

# Overview of the Strategic Waivers Partnership Contract

FORSYTH  
COUNTY SCHOOLS

*Ware  
County Schools*

**Pathways for all  
Success for all**

# What is a Strategic Waivers (SWSS) contract?

- Partnership Contract between a local school district and the State Board of Education
- Formerly known as IE<sup>2</sup>
- Term of the Contract is five years with the ability to extend to ten years
- Contract will allow the school system to receive flexibility for its schools from specified state statutes and/or rules in exchange for greater accountability for student achievement. There is no flexibility with federal requirements including AYP, NCLB/ESSA, Special Education, etc.

# How will we benefit from a Strategic Waivers contract?

- Primary goal is to attain flexibility to think innovatively about services in order to maximize student achievement and meet strategic goals.
- SWSS raises the bar for Ware County students and teachers to excel rather than just meet minimum standards.

# How will we benefit from a Strategic Waivers contract?

- SWSS provides the opportunity for our schools to deliver the instructional programs we believe will ensure our students are successful.
- Freedom from unfunded or under-funded state mandates that divert limited money and resources from where they can be used most effectively. This contract does not provide additional money but it does allow us to use our current resources (both financial and human) more efficiently.

# Ware County Schools Proposed Contract

- Following discussions with school and district leaders, WCS has created a proposed Strategic Waivers contract that clearly identifies:
  - Increased accountability goals
  - Flexibility sought from Georgia education laws and SBOE rules
  - Consequences that will be imposed upon not meeting accountability goals

# Greater Accountability

## Annual Performance Targets for CCRPI

- An individual school shall increase its CCRPI score (without challenge points) by 3% of the gap between the baseline year CCRPI and 100. The baseline year is 2015-2016.

-OR-

- An individual school 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.

-OR-

- A school must “beat the odds” if it fails to meet the CCRPI goal. This is determined by a formula applied by the state DOE and GOSA.

# Flexibility for Innovation

- Flexibility is needed to foster innovation and best practice as it relates to the educational program and organizational effectiveness.
- Flexibility provides school leaders and teachers an unprecedented opportunity to do what they believe is best for their students.

# Flexibility for Innovation

Ware County Schools is seeking flexibility from the following state statutes and/or rules in exchange for greater accountability.

- Academic Programs:
  - Graduation Requirements
  - Middle School Criteria
  - Instructional Extension
  - Early Intervention Program
  - Language Assistance for LEP Students
  - Education Program for Gifted Students
  - Scheduling for Instruction
  - Promotion and Retention

# Flexibility for Innovation (cont.)

- Human Resources
  - Class Size
  - Designation of School Year
- Finance
  - Minimum Expenditure Requirements
  - QBE Financing as it relates to System Earnings
  - Categorical Allotment Requirements

# Possible Consequences

- Schools not achieving annual performance goals will be provided direct, on-site support from the district office.
- Should the Governor's Office of Student Achievement and the State Board of Education deem a school out-of-compliance at the end of the five-year contract, the consequence will be to implement processes for conversion to charter school status, as required by law and rule.

# Transparency of Results

- Annual Report required by the Strategic Waivers School System Contract
- Ware County Schools will use its enhanced website to communicate performance to our stakeholders.
- CCRPI will report system and school performance each year.

# SWSS Impact for Ware County Schools

Benefits of becoming a SWSS include:

- The opportunity for schools to design and deliver the instructional programs they believe will ensure their students are successful.
- The ability to strategically utilize resources, both financial and human, to enhance our educational program.
- The flexibility to think innovatively about services to students in order to maximize student achievement and meet strategic plan goals.

# For more information, contact:

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