

EXHIBIT 5: Overview of Lee County School System

The Lee County School System has an enrollment of approximately 6400 students in grades Pre-K through 12. The system has two primary schools, two elementary schools, two middle schools, a ninth grade school and a high school. In addition to these schools, a pre-kindergarten center and an alternative school are part of the school system. All schools are located within the city limits of Leesburg, Georgia. Lee County has a population of approximately 33,700 people. The northern half of the county is rural, and the southern half is suburban with most parents working in Albany. The socioeconomic level in Lee County is among the highest in South Georgia. The free and reduced rate for the school system is 45 percent. The racial profile for the system is 72 percent white, 20 percent African-American, three percent Asian, two percent Hispanic, and three percent other.

Several major changes in the school system have occurred within the last four years. They include: building a new elementary school, dividing the middle school into two campuses and moving the alternative school to a new location. The school system also realigned school zones for grades prekindergarten- eighth grade. Before the change, students in grades prekindergarten through eighth grade who lived on the east side of Lee County attended schools in the west. A similar dilemma also occurred with students living on the west side. Now, zones have been aligned, and these students attend schools located in the area of Lee County in which they live.

The Lee County School System vision is “A School System with a Passion for Excellence and Distinction that promotes quality instruction, maximizes the potential for all learners and provides a safe learning environment”. Lee County has an excellent reputation for providing quality educational services. The school system continues to grow at an annual rate of one and a half percent. This is unlike many other South Georgia systems that face declining enrollment. For many years, people have moved to Lee County in order for their children to attend Lee County Schools. While this is a compliment to our school system, it also challenges our system to provide high quality schools. Historically, student achievement has been very high in Lee County. In recent years, the school system was one of few systems in the state

to consistently produce high test scores. School activities are well supported by parents and community. Quality of life in Lee County is very high. Lee County is a great place to live, work and raise a family.

Programs established to serve our students include English Language Learners (ELL), serving students K-12; the Early Intervention Program (EIP), serving students K-5; gifted and talented, serving students K-12; alternative education, serving students 4-12; special education, serving students Pre K - 12; targeted assistance through Title I, serving students in 6-12; advanced placement, serving students in 9-12, and career, technical and agricultural education, serving students in 9-12. The variety of program offerings shows Lee County's desire to meet the needs of all students! Students are expected to work with staff to meet their full potential. Teachers spend countless hours in professional development both in house and through attendance at SWGA RESA and conference training. Administrators work to ensure what is learned is implemented in the classroom instruction. System and school leadership teams work together to implement system and school goals. With the assistance of teachers, students set individual academic goals for the year. All of these efforts move the LCSS toward improving student achievement.