**Charter System**

**Renewal**

**Application**

**For Charter Systems Seeking Renewal**

**from the**

**State Board of Education**

***August 2020***

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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 decision-making.

Your Charter System Renewal Application is a legal petition to the Georgia State Board of Education asking it to renew your charter system. The evaluation of your Application will be led by the District Flexibility and 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 your charter system has achieved the academic performance you promised in exchange for broad flexibility from Georgia’s education law, rules, and guidelines. The evaluation will also determine whether:

* The charter system has complied 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] and State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.04 *et seq.*);
* The academic plans are still viable; and
* The charter system is still in the public interest.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review all resources available on the GaDOE’s District Flexibility and Charter Schools Division website prior to drafting and submitting a charter system renewal application ([http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/default.aspx)) including the standard charter contract template, which is what the State Board of Education will approve.

**submission procedures**

Your Charter System Renewal Application must be approved by your Local Board of Education in accordance with the rules and regulations of your local board. Please note that filing a Charter System Renewal Application does not guarantee that a renewed charter system contract will be granted. However, GaDOE will work closely with you to improve your chances of State Board of Education approval of your charter system contract.

Submission to GaDOE of the Charter System Renewal Application must be by mail, UPS/FedEx, or hand-delivered to: **Georgia Department of Education, District Flexibility Charter Schools Division, 2053 Twin Towers East, 205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive, SE, Atlanta, Georgia 30334.** Applications are processed and interviews are scheduled by GaDOE on a first-come, first-served basis. Please provide GaDOE with the dates of the charter system’s AdvancED/SACS Accreditation visit as soon as possible in order to facilitate the scheduling process for the system interview and on-site visit.

**Note that faxed or emailed applications will *not* be accepted as your formal submission. Only complete petitions that comply with these guidelines and the technical requirements below will be evaluated. Applications will not be returned, so please keep a copy for your records. In addition, please note that all information in applications submitted to GaDOE are subject to the Georgia Open Records Act.**

**Charter SYSTEM Renewal Application checklist**

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

* An Application Package includes an **original** and **two copies** of the following items:
* **Application Cover PAGE** (Use the form on page 5; the form may not be altered in any way).
* **charter Application** (Your answers to the questions posed on page 6).
* The 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 system’s name and a footer showing consecutive page numbers.
* 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 8-9; 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.
* Electronic copy of assurances must be signed. Blank copies will not be accepted.
* **local board of education resolution** (A sample resolution is on page 10)
* The original must be signed in blue ink; stamped signatures will not be accepted.
* **Exhibits** (See list of required Exhibits below on page 7).
* Required Exhibits should be as limited in size as possible.
* 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 USB drive that includes:
* Microsoft Word versions of your Application Cover Page, Charter Application, and proposed charter system contract
* Microsoft Excel versions of the following Exhibits: Annual Report Form, Governance Matrix, and CCA Partners Roles and Responsibilities Chart *(if applicable)*
* PDF Version of your complete Application Packet in the following order: Cover Page, Application, signed Assurances Form, signed Local Board of Education Resolution, and Exhibits

**CHARTER SYSTEM RENEWAL APPLICATION**

**COVER PAGE**

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Charter System Information** | | | | | |
| 1. Full Name of Charter System | | | 1. How many schools in total are included in your charter system (including college and career academies)? | | |
| 1. How many of each of the following schools will be included in your charter system?   Primary School(s)       High School(s)  Elementary School(s)       College and Career Academy(ies)  Middle School(s) | | | | | |
| 1. Charter System Street Address | | 1. City | 1. State | | 1. Zip |
| 1. Contact Person | | | 1. Title | | |
| 1. Contact Street Address | 1. City | | 1. State | | 1. Zip |
| 1. Contact’s Telephone Number | 1. Contact’s Fax Number | | | 1. Contact’s E-mail Address | |

**Charter SYSTEM Renewal Application**

**questions**

1. **Essential or Innovative Features Implementation** 
   1. What is the status of the implementation of each Essential or Innovative Feature included in your charter system contract?
   2. For those Essential or Innovative Features that are not on schedule, what are next steps?
   3. Are there any Essential or Innovative Features that should be deleted or added to your new charter system contract (including any college and career academies)?
2. **Academic Accountability**
   1. How have your schools done on meeting the academic targets in your charter system contract?
   2. What steps have you taken on an annual basis at schools that did not meet their academic targets?
   3. What will you be doing for schools that fail to meet their academic targets in the future?
3. **Local Schools Governance implementation**
   1. What are the main successes of your implementation of Local School Governance?
   2. What barriers had to be overcome to implement Local School Governance?
   3. What remains to be done to fully implement Local School Governance with fidelity?
4. **Charter Supplement Uses**
   1. For what did the system use its annual charter system supplemental funds that were included in your QBE funding?
   2. Will any changes be made in the future to how the supplemental funds are used?

**EXHIBITS**

The following Exhibits are required to complete your Charter System Renewal Application Package. Please tab the Exhibits to match the item numbers below. Exhibits should be as limited in size as possible.

1. The most recent Charter System Annual Report Form (including the Accountability tab).
2. A completed Charter System Governance Matrix *(template available on GaDOE’s website)*.
3. If applicable, a Georgia College and Career Academy (GCCA) Partners Roles and Responsibilities Chart *(template available on GaDOE’s website)*.
4. If applicable, TCSG GCCA Certification documents (including a letter stating that the GCCA has been certified or pre-certified)
5. A proposed charter system contract *(template available on GaDOE’s website)*.
6. A copy of the charter system’s AdvancED/SACS Accreditation Executive Summary.
7. A copy of the charter system’s AdvancED/SACS Accreditation External Team Exit Recommendation.
8. A signed Assurances Form and Signature Sheet *(see pages 8-9)*.
9. A signed Local Board of Education Resolution approving the charter system’s renewal application *(sample on page 10)*.

*The most up-to-date versions of the Charter System Renewal Application and required attachments are located on GaDOE’s website at the following link:* [*http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/Charter-Petition-Application.aspx*](https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/Charter-Petition-Application.aspx)*.*

**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 Renewal 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       *(name of school system)* located in       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;
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;
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; and
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 Renewal Application, Assurances Form, and attached Exhibits were approved by the       Board of Education on the       day of      , 201\_.

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Chair, Local Board of Education Date

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Superintendent, Local Board of Education Date

If a Charter is granted, Petitioners assure that the charter system’s 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.

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Chair, Local Board of Education Date

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Superintendent, Local Board of Education Date

**SAMPLE local board of education resolution**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County Board of Education is the governing body of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County School District.

**WHEREAS**, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County Board of Education entered into a contract with the State Board of Education on or about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for the operation of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County School District as a Charter System;

**WHEREAS**, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County Board of Education recognizes the positive impact charter system status has had on increasing community engagement, student achievement, and flexibility throughout the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County School District;

**WHEREAS**, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County Board of Education seeks to renew its charter system contract;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County Board of Education authorizes the renewal of its charter contract with the State Board of Education and hereby submits the renewal petition and this Resolution to the State Board of Education for final approval.

Adopted this the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2017.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Board Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent