



Charter System Application

DISTRICT NAME

Candler County School District

DISTRICT ADDRESS

210 South College Street
Metter, GA 30439

Dr. John D. Barge
State School Superintendent
JULY 2014



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Introduction

The Charter Schools Act of 1998 established a flexibility option for Georgia school districts that wish to become a Charter System. A Charter System is a local school district that operates under the terms of a charter contract between the State Board of Education and the local Board of Education. The system receives flexibility in the form of waivers of certain state laws, rules and guidelines in exchange for greater accountability for increased student performance and an emphasis on school-based leadership and decisionmaking.

Your Charter System Application is a petition to the Georgia State Board of Education asking it to create or renew your charter system. The evaluation of your Application will be led by the Charter Schools Division of the Georgia Department of Education, in partnership with others within the Department (including the Policy Division and the Accountability Division) and with the independent Charter Advisory Committee (CAC) that was also established by the Charter Schools Act.

The evaluation of your Application will focus on whether implementing the charter system proposed in your Application will lead to the improved academic performance you are promising in exchange for freedom from much of Georgia's education law, rules and guidelines. It will also determine whether the proposed charter system would comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures (including the Charter Schools Act of 1998, as amended [O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-2060 through 20-2-2071], State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.04 et. seq., and Department of Education Guidelines accompanying the Charter School Rules); whether your proposed academic plans are viable; and whether the charter system is in the public interest.

Please note that submitting a Charter System Application does not guarantee that a charter will be granted. It does guarantee, however, that the Georgia Department of Education will work closely with you to improve your chances of State Board of Education approval of your charter system contract.

DEADLINE AND SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Your Charter System Application must be approved by your local Board of Education in accordance with the rules and regulations of your local board. After local submission, review and approval, charter system applications must be received at the address below by November 1 of the year prior to the start of the July-June fiscal year in which the charter system contract would go into effect. Early submissions are strongly encouraged.

Georgia Department of Education
Charter Schools Division
2053 Twin Towers East
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive, SE
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

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July 2014 • Page 1 of 11



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APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECKLIST

Your Charter System Application Package must comply with the following submission procedures.

- An Application Package includes an original and two copies of the following items:
 - SYSTEM APPLICATION COVER SHEET** (Use the form on page 3; the form may not be altered in any way).
 - CHARTER SYSTEM APPLICATION** (Your answers to the questions posed on pages 4-7).
 - The Charter System Application is limited to 50 double-spaced pages using an 11-point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins with a header showing the school system's name and a footer showing consecutive page numbers. Please note the suggested page limits provided within each section.
 - The original must be signed in blue ink. Stamped signatures will not be accepted.
 - ASSURANCES FORM AND SIGNATURE SHEET** (Use the Assurances Form and Signature Sheet below on pages 8-10; the Form and the Sheet may not be altered in any way).
 - The original must be signed in blue ink; stamped signatures will not be accepted.
 - EXHIBITS** (See list of required Exhibits below on page 11).
 - Required Exhibits should be as limited in size as possible (no more than 5 pages per Exhibit). The only exceptions to this size limitation for Exhibits are your most recent annual audit, accreditation report, and strategic plan (to which you will provide online links).
 - All Exhibits must be tabbed.
- Your Application Package must be bound by a binder clip; do not enclose your Application Package in a notebook, binder, or folder.
- Your Application Package must also include a single CD or USB drive that includes a:
 - Microsoft Word version of your Charter System Application Cover Sheet
 - Microsoft Word version of your Charter System Application
 - PDF Version of your signed Assurances Form
 - Microsoft Word version of your Exhibits (except for your annual audit, accreditation report, and strategic plan)
 - PDF version of your most recent annual audit
 - PDF version of your most recent accreditation report
 - PDF version of your most recent strategic plan

Faxed or emailed copies will not be accepted. Only complete petitions that comply with these guidelines will be evaluated. Applications will not be returned; please keep a copy for your records.



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CHARTER SYSTEM APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Please enter the requested information in the gray boxes following each question. Thank you!

Proposed Charter System Information			
1. Full Name of Proposed Charter System Candler county School District			
2. Please indicate whether this is a: New Petition <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or a Renewal Petition	3. How many schools in total are you proposing to include in your charter system? 4		
4. How many of each of the following schools are you proposing to include in your charter system? <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">Primary School(s) 1</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Middle School(s) 1</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">Elementary School(s) 1</div> <div style="text-align: center;">High school(s) 1</div> </div>			
5. On July 1 of what year do you want your charter contract to be effective? 2015			
6. How many years are you proposing for the term of your charter contract? (Note that an initial charter cannot exceed five years) 5			
7. Charter System Street Address 210 South College St.	8. City Metter	9. State GA	10. Zip 30439
11. Contact Person Tom Bigwood		12. Title Superintendent	
13. Contact Street Address 210 South College St	14. City Metter	15. State GA	16. Zip 30439
17. Contact's telephone number 912-690-0771	18. Contact's fax number 912-685-3755	19. Contact's E-mail Address tbigwood@metter.org	



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CHARTER SYSTEM APPLICATION

The Charter System Application includes 17 questions grouped into three sections. The first section is "The Case", where you present your school system's need for a charter. The second section focuses on your "Performance Expectations", and the third section focuses on your "Local School Governance" plan.

THE CASE

Please fill out the Excel versions of the following chart found at <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/Charter-Petition-Application.aspx>

1. What challenges is your school district facing?

See the Case attachment

- Provide a brief description of the specific issues that, if resolved, would allow you to consider your school district a complete success.
2. What is the rank order priority of these challenges (from most to least important)?
 3. Which of these challenges will your school district be able to address by becoming a charter system?
 4. What specific actions will your district take to address each of these challenges (listed in #3 above) during its five-year charter term?
 5. Provide a clear explanation of how each of these specific actions (listed in #4 above) will lead to the specific challenge being addressed.
 6. Although you will be granted a broad flexibility waiver if you are granted a charter, please list the specific Georgia law or State Board rule that must be waived to allow your district to implement each specific action (listed in #4 above).
 - Please also list the waivers you have used during the past five years (including those granted to the entire state, e.g. class size) and what goals they helped you accomplish during those five years?
 7. Indicate the timeline for implementation of each specific action (listed in #4 above).
 8. Indicate which of these specific actions (listed in #4 above) represents an innovation for your school district. Changing Graduation Requirement, hiring non Hi Q, Internships

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS



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9. What are your school system's specific student performance expectations for your five-year charter term?
- As background for your answer to this question, please see the CCRPI and Beating the Odds expectations listed below. These expectations will be included in your charter contract.
 - In your answer to this question you will list the specific areas you will target to achieve your CCRPI and Beating the Odds expectations.
 - For example, you may choose to target Math or ELA to raise your overall CCRPI score – because your current Math or ELA scores are dragging your CCRPI score down.
 - As a way to be competitive on Beating the Odds, you may also choose to focus on closing the gap in your system between educationally advantaged and educationally disadvantaged students – or you may choose to ensure gifted students are well-served, since average-performing gifted students will lower your Beating the Odds ranking compared to schools and districts with high-performing gifted students.

Goal 1: During each year of its first five-year charter term, the Charter System shall "beat the odds" as determined by a formula measuring expected student growth.

- A. The Beating the Odds analysis is a cross-sectional, fixed effects regression model that uses the following factors from the CCRPI school-level dataset, GaDOE student record file, and GaDOE CPI data.
- a. Student-based Factors:
 - African American
 - % Hispanic
 - % White
 - % Other
 - % Free/Reduced Lunch
 - % Students with Disabilities
 - % English Learners
 - % Gifted
 - b. School-based Factors:
 - for the District School Size (FTE)
 - Student/Teacher Ratio
 - School Configuration/CCRPI Score Type (i.e. Elementary, Middle, High)
 - Rural Locale Type (i.e. City, Town, Rural)
 - District Performance (Fixed Effect)



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Renewal decisions for new charter systems first converting in 2014 or later will be based in part on whether the system "beat the odds" in each of the first four years of its first charter term (Years 1-4).

Goal 2: During each year of its first five-year charter term, each System Charter School shall "beat the odds" as determined by a formula measuring expected student growth. If each System Charter School fails to beat the odds in Year 1 of the charter, the Charter System shall decrease the number of System Charter Schools not beating the odds during Years 2 and 3 at a rate so that all System Charter Schools will beat the odds in Year 4.

Renewal decisions for new charter systems first converting in 2014 or later will be based in part on whether each System Charter School "beat the odds" in each of the first four years of its first charter term (Years 1-4).

Goal 3: The Charter System will demonstrate proficiency and/or improvement on the CCRPI.

- A. **Measure 1:** For new Charter Systems first converting in 2015 or later, using Year 1 of the charter term to establish a CCRPI baseline, the Charter System's CCRPI score shall be equal to or better than the State in Year 2, and better than the State in Years 3-5 of the charter contract.
- B. **Measure 2:** If the Charter System's first-year CCRPI score is lower than the State, the Charter System shall have until the end of Year 2 of the charter term to close the gap between the Charter System and the State.
- C. **Measure 3:** In Years 3-5 of the charter term, the Charter System's CCRPI score shall be better than the State.

Renewal decisions for new Charter Systems first converting in 2015 or later will be based in part on whether the Charter System's CCRPI score was equal to or better than the State in Year 2, and better than the State Years 3-4 of the charter contract.

Additional Charter Goals:

Goal 4: 85% of students in grade 1-8 will increase individual Lexile levels from their current status by at least 10% as measured by the STAR Assessment which will be administered in August, December, and March to all students. 9th and 11th grade students will meet or exceed state average on 9th and 11th grade English EOCT.

Goal 5: 100% of students in the Candler County School District grades 3-12 will have access to some facet of blended learning (flipped classroom, station rotation, on-line learning, etc)



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LOCAL SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

A key characteristic of charter systems is their distributed leadership decision-making structure. Within such a structure, a charter system must implement school level governance and grant decision-making authority in personnel decisions, financial decisions, curriculum and instruction, resource allocation, establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations per O.C.G.A. 20-2-2063(d).

Explain how your system will transition from Local School Advisory Councils to effective and fully functioning decision-making Local School Governance Teams (LSGTs).

We (Central Office Staff) have presented the Charter System plan to our current school councils. We summarized the challenges and goals in the Charter application. We also highlighted the Performance Expectations section as well as the details associated with Local School Governance Teams. Differences were discussed between current school councils and the LSGTs. Members were encouraged to attend the orientation for SGTs and to seek membership on the SGT. See #13 below for more details.

10. Provide a timeline that shows all the major steps in this transition, including the timing of the formation of LSGTs, the training of principals and LSGTs, and anything you deem important in making this critical transition for decentralized/distributed decisionmaking.

Much effort has taken place to involve the community and all stakeholders in the Charter Application process:

Public Charter System School- Candler County

In March 2014 the Candler County Board of Education approved a recommendation to seek Charter School System Status. A state mandate says that all systems must choose between one of the following options by June 30, 2015: 1) Status Quo, 2) IE2 (Excellence in Education) or 3) Charter System Status. The Charter System choice provides broad based flexibility in how the instruction is designed and delivered to our students. The Board of Education feels that this choice will lead to more engaging and innovative learning opportunities for our students.

Recent stakeholder surveys and interviews revealed a desire to be more innovative in 1) Fine arts, 2) Career Technology Agriculture education (CTAE), as well as 3) Acceleration opportunities for our students.

The Candler County Board of Education will seek additional input from community members, parents, other school systems, students and, of course, our astute teachers and administrators regarding innovations that would help our students achieve and excel in the workplace as well as in post-secondary training. The investigation of the Charter School System has been an ongoing process with the board members and staff over the past 18 months.



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The anticipated date to deliver the charter application to the state is late October 2014.

- May/Sept. 2014 - Continue to seek input from school staff
- Aug./Sept. - Two public hearings.
- June/Aug. - Community group (Archway) investigate other school systems' charters and discuss our prior identified needs with Innovation elsewhere.
- Aug./Sept. - Begin to formulate draft
- Early October - School faculties and community review application draft
- October. - Board meeting action item on Approving Application for Charter System Status
- Oct. - Submission to State DOE

To provide feedback or discuss this topic further please contact Tom Bigwood at 912-685-5713

Ext 0561 or email tbigwood@metter.org.

The Process of Applying for Charter System Status

1. October 2012 - Board of Education met to determine greatest strengths and gaps in program needs. (3 hour workshop).
2. Fall/Winter 2102/13- Meetings with faculties in a workshop setting to determine greatest strengths and program needs
3. Spring 2013 - Meetings with parents at each school to determine strengths and gaps in program offerings
4. Spring 2013 - Meeting with student groups at each school to determine strengths and gaps in program offerings

Unanimous outcome with all constituent groups was to build upon program offerings in Fine Arts and CTAE, as well as to accommodate students who are able to accelerate with course program offerings.

5. October 2013 - Board workshop (3)

Innovation and Charter System compatibility

6. Jan. 2014 - Howard Hendley presented to board and school and district leadership teams



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7. February 2014 - Board members, all principals, and district level leaders went to Morgan County to learn about the Charter System process, practices and programs
8. February 2014 - All assistant principals and Asst. Supt. Dr. Longgear went to Warren County to learn about Charter System process
9. February 2014 - We discussed the decision to go charter system with school faculties
10. March 2014 - Presented to Archway Executive committee
11. April 15, 2014 - Board meeting- Louis Erste- attended our workshop to lead us through the scenarios that help us develop the rationale for our Charter. He provided details on pieces needed in the application
12. April 2014 - presented to the Candler Chamber of Commerce
13. April 2014- presented Powerpoint to the MES and MMS faculty
14. May 2014- Met with MES School Council
15. May 12, 2014- Leadership meeting in Candler- Sherri Sherman attends our meeting to establish the process and timeline for completion of our application.
16. June 4, 2014-Attended a Charter System Sponsored Foundation Meeting in Dublin GA. The focus was on innovation and governance. The meeting provided numerous ideas on innovation (virtual school, flexible curriculum, individual course design, etc.) and clarity on how governance can be managed. Attended by Rhonda Hendrix, BOE Vice-Chair; John Jordan, High School Principal; Ralph Carlyle, Middle School Principal; Lesa Brown, Elementary School Principal and Dr. Bubba Longgear, Asst. Superintendent.
17. June 12, 2014 - Met with Archway Coordinator, Betsy McGriff, to plan for a meeting with our local Archway executive and officials from Hart County. Hart County recently was approved to become a charter system.
18. June 25, 2014, met with Hart County Superintendent and community officials to seek input on how they identified needs based on community input and learned about innovation they intend to implement in the immediate future.
19. July 16, 2014 - Devoted three (3) hours at our summer leadership workshop to discuss academic priorities and innovative practices for The Charter application.
Note: An executive summary was provided.
20. July 17, 2014 - Discussed our recent developments with board members at regular July board meeting and reiterated the timeline for seeking input from community and parents.



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21. July 22, 2014 - Met with a parent group to seek input on the Initiative – Acceleration. We asked their opinion on a flex (self-paced curriculum) and noted their comments. . Our Archway professional assisted with this sharing session.
 22. July 24, 2014 - Met with a parent group to seek input on the Initiative – Acceleration. We asked their opinion on a flex (self-paced curriculum) and noted their comments. Our Archway professional assisted with this sharing session.
 23. July 25, 2014 - A group of our administrative leaders led by Assistant Superintendent CaDeisha Cooper went to the Charter Foundation sponsored workshop in Calhoun, Ga
 24. July 24, 2014- a one hour phone conference with Sherri Sherman providing us guidance on completing the application.
 25. July 29, 30, 31, 2014 - Business and Industry visits (14) with local businesses. Southeastern tech College officials participated with Candler County Colleagues. Purpose: Identified needed skill sets to meet local and regional employment opportunities. These sessions will affirm current pathways and will help to lead either to restructuring present ones or starting new ones.
 26. August 12, 2014 - Shared findings from Business and Industry visits at the Archway meetings.
 27. August 14, 2014 - Agri-Science Advisory council met to discuss program offerings resulting from discussions about state grant dollars and the anticipated Charter System Petition.
 28. August 15, 2014 - District Leaders met to prioritize next steps . It was determined to seek more input from faculty members and parents during the month of August and early September. Also, we will prioritize objectives and major initiatives for our application at the August 25th district leader meeting.
 29. August 19, 2014 - Will update our board members at the Board Workshop on the processes we have engaged in preparing for the Charter System petition to BOE.
 30. August 19, 2014 - Attended parent orientation at MES/MIS and distributed a survey to receive input on digital learning.
 31. August 25, 2014 - Charter system was a key topic on the Principals Meeting agenda. We reviewed key initiatives (CTAE, Acceleration, and Fine Arts)and updated our strategic plan. We also focused on lagging data with CCRPI and tentatively decided on performance objectives.
- NOTE: Dr. Longgear compiled the information and drafted responses to key questions on the Charter application.



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32. August 26, 2014 - Attended Metter Middle School parent orientation and distributed the survey seeking input on Digital learning.
33. September 9, 2014 - Met with MHS Faculty to share portions of the charter application. (the case challenges, performance goals and strategic plan).
34. September 15, 2014 - Principals Meeting devoted one hour to seeking input on content of the charter application.
35. September 16, 2014 - Met with MIS Faculty to share portions of the charter application. (challenges, performance goals, school governance team details, and strategic plan)
36. September 16, 2014 - Board Workshop – 40 minutes on the agenda devoted to the components of the Charter Application.
37. September 23, 2014 - Met with MES Faculty to share portions of the charter application. (challenges, performance goals, school governance team details, and strategic plan)
38. September 26, 2014 - Parent meeting to discuss blended learning/on-line learning opportunities which connects directly to our acceleration plan
39. September 30, 2014 – Submitted revised application to Sherrie Sherman for feedback
40. October 1, 2014 – Metter Advertiser announced our upcoming Public Meetings on October 6th at 4 pm to 6 pm
41. October 6, 2014 – All District and School level leaders met to review and update our Balanced Scorecard and Innovative Strategic Plan ensuring alignment with the Charter Application
42. October 6, 2014 – Held Community Meetings for Charter update and input at 4 pm and 6 pm
43. November 18, 2014 - Board training in which an outside facilitator will lead a strategic session targeted at linking our current strategic plan to the Charter Application. The Board will also collaborate with District level leaders to detail out when and how implementation of all of the strategies listed in the Charter will take place.



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SGT Orientation/Election/Training Process-

Orientation- November 2014

Marketing/recruiting candidates- November 2014 – February 2015

Election at schools February 2015

Training schedule attached

Candler County Schools

Proposed topics training schedule and outline are below:

Year One Topics:

March 2015 – Purpose, Meeting Etiquette, Sunshine Laws, and Effective Meetings
(Pre-planning for all School Governance Teams- 2 hours for all SGTs)

March 2015 – School Strategic Improvement Plans and SACS Recommendations

April 2015 – Report of Progress, Budgeting Process

April 2015– By-Laws

April 2015 – Effective Decision Making

May 2015 – Budgeting Process

June 2015 – Technology Integration, BYOT

August 2016 – Hiring Practices and Human Resource Protocols

September 2016 – Family and Community Engagement

October 2016 – Summary Reports, Education and Governance

Year Two Topics:

Assessment, Special Education Law, Personnel Issues, Effective School Practices, Federal Programs, Budgeting Process, School Improvement Plan, Strategic Planning

Year Three Topics:

- Will be decided by the LDOE and LSGT based on first two years.

11. Address the formation of the local School Governing Teams, including how members are selected, the terms of members, and how and why members may be removed.

- Include information about the steps that have already occurred or will occur to inform all stakeholders of the new governance structure.
- Be specific!

School Governance Team orientations will be conducted Wednesday October 29th at 8:30 am and again that day at 5:00 pm. The orientations, coordinated by Archway, are designed to familiarize any prospective SGT member of the details and commitment level of being an SGT member. Prospective members are identified and individually invited to the LSGT Orientation based upon past school involvement. All parents will be informed of the Orientation and will be invited to come as well. The election will take place at the schools at a PTO meeting in February 2015. All interested individuals will be placed on a ballot and will be voted on by parents of the school that are present at the meeting. Every effort will be made to have a SGT that is representative of the makeup of the school population. Each parent will be allowed to vote for two parents at each school for the K-8 SGT.

There will be 17 members on the K-8 SGT. The SGT will consist of at least two parent members from each of the three "schools within the school". One Principal and two teacher members from each of the three schools will also be on the SGT. Two



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community members (preferably not parents of students in the school) will be appointed by the SGT. The two assistant principals in the building will serve as ex-officio members and will rotate yearly being the facilitator for the meetings.

The Metter High School governance team will consist of 11 members. One parent per grade level (preferably one a parent of a Student with Disabilities), two teachers, and two non-voting students- one Junior and one Senior- will be on the council. The SGT will appoint two community members (preferably not parents of students in the school). The Principal will also serve as a voting member of the SGT. The 9th grade and 11th grade representative parent along with one of the teachers will rotate off after the initial two year term. A sophomore student will be selected by the SGT at the end of the school year and that student will serve a two year term. Student members will not be allowed to be directly related to anyone on the SGT.

Members will serve three year terms with half of the initial elected group serving only two years to create staggered terms. For the K-8 SGT, one elected Parent per each of the three schools will serve only a two year term initially. One teacher from each of the three schools within the one building will also serve an initial two year term. Elected and appointed members will serve no more than one consecutive term. Members may be removed by 2/3 vote of the SGT upon recommendation of one of the members. Reasons for removal from the SGT must be based upon the judgment of the SGT that the member being removed is deemed to be detrimental to the progress of the school. Members of the SGT may also be removed from the SGT by 2/3 vote if they are inactive for six consecutive months, have a change in role that excludes them from serving, or if there is a conflict of interest that impedes their decision making. Any vacant unexpired terms will be filled at the next election time.

12. Use the Charter System Application – Local School Governance Matrix found at this link <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/Charter-Petition-Application.aspx> to show how the Superintendent will share with Local School Governance Teams his/her authority to develop recommendations to the Board of Education.
13. Highlight the differences between the current local school advisory council structure and the new structure your new charter system will implement.

Our current school councils meet quarterly to hear updates on school progress. Our newly trained SGTs on the other hand, will meet at least six times a year and will have a hand in decision making and recommending decisions that will positively impact student achievement in the areas of Personnel, Finances, Curriculum and Instruction, Resource Allocation, establishing and monitoring school improvement goals, and school operations. Our school councils have served as a listening board for a number of issues. The SGT will now be a group focused on student achievement and will make decisions impacting student achievement.



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We currently have a School Council for each of our four schools. Since going to a Pre K-8 building adjacent to our High School and being on the same campus, our focus is intensified on vertical alignment and consistency in practice in order to achieve our overarching goal of post-secondary success for all. (Our Vision is focused on vertical alignment K-12.) This post-secondary success can be evidenced by students pursuing further education or by students immediately entering the workforce. Either way the ultimate goal is for students to be meaningfully employed in an occupation in which they can be self sufficient. We believe that the one SGT for K-8 and one closely connected to it at Metter High School will help us accomplish this goal more readily than four separate SGTs.

Specifically in the area of Personnel, the SGT will be directly involved in recommending the Principal to the LBOE. The SGT will interview up to five candidates selected by the SGT with input from the Superintendent and then the SGT will recommend in rank order the top three candidates for the Superintendent to interview and consider their ranking. SGT members will be kept abreast of personnel openings and a SGT member will be invited to be on an interview committee involving any personnel affecting the grade level they represent. The SGT member will have an equal voice to that of the fellow interview committee members in determining the recommendation for employment of an applicant. In the case of a teacher affecting multiple grade levels, at least one SGT member will be invited to participate on the interview committee. SGT members will also be informed by the Principal the amount of funding available to the school and the parameters within which it is allocated. After receiving that information, the SGT will discuss where and how much of the allocations should be budgeted. The SGT will then vote on an approved allocation plan based upon options presented by the Principal.

Curriculum and Instruction are also going to be areas discussed and decided upon by the SGT. Again, based upon available funding by the local BOE, the SGT will vote on curriculum offerings based upon a presentation by the school leadership. The result of the SGT decision will be presented to the Superintendent for consideration and presentation to the LBOE. SGT members will also be kept abreast of school improvement goals and department improvement goals set forth by the PLCs within the school. The SGT will be afforded the opportunity to provide feedback on the SIPs and DIPs. SGT members will also discuss graduation requirements, innovative remediation/acceleration opportunities, and potential new course offerings.

SGTs will also be involved in the area of school operations. The SGT at each school will be focused on improving the school operations in the following areas: instructional schedule, co-curricular/extracurricular offerings, communication strategies, field trip opportunities, fundraising opportunities, and student discipline plan. Our desire is for the SGTs to be a body focused on student achievement and not a group to field complaints from constituents.



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14. Describe the governance training to be provided to principals and members of the Local School Governing Teams in order to build the capacity needed to make decisions in the areas included in the spreadsheet.

Through our partnerships with the Archway initiative and 1st District RESA, we will provide training to as many prospective LSGT members as will attend. Archway is a community partnership between the University of Georgia and Candler County in which five local entities- Board of Education, County, City, Development Authority, and the Chamber of Commerce- contribute a yearly fee. The Archway Professional is very active in identifying state and regional support for local initiatives. Our local Professional, Betsy McGriff, is extremely involved in the formation of our Charter and is actively seeking trainers to lead our SGTs in becoming functioning bodies. We are targeting current school council members, other parents who have been involved and also making a widespread marketing approach to get as many parents as possible to seek election to the SGT. There is a timeline and list of trainings scheduled that highlight what the training will look like. (see #10)

- Note that training should occur before the charter begins because your local School Governance Teams will be expected to make decisions beginning in Year 1 of your charter. Be sure to show this in the timeline requested in #10 above.

15. Provide the name of the provider(s) of local School Governing Team training that you are considering approaching, if known.

The providers for LSGT training will be a combination of the local school district and training provided through coordination of trainers around the state through the networking of our local Archway Committee. Archway has secured the Carl Vinson Institute to provide some of the training for our District. Archway has also been in communication with the Fanning Institute for training opportunities. First District RESA will also be an instrumental partner in providing training for our SGTs.

- Note that such providers can be internal or external to the school district.

16. Provide the name and contact information of an employee of the charter system that will facilitate communications between the Department and the chairpersons of the Local School Governing Teams in your charter system.

The contact to facilitate communication between the Department and the Chairpersons of the SGT will be Dr. Bubba Longgear- 912-685-5713; blonggear@metter.org.

17. Explain how your system will transition its central office from a Compliance Culture (where success is measured by simply achieving requirements) to an Achievement Culture (where success is measured by achieving high expectations).

We feel that the Central Office in the Candler County School District has been striving to accomplish more of an Achievement Culture over the last ten years and as a result we are closer to that goal than we would have been. Central Office personnel, including the Superintendent and his assistants, spend a lot of time focused on



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achieving high expectations. Superintendent Tom Bigwood is the true lead learner for the district and his passion is about building capacity in others. Consequently the focus of the district and school level personnel is on improving student achievement. Examples of the Central Office focus include:

Summer Leadership, Hot Spots, Walkthroughs, Sweeps, Tkes/Lkes, work plans/logs, Aspiring Leaders Training led by Superintendent Dr. Tom Bigwood, and New Teacher Induction Program via Google Docs conducted by Assistant Superintendent Dr. Cadeisha Cooper are some of the examples of the Achievement Culture of the CCSD Central office.



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ASSURANCES FORM AND SIGNATURE SHEET

The law requires your school district to provide assurances that it will do certain things and comply with certain laws. This Assurance Form enumerates all of these requirements and, when you submit this signed Signature Sheet with this Assurance Form as part of your Charter System Application Package, you are providing the legal assurance that your charter system understands and will do these things. This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the school system.

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for Candler County School District located in Candler County is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that if awarded a charter the school system:

1. Shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations;
2. Shall not discriminate against any student or employee on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, national origin, gender, disability or age;
3. Shall be subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of the physical health and safety of school students, employees, and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct;
4. Shall be subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1050 requiring a brief period of quiet reflection;
5. Shall ensure that the system and the system charter school's governance boards are subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq. and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq.;
6. Shall ensure that the system charter school governance board members may only receive compensation for their reasonable and actual expenses incurred in connection with performance of their duties;
7. Shall ensure that all teachers will be certified or highly qualified in compliance with No Child Left Behind;
8. Shall comply with the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through § 20-14-41 and federal accountability requirements, and participate in statewide assessments;



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9. Shall adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including the IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as applicable;
10. Shall provide state and federally mandated services for English Language Learners, as applicable;
11. Shall provide for supplemental educational services as required by federal law and pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03, and for remediation in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01;
12. Shall notify the state of any intent to contract with a for-profit entity for education management services;
13. Shall be subject to the requirement that it shall not charge tuition or fees to its students except as may be authorized by local boards by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-133;
14. Shall comply with federal due process procedures regarding student discipline and dismissal;
15. Shall be subject to all laws relating to unlawful conduct in or near a public school;
16. Shall have a written grievance procedure to resolve student, parent, and teacher complaints;
17. Shall have a written procedure for resolving conflicts between the system charter schools and the local board of education;
18. Shall comply with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20 -2-211.1 relating to fingerprinting and criminal background checks;
19. Shall remit payments to TRS on behalf of employees;
20. Shall ensure that if transportation is provided for its students, the system shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws;
21. Shall ensure that if the charter system participates in federal school meals programs, then each participating system charter school shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws;
22. Shall prepare a safety plan in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185 and submit and obtain approval from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency;
23. Shall comply with the state facility requirements regarding site codes, facility codes, the submission of architectural plans for any new facility that the system may build or occupy during the charter term and all other facility requirements as established by the Department;
24. Shall be subject to all reporting requirements of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160, subsection (e) of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320, and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-740;



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- 25. Shall be subject to an annual financial audit conducted by the state auditor or, if specified in the charter, by an independent certified public accountant licensed in this state;
- 26. Shall acknowledge that all criteria used to calculate QBE funding may not be waived;
- 27. Shall follow any and all other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the applicant or the operation of the charter system; and
- 28. Shall use any funds appropriated for the QBE weight for charter systems, in accordance with recommendations of the school governance teams or to advance student achievement goals and school level governance training.
- 29. Shall ensure that all new principals and other school leaders, central office staff, superintendents, and Board of Education members receive a detailed orientation session on their charter system commitments as part of their "on-boarding" process.

This Charter System Application, Assurance Form, and attached Exhibits were approved by the Board of Education on the _____ day of _____, 201_.

Superintendent

Date

Chair, Local Board of Education

Date

If a Charter is granted, all Petitioners assure that the proposed charter system programs, services, and activities will operate in accordance with the terms of the Charter and all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.

Superintendent

Date

Chair, Local Board of Education

Date



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EXHIBITS

The following Exhibits are required to complete your Charter System Application Package. Please tab the Exhibits to match the item numbers below. Exhibits should be as limited in size as possible (no more than 5 pages per Exhibit). The only exceptions to this size limitation for Exhibits are your most recent annual audit and your most recent accreditation report.

1. Signed local Board of Education resolution approving the creation of the charter system.
2. Notice that was sent to each principal within the proposed charter system regarding required hearings on the charter system application.
3. Description of how stakeholders, including parents and community members, were involved in the development of the Charter System Application.
18. This is where you can describe the process you used to develop your Application.
4. A list of all schools to be included in the charter system, including new schools or college and career academies that will be formed throughout the life of the charter, with an indication of which existing schools are currently in Needs Improvement status.
5. A brief description of the charter system that includes the name, the mission, grades served, the focus of the curriculum, instructional methods to be used, including any distinctive or unique instructional techniques or educational programs to be employed, and other pertinent information.
19. Your description will be used by the Department to provide information to the public about applicants and new charter systems.
6. Local school governance training timeline including training topics.
7. Conflict of interest policy for local school governing teams.
8. A list of business arrangements or partnerships with existing schools, educational programs, businesses and non-profits and the nature of the services provided, including disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest.
9. A brief description of the system's fiscal history and whether the system is or has ever operated under a fiscal deficit.
10. Online link to the school system's most recent annual audit.
11. Online link to the school system's most recent accreditation report.
12. Online link to the school system's most recent strategic plan.