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**Appendix A – Flexibility Component of Contract**

Under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-80 and State Board Rule 160-5-1-.33, Savannah-Chatham County is seeking flexibility for all schools included in this Contract from the following state laws, rules, and regulations in exchange for greater accountability.

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-82 mandates that the goal for each waiver and variance shall be the improvement of student performance. This Appendix delineates the specifically identified state laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures for which a waiver is requested and the expected impact of such waivers on student performance.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-84, the SWSS must request a waiver or variance of at least one of the following areas:

- Class size requirements in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-182;
- Expenditure controls in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-171 and categorical allotment requirements in Article 6 of Title 20;
- Certification requirements in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200; or
- Salary schedule requirements in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-212.

**Waiver areas selected:**

Class size requirements in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-182
Expenditure controls in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-171 and categorical allotment requirements in Article 6 of Title 20
Certification requirements in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200
Salary schedule requirements in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-212

**Academic Programs Flexibility Rationale:**

The flexibility provides options and opportunities for schools to be creative and out-of-the-box thinkers when addressing today's challenges with student behavior, attendance, and academic performance. In addition, the flexibility frees up staff to support instruction and whole-child development.

<b>ACADEMIC PROGRAMS FLEXIBILITY</b>		<b>Implementation Details</b>
Public School Choice	§20-2-2131	The district has a universal, streamlined process to manage school choice transfers. This process is outlined in our Administrative Placement Guidelines. Administrative Placements are based on school capacity. As long as space is available, families can request to attend another school.

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Graduation Requirements	160-4-2-.48	Continued implementation of the 24-unit graduation requirement. Continued implementation of 20 hours of community service in order to graduate. Monitor and track annual HOPE scholarship eligibility report (year over year comparison) Monitor and track annual CTAE pathway completion report (year over year comparison)
Awarding Credit	160-5-1-.15	Memorandum of Understanding with dual enrollment partners who do not participate in the state’s dual enrollment program (i.e. SCAD). Monitoring and tracking the number of students participating in dual credit programs with institutions that do not participate in the state’s dual enrollment program.
Instruction in social graces and etiquette may be waived	§20-2-187(b)	Customer service and hygiene are implemented in the cafeterias by school lunch personnel. Insufficient time exists to allow for etiquette and social graces training during the lunch period. Time is also allowed for student social interaction. Matters of social graces and etiquette should remain with the parents.
Educational Program for Gifted Students	160-4-2-.38	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Initiate a detailed evaluation of current programs to identify areas for improvement, ensuring that increased class sizes align with educational objectives.</li> <li>2. Ensure each classroom is equipped to handle larger class sizes, focusing on advanced technological tools and instructional resources tailored to the needs of gifted learners.</li> <li>3. Provide ongoing training opportunities for educators, emphasizing effective strategies for managing larger class sizes and implementing differentiated instruction.</li> <li>4. Foster peer interaction and active participation to enhance learning outcomes in larger class settings.</li> <li>5. Adapt curriculum to support larger class sizes while maintaining personalized and challenging student learning experiences.</li> <li>6. Waive the restriction on the count of gifted FTE segments per day for the cluster model, optimizing our cluster model and enhancing learning opportunities for all gifted students.</li> </ol>
Promotion & Retention	§20-2-283	Review of RTI/MTSS practices and data (school and district level) to ensure clarity across the district. Placement team meetings will include staff from the feeder school for students in grades 5 and 8 (middle school would be invited for grades 5 and high school would be invited for grades 8). Review and consistently implement promotion placement form/documentation for placement team meetings.

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Promotion & Retention	§20-2-284	Review of RTI/MTSS practices and data (school and district level) to ensure clarity across the district. Placement team meetings will include staff from the feeder school for students in grades 5 and 8 (middle school would be invited for grades 5 and high school would be invited for grades 8). Review and consistently implement promotion placement form/documentation for placement team meetings.
Organization of Schools; School Administrative Managers	§20-2-290	Provide support services or advisement to students or group of students as needed throughout the instructional day. Ensure schools implement RTI/MTSS procedures to ensure students grow and sustain grade-level performance.
Remedial education program	§20-2-154	REP Guidance document updated and reviewed for clarity across all schools. Professional learning with Lead REP teachers for all 6 – 12 programs. Monitor and report on progress.
Alternative education program	§20-2-154.1	Review of the curriculum and delivery method to ensure that teachers are maximizing their instructional day to meet the needs of the students. Monitor and report on progress.
Health & Physical Education Program	160-4-2-.12	Continue implementing of the FLASH curriculum in middle and high school.
School Councils	§20-2-85	Create local policy and regulation that supports school council or an advisory team that supports the success of the school and the students it serves.
School Councils	§20-2-86	Create local policy and regulation that supports school council or an advisory team that supports the success of the school and the students it serves.

**Human Resources Flexibility Rationale:**

The LEA highly regards the traditional preparation of school educators and intends to consider the additional value that could be added to classroom instruction and student support by expanding employment practices to consider second-career professionals and practitioners in specialty fields, such as technology, science and engineering, foreign language, and other student support service roles. Additionally, the LEA desires to ensure that all employees are compensated at competitive rates while valuing prior non-teaching responsibilities associated with an employee’s teaching or support assignment. The requested waivers will provide schools with maximum flexibility to support the teaching and learning process.

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<b>HUMAN RESOURCES FLEXIBILITY</b>		<b>Implementation Details</b>
Certification Requirements	§20-2-108	We will provide the Local BOE President guidance on the GaPSC certification requirements for the Superintendent and the allowable flexibility with the certification and compensation. If a Superintendent is hired without meeting the GaPSC certification requirements, HR will work collaboratively with the Superintendent and local school board president to ensure the Superintendent is working towards GaPSC certification.
Certification Requirements	§20-2-200	We will recruit and review all applications. We will screen applications based on the following: CHW-101 Academic Major CHW-102 Coursework CHW-103 GACE CHW 104 LEA PQ CHW 105 CTAE Credentials We will monitor applicants hired with a CHW code and ensure they are making progress towards obtaining GaPSC certification.
Professional Learning	§20-2-204	We will recruit, review, and hire paraprofessionals based on the needs of the schools. Paraprofessionals who do not meet the GaPSE requirements will have up to one year to obtain their GaPSC certification.
Class-size and Reporting requirements	§20-2-182	Based on SBR 160-5-1-.08, the local board has approved a maximum individual class size of plus four from the established numbers in Appendix A Regular and Vocational Programs. The LEA will monitor and report on student numbers. The LEA will continue to be creative in teacher recruitment and retention.
Salary Schedule Requirements	§20-2-212	The LEA will pay all current and newly hired secondary mathematics and special education teachers on the T-salary schedule. The LEA will give all CTAE Specialization teachers 1:1 experience for verifiable experience, up to Step 22. The LEA will offer competitive wages to our Paid Resident Teachers and Intern Teachers. We will monitor and report on recruitment and retention data of secondary mathematics

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		teachers, special education teachers, paid resident teachers, intern teachers, and CTAE specialization teachers.
Personnel Required	160-5-1-.22	The LEA will continue to monitor and report on the district's needs. Recruit where we fall short and work towards meeting SBR 160-5-1.22.
Professional Learning	§20-2-167	LEA strategic plan will drive budget decisions based on school and student needs. Monitoring and report will be conducted yearly.
School Day and Year for Students and Employees	§20-2-168(c)	The LEA Board of Education will approve the yearly instructional calendar. The administration will monitor and propose solutions that maximize student learning and minimize teacher burnout.
Instructional Extension	§20-2-184.1	The administration will address the academic needs of low-performing students with programs including, but not limited to, instructional opportunities for students beyond the regular school day, Saturday classes, intersession classes, summer school classes, online classes, and additional instructional programs during the regular school day. In the event all funds are not expended for additional days of instruction, the funds will be used to support whole child development.

<b>HUMAN RESOURCES FLEXIBILITY</b>		<b>Student Improvement Outcomes</b>
Graduation Requirements	160-4-2-.48	The district seeks to implement graduation requirements and standards that are equivalent to or higher than the state's graduation requirements. This will help ensure students are prepared for postsecondary to include, college/university, military, the workforce, or entrepreneurship. Additionally, the district's graduation requirements support CTAE pathway completion, acquisition of world language skills, and acquisition of the coursework needed to meet the rigor requirements for the HOPE scholarship. Finally, community service hours are required for graduation, which will help build positive community support and engagement.
Awarding Credit	160-5-1-.15	This waiver will allow the district to implement graduation requirements and standards that are equivalent to or higher than the state's graduation requirements. The district seeks to award credit for dual enrollment courses taken with colleges/universities that offer dual credit/dual enrollment programs for students but do not participate in the state's dual enrollment program. While students have to self-pay for courses provided by the institution, many of them have found this to help support their academic needs and postsecondary plans.

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Educational Program for Gifted Students	160-4-2-.38	This waiver has significantly enhanced our educational offerings, fostering larger class sizes conducive to collaboration, peer learning, and dynamic classroom experiences for our gifted students across our 56 schools with advanced learning programs. Additionally, we aim to waive the rule for the cluster model that restricts the count of gifted FTE segments per day. Currently capped at two, this restriction particularly impacts elementary students who spend the entire day with one teacher. By waiving this restriction, we ensure equitable access to gifted programming across all grade levels, fostering inclusivity in our learning environment.
Promotion & Retention	§20-2-283	Placement decisions are made on an individual basis by the school principal, with input from the Student Support Team. Written documentation of evidence that supports the individual promotion or retention decision is on file in the student's permanent record. Promotion and retention decisions are made based on a review of the overall academic achievement and attendance requirements by grade level. The school principal uses multiple measures for the final determination of student promotion or retention, such as performance on state-required assessments and/or local formative assessments in Reading and Math
Promotion & Retention	§20-2-284	Placement decisions are made on an individual basis by the school principal, with input from the Student Support Team. Written documentation of evidence that supports the individual promotion or retention decision is on file in the student's permanent record. Promotion and retention decisions are made based on a review of the overall academic achievement and attendance requirements by grade level. The school principal uses multiple measures for the final determination of student promotion or retention, such as performance on state-required assessments and/or local formative assessments in Reading and Math.
Organization of Schools; School Administrative Managers	§20-2-290	The waiver will allow flexibility from the required five hours of instructional time. Our middle schools could offer student support services and/or advisement during the day instead of outside of instructional day.
Remedial education program	§20-2-154	Flexibility is needed in program delivery/time requirements, models, and staffing. This will allow students to receive support based on need and ensure that all schools have equitable services.
Alternative education program	§20-2-154.1	This waiver will allow flexibility with alternative school sites' instructional design and delivery methods. This will also allow the district flexibility with attendance by enabling students to complete work and/or participate in class, including, but not limited to, online during the hours/days that they are not physically at school.

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Health & Physical Education Program	160-4-2-.12	This waiver will allow the district flexibility with teaching FLASH/sex education curriculum.
School Councils	§20-2-85	Waiver will allow the district to bring parents, teachers, school administrators, and the community together under less restrictive requirements.
School Councils	§20-2-86	Waiver will allow the district to bring parents, teachers, school administrators, and the community together under less restrictive requirements.
Certification Requirements	§20-2-108	Flexibility is requested to allow the LEA to hire the best candidate for superintendent that meets various needs, such as educational leadership, strategic planning, community engagement, financial management, personnel management, and accountability and compliance, ultimately leading to improved outcomes for students, staff, and the community.
Certification Requirements	§20-2-200	Flexibility is requested to allow the LEA to expand the pool of teachers by including the ones that have not met all GaPSC certificate requirements. This will allow the district to have the best-qualified teachers in the classroom, delivering teaching and learning to students and ensuring they are ready for the next grade level, college, career, or workforce.
Professional Learning	§20-2-204	Flexibility is requested to allow the LEA to expand the pool of paraprofessionals by including the ones that have not met all GaPSC requirements. They meet the skill and knowledge and have the potential to meet the minimum criteria established by GaPSC. The waiver will allow the district to hire and assist the paraprofessional in meeting the GaPSC requirements while having the best-qualified paraprofessionals in the classrooms supporting teachers.
Class-size and Reporting requirements	§20-2-182	Due to teacher shortage, flexibility is requested to allow the LEA to provide a certified teacher in front of all students. Without the waiver in place, an excessive amount of substitute teachers will be required along with prioritizing school rooms to cover core content areas; thus, impacting connection and elective classes. The waiver will allow the district to provide a highly qualified certificated teacher in front of students while allowing time to focus on recruitment and retention.
Salary Schedule Requirements	§20-2-212	Due to teacher shortage, flexibility is requested to allow the LEA the opportunity to attract and retain Secondary Mathematics teachers, Special Education Teachers, CTAE Instructors, and to offer innovative programs such as Paid Resident Teachers and Paid Internships. The waiver will allow the district to have the necessary personnel to support the needs of all students to ensure they are college, career, and workforce ready.

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Personnel Required	160-5-1-.22	Due to staff shortage, flexibility is requested in hiring and staffing schools. The waiver will allow the district to continue recruiting and selecting the best candidates for school positions.
Professional Learning	§20-2-167	Flexibility will provide the district the ability to leverage funds as needed without establishing a minimum spending amount. This waiver will allow flexibility in media services, fine arts, foreign language, technology specialist, and counselors.
School Day and Year for Students and Employees	§20-2-168(c)	Flexibility is requested to allow the LEA to be creative with its instructional calendar. This will enable the district to include additional staff planning, wellness, professional development, and e-learning days.
Instructional Extension	§20-2-184.1	Waiver is requested to support whole child development.

**Financial Flexibility Rationale:**

The state revenue source currently contributes a minimal percentage of the actual cost of operating schools and meeting the needs of today's students. The LEA will leverage flexibility to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the administration in supporting classroom instructional and whole-child development. The LEA requires the waiver to ensure an effective workforce is in place and to allow equitable distribution of resources and funds.

FINANCIAL FLEXIBILITY		Implementation Details
Direct Classroom Expenditure Control	§20-2-171	The LEA will monitor school and central support expenditures to ensure that the majority of operating expenditures are focused on academics and whole child development. This waiver will also allow the LEA to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the organizational structure. Board reports will be generated on instruction and student support services provided.
Categorical Allotment requirements	§20-2-167	The waiver will provide flexibility to align spending priorities with the district's strategic plan to improve student growth, achievement, and well-being. A workflow approval process is in place to track fund transfer requests, justification, and approvers.

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Categorical Allotment requirements	§20-2-183	The waiver will provide flexibility to align spending priorities with the district's strategic plan to improve student growth, achievement, and well-being. A workflow approval process is in place to track fund transfer requests, justification, and approvers.
Categorical Allotment requirements	§20-2-184	The waiver will provide flexibility to align spending priorities with the district's strategic plan to improve student growth, achievement, and well-being. A workflow approval process is in place to track fund transfer requests, justification, and approvers.
Categorical Allotment requirements	§20-2-185	The waiver will provide flexibility to align spending priorities with the district's strategic plan to improve student growth, achievement, and well-being. A workflow approval process is in place to track fund transfer requests, justification, and approvers.
Categorical Allotment requirements	§20-2-186	The waiver will provide flexibility to align spending priorities with the district's strategic plan to improve student growth, achievement, and well-being. A workflow approval process is in place to track fund transfer requests, justification, and approvers.

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**Acknowledgments**

As the authorized representative of Savannah-Chatham County, I hereby certify and provide legal assurance that Savannah-Chatham County understands that it is requesting increased flexibility from identified state laws, rules, and regulations in exchange for increased accountability and defined consequences. Savannah-Chatham County further understands that the purpose of seeking a waiver or variance from identified state laws, rules, and regulations is to increase student performance. I also certify that Savannah-Chatham County:

- Ensures that all information submitted to the Georgia Department of Education in connection with this strategic waiver application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge;
- Adopted a district strategic plan within the last five years, linked below, for improving the performance of its schools; and
- For each waiver or variance request included in Appendix A of the Strategic Waiver School System Contract, a waiver explanation is provided. Where there is not an explanation provided for a requested waiver or variance, I understand that the waiver or variance request will not be granted.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name) Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date