



Dear District 3 Family:

In order to achieve our goal of becoming a ***District of Choice***, we must best match the continuously changing educational needs of our students with educational spaces that foster a safe, positive and functional learning environment, now as well as in the future.

After an intense and thorough **Educational Space Review**, it was determined that our four elementary schools, one high school and one technology center are vibrant learning environments that can be easily adapted to accommodate the progressive future strategies the district is putting into place. Our two middle schools, however, are not up to current standards and do not serve the needs of the existing programs. They are unable to support 21st century learning environments.

Both middle schools are former high schools that were built in 1954 and are currently two of the oldest middle school facilities in the county. By today's standards, they do not pass guidelines. The buildings are non-ADA compliant, provide inadequate learning environments, and have increasing infrastructure issues. It is evident that our middle schools are our top priority. Renovating both existing schools would cost a projected \$38-40 million: \$16-17 million for Cowpens Middle School and \$22-23 million for Middle School of Pacolet. Building a brand new 21st century middle school would cost approximately the same amount as it would to completely renovate both current middle schools.

Tonight (October 18, 2018), I asked our Board to approve- ***In Concept Only*** -to consolidate Cowpens Middle School and Middle School of Pacolet into one new state-of-the-art facility ***centrally located*** within our district, plus additional renovation and revitalization projects at all elementary schools and our high school. Approval of just the ***Concept*** will allow the district to seek additional community input at town hall meetings before approving a future building plan. A new school means economic development. It will draw more families into our district and become a massive incentive for students and teachers, both new and veteran.

Our purpose is ***Every Student Future Ready. Prepared For College, Career and Personal Success***; therefore, we feel it is necessary to create and maintain ***Future Ready Schools***.

In closing, I would like to personally invite each of you to attend one of the following scheduled town hall meetings to discuss this ***Concept*** in detail.

- October 29- 6:30 pm at Middle School of Pacolet
- October 30- 6:30 pm at Cowpens Middle School
- November 1- 6:30 pm at District Three Community Auditorium

All In,

Kenny Blackwood