



# BUTTS COUNTY

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SCHOOL SYSTEM

## FEDERAL PROGRAMS HANDBOOK

Revised January 23, 2024

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## **Purpose of the Federal Programs Handbook**

“The purpose of federal education program funding under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Act is to provide LEAs and their schools with supplemental financial resources and assistance in order to ensure equitable access to a high quality education, regardless of student economic status or other equity factors.”

Federal program funding , with the exception of ESSER grant funding, supplement and not supplant what the required local and state funds provide.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a step-by-step, systematic approach to managing the rules and guidelines of federal programs to ensure consistent compliance in the Butts County School System. The information provided may be used to ensure that federal programs are being implemented accurately and effectively.

The step-by-step approach contained in this handbook will promote uniformity in operations as the Federal Program team seeks to carry out official duties and responsibilities. The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) provides local educational agencies (LEAs) extensive guidance on the overarching requirements for federal Programs via the on-site monitoring document used to ensure that LEAs are meeting all statutory requirements of federal programs. These specific requirements from the GaDOE document were used to create this handbook. Step-by-step procedures, local and state Board policies, and checklists are all included in this guide.

The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are applicable to the following programs:

Title I, Part A - Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

Title I, Part A - Foster Care Program

Title I, Part A – Family School Partnership Program

Title I, Part C - Education of Migratory Children

Title I, Part D - Programs for Neglected or Delinquent Children

Title II, Part A - Supporting Effective Instruction

Title III, Part A - Language Instruction for English Learners & Immigrant Students

Title IV, Part A - Student Support and Academic Enrichment

Title V, Part B - Rural Education Initiative

Title IX, Part A - McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

IDEA 611-Special Education Flowthrough

IDEA 619- Special Education- Ages 3-5 (Preschool)

ESSER Grants: CARES, CRRSA, ARP including the amendments and continuations of the grants

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## **Description of Federal Programs-All Programs**

### **Title I, Part A- Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged**

Title I, Part A is a federally funded program under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The purpose of Title I under the ESSA is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.

Since 1965 and the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the newly adopted Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I provides a source of federal funding to America's schools. Based on local poverty data and demographics, Title I formulas determine the funding allocation allowing schools to provide supplemental instructional services and resources to assist students in achieving local learning goals and targets.

There are two models of Title I services, targeted assistance and school-wide, allowed under the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act. Schools are eligible to implement supplemental instructional services as targeted programs. Ensuring all students in the school, primarily those who are at-risk, satisfy expected achievement levels on local and state measures, remain the goal of school-wide programming.

School-wide implementation under Title I requires schools complete a comprehensive needs assessment, design specific goals and interventions to respond to the needs, develop a comprehensive plan and conduct an annual review of the program.

### **Title I, Part A - Foster Care Program**

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) is required to ensure the educational stability of children in foster care. (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(E)). In coordination with state and tribal child welfare agencies, GaDOE must ensure that its LEAs implement the Title I educational stability requirements for children in foster care. Additionally, the SEA must conduct regular monitoring and oversight to guarantee appropriate implementation of these provisions at the local level.

### **Title I, Part A – Family School Partnership Program**

The purpose of parental involvement under Title I, Part A is to promote active involvement among local educational agencies (LEAs), administrators, school staff, parents, family engagement coordinators or parent liaisons, community leaders, and other stakeholders working to improve student achievement and promote academic success. LEAs must ensure that strong strategies are in place to build capacity to involve parents/stakeholders in an effective partnership with the school and share and support high student academic achievement.

## **Title I, Part C – Education of Migratory Children**

The purpose of the Education of Migratory Children Program (MEP) is to provide supplemental educational services to eligible migratory children (age three to their 22nd birthday) who have not attained either a high school diploma or High School Equivalency Diploma (GED). As defined in and in accordance with the state's Service Delivery Plan, all local educational agencies (LEAs) that have identified migratory children with unmet needs are expected to implement supplemental instructional and/or support services, during the regular school year and summer months, using funds awarded directly to the LEA by the Georgia Department of Education (Department) or available through the state migratory consortium at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. Eligible migratory students to be served include preschool age participants (home or facility based), students enrolled in grades K-12, and students aged 16-21 not enrolled in school (out-of-school youth) and drop outs. Due to the unique needs of migratory children and youth, direct funded LEAs and the ABAC consortium are required to closely monitor the needs of all participants residing in the district.

## **Title I, Part D-Neglected and Delinquent Children:**

The purpose of Title I, Part D is:

1. to improve educational services for children and youth in local and State institutions for neglected or delinquent children and youth so that such children and youth have the opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic content standards and challenging State student academic achievement standards that all children in the State are expected to meet;
2. to provide such children and youth with the services needed to make a successful transition from institutionalization to further schooling or employment; and
3. to prevent at-risk youth from dropping out of school, and to provide dropouts, and children and youth returning from correctional facilities or institutions for neglected or delinquent children and youth, with a support system to ensure their continued education.

Local school systems and state agencies in Georgia (the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Corrections and the Department of Human Services) serve neglected and/or delinquent youths in institutions operated or contracted by these agencies. The Georgia Department of Education provides resources to school systems and state agencies to carry out the purposes of Title I, Part D based upon the submission of a required plan and application. Butts County Schools currently serves one Neglected and Delinquent institution, Embracing Arms, LLC.

## **Title II, Part A –Supporting Effective Instruction**

The purpose of Title II, Part A is to increase the academic achievement of all students by helping schools and districts improve teacher and principal quality. This includes teacher preparation and qualifications of new teachers, recruitment and hiring, induction, professional development, and retention. In addition, Title IIA funds may be used to improve the skills and knowledge of principals for effective school leadership. School systems must work to ensure that all students, especially children of poverty and of color, have equitable opportunities to be taught by highly effective teachers.

## **Title III, Part A Language Instruction For English Learners and Immigrant Students**

Title III is a federally-funded program that provides eligible Local Education Agencies with funding to supplement those ESOL services already in place. School districts with large EL populations receive direct Title III allocations, while school districts with lower incidence populations are grouped into the “Georgia Title III Consortium”. The Title III Consortium allows these “low-incidence” districts to access Title III funds typically available only to districts with greater numbers of ELs. Both ESOL and Title III hold students accountable for progress in, and attainment of, English language proficiency. Upon attainment of English language proficiency, students exit from supplemental language services.

## **Title IV, Part A - Student Support and Academic Enrichment**

SSAE grants are intended to improve students’ academic achievement by increasing the capacity of States, LEAs, schools, and local communities to:

- provide all students with access to a well-rounded education,
- improve school conditions for student learning, and
- improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students. (*ESEA* section 4101).

## **Title V, Part B**

The Rural Education Initiative (REI) is designed to assist rural school districts in using federal resources more effectively to improve the quality of instruction and student academic achievement. REI (also referred to as REAP - Rural Education and Achievement Program) consists of two separate programs: the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program and the Rural and Low-Income Schools (RLIS) program.

## **Title IX, Part A: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, State educational agencies must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth.

Homeless children and youth must have access to the educational and other services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all

students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment. Homeless children and youth are automatically eligible for Title I services.

### **Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education**

Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) is preparing Georgia's students for their next step after high school--college, beginning a career, registered apprenticeships, or the military. Georgia CTAE pathway course offerings, and the new Educating Georgia's Future Workforce initiative, leverage partnerships with industry and higher education to ensure students have the skills they need to thrive in the future workforce. CTAE offers students more than 130 career pathways within the 17 Georgia Career Clusters.

### **Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

The Exceptional Children's Services Department supports local schools in their efforts to provide special education and related services to students with disabilities, in compliance with federal statutes, federal regulations, state rules, and local policies and procedures.

These services focus on enhancing student achievement and post-secondary outcomes through the implementation of specially designed instruction for students with disabilities targeting their unique needs.

Targeted areas for services and supports include accessible instructional materials, assistive technology, curriculum access, instructional support, dropout prevention, student and family engagement, positive behavioral supports, and transition.

Additional services include ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations for special education, collecting and analyzing data on educational services and outcomes, providing guidance and oversight of the budgets for state and federal special education funds, and coordinating dispute resolution requirements as required by state and federal regulations.

## **Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief**

In response to the economic outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, Congress passed three bills that provided immediate and direct financial assistance to state and local educational agencies through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds. These funds were provided to support areas with the greatest need, where school districts' academic and nonacademic components had the most significant impact due to COVID-19. As additional funding was provided, the funds were intended to support state and local school districts' efforts to reopen schools safely, address significant gaps in learning, and support measures of implementation that will continue to reduce the effects of COVID-19 on students and families.

- CARES Act-Coronavirus Aid, Relief & Economic Security (CARES) Act
- CRRSA Act-Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act
- ARP Act-American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act

### **CARES Act**

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Trump on March 27, 2020. The funding allows states to respond to the COVID-19 emergency in K-12 schools. Funds to local school districts may be used for coronavirus response activities, such as planning for and coordinating during long-term school closures, purchasing educational technology to support online learning for all students, and additional activities authorized by federal elementary and secondary education laws.

### **CRRSA Act**

The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation (CRRSA) Act signed into law by President Donald Trump on December 27, 2020, provides an additional \$54.3 billion for an ESSER II fund. Following the same distribution as the CARES Act, which is based on the share of ESEA Title I, Part A funds follow the same use for coronavirus-response activities. Planning for and coordinating activities that address learning loss, preparing schools for reopening, testing, repairing, upgrading projects to improve air quality in school buildings, and additional activities authorized by federal elementary and secondary education laws are continually permitted.

### **ARP Act**

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act was signed into law by President Joe Biden on March 11, 2021, to speed up the United States' recovery from the economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing recession. ARP ESSER funds will allow SEAs to take additional steps to reopen schools for in-person instruction, keep them open safely, and address the disruptions to teaching and learning resulting from the pandemic.

## **GEORGIA'S ARP ESSER State Plan**

Georgia's state plan for the remainder of its federal stimulus funds under the American Rescue Plan (ARP – ESSER) was approved on July 22, 2021, by the U.S. Department of Education, bringing an additional \$1.4 billion to support K-12 schools in the state. At the state level, ARP funds will address lost learning opportunities, remove barriers to learning, and provide personalized support for students, schools, and educators.

### **LEA Monitoring of Schools and Programs- All Federal Programs**

#### **Monitoring of Federal Programs**

The Georgia Department of Education requires that Butts County School System monitor the implementation of all Federal Programs and the expenditure of all funds associated with those programs. The specific requirements are as follows:

- LEA/Program leaders will conduct self-monitoring of its schools and programs sufficient to ensure compliance with Federal Program requirements, including Title I, Part A, Title I, Part C, Title I, Part D, Title II, Part A, Title III, Part A, Title IV, Part A, Title V, Part B, Title IX, Part A, IDEA, CTAE, and the ESSER Act.
- Federal Program leaders will undergo training from GaDOE and other sources to maintain proficiency in program compliance requirements.
- Federal Program leaders will provide technical assistance to local schools.
- Federal Program leaders' self-monitoring will include monitoring all program expenditures to verify that all program expenditures comply with program requirements.
- Federal Program leaders will maintain all documentation the LEA may need for future auditing/monitoring according to the LEA Monitoring Form, which is issued annually by GaDOE.
- In years when LEA does not receive an on-site visit, Federal Program leaders will continue to follow the monitoring checklist and upload documents to SLDS-Cross Functional Monitoring.
- LEA will undergo monitoring by GaDOE on a five-year cycle. LEA/Program leaders will participate in training and technical assistance updates as provided by GaDOE prior to monitoring visits.
- Following GaDOE and/or federal monitoring, the LEA will receive a comprehensive monitoring report containing recommendations, findings, and required actions. Such recommendations, findings, and required actions will be addressed in a timely manner through the Corrective Action Plan, to be approved by GaDOE. The associated program director will monitor implementation of the corrective action plan.

## Communication and Monitoring

The Butts County School System has a strategic plan for monitoring all federal programs. Regular school visits, professional learning opportunities, technical assistance, required follow-up documentation and the prior approval process are critical components to the monitoring process at the LEA level. District monitoring is a multi-faceted process that is on-going throughout the year. Monitoring is implemented to ensure compliance of federal programs with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) under the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) and the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Act (ESSER). Butts County School System practices continuous monitoring of all Federal Programs to ensure compliance with all federal programs regulations and standard procedures. Our monitoring cycle includes frequent meetings with schools, providing technical assistance, conducting annual inventory of equipment, data collection and data meetings, and support to schools. During leadership meetings led by the Superintendent, the strategic plan and school improvement plans are reviewed. Data is also reviewed from the district and school level. The review of data guides the team in planning for professional learning and Professional Learning Communities.

Monitoring of all schools is a critical component of ensuring that compliance is taking place at each school. During the meeting prior to the beginning of the new school year, the district Federal Programs leader convenes a meeting of all Title School principals during a summer orientation. Principals receive training on policies and procedures and guidance for operating a Title Program. During the beginning of the school year meeting, the Director of Federal Programs discusses required documentation for distribution such as policies, compacts, parents rights to request professional qualifications of their child(ren)'s teachers and paraprofessionals. Other requirements are also reviewed such as the CLIP, annual needs assessment, Annual Title I Meeting, School Improvement Plans, budgets, inventory, homeless students, and parent engagement activities.

During the school year, the Director of Federal Programs meets with school administration to discuss school improvement and needs. The Director of Federal Programs also provides technical assistance to district and school leaders during monthly leadership meetings to share information from webinars, meetings, updates, conferences, and professional learning sessions.

Principals are given detailed information on expectations and copies of program guidance. Specific training is provided in all facets of Federal Programs. Monthly Admin and Curriculum Team meetings are also held with Federal Programs principals. Specific budget information is given out at these meetings. Phone calls and emails are a daily occurrence between Federal Programs district staff and Federal Programs school staff.

All Title services are supplemental. This process is monitored through on-going technical assistance, site visits, and through the budgeting process.

Throughout the school year during monthly curriculum meetings, leadership meetings, and cabinet meetings the director of Federal Programs Director provides technical assistance and guidance for federal programs. The director of Federal Programs meets with principals to discuss the school improvement plans, federal programs requirements, and deadlines. During the monthly meetings which consist of the superintendent, directors, principals, and school leaders data is reviewed and progress monitoring is discussed. The BCSS Superintendent also hosts monthly leadership meetings, which includes directors and principals. During these meetings, the teams review the strategic plan action steps, assessment data, attendance data, discipline data, professional learning plans, and progress monitoring. Each school reports progress toward the individual school improvement plans.

Each federal program in the Butts County School System makes use of monitoring as a means of regular observation and recording of activities taking place in participating schools. An important component to this process is to provide feedback to schools that can assist with school improvement. Our district monitoring includes that all activities are carried out in accordance with federal compliance standards, ensuring that our Equity Action Plan is being implemented and that our identified gaps are addressed, that we are in compliance with budgetary requirements, attainment of school improvement goals, and monitoring inventory and equipment usage.

The Director of Federal Programs reviews the following federal program requirements with the school administrative teams: Annual Needs Assessment, CLIP, Equity Plan Needs Assessment, Strategic Plan, School Improvement Plans, Budget, Professional Learning Needs, Inventory and equipment usage, Annual Title I Parent Meeting, School Engagement Policy, Required Parent Notifications (in an understandable language), Parent Input and Feedback including the 1% of Parent and Family Engagement Funds, School-Parent Compacts, the Importance of Family Engagement, and Stakeholder Involvement. Services to homeless, Services to Migrant Students, Services to ELs, Class Size, Teacher Equity, and Equitable Services.

### **On-site Monitoring**

All Title schools are subjected to on-going monitoring by Federal Program leaders throughout the school year. Federal Program leaders will conduct on-site monitoring of all schools at least once per year to ensure compliance with Title guidelines. Feedback will be provided to the principals via checklists or descriptive information. In addition, emails, staff meetings, and phone conversations take place throughout the year as a means of providing on-going monitoring and communication with each school.

On-site monitoring includes meeting with school personnel regarding technical assistance. These site visits happen throughout the school year. For formalized monitoring, scheduled site visits occur each year by Federal Program leaders. During the formalized site visit, the principal along with any individuals working with the Title budget and/or Title initiatives meet with the director to review pertinent information. At the site visit, the Federal Program leader also works one-on-one with principals to correct any findings and answer any questions.

## **ESSER Monitoring**

Monitoring is an essential component of ensuring that all facets of federal programs are being implemented as prescribed by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Act (ESSER). It is a process systematically providing technical assistance and collecting data to provide information that can guide program implementation.

During the period of the ESSER III - ARP award, the district will review, revise, and resubmit our plan no less frequently than every six months. Documentation is due in April and November. Maintenance of Equity (MOEquity) provisions ensure that districts that serve large proportions of historically underserved groups of students—including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness—receive an equitable share of State and local funds as the Nation continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact. The district complies with applicable Maintenance of Equity requirements as a condition of receiving ESSER funds, which includes submitting MOEquity documentation as requested by GaDOE.

### Timeline for Monitoring

| Month            | Activity   | Person Responsible   | Documentation   |
|------------------|--|--|---|
| June/July        | Review Needs Assessment -revise CLIP<br><br>Initial Meeting with Principals to go over Federal Program procedures  | Director of Federal Programs Principals<br>Director of Teaching and Learning<br>Director of Student Services | Agenda/Sign In Handouts                                   |
| August/September | Review of School Improvement Plans<br><br>Budget<br><br>Discussions/Planning   | Principals<br>Director of Federal Programs Director of Student Services<br>Director of Teaching and Learning | School Improvement Plan<br><br>School wide Plan Checklist |
|                  | Initial Meeting with Parent and Family Engagement Coordinators review requirements<br>Annual Title I Parent Meeting<br>School Family Engagement Policy, Revised Annually<br>School-Parent Compacts, Revised Annually | School Level Parent and Family Engagement Coordinators<br>Director of Federal Programs                       | Agenda/Sign In<br>PIC<br>Calendar<br>PIC<br>Checklists    |
|                  | Budget Review with Principals at monthly Admin meeting   | Principals<br>Director of Federal Programs   | Agenda/Sign In  |
| December         | Federal Program Inventory Review   | Principals<br>Director of Federal Programs   | Inventory Sheets with signature                           |
| January          | Evidence Based Intervention Monitoring   | Director of Federal Programs<br>Principals   | Evidence Based Monitoring Document                        |

|         |  |  |   |
|---------|--|--|---|
| April   | Needs Assessment Surveys/Data<br>Equity Plan Needs Assessment<br>Collection – Review to plan for next<br>fiscal year   | Director of Federal<br>Programs Principals<br>Director of Teaching and<br>Learning   | Stakeholder<br>Survey<br><br>Student<br>Achievement<br>Data   |
| May     | Evidence Based Intervention<br>Monitoring  | Director of Federal<br>Programs<br><br>Principals  | Evidence Based<br>Monitoring<br>Document  |
| Ongoing | Admin Meetings for Technical<br>Assistance<br><br>Curriculum Team Meetings for<br>alignment of CLIP/School<br>Improvement Plan and budgeted<br>initiatives<br><br>Parent and Family Engagement<br>Coordinator Meetings<br><br>Check Budget/Expenditure Review<br><br>Services to Homeless Students<br>Professional Learning Needs<br>Parent Capacity/Staff Capacity<br>Budget/Expenditure Review for<br>ESSER Grants | Director of Federal<br>Programs<br>Director of Student<br>Services<br>Director of Teaching and<br>Learning<br>Parent Engagement<br>Coordinators<br>Director of Finance<br>School Social Worker | Agenda/Sign In<br><br>Curriculum<br>Monitoring<br>Reviews<br><br>Agenda/Sign in<br>Calendar<br><br>Fund<br>Requests/Draw<br>Down Sheets |

## **Data Review**

Data is compiled, reviewed, and discussed during monthly Leadership Meetings, Weekly Cabinet meetings, monthly Curriculum Team meetings and at Board of Education meetings. Schools meet and analyze data with the intent of improving instruction. Principals review data with their leadership teams to identify and address areas in need of improvement. All Title schools have data rooms that are used during the data analysis process. School leaders discuss this information with all staff to ensure they fully understand the data presented.

## **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance is given to schools throughout the year through meetings, emails, phone communications, memos and school visits. The goal is to assist schools in identifying priorities in instruction, professional learning, and effective budgeting. Prior to the start of school, a principal's meeting is held to review the purpose of all federal programs, as well as expectations and procedures related to allowable use of funds. A second principal's meeting is held mid-year (January) to remind principals of end of the year information and to provide preliminary information related to the upcoming budget year. The Federal Programs Director maintains a file of all training conducted throughout the year.

## **Budgeting/Expenditures**

Formalized monitoring of the budget takes place on a regular basis through the prior approval process. The prior approval process allows Federal Program leaders to monitor purchases prior to the expenditure against the approved budget narrative and the approved School Improvement Plan. The budget report/summary allows all necessary parties to review the Title budget against the general ledger and confirm use of correct funding codes. It also allows Federal Program leaders a current snapshot of recent expenditures.

## **Corrective Action Process (Audit and Monitoring Findings)**

Corrective actions from monitoring are discussed with principals, instructional support, finance department, and family engagement coordinators in order to assist them in understanding the critical need for compliance in Federal Programs. Professional learning is provided based on needs. In addition, professional learning is also used as a preventive measure to ensure that staff has a clear understanding of what each federal program entails. Corrective actions as a result of findings will be submitted to the state department for review and approval. The Director of Federal Programs documents areas in need of completion and/or correction and communicates this information to school principals and/or parent and family engagement coordinators, clearly articulating required actions with due dates. Corrective Action plans will be monitored by the Director of Federal Programs.

## **Corrective Action Process (District or School)**

If corrective actions are needed throughout the year, the Director of Federal Programs will:

- Meet with principals to review annual submissions, explain processes, procedures, requirements
- Visit schools and email schools to clarify requirements or processes
- Provide continuous technical assistance with specific guidance



- Review documentation and provide timely feedback

## Monitoring of IDEA Procedures

### Student Support Team

Prior to a student being referred for evaluation for Special Education eligibility, the student goes through various levels, or tiers, through the **Response to Intervention Pyramid (RTI)/ Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS)**. Prevention through intervention is required in all tiers.

Tier I includes evidence-based instruction which is based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence. It includes effective school-wide behavior support and differentiated instruction to promote higher levels of student engagement and achievement. Tier II interventions serve as standard intervention protocols for students in the school who have a skill deficit and require additional support to develop the skill to access the standards. If students are not making the expected levels of progress in Tier II, they are referred to the school's **Student Support Team** which comprises Tier III. As soon as the student arrives at Tier III, vision/hearing screening is conducted by the school nurse or trained staff member.

The Student Support Team includes, **at a minimum**, the **referring teacher and at least two of the following participants**, as appropriate to the needs of the student:

1. Principal.
2. General education teacher.
3. Counselor.
4. Lead teacher.
5. School psychologist.
6. Subject area specialist.
7. ESOL teacher.
8. Special education teacher.
9. School social worker.
10. Central office personnel.
11. Section 504 coordinator.
12. Other appropriate personnel

Parents/guardians are invited to participate in all meetings of their child's Student Support Team and in the development of interventions for their child.

The team will meet at prescribed intervals to review progress monitoring toward interventions, to devise more, or revise, original strategies.

Minutes of each meeting along with outcomes of interventions and plans for the next strategies are kept.

Documentation of Tier II and Tier III interventions, along with Progress Monitoring results, are included in the referral packet if a child is referred from Tier III for a psychoeducational evaluation, which becomes a special education referral.

All student referrals are preceded by evidenced-based academic and/or behavioral interventions and the monitoring of progress. Before a referral for special education evaluation can be made, documentation that the school has attempted reasonable interventions and the amount of progress being made will not close the achievement gap.

The referral for evaluation is then made in order to determine if physical, emotional, and/or academic problems may have an educational impact.

The only time an exception will be made is when it is clear that there is no research based intervention for the area being considered. Examples, but not limited to- Blind, Severe or Profound Intellectual Disability.

### **Child Find**

The purpose of **Child Find** procedures is to identify, locate, and evaluate children and youth, birth to age 21, who are suspected of, or have a disability or developmental delay.

Butts County School System serves children ages 3 through 21 with identified special education needs. Child Find activities are announced in local newspapers, on the system website, and through other local sources throughout the year in order to identify suspected children with disabilities, including those children who are homeless, highly mobile, are wards of the State, detained or incarcerated in jails or correctional facilities, or are parentally-placed in private schools (including religious, elementary and secondary schools) or home school/study programs, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located and evaluated.

A **referral** may be made by anyone who has a concern about a child's development. All referrals are considered confidential. (The parent retains the right to refuse services.)

Children may be referred by any of the following:

- Parents/legal guardians/foster parents
- Physicians/health care providers
- Preschool programs
- School system personnel
- Community agencies
- Private school personnel
- Others who are concerned about a child's development

Prior to any possible referral to special education, the screening of children by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate **instructional strategies and interventions** for curriculum implementation shall not be considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services, but will aid in the decision-making process.

A child should be **referred** when:

- A health or medical disorder interferes with development or learning.
- A child seems to have difficulty seeing or hearing.
- A child appears to have social, emotional or behavioral difficulties that affect his/her ability to learn.
- A child has diagnosed progressive or degenerative condition that will eventually impair or impede the child's ability to learn.
- A child seems to have difficulty understanding directions like others that are his/her age.
- A child's speech is not understandable to family or friends.
- A child has difficulty with reading, math, or other school subjects.

As described in the Student Support Team section of these guidelines and in the Butts County School System Response to Intervention Handbook, student referrals must be accompanied by documentation of scientific research or evidence based academic and/or behavioral interventions that have been implemented as designed for the appropriate period of time to show effect or lack of effect that demonstrates the child is not making sufficient rate of progress. Exceptions may be made in circumstances where immediate evaluation and/or placement is required due to a significant disability that precludes access to instruction; however, exceptions are an infrequent and rare occurrence, and the circumstances evidencing the need for the local education agency's use of the exception will be clearly documented in the eligibility decision.

If a teacher or school is found to be out of compliance the following steps will be taken:

Administrative Support to teacher or school to implement fully

If a concern continues administrators will follow the TKES process to document improvement or lack of improvement.

### **Evaluations and Reevaluations**

The **referral to Special Education** is made through the GOIEP program.

Trained Learning Support Specialists and administrators at each school enter the initial referral data into the GOIEP program and get *Permission to Evaluate* form for parents to sign. When the signature is obtained, the referral folder is forwarded to the School Psychologist.

If the parents of a child referred for special education evaluation refuse to give written consent for initial evaluation, the Butts County School System may continue to pursue the evaluation by using due process

procedures or mediation procedures.

Once the signed *Consent for Evaluation* form is received, the evaluation process will be completed in no later than 60 calendar days. If the *Consent for Evaluation* is received 30 days prior to the end of school, a different timeline is followed based on the Georgia

Department of Education timeline rules.

Students who turn three during the summer period or other holiday periods must have an eligibility decision and IEP (if appropriate) in place by their third birthday.

The time frame described above does not apply if:

1. The parent of a child repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the child for the evaluation; or
2. A child enrolls in a school of another school system after the relevant timeline has begun, and prior to a determination by the child's previous school system as to whether the child is a child with a disability. The exception applies only if the subsequent school system is making sufficient progress to ensure a prompt completion of the evaluation and the parent and subsequent school system have agreed to a specific time when the evaluation will be completed.
3. If extenuating circumstances, e.g., illness, unusual evaluation needs, or revocation of parent's consent for evaluation affect this timeline, Butts County will document the exceptions.

The **Referral Folder** contains the following documentation:

- a. Signed *Parental Consent for Evaluation*
- b. Referral Packet Cover Sheet
- c. Work samples highlighting student performance
- d. Student Support Team Minutes
- e. Intervention Progress Monitoring Graphs

### **Special Education Referral Process: Preschool-Aged Students**

Preschool-aged children (aged 3-5) may be referred for special education evaluation by any person (such as parents, school personnel, local pediatricians and other medical staff, audiologists, parents, and/or staff from private preschools or daycares, Head Start, Pre-K, Health Department, Family and Children's Services and Early Intervention/Babies Can't Wait).

Individuals making referrals for special education evaluation may contact any Preschool

Special Education staff member, the Pre-K Readiness Coordinator, Preschool Special Education Team Leader, or the Director of Student Support. If the child is transitioning from the *Babies Can't Wait* program, the contact will be made to the Preschool Special Education Team Leader.

## Referral Procedures:

### **For *Babies Can't Wait* Referrals:**

- Preschool Team Leader receives notification of referral from *Babies Can't Wait* (BCW) office
- Preschool Team Leader enters the notification date on BCW timeline sheet;
- Preschool Team Leader is contacted by BCW Coordinator to schedule transition meeting;
- Preschool Team Leader enters the transition date on BCW timeline sheet;
- At transition meeting
- Hearing/vision screens are scheduled
- Parental information needed for Eligibility Report is obtained (parental concerns, developmental milestones, medical information, etc.)
- Parental information needed for "Pre-Enrollment" (complete student name, DOB, address, social security number, birth certificate, and shot record) is obtained
- Evaluation is scheduled
- Parent signs the *Permission to Evaluate* form before the evaluation
- Team evaluation (most often including special education teacher, Speech/Language Pathologist, general education "teacher," and parent) occurs;
- Eligibility/IEP meeting is scheduled upon completion of evaluation,
- Central Office Enrollment Clerk is notified as to whether child is/is not eligible to receive services;
- Eligibility for Special Education status/dates is recorded on the BCW Timeline Sheet

### **For Parent Referrals:**

- Designated Preschool Team Leader meets with parents to discuss parental concerns (also obtain other info needed for Eligibility Report: medical information, developmental milestones, sensory issues; developmental history). Interventions will be provided to parents to implement during the evaluation process.
- "Pre-Enrollment" information is requested from parent (complete name of student, DOB, address, social security number, birth certificate, and shot record);
- Vision/hearing screens are scheduled;
- Evaluation date/time is scheduled;

- Permission to Evaluate is signed before evaluation;
- Team evaluation occurs (most often including special education teacher, Speech/Language Pathologist, and parent);
- Eligibility/IEP meeting is scheduled;
- Central Office Enrollment Clerk is notified whether child is/is not eligible to receive services;
- Student information is recorded on the Timeline Sheet indicating whether or not a student is eligible for special education services.

### **For Teacher Referrals:**

Preschool Team Leader meets with teacher to discuss interventions, Teachers implement and document interventions, and meet with the parent as required to discuss progress. If a referral to special education is necessary, the Teacher will work with the Preschool Team Leader to complete the Evaluation Referral Packet.

The Butts County School System conducts a **full and individual initial evaluation** before the initial provision of special education and related services to a child with a disability. In conducting an evaluation, Butts County School System:

1. Uses a variety of evaluation tools and strategies to gather relevant academic, functional and developmental information about the child, including information provided by the parents that may assist in determining whether the child is a child with a disability; and the content of the child's individualized education program including information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum (or for a preschool child to participate in appropriate activities);
2. Does not use any single procedure as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child;
3. Uses technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors

Assessments and other evaluation materials used in Butts County to assess a child under this section:

- (i) Are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;
- (ii) Are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer;
- (iii) Are used for the purposes for which the evaluations or measures are valid and reliable;
- (iv) Are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and
- (v) Are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments.

4. The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities. Evaluation tools and strategies are used which provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the child.

Assessments and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.

5. Assessment selection and administration is such that, when administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level, or whatever other factors the assessment purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, except where those skills are the factors which the assessment purports to measure.

6. If an evaluation is not conducted under standard conditions, a description of the extent to which it varied from standard conditions, i.e., the qualifications of the person administering the test or the method of test administration must be included in the evaluation report.

7. In evaluating each child with a disability, the evaluation shall be sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related service's needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.

8. Evaluations of children with disabilities who **transfer** to Butts County in the same school year are coordinated with those children's prior and subsequent schools, as necessary and expeditiously as possible, to ensure prompt completion of full evaluations.

9. The evaluation of children referred because of learning and/or behavior problems is the responsibility of a **multidisciplinary evaluation team**. A qualified psychological examiner evaluates referred children who require a psychological and/or clinical evaluation.

### **Qualified Psychological Examiner Requirements**

Initial evaluation results used for consideration of eligibility for special education, if not provided by a school psychologist with a valid S-5 (or higher) certificate in school psychology, shall be from one of the following:

(I) A psychologist licensed by the Georgia Board of Examiners of Psychologists and having training and experience in school psychology or child clinical psychology.

(II) A full-time graduate student in an approved, properly supervised school psychology or child clinical psychology training program internship/practicum, who has completed a minimum of one year of approved appropriate graduate training.

(III) A Georgia Merit System employee who has a classification rating of psychologist, senior psychologist, or psychology program specialist.

## Additional Requirements

As part of the evaluation process, the team will review all existing evaluation data such as evaluations and information provided by the parents of the child, current classroom- based, local, or State assessments and classroom-based observations. On the basis of that review and input from the child's parents, the evaluation team will identify what additional data, if any, are needed to determine:

1. Whether the child is a child with a disability and the educational needs of the child, or in case of a reevaluation of a child, whether the child continues to have such a disability and the educational needs of the child;
2. The present levels of academic achievement and related developmental needs of the child;
3. Whether the child needs special education and related services, or in the case of a reevaluation of a child, whether the child continues to need special education and related services; and
4. Whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the child to meet the measurable annual goals set out in the IEP of the child and to participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum.

The evaluation is not required before termination of a child's disability due to **graduation** from high school with a regular education diploma, or due to exceeding the age eligibility for a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). However, we will provide the child with a **summary of the child's academic achievement and functional performance**, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child's post-secondary goals.

## Procedures for Reevaluation

A **Reevaluation Determination**, consistent with federal and state statutes and regulations, is required for special education students at least once every 3 years. The purpose of re-evaluation is to decide if further information is needed to determine if a disability continues to exist, to establish present levels of performance, or to determine whether the student continues to need special education and related services. If existing information satisfies these three needs then a comprehensive evaluation is not indicated and the child remains eligible for special education services. An eligibility meeting will be held to review the data and complete the eligibility.

If the team decides more information is required than the school has available to review, the team will request testing from the school psychologist. A **Consent for Evaluation** form will be signed by the parent at the meeting and a re-evaluation packet will be completed and sent to the Central Office. Hearing/Vision screening will be requested of the School Nurse/ Health Care Worker, while other items will be collected: analyzed work samples and/or data in the area of suspected disability, progress/mastery toward goals and objectives, and any Progress Monitoring in the area(s) of concern. Once the psychologist completes the evaluation, he/she will contact the school to set up a meeting to review the results and to develop a new Eligibility Report. The IEP team will then hold an IEP meeting to reflect the information gathered during the evaluation process. The date of this IEP/Eligibility meeting will become the new eligibility date. Copies of all paperwork will be given to the parent.

For those re-evaluation cases where the student was originally placed for **Speech Impaired** services only, but now has a suspected disability in academic areas, the Tier III/Student Support Team will manage all academic interventions/progress monitoring while the Speech/Language Pathologist continues the speech/language interventions. The Tier III/Student Support Team administrator will coordinate with the Speech/Language Pathologist when a Re-evaluation meeting is needed to discuss with parents the potential need for additional interventions or a referral for academic evaluation.

## **Eligibility and Initial Placement**

The **Eligibility Report** is the documentation that verifies if the student is or is not eligible for special education services. Led by the School Psychologist, a variety of people (special education teacher, general education teacher(s), parents, school administrators) take part in evaluating/interviewing/observing the student and documenting the results on the *GOIEP* Eligibility Report. An Eligibility Team Meeting to determine eligibility is required for all disability areas and convenes before an IEP (Individual Education Plan) is developed. It is the responsibility of the School Psychologist to ensure that all evaluations and the Eligibility Team Meeting are scheduled and completed in a timely manner in order to meet state and federal-prescribed timelines

The **Eligibility Report** is comprised of the following data:

- Student Identifying Information
- Case History (provides an overview picture of the child)
- Hearing and vision screening dates (conducted prior to administration of assessments). These screenings are completed within a year of the evaluation.
- Summary of interventions that were made PRIOR to referral (gives the committee a quick look at the interventions and adaptation of content, methodology, and/or instructional delivery that have already occurred).
- Initial eligibility – The committee lists the interventions provided for the child.
- Reevaluation - The committee lists the specially designed instruction which includes: Adaption of Content, Methodology (specialized program), or

Instructional Delivery. Additional areas of concern that have developed since the previous eligibility are also listed.

*NOTE: There are occasional situations that are so compellingly appropriate for Special Education consideration that it would be unacceptable to delay needed services by having to go through Response to Intervention (RTI-MTSS)/Student Support Team (SST) processes. The committee must review the information presented by the parents and school to determine if the intensity of the rare, unique situation warrants referral for immediate comprehensive special education evaluation and eligibility consideration. If it does, this section of the report is explained.*

- Summary of Progress Monitoring data toward achieving standards (data about specific scientific research or evidence-based intervention(s) and accurate information on the progress monitoring data results for the intervention(s) implemented for an initial evaluation or the specially designed instruction for reevaluation are provided)
- Area(s) of difficulty
- Scientific, research, evidence based interventions which includes baseline performance and intervention data
- Results of District, State, and Benchmark assessments
- Individual student data
- Exclusionary Factors
- Decision-Making for Eligibility
- Summary of Considerations
- Determination of Eligibility
- Eligibility Team Information

### **Independent Educational Evaluation**

If a parent disagrees with the evaluation that the school system completed, the Butts County School System will provide IEE information to the parent. The information will include the amount the school system will pay for an evaluation.

### **Exclusionary Factors**

Possible exclusion factors are discussed at length during the Student Support Team (Tier 3) process as to whether the factor had an impact on the child's educational progress.

Exclusionary factors are considered in eligibility determinations. Each factor is considered for its impact or lack of impact on educational progress. The explanation describes why or why not a factor has influenced educational progress. Once the factors have been addressed, the team refers to the responses and to the eligibility criteria for each disability category.

The Butts County School system utilizes the guidance from the Georgia Department of Education when addressing each **exclusionary factor**. See Butts County School System Special Education Manual for more information.

- Lack of appropriate instruction in reading, math and written expression
- Limited English Proficiency
- Cultural Factors
- Environmental or economic disadvantage
- Atypical education history
- Visual, hearing, or motor disability
- Mutism, tongue thrust and dialectic

The committee analyzes information in order to rule out as a source of difficulty when determining specific disabilities.

A child or youth from 3 through 21 years of age is considered to have a disability under *the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act* (IDEA 2004) if the child or youth meets the eligibility criteria in any of the following areas and needs special education and related services:

- (a) Autism spectrum disorder.
- (b) Deafblind.
- (c) Deaf/hard of hearing.
- (d) Emotional and behavioral disorder.
- (e) Intellectual disability (mild, moderate, severe, profound).
- (f) Orthopedic impairment.
- (g) Other health impairment.
- (h) Significant developmental delay.
- (i) Specific Learning disability.
- (j) Speech-language impairment.
- (k) Traumatic brain injury.

(I) Visual impairment.

### **Determination of Eligibility**

Upon completion of the administration of assessments and other measures, a group of qualified professionals and the parents of the child (Eligibility Team) determine whether the child is a child with a disability and the educational needs of the child.

The *screening* of children by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation shall not be considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services. Student referrals must be preceded by evidenced-based academic and/or behavioral interventions.

Refer to the Butts County School System Special Education Manual, which outlines the eligibility criteria for each area, as outlined by the Georgia Department of Education.

### **Discipline**

#### **Relationship of General Code of Conduct to IEP**

The Code of Student Conduct for the Butts County School System applies to all children unless a child's *Individualized Education Program* (IEP) specifically provides otherwise. The Butts County School System ensures that the parents and the child with a disability receive notice of the rules and regulations applicable to children with disabilities with respect to child management, discipline and suspension/expulsion upon the child's entry into a special education program or at the annual IEP review by providing the parent with procedural safeguards and providing explanation.

A staff member that witnesses or is informed that a student violates the code of conduct will complete the appropriate referral form and submit it to an administrator.

The administrator will fully investigate the referral and then determine if/which consequence is appropriate.

The administrator will contact the parent and notify them of the incident and consequence.

#### **Interim Alternative Settings and 10-Day Rule**

Butts County School personnel consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether a change in placement, consistent with the other requirements of this Rule, is appropriate for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct. School personnel may remove a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct from his or her current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting or suspension, for not more than 10 consecutive school days (to the extent those alternatives are applied to children without disabilities), and for additional removals of not more than 10 consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct (as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement under this Rule).

After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days in the same school year, during any subsequent days of removal the school system will provide services to the

extent required under this Rule.

For disciplinary changes in placement that would exceed 10 consecutive school days, if the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the school code is determined **not** to be a manifestation of the child's disability, school personnel may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to children without disabilities, except the student with a disability must continue to receive his/her free and appropriate public education.

The conduct must be determined to be a **manifestation** of the child's disability if the school system, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or the conduct in question was the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP. If the school system, the parent, and the relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that the conduct in question was a direct result of the failure of the school system to implement the IEP, the system will take immediate steps to remedy those deficiencies.

### **Manifestation Determination**

If the Butts County School System, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team will either conduct a **Functional Behavioral Assessment** (unless a *Functional Behavioral Assessment* conducted before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred is already in place and found to be effective) and implement a **Behavioral Intervention Plan** for the child; or if a Behavioral Intervention Plan already has been developed, review the Behavioral Intervention Plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior, and (except as provided in the Special Circumstances described below), return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the school system agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the Behavioral Intervention Plan.

The administrator in the school will notify the Department of Student Services that a student requires a manifestation meeting.

The manifestation will be scheduled and a member of the Department of Student Services or their designee will facilitate the manifestation meeting.

### **Special Circumstances**

School personnel may remove a child to an **interim alternative educational** setting (determined by the IEP Team) for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, if the child:

1. Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or at a school function;
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance; or
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State or the school system.

## **Unique Circumstances on a case-by-case basis**

There may be unique situations that may require the parent, administrative team and district leaders to meet to discuss all options for a student that has chronic discipline.

## **Notification**

On the date on which the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of the Butts County School Code of Conduct, the school system will notify the parents of that decision, and provide the parents the Procedural Safeguards Notice/Parent Rights in Special Education.

## **Appeal**

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement or the manifestation determination under this Rule, or if the Butts County School System believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others, may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing. If the Administrative Law Judge or hearing officer determines that the removal of the child was a violation of his rights or that the child's behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability, the Administrative Law Judge or Hearing Officer can order a change of placement of the child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if it is determined that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others. These appeal procedures may be repeated, if the school system believes that returning the child to the original placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

## **Placement during Appeals**

When an appeal has been made by either the parent or the school system, the child must remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the administrative law judge or hearing officer or until the expiration of the 45 school day time period provided for in this Rule, section 5, Special Circumstances, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school system agree otherwise.

## **Protections for Children Not Yet Eligible for Special Education and Related Services**

A child who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violated a code of student conduct, may assert any of the protections provided for in this Rule if the school system had knowledge (as determined in accordance with this Rule) that the child was a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

1. The school system must be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred:

(i) The parent of the child expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the appropriate educational agency or a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of special education and related services;

(ii) The parent of the child requested an evaluation of the child;

(iii) The teacher of the child or other personnel of the school system expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly supervisory personnel of the school system.

2. The school system would not be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if the parent of the child has not allowed an evaluation of the child or has refused services or the child has been evaluated and determined not to be a child with a disability based on special education eligibility rules.

3. If the school system does not have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, the child may be subjected to the disciplinary measures applied to children without disabilities who engaged in comparable behaviors.

4. If a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation will be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is complete, the child remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services. If the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by the school system and the information provided by the parents, the school system will provide special education and related services.

### **Referral to Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities**

Nothing in the State Board of Education rules regarding discipline for a student with disabilities prohibits the Butts County School System from reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities or prevents State law enforcement or judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of Federal and State law to crimes committed by a child with a disability.

### **Change of Placement due to Disciplinary Removal**

For purposes of removals of a child with a disability from the child's current educational placement under the State Board of Education discipline rule, a change in placement occurs if:

1 . The removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days, or

2 . The child has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern

(i) Because the series of removals total more than 10 school days in a school year;

(II) Because the child's behavior is substantially similar to the child's behavior

in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals, and;

(iii) Because of such additional factors as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

(b) The school system determines on a case-by-case basis whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change of placement.

1. This determination is subject to review through due process hearings and judicial proceedings.



If a teacher or school is found to be out of compliance the following steps will be taken:

Administrative Support to teacher or school to implement fully

If a concern continues administrators will follow the TKES process to document improvement or lack of improvement.

## Identification of High Risk Schools

Schools will be assessed using the Risk Assessment below. Schools will be ranked in order by point value with the highest number of points equaling the highest risk. The Director of Federal Programs completes the checklist in July annually. If a school is identified as “High Risk,” the Director of Federal Programs along with the Director of Teaching and Learning meet with the school’s principal to discuss areas of concern and provide targeted assistance. Any school identified as “High Risk” will be required to develop a more comprehensive short-term corrective action plan with specific dates for accomplishing corrective action steps.

| Criteria  | 0 points                                       | 1 point                                  | 2 points  | 3 points                                 |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <b>CCRPI Score</b>  | 85 and above                                   | 75-85                                    | 50-75   | Below 50                                 |
| <b>New Principal (1 yr or less)</b>                           | At least one complete year experience          | Experienced Principal but new to Title I | New principal but has Title I experience                                | New principal and new to Title I         |
| <b>Unspent Funds in Prior Fiscal Year</b>                     | <15%   | 16-30%                                   | 31-49%  | ≥50%                                     |
| <b>Findings During Monitoring</b>                             | None   | 1 or 2                                   | 3   | ≥3                                       |
| <b>Timely Submission of Title I Documents</b>                 | On Time  | 1 prompt                                 | Multiple prompts needed   | NA                                       |
| <b>Inventory Accountability</b>                               | No findings                                    | 1 or 2 findings                          | 3 findings  | ≥ 3 findings                             |
| <b>Family Engagement-Required documents submitted on time</b> | Submits the majority documentation by deadline | Frequently submits by deadline           | Usually submits Docs by deadline  | Consistently submits docs after deadline |
| <b>Hires Title I Staff in Timely Manner</b>                   | No delays in hiring staff                      | Some delays in hiring staff              | Major delays in hiring staff or staff missing for at least one semester | Staff not hired or staff not replaced    |

0 – 7            Low Risk  
 8 - 11        Moderate Risk  
 12 – 35       High Risk

## **Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP)**

The comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) process begins in January. The annual needs assessment and planning addresses needs for all federal programs. The Butts County School System utilizes a variety of data sources to make decisions that will impact student learning and teacher effectiveness. Our needs assessment process includes examining student achievement data, perception data from stakeholder surveys, professional learning plans, teacher recruitment and retention data, highly qualified teacher and paraprofessional data, class size data, TKES data, and verbal/survey input from stakeholders. In the spring, each school conducts a stakeholder meeting that includes parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, community members, School Council members, and other support staff. Once the input is collected from the schools, a series of meetings are held at the school and district levels to consider all the prior stakeholder input and data and to make decisions regarding prioritized needs and equity concerns. The culminating activity from the various meetings involves completion of the system and school GaDOE provided template for the S-CLIP. Stakeholders participating in our needs assessment process include system directors, administrators and teachers from each level, paraprofessionals, academic coaches and counselors, parents, community members, School Council members, and higher education representatives. The results of this needs assessment determine any prioritized areas of need/inequity and guide the development of the various documents and parts that make up the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP), Equity Plan (as part of the CLIP), and each school-wide plan and provide focus for the expenditure of funds.

The drafting of the new strategic plan, as well as the system's purpose statement, began in the 2022-2023 school year and was approved in November 2023. This process includes a comprehensive needs assessment and a focus to be much more intentional and collaborative to set our strategic direction with our stakeholders. Technology, software, and program decisions must be based on evidence and approved at the district level. The Director of Teaching and Learning collects information on What Works Clearinghouse to determine if interventions and strategies are strong, moderate, or promising in order to solidify the effectiveness of the programs.

While we have conducted various surveys of the parents and public (calendar feedback, purpose statement work, etc.), we often engage directly with the community by attending civic clubs annually to provide information about the school system and solicit feedback and support (Rotary, Butts Men of Action, Exchange Club, NAACP, etc.). In addition, in 2023, BCSS held community stakeholder events such as the Superintendent's Stakeholder meetings. In these meetings, parents, business owners, government officials, civic club organizations, and even churches attended to learn about key achievement data, topics, initiatives, and challenges ahead for the school system.

Meetings are held for stakeholders for revision/input on the District Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Flexible meeting times are offered. Additionally, a feedback form is placed on the district and school websites for stakeholders to provide input on the revision process. During each meeting, the format of the policy is discussed as well as revisions discussion.

BCSS submitted the S-CLIP option for FY23. The work completed over the past year and a half has allowed us to develop a strategic plan that fully addressed identified needs for improvement throughout our entire system, including federal programs. Using the SLDS platform, the CLIP is reviewed and monitored twice each year. Butts County School System believes that all stakeholders Belong in BCSS. Therefore, the

district provides opportunities for stakeholders to review and provide input in the CLIP. Community stakeholder meetings are held in order to collect feedback. Meetings are held in person and virtually. Surveys are also conducted to obtain feedback.

### **Resolution Procedures for Unapproved CLIP**

If corrections and /or adjustments are needed for the CLIP, the Director of Federal Programs will review the recommendations or requests. The Director of Federal Programs will consult with the Director of Teaching and Learning as well as other federal program directors/coordinators/superintendent to determine what changes need to be made. The Director of Federal Programs will ensure the CLIP is revised and resubmit the CLIP. If additional information is needed to make the correction and/or adjustment, the appropriate director will contact the GaDOE Specialist for direction and guidance. This process is repeated until the CLIP is approved by GaDOE.

### **School Improvement Plans**

School Improvement Plans are revised annually beginning with a comprehensive needs assessment process, and the documents are approved in the Fall. School level stakeholders are invited to participate in the revision process. Each school leadership team updates the plans using representatives from each grade level, content area, and department, as well as school administration and parents. Stakeholder feedback is gathered through the use of survey feedback and stakeholder meetings held at both the school and district level. During school leadership meetings, instructional strategies, parental involvement initiatives, and professional development activities are planned after a careful analysis of various data. All school improvement plans are reviewed by the Director of Teaching and Learning and Director of Federal Programs and must be signed off as approved before implemented. The School Wide Plan checklist is used to determine if all requirements have been met. Technology, software, and program decisions must be based on evidence and approved at the district level. The Director of Teaching and Learning collects information on What Works Clearinghouse to determine if interventions and strategies are strong, moderate, or promising in order to solidify the effectiveness of the programs. All School Improvement Plans are revised annually, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the previous year's activities is conducted to determine what activities should be continued, revised, and discontinued.

### **Resolution Procedure for Unapproved Plans**

If a School wide/School Improvement Plan is not approved, the Director of Federal Programs will meet with the principal to review the School Wide Plan Checklist and discuss the areas not met. The principal will meet with his/her leadership team (including all stakeholders) to discuss and make the needed revisions. Technical assistance will be provided to the principal and leadership team during this process if needed. When revisions are complete, the principal will submit the plan to the Director of Federal Programs for approval.

## **Continuous Improvement Process-All Federal Programs**

In Butts County, we begin our comprehensive needs assessment in January. The district and school-level leaders review benchmark data, assessment data, discipline data, attendance data, and survey data. During the school improvement process, both teacher and pupil performance data are reviewed at the school and district levels. The district and schools also host stakeholder input meetings in preparation of drafting the school improvement plans. Once the summative assessment data is officially reported, the leadership team reviews the data in order to create professional learning plans and professional learning communities. At the annual leadership retreat, the superintendent leads the district leadership and school leader in a SWOT analysis. All of the data collection and feedback assists schools with the development of the school improvement plans. From January until June, data is collected and reviewed, data talks are held during leadership meetings, and professional learning plans are reviewed.

Each school principal facilitates a leadership retreat for staff to review data, goals, and action steps. The development of the school improvement plans continue throughout the summer. In the Fall, the school improvement plans are reviewed and approved. The school improvement plans are shared with stakeholders and staff members. All budget requests must align with the plans. In an effort to determine effectiveness of programs or interventions, schools submit a logic model yearly to document progress of interventions.

In an effort to excel in student achievement, the district encourages professional learning throughout the school district. Butts County School System values teaching and learning. Professional learning is differentiated for teachers based on the school, teacher, and student needs. We are establishing Professional learning communities (PLCs) in schools that empower educators to work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. District and school-level staff also participate in professional learning with a focus on the Georgia Standards of Excellence, Growing Readers, and Mathematical Practices. In order to retain quality teachers, we offer a New Teacher Induction Program for teachers with 0-3 years of experience.

Monthly curriculum meetings are held with principals and instructional coaches. During the meetings technical assistance is provided to support school-wide curriculum initiatives. During curriculum meetings, data is reviewed and discussed, needs are identified, and resources are shared. In the meetings throughout the year, all decisions are made based on our strategic goals in our strategic plan: Excellence in Student Achievement, Excellence in our BCSS Team, Excellence in Operations, and Excellence in Culture and Climate.

The Butts County School System implements the Georgia Department of Education's problem solving process and Systems of Continuous Improvement as follows:

The system and schools must compile and review various forms of data and evidence related to school and student performance including CCRPI results, student achievement data from state assessments (GKIDS, Milestones, ACCESS, GAA, etc.), local assessment data (Scholastic Reading Inventory, Measures of Academic Progress, benchmarks, STEEP), perception data from stakeholder surveys, professional learning plans, teacher recruitment and retention data, instructional rounds team walkthrough data, attendance data, discipline data, social emotional learning data, risk assessment data, data reflecting community involvement at school level (mentoring programs, Parent Involvement meetings, PTO, curriculum nights, career readiness) mid-year impact check results, and verbal input from stakeholders. Progress is examined by professional learning communities, school governance teams, leadership teams, system and school departments, system and school administrators, parent advisory councils, and whole faculties. As a result of examining progress, schools must compile findings into a document and prioritize overarching areas in need of improvement.

Schools will then create goals and evidence-based action steps to address the prioritized overarching areas in need of improvement using a provided schoolwide improvement plan template. Schools will use the schoolwide improvement plan template to identify a team lead, timeline, method of monitoring implementation, method of evaluation, and needed resources for each action step in their plan.

Schools will implement their plans and monitor progress throughout the school year by repeating the improvement cycle starting over with examining progress. Classroom observations are conducted by the district level CIA Team multiple times each year and provide feedback to schools on the extent to which evidenced based action steps from school improvement plans are being implemented in classroom instruction. Debriefing sessions are held with school administrators based on observations. This information is used formatively and summatively to adjust school improvement initiatives as appropriate.

We have strategies in place to address the continuous improvement process of professional growth and career development for teachers, principals/assistant principals and other school leaders. The following strategies are implemented to build staff capacity and professional growth: Scheduled Professional Learning Days, monthly leadership professional learning sessions for assistant principals and principals, an aspiring leaders program, organized PLC's within each school, and monthly curriculum meetings for principals and instructional coaches. We also have district meetings where the three elementary schools come together for a PLC. We have Kindergarten and first grade teachers, second and third grade teachers, fourth and fifth grade teachers at separate meetings. For our middle school and high school we have content meetings; math, ELA, science and social studies. BCSS has contracted with consultants for professional development for principals, assistant principals, and instructional coaches. We also utilize our Griffin RESA for off site professional learning opportunities for teachers and other staff members.

## Services to Eligible Private School Children

Butts County School System currently has no participating private schools.

Under Title, local educational agencies (LEAs) are required to provide services for eligible private school students, as well as eligible public school students. In particular, the Title services for private school students must be developed in consultation with officials of the private schools. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) has strengthened these requirements by, among other things, requiring meetings with private school officials and a written affirmation signed by private school officials that the required consultation has occurred. In addition, ESSA has determined new requirements for equitable services which include:

- ESSA requires each state to identify an Ombudsman to work with public and private schools to support service delivery. GaDOE's Ombudsman is Dr. Sunita Holloway (sunita.holloway@doe.k12.ga.us).
- Notifications of LEA set-asides/allocations for provision of equitable services to private schools will be made available to private schools from the Ombudsman's office.
- The GaDOE will offer training to private school staff to support coordination of Federal programs service delivery with LEAs.

The Title services provided by the LEA for private school participants are designed to meet their educational needs and supplement the educational services provided by the private school. These services may be provided by the LEA, or by a contractor who is independent of the private school and many religious organizations. Title services or benefits must be secular, neutral, and non-ideological.

The Student Services Department (IDEA) provides meaningful consultation throughout the year with private school representatives and parents (including parents of homeschool students) regarding proportionate share services, which includes at least one annual meeting. In accordance with IDEA regulations, each LEA must annually locate, identify, and evaluate all children ages 3-21 with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents in private schools, to include not-profit religious, elementary schools and secondary schools in the school district served by the LEA. Private school entities are identified by the documentation that they provide to our local school system, a DE1111 form, within the first 30 days of school. This allows the system to determine the private schools within and outside of the geographic boundaries that have enrolled students in the Butts County School System.

If Butts County School System should have a private school to request funds, the LEA shall provide notice in a timely manner to the appropriate private school officials in the State of the allocation of funds for educational services and other benefits under this part that the LEAs have determined are available for eligible private school children.

Eligibility criteria are used to determine the students who are most in need of services. Using assessment data provided by the private school, scores/levels are given ranges and point values are applied to those ranges.

When a private school determines that the school would like to participate in Title I or Title II, the district will determine the per pupil allocation for qualified students. The following guidelines will ensure appropriate and equitable participation.

## **Procedures to Include Private Schools**

Invitations for private schools to participate in consultations and/or participation in federal programs the following calendar year are sent in the fall via the ES4PS platform. Invitations are sent to private schools located in the geographic region, schools with prior enrollment, and schools that submit the DE1111 form. If invitations are not acknowledged or a response is not provided from the school, our school district makes good faith efforts to make contact with the private school. The LEA will complete annual submissions of Form A and Form B in ES4PS in a timely and accurate manner.

### **Invitations**

Invitations for private schools to consult in participation in federal programs the following calendar year are sent in the fall, usually October. A meeting is held to present information about the programs available to students in private schools. All federal program leaders are invited to the meeting, which is complete with an agenda and sign in sheet. Upon receipt of the intent to participate form which is provided to private school officials, a meeting is held to discuss plans and the required components of Title services for private school students. The Director of Federal Programs is responsible for sending invitations via the ES4PS platform, monitoring the collection of documentation, and providing good faith effort.

### **Documentation for Participation:**

The private school must provide a copy of their 501(c)3 status.

### **Identification of Participants:**

LEA works closely with the private school to verify the attendance area of possible students. It is the responsibility of the private school to provide potential students names, addresses, and verification of free and reduced participation for qualification of the student.

### **Finance:**

It is the responsibility of the LEA to process third party vendor work as well as services and materials provided directly from the district. No Requests for Reimbursement will be allowed as all purchases must be approved prior to the purchase. All materials and supplies purchased by the LEA are the property of the LEA. At the time the private school no longer participates, the property will be returned to the LEA. An inventory will be maintained at the LEA. The private school will complete an inventory check twice per year at the request of the LEA.

### **Complaints:**

Complaints by the private school are filed in compliance with the LEA complaint process (see Complaint Procedure). All complaints will be addressed within 10 days of filing and will be resolved within 60 days according to the process.

**Evaluation:**

At the end of April, the LEA will ask each private school to fill out a survey to evaluate services provided by the LEA.

**Equipment:**

The private schools will follow the same procedures as Butts County schools.

**Funding:**

If the Butts County School District has a Private School to request funds, the private school students would receive their proportionate share of services via per pupil allocations and required services amounts based on poverty. Eligibility criteria are used to determine the students who are most in need of services. When a private school determines that the school would like to participate in Title I, II, or IV, the district will determine the per pupil allocation for qualified students. The following

guidelines will ensure appropriate and equitable participation. No private schools have opted to receive federal funds or services through the Title I, II, or IV programs.

## **Maintenance of Effort and Comparability, Assessment Security and Accountability**

### **Maintenance of Effort (MOE)**

GADOE compares the fiscal effort of the preceding year to the second preceding fiscal year and makes the maintenance of effort determination available to the system through a marked “met” or “unmet” on the consolidated application. Documentation for MOE is only required for districts that do not meet the required maintenance of effort. Districts’ MOE is completed by the GaDOE. The Federal Programs Director will pull the MOE information from the Consolidated Application.

### **Comparability of Services**

The Georgia Department of Education (Department) requires each school district to demonstrate comparability on an annual basis. The Department has developed and utilizes a computerized application to calculate comparability for all school districts in the state. This application is designed to run every possible permutation available to demonstrate comparability. The application is housed in the My GaDOE portal and automatically incorporates current FTE, CPI, and poverty data collected by the Department in the fall of each school year. If a district proves to not be comparable in the initial run of the baseline data supplied via state supplied data, the district has the opportunity to work with their Title I Area Specialist to adjust the current data to correct data entries found to be inaccurate. Once documentation is provided to support the requested changes, the data entries can be adjusted in the “self-reported” section of the application by the Area Specialist and the comparability calculations re-run. This process is repeated until comparability is met. If comparability is still not met, the District will either utilize their Resource Allocation Methodology/Plan to demonstrate all of their schools were equitably funded with state and local funding in order to demonstrate comparability or return the requisite amount of non-federal funds to compensate for the number of instructional staff missing to meet compliance with comparability. The Director of Federal Programs is responsible for the comparability report.

### **Assessment Security**

For each assessment administration, all school and district level coordinators and administrators are trained regarding test security and security breaches. The district Testing Protocols can be found in the Appendix of this manual.

### **EL Assessment Participation**

The Director of Teaching and Learning/Assessments will check the participation rate on the Access Assessment and collect the justification reasons from school testing coordinators if the participation percentage falls below 95%.

Please direct any questions about system testing, security, or procedures to the Director of Teaching and Learning/Assessments, Butts County School System.

### **Reporting of Accountability**

Butts County School System provides public access to the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement’s district and school report cards. It is the responsibility of the Director of Federal Programs to ensure the links remain active on the district and school websites.

## **Internal Controls, Expenditures, Inventory, Drawdowns, and Cost Principles-All Programs**

### **Internal Controls**

#### Grant Development and Budget Process

Each federal fund program coordinator prepares a yearly budget showing the distributions for district, per school and /or per program/function/object code. Federal program coordinators ensure that all funds budgeted are allowable per funding source. The budget is forwarded to Business Services after the GaDOE approves the budgets in the Consolidated Application. The Director of Finance and/or designee or the bookkeeper for federal programs enters the budget into the system financial software using the Consolidated Application budget as the source.

#### Supplement Not Supplant

BCSS implements a Resource Allocation Method Plan and all expenditures at the school level are supplemental. The following three-prong test will be used for Title I Set Asides in determining whether a fiscal expenditure supplements and not supplants. A positive response to any of the three prongs indicates that an expenditure would be supplanting.

1. Required – is the program or activity that the district wants to fund required under state, local or another federal law?
2. Equivalency – Were state and local funds used in the past to pay for this program or activity?
3. Non-Title I Programs- Are the same programs or activities being implemented in other schools that do not receive Title I funds AND are these programs and activities being paid for with state or local funds.

Title II, Part A funds may be used only to supplement educational program activities provided with state and local funds. Title II, Part A funds may NOT be used to pay for activities that, in the absence of these funds, would be provided with state and local funds. Title II, Part A funds may be used to fund only the professional development activities that supplement those mandated locally or by the state and can supplement those discretionary professional development activities that would be funded in the absence of other local and/or state funding sources.

Under Title IV, Part A, supplanting is presumed when a LEA uses SSAE funds to pay for an activity that is required by federal, state or local law or an LEA uses SSAE funds to pay for an activity it supported with state or local funds in the prior year.

#### **ESSER Grants-**

ESSER grants are not subject to the supplement, not supplant provision. Except for the ESSER grants, the ESEA grants comply with the supplement, not supplant provision. Supplement not Supplant is not applicable to the ESSER Grants.

### Allowability

Since each federal program has unique requirements as to allowable activities and costs, individual program managers are responsible for understanding the rules, regulations and requirements of the award that he or she oversees. This knowledge and understanding can be obtained from the following sources:

- program specific training as provided by GaDOE,
- review of 2 CFR part 200,
- review of general compliance requirements in the Compliance Supplement, Part 3.2,
- review of agency cross cutting requirements in the Compliance Supplement, Part 4 -84.00,
- review of program specific requirements in various parts of the Compliance Supplement, Part 4, and
- periodic and informal communications with GaDOE grant managers.

Procedures are in place to ensure that direct charges against Federal Funds are allowable, allocable, reasonable and necessary. All items requested must be allowable expenditures under the authorizing program statutes, regulations, and rules. The program manager is responsible for ensuring that guidelines regarding allowability are adhered to. The following will be taken into consideration when determining the allowability of a request:

- Identified as a need in the Comprehensive Needs Assessment and addressed in the District Improvement Plan and/or school-wide plan
- Necessary, reasonable and allocable
- Allocable to federal program (law and non-regulatory guidance) as referenced in 2 CFR, Part 200.420-200.475 (Determining Allocability of costs for Federal Programs) which addresses certain allowable items as charges to a grant.
- Conform to all applicable laws, regulations and guidance
- Consistent with state and local policies
- Supplemental in nature
- Adequately supported by source documentation
- Occur within the period of performance
- Be incurred during the approved budget period ;This is the fiscal year of the budget.
- Comply with standards of documentation of personnel expenditures
- Avoids conflict of interest

### Transferability

Butts County Schools has the flexibility to transfer Title II, Part A and Title IV, Part A funds. During the current school year, Butts County did not transfer funds from Title II, Part A. However, 100% of its Title IV, Part A funds was transferred to Title I, Part A. The district indicated the transferability option in the CLIP. The district will draw down funds from Title IV, Part A. Funds from Title IV, Part A will be indicated on the completion report with function and object object codes 5000-930. This decision to transfer funds is made annually during the CLIP revision process.

The Director of Federal Programs follows the procedures below:

- The sending program budget is completed and approved.
- Title I budget is adjusted for 1% PFE, Private School Proportionate Share, and Indirect Cost.
- Title I Director in collaboration with the finance department and sending program review expenditures to determine which ones would be coded for Title I or the sending programs.
- Drawdown for the sending program is completed in the DE0147 for that program.
- Title I drawdown is completed in the DE0147 for Title I

### RAMP (Resource Allocation Method Plan)

The Resource Allocation Method Plan (RAMP) is used to illustrate the methods that are used to equitably distribute state and local funds and resources to each school before allocating federal funds. State and local revenues are estimated based on student enrollment, teaching staff and local property tax assumptions. Once the school system estimates state and local funding, staff allocation to the individual schools is a critical budget process. Staff allocations are tested against the RAMP with the October FTE count to ensure compliance.

**Segregation of Duties**  
**GAO-14-704G Standards for Internal Controls for the Federal Government**  
**10.03;10.12-10.14; 2 CFR 200.303(a)**

The Butts County School System requires the following segregation of duties associated with cash management to prevent errors and fraud:

**Director of Finance**

Under the supervision of the Superintendent, Director of Finance will carry out the following duties:

- Prepare monthly and annual financial statements for inspection by the Board of Education.
- Establish accounting procedures to ensure that proper internal controls are maintained for the district business office
- Manage cash flow and investment of available funds.
- Assist the Superintendent in preparation of financial data for the tax digest, state allotments, and other financial areas.
- Open all bank accounts and reviews prior to reconciliation. Approves reconciliations of other staff members.
- Oversee the reconciliation of all accounts.
- Supervise operation of the business office to include payables and payroll.
- Compile annual budget for board approval and submit it to the Georgia Department of Education.
- Coordinate accounting procedures to ensure that central office and local school administrators follow proper procedures in the budgeting, record keeping, and expending of program funds for which they are responsible.
- Oversee, approve and post monthly and year-end adjustments, run and balance reports.
- Oversee and assist with the preparation and submission of year end and interim financial reports to the Georgia Department of Education.
- Manage funds for SPLOST, Capital Projects and Debt Service.
- Ensures a yearly audit is completed and submitted to the Department of Audits and Accounts.
- Compile data for audit, work with state auditors during audit, and prepare MD&A for audit report.
- Assist in the implementation of accounting procedures by maintaining accurate records and internal controls throughout the system and ensuring compliance with all applicable regulatory requirements.
- Perform journal entries, budget adjustments, and reviews and approves bank reconciliations.
- Coordinates budget process and enters the budget into the financial software.
- Close books at month and year end.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Superintendent.

### **Finance Specialist/Payroll Specialist**

Under the supervision of the Director of Finance, the Finance Specialist/Payroll Specialist will carry out the following duties:

- Process monthly payroll and reporting for all system employees.
- Invoice for any payroll reimbursements.
- Prepare year-end reporting, including W-2's and 1099's.
- Calculate sick leave for retirement.
- Assist with budget preparation.
- Calculate salary adjustments
- Records Management
- Oversees verification of employment
- Compile data for audit, work with auditors during audit,
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Director of Finance and Director of Human Resources.

### **Accounts Payable Specialist**

Under the supervision of the Director of Finance, the Accounts Payable Specialist will carry out the following duties:

- Balance travel reports monthly.
- Prepare invoices.
- Prepare year-end reporting, including 1099's.
- Pay invoices as they become due
- Enter vendors into the accounting software
- Compile data for audit, work with auditors during audit
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Director of Finance

### **Administrative Assistant to Finance**

Under the direction of the Director of Finance, the Administrative Assistant will carry out the following duties:

- Assist with internal audits
- Assist with bank reconciliation of the primary bank account
- Assists with the drawdown review process
- Assists in maintaining Federal Programs budgets
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Director of Finance

## **Director of Federal Programs**

Under the direction of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent, the Director of Federal Programs carry out the following duties:

- Monitor all purchases to ensure that expenditures are allocable, reasonable, and necessary
- Manages Consolidated Application budgets.
- Ensuring all system policies for purchasing, expending funds, and inventorying equipment are followed to avoid fraud, waste, abuse, and corruption. No items will be purchased without prior approval, and all items purchased must be a part of the approved budget.
- Approve each purchase requisition/order, travel expense statement and professional learning (PL) leave that is funded through a federal grant (with the exception of IDEA).
- Meet with the Director of Finance as needed and review financial reports to ensure alignment and balance on a regular basis.
- Review and approve all drawdown requests for federal grants (excluding IDEA).
- Ensure system and school inventories are maintained electronically and kept up to date.
- Complete a physical inventory check at each facility each year. Purchase Orders are pulled from object codes 615, 616 to verify if each item is included in each school's and the central office's inventory.

## **Director of Student Services**

Under the supervision of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent, the Director of Student Services will carry out the following duties related to IDEA, CEIS, and Special Needs Pre-K:

- Maintains accurate records and internal controls (e.g. ledgers) ensuring compliance with all applicable regulatory requirements and accuracy of fund balances (object codes).
- Reviews detail and summary reports for potential budget variances and ensures fund balances are accurate.
- Approves purchase requisitions, travel expense statements, and registration payments for compliance and accuracy.
- Manages Consolidated Application budgets.
- Assists with database activities related to the financial system.
- Ensures the special education inventory is accurate.
- Assists auditors by providing supporting documentation and/or information on internal processes (including financial documents, professional learning documentation, equipment inventory, and all IDEA monitoring documents).

## Written Procurement Procedures

The following procedures must be followed to ensure the proper handling of federal funds:

1. Each budget, after prepared at the system or school level, is reviewed by the Director of Federal Programs to ensure alignment to system (CLIP) and school improvement plans (SIPs), revised as necessary, and approved by the program coordinator. Once the system or school makes the necessary changes and the budget is submitted and approved by the GaDOE, each department or school completes requisitions.
2. Requisitions must include:
  - Complete vendor information including phone number (and fax number if applicable)
  - Ship to information including the address for the school
  - Appropriate account number assigned by the system coordinator, principal or designee based on the budget sheets
  - Sufficient detail to determine if each cost item is allocable, reasonable, and necessary.
  - Domestic Preferences for Procurements 200.322 “To the greatest extent practicable” must provide a preference for the purchase of goods and materials produced in the U.S.
  - Must include this section in all subawards, contracts and purchase orders.
3. The appropriate federal program coordinator reviews the requisition to assure that the purchase is included in the School wide/School Improvement Plan/Equity Plan and that the expense is allocable, allowable, reasonable, and necessary
4. If approved, the program coordinator then approves the requisition and converts the requisition to a purchase order using the financial software program.
5. If rejected, a reason is entered on the requisition form and returned.
6. When the ordered item arrives, the school or department compares what is received with what was ordered and submits signed documentation of receipt to the Finance Office. Any disputes are reconciled between the school/district and the vendor.
7. Multiple year contracts should include the opt-out clause to clearly state “if federal funds are no longer available the contract will be void”.

### Invoices

The following procedures are followed for invoices:

- Receipt of Invoice: Invoice is received by the federal program director and forwarded to Account Payable Specialist.
- The Accounts Payable Specialist compares vendor invoices to purchase orders. If these items match, the invoice is entered as an account payable. If not, the Accounts Payable Specialist alerts the appropriate program coordinator and they work together to determine a solution.

**Payment of Invoice:**

The following procedures are followed for payment of invoices:

- The Accounts Payable Specialist charges the expenditures to the proper fund/program designated on the purchase order by the program coordinator in the system financial software.
- If invoices received that are charged to a federal program exceed the amount of purchase orders, the Accounts Payable Specialist alerts the appropriate program coordinator and they work together to determine a solution.

## **Written Method for Conducting Technical Evaluations of Competitive Proposals and Selecting Recipients**

### **2 CFR 200.320(d)(3); 200.318(d)(e)(f); 200.319**

#### **Bid and Quotation Pricing Limits**

Acquisition of all goods and services from budgeted funds shall be subject to the following limits except where in a clear emergency or a potential work stoppage exists or when a particular item may be obtained from only one source of supply. Purchases must not be divided into smaller units in order to circumvent the following limits.

#### **Informal Procurement Methods**

Informal Procurement Methods to include delineation of the dollar range for micro-purchases and small purchases.

##### Micro Purchases: \$0 - \$10,000

- Individuals should use their best judgment as to cost and source of supply. Bid quotations are desirable to operate economically, but are not required.
- Calculate the aggregate dollar amount for each purchase order of supplies or services
- To the extent practicable, must distribute micro-purchases equitably among qualified suppliers. Take into consideration the price as to its reasonableness based on research, experience, purchase history

##### Small Purchases: \$10,001 - \$250,000

- These purchases must be supported by a competitive process to include multiple quotations.
- Must obtain an adequate number (at least 2) of quotes from qualified sources.

#### **Formal Procurement Methods**

Formal Procurement Methods to include delineation of the dollar range for sealed bids 2 CFR 200.329(b) and proposals 200.320(c);200.325(b)(c)

##### Purchases greater than \$250,000

- Used for purchases that exceed small purchase threshold (\$250,000, or lower, if set by the LEA)
- Procedures that include position(s) responsible for obtaining the price/rate quotes and where the quotes are kept on file.
- Denote the position of the person who is responsible for ensuring technical evaluations are conducted in compliance with Federal regulations.
- Process for sealed bids, describing how bids are advertised and the position responsible.
- Any purchases in excess of \$250,000 including contract modifications will require a cost or price analysis, sealed bids, and/or competitive proposals. Cost analysis means evaluating the separate cost elements that make up the total price, including profit. Price analysis generally means evaluating the total price. The Assistant Superintendent shall give the lowest bidder priority consideration in the decision to award contracts, assuming all specifications and other stipulated bidding conditions have been met and assuming the bidder's proposal meets the best interests of Butts County School System.

## **Noncompetitive Proposals (2 CFR 200.320(f))**

- Explanation of the process for non-competitive proposals, including the 5 explanations for when sole sourcing is allowed (Limited use);
- The aggregate dollar amount does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold.
- The item is available only from a single source.
- The public emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from publicizing competitive solicitation.
- The Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity expressly authorizes noncompetitive proposals in response to written requirements from non-federal entity.
- After soliciting a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

## **Independent Contract Agreement – Consultants**

When contracting with consultants, the following procedure is followed:

- Identify a consultant qualified to deliver the desired service
- Prior to consultation service being provided, complete the Service Contract Checklist and obtain required documentation.
- A complete contract must be submitted with the approval packet that details services to be performed and details of invoice and payment
- Service Contract agreements less than \$20,000 must be approved by the Superintendent or designee.
- Service Contract agreements over \$20,000 must be approved by the Superintendent and the Board.

## **Contracted Services**

The Director of Teaching and Learning and the Director of Federal Programs work with the Human Resources and Finance Departments to ensure compliance and accuracy. Each program coordinator ensures that contracts are fulfilled, budgeted correctly, and that services were provided in accordance with the purchased services contract.

Processes for Contracted Services:

- The LEA will maintain oversight to ensure that contractors perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of the contract to include payment after deliverables are received (including purchase orders)

Processes for entering into a contracts (object Code 300):

- Contracts should be detailed enough to specify:
- Service(s) being purchased/provided.
- When service must be delivered (date)
- Names entering into contract, contract rate (total fee/per hour)
- Timeframe of contract
- Method of payment
- Where services will be provided (location), signatures/date.
- Any other relevant information

## **Maintenance of Procurement Records**

Records are maintained to detail the history of procurement. Invoices, and supporting documents are maintained in the finance office. Contracts are maintained with the director who ensures monitoring and compliance. The rationale for the method of procurement is determined based upon the activity performed.

## **Suspension and Debarment**

Each federal program director and/or department head checks Georgia's System for Award Management (SAM) website, <https://www.sam.gov/> prior to approving any purchase equal to or in excess of \$25,000 to ensure the vendor is not on the list of suspension and debarment. The resulting check must be printed, signed, dated, and uploaded to the requisition/purchase order.

The Director of Federal Programs and/or department head must check the System for Award Management (SAM) website, prior to approving any contract or subcontract expected to equal or exceed \$25,000 to ensure the vendor is not on the list of suspension and debarment. Butts County is required to check information and debarment and the SAMS website. Our district cannot and does not purchase from any vendor or contracted person/company identified on this website as being suspended or debarred. Evidence of the verification will be in the form of a search result screenshot printed, signed, dated, scanned, and attached to the requisition/purchase order.

We required to check once and if vendor becomes suspended or debarred during the year, the LEA may choose to continue to use the vendor if the LEA was using the vendor before the vendor was excluded (2 CFR 180.315).

## **Written Methods for Conducting Technical Evaluations of Competitive Proposals and Selecting Recipients**

The Butts County School System shall ensure that the process of procuring goods and services is fair and equitable by taking the following measures:

- Incorporating a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product, or service to be procured. The description must not, in competitive procurements, contain features which unduly restrict competition. The description may include a statement of the qualitative nature of the material, product or service to be procured and, when necessary, must set forth those minimum essential characteristics and standards to which it must conform if it is to satisfy its intended use.
- Avoid providing detailed product specifications.
- When it is impractical or uneconomical to make a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements, a “brand name or equivalent” description will be used as a means to define the performance or other salient requirements of procurement. The specific features of the named brand which must be met by offers will be clearly stated.
- Identify all requirements which the offers must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals
- Ensure that all prequalified lists of persons, firms, or products which are used in acquiring goods and services are current and include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and free competition. Also, the school system will not preclude potential bidders from qualifying during the solicitation period.
- The Board of Education may reject any or all bids. The Board may in its judgment consider such factors as service, location, and timeliness of delivery; therefore, they may accept the bid that appears to be in the best interest of the school system even if it is not the lowest bid. The Board reserves the right to waive any formalities in or reject any or all bids or any part of any bid. Any bid may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for the opening of bids.
- Contracts binding the school district can be made only by the Board or the Superintendent or approved agent.

## Bid and Quotation Pricing Limits

Acquisition of all goods and services from budgeted funds shall be subject to the following limits except where in a clear emergency or a potential work stoppage exists or when a particular item may be obtained from only one source of supply. Purchases must not be divided into smaller units in order to circumvent the following limits.

### Informal Procurement Methods

Informal Procurement Methods to include delineation of the dollar range for micro-purchases and small purchases.

#### Micro Purchases: \$0 - \$10,000

- Individuals should use their best judgment as to cost and source of supply. Bid quotations are desirable to operate economically, but are not required.
- Calculate the aggregate dollar amount for each purchase order of supplies or services
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#### Small Purchases: \$10,001 - \$250,000

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- Procedures that include position(s) responsible for obtaining the price/rate quotes and where the quotes are kept on file.
- Denote the position of the person who is responsible for ensuring technical evaluations are conducted in compliance with Federal regulations.
- Process for sealed bids, describing how bids are advertised and the position responsible.
- Any purchases in excess of \$250,000 including contract modifications will require a cost or price analysis, sealed bids, and/or competitive proposals. Cost analysis means evaluating the separate cost elements that make up the total price, including profit. Price analysis generally means evaluating the total price. The Assistant Superintendent shall give the lowest bidder priority consideration in the decision to award contracts, assuming all specifications and other stipulated bidding conditions have been met and assuming the bidder's proposal meets the best interests of Butts County School System.

### Noncompetitive Proposals (2 CFR 200.320(f))

- Explanation of the process for non-competitive proposals, including the 5 explanations for when sole

sourcing is allowed (Limited use);

- The aggregate dollar amount does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold.
- The item is available only from a single source.
- The public emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from publicizing competitive solicitation.
- The Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity expressly authorizes noncompetitive proposals in response to written requirements from non-federal entity.
- After soliciting a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Standards of Conduct: Employees of the Butts County School System who are engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts shall abide by the following:

- No employee, officer, or agent may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest.
- Definition: such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract.
- No employee, officer or agent may participate in selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award if he/she has a real or apparent conflict of interest.
- Officers, employees, and agents of the Butts County School System may neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subcontracts.
- Violation of these standards will result in reporting of said personnel to the Superintendent of Schools and if appropriate, local authorities. Any misconduct could result in suspension, loss of employment, and any other consequences that are applicable by law.
- Any violation of these procedures must be disclosed in writing, in a timely manner. All violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award must be reported as failure to make disclosures can result in (remedies for noncompliance, including suspension and debarment).

## **Chain of Command for Reporting Potential Conflicts of Interest**

Anyone who becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest related to the use of federal funds should report their suspicion to their immediate supervisor. If at the school level, it should be reported to the principal. The principal should report the suspected conflict of interest to the superintendent.

## **Definition of Nominal Items**

Nominal items are those items that are less than \$100 in cost.

## **Best Practices for Avoiding Conflicts of Interest**

The following best practices will be used to avoid conflicts of interest:

- Training is provided to all employees of the Butts County School System who are engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts on an annual basis, typically during the annual

Federal Programs training at the beginning of the school year. Policy is included in the Federal Programs Uniform Guidance manual.

- Attendees at the annual training are required to sign-in verifying receipt of the Federal Programs Manual and policies included therein.

## **Personal Compensation**

### **Payroll**

The Director of Federal Programs work with the Human Resources and Finance Departments to ensure payroll reports are accurate. In addition, each program coordinator ensures that the number of federally-funded employees is consistent with the approved application. Monthly payroll reports, expenditure summary and detail reports, and substitute reports will be used to ensure that each object code is accurate.

### **Time and Effort**

Charges to a federal fund for salaries and wages must be based on records that accurately reflect the work performed by all employees whose salaries or other compensation are paid in whole or in part with federal funds. A time sheet must be maintained by any employee who provides supplemental instruction outside of school hours. The Director of Federal Programs will ensure that an annual periodic certification or personnel activity report will be maintained for all employees paid with federal funds. Time and effort records are maintained for all employees whose salaries or other compensation are paid in whole or in part with federal funds, not to exceed 100%.

### **Periodic Certification**

An annual periodic certification will be maintained for any employee who worked on one federal grant or one cost objective (job). These certifications will be completed after-the-fact and must account for the total activity performed. The certification will be completed at the end of June and will be completed on one form per work site. The principals collect the periodic certifications, and submits them to the Director of Federal Programs. The forms are signed, collected, and kept on file in the office of the Director of Federal Programs.

### **Personnel Activity Report (PAR)**

A PAR will be maintained for any employee who works on more than one federal grant and more than one cost objective (job). Split-funded personnel paid with federal funds are required to maintain monthly time logs that coincide with one or more pay periods that must account for the total activity performed. Logs will be signed by the employee and the employee's immediate supervisor. The appropriate federal program coordinator or supervisor is responsible for checking monthly to ensure logs are being maintained. Additionally, the coordinator/supervisor will work with the employee to complete reconciliation and appropriate adjustments will be made prior to the end of the school year.

### **Stipends-Georgia Rule 160-3-3-.04.**

Stipends will be paid to certified personnel and paraprofessionals for having successfully completed previously approved learning opportunities that have occurred at any time during the fiscal year outside of the employee's normal contract hours. The Butts County School System does not pay stipends for work on an award for performance. Any stipends awarded must be allowable, reasonable and necessary to the federal program. Stipends will only be awarded if the following conditions exist:

- There is evidence that the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions gained from the professional learning activity are aligned to an approved individual plan, or a school or LEA initiative and/or product, and/or specific goals; and
- There is evidence that the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions developed through participation in or facilitation of professional learning have been implement/demonstrated in the classroom/work setting; and
- Participation occurs beyond regular contract hours, days, or school year
- Funds awarded by an LEA to certified personnel and paraprofessionals for having successfully completed learning opportunities that have occurred at any time during the fiscal year outside of the employee's normal contract/work hours.
- Compensation for work on an award for performance for allowable activities.

State and federal funds designated for professional learning shall not be used to pay stipends to school board members or to school council members who are not employees of the LEA. The appropriate federal program coordinator will maintain the appropriate paperwork to ensure employees are adequately compensated.

Stipends must be documented via sign-in sheet. Sign-in sheets are verified by the supervisor and approved for payment by the Director of Federal Programs.



## Travel Policy

Costs incurred by employees and officers for travel, including costs of lodging, other subsistence, and incidental expenses, must follow the [Georgia Statewide Travel](#) policy set by the State

Accounting Office, with the following addendums:

- o Employees traveling for the day only (not spending the night) will not be eligible for meal reimbursement
- o Per diems should not be requested if the meal is provided as part of the registration or event
- o Valet parking will not be reimbursed unless it is the only service offered
- o Receipts are not required for eligible meals as reimbursement will be based on the Statewide Travel Policy per diem rates; receipts for parking or additional expenses will be required. Travel Costs must also be considered reasonable and otherwise allowable only to the extent such costs do not exceed charges normally allowed by the Butts County School System in its regular operations as the result of the school system's written travel policy. In addition, if these costs are charged directly to a federally funded source, documentation must justify that:
  - Participation of the individual is necessary to the federal award; and
  - The costs are reasonable and consistent with non-federal entities' established travel policy or follow GSA 48 CFR 31.205-46a .
  - A conference is necessary for the project by inclusion of an agenda.

The following procedures are intended to ensure that charges are reasonable and consistent.

- All federal program coordinators must pre-approve any applicable federally funded PL before payment will be allowed.
- A travel expense form must be completed in its entirety in order to receive reimbursement for expenses.
- Employees are responsible for ensuring that expenses claimed in the travel expense report are proper, accurate, and incurred for official business. A traveler who knowingly presents a false or fraudulent claim may be subject to penalties under criminal statutes.
- Employee completes and sends the "Employee Expense Statement" to the administrator for approval. The building/facility administrator or his/her designee verifies the information on the form and once deemed accurate, submits to the Director of Federal Programs.
- Failure to request reimbursement within 45 days of travel may result in a loss of or reduction of funds.
- Purpose of the trip must be included on the expense report.
- Attendees are responsible for maintaining and providing upon request information related to registration and dues and fees to include agenda, sessions attended, and proof of attendance.

## Equipment Management

The Butts County School System (BCSS) shall provide effective control over and accountability for all funds, property and other assets. BCSS shall adequately safeguard all assets and assure they are used solely for authorized purposes.

### Acquisition of Equipment

Equipment may be purchased with all federal funds. However, the Federal Programs Coordinator must determine if:

- The equipment is reasonable and necessary to effectively operate its programs;
- Existing equipment will not be sufficient; and
- The costs are reasonable and necessary.

All equipment purchases must be signed off by the Federal Programs Director to ensure that purchases are allowable, supplemental and consistent with academic needs. The Federal Programs Director will also ensure that federal funds are not to be used for general expenses required to carry out other responsibilities of a state or its sub recipients.

Technology purchases are determined and approved during the school wide planning process.

All technology purchases must go through the Director of Technology for approval. For equipment, technology has specific requirements that must be met. For software purchases, technology will verify that the software is compatible with our systems. Technology will not support items that are not approved through their office. The Director of Technology will secure any necessary quotes/bids as outlined in the Board financial policies.

### Equipment Logs:

All equipment and real property purchased with federal funds must be kept on a master inventory list (Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet) regardless of cost if they have a shelf life of more than one year. There is no minimum amount. For Title I, this includes the Title I, Part A allocation, Distinguished School Funds, School Improvement Funds and any other grant programs. Consumables such as books and software do not need to be kept on this list but should be kept through normal media center procedures. This list must include:

- School
- Item Description
- Vendor
- Source of Funding
- Cost
- FAIN Number
- Condition
- Date of Acquisition
- Serial Number
- Use
- Location (Room Number)
- Disposition

The Media Specialist and IT Technician at each school are responsible for maintaining the Federal Programs inventory list. Items on the inventory list are verified by the Media Specialist and IT Technician and signed off by the principal during physical inventories. One signed copy of the inventory will be kept in the Title I school and another copy in the district office.

### **Purchase Orders**

Principals call or email the Director of Federal Programs to discuss items needed that are related to their School Improvement Plan. Principals approve the items and the school bookkeeper will enter in Smart Fusion. The Director of Federal Programs approves or denies the request in Smart Fusion. If approved the bookkeeper will place the order.

### **Equipment Labels**

All equipment and real property must be labeled or barcoded. Technology equipment is labeled with a YELLOW identification tag. Labels must be placed on the top of the equipment and in a highly visible location. For items that are too small for an equipment label, a silver sharpie may be used. For items that are exposed to water, an engraver may be used.

Media Specialists and IT Technicians at each school are responsible for labeling equipment. The Technology Department is responsible for labeling all technology equipment within a 30 day time period. Media Specialists are responsible for labeling all instructional equipment. Labels must be added after receipt of the item and before the item is distributed for use. Labels are verified by the Media Specialists and IT Technician during physical inventories. New equipment will be added within a 30 days of receipt.

### **Equipment Use**

Equipment should be used in accordance with the intent of the grant it was purchased with. For Title I, Part A, equipment in school wide schools will be used to upgrade the educational environment in reading, ELA, math, science and social studies. Any equipment purchased with federal funds is considered solely for the use of that program.

Schools may check out the use of equipment to employees through the media center system. Off-site use of equipment may not be utilized by students, parents or community members.

### **Physical Inventories**

Physical Inventories must be completed by the Principal or his/her designee each fiscal year. The Director of Federal Programs and the Director of Student Services will schedule appointments with the principal to review the inventory. The Media Specialist and IT Technician must send the updated inventory to the Federal Programs office prior to the visit.

The Director of Federal Programs and the Director of Student Services will preselect items on the physical inventory to check. The Directors will ensure that all equipment is properly labeled, listed on the inventory and used appropriately. The Directors signs off on the physical inventory and checks viewed items.

Additional items that will be added to the inventory sent by schools during the physical inventory include:

- Date of Inventory
- Initials/Signature
- Notes (if applicable)

Notes will include if items were removed from inventory and the reason, replacement information and information about repairs or damages.

## **Inventory Records**

Inventory records are maintained until equipment is disposed of or transferred to another federal program. Records for real property and equipment acquired with federal funds are retained for at least five years after transfer or final disposition. Disposition/transfer can occur at the close of the federal program/school if equipment is no longer needed for the original intent. It may be transferred to another federal program in the event the equipment is no longer usable with approval of the Federal Programs Coordinator.

## **Disposition of Equipment**

Equipment will be disposed of according to the Butts County School System's Board Policy.

Equipment should not be removed from any school or site without approval from the Federal Programs Coordinator and the Director of Technology. Each school equipment contact for Federal Programs must complete a disposition list for equipment to be removed from the building. This form will include all of the information from the Federal Programs Equipment Log plus the following:

- Disposition Date – Date of actual removal from the building
- Notes – Reason equipment is being removed
- Sent for Recycling – Yes/No
- Picked up by

Equipment can only be removed after approval for the following reasons:

- Equipment is no longer working and cannot be repaired
- Equipment is no longer being supported (part of district refresh plan)

Once the school list is complete, the school contact will send it to the Federal Programs Department. The Director of Federal Programs will review and approve or disapprove the list. If the list is approved, the Director of Federal Programs will arrange a time to meet with the IT Technician assigned to the school and the school contact. This meeting will include checking off and removal of the equipment. Any equipment removed outside of this process will be the financial responsibility of the person who removed the equipment from the site or school.

Funds received from equipment sold as surplus will be returned to the originating account. The amount of the sale will be noted on the log as well as the program being reimbursed.

BCSS will adhere to the following disposition procedures for equipment that is no longer needed:

- Description of equipment greater than \$5000 and more than 3 years old that can be retained, sold or disposed, with no obligation to GaDOE.
- Description of equipment >\$5000 or more may be retained or sold and GaDOE (awarding agency) has rights to state's share at \$500 or 10-percent of sales.

### **Damaged or Missing Equipment**

It is the school's or site's responsibility to ensure that the equipment is accounted for and kept in good-working condition. Equipment that is damaged, lost or stolen must be reported to the Federal Programs Director within 5 days.

Adequate safeguards to prevent loss, damage or theft of the equipment should be put in place by each school or site. These may include:

- Locks
- Security cameras
- Use of logs or sign-in sheets
- Equipment use agreements

For normal equipment issues, school's need to submit the item for repairs if possible.

If the item is no longer working, schools must note the date of disposition and the reason on the Title I Inventory. Schools and sites must follow the disposition procedures listed above. Records for items identified for disposition are maintained on the inventory for at least three years before final removal.

If equipment or real property is missing or stolen, then a school must replace the item with non-federal funds. Schools must investigate why the equipment is missing and send a letter to the Federal Programs Coordinator indicating the reason and how it will be replaced.

This letter must be printed on the school letterhead and signed by the school's principal. The letter must be accompanied by the Federal Programs Equipment Disposition Form. Police Reports will only be required for items of \$5,000 or more.

### **Replacement of Equipment**

All equipment purchased with Title I funds must be refreshed with Title I funds. Replacement schedules must be kept in mind during budget planning.

### **Repurpose of Equipment**

Equipment deemed "out of date" or no longer functioning for intended grant use may be repurposed within the school district as needed.

### **Maintenance of Equipment**

At the end of the school year, equipment is collected and locked in a secure location. The technology specialists conduct annual updates.

### **Use of Equipment in Targeted Assistance Schools**

Currently, the Butts County School System does not have any Targeted Assistance Programs.

However, if a Target Assistance School should be served in BCSS, equipment purchased with federal Title I funding will be exclusively utilized by eligible Title I students in Title I Targeted Assistance (TA) Schools. The general purpose for this equipment is to promote mastery of core content knowledge in reading/mathematics and to facilitate remediation.

All equipment purchased by participating TA schools are to be used only by Title I teachers, eligible Title I students and eligible parents. A list of the Title I students and their parents must be available to ensure that the equipment is only used by these students and parents. When feasible, all Title I equipment is to remain in the Title I teacher/Lead Teachers classrooms. All Title I equipment placed in the media center must be kept in a separate area, labeled and a check-out ledger must be maintained.

### **Private Schools (Off-Site Use of Equipment)**

Currently, the Butts County School System does not have any participating private schools. If private school(s) are ever served, they will follow the same inventory procedures as public schools in the district. Although the equipment may be used by the private school, the Butts County School System retains the title and will account for the equipment in its inventory management system.

Private schools will label Title I equipment in the same manner as the Title I schools. Private school staff will be trained on the proper means of ensuring that only Title I eligible students are allowed to use equipment purchased by Title I. The private school will receive a copy of the equipment procedures.

If a private school is no longer participating in a federal program or if there is no longer a need for the equipment at the private school, the Title I Office will remove the equipment and place it in a Title I school that has a need for the equipment. Equipment will be removed immediately upon notification that the equipment is no longer needed or the private school is closing.

### **Capital Outlay Purchases**

The Butts County School System has not made capital outlay purchases using federal funds. If capital outlay purchases are made in the future, they will be consistent with approved federal fund budget/budget amendment (Object Code 700). They will be pre-approved by the Georgia Department of Education prior to being included in the budget. The system will receive approval for the disposition of capital outlay equipment. The Director of Federal Programs will complete the "Expenditure Prior Approval Form" as documentation for pre-approval from the GaDOE.

### **Process for Disseminating Inventory Procedures**

The Director of Federal Programs is responsible for ensuring that principals and site coordinators are knowledgeable about allowable procedures for the use of Title I equipment and established procedures for maintaining an accurate inventory of equipment. These procedures will be shared annually during an administrative meeting.

## Cash Management & Drawdown of Funds

Funds are drawn down based on actual program expenditures. It is the responsibility of the Director of Federal Programs and the Director of Finance or their designee to work cooperatively to review all expenditures on a monthly basis after budget approval before funds are drawn down from GAORS.

Moreover, the following practices are observed:

- The Director for each federal program must reconcile their respective budgets monthly to ensure that all expenditures charged to their program are allowable.
- The Director of Finance or designee will perform periodic reviews of the general ledger, including federal accounts and fund sources.
- The Director of Finance runs a monthly report out of the financial software to draw down funds. Each federal program coordinator or their designee will sign a printed copy, verifying the accuracy of the report.
- Funds are drawn down monthly based on actual expenditures and on a reimbursement basis only.
- The Director of Finance and each federal program coordinator reviews, signs and dates the report.
- There is no cash involved as all drawdowns are directly deposited into the system's bank account.
- Federal program coordinators ensure that equipment/supplies are purchased and received during the period of performance of the grant award.
- The school system does not request advance payments for federal fund disbursements, only reimbursements.
- All reporting documentation is kept in the Finance Department and is available for review upon request.
- Drawdown sending program funds first, then draw down Title I.

At year end reconciliation for GAORS grants, a report is printed from the accounting software along with the Consolidated Application, and the Federal Program Coordinator reviews and signs off that the completion report may be entered. The Director of Finance will then submit to GaDOE. The original is kept on file in the Finance Department and a copy is made for the Federal Program Director's file for monitoring.

## **Individual Federal Programs**

### **Title I, Part A- Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantage**

#### Allocation Selection and Requirements

After receiving notification of the Title I, Part A grant amounts from GADOE, reservations in each budget are set aside for required components such as parent involvement, professional learning, neglected and delinquent, private school per pupil and equitable services, and homeless students. Administrative costs are also part of the reservations, which are not part of the schools' per pupil amounts. The remainder of Title I funds are allocated to schools based on per pupil allocation, as determined by the percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced price meals.

#### **Required Set Asides Reservation of Funds**

##### Private Schools

BCSS does not serve any private schools at this time. If private schools choose to participate in the future, the set-aside will be determined by the state as related to equitable proportionate share.

##### Parent and Family Engagement

Required 1% Set Aside for Parental Involvement: Principals have the option of expending their 95% portion of the required 1% set aside in Parent Involvement funds or submitting them back to the system level. Title I parents are informed about the 1% set aside during the Spring Annual Meeting and participate in the discussion regarding this requirement each Spring during Title I planning meetings held at each school. If the total 1% is not expended, the difference must be carried over to the following fiscal year. Currently, Butts County Schools uses parent and family engagement funds at the district level and school levels. Funds are used to provide stipends to Parent and Family Engagement Coordinators and for books and supplies for Parent and Family Engagement activities. Butts County Schools use Method 1-PPA Required 1% Set Aside for Family Engagement.

##### Homeless Children and Youth

The system Homeless Liaison trains school personnel to identify children in homeless situations. The system Homeless Liaison is consulted if any staff member suspects that a student qualifies for homeless services. The Homeless Liaison then investigates the situation and makes the ultimate determination on whether or not students qualify. When a student does qualify, the appropriate information is entered into the Student Information System. Homeless set aside funds are used to purchase needed supplies and for tutoring services for identified homeless students on an as needed basis. Transportation is also provided to students on an as needed basis. Title I, Part A funds are also reserved to benefit the education of homeless students. Funds are allocated based on an annual analysis of student needs. Butts County Schools uses Method 1 the LEA has selected Method 1 to identify homeless student needs and fund accordingly. Determination for needs is made in collaboration with the school social worker.

### Neglected and Delinquent Children

The Butts County School System currently serves one center that serves neglected and/or delinquent children. The Annual Survey of Local Institutions for Neglected or Delinquent Children is completed each year to determine the number of students within the district being served by the center. The Director of Federal Programs meets with the Center Director annually to determine needs of the students and the required set-aside is budgeted according to the needs assessment of the students/center.

### Calculating Parent and Family Engagement Carryover

The final expenditure report for each fiscal year along with the district's completion report is used to determine the amount of Parent and Family Engagement funds from the required set aside that were not spent. The Director of Federal Programs will complete and upload an analysis of these funds to the Consolidated Application Attachments tab. The Director of Federal Programs will ensure that the funds are allocated with the budget amendment to Parent and Family Engagement. The LEA will use Method 1: Poverty Counts Multiplied by a PFE per-pupil allocation.

### **Rank Order**

The Butts County School System participates in the CEP (Community Eligibility Provision) program in conjunction with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Direct Certified counts are used to calculate poverty percentages and schools are served in rank order from highest to lowest.

### **Targeted Assistance**

The Butts County School District does not have a school identified as a Targeted Assistance School at this time. The Butts County School District does not have a school identified as CSI, CSI Alternative, CSI Promise, or TSI Schools. In the event that any Title I schools are identified, five percent of Title I, Part A allocation will be reserved to assist the schools.

### **Rank Order within School Wide Schools**

The district does utilize Title I-A funds to service targeted assistance-like programs within a school wide school program. Students are served in these programs based on a multiple selection criteria. Each school uses their data from the comprehensive needs assessment to determine what grade levels will be served and the exact multiple selection criteria needed to identify students are deemed "at-risk" or "in need of supplemental support." Some of those criteria are: classroom performance, benchmark/formative assessment scores, summative/Milestones scores, Lexile data, local universal screenings, and teacher recommendation. Students are ranked and a targeted group is established. Students in the targeted group (often highlighted in a color) are invited to participate in the supplemental program first, then the program is offered following the rank order.

## **Title I, Part A – Notice to Parents**

### **Parent Notifications**

#### Supplement Language Services

The Butts County School System does not currently utilize Title I-A funds to provide supplement language services or activities to ESOL students. However, should funds be utilized in the future, the district will notify parents of ESOL students no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year. Notification will include the supplement language program/activities being provided, the methods of instruction used in the federally funded programs and how the program differs from the basic, State-mandated ESOL program, and how the program/activities will specifically help students learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation.

#### Communication in an Understandable Format

Upon enrolling their child(ren) in the Butts County School System, every parent indicates their household's preferred communication language as a standard part of the registration process. To the extent practical, efforts are made to provide either written support or support through an interpreter when a parent indicates a language other than English. Furthermore, all parent communication is written in a format so that the content is easily understandable.

#### Parent Right to Know

In accordance with ESSA, all schools are required to notify parents at the beginning of each school year of their "Right to Know" the professional qualifications of their student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals. The Parent Right to Know notification will be posted on each school's web page within 30 calendar days from the start of school. The Director of Federal Programs will be responsible for ensuring all schools have posted their letter by this date.

Parents receive notification that:

- is in a format that is understandable,
- is disseminated in a manner that allows parents to receive it,
- is in a language that parents can understand, to the extent practicable, and
- includes detailed contact information, name of school or district, and the date, month, and year of the notification.

## 20 Day Notification of Professional Qualifications

In accordance with ESSA all schools are required to provide timely notice to parents when students have been taught for four or more weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

Notification requirements apply to all teachers in all schools/programs. Notifications will be sent within ten business days following the four consecutive weeks. The notification will be sent in a format that ensures parents have the opportunity to receive the information. This may include: first class mail, parent link communication, sent home with student and/or email blast. To the extent practicable, the notification will be in a language the parent will understand. This applies to all teachers in all schools/programs.

In the event a notification must be sent, the following information will be included:

- day/month/year of notification,
- name of teacher who has not met professional qualifications requirements,
- name of the district and the point of contact, by position, and
- statement that the teacher has not met the district's professional qualifications for the grade level(s) and/or subject area(s) in which the teacher is assigned.

### *Regular Education Teachers:*

Notification must be sent when students have been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet the district's PQ requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

### *Special Education Teachers:*

Special Education teachers who do not issue grades: 20 day notifications must be disseminated if the teacher does not hold special education certification.

Special Education teachers who do issue grades: 20 day notifications must be disseminated if the teacher does not hold special education certification and content certification or equivalent as aligned.

## **Title I, Part A– Family-School Partnership Program**

Parent and Family Engagement is an ongoing process that increases active participation, communication, and collaboration between parents, schools, and communities with the goal of educating the whole child to ensure student achievement and success. The Georgia Department of Education’s Family-School Partnership Program ensures that Title I, Part A parent and family engagement regulations are met with meaningful and strategic actions to build parent and school staff capacity as mandated by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. Schools and districts must ensure that strong strategies are in place to: 1) build capacity to engage parents/stakeholders in an effective partnership with the school; and 2) share and support high student academic achievement.

### **Technical Assistance to Schools**

The Butts County School System provides technical assistance to schools in the following ways:

- Professional learning sessions during administrative and curriculum meetings
- Quarterly meetings between the Director of Federal Programs and Family Engagement Specialists
- The creation and sharing of a Federal Programs Handbook
- The Parent and Family Engagement Documentation Calendar
- Technical assistance with planning, organizing, and conducting parent meetings
- Technical assistance during administrative meetings
- Checklists to evaluate School-Parent Compacts and Family Engagement Policies
- Ongoing emails and phone calls
- The BCSS website

### **District and School Family Engagement Policy Input and Distribution Procedures**

Title I, Section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) requires that each school receiving Title I, Part A funds develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to parents of participating children a written parental involvement policy.

Butts County School System is committed to cultivating and sustaining partnerships with parents and community stakeholders, and encourages their participation in the development, implementation, review and evaluation of its parental involvement policy/plan. This written policy/plan focuses on improving academic achievement and school performance and outlines how the LEA will coordinate, provide technical assistance and other support to schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities, training, and workshops.

The LEA, school, parents, and community stakeholders will jointly develop and agree on the Parental Involvement Policy/Plan which will describe the means for carrying out Title I, Part A requirements. The policy/plan will be made available to the local community and parents of students enrolled in the Butts County School System using multiple means. The policy/plan will be available on the Title I page of the district's website, on individual schools' websites, in hard copy format in the main office of each school, and sent home with students via email, backpacks, or newsletters.

District and school parent involvement plans are reviewed and revised annually with parents and other stakeholders (teachers, principals, administrators, and other school personnel). Schools hold individual meetings for review of the district and school Parent Involvement Plans. All Title I parents, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel in the district are invited to the meetings to provide input. Parents and other stakeholders will be notified by invitation sent by each individual school. Parents who cannot attend the meetings will be given the opportunity to submit input before final revisions are approved. The Director of Federal Programs will be responsible for collecting the required information (agendas, meeting notes, and sign in sheets).

Revision dates will be clearly marked on each plan. The Principal and Director of Federal Programs will review plans before or during on-site monitoring visits. Plans include activities/workshops that have been identified and requested through the previous year's annual parent involvement survey. School improvement and parent involvement plans are posted on the website, available in the front office of the school, and hard copies are either in the student handbook or beginning of school packets at each school. Each school in the Butts County School System holds an annual open house or parent orientation. These meetings give parents the opportunity to review and provide feedback on system-wide and school student data, parent activities, district and school Parent Involvement Plans, School wide Title I Plans, School Improvement Plans. Parents are notified about this opportunity through advertisements.

### **Communication in an Understandable Format**

Upon enrolling their child(ren) in the Butts County School System, every parent indicates their household's preferred communication language as a standard part of the registration process. To the extent practical, efforts are made to provide either written support or support through an interpreter when a parent indicates a language other than English.

During the annual review/revision of documents at parent workshops and other advisory meetings. After the school system review/revision process, district and school Parent Involvement Plans are

### **School Procedures: School-Parent Compacts**

The Butts County School System will share responsibilities for high student academic achievement with all parents and students enrolled in the school system and will develop, in collaboration with parents and students, a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. The school-parent-student compact will also describe the means by which the school, parents, and students will build and

develop a partnership to ensure student mastery of the GaDOE's high academic content standards. All Title I schools are required to have school-parent compacts. It is the responsibility of the Principal, in coordination with the school Family Engagement Coordinator, to make sure that all compacts

are reviewed and revised annually. The review and revision will occur at Parent Planning Meetings, school governance meetings, and parent workshops. Revision dates will be clearly marked on each compact. An invitation will be sent home to all parents in the school and meeting dates will be publicized in school newsletters, local newspapers, and on each school's web site. The Director of Federal Programs will be responsible for coordinating with schools to schedule meetings and collect required information (agenda, meeting notes, and sign in sheets). Parent compacts will include responsibilities for the teachers, parents, and students. Compacts will be distributed to all parties involved for signatures each fall. Copies of the signed parent compacts are kept at the school level.

### **Annual Title I Meeting**

All Title I schools are required to hold an annual meeting at the beginning of the school year, no later than November 1<sup>st</sup>. It is the responsibility of principals in coordination with the Family Engagement Coordinator to arrange meeting times and invite all stakeholders to the meetings. The Family Engagement Coordinator will be responsible for collecting and submitting documentation of the required Title I Annual Meeting, including copies of sign in sheets, agendas, and minutes to the Title I Director. Meetings are publicized via flyers sent to parents, web sites, an automated call system, and marquees at each school.

### **Required 1% Set Aside for Parent and Family Engagement**

Principals have the option of expending the 1% set aside or combining funds for school parent and family engagement coordinators. Parents are afforded multiple opportunities to provide input on the use of Title I family engagement funds including but not limited to CLIP Stakeholder Meetings, Surveys, parent conferences, school level comprehensive needs assessment meetings, school-wide planning meetings, and through email. The feedback is used during the final school-wide planning and budgeting for parent and family engagement activities.

## **Title I, Part A - Foster Care Provisions**

The Foster Care Program focuses on school access, improved educational outcomes, and enhanced academic stability for children and youth in foster care. The provisions derived from the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) establish guidelines for recognizing and addressing the unique needs of foster care children and youth. The Foster Care Program has the responsibility of working closely with local child welfare agencies and local educational agencies to identify children and youth in foster care and to ensure the successful implementation of ESSA provisions.

### **Foster Care Point of Contact**

The Butts County School System's foster care point of contact is the district's School Social Worker. The contact person works with the local educational agencies and the local DFACS to identify children in foster care. The Social Worker ensures that the needs of the children and youth are met at the school level.

### **Foster Care Transportation Plan**

BCSS is required to ensure the educational stability for children in foster care by meeting the Title I, Part A educational stability requirements:

- A child in foster care remains in his or her school of origin, unless it is determined that remaining in the school of origin is not in the child's best interest;
- If it is not the child's best interest to stay in his or her school of origin, the child is immediately enrolled in the new school even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollments; and
- The new enrolling school immediately contacts the school of origin to obtain relevant academic and other records.

For additional information, please see Butts County School System's complete Foster Care Transportation Plan.

## **Title I, Part C Education of Migratory Children**

### **Identification and Recruitment**

Migrant students are identified through the occupational survey, which is a portion of the online student enrollment packet. The Assistant Superintendent is notified by the System Data Clerk whenever a parent or guardian indicates a positive response to questions related to the household's occupational reasons and the nature of such employment. The Assistant Superintendent utilizes this information to help identify and recruit migrant students. Contact is then made with each potentially eligible family to determine case-by-case eligibility and needs.

When migrant students are identified, a comprehensive needs assessment and delivery plan will be developed. The Student Information Specialist is responsible for maintaining, updating, and properly coding all required enrollment, educational, and health data in Butts County School System's Student Information System on migrant eligible students and shares this information on an intra-system and interstate basis.

## **Title I, Part D – Neglected and Delinquent Children**

### **Services for Neglected and Delinquent Children**

The purpose of Title I, Part D is:

- to improve educational services for children and youth in local and State institutions for neglected or delinquent children and youth so that such children and youth have the opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic content standards and challenging State student academic achievement standards that all children in the State are expected to meet;
- to provide such children and youth with the services needed to make a successful transition from institutionalization to further schooling or employment; and
- to prevent at-risk youth from dropping out of school, and to provide dropouts, and children and youth returning from correctional facilities or institutions for neglected or delinquent children and youth, with a support system to ensure their continued education.

Local school systems and state agencies in Georgia (the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Corrections and the Department of Human Services) serve neglected and/or delinquent youths in institutions operated or contracted by these agencies. The Georgia Department of Education provides

resources to school systems and state agencies to carry out the purposes of Title I, Part D based upon the submission of a required plan and application.

The Butts County School System currently has one center in its geographical boundaries that serve neglected or delinquent students. Meetings are held throughout the year to determine needs of the students at the center and how the district can support those needs. Students are served in one of our five schools which are all Title I School wide programs. These schools provide high quality instruction grounded on evidence-based research for all students including those who are assigned to an N&D facility.

## **Title II, Part A - Supporting Effective Instruction**

The mission of the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) is to educate Georgia's future by graduating students who are ready to learn, ready to live, and ready to lead. Led by our State School Superintendent, the goal is to improve educational outcomes and expand learning options for Georgia's public PK-12 students. To accomplish this, we need effective communication, meaningful collaboration, a focus on the whole child, and classroom-centered policies and practices. Federal Programs serve as a supplemental programmatic and fiscal support for this mission. Federal Programs provide high quality service while fostering collaboration, innovation, and support. Title II, Part A provides supplemental support for Georgia's teachers, principals, and other school leaders to improve educational outcomes and expand educational options for Georgia's PK-12 students.

The purpose of Title II, Part A is to provide grants to State educational agencies and sub grants to local educational agencies to— (1) increase student achievement consistent with the challenging State academic standards; (2) improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders; (3) increase the number of teachers, principals, and other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools; and (4) provide low-income and minority students greater access to effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders.

In the Butts County School System, Title II, Part A funds are used to support student learning through high quality initiatives such as professional learning activities tailored to the needs of each school, a new teacher induction program, a mentor teacher program, retention and recruitment, endorsements, and certifications.

### **BCSS Mission**

The mission of the Butts County School System is to educate each student in a safe environment while providing opportunities and experiences to graduate as a productive community member.

### **We Believe**

Recruiting, retaining, and training quality staff is required for excellence to be achieved.  
Holding staff and students accountable for high standards and rigor will grow our schools.  
Providing relevant educational experiences for every child is what makes our schools great.

### **Professional Learning**

Professional Learning in Butts County Schools is standards based, results-driven, and job-embedded. It is designed to improve student achievement by enhancing teacher content expertise and developing appropriate pedagogical skills. Professional Learning needs are assessed during the Comprehensive Needs Assessment process. Student achievement data, graduation data, and performance data are analyzed, and desired outcomes are stated. The Butts County School System will provide training to enable teachers, paraprofessionals and administrators to address the needs of students with different learning styles, particularly students with disabilities, students with special learning needs (including students who are gifted and talented), and students with limited English proficiency; improve student behavior in the classroom and identify early and appropriate interventions to help students; involve parents in their child's education; and understand and use data and assessments to improve classroom practice and student learning.

Professional learning activities that are funded through Title II, Part A align with the ESSA definition of professional development and are evidence-based, align with the district's CLIP/improvement plan, goals and action steps, and/or equity gaps, and are allowable under current Title II, Part A ESSA guidance. Professional learning activities that are funded through Title II, Part A are evaluated to determine their effectiveness on student achievement or other relevant outcomes. Source documentation is maintained for all professional learning activities that are funded through Title II, Part A. Professional learning for all teachers and leaders will be a crucial component of improvement. Our teachers and leaders continually request job-embedded professional learning to deepen their knowledge of effective practices and build confidence in their abilities to implement and develop collective efficacy. We have invested the past year in developing leaders, instructional coaches, and teachers in using practices that will engage students in rigorous and authentic learning experiences, but we are still seeing evidence that those practices are being implemented with limited depth.

## **Annual Needs Assessment**

In the spring, principals receive technical assistance by the Director of Federal Programs and the Director of Teaching and Learning on how to conduct an annual needs assessment. An annual needs assessment is conducted in the spring at the school and district level. A survey is also conducted to gather feedback on teacher effectiveness and professional learning needs. The data from feedback is discussed with the leadership team to provide further input on the school's and system's needs. District staff, school staff, community stakeholders, and business partners review the district data, assessment data, and other needs to determine action steps for improvement. BCSS has a coherent data analysis protocol with analysis tools and procedures in place to identify consistent and relevant data points to extract for comparison. Currently, classroom teachers analyze data at the classroom and student level in order to assess strengths and weaknesses and to make instructional decisions. By beginning at the classroom level, we provide opportunities for students to engage in self-assessment and review of their own data and share that data with their families. Following that analysis, school level leadership teams disaggregate and analyze data independently to determine school-level bright spots to leverage as well as gaps in performance by grade level, content area, subgroup, etc. School teams then share disaggregated data with the District Curriculum team for collaborative review. During these checkpoints, district leaders, principals, and instructional coaches work to collaboratively review data presented in order to target trends that become apparent in particular content areas, grades, or are isolated to individual schools. These data checkpoints and the work sessions that follow them are crucial as we work to identify trends and possible professional learning and/or resource needs as well as patterns that may result in changes to core instruction.

## **Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals**

Butts County's Certified Professional Qualifications requirements are below:

- Hold a Clearance Certificate issued by the PSC and one of the following:
  - Have a Bachelor's degree in the field or related field; and/or
  - Have relevant coursework or experience in the field; and/or
  - Have related field or applicable GACE scores Paraprofessionals must meet PSC requirements.

Any teacher or paraprofessional who does not meet the district's professional qualifications or who holds a non-renewable certificate will have an individualized remediation plan to meet the professional qualifications or gain a clear renewable certificate. The remediation plan will be developed collaboratively with the teacher principal, and the Director of Human Resources at the time of hire or when non-PQ status or non-renewable certificate is determined. All remediation plans are monitored quarterly.

In order to maintain qualified teachers and paraprofessionals, a Principal training is held each spring. All principals and district staff are trained on the requirements to meet professional qualifications and the placement of teachers and paraprofessionals.

## **Effectiveness of Planned Activities**

Planned professional learning opportunities at the school and district level are compared to research to ensure each activity is evidence-based. Schools include documentation strategies in their school improvement plans. All School Improvement Plans are revised annually, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the previous year's activities is conducted to determine what activities should be continued, revised, and discontinued. The Director of Federal Programs prepares a report on the effectiveness of each activity in the Title II, Part A Program. The report includes a review of data to summarize the effectiveness of all funded activities. Source documentation is stored at the school level and the district level.

## **Title III, Part A - Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students**

Title III, Part A: Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as Amended under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) P.L. 115-141, enacted March 23, 2018, awards subgrants to eligible Local Education Agencies (LEA) "to help ensure that English learners (ELs), including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency and develop high levels of academic achievement in English." [Sec. 3102 (1)]

Title III, Part A EL Language Programs are a variety of supplemental services and activities provided to EL students, their teachers, and their families beyond the schools' legal obligations to English learners and their limited English proficient parents. All Federal Program services are provided within the Systems of Continuous Improvement framework.

### **English Learner Defined**

An English Learner (EL) is a student whose native/first/dominant language is not English, and who is eligible for services.

### **Required Activities for the English Learner**

Portions of the Title III, Part A subgrant must be used for each one of the following activities required in Title IIIA statute, under the ESSA:

1. Provide effective, supplemental language instruction educational programs (LIEPs) that demonstrate success in increasing EL students' English proficiency and content achievement. [See ESEA/ESSA § 3115(c)(1).]
2. Provide effective professional development (PD) for teachers, administrators, and other school personnel. This PD must:
  - a. Be designed to improve the instruction and assessment of ELs; and
  - b. Be designed to enhance participants' ability to understand and implement curricula, assessment practices and instructional strategies for ELs; and
  - c. Prove effective in increasing ELs' English proficiency or substantially increasing participants' subject matter knowledge, teaching knowledge, or teaching skills; and
  - d. Be of sufficient intensity and duration to have a positive and lasting impact on teachers' performance in the classroom. [See ESEA/ESSA § 3115(c)(2).]
3. Provide and implement parent, family and community engagement activities that enhance or supplement the Title III, Part A-funded language activities/programs. This may include strategies that serve to coordinate and align related programs.

### **Identification of English Learners, English Learner Entrance Procedures, and English Learner Exit**

#### **Procedures**

The information regarding the Butts County School System's procedures for identifying English learners, the district's entrance procedures, and the exit criteria can be found in the BCSS ESOL Manual.

## **Identification of Immigrant Students**

When parents enroll students, they complete an online registration application. The following information is collected to determine if the student will be flagged as an immigrant:

- Student place of birth
- Student Age
- Date of entry into US school

## **Notifications and Information for Parents**

Parents are provided information about the program to ensure informed decisions are made for the student. The following documents are distributed to the parents during initial placement or annually:

- Combined Notification of ESOL and Supplemental Services
- English Learner Testing Accommodations
- Notification of Services No Longer Needed (if applicable)
- Parent Waiver of ESOL Services (if applicable)
- ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 scores

Parents are invited to attend meetings and parent conferences. Parents are also invited to attend Literacy Nights and Curriculum Nights as well as other school-based informational workshops. For additional information regarding procedures related to Butts County School System's ESOL Program, please see the ESOL Manual.

## **Title IV, Part A – Student Support and Academic Enrichment**

### **Use/Prioritization of Funds**

BCSS makes a determination of how Title IV funds are spent following the needs assessment process. Needs are prioritized and funded based on the results from the Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan. BCSS will prioritize the distribution of funds to schools that meet any of the following criteria:

1. Has the greatest need as determined by data analysis and review
2. Has the highest number of students from low-income families
3. Are identified for comprehensive support and improvement
4. Are implementing a targeted support and improvement plan
5. Are identified as persistently dangerous schools

## **Title V, Part B - Rural Education Initiative**

The Rural Education Initiative is designed to assist rural school districts in using Federal resources more effectively to improve the quality of instruction and student academic achievement. It consists of two separate programs – the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program and the Rural and Low-Income Schools (RLIS) program.

The SRSA program is a rural school initiative with two components –

- **Rural Flexibility – the Alternative Use of Funds Authority**  
Rural Flexibility provides eligible local educational agencies (LEAs) with greater flexibility in using the formula grant funds that they receive under certain State-administered Federal programs. This portion of the SRSA program is not a grant program and does not provide LEAs with funding.
- **The SRSA grant program**  
LEAs eligible to participate in REAP-Flex are also eligible for a grant under the SRSA grant program. The US Department of Education awards SRSA funds directly to eligible LEAs on a formula basis.  
The RLIS program is an initiative that provides grant funds to rural LEAs that serve concentrations of children from low-income families. Under the RLIS program, the U.S. The Department of Education awards funds by formula to State Education Agencies (SEAs) to provide subgrants to eligible LEAs to support a range of authorized activities to support student achievement.

### **School Improvement 1003 (a)**

The Butts County School System does not receive 1003(a) funding.

### **School Improvement 1003(g)**

The Butts County School System does not currently have any schools identified as needing comprehensive or targeted support interventions, and does not receive 1003(g) funding. Should schools be identified in the future, district leaders including the Director of Federal Programs will work with these schools to implement practices that have proven effective with improving schools.

## The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, State educational agencies must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth. Homeless children and youth must have access to the educational and other services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment. States and districts are required to review and undertake steps to revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youth.

### Services for Homeless Children and Youth

#### Definitions

*Children and youth experiencing homelessness* means children and youth who are otherwise legally entitled to or eligible for a free public education, including preschool, and lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who:

- are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- are living in motels, hotels, campgrounds or trailer parks due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- are living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- are abandoned in hospitals;
- are awaiting foster care placement;
- have a primary nighttime residence that is a private or public place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- are living in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting; and
- are migratory and living in a situation described above.
- A child or youth shall be considered to be experiencing homelessness for as long as he or she is in a living situation described above and to the end of the school year in which the student moves into permanent housing.

*Unaccompanied youth* means a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, who is experiencing homelessness as defined above.

## **Identification**

In collaboration with school personnel and community organizations, the liaison or designee will identify children and youth experiencing homelessness in the district, both in and out of school, and maintain access to data regarding homeless students. The liaison or designee will train school personnel on possible indicators of homelessness, sensitivity in identifying families and youth as experiencing homelessness, and procedures for forwarding information indicating homelessness to the liaison. The liaison will also instruct school registrars and secretaries to offer homeless education information upon the enrollment and withdrawal of every student, and to forward information indicating homelessness to the liaison.

## **School Selection**

Each child and youth experiencing homelessness has the right to remain at his or her school of origin, or to attend the appropriate school that serves students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living. Therefore, in selecting a school, children and youth experiencing homelessness shall remain at their schools of origin to the extent feasible, unless that is against the parent's or youth's wishes. Students may remain at their schools of origin the entire time they are experiencing homelessness, and until the end of any academic year in which they become permanently housed. The same applies if a child or youth loses his or her housing between academic years.

## **Enrollment**

Consistent, uninterrupted education is vital for academic achievement. Due to the realities of homelessness and mobility, students experiencing homelessness may not have school enrollment documents readily available. Nonetheless, the school selected for enrollment must immediately enroll any child or youth experiencing homelessness. Enrollment may not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment. Unaccompanied youth must also be immediately enrolled in school. They may either enroll themselves or be enrolled by a parent, non-parent caretaker, older sibling or the LEA liaison. If complete records are not available, IEP teams or other committees or school officials, as appropriate, must use good judgment in choosing the best course of action, balancing procedural requirements and the provision of services. In all cases, the goal will be to avoid any disruption in appropriate services.

## **Transportation**

Transportation shall be provided to and from the school of origin for a child or youth experiencing homelessness. Transportation shall be provided for the entire time the child or youth has a right to attend that school, as defined above, including during pending disputes. Parents and unaccompanied youth must be informed of this right to transportation before they select a school for attendance. In addition to receiving transportation to and from the school of origin upon request, children and youth experiencing homelessness shall also be provided with other transportation services comparable to those offered to housed students.

## **Services**

Children and youth experiencing homelessness shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected. School personnel must also inform parents of all

educational and related opportunities available to their children and provide parents with meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education. All parent information required by any provision of this policy must be provided in a form, manner, and language understandable to each parent.

### **Disputes**

If a dispute arises over any issue covered in this policy, the child or youth experiencing homelessness shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute. The student shall also have the rights of a student experiencing homelessness to all appropriate educational services. The school where the dispute arises shall provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision and the right to appeal and shall immediately refer the parent or youth to the liaison. The parent or unaccompanied youth shall be given every opportunity to participate meaningfully in the resolution of the dispute.

### **Credit for Full or Partial Coursework**

Students experiencing homelessness will be provided credit recovery options so as not to cause the loss of partial or incomplete credits. The following methods will be used:

- After school credit recovery
- Awarding of half and full units of credit where appropriate through after school programs

The Butts County School System's Homeless Liaison and point of contact is our School Social Worker.

## **Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education**

Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) is preparing Georgia's students for their next step after high school--college, beginning a career, registered apprenticeships, or the military. Georgia CTAE pathway course offerings, and the new Educating Georgia's Future Workforce initiative, leverage partnerships with industry and higher education to ensure students have the skills they need to thrive in the future workforce. CTAE offers students more than 130 career pathways within the 17 Georgia Career Clusters.

The Butts County School System's CTAE Director is available for procedures related to CTAE.

## **Special Education Services and Supports**

The Georgia Department of Education (Division for Special Education Services and Supports) provides necessary infrastructure and support for leaders, teachers, and families to meet the whole child needs of each student improving student outcomes and school climate resulting in an increased quality of life and workforce ready future. We must commit to effective collaboration across agencies and school-home partnerships to support local school districts in their efforts to provide special education and related services for students with disabilities.

The GaDOE must provide state General Supervision for local school districts to improve educational results and functional outcomes for all children with disabilities and ensure that the requirements of IDEA are met. We believe that all students must have an equitable opportunity for school completion and successful postsecondary outcomes.

### **Pre-Kindergarten Programs**

There are no federally funded pre-kindergarten programs in Butts County Schools, with the exception of specific IDEA funds for qualifying students. Policies and procedures will be put in place if grant allowability is provided and the district determines the need for the disbursement of funds to kindergarten programs. Information specific to the Special Education Preschool Program is available in the BCSS Special Education Program Manual.

Specific procedures related to special education services and supports are available by contacting the Director of Student Services.

## **Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds Internal Procedures for Butts County**

### **ESSER Funding Budget Process**

Each assigned ESSER Federal Program Coordinator (Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Director of Federal Programs, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Student Services, and the Director of Human Resources) will prepare a yearly budget showing the distributions for district, per school and /or per program/function/object code. The ESSER Federal Program Coordinators will ensure that all funds budgeted are allowable per funding source. The budget is forwarded to Business Services after the GaDOE approves the budgets in the Consolidated Application. The Director of Finance and/or designee or the ESSER Finance Specialist enters the budget into the system financial software using the Consolidated Application budget as the source.

### **Internal Procedures:**

- ESSER Budget meetings will be held regularly.
- Under the direction of the Director of Finance, the CARES Finance Specialist will continually revise a budget spreadsheet to include appropriate account numbers, programs, functions, object codes, and expenditures.
- ESSER Federal Program Coordinators will create Purchase Orders, submit Purchase Orders w/ documentation to the Accounts Payable Finance Specialist. Copies of the documentation will also be submitted to the ESSER Finance Specialist. All documentation to include contracts, receipts, etc. should be included as an attachment.
- The Director of Finance will send a monthly Federal and State Grants Fund Requests Form along with a detailed account drawdown report. Each ESSER Federal Program Coordinator will review the ESSER Budget Spreadsheet and purchased items. The coordinators will approve the purchases and sign off.
- The Director of Federal Programs will review the ESSER Budget Spreadsheet, review all attachments from coordinators, and approve the total expenditures.
- The Director of Federal Programs will send the approved documents to the Director of Finance.
- The approved documents will be returned to the Director of Finance to draw down funds from the DOE.
- The Director of Federal Programs will complete all amendments in the Consolidated Application, as needed.

## BACK TO SCHOOL GUIDANCE

BCSS Families and Stakeholders,

Below outlines the BCSS COVID guidance/protocol based on the local Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) Guidance.

- Face coverings are optional
- Frequent handwashing and/or the use of hand sanitizers continue to be a critical strategy for preventing the spread of illness. Therefore, we will continue to provide sanitizing stations and encourage students to wash or sanitize their hands more frequently.
- We will continue to ensure surfaces and facilities are cleaned and disinfected daily as recommended.
- We will continue to have our facilities thoroughly disinfected at intervals throughout the year while school buildings are unoccupied.

If a student tests positive for COVID:

- Parents are asked to report the positive test to the school nurse.
- They will be advised to quarantine for 5 days from the onset of symptoms.

Our priority is to maintain a safe and successful learning environment for all students throughout the school year.

As always, the health and safety of our students is of the utmost importance. Please continue to check our website ([www.bcask12.org](http://www.bcask12.org)) for the most up-to-date information and resources.

## APPENDIX A

### Butts County Complaint Procedures

#### A. Grounds for a Complaint

A formal complaint may be filed when an organization or individual believes that a recipient of funding has violated a requirement of a federal statute or regulation related to the administration of a program. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the complaint is received, unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing. The federal ESSA programs for which formal complaints may be filed and investigated are:

#### B. Federal Programs for Which Complaints can be filed

- Title I, Part A-Improving Basic Programs Operated by Educational Agencies
- Title 1, Part A-School Improvement Grants, referred to as 1003(a) and 1003(g)
- Title I, Part C -Education of Migratory Children
- Title I, Part D -Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
- Title II, Part A- Supporting Effective Instruction
- Title III, Part A-Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students
- Title IV, Part A- Student Support and Academic Enrichment
- Title IV Part B- 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- Emergency Relief Funds CARES Act, CRRSA Act, ARP Act

#### C. Complaints Originating at the Local Level

As part of its Assurances of ESSA program grant applications and pursuant to Section 9306 of ESSA, agencies agree to adopt local written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of the law in the administration of covered programs. Therefore, complaints should not be filed with the DOE until all efforts have been exhausted at the local level to resolve complaints. If the complainant has tried to file a complaint with BCSS to no avail, the complainant must provide the DOE with written evidence of their attempt to resolve the issue at the local level.

#### D. Filing a Complaint

To further delineate Board policy, the following is required for complaints about federal program implementation of ESSA.

All complaints must be in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include the following:

- A statement that the local agency has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program;
- The date on which the violation occurred;
- The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation);
- A list of names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information;
- Whether the complaint has been filed with any other government agency, and if so, what agency;
- Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant's position; and
- The address of the complainant.

The complaint must be addressed to:

Superintendent  
Butts County Schools  
181 North Mulberry  
Street Jackson, GA  
30233

Once the complaint is received by the Office of the Superintendent, it will be copied and forwarded to the appropriate Federal Program Manager.

#### E. Investigation of the Complaint

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, the Federal Program Manager or his or her designee will issue a Letter of Acknowledgment to the complainant that contains the following information:

- The date the BCSS received the complaint;
- How the complainant may provide additional information;
- A statement of the ways in which the BSC may investigate or address the complaint;
- Any other pertinent information.

A copy of the complaint along with the Letter of Acknowledgement may also be sent to the GaDOE.

Appropriate BCSS staff will review the information to determine whether:

- Additional information is needed;
- An on-site investigation must be conducted;
- Other measures must be taken to resolve the issues raised in the complaint;
- A Letter of Findings can be issued.

The BCSS will have sixty (60) days from the receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Finding.

#### F. Right to Appeal

Complaints may also be filed with the Georgia Department of Education.

## APPENDIX B

### Procedures for Waste, Fraud, Abuse and Corruption

(1) **Purpose:** To ensure the reporting of suspicion of fraudulent activity, Butts County Schools provides employees, clients and providers with confidential channels for such reporting.

(2) **Definitions:**

**Fraud:** A false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words, by conduct, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, that is used for the purpose of misappropriating property and/or monetary funds.

**Waste:** The thoughtless or careless expenditure, consumption, mismanagement and use of resources owned or operated by Butts County Schools. Waste also includes incurring unnecessary costs because of inefficient practices, systems or controls.

**Abuse:** The excessive or improper use of something, or the use of something in a manner contrary to the natural or legal rules for its use; the intentional destruction, diversion, manipulation, misapplication, maltreatment or misuse of resources owned or operated by the school district.

Examples:

- Forgery or alteration of documents (checks, contracts, purchase orders, invoices, time sheets, leave records)
- Misrepresentation of information on documents (employment history, time sheets, leave records, travel reimbursement requests, financial records)
- Theft, unauthorized removal, or willful destruction of district records, property or the property of others.
- Misappropriation of funds, equipment, supplies or any other asset.
- Authorizing of receiving payments for goods not received or services not performed.
- Authorizing or receiving payment for hours not worked.
- Inappropriate use of District-provided electronic devices such as computers, cell phones, or email.

(3) **Statement of Administrative Regulations:** Butts County Schools thoroughly and expeditiously investigates any reported cases of suspected fraud to determine if disciplinary, financial recovery and/or criminal action should be taken.

(4) **Confidentiality:** All reports of suspected fraud must be handled under the strictest confidentiality. Only those directly involved in the investigation should be provided information regarding the allegation. Informants may remain anonymous but should be encouraged to cooperate with investigators and should provide as much detail and evidence of alleged fraudulent acts as possible.

(5) **Procedures and Responsibilities:**

- Anyone suspecting fraudulent activity should report their concerns to the Superintendent.
- Any employee with Butts County Schools (temporary staff, full-time staff and contractors) who receives a report of suspected fraudulent activity must report this information within the next business day.
- Employees have the responsibility to report suspected fraud. All reports can be made in confidence.
- Butts County Schools shall conduct investigations of employees, providers, contractors, or



vendors.

(6)

- If necessary, the person reporting will be contacted for additional information.
- Periodic communication through meetings should emphasize the responsibilities and channels to report suspected fraud.

## APPENDIX C

### Testing Protocols 2023-24

STC – School Testing Coordinator

SYTC – System Test Coordinator

### DELIVERY OF TESTING MATERIALS

#### From Vendor to Central Office

Vendor will ship Testing Documents to BCSS central office.

System Test Coordinator will notify School Testing Coordinators of the pickup date of testing documents.(ACCESS & GAA only)

System Test Coordinator will verify all materials from the vendor.

System Test Coordinator will secure all testing materials in the testing warehouse. Only the System Test Coordinator and Testing Clerk will have key access to the testing materials.

School Testing Coordinator will retrieve documents from the System Test Coordinator- materials will be counted and verified before delivery to the school site.

Any discrepancies will be communicated to the vendor by the SyTC.

#### From Central Office to Schools

The following exams will be picked up by the School Testing Coordinator or delivered by the System Testing Coordinator:

- ACCESS
- GAA

### Inventory of Materials

- Each school receives their inventory from the Central Office with their testing materials in a box.
- The BCSS Inventory consists of the following parts
- Materials Inventory
- Reflects the total count manuals and test tickets
- Rosters are sent to the schools for review and changes prior to being uploaded to the DRC. Once they have been verified and changes have been made, the System test coordinator will upload
- the information to DRC.
- Test tickets are now printed and reviewed by the schools once the roster and registration information has been downloaded by the District office to DRC.

The STC will verify count and may pick up the testing materials or have them delivered from the Central Office.

### **Discrepancies**

- All discrepancies are reported to the SyTC by the Inventory Verification Form which is included in the training materials.
- Discrepancies should be reported to SyTC immediately.
- SyTC calls & emails vendors with the discrepancy and notifies the GaDOE

### **Pick-Up of Additional Materials**

Additional Materials can be requested directly to the SyTC by phone, email or fax.

Additional Materials can be picked up and signed for by the STC.

STC will receive an updated BCS inventory that reflects the additional testing documents received.

The Inventory must be signed as a receipt of materials received.

### **PROCEDURE FOR TESTING ADMINISTRATION**

Before Test Materials are picked up or delivered to School Test Coordinators, each will attend a training session for the specific test administration. This training will include but not limited to Department of Education Testing Division webinars, Student Assessment Handbook, and Examiners and Test Coordinators Manual. Each attendee will sign in to verify attendance. The following items will be included in the training of all test administrators. Each school will then conduct a training to include all items on the school level.

### **Test Security**

All testing material must be secured with limited “key control”, meaning only the Principal and School Test Coordinator should have access to the testing documents.

All online testing materials must be secured with limited “key control”, meaning only the Principal and School Test Coordinator should have access to the testing documents.

### **Distribution of Testing Materials to Examiners**

The examiner must count the testing materials prior to leaving and sign for the materials.

This includes, test manuals and paper for test tickets.

The examiner must not leave the testing documents unattended and follow all testing responsibilities as outlined in the Student Assessment Handbook/ Examiner’s Manual.

### **During Testing**

The examiner should closely monitor the students and verify that they are answering in the correct section of the answer documents, marking in the correct place and focusing on their own exams.

If the examiner suspects unethical student behavior or needs to document any other activities that occur in the classroom, such as a student using the restroom, they should use the “Examiner’s Daily Log/Notes” section of the Examiner’s Checklist and Procedure Form provided by the School Test Coordinator (STC).

- As a reminder the Examiner should contact the STC immediately and then document the incident.
- If a proctor is present, they may also provide a statement of the incident.

The examiner must read and adhere to all of the testing requirements described in the examiners manual for the respective exam.

### Cell Phone Use on Georgia Standardized Assessments

Students are not permitted to use, or bring into the testing environment, any electronic device that could allow them to access, retain, or transmit information (e.g., cell phone, smartphone, PDA, electronic recording, camera, or playback device, etc.). Announcements **must** be made prior to testing that such

devices are not allowed in the testing environment and that possession or improper use of such devices during testing may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the system's student code of conduct and/or test invalidation. Devices such as those mentioned above that are brought into the testing environment must not remain in the student's possession during testing. **All such devices must be collected and labeled with the students' name.** In the event a student brings such a device into the testing environment but does not have the device out during testing, the examiner and/or proctor must collect the device if they become aware of its presence and should allow the student to continue testing.

In the event an examiner **confirms** during testing that a student is using a device to **access, retain, or share** information, the examiner must with minimal disruption:

- collect the device,
- **stop testing that student,**
- remove the student from the testing session, and
- notify the School Test Coordinator immediately.

In the event such actions are **suspected, but not yet confirmed**, the examiner must with minimal disruption:

- collect the device,
  - **allow the student to complete testing,**
  - notify the School Test Coordinator immediately, and
  - as soon as it is appropriate to attempt to confirm whether or not the device has been used in violation of the guidelines above.
- 
- Simple possession of a device (including the ringing of a phone during test administration) may be addressed in keeping with the system's code of conduct and does not require an irregularity report to the GaDOE.
  - If it is confirmed that the student did use, or intended to use, the device to access information and/or to photograph, post, retain, share, or transmit information/images from any portion of a secure test booklet and/or answer document the test for that student will be invalidated. The School Test Coordinator must notify the System Test Coordinator. The System Test Coordinator must contact the Assessment Specialist at the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and report the incident as an irregularity. An Irregularity Form, with statements, must also be submitted to the GaDOE as soon as possible on the MyGaDOE Portal. Students who receive, from another party, messages/posts/texts that contain secure test information may also have their test invalidated if the information received is used

by them to gain an advantage. Students and staff are expected to report all instances where they receive electronic information from another person containing secure test content/materials published by the GaDOE.

- Please make students aware that the GaDOE monitors various websites/social media sites in search of instances where individuals may have posted secure test information. GaDOE works with websites/social media sites to identify the source of any such posting that becomes known. Such actions may result in invalidation and disciplinary action in accordance with the system's code of conduct. **Importantly, examiners and proctors must be vigilant regarding test materials, test security, and the risks associated with electronic devices in the testing environment. While this has always been important, it has become increasingly important given the existence of social media and various smartphone applications.**
- Each electronic device incident will vary and will be handled on an individual basis. Once the information has been evaluated, the GaDOE will determine if the assessment should be invalidated. If necessary, the assessment specialist will provide instructions for coding the invalidation. Make certain that you provide the SyTC with as much details as possible to share with GaDOE in order for the Department to determine if the assessment should be invalidated.
- Butts County Schools will adhere to the Student Code of Conduct (JCDA) in the case of inappropriate use of electronic devices. Only the GaDOE will determine if the assessment should be invalidated.
- Examiners and proctors should refrain from having phone conversations, sending emails, sending texts, posting to social media, etc. during their administration of a test to students and during the time they possess secure materials. Examiners' electronic devices may be subject to collection. This does not apply to a need that a staff member may have to use such a device in the event of an emergency/urgent situation.

## Conclusion of Testing

The examiner must verify that everything that was distributed to them prior to testing is what they are returning.

The Examiner must bring the testing documents directly to the STC, recount again and sign that they have been returned.

Examiners must ensure that answer documents are filled in for the appropriate tests.

## Unethical Behavior

If any unethical behavior occurs regarding testing protocols and policies, investigation will be conducted and employees may be reported to the Professional Standards Commission and result in the dismissal of the teacher and the revoking of the certification license.

## **RETURN OF TESTING MATERIALS**

### **Return of Testing Documents to Central Office**

Prior to the testing documents being returned to Central Office, the School Test Coordinator (STC) will:

- Inventory all materials and resolve any discrepancies prior to returning materials.
- All of the following must be returned:
  - Examiner's Checklist & Procedure Form
  - Test Tickets
  - Rosters/Absence Sheet/Accommodations
  - Training Log
  - Non-Participation Log
  - Principals Certification
  - Security checklist
- All test tickets must be accounted for and stored in a secure location that stays locked.

### **Receipt of Results**

Electronic results are sent in the DRC. All principals and testing coordinators should have access to the scores.

- Principals must be made aware that, "This data contains student performance and programmatic information for individual students. It should be treated as highly sensitive and secured upon receipt."

## Appendix D

### Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds

In response to the economic outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, Congress passed three bills that provided immediate and direct financial assistance to state and local educational agencies through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds. These funds were provided to support areas with the greatest need, where the academic and non-academic components of school districts had the most significant impact due to COVID-19. As additional funding was provided, the funds were intended to support state and local school districts' efforts to safely reopen schools, address significant gaps in learning, and support measures of implementation that will continue to reduce the effects of COVID-19 on students and families.

#### Section 18003 of Division B of the CARES Act-Coronavirus Aid, Relief & Economic Security (CARES) Act

- **Equitable Services:** An LEA that receives ESSER funds under the CARES Act (section 18005) must provide equitable services to non-public school students and teachers in the same manner as provided under section 1117 of Title I, Part A of the ESEA.

#### Section 313 of the Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act

#### Section 2001 of the ARP Act-American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act- Section 2001

- The LEA must reserve at least 20 percent of funds to address learning loss by implementing evidence-based interventions and ensure that those interventions respond to students' social, emotional, and academic needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student subgroups.
- Remaining LEA funds may be used for a wide range of activities to address needs arising from the coronavirus pandemic, including any activity authorized by the ESEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), or Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins CTE).
- Maintenance of Equity: The ARP contains LEA maintenance of equity requirements for FYs 2022 and 2023.

#### LEA Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan

- An LEA that receives ARP ESSER funds must publicly make a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services on its website. Before making the plan publicly available, the LEA must seek public comment on the plan.

## **Use of ESSER Funds for Minor or Major Construction Projects**

The Butts County School District will ensure that school facility repairs and improvements are solely to reduce the risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs and inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air condition systems, filtering, purification, and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement.

The Butts County School District will ensure the required documentation is on file with GaDOE Facilities once all steps are completed for approval of projects by the ESSER Grants Team.

- Submit all required documentation complying with state law regarding Public Works Construction Projects. O.C.G.A. 36-91-20, 36-91-21, and 36-91- 22
- Revise or withdraw any state capital outlay funded projects where ESSER funding was utilized.
- Verify that the construction project will be completed by the end of the grant period
- Submit required documentation adhering to the Davis Bacon Wage Requirement for all federal contracts and subcontract over \$2,000 for construction, alterations, repairs, painting, and decorating.
- Submit applicable required documents that follow federal construction regulations. 34 CFR75.600-617