Local Government & School Collaboration Study
The Carl Vinson Institute of Government has partnered with several Archway communities including Candler, to research collaborative opportunities between local boards of education and city or county governments. Case studies were initiated in four areas where schools and local governments have successfully collaborated. The areas include siting new schools and land use planning, juvenile justice and truancy panels, promoting fire service at high schools and purchasing. Within each area, the report highlights two governments that are making inroads to solving a public policy problem or reaching a goal. The cases studies describe the problem, how local government and schools are working together, and lessons learned for other communities considering adopting these programs.

In 2014, a new Pre-K through eighth grade school complex opened in Candler County. The relocation of students to this facility left two existing school sites vacant. The planning process for relocation has been underway since 2010, but details were not formalized until the schools were actually vacated. Similar situations exist in municipalities throughout Georgia, often without much, if any, communication between parties. The Carl Vinson Institute seeks to identify situations where planning and dialogue took place in advance and to catalogue best practices. Archway Professional Betsy McGriff interviewed Metter Mayor Billy Trapnell, Metter City Manager Joseph Mosely, Candler County School Superintendent Dr. Tom Bigwood, and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Bubba Longgrear to get their feedback on the process.
Youth Leadership Candler Session 2
The second session of Youth Leadership Candler was held on November 17. In an effort to expose participants to varied locations throughout their community and to have them think through what those places “say”, Archway Professional Betsy McGriff led the students in conducting a visual asset inventory. Students were asked to use their smartphones to capture photographs of community assets, community weaknesses, and community opportunities. They then posted the photos to social media dedicated to the Youth Leadership Program and participated in a debrief session with their peers. The activity was eye-opening for the students and program leaders alike. A follow-up assignment stemming from this session will require the students to create a presentation to city and county leadership on their findings and ideas.

Youth Leadership Candler Participant Morgan Clifton thinks that readily available waste bins are an asset to her community.

Youth Leadership Candler participants saw the “dark side of the City” on their recent Visual Asset Inventory.

Youth Leadership Candler Participant Hagan Spears envisions a dance studio with performance space on the site of a former movie theater that has long been used for storage.