

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application**



## Charter System Application

DISTRICT NAME

Terrell County School System

DISTRICT ADDRESS

761 First Ave. S.E.  
Dawson. GA 39842

Richard Woods  
State School Superintendent

**Terrell County School System  
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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 Terrell County School System			
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? <u>4</u>		
4. How many of each of the following schools are you proposing to include in your charter system? Primary School(s) <u>1</u> Middle School(s) <u>1</u> Elementary School(s) <u>1</u> High school(s) <u>1</u>			
5. On July 1 of what year do you want your charter contract to be effective? 2016			
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 761 First Ave. S.E.	8. City Dawson	9. State Georgia	10. Zip 39842
11. Contact Person - Robert D. Aaron		12. Title - Superintendent	
13. Contact Street Address 761 First Ave. S.E.	14. City Dawson	15. State Georgia	16. Zip 39842
17. Contact's telephone number 229 995-4425	18. Contact's fax number 229-995-4632	19. Contact's E-mail Address raaron@terrell.k12.ga.us	

## **Terrell County School System Charter Application**

### **The Case**

Terrell County School District is made up of four schools: Lillie Cooper Primary (PreK-2), Carver Elementary (3-5), Terrell Middle (6-8) and Terrell High School (9-12). Terrell County, located in Southwest Georgia, is a small rural system with a school community consisting of a high minority and low income population. Because 97.13% of students are eligible to receive free or reduced meals, all students eat free under the federal lunch program. Economic, social and educational descriptors portray a population facing significant challenges as it sends its children into a high-tech 21st Century world. Challenges such as fragmented families with inadequate education and families too poor to provide security or enrichment; bring to the classrooms of Terrell County Schools a profound need for support. Staff in these schools embrace these challenges as an obligation and actively seek resources to provide for students.

The Terrell County School System has the responsibility for ensuring highly reliable and effective schools which deliver a high quality educational program to all children and youth. In March of 2014, the school system was serving 1,384 students in kindergarten through grade twelve with an additional 88 four-year-olds enrolled in a pre-kindergarten program. The student population is 6 percent White, 92 percent Black and 1 percent Hispanic.

The planning process which has led to making application for charter system status for the Terrell County School System began on Monday, July 28, 2014. Mr. Robert Aaron, Superintendent of Terrell County School System conducted a meeting with members of the Terrell County community in support of the creation of an inclusive vision for the school system. The purpose at that time was to engage citizens from all sectors of the community in a candid conversation about the current and future state of the Terrell County School System. Participants included school system staff, community members, parents, and local officials. During the meeting stakeholders were given a system wide needs assessment survey in order to identify the challenges of the Terrell County School System. A month later, Thursday, August 28, 2014 a focus group was convened to share and respond to the results of the needs assessment, and a report was

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prepared to identify Terrell County challenges. These two activities provided the impetus for initiation of a strategic planning process. Parents, school staffs, and community members were actively engaged in the development of the plan. The strategic plan has been updated periodically with the most recent update in October 2014.

The TCSS strategic plan identified three challenges that the system will address in this application. Community Relations, Academic Achievement and Increased Pathway options will be our focus. With the flexibility waiver, schools will be able to address these challenges throughout the system and TCSS will increase all students' academic achievement.

In summary, relationships between the TCSS and the community must improve in order to support all children graduating from high school. Even though students have shown some academic growth, half of the schools in the TCSS are Focus Schools according to the CCRPI report for 2014 and state targets. TCSS only has four high school pathways. The flexibility waiver with the Move on When Ready and the Career Academy innovations will increase Terrell County School Systems pathway options to eight or more in order for students to be career, college and work ready when they graduate from high school.

TCSS strategic plan identified three challenges that the system will address in this application: 1. Community Relations, 2. Academic Achievement, and 3. Increased Pathway Options. With flexibility the system will be able to provide many innovative practices that will address the system's challenges and provide a quality education that meets the needs of all children. Table I forms the CASE for the challenges of the TCSS. Specific actions that will be taken and how those actions will lead to the challenges being addressed, as well as the flexibility waivers required.

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**Table I  
The Case**

#	Question	Challenge #1	Challenge #2	Challenge #3
<b>1</b>	What challenges is your school district facing?	Community Relations	Ensuring students are meeting academic achievement in all subject areas	Limited CTAE Pathway Options
<b>2</b>	What is the rank order priority of these challenges (from most to least important)?	1	2	3
<b>3</b>	Which of these challenges will your school district be able to address by becoming a charter system?	Yes	Yes	Yes

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4	<p>What specific actions will your district take to address each of these challenges (listed in #3 above) during its five-year charter term?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Engage the Local Governance Team in building community relations with the TCSS</li> <li>b. Engage TCSS in the work of the Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club</li> <li>c. The Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club actively involved in the TCSS</li> <li>d. The TCSS, businesses and community leaders will support parents in helping them become active in their child's education.</li> <li>e. Businesses will show support for all students graduating from high school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Restructure the daily schedule for RTI</li> <li>b. Targeted Instructional Learning Time</li> <li>c. Flexibility of class time during the school day</li> <li>d. Implement GOSHA reading and math grants in grades K-3</li> <li>e. Provide High school courses to middle school students.</li> <li>f. Expand dual enrollment and Move On When Ready (MOWR) Initiative with post-secondary institutions.</li> <li>g. Prepare staff and students for digital learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase credit-bearing internships and apprenticeships.</li> <li>b. Expose students at the primary and elementary levels to career pathway options.</li> <li>c. Create and Implement a Southwest Georgia Regional College and Career Academy in partnership with Dougherty County, Albany Technical College, Albany State University and Darton College.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>5</b></p>	<p>Provide a clear explanation of how each of these specific actions (listed in #4 above) will lead to the specific challenge being addressed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Local Governance Teams will come up with a strategic plan on ways to broaden community involvement and increase the involvement of caring adults in schools that will help in solving school specific challenges.</li> <li>b. The TCSS will become actively engaged in the work of the Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club to see how businesses can partner with schools to support schools and their challenges.</li> <li>c. The Chamber of Commerce and Rotary club committees will regularly be invited to meet in TCSS schools and observe education at work and offer support on ways to help schools address school challenges.</li> <li>d. Businesses, community leaders and the TCSS will partner together to assist parents in becoming active in their child's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Restructure the daily schedule so students receive intervention support to reduce the impact of retention.</li> <li>b. Schedule targeted Instructional Learning Time to focus on students areas of weakness</li> <li>c. Flexibility of class time to allow more time for subject(s) where students mastery needs are greater. (Focus on primary and elementary grades)</li> <li>d. Implement the GOSHA reading and math grants in grades K-3 to ensure all students are on the pathway to reading proficiency by the end of third grade.</li> <li>e. Provide courses for high school credit to middle school students in Math and ELA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide credit—bearing internships and apprenticeships through Workforce to allow students to get real life work experiences.</li> <li>b. Provide students at the primary and elementary levels exposure to career pathway options to get them thinking about future careers.</li> <li>c. Implementing a Southwest Regional College and Career Academy will expose and improve students' academic achievement. Student who develop early passions and understand the pathways to those careers are more likely to persist to graduation. The soft skills taught in a career Academy environment will foster students' job readiness and self-regulatory skills.</li> </ul>
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		<p>education by providing release time for parents to attend conferences, meetings and other functions of the schools to ensure students stay on track for graduating from high school.</p> <p>e. Businesses will place “Graduating from High School is our Business” stickers in their business windows to support all students graduating from high school career, college or work ready.</p>	<p>f. Expanding the MOWR Initiative provides students with more course offerings aligned to their interest which increases students’ academic achievement.</p> <p>g. Prepare staff and students for effective use of digital technology to enhance learning in instruction, learning and assessments.</p>	
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p>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).</p>	<p><b>Waivers:</b> O.C.G.A. § 20-02-0210 - supports the creation of local school governance teams</p> <p>O.C.G.A. § 20-2-85-86 School Councils</p>	<p><b>Waivers: All Actions</b> GBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11 Promotion, Placement, &amp; Retention (O.C.G.A. §20-2-182, 183, 184, 185) – to allow for modification of requirements for promotion, placement, &amp; retention of students in grades 3, 5, &amp; 8 GBOE Rule 160-4-2-.17 Early</p>	<p><b>Waivers:</b> O.C.G.A. § 20-2-182 allows flexibility in CTAE course development DOE RULE: 160-5-1-.22 – flexibility O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200; DOE RULE: 160-5-1-.22 – flexibility in certification requirements to hire experienced (content/subject) experts in professional fields</p>

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			<p>Intervention Program (EIP) (O.C.G.A. §20-2-153) – to allow for instructional delivery models beyond those specified in the rule</p> <p>GBOE Rule 160-4-5-.02</p> <p>Language Assistance: Program for English Learners (ELs) (O.C.G.A. §20-2-156) – to allow for alternative service delivery models &amp; to waive class-size &amp; teacher certification Requirements</p> <p>GBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38</p> <p>Education Program for Gifted Students (O.C.G.A. §20-2-151, 152, 161) – to modify minimum participation requirements &amp; models required by <i>Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services</i></p>	
<b>7</b>	Indicate the timeline for implementation of each specific action (listed in #4 above).	Spring of 2016	Spring of 2016	Spring of 2016
<b>8</b>	Indicate which of these specific actions (listed in #4 above) represents an innovation for your school district.	All actions represent An innovation for school district	All actions represent An innovation for school district	All actions represent An innovation for school district

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The following section contains expanded responses to the questions posed in “The Case” matrix included above as Table 1.

## 1. What challenges is your school district facing?

Provide a brief description of the specific issues that, if resolved, would allow you to consider your school district a complete success.

For the last three years, Terrell County School System has shown student growth in ELA. However, the new Terrell County Schools strategic plan shows that many students are not proficient in ELA, math, science and social studies and intensive attention must be given to these core academic content areas in order to improve students’ academic achievement. As with most school systems, there are many Terrell County students who are unsuccessful in their academic work and who fail to complete school or graduate with the skills required to be successful.

The system’s goal is to graduate all of its students and to ensure they are prepared for college, career and life. The challenges described below are ones that, in most instances, have many root causes and have been intractable over time. By addressing these issues effectively Terrell County Schools will become exceptional.

### **Challenge #1 – Community Relations**

Getting parents and the community involved will be a key to the ultimate success of our school system and the children we serve. We will not have a great need for waivers in this area but the concept of charter and the involvement of community in the process will help us mobilize all groups inside and outside of our classrooms to be a part of the solution.

### **Challenge #2 - Ensuring children meet academic achievement in all subject areas.**

Provide Flexible Learning time during the school day for students that need additional time to master subject skills based on benchmark assessments, teacher recommendations and state assessments. Implement the GOSA reading and math grants in grades 3-5 to ensure ~~all students are on the pathway to reading and math proficiency by the end of third grade.~~

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And restructure the daily schedule so students can receive intervention support based on areas of need to reduce the impact of retention.

### **Challenge #3 - Limited Pathway Options**

In order for students in Terrell County School System to be College, Career or Workforce ready when they graduate from high school, more pathway options need to be available. TCSS currently have four pathway options. Creating and implementing a Southwest Georgia Regional College and Career Academy will improve TCSS pathways to eight or more options. Joining a partnership with Dougherty County, Albany Technical College, Darton College and businesses will provide the necessary personnel to teach the pathway courses and provide the necessary support to ensure TCSS students have 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills when they graduate from high school.

### **7. Indicate the timeline for implementation of each specific action (listed in #4 above).**

1. Community Relations
  - a) Utilize Local School Governance Team to involve their different constituent groups in the education process. (2016)
  - b) Increase role of Terrell County Chamber. (2016)
  - c) Businesses and schools partner with parents. (2016)
2. Ensuring children are meet academic achievement in all subject areas.
  - a) Restructure the daily schedule so students receive intervention support to reduce the impact of retention. (2016)
  - b) Schedule Targeted Instructional Learning Time (2016)
  - c) Flexibility of class time to allow more time for subject(s) where student mastery needs are greater. (Focus on primary and elementary grades). (2016)
  - d) Provide courses for high school credit to middle school eighth grade students who exceed standards on state assessments in Math/ELA. (2016)
  - e) Expanding the MOWR Initiative provides students with more course

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offerings aligned to their interest which increases students' academic performance. (2016)

- f) Prepare staff and students for effective use of digital technology to enhance learning in instruction and assessments. (2016)

#### 3. Limited CTAE Pathway Options

- a. Increase credit-bearing internships and apprenticeships. (2016)
- b. Expose students at the primary and elementary levels to career pathways (2016)
- c. Implementing a Southwest Georgia Regional Career Academy will expose and improve students' academic achievement. (2016)

#### **8. Indicate which of these specific actions (listed in #4 above) represents an innovation for your school district.**

The following represents an innovation for our school system.

- a. Terrell County school system will increase its role in Chamber and Rotary Club work and regularly invite the chamber board and Rotary Club to meet in our schools and observe education at work for children.
- b. Restructure the daily schedule so students receive intervention support to reduce the impact of retention.
- c. Opportunities for credit-bearing internships and apprenticeships.
- d. Investigate options for adding new CTAE pathway options.

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### Performance Expectations

**9. What are your school system's specific student performance expectations for your five-year charter term?**

**GOAL 1:** During each year of its first five-year term, the Terrell County Charter System shall “beat the odds” as determine by a formula measuring expected student growth.

**GOAL 2:** During each year of its first five-year charter term, the Terrell County Charter System shall “beat the odds” as determined by a formula measuring expected student growth. If each Terrell County Charter System Schools fails to beat the odds in Year 1 of the charter, the Terrell County 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 Terrell County Charter System Schools will beat the odds in Year 4.

**GOAL 3:** The Terrell County Charter School System will demonstrate proficiency and/or improvement on the CCRPI.

- A. Measure 1: Since Terrell County Charter School System is first converting to a charter system in 2016; 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 State in Years 3-5 of the charter contract.
- B. Measure 2: If the Terrell County Charter System's first year CCRPI score is lower than the State, the system shall have until the end of Year 2 of the charter term to close the gap between Terrell County Charter System and the State.
- C. Measure 3: In Years 3-5 of the charter term, the Terrell County Charter School System's CCRPI score shall be better than the State.

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**Local School Governance**

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

The current local school governance structure is that of an advisory council which was designed to meet state and local requirements. Decision making of the advisory council is limited as the advisory council primarily serves to represent the voice of the stakeholders. Meetings are held quarterly to disseminate information related to federal programs, student data and school improvement initiatives.

The transition from an Advisory Council to a School Governance Team began July of 2014, when all school staffs were informed about the forthcoming of the charter system (flexibility and governance) opportunity. Active parents and community partners were made aware of and began transitioning the current advisory councils to form the initial Local School Governance Teams (LSGT). Those serving on the current advisory council agreed to continue to serve on the LSGTs without application because of timing and proven prior commitment. By November 2014 all schools had identified potential Local School Governance Teams (LSGTs) members with the understanding that adjustments would need to be made as criteria unfold.

Table #4 represents the election criteria which were initially compiled by the Central Advisory Council. The criteria went through a series of vetting processes that involved various stakeholder groups with final input on the configuration selected by the schools' 2015-2016 leadership in late July 2015.

TCSS staff along with the internal consultant (the staff) began to compile the Terrell County Charter training framework and units in September 2015. Several draft compilations had been discussed. There are excellent charter system templates that already exist around the state. The staff also reached-out to other systems who serve populations similar to ours and who had also chosen the charter system model. Community engagement strategies were exchanged and the unique learning curve for broad-based training that is unique to the TCSS community was also considered. The TCSS Central Office staff will work with the staff at each school to set and broadly announce trainings for all identified and

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*potential* LSGTs members throughout the 2015-2016 year. While the role of these team members remains advisory during the 2015-2016 school years, the training will enable members to pilot governance activities during their yearlong training that transitions them to authentic site-based decision makers. The following table (1) shows a timeline of events that have already occurred and future plans for transitioning and training of all principals, system leadership, LSGT members and future potential LSGT members.

**Table 1  
Timeline for the Development and Transitioning of the  
Terrell County Local Governance Team (LSGT)**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT &amp; TRANSITION ACTIVITY</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
<b>July 2014</b>	Local school board members, community stakeholders and business partners received an overview of the Charter System Process from superintendent of TCSS	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>July - August 2014</b>	Central office staff, Principals and Assistant Principals received an overview of the Charter System Process from superintendent of TCSS	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>October 2014</b>	Principals, teachers and staff received an overview of the Charter System Process from superintendent of TCSS	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>January 2015</b>	Local school board members, community stakeholders and business partners received an update on the Charter System Process from superintendent of TCSS	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>February- March 2015</b>	Principals, Instructional Leaders, superintendent and Central Office staff meet to make a decision on Charter System option	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>March – May 2015</b>	Stakeholders were informed TCSS will go Charter System option	<b>Superintendent</b>

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	Stakeholders received updates on Charter System application process	
<b>July 2015</b>	Curriculum Director of TCSS attended workshop on the development of the Local School Governance, conducted by Dr. Sherri Gibney-Sherman. She reviewed the DOE Governance Matrix to start the process of developing the LSGTs' criteria, parameters and bylaws	<b>Curriculum Director of Terrell County School System</b>
<b>August -September 2015</b>	<p>Overviewed governance authority (matrix) with principals and system leaders. Received input into the DRAFT Local School Governance Matrix from principals and system leaders.</p> <p>Developed system CASE challenges through multi-voting of principals, assistant principals and school leaders DRAFT Strategic Plan</p>	<b>Superintendent Central Office Staff Instructional Leaders</b>
<b>August – September 2015</b>	Superintendent met with major stakeholder groups (Parents, educators, community leaders and businesses) for overview discussion and input on local school governance team scope and to collect feedback on challenge areas to develop/update the "CASE"	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>March- September 2015</b>	Continued to meet with school staffs, PTOs, intro/overview of Charter System Concept and Local School Governance Teams	<b>Superintendent</b>

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<b>July 2015</b>	Update Principals and System-wide Leaders during Administration system wide meeting	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>August – December 2015</b>	Compiled and prepared first draft of Charter System application and submitted it to GADOE consultant, Dr. Sherri Gibney-Sherman and. Governance section submitted to Dr. Lynn Plunkett for review and return.	<b>Internal Charter System Consultant Curriculum Director of TCSS</b>
<b>September 2015</b>	Met face-to-face with each principal to secure continued “buy-in” with new updates on Charter System application (e.g. challenges, flexibility and governance).	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>December 2015</b>	Re-submitted the charter application (second draft) updates to Dr. Gibney-Sherman	<b>Internal System Consultant Curriculum Director of TCSS</b>
<b>January 2016</b>	Submit second draft application to the entire Local School Board and Charter System Advisory Committee	<b>Internal System Consultant Curriculum Director of TCSS Superintendent</b>
<b>January 2016</b>	Scheduled 1 <sup>st</sup> Charter System Public Hearings, Website Release of Charter System application for public comments	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>January 2016</b>	Scheduled 2 <sup>nd</sup> Charter System Public Hearings, Website Release of Charter System application for public comments (Official Press Release to Principals and in legal organs)	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>January 2016</b>	Incorporated final edits from GADOE consultant, Dr. Sherri Gibney-Sherman, public hearings and public comments on the website, etc,	<b>System Staff and Internal Charter System Consultant</b>

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	Meeting of the Charter System Committee to overview the final Charter System application before the superintendent recommends the DCSS Charter Application to the LBOE	
<b>January 2016</b>	Submit Charter System Application to GaDOE	<b>Superintendent's Staff LBOE System Staff</b>
<b>January – April 2016</b>	Officially Kicked-off of Local School Governance Team Training  Embedded training for Principals and LSGTs as they monitor existing plan and develop Strategic School Improvement Plans and budgets for 2016-2017	<b>Internal Consultant Staff</b>
<b>April – July 2016</b>	All LSGTs members will be working to become Terrell Charter System Certified Governance Team Members by July 2016.	<b>Principals Internal Consultant Staff Governance Trainers</b>
<b>August 2016</b>	Swearing-in of the first official LSGTs	<b>Principals LSGTs</b>
<b>August 2016 -2020</b>	Continuous LSGT Training will be offered through the <i>TCSS</i> – <b>(Postings &amp; regular Media invitations will continuously advertise training opportunities throughout the term of the Charter System period for qualified interested citizens.)</b>	<b>Charter System Staff Media Information Service Department</b>

**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.**

The LSGT is comprised of a minimum of seven members, the school principal, two staff members, two parents, and two community leaders. Additional members may be added to the Local School Governance Teams by the local LSGT groups but the ratio of employees of the school system to those not employed by the system can't be altered to have more school employees represented on the

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- a) Principal – the principal of a school shall serve as a member on the LSGT for the school as long as the individual retains the title of principal. The principal will also serve as the secretary of the LSGT.

The school principal shall have the following duties pertaining to the LSGT activities:

- 1) Help to organize the LSGT by convening the appropriate bodies to select LSGT members;
  - 2) Working with the chair to set the meeting agenda, with participation of the full LSGT; meeting time; and location; and notifying all LSGT members of the same;
  - 3) Perform all of the duties required by the charter petition and the bylaws of the LSGT;
  - 4) Communicate all LSGT requests for information and assistance to the superintendent and inform the LSGT of responses or actions of the superintendent or local board of education;
  - 5) Work with system personnel and the school LSGT to develop the school improvement plan and school operation plan and submit the plans to the LSGT for review and recommendations.
- b) Staff – Two members of staff will serve on the LSGT for two-year staggered terms. The staggered terms were established during the first charter period. At least one of the staff members must be a teacher. The staff representatives must be employed at the school where they serve on the LSGT. Election of the staff representatives will be by a majority vote of staff at the school. Elections may be held at the discretion of the LSGT as long as new members have been installed by election before September of a new school year. In the event that a staff member leaves the school, resigns or is removed by an action of the LSGT, an election will be held to select another staff member to fulfill the unexpired term of the individual. If there are two or less meetings remaining for the year, the LSGT may determine to hold an election at the regular election cycle.

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- c) Parents – Two parent members will serve on the LSGT for two-year staggered terms. The staggered terms were established during the first charter period. The parent representatives must have a child enrolled at the school where they serve on the LSGT and retain an enrolled child during the term of election (two years). Election of a parent representative will be by majority vote of parents at the school. Teachers employed at the school who are also parents of children in the school are not eligible to run for a parent seat. Elections may be held at the discretion of the LSGT as long as new members have been installed by election before September of a new school year. In the event that a parent no longer meets qualifications, resigns or is removed by an action of the LSGT, an election will be held to select another parent to fulfill the unexpired term. If two or less meetings remain on the LSGT schedule for the year, the LSGT may determine to hold the election during the regular election cycle
- d) Community – Two community members will serve on the LSGT for two-year staggered terms. The staggered terms were established during the first charter period. The community representatives are required to be a community leader with an interest in the school. Every effort will be made to secure candidates for the community position who live within the attendance area of the school. The community position cannot be held by an individual employed in the school system at any level or by an individual retired from the school system for less than five years. Selection of a community representative will be by a majority vote of the members of the LSGT. Selection may be held at the discretion of the LSGT as long as new members have been installed before September of a new school year. In the event that a community representative no longer can or wishes to serve on the LSGT or is removed by an action of the LSGT, the LSGT will select another person to fulfill the unexpired term.
- e) Other members designated to be part of the LSGT by the local school LSGT - If parent members are added to the LSGT, they will be required to meet the same service

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requirements and be subject to the same election procedures as the identified parent group.

The LSGT groups are encouraged to include students in the process of local governance at the middle and high school levels. Schools may elect to have two students serve on the LSGT **or** include regular discussions (at least twice each year) with a student group to include the student perspective in decision making. The type of student participation and the individuals or student groups included will be left to the discretion of the LSGT.

**Other Requirements** – No more than four members of the minimum seven members LSGT shall be employees of the school system. The same ratio will apply, if additional members are added to the LSGT.

**Removal of an LSGT member** – An LSGT member will no longer be a part of the LSGT when the individual no longer meets the requirements listed in the seats requirements. The Board of Education or the LSGT may remove a member for non-participation or for acts against the Code of Conduct signed by each member upon taking a position on the LSGT. The LSGT of each charter system school will be subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1, et seq. (Open and Public Meetings) and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70, et seq. (Inspection of Public Records).

The LSGT of each charter system school shall consist of a minimum of seven members, of whom a majority shall constitute a quorum. The chairperson of the LSGT shall be determined by a majority vote of the LSGT. Ad Hoc committees may be appointed as deemed appropriate by the LSGT and may include membership outside the LSGT, including high school student representation.

The Code of Ethics for Educators is the standard of conduct to which all LSGT members are held. As such, each member of the LSGT will be asked to execute an agreement to acknowledge understanding of the Code of Ethics and the duties and responsibilities of their office and acceptance of responsibility for performing those duties in a professional manner. The members of the council are accountable to the constituents they serve and shall:

- a. Maintain a school-wide and system-wide perspective on issues;

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- b. Regularly participate in LSGT meetings;
- c. Participate in information and training programs;
- d. Act as a link between the LSGT and the community;
- e. Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community; and
- g. Work to improve student achievement and performance.

Participation in training opportunities is an expectation of LSGT membership and a part of the Code of Ethics for the LSGT members. Failure to adhere to the Code of Ethics and duties and responsibilities of the membership of the LSGT, as outlined herein and in the By-Laws, may result in a member being removed by a majority vote of the LSGT or the Board of Education.

**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.**

System Name: Terrell County School System	Minimum LSGT Authority	How and When Minimum Authority will be Implemented	Additional LSGT Authority*	How and When Additional Authority will be Implemented
<b>Personnel Decisions</b>	LSGTs shall Recommend the Principal or school leader for selection by the BOE	<b>Principal employment</b> - HR advertises position, receives apps & resumes & screens applicants (e.g., background check, references) - LSGT (less current principal) & system staff interview candidates & score rubric. LSGT & system staff reach consensus on candidate recommendation, superintendent recommends selected candidate	Examples include: Input on principal goals, feedback on principal performance, type & qualifications of all positions, requirements for substitutes, attributes & qualifications for school administrative positions, distribution methods for incentive funds	<b>Principal goals</b> - established annually as integral part of school improvement planning process by LSGT (Year 2); <b>Principal performance</b> - LSGT meets annually to conduct self-evaluation; principal's performance in achieving goals is evaluated by LSGT as part of evaluation process (Year 3); <b>Personnel</b>

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application**

		to BOE, BOE employs or rejects recommendation (Year 1); <b>Principal transfer</b> - Supt. provides notification to LSGT prior to recommendation to BOE (Year 1)		<p><b>qualifications &amp; characteristics</b> - LSGT shall be provided an opportunity each year to submit recommendations relating to qualifications &amp; characteristics desired for all</p> <p>school staff (Year 2); <b>Incentive funds</b> - LSGT recommends to superintendent proposed use of incentive funds allocated to school as part of proposed school budget (Year 1)</p>
<b>Financial Decisions &amp; Resource Allocation</b>	LSGTs shall have input into the final recommendations for the school budget, including number & type of personnel, curriculum costs, supply costs, equipment costs & maintenance & operations costs	<p><b>Allocation of Staff</b> - System projects student enrollment &amp; allocates staff; LSGT, through principal, may request reconsideration stating reasons for request; (Year 1);</p> <p><b>Budget</b> - System allocates specified general &amp; special revenue funds for school for FY; principal &amp; staff develop proposed budget with participation of LSGT; LSGT reviews final budget &amp; may</p>	Examples include: School budget approval, budget priorities aligned with school improvement plan, use of charter system funds, vendors for school resources, fundraising budget	<p><b>School budget approval</b> - School budgets for general &amp; special revenue funds are prepared by principal, staff, &amp; LSGT. Budget is based on school improvement plan &amp; system priorities; LSGT approves at school level (Year 2);</p> <p><b>Alignment of budget priorities</b> - LSGT, with guidance of principal, shall ensure that budget priorities are aligned with school improvement plan (Year 2);</p> <p><b>Fundraisers</b> - LSGT may recommend</p>

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application**

		<p>recommend changes (Year 1)  <b>Personnel positions</b> – LSGT recommends types of positions, roles, qualifications, &amp; job descriptions (Year 2)</p>		<p>fundraisers that are consistent with Board of Education policy &amp; for designated purposes; budget for use of funds shall be consistent with stated purpose; generally fundraisers are for specific purpose &amp; are limited in number (Year 2)</p>
<p><b>Curriculum and Instruction</b></p>	<p>LSGTs shall have input into the selection of the curriculum &amp; accompanying materials consistent with the district's Essential and Innovative Features as included in the charter contract</p>	<p><b>Curriculum</b> - Defined as "what is taught," shall be basically uniform across the system to ensure alignment with state &amp; system goals &amp; with state student assessment program. LSGT shall be represented on all curriculum review committees &amp; on committees convened to recommend instructional materials; LSGTs shall have prerogative to recommend enrichment programs &amp; activities that complement the basic curriculum (Year 1)</p>	<p>approval of instructional programs &amp; materials</p> <p>consistent with innovations, graduation requirements, new course offerings, opportunities for student acceleration &amp; remediation</p>	<p><b>Instructional delivery innovations</b> - The goal of all classroom teachers is to employ effective instructional strategies - their recommendations must be a primary consideration; the LSGT shall be informed of innovative models to be implemented, may recommend additional models, &amp; shall be given opportunities to provide feedback (Year 1);  <b>Graduation requirements</b> - LSGT shall be represented on all system-wide committees established to review graduation requirements (Year 2); <b>Course offerings</b> - LSGT is authorized to recommend enrichment</p>

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application**

				courses in addition to the system-adopted curriculum; recommendations shall be made to superintendent. (Year 1)
<b>Establishing &amp; monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals</b>	LSGTs shall approve the school improvement plan & provide oversight of its implementation	<b>School improvement plan</b> - LSGT shall participate in development of school improvement plan, shall approve plan at school level, & shall receive regular reports by principal on implementation progress (Year 1)	Examples include: LSGT members serving as  members of the school improvement planning team, LSGT approval of any innovations that would traditionally require a waiver of state law	<b>Membership on SIP Team</b> - LSGT shall designate 1 or more members to serve on school improvement planning team & shall approve at the school level innovations that would require waiver of state law (Year 2); <b>School Improvement Goals</b> – LSGT develops actions, strategies, & interventions with input from teachers & principal (Year 2); <b>Budget</b> – LSGT allocates resources for implementing the school improvement plan
<b>School Operations</b>	LSGTs shall have input into school operations that are consistent with school improvement & charter goals	<b>Operational components</b> - LSGT, with guidance of principal, shall identify school operational components in which the LSGT shall have involvement & decision making authority (Year 1)	Examples include: approval of use of instructional time during school day, partners in education, co-curricular & extra-curricular activities, stakeholder surveys, parent involvement, communications strategies,	<b>Partners in education and parental engagement</b> - LSGT shall participate actively in establishing & sustaining partners in education & parental engagement programs (Year 1); <b>Parent, stakeholder, &amp; student surveys</b>

**Terrell County School System  
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			<p>school- level policies, volunteer support, field trips, fundraisers, student dress code, student discipline plan</p>	<p>LSGT shall participate actively in development &amp; administration of surveys (Year 2);  <b>Tutoring, mentoring, &amp; volunteer programs;</b> LSGT shall assume lead in establishing &amp; maintaining active tutoring, mentoring, &amp; volunteer programs in the school (Year 2);  <b>Communications strategies &amp; plan</b> - LSGT shall develop a school/parent communication plan which shall be approved by the school leadership team (Year 2)</p>
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**13. Highlight the differences between the current local school advisory council structure and the new structure your new charter system will implement.**

When SGC’s were implemented in Terrell County (July 2010) there was limited involvement from school councils regarding decision-making activity and processes. School councils existed primarily in advisory functions and often served only as a sounding board or receivers of information. The advent of SGC’s slowly but steadily shifted the function of these governance teams to one of being much more actively involved in decision making and even initiating changes at both the school and system level. The system charter will place emphasis and growth on the SGC’s to take responsibility for their involvement and accountability in the school improvement process.

## Terrell County School System

### Charter Application

**Features of the LSGT process will include, but not limited to:**

- Providing oversight governance (not management) to school programs, policies and initiatives
- Remaining substantially autonomous from the local school district
- Participating in on-going training
- Representing the composition of the school community
- Complying with effective operational processes such as Open Meetings and Open Records statutes
- Maintaining a school-wide and a system perspective in all considerations
- Supporting the System Strategic Plan and performance goals of the System Charter

**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.**

The LSGT will attend training and consistently strive to achieve the characteristics of an effective system charter school governance team. Such trainings will help the LSGT evaluate the efficacy of programs within the school and report the status of said programs to the Board of Education. Such interactions between the LSGT and the Board of Education will help to identify and provide focus to areas of strength and need, as well as and focus attention on the mission and vision of the school and the system.

A central tenet of an effective LSGT is active involvement of all the members in the school. LSGT members will be highly involved in the governance of the school. Such involvement will empower the LSGT members to find creative ways to solve educational problems and give a strong voice to parents, the staff, and other members of the community. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-85, the Terrell County Board of Education believes that parent and community support is critical to the success of students and schools. In the interest of students, the board recognizes the need for school- based decision-making. Through the LSGT, it is the desire of the TCBOE to bring parents and community

## Terrell County School System Charter Application

members together with local teachers and administrators to make school based decisions and perpetuate school improvement.

While the management and control of the public schools remains the responsibility of the local Board of Education, the schools belong to the community and involvement of the LSGT in decision making will assist in making the community a bigger part of the decision making process. Having effective governance is more about collectively arriving at the best decision for children than it is about who makes the decision. It is further recognized that training and on-going support is a crucial component of the successful operation of a LSGT. In training practices of states with successful and on-going charters that include Local School Governance, the following initial areas of training are common:

### Training topics

- a. Legal mandates, state and local policy and rule interpretation and confidentiality
- b. Collaborative Skills and Group Process
- c. Team Skills (Conflict Resolution)
- d. Strategic Planning
- e. Curriculum development
- f. School and community relations
- g. School budgets
- h. Human Resources and personnel responsibilities

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

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

It is the intent of the school system to use school system staff, RESA staff, and, yet unnamed consultants to prepare and present the Local School Governance Team trainings and others which may be desired over time. The LSGT trainings will be presented in a variety of formats to facilitate the needs of LSGT members.

## Terrell County School System

### Charter Application

**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.**

Robert Aaron, Superintendent of Terrell County Schools, and Bernice Burke, System Curriculum Director, are designated as the system contact persons to provide support and assistance to the LSGTs and to facilitate communications between the Department of Education and the chairpersons of the LSGTs. The Superintendent and the System Curriculum Director will be responsible for assisting principals in the formation of the LSGTs, development of bylaws, coordination of training, provision of ongoing support, and response to or forwarding of inquiries from LSGTs to the appropriate staff and the Board of Education.

The contact information is as follows:

Robert Aaron, Superintendent  
Terrell County Schools  
761 First Ave. S.E., Dawson, GA.  
[raaron@terrell.k12.ga.us](mailto:raaron@terrell.k12.ga.us)  
229-995-4425

Bernice Burke, Curriculum Director  
Terrell County Schools  
761 First Ave. S.E., Dawson, GA.  
[bburke@terrell.k12.ga.us](mailto:bburke@terrell.k12.ga.us)  
229-995-4726

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

The central office staff of the Terrell County School System views its primary role as that of support for the individual schools which make up the system. Many mandates are imposed on local a school system from the state and federal levels, and it is typically the responsibility of central office staff of local school systems to ensure that the system responds appropriately to such mandates. The challenge is to comply without adopting a culture of compliance. Terrell County Schools has met this challenge through creating and cultivating a trusting and supportive relationship between school and system staff. There is a clear understanding that all staff at the school and system levels must focus on the students and their achieving at a high level. System staff, school leaders, and classroom teachers must all establish high expectations for themselves and for the students. Non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction will continue to be pursued so that high quality instruction is the hallmark in every classroom in the system.

## **Terrell County School System Charter Application**

Charter system status will give the school system the flexibility needed to design and deliver a highly effective education program that will challenge every student to do his/her very best to achieve at a high level, graduate, and be prepared for post-secondary work or career entry. The central office will ensure broad-based participation by school leaders and staff in pursuing the actions enumerated in this application.

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application**

**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 Terrell County School System located in Terrell 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;
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;

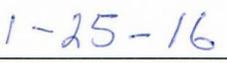
## **Terrell County School System Charter Application**

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;
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.

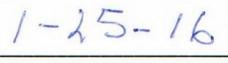
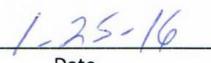
## Terrell County School System Charter Application

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 Terrell County Board of Education on the 25 day of January, 2016.

 _____ 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

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application**

**Exhibit 1**

**Signed Terrell County Board of Education resolution approving the  
creation of the charter system**

**Terrell County School System**  
**Charter Application**  
**Terrell County Board of Education**  
**Resolution to Apply for Charter System Status**

**WHEREAS**, the mission of Terrell County Schools is "to ensure that all children learn and become successful contributing members of society. The Terrell County School District is committed to providing quality educational opportunities through collaborative efforts of student, parents, administrators and community. "  
and

**WHEREAS**, the vision for our school system is to "become schools of excellence; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education on May 11, 2015, authorized the superintendent and school staff to conduct a planning process and prepare a charter system petition; and

**WHEREAS**, the superintendent and staff have conducted numerous meeting with the Terrell County community for the purpose of envisioning the future desired for the school system; and

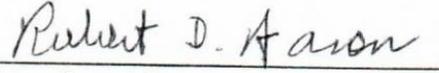
**WHEREAS**, the superintendent and staff have developed a strategic plan and charter system petition; and

**WHEREAS**, the community has responded positively to the plan and petition developed:

**RESOLVED**, the Terrell County Board of Education approves the charter system petition, and hereby, submits said petition to the Georgia Board of Education and Georgia Department of Education for favorable consideration and approval.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Chair

5-11-15  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent

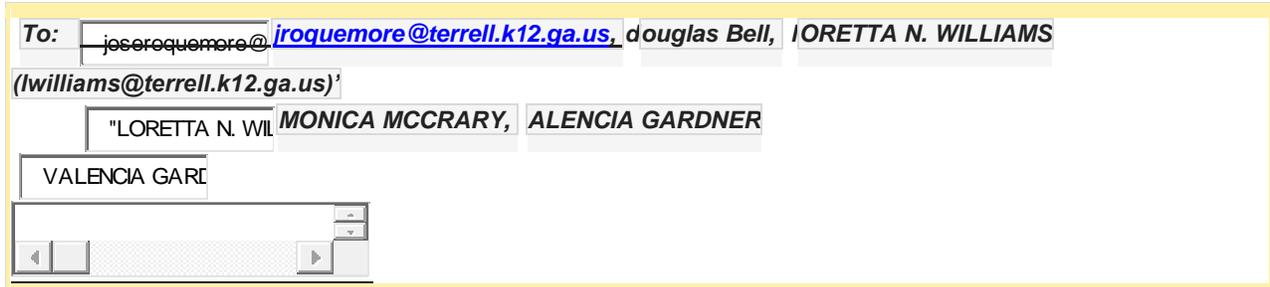
5-11-15  
Date

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application  
Exhibit 2**

**Notice that was sent to each principal within the proposed charter system regarding required hearings on the charter system application**

## Terrell County School System Charter Application

The following e-mails regarding required hearings on the charter system application was sent by Superintendent, Robert Aaron, to all principals and others in the Terrell County School System on January 7, 2016 and January 21, 2016



From: Robert Aaron  
Date: January 7, 2016

Good Morning Principals,

This email serves as notification of the two public hearings required for the Charter System Petition for the Terrell County School System. You are hereby requested to forward this e-mail to all members of your staff. The dates and times for the hearings are:

Tuesday, January 14, 3:45pm. at Terrell High School Lunchroom

Tuesday, January 25, 4:00pm. at Terrell County Board of Education Central Office Board Room

A slideshow presentation is attached and is to be shown to your faculty prior to the first hearing. The presentation will also be posted on the school system's website prior to the first hearing. Comments will be solicited at each of the hearings.

The Terrell County Board of Education will consider the Charter System Petition for approval at its meeting on May 11, 2015, which begins 7:00am. The petition will be submitted to the Georgia Department of Education by January 28, 2016.

Your staff, after viewing the slide presentation, is invited to send comments to Bernice Burke Curriculum Director for Terrell County School System at [bburke@terrell.k12.ga.us](mailto:bburke@terrell.k12.ga.us) Comments should be received by Bernice Burke no later than January 19, 2016.

Thanks,  
Robert Aaron  
Superintendent  
Terrell County Schools

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application**

**Exhibit 3**

**Description of how stakeholders, including parents and community members, were involved in the development of the Charter System Application**

# **Terrell County School System Charter Application**

## **Stakeholder Engagement in Development of the Charter System Application**

The planning process which has led to making application for charter system status for the Terrell County School System began on Monday, July 28, 2014. Mr. Robert Aaron, Superintendent of Terrell County School System conducted a meeting with members of the Terrell County community in support of the creation of an inclusive vision for the school system. The purpose at that time was to engage citizens from all sectors of the community in a candid conversation about the current and future state of the Terrell County School System. Participants included school system staff, community members, parents, and local officials. During the meeting stakeholders were given a system wide needs assessment survey in order to identify the challenges of the Terrell County School System.

A month later, Thursday, August 28, 2014 a focus group was convened to share and respond to the results of the needs assessment, and a report was prepared to identify Terrell County challenges. These two activities provided the impetus for initiation of a strategic planning process. Parents, school staffs, and community members were actively engaged in the development of the plan. The strategic plan has been updated periodically with the most recent update in October 2014.

The formal charter system application process began with an orientation meeting of the charter system committee on November 6, 2014. The charter system committee was composed of Superintendent Aaron, principals, teachers and instructional coaches. A second meeting of the charter system committee was held on January 8, 2015 to establish a plan to develop the charter system petition.

A planning session was held on April 15, 2015. The meeting was attended by teachers, local elected officials, educators and community members including parents. Those attending received information about the charter options available to local school systems, the decision of the Board of Education to pursue charter system status, and the flexibility and accountability dimension of charter system status. Those attending discussed the challenge of improving student performance on state assessments, governance implication with the establishment of local school governance teams, Georgia Milestones assessments and other issues that may be addressed with the flexibility granted to charter system.

## **Terrell County School System Charter Application**

On August 14, 2015 a session was held to discuss the role, relationships, and responsibilities of local school governance teams. The charter system committee members met with representatives of local businesses and organizations along with school administrators and teachers for the purpose of sharing perspectives on how the LSGTs could fill a decision making role that would be aligned with the authority and non-negotiable system goals established by the Terrell County Board of Education.

A slide presentation on the charter system application and dates for public hearings was transmitted to all schools on November 7, 2015. All faculties and system level staff were provided an opportunity to view the presentation. Public hearings were held on January 14 and January 25, 2016, for the purpose of presenting the proposed charter system application and to receive comment from those attending. On January 19, 2016, the charter system committee held a session to conduct a final review of the charter system application. The application was submitted to the Terrell County Board of Education on January 25, 2016, for its consideration and adoption.

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application**

**Exhibit 4**

**A list of schools to be included in the charter system, with an indication of which existing schools are currently in Needs Improvement status**

**Terrell County School System**  
**Charter Application**  
**Schools That Are to Be Included in the Charter System**

Lillie Cooper Primary School

\*Carver Elementary School

\*Terrell Middle School

Terrell High School

\*Carver Elementary and Terrell Middle Schools are designated as Focus Schools

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application  
Exhibit 5**

**A brief description of the charter system that includes the name, 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**

**Terrell County School System**  
**Charter Application**  
**Terrell County School System – A Charter System**

The Terrell County Charter School System has as its vision “to ensure that all children learn and become successful contributing members of society. “The school system’s mission” is to provide quality educational opportunities through collaborative commitment and effort of students, parents, teachers, administrators and community.” The system serves 1,384 students from kindergarten through grade twelve in one primary school (pre-k-2), one elementary school (3-5), one middle school (6-8), and one high school (9-12). The system also provides in its primary school a pre-Kindergarten program for 88 four-year olds in Terrell County

In July of 2014 the system began the strategic planning initiative with meetings of community members and school leaders to discuss goals and objectives for the school system. Input was then solicited from students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders to create a strategic plan. A strategic planning team and several sub-committees developed the final plan in 2014. The outcome of the initiative was a carefully crafted strategic plan designed to improve significantly the educational opportunities for all students enrolled in the Terrell County School System. Many of the strategic plan elements were incorporated into the charter system application.

The school system’s application for charter system status identified three challenges that the school system will address during the five-year term of the charter. The first challenge, Community relationships with the school, parents, business leaders and the community to support the concept of high school graduation for all children. Getting parents and the community involved will be the key to the ultimate success of this challenge. The concept of charter and the involvement of community in the process will help mobilize all groups inside and outside of all classrooms to be a part of the solution of graduation for all children.

Challenge number 2, Ensuring students are meeting academic achievement in all subject areas will be accomplished through rigors classroom instruction. A variety of sources and delivery methods will be used to get each child to the destination of graduation. One instructional method will not work for every child. Therefore, to address the needs of every child the innovation of charter will be used to mold

## **Terrell County School System Charter Application**

education to the needs of each individual child.

Challenge 3, Limited Pathway Options. This is an important area where it will be necessary for success in providing pathways to graduation for children that meet their needs. We will have the flexibility to adjust pathways to meet the needs of students instead of students having to adjust their goals and dream to fit a pathway.

We believe that the initiatives outlined in this application will lead to significantly increased student learning, performance on state assessments and on the graduation rate for the school system.

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application**

**Exhibit 6**

**Local school governance training timeline including training topics**

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application**

**Timeline and Topics for Local School Governance Team Training**

- a.** Legal mandates, state and local policy and rule interpretation and confidentiality-----June 2016
- b.** Collaborative Skills and Group Process-----June 2016
- c.** Team Skills (Conflict Resolution)-----July 2016
- d.** Strategic Planning-----July 2016
- e.** Curriculum Development-----July 2016
- f.** School and Community Relations-----July 2016
- g.** School Budgets-----TBA
- h.** Human Resources and Personnel responsibilities-----TBA

**Terrell County School System  
Charter Application**

**Exhibit 7**

**Conflict of interest policy for local school governance teams**

## Terrell County School System Charter Application

### Conflict of interest policy for local school governing teams-

The policy cited below is the current Terrell County Board of Education policy in regards to Conflict of Interest. A similar policy will be adopted for the School Governing Councils.

**TERRELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Board Member Conflict of Interest**

**Descriptive Code: BHA**  
**Issue Date: 1/10/2011**  
**Rescinds Code: BHA**  
**Issued: 3/8/2010**

The Terrell Board of Education shall adhere to these Conflict of Interest provisions, as set forth in state law.

### Financial Governance

1. No Board member shall use or attempt to use his or her official position to secure unwarranted privileges, advantages, or employment for himself or herself, his or her immediate family member, or others.
2. No Board member shall act in his or her official capacity in any matter where he or she, his or her immediate family member, or a business organization in which he or she has a material financial interest that would reasonably be expected to impair his or her objectivity or independence of judgment. Compliance with Code Section 20-2-505 shall not constitute a violation of this paragraph.
3. No Board member shall solicit or accept or knowingly allow his or her immediate family member or business organization in which he or she has an interest to solicit or accept any gift, favor, loan, political contribution, service, promise of future employment, or other thing of value based upon an understanding that the gift, favor, loan, contribution, service, promise, or other thing of value was given or offered for the purpose of influencing that board member in the discharge of his or her official duties. This paragraph shall not apply to the solicitation or acceptance of contributions to the campaign of an announced candidate for elective public office if the local board of education member has no knowledge or reason to believe that the campaign contribution, if accepted, was given with the intent to influence the local board of education member in the discharge of his or her official duties. For purposes of this paragraph, a gift, favor, loan, contribution, service, promise, or other thing of value shall not include the items contained in subparagraphs (a)(2)(A) through (a)(2)(J) of Code Section 16-10-2.
4. No Board member shall use, or knowingly allow to be used, his or her official position or any information not generally available to the members of the public which he or she receives or acquires in the course of and by reason of his or her official position for the purpose of securing financial gain for himself or herself, his or her immediate family member, or any business organization with which he or she is associated.

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5. No Board member or any of his or her immediate family members or business organization in which he or she has an interest shall represent any person or party other than the local board of education or local school system in connection with any cause, proceeding, application, or other matter pending before the local school system in which he or she serves or in any proceeding involving the local school system in which he or she serves.
6. No Board member shall be prohibited from making an inquiry for information on behalf of a constituent if no fee, reward, or other thing of value is promised to, given to, or accepted by the local board of education member or his or her immediate family member in return therefor.
7. No Board member shall be deemed in conflict with these provisions if, by reason of his or her participation in any matter required to be voted upon by the local board of education, no material or monetary gain accrues to him or her as a member of any profession, occupation, or group to any greater extent than any gain could reasonably be expected to accrue to any other member of that profession, occupation, or group.
8. No Board member may also be an officer in any organization that sells goods or services to that local school system, except as provided in Code Section 20-2-505 and excluding nonprofit membership organizations.
9. No Board member shall be deemed in conflict with these provisions if, by reason of his or her participation in any matter required to be voted upon by the local board of education, no material or monetary gain accrues to him or her as a member of any profession, occupation, or group to any greater extent than any gain could reasonably be expected to accrue to any other member of that profession, occupation, or group.
10. No Board member shall sell to any county board any supplies or equipment used, consumed, or necessary in the operation of any public school in this state unless there are fewer than three sources for such supplies or equipment within the county; provided, however, that any purchase pursuant to this subsection for supplies or equipment that is equal to or greater than \$10,000.00 shall be approved by a majority of the members of the board in an open public meeting. Any member violating this shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.
11. No local board may do business with a bank or financial institution where a Board member is an employee, stockholder, director or officer when such board member owns 30% or more stock in that institution.
12. No Board member may have a financial interest in school buses, bus equipment or supplies, provide services for buses owned by the Board, or sell gasoline to the Board from a corporation in which the Board member is a shareholder.
13. No Board member shall accept a monetary fee or honorarium in excess of \$101.00 for a speaking engagement, participation in a seminar, discussion panel, or other activity that directly relates to the official duties of that public officer or the office of that public officer.

~~Actual and reasonable expenses for food, beverages, travel, lodging, and registration for a~~  
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## **Terrell County School System Charter Application**

meeting which are provided to permit participation in a panel or speaking engagement at the meeting shall not be monetary fees or honoraria.

### **Conduct As Board Member**

1. No Board member shall disclose to or discuss any information which is subject to attorney-client privilege belonging to the local board of education to any person other than other Board members, the Board attorney, the local school superintendent, or persons designated by the local school superintendent for such purposes unless such privilege has been waived by a majority vote of the whole Board.
2. No Board member shall vote on the employment or promotion of any of his or her immediate family members. No immediate family member of a Board member may be employed or promoted unless a public, recorded vote is taken separately from all other personnel matters.
3. No Board member may be employed in any position in the school district in which they serve.
4. No Board member shall hold another county office.
5. No Board member shall be employed by the State Department of Education or serve concurrently as a member of the State Board of Education.
6. No Board member shall serve on the governing body of a private elementary or secondary educational institution.

Each member of this Board understands and acknowledges that no person shall be eligible for election as a member of a local board of education unless he or she:

- (1) Has read and understands the code of ethics and the conflict of interest provisions applicable to members of local boards of education and has agreed to abide by them; and
- (2) Has agreed to annually disclose compliance with the State Board of Education's policy on training for members of local boards of education, the code of ethics of the local board of education, and the conflict of interest provisions applicable to members of local boards of education.

Each person offering his or her candidacy for election as a member of a local board of education shall file an affidavit with the officer before whom such person has qualified for such election prior to or at the time of qualifying, which affidavit shall affirm that he or she meets all of the qualifications required pursuant to this subsection. This subsection shall apply only to local board of education members elected or appointed on or after July 1, 2010.

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Exhibit 8**

**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**

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Members	Email/Phone	Associations
<b>Business and Computer Science</b>		
Larry Massey	<a href="mailto:lmasley236@aol.com">lmasley236@aol.com</a> 229-995-5891 mhoover@masseywholesale.com	Massey Wholesale ( <b>Matt Hoover –job shadow</b> ) P.O
Kevin Massey (also Heidi Breeden & Kristal Durr)	<a href="mailto:kmassey@bankoferrell.com">kmassey@bankoferrell.com</a> 229-995-4461	Bank of Terrell ( <b>Career Day</b> ) P. O. Box 389 Dawson, GA 39842
Brad Stafford	<a href="mailto:bradstafford@windstream.net">bradstafford@windstream.net</a> 229-995-6493 or 883-0090 Cell: 886-7819	Badcock Home Furniture & More ( <b>Funds for School Events</b> ) 523 Forrester Drive SE Dawson, GA 39842
Tara Sauls	229-995-2126 <a href="mailto:tsj24@windstream.net">tsj24@windstream.net</a>	Moseley Drug ( <b>Career Day</b> ) 412 Johnson Street SE Dawson, GA 39842
Steve Highsmith	<a href="mailto:ipmre@msn.com">ipmre@msn.com</a> 229-995-6088 229-894-7333	IPM Real Estate ( <b>Career Day</b> ) 805 Forrester Drive SE Dawson, GA 39842
Tommy Rountree	<a href="mailto:news@thedawsonnews.com">news@thedawsonnews.com</a> 229-995-2175	The Dawson News( <b>Communications, Career Day,Funds for School events</b> ) P.O. Box 350 Dawson, GA 39842
Steve Wiley	229-995-4469 <a href="mailto:insurancemarket@windstream.net">insurancemarket@windstream.net</a>	Insurance Market ( <b>Career Day</b> ) P.O. Box 547 Dawson, GA 39842
Teensie Brown	229-995-3855	The Garden Center Florist( <b>Funds for School events</b> ) 1080 Johnson Street SE Dawson, GA 39842
Dorothy Bruce	<a href="mailto:ddbruce@windstream.net">ddbruce@windstream.net</a> 229-995-4855	Charles Bruce CPA( <b>Career Day, Funds for school events</b> ) P.O. Box 694 Dawson, GA 39842
Ricki Milliron	<a href="mailto:ricki.milliron@goldenpeanut.com">ricki.milliron@goldenpeanut.com</a> 229-995-2111	Golden Peanut Co. ( <b>Career Day, School field trips</b> ) 715 MLK Jr. Drive Dawson, GA 39842
Glatcie Hall	<a href="mailto:glatcie.hall@dol.state.ga.us">glatcie.hall@dol.state.ga.us</a> 229-995-3741	Georgia Department of Labor( <b>Career Day</b> ) 127 West Lee Street Dawson, GA 39842
John L. Gardner	<a href="mailto:gardnerjohnl@yahoo.com">gardnerjohnl@yahoo.com</a> Cell: 229-343-8834 Laboratory: 229-995-4481 <a href="mailto:Chris.butts@ars.usda.gov">Chris.butts@ars.usda.gov</a>	National Peanut Research Laboratory/ TCBOE (Marshall Lamb or Chris Butts—tour contact) Terrell County BOE ( <b>Career Day</b> ) P. O. Box 509 Dawson, GA 39842
Ernest Johnson	<a href="mailto:ejohnson@terrell.k12.ga.us">ejohnson@terrell.k12.ga.us</a> 229-995-2544	Johnson & Son Construction ( <b>Funds for school events</b> ) 249 S. Main Dawson, GA 39842
	229-995-2513	Woolf Furniture

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Robert Gardner		105 North Main St( <b>Funds for school events</b> ) Dawson, GA 39842
Gina Webb, Director	<a href="mailto:tcc@windstream.net">tcc@windstream.net</a> 229-995-2011	Terrell County Chamber of Commerce Executive P.O. Box 405 ( <b>Public Relations for the School System</b> ) Dawson, GA 39842
Linda Beck	<a href="mailto:linda.beck@tyson.com">linda.beck@tyson.com</a> 229-995-6841	Tyson Foods ( <b>Career Day, Funds for school events</b> ) 514 Industrial Blvd Dawson, GA 39842

**Terrell County School System  
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**Exhibit 9**

**A brief description of the system's fiscal history and whether the system is or has ever operated under a fiscal deficit**

# Terrell County School System Charter Application

## Fiscal History

The Terrell County School System derives its general fund financial support from state allocations through the Quality Basic Education Act funding formula and categorical grants, from local property taxes, from a one percent local option sales tax, and from the federal government through various special purpose grants and allocations. The system has maintained fiscal stability over the past five years despite a decline in net state funding from \$53.9 million in fiscal year 2009 to \$49.9 million in fiscal year 2013. Total general fund revenue has declined from just over \$68.7 million in fiscal year 2009 to \$64 million in fiscal year 2013 to support the 8,926 students enrolled in kindergarten through grade twelve in that year. America Recovery and Restoration Act (ARRA) funds totaling just under \$7.5 million, over the five years analyzed here, offset some of the loss in state funding. Local revenue has increased from \$12.8 million to \$13.7 million over the five fiscal years.

The school system, to remain solvent, has reduced the length of the work year for teachers by six days in fiscal years 2010 and 2011 and by four days in fiscal years 2012, 2013, and 2014. An immediate goal is to return all staff to full employment and compensation. The school year for students was reduced to 177 days in 2009-10 and 2010-11. For the past three years, 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14, the school year was set at 179 days. A second immediate goal is to restore the 180-day school year and to devise new strategies to maximize student learning in and out of school.

The number of classroom teachers has decreased from 668 in fiscal year 2010 to 634 in fiscal year 2014. In fiscal year 2010 the student/teacher ratio was 12.7:1. The ratio has increased each year since reaching 14.2:1 in fiscal year 2014. These reductions in people, compensation, and services have obviously had a negative overall effect on the ability of the school system to provide a high quality educational experience for all students. The school system has been diligent in its effort to ensure financial solvency while protecting the educational program to the greatest extent possible.

The school system has never been in deficit financing and has maintained an adequate fund balance (ending fund equity) each year until fiscal year 2013 when the general fund balance dipped from \$7.5 million at the beginning of the year to just under \$4.7 million at the end of the year. The equity was

## **Terrell County School System Charter Application**

\$8.2 million in fiscal year 2009 and was \$7.5 million at the end of fiscal year 2012. While this level of equity is not deemed adequate, it has enabled the school system to avoid short term borrowing for operational purposes.

The Board of Education is offsetting some of the loss in state funding through an increase in the property tax mill rate to 10.287, a two mill increase over the current rate. The school system is one of ten in the state that has a one percent local option sales tax for school maintenance and operation in lieu of property tax. The system is required to roll back its property tax mill rate to account for sales tax revenue anticipated each year. The effective mill rate taking sales tax revenue into account is 16.164 for the current fiscal year. The property tax digest for school maintenance and operation has increased slightly over the past six years from \$856.7 million in calendar year 2009 to \$897.5 in calendar year 2014 for an increase of 4.75% over the six year period. The system is 174<sup>th</sup> in property wealth per weighted full- time-equivalent student placing it near the bottom among the state's 180 school systems in its financial ability to support public education. The system is best characterized as a low ability/high effort school system.

The system believes that financial performance should be judged in terms of the resources available to the school system, the system's stated goals, the allocation of resources toward those goals, and the results achieved. The system has devoted just fewer than 77 percent of its general fund budget in three of the past five years to the expenditure functions of instruction, pupil services, improvement of instructional services, and media services; in other words, to those areas that directly support teaching and learning. In the other two years the percentages have been 74.9 and 74.1. Student performance as measured by the state testing program has improved in virtually every area for each of the past five years. Thus, the system has maintained its focus on the classroom during a period of declining resources.

The citizens of Terrell County have approved four special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) referenda which have provided the school system with funds to construct and renovate many of its school facilities. The school system has been "assigned a rating of A1 underlying rating and an Aa1 enhanced rating" by Moody's.

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**Exhibit 10  
Terrell County School System's most recent audit**

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Hyperlink to Terrell County most recent Audit report.

<http://www.terrell.k12.ga.us/Portals/Terrell/District/docs/Exhibit%2010.pdf>

**Terrell County School System  
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**Exhibit 11**

**The school system's most recent accreditation report**

**Terrell County School System  
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Hyperlink to Terrell County School System's **recent accreditation report.**

<http://www.terrell.k12.ga.us/Portals/Terrell/District/docs/Exhibit%2011%20Quality%20Assurance%20Review.pdf>

**Terrell County School System  
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**Exhibit 12  
Terrell County School System's most recent strategic plan**

**Terrell County School System  
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Hyperlink to **Terrell County School System's most recent strategic plan.**

<http://www.terrell.k12.ga.us/Portals/Terrell/District/docs/Strategic%20Plan%20TCSS%202015-18.pdf>