARED, OUR PARTNERS BENEFIT


Not only was 2015 a year of growth for GLISI's district partners, it was a year of growth for GLISI as well. We grew our team, broadened our reach, and deepened our collective knowledge base by serving and learning alongside more partners. The result? More opportunities to develop and share best practices among the leaders we serve.

In 2015, we continued to cultivate our reach nationally as part of The Wallace Foundation's *Principal Pipeline Initiative*. GLISI facilitated professional learning communities for 60 high-performing principals from innovative districts around the country^[1]. This cross-national collaboration culminated in eight learning tools that illuminate how effective leaders respond to contemporary challenges of school leadership (p. 21). These tools have been leveraged in our consulting partnerships back home in Georgia and are accessible to all school leaders on GLISI's website.

We also had the opportunity to share our research on leadership dispositions with a national audience at the University Council for Educational Administration conference. This award-winning research, initiated in partnership with leaders in Gwinnett County, identifies a framework of dispositions for effective school leaders. GLISI applied the research findings in Forsyth County and Gainesville City to help

teams define leadership competency frameworks that capture the skills, knowledge, and dispositions essential for leadership success in their districts. These frameworks have become the bedrock for key aspects of their talent management practice—from hiring and selection processes to professional learning curriculum for aspiring leaders.

Finally, GLISI's team was invited to facilitate a session at the annual conference of the School Leadership Program Development Network, which focuses on best practice in preparing school leaders. There, we shared our expertise in managing complex multi-partner projects. Using GLISI's hallmark adult learning approach—which aims for engagement, relevance, and reflection—we led participants through a simulation of how to define roles, responsibilities, communication protocols and decision-making processes, at the outset of a project. This method, based on our research on consulting effectiveness, has proven successful in Paulding and Carroll County Public Schools, because it ensures transparent communication, builds trust, and focuses partners on the goals of our work: developing leaders to improve teaching and learning^[2].

We are proud of the growth in our team, our brand, and our expertise—but most proud of the impact of our growth on the leaders, teachers, and students we serve. 

¹ Participating districts include: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools, North Carolina; Denver Public Schools, Colorado; Gwinnett County Public Schools, Georgia; Hillsborough County Public Schools, Florida; New York City Public Schools, New York; Prince George's County Public Schools, Maryland

² Mohammed, M.B., Welch, J., & Bussey, L.H. (2015). Bridging theory and practice: A conceptual framework for consulting organizations. *School Leadership and Management*, 35(1), 1-24; Bussey, L. H., Welch, J. C., & Mohammed, M. B. (2014) Effective consultants: a conceptual framework for helping school systems achieve systemic reform, *School Leadership & Management*, 34:2, 156-178.

ILLUMINATING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

School leaders from The Wallace Foundation Principal Professional Learning Community designed eight innovative tools that illuminate effective school leadership. The tools address six problems of practice and are informed by research, combined expertise, and brainpower of the GLSI team.

SHAPING VISION



This two-part roadmap identifies the key stages of visioning and provides real-world examples of how school leaders are casting, implementing, branding, and sustaining visions that are positively affecting student outcomes.

INFLUENCING CULTURE

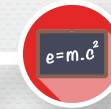


This professional development toolkit is designed to assist new or transitioning principals with identifying, influencing, and avoiding pitfalls in school culture transformation.

PROMOTING GROWTH



This web-based, electronic guide offers embedded tools, templates, and suggestions to support principals as they cultivate leadership in their teams.



IMPLEMENTING CURRICULUM

This resource introduces a Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle for ensuring a rigorous curriculum in every classroom, for every child, and offers a number of associated protocols, resources, and examples in support of curriculum improvement.



MANAGING TIME

Based on interviews with district superintendents, principal supervisors, and the know-how of exemplary instructional leaders, this resource identifies key strategies for overcoming barriers and making instruction a principal's number one priority.



IMPROVING INSTRUCTION

This online repository offers tools for school leaders at various stages of readiness to implement quality professional learning that builds school-wide instructional capacity.

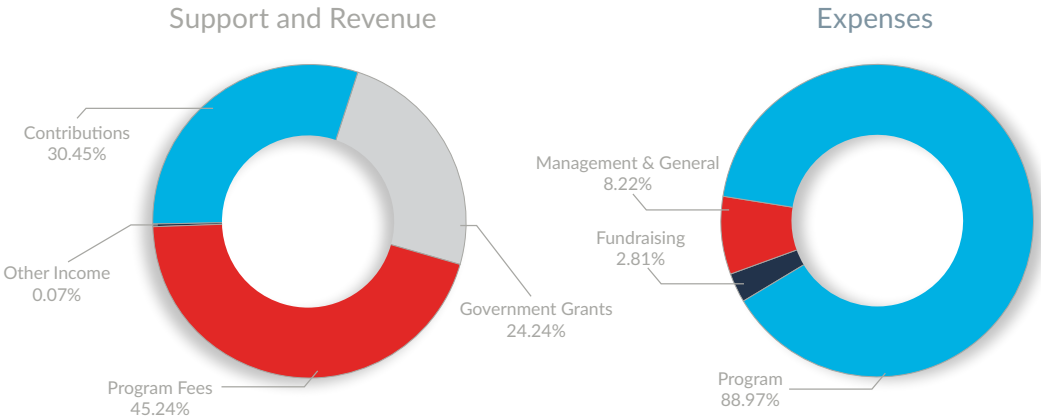
Access these free tools on our website
www.glisi.org

FINANCIALS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Statement of Activities

Year Ended June 30, 2015

Support and Revenue	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Contributions	\$873,441	-	\$973,441
Government Grants	\$774,815	-	\$774,815
Program Fees	\$1,446,102	-	\$1,446,102
Other Income	\$2,412	-	\$2,412
Net Assets Released From Restriction	\$ 100,000	(\$100,000)	-
Total Support and Revenue	\$3,196,770	(\$100,000)	\$3,096,770
Expenses	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Program	\$2,967,656	-	\$2,967,656
Management and General	\$274,236	-	\$274,236
Fundraising	\$93,663	-	\$93,663
Total Expenses	\$3,335,555	-	\$3,335,555
Change in Net Assets	(\$138,785)	(\$100,000)	(\$238,785)
Net Assets Beginning of Year	\$2,995,475	\$200,000	\$3,195,475
Net Assets End of Year	\$2,856,690	\$100,000	\$2,956,690



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Georgia State Schools

Gilmer County Schools

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Gwinnett County Public Schools

Long County School District

Monroe County Schools

Montgomery County School

Morgan County Charter School System

Murray County Schools

Paulding County School District

Pelham City Schools

Tattnall County Schools

Twiggs County Public Schools

Valdosta City School District

Washington County Schools

Wayne County School System

Wilkinson County Schools



GLISI

Strong leaders transform lives.

OUR HISTORY

In 2001, a coalition of education, business, and government leaders came together to improve schools in Georgia. They believed school leaders needed tools and training to prepare more students for college and career success. GLISI was founded to provide those tools and training. Since then, GLISI has incorporated as an independent non-profit organization. We are Georgia's premier partner for leadership development, consulting and research.

OUR MISSION

We develop world-class education leaders who advance student achievement and organizational effectiveness.

Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement

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