



**Dr. Brian Otott
Superintendent**

March 20, 2018

PRESS RELEASE

PCSD College and Career Academy Awarded \$3.15 Million Grant

The Technical College System of Georgia has awarded the Paulding County School District \$3.15 million to help construct a new College and Career Academy that will develop job skills in students to help meet the future needs of employers in Paulding County. On March 5, 2018, Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle presented a check to Paulding County School District officials, who had partnered with Chattahoochee Technical College in applying for the grant. The money will be used to renovate the centrally located New Hope Education Center into the Paulding College and Career Academy.



Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle presents a \$3.15 million check to the Paulding County School District on March 5, 2018. From left are: PCSD CTAE Director Marores D. Perry, Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle, PCSD Superintendent Dr. Brian Otott, and state Rep. Paulette Rakestraw, R-Hiram.

“This is a tremendous day for Paulding County students,” said Superintendent Brian Otott. “We are very thankful to the state for recognizing our vision and helping to fund what will be a first-class, 21st Century College and Career Academy. This facility will provide new opportunities for many Paulding students and help produce a workforce that can better serve our county and region.”

Currently, 86 percent of Paulding County residents who are employed commute out of the county to work, while 60 percent of those who work in Paulding do not reside in the county. The Paulding County College and Career Academy will feature programs specifically tailored to develop work skills needed by employers in Paulding County.

The Paulding County College and Career Academy (PCCA) will open for the 2019-2020 school year with four career clusters including: Patient Care Tech; Advanced Manufacturing; Energy; and Cybersecurity programs. Meanwhile, the School District will work with local business and industry, post-secondary schools, the Paulding County Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development for Paulding County, students and other stakeholders to identify new programs for the PCCA to meet the needs of a growing community.

“The Paulding College and Career Academy will ensure that students are given the opportunity to develop the skills essential to meeting the needs of business and industry in our community, as well as prepare them for education opportunities and careers they will begin after graduation,” said Marores D. Perry, CTAE Director for the Paulding County School District. “PCCA will have goals in place to address increasing high school graduation rates and closing the skills gaps that have been identified through various needs assessments. I am really excited about the future of the

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Academy and the variety of options that will be available to students that would not have been available at their home high schools.”

PCCA’s aim will be to graduate students with more than a high school diploma. Students will graduate with credentials to ensure success, including: college credit (core, CTAE and elective credit); technical college certificates; and hands-on work experience provided through internships and apprenticeships. The Academy’s mission will be to **Engage** the community, to **Inspire** greatness in students, and **Prepare** them for the future needs of the workforce.

The Paulding County School District is continually looking for ways to increase graduation rates. Making the courses more relevant to a student’s future career plans can help them understand the need to finish their high school education and even move on to post-secondary opportunities. For the Class of 2015, the latest year for which data is available, only 48 percent of Paulding County students went on to post-secondary institutions. By 2020, it is projected that more than 60 percent of jobs in Georgia will require some form of degree: Technical Certificate; Associates Degree, Bachelor’s Degree, etc. There is a significant gap between the jobs available and the number of students who are obtaining the appropriate credentials. The PCCA will give students the skills and exposure to college courses that they need to have the confidence and ability to fill these positions.

“Paulding County has embraced the proven success of our College and Career Academies, and I am excited that even more students will have the chance to pursue a new world of opportunities in the classroom and in the workplace,” said Lt. Gov. Cagle. “It is more important than ever that all of Georgia’s students learn the valuable skills that will make them successful, igniting economic growth at the local level. I am committed to bringing a College and Career Academy to every student across our state by 2020, so that every community has the same opportunity to grow a workforce that is second to none.”



A rendering of what the former New Hope Education Center will look like when it is renovated into the centrally located Paulding College and Career Academy. The \$3.15 million grant from the state will be used for this renovation.

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