SS8CG5 The student will analyze the role of local governments in the state of Georgia.

1. Explain the origins, functions, purposes, and differences of county and city governments in Georgia.

County Government

• Counties are subdivisions of the state set up to carry out certain governmental functions

• The State Constitution mandates that Counties are to be uniform in organization and have specific powers.

• Most counties are run by a board of commissioners.

• A County administrator is chosen by the Board to carry out day to day functions.

• The County government oversees the running and upkeep of the county but may work in conjunction with the city government in certain areas.

• Based of the population of the county, there are different #s of County officials but most have clerks, attorneys, fire chiefs, inspectors, etc.

• County governments usually establish county policies, county tax rate, set the budget, adopt laws , and provide services to the county.

City Government

• A City with its own government is called a municipality.

• A city exists as a political unit by receiving a charter from the state legislature.

To get a charter, it must meet 3 requirements

– Have at least 200 residents

– Be located at least 3 miles from another town

– Have 60% of its land divided into tracts being used for business purposes

• It can only do what the charter authorizes

• Examples of services: Police Dept., Maintain streets, license businesses, provide water and sewage

• Some cities have their own school system

b. Compare and contrast the weak mayor-council, the strong mayor-council, and the council-manager forms of city government.

Forms of City Gov’t

* Mayor Council Form--an elected city council made up of a mayor and other members run the affairs of the city. In the Mayor council system you have to go through a political process to get rid of them if you do not like the job being done Weak Mayor Council – In this type, the mayor is a figurehead which is there to preside over the meetings but most of the power to pass legislation in the hands of the council members
* Strong Mayor Council – In this type, the mayor is a major figure with power to promote legislation, prepares budgets and control the council
* Council Manager Form – an elected body HIRES a person to MANAGE the laws passed by the city council and run day to day affairs. There may or may not be a mayor in this system. In the Council manager system the person can be fired as well hired. This can be both a pro and a con depending on the situation.

SS8CG5c.Describe the function of special purpose governments

Special Purpose Districts

• Created for certain or specific reasons or to accomplish certain tasks

• Most govern themselves.

• A School system is a good example. State Law requires children to attend school but most of the day to day organization and administering of policy is done by the local school board and its leaders.

• MARTA transportation is another example of a special district.