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**JIMMY ATKINS**  
 President

**DANA T. BEDDEN, Ed.D.**  
 Superintendent

**JOE L. SCOTT**  
 Vice-President

*“Accepting the Challenge to Change to Build Something Better”*

Dear Richmond County Staff, Students, Parents, and Community,

Providing high quality, effective instruction for all students in Richmond County Schools will continue to be a major system priority and focus across our district. This priority is reflective of the mission of the Richmond County School System which is to educate all students to become lifelong learners and productive citizens. Clearly stated, our vision is to have a system full of learners who will lead in tomorrow’s society.

Our commitment to providing a high quality and effective school system is becoming evident through our new initiatives being implemented. We are celebrating successes of becoming a more effective system with our 30% increase in the middle schools making adequate yearly progress (AYP) and the 10% increase in our high schools making AYP. In addition, we had the following test results for the percentage passing the Georgia High School Graduation test:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Percent First Time Takers Passing</u>
Writing	88%
ELA	88%
Mathematics	90%
Science	80%
Social Studies	80%

Building a high performing school system is a challenging and rewarding task. For us, this task will involve effectively implementing the six high impact practices of Data-Driven Decision Making, Pyramid of Interventions, Professional Learning, School Leadership Teams, Planning with Action and Measureable Goals, and Standards Based Classrooms. On the support side, we will improve and focus towards directing staffing resources and funding to where they are most needed.

Some would say the 2007-2008 school year was marked with change. I would agree and say that we are changing to redefine our commitment to our *mission and vision* (the purpose of the organization). It is my hope that these **changes will be filled with the creativity and discovery needed to overcome obstacles and accomplish breakthroughs** to build a better system.

All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter another.

~Anatole France

Sincerely,

Dr. Dana T. Bedden  
 Superintendent of Schools