



Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent
"Educating Georgia's Future"

Investing in Educational Excellence (IE²) System* Application

DISTRICT NAME

Pike County School District

DISTRICT ADDRESS

16 West Jackson Street
Zebulon, Georgia
30295

Richard Woods
State School Superintendent

MAY 2015

*Please note that if HB 502 goes into effect on July 1, 2015, districts that chose the IE² flexibility option will henceforth be known as Strategic Waivers School Systems.

IE² SYSTEM APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Please enter the requested information in the gray boxes following each question. Thank you!

Proposed IE2 System Information			
1. Full Name of Proposed IE2 System Pike County School District			
2. Please indicate whether this is a: New Petition <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or a Renewal Petition	3. How many schools in total are you proposing to include in your IE2 system? 5		
4. How many of each of the following schools are you proposing to include in your IE2 system? <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">Primary School(s) 1</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Middle School(s) 1</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">Elementary School(s) 1</div> <div style="text-align: center;">High school(s) 2</div> </div>			
5. On July 1 of what year do you want your IE2 contract to be effective? 2016			
6. IE2 System Street Address 16 West Jackson Street	7. City Zebulon	8. State GA	9. Zip 30295
10. Contact Person Mike Duncan		11. Title Superintendent	
12. Contact Street Address 16 West Jackson Street	13. City Zebulon	14. State GA	15. Zip 30295
16. Contact's telephone number 7705678489	17. Contact's fax number	18. Contact's E-mail Address duncans@pike.k12.ga.us	

Pike County School System Overview

The Pike County School system serves approximately 3,409 students from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. Of these, approximately 719 students attend Pike County Primary School; 716 students attend Pike County Elementary School; 791 students are served at Pike County Middle School; and 1,183 students attend Pike County High School. The District also houses an alternative program, which not only serves as an alternative setting for students placed there due to serious disciplinary infractions, but also as a voluntary setting for students who thrive in an environment different from the typical high school. The District offers a rigorous STEM program, as well as several industry-certified CTAE pathways. Strong partnerships with local colleges and technical schools are rapidly increasing additional educational opportunities for our students, including a partnership with Spalding and Butts counties to open the Griffin Region College and Career Academy.

Pike County is a small, mostly rural, community that has experienced significant growth over the past ten years. In 2000, census data reported a population of 13,688, while in 2010 census figures revealed a total population of 17,869. This represents an increase of approximately 30.5%. This rate is significantly higher than the average rate for Georgia, which was 18.3% over the same time period.

The demographic makeup of the system has remained quite consistent over the past few years. (See table below.) The district had a free/reduced lunch population of 44.02% for the 2014-2015 school year. Graduation percentages have risen significantly over the past decade, consistently being in the mid to upper 80's.



Percentage of Enrollment by Race/Other Subgroups
 Percent of Students Enrolled by Subgroups

		Percentage of Students		
		2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
Other Subgroups	Limited English Proficient	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Eligible for Free/ Reduced Meals	44.0%	42.0%	42.0%
	Students With Disability	8.6%	7.1%	7.6%
	Migrant	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Race/ Ethnicity	Asian	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Black	8.0%	8.0%	9.0%
	Hispanic	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
	Native American/ Alaskan Native	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	White	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%
	Multiracial	3.0%	2.0%	2.0%

Two years ago, stakeholders were asked to imagine a schooling experience which prepared students for success in a dynamic global economy in an increasingly unstable world. These efforts identified a clear purpose for school and established clear expectations for student success. With thousands of data points, a surprisingly high degree of consensus was reached: Stakeholders concluded that success in the 21st century will require the ability to think critically, problem solve creatively, communicate clearly, and collaborate effectively. To this end, the Pike County School District developed strategies within three strategic goal areas (student achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, and operational effectiveness and efficiency) to address the most fundamental barriers to mission attainment-instructional rigor.

The Pike County School System strives to provide an exceptional educational program for all students that promotes academic excellence, 21st century skills, and College/Career readiness. Data-driven decision-making and constant evaluation of both student and adult performance are pivotal components to the success experienced by Pike County students. Pike County teachers

and administrators are all part of Professional Learning Communities, which focus on the improvement of performance tasks, instruction, and student work. This work is structured and ensured through a systematic quarterly review process embedded in the system strategic plan, as well as accountability through a balanced scorecard. This commitment to excellence requires that district and school leaders strategically allocate resources in direct alignment with the district's identified mission, vision, beliefs, and strategic goals.

Building the Case

The Mission of the Pike County School District is to “Develop a Creative Problem Solver Ready for College and Career.” This commitment to our students will be further realized through a contract with the State Board of Education to operate in an Investing in Educational Excellence (IE²) partnership that advances student achievement and ensures sound, operational practices as monitored by the Georgia Department of Education and the Governor's Office of Student Achievement.

The Pike County School System has identified Title 20 Law and State Board of Education rules to be waived in exchange for additional measures of accountability designed to improve student achievement. The identification of Title 20 Law and State Board of Education Rules was identified through a year-long community engagement and data collection process, leading to the current Pike County Public Schools strategic plan.

The Pike County School District has been historically, and remains, one of the lowest per pupil expenditure county school districts in Georgia, ranking as low as second and high as seventh.

The economic recession decimated the District's fund reserve that took almost 20 years to build, which was only a modest 17 percent of annual operating revenue. The last eight years witnessed a 15 million dollar loss in State revenue. The drastic cuts in State revenue were balanced in the early years by utilizing and depleting fund reserves which now stand at less than 1 percent of

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annual operating revenue. Financial stability and solvency is only possible through continued and increasing levels of flexibility. Pike County has sought flexibility in the past for class size, minimum direct classroom expenditures, and expenditure controls. These waivers allowed the District to remain solvent.

The greatest instructional challenge we face is rigor. We have, for over a decade, analyzed trend data on state-administered assessments, as well as national assessments such as the SAT, and measured our students against the world by administering the PISA Exam. We consistently underperform our demographic cohort in terms of the percentage of students exceeding the bar. Despite enjoying a strong graduation rate that hovers in the mid to high eighties, we have significant room for improvement, and it begins by leveraging professional development and innovative programming to realize the community's desire for our schools to "Develop Creative Problem Solvers Ready for College and Careers." Continued financial flexibility will free up much-needed monies for professional development that will be the catalyst for changing the culture of teaching and learning, one that emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication. Pike County has sought flexibility in the past for middle school program criteria, school day and school year for students and employees, and instructional extension.

These waivers resulted in the District adopting and resourcing a calendar emphasizing the importance of professional development to achieve long-term instructional goals. A dramatic increase in the quality of teacher tasks and student work products around the researched-based tenets of Authentic Intellectual Work (construction on knowledge, elaborated communication, and value beyond school) has been realized. We are confident in our plan and our trajectory to become one of Georgia's preeminent school districts.

In light of the aforementioned issues of rigor, the most important variable to transform the culture of teaching and learning is the instructional strength of the classroom teacher. To this end, and in conjunction with a strong professional development program, the need to recruit and retain the

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most effective teachers and leaders is paramount. Flexibility in this area affords us the opportunity to restructure the Pike County School District and recruit talented program-specific personnel to advance our initiatives in STEM, Authentic Intellectual Work, virtual learning, and design thinking pedagogy. Pike County has sought flexibility in the past for required personnel. Flexibility in required personnel has allowed for modest restructuring and greater emphasis and funding on personnel and programs directly impacting instruction.

A culture shift from “test prep” to deeper learning is indeed the most complex issue facing American education. Deeper learning requires transfer of knowledge and skills. An instructional program that commits to deeper learning and instructional rigor requires innovative approaches toward professional learning, instructional delivery, and operational systems. Flexibility in financial decisions, organizational design, and staffing is necessary for the Pike County School District to reimagine a 21st century education committed to developing creative problem solvers ready for college and career.

Furthermore, The Pike County Schools System recognizes that students learn at different rates and in different ways, thus the System plans to leverage flexibility to provide complete differentiation and individualization. The System’s strategic planning process uncovered a need to offer an alternative educational option for a small population of high school students. Some of the barriers for these students found in the traditional structure are instructional pacing, course load, peer interaction, employment, and family circumstances. Zebulon High School, scheduled to open fall 2016, is a choice school; that is, no student shall be placed in Zebulon High School and may return to Pike County High School at the conclusion of any grading period, unless restricted by tribunal placement.

Zebulon High School will allow the district to develop individualized learning plans including appropriate literacy and numeracy interventions, credit recovery, and Advanced Placement© without the limitations imposed by a traditional high school setting. Zebulon High School will

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utilize a virtual instructional model that incorporates blended learning, one-on-one and small group instruction with flexible daily schedules and extended school year options. All students enrolled in Zebulon High School must qualify and enroll with a post-secondary institution by the beginning of their second year. In partnership with Southern Crescent Technical College, students may be provisionally enrolled in a technical college certificate course of study without meeting the minimum entrance test score requirements. The System plans to provide transportation to Southern Crescent Technical College and Gordon State College.

The Pike County School Systems believes that individualized learning plans coupled with dual enrollment and work-based learning opportunities in a flexible personalized schedule can re-engage and empower these student to become career ready on their own terms.

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Challenges Prioritized Order	Specific Action and Explanation	Waiver
<p>Ensuring the financial stability of the Pike County School System despite uncertain and unpredictable local revenue and insufficient fund reserves.</p>	<p>The Pike County School System will align spending priorities with the district's strategic plan. The flexibility will allow us to continue focusing scarce resources directly on expenditures impacting instruction such as professional development and instructional support materials</p>	<p>Class-size and Staffing (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-182); Minimum Direct Classroom Expenditures and Expenditure Controls (O.C.G.A § 20-2-171); QBE Financing (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161); Categorical Allotment Requirements, Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-183 to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-186)</p>
<p>Ensuring the Pike County School System provides a rigorous and relevant academic program to ALL students.</p>	<p>The Pike County School System will pursue innovative course design, delivery models, and pedagogical approaches in order to leverage the Georgia Standards for Excellence as a vehicle to enable students to think critically, problem-solve creatively, communicate clearly, and collaborate effectively.</p>	<p>ELL Program Requirement (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-156; Organization of Schools; Schedules (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-290); Competencies and core curriculum, Online learning (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-140.1, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-142 and SBOE 160-4-2-.48); Graduation Requirements (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131)and (SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.48); Middle School Program Criteria (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-290); Remedial Education (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-154), (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-154.1); Early Intervention Program (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-153); Education Program for Gifted Students (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161); School Day and school Year for Students and Employees (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-15, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160 (a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168 (c)); Comprehensive Health and Physical Education program (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-82 (e) SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.12); Promotion and Retention (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283); Instructional Extension (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-184.1); Common Minimum Facility Requirements (O.C.G.A § 20-2-260)</p>
<p>Ensuring the Pike County School System recruits and retains staff to provide rich and varied learning opportunities for all students.</p>	<p>The Pike County School System will strive to develop students who are creative problem solvers ready for college and career by offering high quality instructional opportunities in areas such as STEM, CTAE, and higher level mathematics and sciences. We will do so by exploring the expansion of employment practices to employ professional practitioners in these specialty fields.</p>	<p>Certification requirements (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-108, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-201, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-204); Personnel Required (SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.22)</p>

Waivers Component

Under O.C.G.A § 20-2-80 and SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.33, the Pike County School System is seeking flexibility for all of its schools from the following state statutes (Official Code of Georgia) and/or rules (State Board of Education Rule) in exchange for greater accountability (as outlined in the IE2 Partnership Contract) over the life of a five-year contract which allows for seven years of flexibility between the Pike County Board of Education and the Georgia State Board of Education.

- Class-size and Staffing (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-182)
- Minimum Direct Classroom Expenditures and Expenditure Controls (O.C.G.A § 20-2-171)
- QBE Financing (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161)
- Categorical Allotment Requirements, Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-183 to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-186)
- ELL Program Requirement (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-156)
- Organization of Schools; Schedules (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-290)
- Competencies and core curriculum, Online learning (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-140.1, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-142 and SBOE 160-4-2-.48)
- Graduation Requirements (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131) and (SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.48)
- Middle School Program Criteria (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-290)
- Remedial Education (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-154), (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-154.1)
- Early Intervention Program (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-153)
- Education Program for Gifted Students (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161)
- School Day and school Year for Students and Employees (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-15, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160 (a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168 (c))
- Comprehensive Health and Physical Education program (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-82 (e) SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.12);
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- Instructional Extension (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-184.1)

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- Certification requirements (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-108, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-201, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-204)
- Personnel Required (SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.22)
- Common Minimum Facility Requirements (O.C.G.A § 20-2-260)

Accountability Component

The State Board shall hold the Pike County School District accountable for the performance of the academic goal listed below.

Goal 1: Each Pike County School District school will demonstrate proficiency and/or improvement on the CCRPI.

Measure 1: School performance goals will be set so that for each year during the five-year contract, an individual school shall increase its CCRPI score (without Challenge Points) by 3% of the gap between the baseline year CCRPI score (without Challenge Points) and 100. Baseline year is 2015-2016.

OR

Measure 2: For each year during the five-year contract, an individual school with an initial CCRPI score (without Challenge Points), performing in the top quartile of the state within each grade cluster shall remain at or above the top quartile threshold established in the baseline year. Baseline year is 2015-2016.

OR

Measure 3: If a school fails to meet its CCRPI target score, the school will be deemed as meeting its yearly performance target if the school is determined to be “beating the odds” through an analysis that compares the school’s CCRPI to its expected performance as determined by the “beating the odds” model developed in partnership between GOSA and the GaDOE.

Consequences Component

Sanctions and interventions for nonperforming schools:

The schedule of sanctions and interventions shall be designed to ensure that the local school system sufficiently addresses the achievement deficiencies at all non-performing schools under the local school system’s management and control. Such sanctions and interventions shall be at the recommendation of GOSA and shall include the following:

In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-84.1, Pike County School District will employ the following interventions or sanctions at all non-performing schools under the Pike County School District’s local management and control. The sanctions and interventions shall include the following:

- (a) If based upon the review of the 2016-2017 and/or 2017-2018 performance data, a school has not made sufficient progress toward meeting the articulated academic goals, a school improvement

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plan will be incorporated into the annual school strategic planning process and implemented by August 2018 (based upon review of 2016-2017 data) or August 2019 (based upon review of 2017-2018 data). The school improvement plan will address the specific achievement deficiencies along with a targeted plan to address the deficiencies. The school improvement plan and the targeted plan will be approved and monitored by the district throughout the academic year.

- (b) If based upon the review of 2018-2019 and/or 2019-2020 performance data, a school has not achieved three years of growth in the articulated academic goals, the Pike County School District will apply direct school management support and intensive teacher development support as outlined in the jointly developed school improvement plan between the school leadership and district leadership staff. Implementation of the school improvement plan will occur no later than August 2020 (based upon review of 2018-2019 data) and/or August 2021 (based upon review of 2019-2020 data) and will be monitored by the school system.
- (c) If based upon the GOSA evaluation of the 2020-2021 performance data, a school has not achieved three years of growth in the articulated academic goals, the Pike County School District will apply, in the 2022-2023 school year, the consequences recommended by GOSA and approved by the State Board of Education.

ASSURANCES FORM AND SIGNATURE SHEET

The law requires your school district to provide assurances that it will do certain things and comply with certain laws. This Assurance Form enumerates all of these requirements and, when you submit this signed Signature Sheet with this Assurance Form as part of your IE2 System Application Package, you are providing the legal assurance that your IE2 system understands and will do these things. This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the school system.

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for an IE² contract for The Pike County School District located in Pike County is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that if awarded an IE² the school system:

1. Shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations;
2. Shall not discriminate against any student or employee on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, national origin, gender, disability or age;
3. Shall be subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of the physical health and safety of school students, employees, and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct;
4. Shall be subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A § 20-2-1050 requiring a brief period of quiet reflection;
5. Shall ensure that the IE² system is subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq. and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq.;
6. Shall ensure that all teachers will be certified or highly qualified in compliance with No Child Left Behind;
7. Shall comply with the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through § 20-14-41 and federal accountability requirements, and participate in statewide assessments;
8. Shall adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including the IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as applicable;
9. Shall provide state and federally mandated services for English Language Learners, as applicable;

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10. Shall provide for supplemental educational services as required by federal law and pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03, and for remediation in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01;
11. Shall notify the state of any intent to contract with a for-profit entity for education management services;
12. Shall be subject to the requirement that it shall not charge tuition or fees to its students except as may be authorized by local boards by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-133;
13. Shall comply with federal due process procedures regarding student discipline and dismissal;
14. Shall be subject to all laws relating to unlawful conduct in or near a public school;
15. Shall have a written grievance procedure to resolve student, parent, and teacher complaints;
16. Shall comply with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20 -2-211.1 relating to fingerprinting and criminal background checks;
17. Shall ensure that if transportation is provided for its students, the system shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws;
18. Shall ensure that if the IE² system participates in federal school meals programs, then each participating system IE² school shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws;
19. Shall prepare a safety plan in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185 and submit and obtain approval from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency;
20. Shall comply with the state facility requirements regarding site codes, facility codes, the submission of architectural plans for any new facility that the system may build or occupy during the IE² term and all other facility requirements as established by the Department;
21. Shall be subject to all reporting requirements of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160, subsection (e) of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320, and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-740;
22. Shall be subject to an annual financial audit conducted by the state auditor or, if specified in the IE² contract , by an independent certified public accountant licensed in this state;
23. Shall acknowledge that all criteria used to calculate QBE funding may not be waived;
24. Shall follow any and all other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the applicant or the operation of the IE² system; and
25. Shall ensure that all new principals and other school leaders, central office staff, superintendents, and Board of Education members receive a detailed orientation session on their IE² system commitments as part of their “on-boarding” process.

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This IE² System Application, Assurance Form, and attached Exhibits were approved by the Pike County Board of Education on the 12 day of January, 2016.

Superintendent

Date

Chair, Local Board of Education

Date

If an IE² contract is granted, all Petitioners assure that the proposed IE² system programs, services, and activities will operate in accordance with the terms of the IE² contract and all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.

Superintendent

Date

Chair, Local Board of Education

Date

EXHIBITS

Imagine the Possibilities...

PIKE COUNTY SCHOOLS



www.pike.k12.ga.us

**RESOLUTION
INTENT TO PURSUE IE² CONTRACT**

WHEREAS, the Pike County Board of Education understands the importance of student achievement and school improvement initiatives; and,

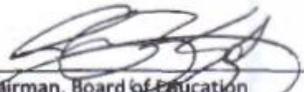
WHEREAS, the Pike County Board of Education seeks relief from certain laws and rules which currently constrict our ability to fund school improvement efforts and initiatives; and,

WHEREAS, the Pike County Board of Education understands and appreciates the need for greater accountability for all school system leaders, policy makers, and staff members; and,

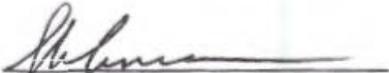
WHEREAS, the Pike County Board of Education recognizes the Investing in Educational Excellence (IE²) operational system as detailed in O.C.G.A. §20-2-80 provides a means of receiving flexibility from certain State Board of Education rules and state laws in return for greater accountability in terms of student achievement and other positive student outcomes;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pike County Board of Education intends to become a party to an IE² contract with the State Board of Education and to abide by the terms and conditions of such contract for the betterment of the public school students of the Pike County School System.

Adopted this 10th day of February, 2015.



Chairman, Board of Education
Pike County School System



Superintendent
Pike County School System

Exhibit 2: Public Hearing Notice

December 9, 2015

Principals and Staff:

The Pike County Board of Education will conduct a Public Hearing on January 12, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the Pike County Memorial Annex, 7450 HWY 19S Zebulon, Georgia, 30295 concerning the following transition in school system status:

- ◆ In accordance with the State of Georgia in Article 4, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-84, the Pike County School System intends to operate as a Strategic Waiver School System (SWSS) through the development of the SWSS partnership between our school district and the State Board of Education. The contract is scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2016.

All persons having an interest in this matter are invited to attend and make their views known at this time. The application may be viewed on our system website at <http://www.pike.k12.ga.us>. Written comments or questions should be directed to Michael Duncan, Superintendent, at duncans@pike.k12.ga.us by January 11, 2016.

Sincerely,
Michael Duncan, Ed. D
Superintendent

Exhibit 3: List of All Schools

Pike County Schools included in Strategic Waiver School System Application:

- Pike County Primary School
- Pike County Elementary School
- Pike County Middle School
- Pike County High School
- Zebulon High School (Virtual School)

Exhibit 4 (E, F, G): See IE2 Contract

Exhibit 5: System Description

The Pike County School system serves approximately 3,409 students from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. Of these, approximately 719 students attend Pike County Primary School; 716 students attend Pike County Elementary School; 791 students are served at Pike County Middle School; and 1,183 students attend Pike County High School. The District also houses an alternative program, which not only serves as an alternative setting for students placed there due to serious disciplinary infractions, but also as a voluntary setting for students who thrive in an environment different from the typical high school. The District offers a rigorous STEM program, as well as several industry-certified CTAE pathways. Strong partnerships with local colleges and technical schools are rapidly increasing additional educational opportunities for our students, including a partnership with Spalding and Butts counties to open the Griffin Region College and Career Academy.

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The demographic makeup of the system has remained quite consistent over the past few years. (See table below.) The district had a free/reduced lunch population of 44.02% for the 2014-2015 school year. Graduation percentages have risen significantly over the past decade, consistently being in the mid to upper 80's.

 **Percentage of Enrollment by Race/Other Subgroups**
Percent of Students Enrolled by Subgroups

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Other Subgroups	Limited English Proficient	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
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	White	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%
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Exhibit 6: Financial History

The financial state of Pike County Schools was a rocky one for much of the “great recession”. However, every challenge was met; albeit at great cost to District long term financial stability, employee’s fiscal well-being, and maintenance of our infrastructure.

The District absorbed unprecedented cuts in State funding in the period fiscal 2010 through 2014 experiencing a net decrease of 1.1 million. As the State struggled to fully fund the Quality Basic Education funding formula, we faced the realization that the State/Local partnership in educational funding has fundamentally changed. Local districts and communities are being asked to fund more and do more with local property tax funding. This challenging shift in the school financial partnership is proving to be a difficult one for our community to face. This is proven when one considers that, even in the advent of State funding reductions, Pike County property tax payers received an aggregate tax cut of almost \$400,000 in the same period. The necessitated shift in our local tax structure is one of our most significant fiscal challenges moving forward. Given the dangerously depleted status of the Districts fund reserves, embracing the new educational funding partnership realities is an essential for our future, long term financial stability. Good news was experienced with the fiscal 2015 and 2016 budgets. State funding rebounded to some degree, enabling the elimination of staff furlough days in place since fiscal 2010. The additional State dollars allowed necessary personnel positions to be restored, staved off any further reduction in professional teaching staff, and gave opportunity to provide long overdue professional learning opportunities. In the FY16 budget, a cost of living raise was funded for the first time since FY09. While many gains were achieved, all the fiscal 2015/2016 news was not good as the District’s fund reserves took another serious nose dive. There remains many significant challenges to restore all that was lost in the recession but we remain positive of this District’s ability to meet those reaction to the fundamental funding partnership shift.

The District and community, facing a dire necessity to improve and repair plant infrastructure, approved an ESPLOST in 2013 which focused on maintenance and technology projects. Approved projects involved our core technology delivery systems and repair and renovation of instructional buildings. Given the diminished capacities of State educational funding, use of the local option sales tax to maintain and replenish infrastructure is a fiscal must.

Financially, many challenges remain for Pike County Schools. We are confident the Pike community at large as well as School District community will meet these challenges with resolve, innovation and ingenuity.

Exhibit 7: Link to FY13 Audit Report

The audit process for FY 14 is currently still underway via the Georgia Department of Audits.
<http://www.pike.k12.ga.us/Portals/Pike/District/docs/Finance%20Department/FY14%20Pike%20County%20Audited%20Financial%20Statements.pdf>

Exhibit 8: Link to Advanc-Ed/SACS Accreditation Report

<http://www.pike.k12.ga.us/Portals/Pike/District/docs/AdvacEd%20Accrediation%20Report.pdf>

Exhibit 9: Link to PCSS Strategic Plan

<http://www.pike.k12.ga.us/Portals/Pike/District/docs/AdvacEd%20Accrediation%20Report.pdf>