

### **Purpose**

Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, school districts can apply for flexibility from state law, rule, and policies through an Investing in Educational Excellence Partnership (IE<sup>2</sup>) contract between the Local Board of Education (LBOE) and the State Board of Education (SBOE).

The guidance and procedures in this document should be followed to ensure a district's application is correctly submitted and can be reviewed and finalized in a timely manner. This guidance has been adapted from the O.G.C.A. § 20-2-80 through 20-2-84.6 and State Board Rule 160-5-1-.33.

### **Application Window**

The process of preparing and finalizing an IE<sup>2</sup> contract once you notify the GaDOE will likely take 5-6 months, so districts should plan accordingly. This means that to be able to budget and sign contracts for an upcoming fiscal and school year, a district must have their contract approved by the SBOE no later than the regularly scheduled April SBOE meeting preceding the fiscal and school year in which the five-year contract will begin.

- Accordingly, a district must submit a letter of intent to the GaDOE no later than January 1 of the year prior to the intended effective date of the contract to the GaDOE. The letter of intent must be accompanied by a LBOE resolution supporting the district's intent to pursue such contract;
- The GaDOE strongly recommends that districts make every attempt to start the formal application process before the end of the September preceding the specific fiscal and school year in which they want the five-year contract to begin.

### **Initial Notification**

Districts interested in applying for an IE<sup>2</sup> contract must submit a letter of intent to the State Superintendent of Schools to initiate the formal application process. The formal application process does not begin until the district's letter of intent is received by the GaDOE. Please send the letter of intent to the following two people:

Brad Bryant, State Superintendent of Schools  
Georgia Department of Education  
2066 Twin Towers East  
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive  
Atlanta, GA 30334

Please cc:

Clara J. Keith, Deputy Superintendent  
Policy and External Affairs  
Georgia Department of Education  
2062 Twin Towers East  
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive  
Atlanta, GA 30334

### **Initial IE2 Meeting**

After the local letter of intent is received by the GaDOE, an initial meeting will be scheduled between the district and the GaDOE.

### **LBOE Resolution and IE2 Timeline**

After the initial IE2 meeting, the district must send a LBOE resolution supporting the IE2 contract and the district's anticipated timeline to the GaDOE. Please see the district example (Appendix A -- Forsyth County's timeline). The timeline should span the time period from local planning through SBOE approval and provide the following:

- Date(s) for the public announcement regarding the district's intention to seek an IE<sup>2</sup> Contract;
  - Date(s) window for Local/State negotiations related to the accountability measures and targets. Please provide at least a four week window;
  - Date(s) for local public hearing to take comment on the district's proposed plan;
  - Date(s) for anticipated local plan submission to GaDOE;
  - Date for SBOE "Item for Information" which occurs the month before SBOE Initiation;
  - Date for intended SBOE Initiation, which will occur the month following the SBOE Item for Information, and
  - SBOE Approval which will follow the month after initiation.
- For a list of SBOE meeting dates, download the SBOE Calendar at

[http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/pea\\_board.aspx](http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/pea_board.aspx)

Please send the LBOE resolution, and district time line to:

Clara J. Keith, Deputy Superintendent  
Policy and External Affairs  
Georgia Department of Education  
2062 Twin Towers East  
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive  
Atlanta, GA 30334

### **Communications**

From local notification through SBOE adoption, communication may be the most critical piece of the IE<sup>2</sup> process. The district and the state must ensure that communications and all relevant documents are sent and received in a timely fashion.

- E-mail exchanges between the district and the state should include e-receipts and immediately be followed up with confirmation phone calls.
- Documents sent through the mail or other courier service should be sent early enough to arrive before any deadline set by the Georgia Department of Education. Tracking numbers should be shared with the intended recipient.

Georgia Department of Education  
Guidance on Investing in Educational Excellence Partnership (IE<sup>2</sup>) Contracts - v.1.2

All e-mails to the state regarding a district's IE<sup>2</sup> proposal should include the following people and positions.

Clara Keith, Deputy Superintendent  
GaDOE Policy and External Affairs  
[ckeith@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ckeith@doe.k12.ga.us)

Jennifer Hackemeyer  
General Counsel  
[jhackeme@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:jhackeme@doe.k12.ga.us)

Gregg Stevens  
Assistant General Counsel  
[gstevens@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:gstevens@doe.k12.ga.us)

Kathleen Mathers, Executive Director  
Governor's Office of Student Achievement  
[Kmathers@gov.state.ga.us](mailto:Kmathers@gov.state.ga.us)

Eric Wearne Ph.D.  
Deputy Director  
Governor's Office of Student Achievement  
[ewearne@gov.state.ga.us](mailto:ewearne@gov.state.ga.us)

### **Notification and Public Hearing Requirements**

State law requires an *opportunity for full discussion and public input* for a district plan before it is submitted to the State Board of Education. In order to provide for adequate public input and ensure public transparency a district should:

- Publicly announce its intention at a regularly scheduled LBOE meeting to submit an IE<sup>2</sup> plan and provide an overview of what flexibility will be sought. This should occur before the district begins negotiating details with the state, and
- Hold a public hearing on the district's proposed plan before local-state negotiations end to share and gather input on the district's plan prior to LBOE approval.

A district might also consider holding meetings with the various stakeholder groups to share and gather input.

### **District Plan Availability**

Districts should ensure their proposed plans are easily accessible to the general public by publishing the plans on the district's website prior to public hearings in an easy to find location. Printed copies should be made available for those stakeholders who might not have access to the Internet.

### **Performance Measures and Targets**

For each school participating in the flexibility plan, a district's plan must include accountability measures and targets (both annual and five-year) for all participating schools.

A district's IE<sup>2</sup> performance measures and targets must exceed the current state and federal accountability measures that apply to all schools in the state per the Single Statewide Accountability System (SSAS) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

At the same time, a district's IE<sup>2</sup> performance measures and targets must also be proportional to the flexibility the district is requesting. Please keep in mind that proportionality is not necessarily based on a one to one relationship. The local district's initial set of measures will serve as a starting place for negotiations with GaDOE to determine proportionality.

The district must submit its draft proposed measures and targets along with its draft strategic plan to GaDOE. The proposed measures and targets will then be reviewed by GaDOE and GOSA, after which the district should plan on attending at least one face-to-face meeting with GaDOE and GOSA to discuss the measures and targets in greater detail.

Once the measures and targets have been tentatively agreed upon, the GaDOE and GOSA will finalize all school data. The finalized data for schools included a district's IE<sup>2</sup> contract which will then be provided to the school district. The district will then need to seek LBOE approval before final submission to GaDOE and SBOE.

- Baseline performance starting points for all subgroups and included subjects must be based on Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) assessment data where available.
- Baseline targets must be based on three-year averages for subgroup performance in a subject wherever three years of GPS results are available. For example, Reading/ELA Criterion Reference Tests (CRCT) must include the three most current years of GPS results in grades 3-8 and 11 since the GPS has been in place for three years or more.
- Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) results can be used when there are no GPS results available for a given grade and subject. For example, no GPS results for the Math GHSGT until 2010-2011.
- Annual performance targets will be established through district-state negotiations.
- Fifth-year goals will be established through district-state negotiations.

**Strategic Plan**

Per state law, each district applying must submit its strategic plan. The draft strategic plan must be submitted to GaDOE as part of the district's SBOE Item for Information requirement. The strategic plan must include the following information at a minimum.

- The school year the district expects the contract to begin.
- The list of state statutes and SBOE Rules the district is seeking to waive in its IE<sup>2</sup> contract.
  - Be prepared to explain the reasons the district needs to waive each statute and what the district hopes to accomplish with each when you present to the SBOE.
- A list of the schools included in the district's IE<sup>2</sup> plan;
  - Charter schools cannot be included in an IE<sup>2</sup> contract.
- A list of the schools not included in the district's IE<sup>2</sup> plan;
  - Charter schools cannot be included in an IE<sup>2</sup> contract.
- The district's proposed accountability measures that it believes are proportional to the flexibility being requested. Please keep in mind that proportionality is not necessarily based on a one to one relationship. The local district's initial set of measures will serve as a starting place for negotiations with GaDOE to determine proportionality.
  - Baseline data will be calculated by the GaDOE in partnership with GOSA
- Copies of the public hearing notices that the district published as required in state law.

The final LBOE approved strategic plan must accompany the district's formal submission.

**Contract Template**

- The GaDOE requests that districts do not alter the language of the IE<sup>2</sup> contract template.

**District Submission Checklist for the SBOE Item for Information**

The local district must submit the following documents to the GaDOE at least 14 calendar days prior to the scheduled SBOE meeting date at which the Item for Information will be presented.

- One hard-copy of
  - The district's draft strategic plan, and
  - A brief summary that explains the district's public hearing efforts to date.

**District Submission Checklist for the SBOE Action Item**

Before the district's IE<sup>2</sup> contract can be placed on the SBOE agenda for consideration, the GaDOE must receive all of the following documents from the LBOE at least 21 calendar days prior to the anticipated SBOE approval meeting date. Failure to meet the deadline will result in the item being automatically rescheduled to the next regularly scheduled SBOE meeting – usually second Thursday of the next calendar month.

- One hard-copy of the approved plan in its entirety; the hard copy must include:
  - The LBOE signed contract;
  - The LBOE approved strategic plan;
  - The LBOE approved individual school plans;
  - The LBOE approved performance data and targets for each school;
  - A list of the schools included in the district's IE<sup>2</sup> plan;
  - A list of the schools not included in the district's IE<sup>2</sup> plan, and
  - A summary of the local school district's public hearing efforts to date.

**AND**

- On a CD-ROM and/or USB Thumb Drive
  - LBOE approved strategic plan  
ACROBAT (PDF) and WORD versions
  - LBOE school plans  
ACROBAT (PDF) and WORD versions
  - LBOE approved school performance data for all participating schools  
ACROBAT (PDF) and EXCEL versions
  - List of the schools included in the district's IE<sup>2</sup> plan, and  
ACROBAT (PDF) and EXCEL versions
  - List of the schools not included in the district's IE<sup>2</sup> plan  
ACROBAT (PDF) and EXCEL version

### **District Presentation to the SBOE**

The SBOE will expect a 10-15 minute presentation during its Committee of the Whole. The Committee of the Whole is generally held the Wednesday prior to the second Thursday of each month. A district's presentation should provide the SBOE with the following at a minimum:

- an explanation of what laws and rules the district is waiving (be prepared to explain what you intend to do with the flexibility);
- an explanation regarding the district's public input efforts to date, and
- an explanation regarding the performance measures and targets based on actual school level examples and data from the proposed plan.

Previous district IE<sup>2</sup> presentations are available to download at the following URL:  
[http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/pea\\_policy.aspx?PageReq=IE2](http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/pea_policy.aspx?PageReq=IE2)

### **Annual Performance Evaluations**

- The Governor's Office of Student Achievement is responsible for all performance evaluations for those schools participating in IE<sup>2</sup> Partnership contracts. Their annual evaluations and recommendations will be shared with the SBOE.