



SACS/CASI  
District Accreditation  
Self-Study Report

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Jerry Boyd, SACS Chair

January 28–31, 2007

Chickamauga  
City  
Schools

*"Working Together to Ensure a Tradition of Excellence Continues."*

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## Section 1

### **Overview of District's Preparation and Organization to Conduct District SACS Study**

On November 11, 2004, the Superintendent and school-based administrators of Chickamauga City Schools attended SACS CASI district accreditation readiness training at Kennesaw State University presented by Mr. Terry Cullifer and Dr. Mark Elgart. Overwhelmingly, this administrative leadership responded very positively to the district accreditation philosophy and process as presented. The prevailing sentiment from the team was that the process of district accreditation directly reflected the Chickamauga City School's philosophy of continuous school improvement. On November 19, 2004, the Superintendent drafted a letter to be sent to Dr. Mark Elgart requesting the district be considered to pursue district accreditation and on December 4, 2004 the full Board of Education voted unanimously to support this endeavor.

The Chickamauga City School's approach to continuous school improvement has always been a priority. A group of ten district and school level staff members attended the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) in October 2004. This core group consisted of the Superintendent, Programs Director, each of the three principals and two assistant principals and one key teacher from each school. The experience brought to the forefront the desired need to develop a more systematic plan for school improvement. Although each of the three schools had previously been recognized as a quality school, and had exhibited significant efforts to address student needs, the system was ready to move beyond random acts of improvement and adopt an accountability process. Immediately, a "Better Seeking Team" was established in each school to begin examining data and deal with key issues affecting the school. From these teams, a district improvement team began sharing across school lines regarding school improvement. Continuous improvement became a core value, and Chickamauga City Schools became more than just the sum of its individual schools.

From the GLISI experience, strategic goals were developed to direct and guide the system's improvement initiatives. Four academic goals were developed to move each school and the system toward improvement while at the same time addressing requirements of *No Child Left Behind* legislation in meeting and exceeding Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The system adopted the theme "*Working Together to Ensure the Tradition of Excellence Continues*" to provide a system-wide focus on a seamless effort for improvement. This prevailing message went forth with the challenge to work together to analyze the data, and drive instruction based on documented need. Teachers agreed to raise standards and provide the appropriate support students needed to be successful. The district adopted the principle of moving a good school system to a great one from Jim Collins' book *Good to Great*. During the 2006-2007 school year, the school district revised its Strategic Plan to include a total of six goals focused around two directions of improvement: higher academic achievement and efficient operations. The first five goals of the Strategic Plan center on higher academic achievement and performance while the final one focuses on efficient and effective operations that support an

environment conducive to learning. The effort has provided a more focused and united system. From the District Strategic Plan, individual schools have developed their school improvement plans utilizing current data and information to produce a dynamic plan to guide the implementation of strategies and activities which support the district goals as well as school level improvement initiatives.

School and district-level personnel have worked to examine and document Chickamauga City School's compliance with all ten SACS CASI District Standards. Furthermore, the district and schools have developed a clearly defined process for monitoring and ensuring quality assurance. The system is currently implementing Georgia's new standards based curriculum and investigating standards based assessment which will give a more accurate picture of student mastery. Following is a timeline showing the journey of the Chickamauga City Schools toward continuous quality improvement.

### **Continuous Improvement Timeline**

October 4-6, 2004	District Leadership Team Attends GLISI Conference
November 11, 2004	System Team Receives District Accreditation Readiness Training
November 19, 2004	Letter Sent By Superintendent Requesting Pursuit of District Accreditation
December 4, 2004	Board of Education Unanimously Approves Recommendation to Pursue District Accreditation
May -September 2006	Development of District Strategic Plan
August-October 2006	Review and Revision of System Mission, Vision, Beliefs, and Values
September-November 2006	Review and Revision of School Improvement Plans and review by District Leadership Team
November 2006	Board Approves Chickamauga City Schools District Strategic Plan
January 28-31, 2007	Quality Assurance Review Team Visit

## Section 2

### **District and Community Profile**

The City of Chickamauga, incorporated in 1891, is a small Walker County community in Northwest Georgia. Over the last century, the city has changed and grown, from a population of 95 in 1900 to 2,245 in 2000. Demographically there is little diversity, with 99% being Caucasian. The city is surrounded by the North Georgia mountains, and the history of the area has been rediscovered and restored wherever possible.

Chickamauga is a growing and changing community with a proud heritage and a promising future. While the community strives to protect and enhance Chickamauga's quality of life and historical heritage, growth and change are welcomed. Historic downtown Chickamauga, offering a mix of antique and specialty shops, and restaurants, is complemented by historical assets such as the Gordon Lee Mansion, and the Chickamauga Battlefield. Additionally, Northwestern Technical College is located only a few miles south of Chickamauga. Approximately 10 miles north of Chickamauga is Chattanooga, Tennessee. Chickamauga residents can enjoy a short drive to experience the benefits of a major city. The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and Chattanooga State Technical College are also easy commutes from Chickamauga.

#### **City of Chickamauga Profile**

	<b><u>1990</u></b>	<b><u>2000</u></b>	<b><u>2005</u></b>
<b>Total Population</b>	2,149	2,245	2,248
<b>Age Distribution</b>			
0-20	634	684	657
21-44	744	768	766
45 & over	771	793	766
<b>Race Distribution</b>			
White	2,139	2,208	2,208
Black	3	13	14
American Indian	1	6	6
Asian	4	5	5
Other	2	13	15
<b>High School Graduate or Higher</b>		906	
<b>Bachelor's Degree or Higher</b>		144	
<b>Family Owned Housing</b>		73.9%	
<b>Median Housing Value</b>		\$81,500	
<b>Per Capita Income</b>		\$17,716	
<b>% of citizens below the poverty level</b>		8%	

## **Chickamauga City School System**

The Chickamauga City School District also enjoys a history rich in tradition and excellence. The district is composed of three schools. Chickamauga Elementary School serves grades kindergarten through five; Gordon Lee Middle School serves grades six through eight; and Gordon Lee High School serves grades nine through twelve. This organizational structure has served student needs and is expected to continue. The district has discussed the possibility of building a new middle school in the future. If this occurs, the current space in the middle school facility will be absorbed by Gordon Lee High School. The system has a current enrollment of 1,324 students. The citizenry of Chickamauga and surrounding Walker County have been especially supportive of the school system as evidenced by the passage of three Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) votes in 1997, 2002, and 2007 (passed in September 2006 for effect in 2007).

The student population at the Chickamauga City Schools is 99% Caucasian. The system has approximately 54% out of district students who have applied to attend the city school system and pay a minimal tuition fee.

Each of the schools within the Chickamauga City School System has been continuously accredited through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools since their initial accreditation (Elementary School- 2002, Middle School- 2004, High School- 1932).

The reputation of the Chickamauga City Schools continues to bring new students into the system who seeks a quality education geared toward the success of each student. The Chickamauga City School System is committed to “Working Together to Ensure a Tradition of Excellence Continues.” Exceeding expectations is the goal and while students generally perform above average, data indicates that some students are below achievement standards and a majority of students score in the meets category. The system is working hard to move these students to the exceeds range.

The district utilizes profile information in the continuous improvement process. The profile data which includes demographic and assessment information is updated regularly from the Georgia Department of Education, Office of Student Achievement, and local sources. For further information regarding the school system, please visit the website at [www.glschools.org](http://www.glschools.org).

## ***Chickamauga City School System***

### ***Our Mission***

The Chickamauga City School System will provide a comprehensive, high quality education for all students in an engaging, safe and supportive environment.

### ***Our Vision***

The Chickamauga City School System will inspire all students to maximize their potential and become lifelong learners while empowering them to become respectful, productive, and successful members of society.

### ***We Believe***

- All students can learn.
- A highly qualified staff committed to continuous improvement is essential for increased student achievement.
- High expectations and support lead to greater student success.
- Character education and respect for individual differences are important in the development of the whole child.
- Education is a partnership among students, parents, school, and community.
- School must prepare students for the changing future.
- Student learning is the primary focus of our school system.

### ***We Value***

- Trust and Honest Communication
- Stakeholder Participation
- Continual Self Evaluation and Improvement
- Efficient Operations
- Common Understanding, Shared Vision and Responsibility
- Commitment and Competency

### ***Our Motto***

Working Together to Ensure a Tradition of Excellence Continues

# Chickamauga City Schools Fact Sheet

## Seven-Year History of Millage Rate

<u>Year</u>	<u>Millage Rate</u>
1	9.56
2	7.25
3	7.25
4	10.25
5	10.25
6	10.25
7	10.25

	<u>03-04</u>	<u>04-05</u>	<u>05-06</u>	<u>06-07</u>
<b>Expenditures Per Student (General Fund Only)</b>	\$5,070	\$4,830	\$5,080	\$5,380
<b>Students Paying Tuition</b>	749	776	729	719
<b>Tuition Costs</b>				
Elementary School	\$250.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$500.00
Middle School	\$250.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$500.00
High School	\$250.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$500.00
<b>% County Enrollment</b>	56.26%	55.61%	53.78%	54.43%

## Demographic Factors

	<u>03-04</u>	<u>04-05</u>	<u>05-06</u>
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	1,333	1,311	1,324

### Ethnicity/Race/Gender

Female	685	671	676
Male	648	640	648
Asian/Pacific Islander	5	2	1
Black/African American	2	2	1
Hispanic	0	0	1
Multiracial	2	0	7
Native American	0	0	0
White/Non-Hispanic	1,324	1,307	1,314

### Other Subgroups

Free/Reduced Lunch	14.1%	14.1%	13.9%
Limited English Proficient	0	0	0
Special Education	111	98	118
Gifted Education	215	229	222
Early Intervention Program (K-5)	50	57	50
Remedial Education (9-12)	8	12	18
Migrant	0	0	0

## Professional Certification Level Certified Staff Members

T4- Bachelors Degree	T5- Masters Degree	T6- Specialist Degree	T7- Doctorate Degree	Total
30	36	26	0	92

## Chickamauga City Schools

### Certified/Classified Personnel Information

School/Location	Administrators	Certified Staff	Classified Staff
Central Office	3	2	8
Chickamauga Elementary School	1.5	32	15
Gordon Lee Middle School	1.5	22	6
Gordon Lee High School	2	28	8
Consolidated School Nutrition	0	0	16
Maintenance Facility	0	0	1
<b>System Totals</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>54</b>

## Section 3

### District SACS Accreditation Standards

#### Standard 1 Beliefs and Mission

*A quality system develops and communicates a vision, beliefs and mission that provide a focus for the quality of the work of the students and the quality of the work of the system and schools.*

##### **1.1 Establishes a vision for education in the community through the leadership of the governing board of the system and in cooperation with its stakeholders.**

The Chickamauga City School System has the following vision, beliefs, and mission statements. These are reviewed annually and revised as needed.

##### *Our Mission*

The Chickamauga City School System will provide a comprehensive, high quality education for all students in an engaging, safe and supportive environment.

##### *Our Vision*

The Chickamauga City School System will inspire all students to maximize their potential and become lifelong learners while empowering them to become respectful, productive, and successful members of society.

##### *We Believe*

- All students can learn.
- A highly qualified staff committed to continuous improvement is essential for increased student achievement.
- High expectations and support lead to greater student success.
- Character education and respect for individual differences are important in the development of the whole child.
- Education is a partnership among students, parents, school, and community.
- School must prepare students for the changing future.
- Student learning is the primary focus of our school system.

Our mission, vision, and beliefs emphasize that student learning is the priority of all efforts and collaboration, both external and internal, and is the key to success. In fall 2006 after numerous meetings to gather input from staff, PTO's, School Councils, Board and community members several drafts of the vision and mission statements were shared with these stakeholder groups. A final version was agreed upon and adopted in the fall of 2006.

## **1.2 Identifies system-wide goals to advance the vision.**

Beginning with participation in the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) training experience in October 2003, key leaders in the system decided it was time to step up to the next level. There had certainly been many good things going on in the system, and students were being successful. However, some students were not experiencing the success at a level compatible with their ability and there was a performance gap between students with disabilities and general education students. In conjunction with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and based on data, the system identified areas of challenge and set goals for improvement. These are revised annually. Our current goals are:

### ***System Goals***

- All students will meet or exceed state standards in reading/language arts and mathematics.
- All students will graduate from high school.
- All students will be taught by highly qualified teachers.
- Drop out rate will decrease for students with disabilities.
- Increase the percentage of students with disabilities meeting or exceeding state standards in reading/language arts and mathematics.

These goals promote the vision and set the course for continuous and sustainable improvement.

## **1.3 Establishes an accountability system to document and monitor achievement of its goals.**

The system balanced scorecard is updated annually. The Superintendent begins the year with a State of the System presentation. The presentation focuses on the demonstration of the mission and belief statements through the performance of staff members and students throughout the system. Subsequent to the Superintendent's presentation, each building level principal communicates information on his/her school performance through a similar manner. Within the school building, schools maintain data rooms/boards where staff members can physically see the demographic picture of the school while identifying root causes and discussing school improvement initiatives. The school leadership team develops goals which are revisited annually and monitored internally. In addition, as a part of the evaluation process, each teacher keeps individual student achievement and professional goals that he or she discusses with the principal each year.

## **1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile that describes the system, students, and community.**

The system profile at the system and school levels is updated annually at the beginning of the school year. In addition to the performance updates, enrollment information,

demographic information, teacher information, discipline information, attendance information, and community information are also updated to reflect changes.

**1.5 Ensure that the system’s vision, mission, and beliefs guide the instruction and curriculum throughout the system and reflect research and best practices concerning teaching and learning.**

The system and each school are aligned to the same district-wide vision, mission, and beliefs. As schools develop their specific improvement plans, each of their goals must align with a district level goal. A commitment has been made to “work together to ensure the tradition of excellence continues.” A more concentrated effort is being made to reach every child so he/she can benefit from what the system has to offer. Consequently, data and data driven decisions have become the rule of the day. Teachers have been trained and utilize research-based best practices to engage students in real world, relevant experiences which help them meet or exceed the standards. At the school level, principals monitor the strategies and best practices being used in the classroom. In addition, the system adopted the strategies of Learning Focused Schools. These strategies are monitored by LFS walkthroughs. Finally, the curriculum implementation is aligned with the timeline from the Department of Education for the Georgia Performance Standards. The Board thoroughly endorses this vision to excellence which is based upon focusing on the needs of individual students.

**1.6 Reviews its vision, mission, and beliefs annually and revises them when appropriate.**

The system’s vision, mission, and belief statements are reviewed and revised annually with input from the teachers, system and school administrators, School Councils, the Board of Education, and student groups. The mission, vision, and belief statements are posted on the system web site for the public to view. The mission and vision are also posted in the Central Office, each school and classroom.

The process followed by the Chickamauga City School System in developing and communicating the mission and belief statements has truly promoted stakeholders working together as a community of learners by engaging in a consensus building initiative that promotes ownership of the process and commitment to work collaboratively toward preparing students for the future.

## Standard 2 Governance and Leadership

*A quality system provides for and promotes stability in the leadership, governance and organizational structure which include a focus in developing and maintaining a vision; an emphasis on improving student learning; and support for innovative efforts that produce desired results.*

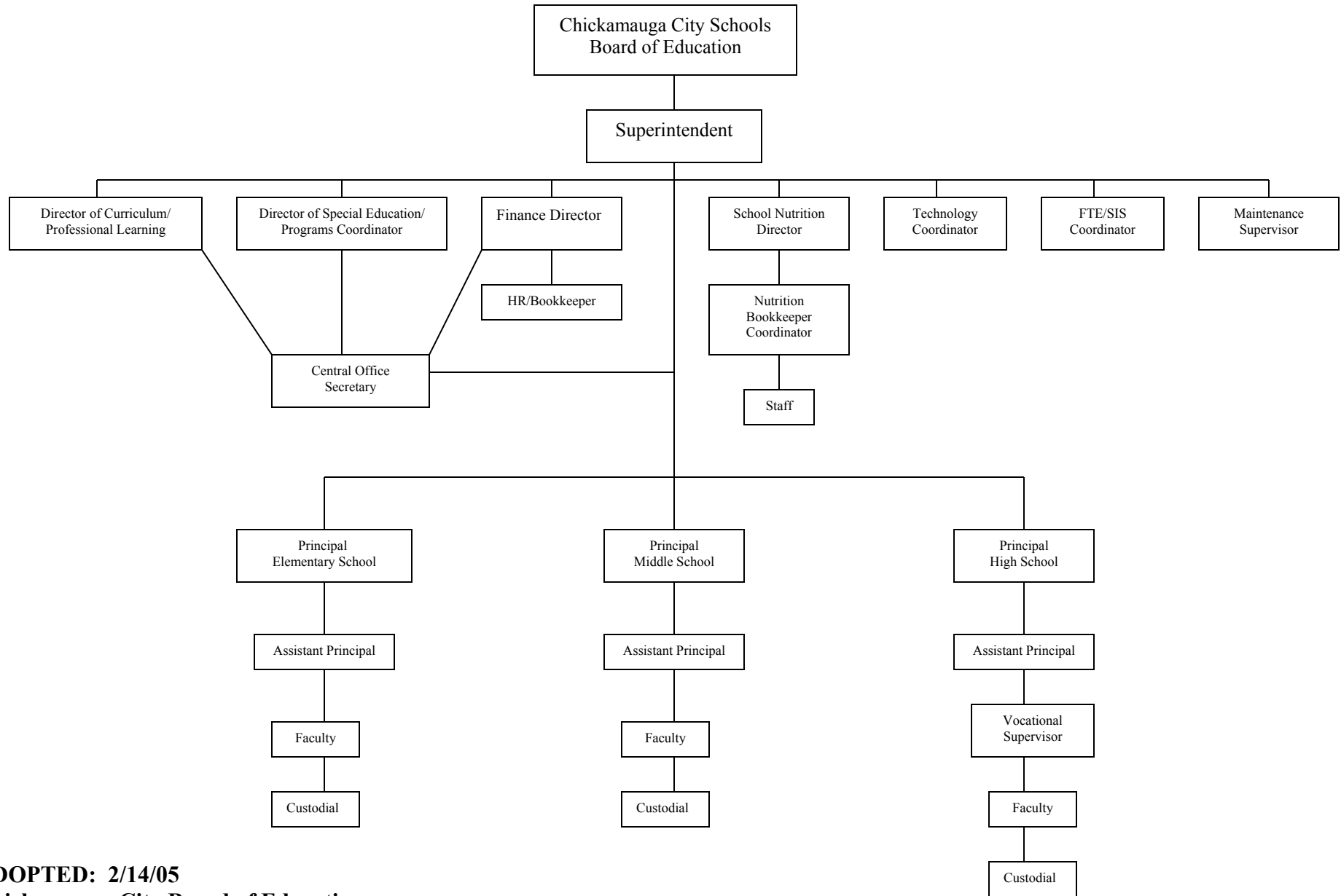
### **2.1 Adopts written policies and procedures that promote the effective operation of the system that include clearly defined lines of authority, relationships, and accountability which support the mission, beliefs and goals of the system.**

Chickamauga City Schools operate under a five member governing board elected by the public for a four year term. Stability in leadership is important to the Chickamauga community and expectations of the school board, superintendent and staff are high. Board members have served numerous terms of office for which they receive no pay. Mr. Billy Ellis has served twenty-five years; Mr. Grant Parrish, twenty-two years; Mr. D.A. Jewell, V, sixteen years; Mr. Don Littleton, ten years; and Ms. Janet Landers, two years.

The Superintendent has been employed in the school district for twenty-nine years, serving as a teacher, Assistant Principal and Principal of Gordon Lee High School, and serving the past seven years as Superintendent.

Each leader of the school system works diligently to foster a sense of collegiality between the school district and the community. The Superintendent engages stakeholders both formally and informally in the district improvement process. The Board of Education adopts written policies and procedures which promote effective and efficient operation of all aspects of the organization. An up to date book of policies and procedures is kept in the Central Office as well as each school. The District is in the process of providing on-line access to all Board policies. Clearly defined lines of authority, relationships and accountability are established to support the vision, mission, core values and goals of the school district.

The organizational chart adopted by the Board of Education establishes lines of authority and indicates relationships between various operations of the system.



**ADOPTED: 2/14/05**  
**Chickamauga City Board of Education**

**2.2 Permits the administrative team of the system to implement policies and procedures without interference.**

The administrative leadership of the district is permitted to implement policies and procedures without interference. The Board invites and solicits public comment, including comments and suggestions from school and district level personnel, regarding the adoption and changes in policies and procedures. The Chickamauga City Board of Education supports school site-based decision-making. Day to day operations of the schools is seen as the responsibilities of the administrators of each school. The relationship between the administration and the Board is based upon trust, collaboration and professionalism. The size of the system certainly lends itself to effective communication.

**2.3 Establishes policies and procedures that recognize and preserve the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the head of the system and the schools.**

The district establishes policies and procedures that recognize and preserve the executive, administrative and leadership authority of the head of the system and the schools. Board policy designates the Superintendent as chief executive officer and educational leader of the school district. Board policy further grants the Superintendent authority and power to act in accordance with the system’s mission and in the best interest of the system when no guides for administrative action through Board policy exist.

The Board is organized into standing committees. The appropriate committee stands to receive reports and recommendations as well as to serve as an advisory and sounding board to the Superintendent and/or her designee in matters pertaining to that particular committee. The committees are: Finance and Personnel, Facilities, and Technology. Each Board member other than the Chairman of the Board serves on committees. The Chairman of the Board serves in ex-officio at all Committee meetings. Committees will meet on an as needed basis.

Chickamauga City Schools Committee Assignments

	Facilities	Finance & Personnel	Technology
D.A. Jewell, V.			
Billy Ellis	X	X	
Janet Landers			X
Don Littleton		X	
Grant Parrish	X		X

#### **2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board.**

Board policy recognizes and supports the importance of a planned and continuing program of professional learning for Board members. Upon election, new Board members attend extensive training. Board policy also stipulates each member shall participate in annual training. Board members regularly participate in Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) conferences and workshops. Certificates indicate that members of the Board are current on their requirements.

#### **2.5 Maintains access to legal counsel who can advise or obtain necessary information about the legal requirements and obligations that exist in the state, federal, or other jurisdictions in which it operates.**

The district maintains access to legal counsel who advises and provides necessary legal information and obligations that exist in the state and federal jurisdictions in which the district operates. For many years the Board has retained Harben & Hartley, Attorneys at Law, Gainesville, Georgia as legal counsel. A vote is taken each year to reaffirm the relationship between the Board and the legal advisors. The firm specializes in educational law. The Superintendent serves as the general liaison between the school administration and School Board Attorney.

#### **2.6 Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations from protracted proceedings and claims for damage.**

The district maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operation from protracted proceedings and claims for damage. The current insurance policy is in effect for the current fiscal year and provides coverage for general liability, fleet, property, and crime.

#### **2.7 Creates and strengthens collaborative networks of community stakeholders to support student learning.**

The district seeks and provides for collaborative networks of community stakeholders in an effort to support student learning. The agenda for all regularly scheduled Board meetings includes an opportunity for public participation. The Board periodically instructs the Superintendent to gather information from employees or the public for the purpose of input before decisions are made or proposed policies adopted. The Superintendent and officers of the Board participate as needed in meetings of the City Council, Planning Commission, and City Manager. As an Independent City School System, the Chickamauga City Schools are technically an entity of the City of

Chickamauga. Tremendous support is received from the city via the mayor, City Council, City Manager, and employees.

The Superintendent and the Board continue to strengthen collaborative networks of community stakeholders through their involvement in civic organizations. Each school as well as the system has business partners. Many excellent relationships have resulted from involvement with the Youth Apprenticeship Program at Gordon Lee High School. Additionally, the Superintendent serves as an executive officer of the Walker County Chamber of Commerce, is a member of the Chamber Education Committee, and is also a member of the Steering Committee for the Walker County Partners for Educational Progress (W.A.C.O.P.E.P.). All these organizations continually focus their efforts on improving collaborative networks to support student learning and ensure a quality learning environment for students.

Each school has an active, on-going School Council which by law may submit inquiries and information to the Board of Education. Oftentimes, the Board itself directly asks for input from the councils on matters under consideration. The district also seeks input through surveys from employees, parents and community members.

## **2.8 Allocates and aligns the human, instructional, financial, and physical resources in support of the vision, mission, beliefs, and expectations for student learning.**

The district allocates and aligns the human, instructional, financial, and physical resources in support of the vision, mission, core values, and expectations for student learning. Regular administrative meetings of the Superintendent's District Leadership Team which includes cabinet members, school administrators, and academic leadership representatives promote a consistent alignment of all resources to achieve the goals of the district. Annually the Superintendent and cabinet members meet with teachers by grade level and/or subject area teams to identify needs. Having only three schools, one of each level including elementary, middle and high school, equality is easily sustained. Each school has more than adequate resources given the number of students and its needs.

To support the implementation of school improvement efforts, the district annually develops an operational budget. To assure the budget aligns with the mission, beliefs, and goals of the district, the Superintendent, School Improvement Specialist, Director of Special Education and Programs, and Finance Director collaborate with each principal to discuss the budget and review the school level improvement plan. The Consolidated Application is then submitted to request and document needs for federal funding to support instructional services. All requests for funds through the Consolidated Application align with goals and initiatives in the system improvement plan.

At the school level, an administrative team consisting of the principal, the assistant principal and the school leadership team facilitates leadership. The team analyzes data, develops strategies to promote student learning, communicates plans with team/grade level members, identifies professional learning needs, and gains feedback on

improvement initiatives. To monitor alignment of instructional initiatives as well as to provide support for these initiatives, members of the school and system administrative teams routinely conduct walkthroughs in the school.

The system utilizes the Georgia Leadership Evaluation Instrument (GLEI) evaluation instrument for administrators. The Superintendent meets with principals to determine focal areas where support is needed and can be provided to enhance student achievement. The Superintendent reviews progress individually with each principal three times per year.

All of these processes and initiatives demonstrate leadership's role in ensuring the allocation and alignment of human, instructional, financial, and physical resources support the vision, mission, beliefs, and expectations for student learning. The Chickamauga City School System provides strong leadership, effective governance, and organizational structures which support the vision and mission of the system. The structure is supportive, collaborative, and focused on doing what is best for students and their achievement.

## **Standard 3 Curriculum**

*A quality system offers a research-based curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning that is subject to review and revision at regular intervals.*

### **3.1 Develops curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning.**

Following Georgia's schedule for implementation, during the 2004-2005 school year Chickamauga City Schools began the process of implementing the *Georgia Performance Standards* (GPS) and phasing out Georgia's *Quality Core Curriculum* (QCC) as the foundational curriculum. To ensure consistent and effective implementation of the GPS, teachers meet to receive training, analyze the objectives, unpack the standards, develop curriculum maps/pacing guides, identify materials and resources, and analyze the data on student performance in the content areas. The *Georgia Performance Standards* provide teachers with a viable, consistent, research-based guideline for instruction that clearly defines and specifies what students are expected to know in each subject and grade. The *Georgia Performance Standards* and the *Quality Core Curriculum*, along with supporting resources, are available to teachers, students and parents on the Georgia Department of Education's website. Teachers, students, and parents know what topics must be covered and mastered in each subject and grade.

### **3.2 Provides a curriculum that includes a set of essential knowledge and skills in each content area.**

The *Georgia Performance Standards* include a set of essential knowledge and skills in each content area. The Performance Standards provide clear expectations for assessment, instruction and student work. They define the level of work that demonstrates achievement of the standards, and they also allow the teacher to assess the extent to which the student knows the material or can manipulate and apply the information.

### **3.3 Aligns curriculum with clearly defined expectations for student learning across subject areas and grade levels.**

The *Georgia Performance Standards* provide a curriculum framework with clearly defined standards across subject areas and grade levels. The master schedules at the elementary school and middle school provide for common planning time for grade level teachers. This provides teachers with the opportunity to work collaboratively to analyze student data so as to effectively plan, implement and evaluate instruction to meet the varying needs of their students. Professional learning days also provide opportunities for teachers at all levels to work together for horizontal and vertical alignment of the curriculum. As an example, all schools were recently involved in a three day data retreat where math data for all grades was examined by teachers from all grade levels. Central office administrators have also met with all grade levels and /or subject levels to discuss curriculum alignment and to identify any areas of concern with vertical alignment of the curriculum. *Learning Focused Schools* training was provided for all staff to ensure an

understanding and consistency as our system moved to a standards based curriculum. The GPS redelivery training has also provided an opportunity for teachers across grade levels to work together as they receive GPS training. Chickamauga City Schools also participated in the *Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement* initiative. The district leadership team includes the superintendent, all principals and assistant principals, one teacher from each school, school improvement specialist, technology specialist, and special education/program director. Each school's leadership team includes the principal, assistant principal and several teachers representing different grade levels and program areas.

### **3.4 Ensures that the curriculum reflects a commitment to equity, an appreciation of diversity, recognition of different ways of learning, and challenges each student to excel.**

The district leadership team and the school leadership teams examine and analyze test data of all students, content areas, and subgroups including students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged, gender, and race. The disaggregated data is shared and discussed in faculty meetings with all school staff members and used to determine the academic needs of the student body. The district and school leadership teams also analyze organizational and instructional practices to determine which ones have a positive impact on student achievement and which ones are not effective. System and school personnel also use parent, teacher, student, and community surveys and failure, dropout, retention, and graduation rate data to help determine the academic needs of the students. Surveys are also given to parents of students who receive Title I, EIP, and special education services to determine specific program needs.

To successfully teach to the needs of all students, particularly students with disabilities, students with special learning needs (including gifted and talented) and those with limited English proficiency, specific classes and workshops have been included in Chickamauga City Schools' professional learning plan. These include training for teachers who work with students with disabilities, trainings to increase the number of AP teachers so that more AP courses can be offered in the high school, training on differentiated instruction, gifted endorsement classes, *Learning Focused Schools* training, training in understanding and using data and assessments to improve classroom practice and student learning, and classes which support implementation of the *Georgia Performance Standards*.

Chickamauga City Schools recognizes that our students have diverse academic needs and learn in different ways. The curriculum reflects a wide range of courses provided to support and challenge all students. From Title I and Early Intervention Programs to the gifted and AP programs, students are supported and encouraged to succeed and excel. Inclusion in the general education setting for special needs students is utilized at all schools. Chickamauga City Schools also offers programs of academic support such as after school and summer remediation programs, mentoring, and remedial programs. High standards are the norm for all students.

### **3.5 Develops written curriculum guides and support materials that serve as a basis for implementing the curriculum.**

Each teacher follows the state curriculum, either the *Georgia Performance Standards* or the *Quality Core Curriculum*, and develops written units which include the supporting materials needed to effectively implement the curriculum. Written curriculum guides with support materials are in place for all grades and subjects currently using the QCC. The GADOE website, as well as other teacher resource websites, provides support materials for teacher review which may be downloaded for use. Teachers are developing written curriculum guides with support materials as GPS units are developed by subject area or grade level.

### **3.6 Promotes in the curriculum the active involvement of students in the learning process, including opportunities to explore application of higher order thinking skills and to investigate new approaches in applying their learning.**

Teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities to learn research-based best practices and strategies which promote the active involvement of students in the learning process. Included in these professional learning activities are the trainings for the new *Georgia Performance Standards*, *High Schools That Work*, *Making Middle Grades Work*, *Learning Focused Schools*, *Differentiated Instruction* as well as other professional learning designed to help teachers engage students more in the learning process and assist students to not only learn new material, but also to apply their learning.

### **3.7 Gathers, analyzes, and uses data and research in making curriculum choices.**

When teachers return to school in August, a district meeting is held and test data results are reviewed. Each school, along with Central Office staff, closely analyzes their data (by grade level, subject area, and sub-group). It is noted which areas have shown improvement, which areas are in need of additional focus and which areas show gaps in learning. All staff members have access to the data and input. The administrators and teacher representatives for all grade levels from each of the schools have participated in 3 days of learning the process of drilling down into data to identify areas needing attention. Once needs are identified, curriculum choices can be made using scientifically researched and /or evidence based practices or products. The Chickamauga City School System selects and implements scientifically and /or evidence-based practices and products targeting assessed needs. To ensure that funds are spent on scientifically and /or evidence-based practices, any purchase of \$1,000 or more must be approved by the Chickamauga City Schools Superintendent. Title I, Title II, Special Education, and Professional Learning funds may only be spent with the approval of the program directors. This screening process helps ensure that funds are spent only on products with proven results. Pilot programs are also sometimes used to determine the effectiveness of a product.

**3.8 Provides a balance of educational experiences through the curriculum that is based on knowledge of human growth and development, and relies on sound learning principles.**

Educational experiences offered by Chickamauga City Schools are based upon age-appropriate learning experiences and sound learning principles. A range of courses are offered in academic, technical, and elective areas. Programs including special education, early intervention, Title I, advanced placement, gifted education, and remedial education are also provided to eligible students. Support services such as tutoring and mentoring are available to students. Incorporating research based best practices and the use of differentiated instruction in classroom instruction utilizes sound learning principles and a balance of educational experiences.

## **Standard 4 Instructional Design**

*A quality system develops and employs instructional strategies and activities in support of student achievement of the expectations for learning defined by the curriculum.*

### **4.1 Analyzes and uses the results of assessments of student learning to improve instructional design and effectiveness.**

Students in the Chickamauga City School System participate in a number of mandated testing programs annually, and in addition, use other program-specific assessment tools. The academic needs of students and priorities for improvements, including instructional design and effectiveness improvements are determined by utilizing data from the following assessments:

- The Georgia Criterion Reference Competency Tests (CRCT) in grades 1-8.
- The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in grades 4, 6, and 8.
- The Georgia Writing Tests in grades 3 and 5.
- The Middle Grades Writing Assessment in grade 8.
- The Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT) in grade 11.
- The Georgia Kindergarten Assessment Program (GKAP)
- The Georgia End of Course Tests (EOCT)
- Benchmark Testing
- Formative and Summative Teacher Assessments

Also, to determine student academic needs, program eligibility, monitor progress and improve instructional design and effectiveness, the following assessment tools are used:

- CRCT results are used to determine Title I eligibility.
- The state checklist is used for eligibility in the Early Intervention Program (EIP).
- The DIBELS test is used for monitoring students in EIP and Title I.
- Several screening instruments are used to identify students with special needs followed by a comprehensive psychological evaluation. Every three years the evaluation is reviewed and a new evaluation is completed if needed.
- Several instruments are used to identify students who may qualify for the gifted program.

Chickamauga City Schools has a leadership team which includes the superintendent, all principals and assistant principals, one teacher from each school, school improvement specialist, technology specialist, and special education/program director. Each school has a school leadership team which also includes the principal and assistant principal and several teachers representing different grade levels and program areas. The district leadership team as well as the school leadership teams examine and analyze test data of all students, content areas, and subgroups. The disaggregated data is shared and discussed in faculty meetings with all school staff members to analyze the academic

needs of the students so that the development of effective instruction can be addressed. The *Georgia Performance Standards* training includes an assessment component which addresses the use of assessment to guide and improve instructional design and effectiveness. During the 2006-2007 school year, teachers will be utilizing benchmark assessments as well as teacher created evaluations to monitor student progress, analyze learning needs and develop effective instructional plans.

Data training has been completed by all system administrators, and teachers from all grade levels. This training provided participants with the skills to analyze the data more thoroughly so that instruction could be improved for specific students or groups of students and effectiveness of instruction could be improved in targeted areas. The district leadership team also completed the *Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement* where they received training on using assessment data effectively.

Over the past year, a large number of SMART Boards and Classroom/Student Response Systems were purchased and are in all three schools. The Student Response System enables teachers to immediately know if a student has an understanding, and if not, re-teaching can take place immediately. More SMART Boards will be added in the future.

#### **4.2 Designs and employs instructional strategies and activities that are research-based and reflective of best practice.**

The Chickamauga City School System selects and implements scientifically and/or evidenced-based practices and products targeting assessed needs. To ensure that funds are spent on scientifically and/or evidence based practices and products, any purchases of \$1,000 or more must be approved by the Chickamauga City Schools Superintendent. Title I, Title II, Special Education, and Professional Learning funds may only be spent on products with proven results and must have the program director's signature before purchases are made.

The Chickamauga City School administrators have received instruction on using the Georgia Department of Education's link to *Technology Solutions That Work*. This website will assist administrators and teachers in knowing which technology materials and products are scientifically and/or evidence based. During the GLISI training, district leadership team members learned to design and employ research-based instructional strategies and activities reflective of best practice.

Integrating technology into the classroom is a priority. Each teacher has a PC and units available for student use. Additionally, computer labs are available at the middle and high schools, and each school media center has a bank of computers for student use. Funds from a Comprehensive School Reform Grant have been utilized along with local funds to provide 21<sup>st</sup> century technology classrooms in all grades 6-12 core area classes and special education classrooms. Additionally, there is a commitment to purchase additional 21<sup>st</sup> century classrooms for every teacher in the system as well as complete rewiring of the elementary school. SPLOST funds have been designated for this purpose and outside donations will also be used to accomplish this goal.

Professional learning activities are provided which improve teacher knowledge on research based instructional strategies and practices in meeting the needs of students with diverse needs, including gifted and talented, ESOL, and students with disabilities. Some recent professional learning opportunities include:

- Sopris West *Best Practices Institute* Training
- *Georgia Performance Standards* Training and Various Supporting Trainings (*Differentiated Instruction, Assessment, Examining Student Work*)
- *High Schools That Work* Training
- *Making Middle Grades Work* Training
- *Learning Focused Schools* Training
- *Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement* (GLISI)

Professional learning is ongoing and is focused on improving student achievement. Each school now has a professional learning resource area and teachers are collaboratively working together to increase student achievement. Teachers are participating in SREB workshops to increase teacher knowledge of the various levels of student performance and how to move students from the basic level to the proficient and advanced levels of student performance. Teachers are learning strategies such as appropriate wait time, not accepting substandard work from students, moving learning from teacher-centered to student-centered, and ways to more effectively engage students in the learning process.

Administrators participate in professional learning designed to help them become outstanding managers and educational leaders knowledgeable about instructional strategies and activities that are research-based and reflective of best practices.

Parents and community are involved in activities to help students who may need additional help in academic areas. These include:

- Family Literacy Program
- Parent Volunteer Reading Program
- High School Child Development Class
- Chickamauga Public Library
- Summer Reading Program
- Youth Apprenticeship Program
- Mentor Program

#### **4.3 Aligns the instructional design, including strategies and action plans, with the system's mission and expectations for student learning.**

Chickamauga City School System's mission is to provide all students with a comprehensive, high quality education in an engaging, safe and supportive environment. After the annual analysis of the data (previously described in Section 4.1) and the determination of the learning needs of the students, the district leadership team uses the results of all of the information to develop a district three year plan which is annually evaluated. School leadership teams then focus on documented areas of weakness to

address student academic needs. Based upon identified needs, each school develops a school improvement plan which details goals, measurable objectives, and action steps which utilize research based best practices for instructional and academic improvement for all students including specific subgroups. These school improvement plans, which are aligned with the District Strategic Plan, are reviewed by the district leadership team. The district three year plan is then presented to the Board of Education for approval.

#### **4.4 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning.**

At Gordon Lee High School, instructional time is protected by:

- Student advisement sessions are regularly scheduled twice a month.
- Logs are kept and monitored for school imposed absences.
- Announcements are made at the beginning and end of each day to reduce interruptions.
- Teachers are expected to begin instruction at the start of every class period and to continue instruction for the full 90 minute block.
- Memos are sent in e-mail form in order to reduce all-call announcements.
- Field trips are for instructional purposes only and must be board approved.
- Teacher and parent conferences are held before school, during planning time, after school, and twice each year in the evenings.

At Gordon Lee Middle School, instructional time is protected by:

- Announcements are done through a power point presentation that runs during the first few minutes of class or at the very end of the school day.
- Assemblies are limited, but when there is an assembly an alternative schedule is run. By using this alternative schedule, we are able to take a few minutes from each class rather than the entire time from one class. There is also an alternative schedule used when we have advisor/advisee meetings.
- E-mail is used for reminders and other pertinent information.
- Teacher and parent conferences are held before school, during planning periods, or after school.
- Field trips must be instructional, limited in number, and must be board approved.
- Logs are kept and monitored for school imposed absences.
- Club meetings are held before or after school hours.

At Chickamauga Elementary School, instructional time is protected by:

- Announcements are made only at the beginning of the day.
- Teachers have common planning times.
- E-mails are used to provide teachers with information.
- Each grade level has a 2-3 hour block of uninterrupted instruction time.

#### **4.5 The instructional design provides all students with instruction that stimulates and enhances intellectual and creative development of higher order thinking skills and requires students to apply their learning.**

Professional learning opportunities have been provided to assist teachers in gaining the skills and strategies which will stimulate and enhance intellectual and creative development of higher order thinking skills and require students to apply their learning. These include professional development in ways to successfully teach to the needs of all students, particularly students with disabilities, students with special learning needs, (including gifted and talented) and those with limited English proficiency. Student academic data reveals that the gifted and talented students are not reaching the expected levels of achievement. To address this, teachers have received Advanced Placement training and additional Advanced Placement classes have been added. The number of teachers with gifted endorsements has also been increased. Teachers have been receiving *Georgia Performance Standards* training with additional training in *Differentiated Instruction, Assessment*, and classes helping teachers to effectively work with students with disabilities. To provide a strong foundation for the implementation of the *Georgia Performance Standards*, all teachers received *Learning Focused Schools* training prior to the initial GPS training. The *High Schools That Work* and *Making Middle Grades Work* initiatives, and the GPS training will enable teachers and administrators to implement an instructional design that provides all students with instruction that stimulates and enhances intellectual and creative development of higher order thinking skills and that requires students to apply their learning. High standards are the norm for all students at Chickamauga City Schools. Inclusion in the general education setting for special needs students is utilized at all schools.

#### **4.6 Provides a comprehensive program of information and media services that are aligned with its beliefs, mission, and goals.**

Chickamauga Elementary School has a media specialist and a media clerk while Gordon Lee High School and Gordon Lee Middle School share a media specialist and a media clerk. The media centers serving the schools provide on-going support for the instructional programs in the schools. Teachers are assisted in identifying resources to include in their instructional units and give input as to needed materials and equipment. Flexible scheduling is utilized to maximize use of the media center facilities and resources. The system subscribes to Follett databases. All schools have internet access and additionally, each of the school libraries is all networked with the Chickamauga Public Library which also offers support and activities to further the educational programs of the school. A technology specialist and his assistants facilitate technical support for classrooms and the media center.

## **Standard 5: Assessment, Measurement, and Effectiveness Results**

*A quality system uses effective and continuous performance management systems for assessing, aligning, and improving student learning and operation performance, including organizational and instructional effectiveness, at all levels and areas of the system.*

### **5.1 Establishes key indicators and performance expectations for student learning.**

The Balanced Scorecard is maintained and used by the Chickamauga City Schools to document progress toward meeting system and school goals. The Balanced Scorecard organizes data into areas including student achievement, attendance rates, graduation data, and specific program data. It currently shows three consecutive years of data and comparisons from year to year are easily made.

The District Leadership Team includes the Superintendent, School Improvement Specialist, Director of Special Education and Programs, Technology Specialist, all principals and assistant principals, and one teacher from each school. The School Leadership Teams include representatives from different grade levels and content areas, support staff, administrators, parents, and community members. The district and school leadership teams play an important role in evaluating data and in developing the system and school plans.

The system strategic three year plan is reviewed annually along with the school improvement plans. The schools use the system strategic plan, balanced scorecard, and other data to develop and review school improvement plans. Each school improvement plan includes goals, measurable objectives, action steps, professional learning, timelines and evaluation methods.

### **5.2 Develops and implements a comprehensive system for assessing student progress based on clearly defined student results for learning.**

The Chickamauga City School System uses a variety of high quality academic assessments to assist in determining student success. These include standardized and non-standardized tests which provide valuable diagnostic information and assist in determining student progress and level of mastery on the state student achievement academic standards. Students participate in a number of mandated testing programs annually and, in addition, other program-specific assessment tools are used to gather information on student performance. The academic needs of students and priorities for improvement are determined by using data from the following assessments:

- The Georgia Criterion Reference Competency Tests (CRCT) in grades 1-8.
- The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in grades 4, 6, and 8.
- The Georgia Writing Tests in grades 3 and 5.
- The Middle Grades Writing Assessment in grade 8.

- The Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHS GT) in grade 11.
- The Georgia Kindergarten Assessment Program (GKAP).
- The Georgia End of Course Tests (EOCT).
- The Dynamic Indicators Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), STAR Reading, & Accelerated Reader in grades K-5.

To assess students informally a variety of strategies and best practices are utilized. These include teacher-prepared tests, computerized assessments, rubrics aligned to standards, and commercially prepared tests. The use of assessment to guide instruction is an importance piece in the GPS training. Currently, system level personnel are in the process of implementing the use of benchmark tests through the state online assessment tool and scheduling benchmark testing dates so that assessments are administered simultaneously to all students. Plans are in place to conduct system wide benchmark testing a minimum of three times per year with results being used to drive instruction. Revisions that may be needed to benchmark tests, teacher made tests, and rubrics include a review: to ensure a curriculum map is in place with appropriate objectives, timelines, and assessments, to ensure proper alignment of rubrics and standards, to ensure benchmark and teacher made tests actually measure what is being taught, to ensure benchmark testing is administered at appropriate intervals, and to ensure assessment results are evaluated and utilized to guide instruction to meet student needs. Test data is annually updated by the Central Office staff throughout the school year and summer as data is available from the Department of Education.

The district leadership team and the school leadership teams examine and analyze test data of all students, content areas, and subgroups including students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged, gender, and race. The disaggregated data is shared and discussed in administrative and faculty meetings and used to determine the academic needs of the student body. Test data is examined continuously throughout the school year for instructional, assessment, and evaluation planning for both individual and group needs.

- When teachers return to school in August, a district meeting is held and new test results are reviewed. Each school, along with Central Office staff, closely analyzes the data (by grade levels, subject areas, and subgroups). It is noted which areas have shown improvement, which areas are in need of additional focus and which areas show gaps in learning, particularly between regular education students and students with disabilities. All staff members have access to the data and an opportunity to provide input.
- The school leadership team in each school, along with the Central Office staff reviews the district and school improvement plans to determine which goals have been met, which goals should be revised, and which goals should be deleted or added.
- Professional learning funding, materials and resources are then addressed.
- The targeted goals for the year are then discussed in a faculty meeting so that all staff members are aware and involved.

- Teachers then address the school improvement goals by typically gathering pre and post test data and evaluating progress made toward goals throughout the year.
- Teachers meet regularly to discuss the targeted goals and progress made which helps to maintain a focus.
- By analyzing benchmark assessments and monitoring student progress, it can be determined if goals need to be revised throughout the school year.

**5.3 Establishes and provides a comprehensive assessment system that includes current data that includes a profile of student performance, community characteristics, system characteristics, and stakeholder perceptions of the system (staff and stakeholder).**

School and system needs are identified annually by updating the balanced scorecard as well as by a variety of methods including stakeholder surveys and data analysis. The needs are examined and prioritized for each school as well as the system. Federal and state program coordinators work with the schools to evaluate their current professional learning plans and to update the professional learning plans at the school level as well as the system level. The district leadership team and the school leadership teams play an important leadership role in evaluating the effectiveness of programs currently in use and in helping in the development of the school and system plans. Each school's school council, made up of community members, parents, and school personnel, are key in providing data on stakeholder perceptions of the system.

**5.4 Employs an assessment system that provides data for making informed decisions for continuous improvement.**

The system balanced scorecard, standardized state and national assessments and benchmark assessments and tools, provide personnel with the data needed to make informed decisions for continuous improvement. Additionally, data from parent, teacher, students, and community surveys provides information on the perceptions of the stakeholders which is utilized in guiding the decision making. The district leadership team and school leadership teams are continually monitoring the progress of the district and school improvement plans.

**5.5 Conducts a periodic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness as a basis for improving the system and schools.**

The district and school leadership teams analyze organizational and instructional practices to determine which ones have a positive impact on student achievement and which ones are not effective. System and school personnel also use parent, teacher, student, and community surveys and failure, dropout, retention, and graduation rate data to help determine the academic needs of the students.

## **5.6 Communicates assessment results to all stakeholders.**

In an effort to share information with teachers, parents, and students on the progress being made toward meeting state student academic standards a variety of methods are utilized. Not only are individual student performance profiles on state assessments provided for teachers, parents, and students, group performance scores are also posted on the system and school website along with the balanced scorecard. The systems' assessment results are also posted on The Georgia Department of Education's website along with a system profile. Additionally, information is shared through school newsletters, local newspaper, PTO meetings, school council meetings, Board of Education meetings, parent/student conferences, progress reports, and report cards. Students and parents receive grade or progress reports every 4 ½ weeks which equals 8 times per year. Parent conference days are scheduled two times per year from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm to help accommodate parent work schedules.

## Standard 6 Resources

*A quality system has qualified staff that is supported by the financial and physical resources necessary to fulfill the vision, mission, and goals of the system.*

### **6.1 Maintains financial accounts in accordance with accepted accounting procedures and are audited annually; (Note: the report of the annual audit is on-site and available to evaluators).**

The Chickamauga City School System maintains financial accounts in accordance to generally accepted accounting procedures and by directives issued by the Georgia Department of Education. The system is audited annually by the State of Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts.

### **6.2 Secures income from all regular sources that is sufficient to support all regular expenditures and to assure the continuity and stability of services.**

The Chickamauga City School System has demonstrated its financial abilities and proven financial stability by increasing the fund balance while providing continual quality services during periods of changing and challenging economic conditions. This has been achieved by securing income from all regular sources including local, state, and federal funding. The primary sources of local revenue include property taxes, tuition and private donations. The community has also provided support to the system by voting in favor of the Educational Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (ESPLOST) which provides additional funds, outside of the operating budget, to be used for various designated capital expenditures such as facility improvements, technology and major maintenance.

### **6.3 Manages debt service or lines of credit in such ways as to assure that fiscal responsibility remains under the control of system authority.**

The City of Chickamauga Board of Education was established under the laws of the State of Georgia and operates under the guidance of a school board elected by voters and a Superintendent appointed by the Board. The Board of Education is a component unit of the City of Chickamauga, Georgia which is the primary government. Though the Board does not have power to levy taxes or issue bonds, the School Board has the responsibility of recommending the millage rate used to calculate school taxation to the Chickamauga City Council.

**6.4 Maintains and monitors a balance sheet that describes the overall financial operations and financial condition of the system.**

Interim financial reports which describe the overall financial picture of the system are prepared monthly by the Finance Director. These reports are then presented, discussed, and approved by the Board of Education at their monthly meeting.

**6.5 Develops and implements an annual budget that provides the resources to support the beliefs, mission, and educational programs of each school.**

The beliefs, mission, and educational programs of each facility are supported by the resources identified and implemented in the annual budget. The budget is developed through collaboration with the superintendent, program directors, school administrators, technology specialist, and the maintenance supervisor and based upon estimated revenues from various sources such as property taxes, tuition, and donations and expenditures are derived from anticipated student enrollment, staffing requirements, and program and facility needs. The Finance Director compiles the data and prepares a proposed budget. This budget is presented to the Board for consideration and advertised in the legal organ of Walker County inviting public comment. The final budget is then adopted by the Board and submitted to the Georgia Department of Education as required.

**6.6 Employs an administrative head of the system that has earned a graduate degree from a regionally accredited or federal or state sanctioned institution with 18 hours in administration and/or supervision as a part of, or in addition to, the degree, or meets the legal qualifications of the state in which employed.**

The Superintendent of Chickamauga City Schools has earned the appropriate graduate degrees and meets all requirements and legal qualifications of the State of Georgia. The Superintendent holds a level 6 (Specialist degree) in Educational Leadership. This was earned from a regionally accredited college and meets all legal qualifications for Georgia's leadership certification. The Superintendent previously served as assistant principal for three years and a high school principal for three years before becoming Superintendent.

**6.7 Employs system level administrative and supervisory staff members having responsibilities for instructional services that have earned a graduate degree from a regionally accredited or federal or state sanctioned institution with 18 hours in administration and/or supervision as a part of, or in addition to, the degree, or meets the legal qualifications of the state in which employed.**

All system level administrative and supervisory staff members having responsibilities for instructional services have earned the appropriate graduate degrees and meets all requirements and legal qualifications of the State of Georgia for the position assigned.

The system level administrative staff members all hold level 6 (Specialist degrees) from regionally accredited institutions and have met all requirements for certification by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

#### **6.8 Develops and maintains a remuneration plan for all employees.**

Chickamauga City Schools has developed and maintains a remuneration plan for employees. Certificated employees follow the State Salary Schedule as issued by the Georgia Department of Education and receive a local supplement based on certificate type and years of experience. Administrative and Supervisory Certificated Personnel also earn additional compensation as structured. Non-Salary Classified employees receive an hourly rate determined by a salary schedule based upon years of experience. There is also a local supplement plan for employees who supervise extra-curricular activities. With the exception of the State Salary Schedule, all salaries and related schedules are annually reviewed and approved by the Board of Education.

#### **6.9 Maintains staffing that is sufficient to meet the vision, mission and goals of the system.**

The Chickamauga School System diligently works to ensure highly qualified staff members are employed in all positions. As a testament to the quality sought and the desirability of working in this system, the turnover rate is relatively low and there are generally an ample number of qualified applicants for most vacancies. All teachers in the Chickamauga City School System are “highly qualified” as defined by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. All teachers hold clear renewable teacher certification for the grade(s) and subjects which they teach.

#### **6.10 Implements a system of employee evaluation and assessment that includes confidentiality for each staff evaluation or assessment.**

Teachers, administrators, and other certified staff members are evaluated using the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP) or the Georgia Leadership Evaluation Instrument (GLEI). A Professional Development Plan (PDP) is prepared for all employees and a remediation plan is developed for those needing to improve in areas identified by the evaluation. Evaluations are confidential and are kept in sealed envelopes and placed in personnel files located in the Central Office.

## **Standard 7: Student Services**

*A quality system identifies and has a network of services that support the development and well-being, including the health and safety, of each student.*

### **7.1 Designs and provides student support services that meets the needs of students, are continually reviewed, and are aligned with the vision, beliefs, mission, and expectations for student learning.**

The Chickamauga City School System provides a variety of student support personnel, services, and programs to meet the needs of all students. Each school has an assistant principal, guidance counselor, and a nurse. A social worker and educational diagnostician are available for each school. The Graduation Coach works with middle and high school students. Gordon Lee High School and Gordon Lee Middle School have remedial programs in the area of math and language arts. Chickamauga Elementary School has Title I Targeted Assisted and Early Intervention Programs. This school year the elementary school implemented the Students Having Active Reading Partners (SHARP) Mentoring Program. Individual students are partnered with a mentor from the community. The mentors spend time helping students with schoolwork, reading books, and eating lunch together. All three schools have interventions in place to support students with academic and behavioral needs which include Student Support Teams (SST), after-school tutoring, summer school, gifted, special education, and ESOL services.

### **7.2 Provides student services coordinated with the school, home, and community.**

Chickamauga Elementary School is a Title I Targeted Assisted School. The current parent involvement plan includes many opportunities for parents including the Family Literacy Program. Throughout the year parents are invited to participate in informational sessions focused on reading activities that parents can do at home with their child to build good reading skills. Parents have access to the media centers and computer labs at each school. Parents are involved in the Renaissance programs along with PTO activities. Parents, community representatives and/or business leaders serve as members of the school councils, PTOs, booster clubs, and mentoring programs. Information on system and school-wide activities and opportunities are disseminated through the system and school websites, newspaper, school newsletters, television, and school board meetings. Additionally, a parental survey will be conducted annually in April. The results of the parental survey and any suggestions for improvement will be analyzed by the school leadership team to determine strengths and areas of need. From the analyzed data, strategies for enhancing the parental involvement component will be generated. Each month at the school board meeting students are spotlighted for various achievements such as extracurricular awards, academic achievements, and community services recognitions. Child Find activities are conducted annually and provide local day care centers, state preschool programs, and church programs with parent materials on child development, reading resources, and contact information for further assistance.

The school system has built a strong partnership with several organizations throughout the community. The Walker County Chamber of Commerce has a standing Education Committee. The Chamber supports educational issues, provides outlets through their website and newsletter to disseminate information to the community and also have members who serve as mentors in the schools, hire youth apprentices, and provide scholarships. Several local churches and civic groups provide assistance to students and families in need. The Lions Club works with the school system to provide funds for students in need of eye glasses. The Lions Club and Kiwanis Club sponsor banquets and scholarships for students. The Least of These organization has provided funds to help students with graduation costs, medical bills, and supplies. The Renaissance Programs at Chickamauga Elementary School and Gordon Lee Middle School are supported by parents, business partners, and community members. These supporters provide rewards, incentives, funds, and volunteer services. Throughout the school year the superintendent provides parents with information addressing system and school initiatives and areas of focus for the year. Information such as the importance of school attendance and preparation for statewide testing is shared with parents through the superintendent's letters. Additionally, the Superintendent writes an annual review and forecast for the local paper and contributes an article for the Community Guide Magazine. The Department of Family and Children's Services, Lookout Mountain Community Services, and the Department of Labor are organizations that work closely with the school system in assisting in the well-being of all students.

**7.3 Develops and requires written emergency and security plan(s) that ensure the safety and care of students and stakeholders in the system.**

Chickamauga City School System has developed a flip chart of emergency procedures which is housed in each school and each classroom. Currently, the emergency and security plans are being revised in conjunction with GEMA. Emergency plans are reviewed twice per year at each school.

**7.4 Maintains secure, accurate and complete student records system in accordance with state and federal law and regulations.**

The student information system used by the Chickamauga City School System is SchoolMax. It is updated continuously to provide accurate information on each student. Permanent records for the elementary school are kept in the main office and the middle and high student permanent records are kept on the high school campus in the registrar's office. All records are kept in a secure area in fireproof file cabinets. The system registrar is responsible for the consistent and timely response to student record requests.

### **7.5 Provides student services, as appropriate, in the areas of health, counseling, nutrition, safety, co-curricular, and transportation.**

A guidance counselor is available at each school to provide comprehensive and developmentally appropriate guidance services for students. The system social worker collaborates with school personnel, students, parents, and community agencies to ensure a variety of student needs are addressed.

Chickamauga City School System is a member of the Northwest Georgia RESA Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities consortium. The annual SADFSC survey is completed by students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 and results are analyzed to determine the needs of students related to safety, drug abuse and violence. Drug, alcohol, and tobacco standards are included in the science and health curriculums. All 9<sup>th</sup> grade students participate in the Alcohol and Drug Awareness Program (ADAP).

Upon entering the school buildings, visitors are required to check in at the front office and receive a visitor's nametag. All staff members are provided with an identification badge to wear during school hours. First aid kits and defibrillators are available at each school and are accessible for after school and extracurricular activities.

Transportation is provided for field trips and extracurricular activities. Licensed bus drivers are utilized and participate in the annual bus safety training. Students also participate in the annual bus safety training.

A variety of extracurricular activities are available for students ranging from sports, band, clubs, leadership, and chorus. Students are encouraged to participate in activities to help develop a well-rounded child.

The Chickamauga City School System believes that students who begin each day as healthy individuals can learn more, learn better, and are more likely to complete their formal education. The school system along with stakeholders recently developed a Wellness Plan which includes goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school based activities designed to promote student wellness. The Chickamauga City School System also provides a nutritional breakfast and lunch program which is available for all students who wish to participate.

### **7.6 Promotes the development of student decision-making skill, ethical and lawful conduct, and responsible citizenship.**

Each school has a character education program that promotes appropriate conduct, choices, and attitudes. Students are involved in character education presentations. Chickamauga Elementary School has a Code of Conduct that is recited each morning by all students. Fifth grade students participate in the safety patrol program. Each week 3 to 4 students are chosen to be in the hallways during morning and afternoon dismissal times to help keep the halls orderly and quiet. Gordon Lee High School and Gordon Lee

Middle School have student councils where students are elected by their classmates to represent the student body. Each school participates in a variety of service projects such as Thanksgiving food baskets for needy families, Christmas Toys for Tots and Relay for Life.

Chickamauga City School System uses several programs throughout different grade levels which include: *Too Good for Drugs*, *Too Good for Drugs and Violence*, the *CHAMPS* program provided by the Walker County Sheriff's Department, the *Why kNOW* Program provided by the Why kNOW Abstinence Education Organization and the *Alcohol & Drug Awareness Program (ADAP)* materials provided by state law enforcement agency. The Chickamauga City School System also participates in the random drug testing program of students involved in extracurricular activities.

**7.7 Employs a process for developing and implementing written guidelines for student conduct and attendance that is communicated to students, parents, and staff.**

Beginning in April of every year students must complete an application packet for the upcoming school year. Included in the application packet are school board policies on student attendance, student conduct, student alcohol and drug abuse, dress code, tardies, and the honor code. At the beginning of each school year students receive an agenda book or student handbook which includes written guidelines for student conduct and attendance policies.

## **Standard 8 Staff and Stakeholder Communications and Relationships**

*A quality system develops and supports organizational patterns or structures that promote effective communications and relationships between and among the schools, stakeholders and system.*

### **8.1 Provides members of the staff with the information they need concerning students, parents, school operations, and employment status.**

Monthly administrative meetings are conducted and new information is shared and discussed. Memos, emails, and face to face meetings are also conducted to provide members of the staff with the information they need concerning students, parents, school operations, and employment status. Student information sheets and emergency cards provide members of the staff with information they need concerning students and parents. Each employee with established need has electronic access to appropriate student information. Various meetings, such as IEP and SST, are conducted to provide information to staff as needed. The system is making attempts to promote the effective and efficient flow of information through multiple means. Following each board meeting the Superintendent notifies the principals of actions taken and principals report the information to staff members. Board minutes are available for review.

### **8.2 Demonstrates staff morale where staff reflects a positive attitude toward the system, schools, and stakeholders.**

The responses of staff completing the annual needs assessment survey and the SAI reflect a very positive attitude by staff members in all schools. In addition, the extremely low turnover rate is evidence of a staff with high morale. The size of the Chickamauga City School System makes it possible to foster a sense of school family and encourage a positive school climate.

### **8.3 Ensures that communications among and between system staff, stakeholders and schools are clear and effective.**

Chickamauga City Schools believes that communication is a key to operating a successful and efficient school system. A variety of tools is used to ensure that there is an open, effective and collaborative communication process in place. The district uses Microsoft Exchange email platform so that every employee has direct access at work and at home if they choose. Each employee has direct access to any other employee in the district and is encouraged to utilize such communication means for speed and efficiency. The district maintains an informative website that was revamped in September 2006 to be more user friendly and informative with pertinent information for staff, community, and others interested in learning about Chickamauga. The district site allows links directly to individual school sites and to the City of Chickamauga. Additionally, the system has installed a phone system to promote communication. All administrators and teachers have voice mail to make access by parents and other staff members easier. Phones are in every

teacher's classroom to facilitate communication between the school and home and to keep parents informed.

A back-to-school issue was run in the local paper in August 2006 to provide the community at large with information about the district, contact information, and highlighted achievements. This was an effort to keep parents and the community interested, informed, and involved in the school system. Additionally, three one hour television shows per year to spotlight the schools are locally created and aired on local TV. This year the scheduled air dates are in October, January, and May.

Additionally, each school has a School Council which is comprised of two teachers, two parents, two business partners, and the principal. These councils along with a PTO at the elementary and middle school and booster clubs at the middle and high school provide effective communications and relationships between the stakeholders and the schools.

With all of these avenues for communication, the system is still challenged to ensure all stakeholders feel they have opportunities to be included in the decision making process. The system is working with parent groups to collect suggestions for ways to enhance the open door policy where parents receive information expeditiously and where parents know the timeline as well as the avenue to voice opinions or ideas regarding school improvement initiatives.

#### **8.4 Maintains constructive and mutually supportive relationships among and between all levels of the system.**

Constructive and mutually supportive relationships exist among and between all levels of the system. The District Leadership Team meets to address improvement efforts, professional learning, and curriculum issues. The Administrative Team which includes central office administrators, and school principals and assistant principal from each school meets monthly to address old and new business items. This team is also present at the monthly Board meetings. The principals and/or assistant principals chair school leadership teams and the school councils at their schools in order to keep everyone involved in school improvement efforts

The Superintendent conducts at least three entire staff meetings per year to share areas of strengths and areas of challenge for all three schools. The District Leadership Team has one teacher representative from each school. Data retreats are held with teachers and administrators from each school. Teachers are provided time to plan horizontally as well as vertically in an effort to align the curriculum.

The smallness of the school system lends itself to a family atmosphere that fosters constructive and mutually supportive relationships among and between all levels of the system. The Superintendent, School Improvement Specialist, Director of Special Education and Programs, and Technology Specialist are frequently in the schools or in contact with all levels in a role of support and assistance and encourage working together

cooperatively and congenially by structuring opportunities for interaction between and among all levels in the system.

**8.5 Provides evidence of communications with other appropriate agencies such as public or mental health, physicians, and other related professionals.**

Consistent and open communication exists between the district and appropriate agencies such as DFACS, Lookout Mountain Community Services, Chickamauga and Walker County Police Departments, Juvenile Court, Walker County Health Department, Housing Authority, City Council, Planning Commission, Fire Department, City Recreation Department, Walker County Chamber of Commerce, and Walker County Partners for Educational Progress. The governmental and business communities provide great support as partners to schools and the district. The system seeks on-going partnerships of local businesses and has an extensive Youth Apprenticeship Program.

**8.6 Ensures that records and other correspondence defining students' accomplishments are accurate and consistent with professional standards.**

Each school follows strict guidelines when dealing with student records to ensure that all staff members adhere to Chickamauga City Schools and State Board policy. Student Support Team plans, Individual Education Plans, and 504 plans are developed according to regulations and standards.

A new student information system is in place and by fall 2008, parents will be given access to view student grades and progress for each class. The electronic means of communication will improve the traditional 4 ½ week reporting of grades through paper report cards and progress reports in a more timely and consistent manner.

**8.7 Involves staff in the process of designing of professional development programs.**

Professional development is data driven and is part of each school's improvement plan. Based on DOE requirements for trainings as well as professional development identified in each school's improvement plan an annual system professional development plan is designed. All school certified personnel participate in the needs assessment conducted annually which is used to develop the professional development plan. A staff development advisory committee with representatives from each school also gives recommendations to the professional learning director.

**8.8 Provides professional development for staff that support the overall goals and action plans for the system, including building knowledge, skills, and potential for a high level of performance.**

Professional development initiatives are tied to objectives in the school improvement plans. Currently, the district's professional learning focus is on the implementation of the Georgia Performance Standards, with supporting components including assessment, research-based best practices, and differentiated instruction. Many professional learning opportunities are offered through our Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) and the Department of Education. Additionally, topic and subject specific experts are brought in-house to provide professional learning activities which build knowledge, skills and enhance potential for a higher level of performance. Counselors, teachers, and administrative teams continue to attend professional learning conferences to make certain that standards are being met and that schools are aligned with curricular changes, state guidelines, promotion requirements, college admissions, and student needs.

**8.9 Ensures that no form of bias or prejudice is practiced or sanctioned.**

Chickamauga City School District meets all governmental regulations to ensure that no form of bias or prejudice is practiced or sanctioned. Legal updates are forwarded within the system. The Equal Opportunity Employment and Discrimination policies developed by the Board of Education ensure that the district enforces a continuous commitment of nondiscrimination to all stakeholders.

## **Standard 9 Physical Facilities**

*A quality system has the necessary resources to provide the facilities, sites and equipment for the educational programs and services to be fully implemented throughout the system and individual schools.*

### **9.1 Maintains compliance with applicable local, state, and federal law, standards, and regulations.**

The Chickamauga City School System maintains compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards and regulations. Regularly scheduled inspections are conducted by appropriate agencies including the Board of Health and the Fire Marshall. Fire and severe weather drills are held according to the state mandated schedule and documentation is maintained at the district level. All school buildings meet state specifications and have exit routes clearly posted for immediate, but orderly evacuation if needed. Fairness compliance is maintained through the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements and regulations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

### **9.2 Ensures that the system sites, facilities, and equipment are maintained to provide an environment that is healthy and safe for all occupants.**

The system maintains a safe and orderly environment which supports the vision, mission, and values. Regular facility inspections are conducted to ensure the health and safety of students, staff, and visitors to the schools. The superintendent and maintenance supervisor work with state and local fire departments and other agencies such as the Georgia Emergency Management Agency to actively review campus and building safety and security. The maintenance and school nutrition departments work cooperatively so that issues of safety, wellness, and environments are scrutinized to meet the needs of the system. Inspections by the system insurance provider and the maintenance director are routinely done to ensure the safety of students. Custodians provide a clean environment and a work order system is used to report maintenance problems and immediacy of action needed on request.

### **9.3 Has a process in place that includes plans and implementation for maintaining and improving the system sites, facilities, and equipment.**

As required by the state, the district maintains a Five Year Facilities Plan. The current plan will be updated in spring 2007. This plan identifies existing and proposed factors influencing facility needs such as organizational structure, student enrollment, and number of instructional units. Using trends in growth, this plan projects facility needs including modification and renovation of existing facilities, additional classrooms, and additional schools. Funding for capital outlay from the state is determined through a formula relating to established needs and enrollment.

Over the past several years the district has earned only minimal state funding for capital outlay projects because of the small size of the system and limited growth. Most financing for projects which have been completed have been funded from local resources including Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) and private donation. Both new construction and maintenance are carefully prioritized to maximize the funds available. Several classroom additions have been added to Chickamauga Elementary School to address growth. The band room and cafeteria utilized by GLHS and GLMS have both been expanded as well as the Gordon Lee High School gymnasium. Availability and maintenance of technology is a continuous challenge. Several independent foundations donate funds annually and much of this is used to expand and upgrade technology. The strategic plan identifies efficient operation of the system as one of the district goals. To accomplish this goal the district is beginning a process which will produce a long range document that provides a prevention and maintenance schedule to replace such items as roofs, sinks, water coolers, HVAC units, kitchen and restroom equipment, carpeting, as well as a painting schedule for facilities. The Building and Grounds Committee of the Board receives regular reports and recommendations on the needs and conditions of the district's facilities.

## **Standard 10 Continuous Process of Educational Improvement**

*A quality system establishes, implements and monitors a continuous process of educational improvement clearly focused on student performance.*

### **10.1 Develops and implements a strategic plan, aligned with the vision, mission and beliefs of the system, to guide improvement efforts throughout the system.**

The Chickamauga City School System has developed a system strategic plan. The plan addresses several areas which include: system and school profiles, student achievement goals, operating and facilities goals, data, surveys, and a balanced scorecard. The system goals are aligned with the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) goals and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) goals and system and school needs. Each goal includes: objectives, strategies, interventions, professional learning, resources, timelines, and evaluation methods. The strategic plan is aligned with vision, mission and beliefs of the school system.

### **10.2 Engages stakeholders in the development and implementation of plans and processes for continuous improvement.**

Through the district leadership team and the school leadership teams disaggregated data is shared and discussed in faculty meetings with all school staff members and used to determine the academic needs of the student body. Parents are informed through newsletters, website, and open house. System and school personnel also use parent, teacher, student, and community surveys to engage stakeholders in the development and implementation of plans and processes for continuous improvement.

### **10.3 Engages in a continuous process of improvement.**

The vision of the Chickamauga City School System is to inspire all students to maximize their potential and become lifelong learners while empowering them to become respectful, productive, and successful members of society. The vision articulates the direction the system is moving in order to educate and prepare students for the future.

The balanced scorecard, AYP report and the system state report card all reflect the current profile of the school system. The system strategic plan and the school improvement plans describe the identified needs, goals, objectives, and action steps that are addressed to improve student learning. Data is displayed throughout the school system and on the website showing results over the last three years. These documents are used to help guide the system and schools on what actions need to be taken next to ensure student learning.

#### **10.4 Ensures that each school is engaged in a planning process with improvement goals that complement the system vision and goals.**

Once the system strategic plan is developed, revised or updated each school follows in the same process. Each school has a school improvement plan which is reviewed and revised throughout the year. The district and school leadership teams examine and analyze test data for all students, content areas, and subgroups including students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged, gender and race. Test data is examined continuously throughout the year for instructional, assessment, and evaluation planning for both individual student and group needs. The district and school leadership teams also analyze organizational and instructional practices to determine which ones have a positive impact on student achievement and which ones are not effective. System and school personnel also use parent, teacher, student, and community surveys and failure, dropout, retention, and graduation data to help determine the needs of the student body. The district leadership team used all of this information to develop a system three year strategic plan. School leadership teams then focus on documented weaknesses to address student academic needs. Each school develops a school improvement plan aligned with the system strategic plan. These plans are reviewed by the district leadership team and the system three year plan is approved by the Board of Education.

In December of 2004, the district leadership team participated in and completed the *Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI)* training. The *GLISI* experience helped current and future leaders in the system to master the new work of leadership for school improvement by supporting systemic change that creates an environment for success for students, teachers and staff leaders. Several strategies learned through *GLISI* were implemented in the school improvement process for the school system. The Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) cycle, analyzing data, analyzing causes, and root cause analysis are a few of the components used continuously to guide improvement efforts throughout the school system.

#### **10.5 Monitors compliance with accreditation standards by each school in the system.**

The district leadership team reviews the SACS District Standards to ensure that standards are met at the district and school level in all areas. Central Office administrators have discussed with each principal the school level standards and how the school is meeting the standard. Annually, principals complete an assurance that the school is meeting the standards.

#### **10.6 Maintains continuity and collaborative planning among the elementary, middle, and secondary levels in improvement efforts.**

Monthly meetings are conducted with the superintendent, system administrators, and school administrators to allow for information sharing, determination of school and program needs, and working with the schools to coordinate and integrate services. In the fall of 2006, system administrators, school administrators and teachers from each school participated in the Data Retreat training by Northwest Georgia RESA. The focus of the

training was on K-12 math. Participants were trained in analyzing math data from the CRCT, GHSCT, EOCT. Data was disaggregated by composite scores, domains, subgroups, and individual student scores. Parent, teacher, and student surveys on math were also completed and analyzed.

**10.7 Provides professional development for system and school personnel to help them implement improvement goals and strategies.**

At Chickamauga City Schools, professional learning must be based on the identified needs of the system and schools and must be aligned to the system and school improvement plans. Professional learning is ongoing and focused on improving student achievement. Teachers are provided with high quality professional learning opportunities that help improve teacher knowledge of research based instructional strategies and practices. All teachers have an individual professional development plan which is developed collaboratively with the principal and based upon the needs of the school. Professional development activities are funded by state and federal funding and private donations. Administrators participate in professional learning designed to help them become outstanding managers and educational leaders.

**10.8 Monitors and makes progress in meeting goals and standards for student performance that take into account those required by state and federal agencies.**

System and school level personnel continually monitor the progress being made toward the state and federal standards. For the past three years the system and each school has met adequate yearly progress (AYP). To meet AYP, the system and each school must meet the following criteria: 95% participation rate for both math and reading/language arts, academic performance for both math and English/language arts, and second indicators; GLHS- graduation rate, GLMS- meet and exceed scores for the CRCT social studies section, and CES- attendance rate.

**10.9 Communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders.**

System and school improvement plans, results of test data and progress on goals are reviewed with stakeholder groups such as school councils, faculty members, board members, students and parents. The balanced scorecard, AYP reports, system and school report cards are available online and in printed form. Information is also shared through the local newspaper.

## Section 4

### **Quality Assurance Process**

A total team effort exists at the Chickamauga City Schools in approaching the important work of school improvement. We recognize that in order to achieve and adhere to the highest learning standards we need a high quality staff, involved parents, and a supportive community.

In the fall of 2004 a commitment was made to participate in the *Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement*. At that time the District and School Leadership Teams were reorganized. Many concepts, strategies, and behaviors learned through the *GLISI* process have been modeled by team members which have led to positive changes in effectiveness at the system and school levels. Professional learning communities have been formed and teachers collaborate more often. Staff members continue to focus on quality instruction, research based strategies, data-driven instruction, and support for all students to reach the standards.

The Administrative Team develops and monitors the district strategic plan and reviews and approves the school improvement plans. The school leadership teams are responsible for developing, implementing, monitoring, and revising the school improvement plans. All school improvement goals must be aligned with the district strategic goals. System and school administrators meet monthly to allow for monitoring of progress toward system and school goals by analyzing data, sharing information, determining school or program needs, and working together to coordinate and integrate services.

In the fall of 2006 a team from each school completed a math data retreat. Team members focused on K-12 math data by analyzing state test scores from the domains, subgroups, individual students and analyzing parent, teacher, and student surveys. Beginning in August 2007, a system-wide data retreat will take place at the beginning of each school year. Teachers will work together to analyze the most current data and update school improvement plans.

The Chickamauga City School System maintains a balanced scorecard which includes data on state and national test scores, attendance rates, graduation rates, and retention rates. System and school needs are identified by examining the balanced scorecard as well as a variety of methods including surveys and data analysis. Data is disseminated to stakeholders through a variety of means including the system website, local newspaper, school newsletters, and individual student reports.

# CHICKAMAUGA CITY SCHOOLS

## STRATEGIC PLAN

### Chickamauga Board of Education

D. A. Jewell, V – Chairman  
Grant Parrish – Vice Chairman  
Billy N. Ellis  
Don Littleton  
Janet Landers

### District Leadership Team

Melody Day, Superintendent  
Sandra Parrish, School Improvement Specialist  
Stacy McDaniel, Director of Special Education & Programs  
Wes Brown, Technology Specialist  
Randy Barker, Gordon Lee High School Principal  
Clay Crowder, Gordon Lee High School Asst. Principal  
Kristen Bradley, Gordon Lee Middle School Principal  
Nancy Gurganus, Chickamauga Elementary Principal  
Benny Ashley, Middle & Elementary School Asst. Principal  
Kevin McElhaney, High School Social Studies Teacher  
Ramey Smith, Middle School Language Arts Teacher  
Casie Cassell, Elementary School First Grade Teacher

## **Superintendent's Foreword**

This 2006-2009 Chickamauga City Schools Strategic Plan provides a three-year plan that emphasizes highest student achievement, effective internal and external communication, efficient operations, and accountability. The district strategic plan provides a framework for all system personnel to use in focusing on planning and implementation efforts toward the system's goals, and on reporting results. The plan provides clear directions for schools and departments to align their improvement efforts. It also provides a set of priorities that will be aligned with the resources in our continuous improvement efforts. Schools will be expected to use the plan to build their future improvement plans, aligned with their resources and expected results. This plan and future plans will serve as the foundation for all the work of the Chickamauga City Schools.

Melody Day  
Superintendent

## **KEY ELEMENTS OF THE DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN**

- Two strategic directions
  - ~ Higher Student Achievement
  - ~ Efficient Operation
  
- Focus on specific board approval goals
  
- Three-year plan that reinforces a consistent focus over time
  
- Alignment of all resources and goals from the classroom to the School Board to assure that each student is successful
  
- Utilization of measures as the basis for accountability and improvement
  
- Alignment to the Georgia Performance Standards
  
- Utilization of an integrated approach throughout the system