

# Charter System Application

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

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

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

## DEADLINE AND SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

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

Georgia Department of Education

Charter Schools Division

2053 Twin Towers East

205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive, SE

Atlanta, Georgia 30334

## APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECKLIST

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

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

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

## 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 <b>Morgan County Charter School System</b>			
2. Please indicate whether this is a: <b>Renewal Petition x</b>	3. How many schools in total are you proposing to include in your charter system? <b>4</b>		
4. How many of each of the following schools are you proposing to include in your charter system? <b>Primary School(s) 1 Middle School(s) 1</b> <b>Elementary School(s) 1 High school(s) 1</b>			
5. On July 1 of what year do you want your charter contract to be effective? <b>2016</b>			
6. How many years are you proposing for the term of your charter contract? (Note that an initial charter cannot exceed five years) <b>5</b>			
7. Charter System Street Address <b>1065 East Avenue</b>	8. City <b>Madison</b>	9. State <b>Georgia</b>	10. Zip <b>30650</b>
11. Contact Person <b>Dr. James Woodard</b>		12. Title <b>Superintendent</b>	
13. Contact Street Address <b>1065 East Avenue</b>	14. City <b>Madison</b>	15. State <b>Georgia</b>	16. Zip <b>30650</b>
17. Contact's telephone number <b>706/752-4600</b>	18. Contact's fax number <b>706/752-4601</b>	19. Contact's E-mail Address <b>james.woodard@morgan.k12.ga.us</b>	

## CHARTER SYSTEM APPLICATION

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

### THE CASE

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

#### 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.**

The Morgan County Charter School System (MCCSS) is comprised of four schools: Morgan County Primary School (grades PK-2), Morgan County Elementary School (grades 3-5), Morgan County Middle School (grades 6-8), Morgan County High School (grades 9-12) and an Alternative Education Program that serves student in grades 6-12 on its own campus. Total enrollment (November, 2015) is 3181 students: 1% Asian, 2% Two or More Races, 5% Hispanic, 28% African American, and 64% White. Enrollment numbers have shown a slight decrease over the last several years; however, with the construction of a new hospital,, zoo, farmers’ market, and industry, the population of the county and thus, the school system, is expected to increase. (This increase in population growth with the advent of new industry is an identified challenge addressed in this renewal application.) Fifty percent (50%) of MCCSS students have been identified as eligible for free and reduced lunch. All four schools are eligible for Title I Targeted Assistance.

The Morgan County Charter School System obtained Charter School System status in 2011 for Morgan County Primary School, Morgan County Elementary School, and Morgan County Middle School. Prior to 2011, each school in Morgan County had achieved the distinction as Converted Charter Schools. Because

Morgan County High School became a converted charter school later than the other three schools and was functioning under different timelines than the other three schools, system and school leadership, as well as the School Council (at that time) decided to allow the high school to remain a converted charter school when the remainder of the schools joined the system charter. As leadership changed at the school and system levels, the need for all of our schools to come under one charter for unity and consistency became apparent. The system and community pride themselves as being “*One Morgan*,” and have placed heavy emphasis on vertical alignment from school to school, as well as on K-12 initiatives such as cross-grade Professional Development, Career Readiness, and unique relationship-building programs such as “*Mentor1Morgan*.” After diligent study and discussions among the Morgan County High School Governance Team and the System Leadership Team, MCHS Leadership Team, teachers, parents, and the community, a public meeting was held in the Spring, 2015, ending with a unanimous vote for Morgan County High School to dissolve its Charter and be included in the system Charter. The Morgan County Board of Education voted to accept this plan on May 11, 2015.

One of the most recent opportunities for community input has just recently occurred. During the last two school years, over 200 parents, students, and educators were joined by business and industry representatives, local government officials, community leaders, and college and technical school partners to undergo a year and a half-long strategic planning process to aid in developing a 3.3 million dollar College and Career Academy Grant, which was recently awarded to the school system. Results from these community conversations and self-examination have helped identify local challenges and innovative thinking and strategies among our school, post-secondary schools, businesses, and community members, many of which are worked into this Charter renewal.

During the summer of 2015, school and system leaders met to evaluate performance accountability in light of the collected surveys, outside appraisals, data analysis, self-assessments, Strategic Plan reviews, and School Governance Team recommendations, not only during the past school year but also for the last five years of our Charter. Based on those discussions and a thorough review of each school's School Improvement Plan, four "cornerstones for the puzzle of student achievement" emerged: Safety/Discipline, Student Support, Rigorous and Engaged Classrooms, and Maintenance/ Facilities. The focus of our entire System Charter renewal is based on identified challenges in these areas that we resolve to improve through our Charter status. Our goal is to create an exceptional performance culture focused on student achievement. In order to create this improved culture, the following challenges were identified, which, when resolved, will allow the MCCSS to become a "complete success": Improving student achievement, enhancing workplace readiness, and creating a performance culture in our schools and system (Exhibit #13).

Several challenges directly affecting **student achievement** identified by these groups have come about as Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) have become more of a focus in regards to student learning. As a district, Morgan County Charter Schools exceeded the state average in the percentage of students meeting and exceeding at all grade levels on the state CRCT/Milestone assessments. However, when drilled down to the school and grade levels, this data reveals that the students in Morgan County are not growing academically as well as their academically-similar peers around the state.

Progress data for students at each school level within the Morgan County Charter System has shown to be below the state at the same level. Also, the differences in the growth levels from 2013 to 2014 between the system and the state have grown by as much as 7%.

**Percentage of Students Achieving High to Moderate Growth 2014**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Morgan County Charter System 2014</b>	<b>Georgia State Average 2014</b>	<b>Differences</b>
Elementary	58%	63%	-5%
Middle	54%	65%	-11%
High	58%	62%	-4%

**Percentage of Students Achieving High to Moderate Growth 2013**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Morgan County Charter System 2013</b>	<b>Georgia State Average 2013</b>	<b>Differences</b>
Elementary	65%	65%	0%
Middle	63%	67%	-4%
High	61%	65%	-4%

Data from the 2013 and 2014 CRCT shows that growth among subgroups is also a concern for Morgan County students as the percentage of students achieving high to moderate growth has decreased 9% for Asian, Hispanic, and Multiple Race students as well 7% for White students and 4% for Black students.

**Percentage of Students Achieving High to Moderate Growth - By Race**

<b>Race</b>	<b>Morgan County Charter System 2014</b>	<b>Morgan County Charter System 2013</b>	<b>Change from 2013 - 2014</b>
<b>Asian</b>	62%	71%	-9%
<b>Black</b>	55%	59%	-4%
<b>Hispanic</b>	57%	66%	-9%
<b>White</b>	58%	65%	-7%
<b>Multiple Races</b>	51%	60%	-9%

However, this lack of growth is not just limited to race but also by economic status. The changes in the growth of the students for by economic status show that over the past two administrations that fell by over 6%.

**Percentage of Students Achieving High to Moderate Growth - By ED Status**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Morgan County Charter System 2014</b>	<b>Morgan County Charter System 2013</b>	<b>Change from 2013 - 2014</b>
<b>Economically Dis.</b>	55%	61%	-6%
<b>Non - ED</b>	59%	66%	-7%

Based on the most current data from the CCRPI (College and Career Readiness Performance Index) Report, the Morgan County Charter School System fell a difference of 4.1 points, falling from 81.5 to 77.4 points out of a total possible score of 100. The MCCSS score exceeded the state score by 2.1 points.

On the other end of the continuum, the system also needs to accommodate the advanced learning needs of our higher performing students. While the number of students taking Advanced Placement courses at Morgan County High School is high, the pass rate (score of 3, 4, or 5 on the final exam) on these tests continues to be low. In 2015, 291 AP tests were taken by Morgan County High School students, but only 106 reached a passing score. The number of students choosing to participate in the International Baccalaureate Program is slightly decreasing, however, more of our students are earning the prestigious IB diplomas as 9 of the 23 candidates completed the program last year.

The system recognizes that our students need to be better informed about college and career choices, and then we need to provide them with the tools they need to be successful in their chosen pathway. As a rural school district with 50% of our students eligible for free/reduced lunch, another challenge (having long-term effects even after students graduate) identified by all stakeholders is in providing students with an extensive selection of marketable career/technical opportunities. Our students are not graduating **ready for the workplace**. Morgan County High School's graduating class of 2015 contained 228 students. Of those students, only 92 were CTAE Pathway completers (40%). Of those, only 46 were credentialed in their CTAE Pathway (20%).

Building a **performance culture** in the system takes time and trust. This year's 72% voter approval for the ESPLOST referendum validates that a majority of our stakeholders approve of the direction the system is moving. However, school climate surveys through LKES and community/parent questionnaires reveal that we need to strengthen our culture so that all of our users will know that we are transparent and trustworthy. The average parent survey aggregate score per school was 77 while the aggregate teacher score was 84.

**2. What is the rank order priority of these challenges (from most to least important)?**

Increased student achievement

“Real-life” workforce preparedness, and

Creation of an enriched performance culture.

**3. Which of these challenges will your school district be able to address by becoming a charter system?**

The Morgan County Charter School system will be able to address each of these three identified challenges by continuing our Charter status. The system recognizes the importance of using data to make informed decisions that will ultimately improve **student achievement**. Professional learning funds have been spent to educate teachers and administrators on procedures to analyze student and teacher data to aid in differentiated instruction, the Response to Intervention process, prescribed software programs, discipline events/interventions, and remediation/ enrichment activities. Analysis of this data has helped the system focus on challenges that will require innovative solutions within the context of Charter waivers. These challenges were thoroughly discussed and identified by the system’s High Performance Professional Learning Communities (HPPLC) comprised of administrators and teachers representing each grade level and content level at each school; School Improvement Planning Teams at each school; Principals’ Council; Executive Leadership Council; School Governance Teams; System Leadership Team (made up of the chairs of each School Governance Team, principals, and Executive Leadership Central Office staff); and by each GLISI (Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement) cohort group (Morgan County has had four cohort groups trained using the GLISI model for data/root cause analysis over the last four years.)

Providing our students the **workplace readiness** skills they require is hindered by the current inadequate offering of career-based learning is compounded by the inability to recruit certified faculty who have job-related experience in these technical fields. The requirement for certified faculty is a limitation in Morgan County, when an industry recognized expert instructor could be employed to excite students to want to pursue a variety of career choices. The system has found itself having to fill long-established college/career

classes with students who may have little or no interest in that specific subject matter in order to “earn” the teacher or to offer a “vocational” or AP class to a student who has not been properly guided into appropriate career choices. As new, additional, and intensive college and career classes/pathways are created and offered, (our College and Career Academy is set to open in 2017), true workplace readiness can trickle down into the lower schools. The MCCSS five year facilities plan calls for a new middle school to be built on the same campus as a new Morgan County High School and College and Career Academy. The need to offer middle school students high school classes for credit becomes apparent so that these learners can take advantage of the new pathways, as well. Offering credit-earning high school content courses at the middle school level will allow students to take more in-depth classes in their college and career pathway once they get to the high school. The system also proposes to create a curriculum that acknowledges physical activities performed by student athletes/ROTC cadets that will align with high school credit-earning Physical Education state standards that will not involve traditional instructional seat time. Freeing up this class will also allow our students more time in their chosen college/career pathway.

The MCCSS wants to provide clear expectations and focus on the strength of each individual member of our school system: educators and students. We want to create a healthy **performance culture** embracing clear communication and collaboration that attracts and retains diverse talents. We want to encourage, reward and motivate our students and staff so that effective learning can take place, and we want to invest in our employees by offering professional learning geared at meeting targeted goals in School Improvement Plans. Each of these ideals is in-twined with the common theme, or “cornerstones” we’ve identified as our main focus: Student Support, Safety/Discipline, Maintenance/Facilities, and Rigorous and Engaged Classrooms – All leading to a performance culture based on increased student achievement.

**4. What specific actions will your district take to address each of these challenges (listed in #3 above) during its five-year charter term?**

- a. Innovative Mini-Grants will be awarded to teachers/schools/system to improve student achievement
- b. Integrated courses which cover curriculum standards for multiple subjects will be designed and used
- c. “Expert” teachers and other school/ College and Career Academy staff who do not hold Georgia certification will be hired
- d. Opportunities for credit-earning internships and externships (Grades 9-12) will be created
- e. Opportunities to earn credit by demonstrating mastery of standards for specific content areas in both classroom and workplace settings for students in grades 9-12 will be generated
- f. A Strong Teacher Induction Program for teachers out of field or who have industry certification but not teacher certification will be designed and implemented

**5. Provide a clear explanation of how each of these specific actions (listed in #4 above) will lead to the specific challenge being addressed.**

In an effort to address the **Student Achievement**/Student Growth Percentage improvement challenge, which has become the system’s first priority, the system will provide charter funds to award closely-monitored innovative grants to teachers to improve student growth in the identified areas of need. The “grant” process was decided upon this year because of the new data being established through Milestone testing. It is difficult to set outcomes when baseline data is just now being shared. Flexibility will be provided to schools in their applications and they will focus on the identified areas/subgroups based on data analysis drilled down to the student and domain levels. Schools will be able to focus on their greatest needs based on School Improvement Plan targets. Schools will be required to submit detailed applications for the innovative grants, including the timelines of the grant periods and scheduled accountability checks.. The

applicants will identify the challenged academic area, provide a step-by-step action plan geared to improve growth, identify subgroups affected by the grant, and justify the manner in which the grant funds will support the challenged academic need. Accountability will be assessed throughout the grant, as the success of the activity will be measured with pre and post-assessments and targeted goals. Impact checks will be held at least twice a year to insure that that the activities are following the stipulation in the grant and that students are progressing. Schools will be provided with instruction on how to identify specific challenges based on data analysis and a team of readers from the teaching and learning field will insure that each grant relates to the School Improvement Plan targets/identified areas of need and is researched-based. The system will ensure the sustainability for each activity that leads to predicted, positive outcomes after the mini-grant period ends.

While the activities outlined in the grants are taking place at the school/classroom level, the school and school system will monitor student growth two times during the year (December/January and May). This monitoring will allow district and school level leaders to be proactive regarding student growth. Should changes be needed, they can be initiated before the administration of the EOG/EOC Milestone assessment at the end of the school year. This bi-annual standardized monitoring will work in conjunction with the system's use of the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP), as designed by Northwest Education Agency (NWEA) which assesses student growth in Reading and Math in grades K – 10. MAP will provide progress monitoring for these students to insure that the innovative instruction/resources from the mini-grants are improving student achievement. The broad flexibility granted by our Charter System status will allow the grants to include flexibility in areas such as certification, maximum class size, state EIP, REP, ESOL, and Gifted program delivery models, alternative schedules and calendars, seat time requirements, variation of time allowed for specific content areas based on learner needs, integration of content standards for combined subjects, and alternative courses to meet graduation requirements.

The systems' second stakeholder-identified challenge is to increase **workforce readiness**. In order to implement the community's goal for an inclusive whole school approach learning community encompassing 100% of students actively engaged in a career pathway program of study, MCCSS has received a 3.3 million dollar grant to construct a College and Career Academy (to open in 2017). The system will use its broad flexibility through this Charter to insure that state certified, industry experienced instructors are allowed to teach in the highly-technical classes that were specifically chosen by the community to meet our own workforce needs (focusing on agriculture, tourism/hospitality, biophysical sciences, etc.). This flexibility to state certification in certain career and technical areas will give the students of Morgan County a K-12 environment that promotes the education and implementation of 21st century workplace skills and that promotes high-demand STEAM careers and skills. A formal Advisory Program time (in use now through our current Charter waiver) may continue to be carved out from content area subjects, allowing the system flexibility from the seat time requirement. The system's emphasis on "real world" training will lead to monitored, credit-bearing internships and externships in the community setting for high school students. Traditional class times will need to be varied to allow more time for the students to experience "hands on" learning without having a bell ring, signaling the end of the class period, whether or not the student has met the day's learning objective or skill set. Students will be permitted to earn credit by demonstrating mastery of standards for specific content areas in both classroom and workplace settings.

The system's first two priorities, increasing student achievement and providing workplace readiness, are actually dependent upon the success of an enriched **performance culture** (our third challenge) throughout the MCCSS. We want to establish an incentive program (which may or not be monetary) to keep our best teachers in Morgan County. Because we will be using flexibility in hiring some "expert" teachers (especially "industry experienced" instructors who are part of our workplace readiness program who may not hold teaching certificates), we will invest in a strong Teacher Induction Program aimed at sharing

education information (such as classroom management strategies, the “non-negotiable,” special education accommodations, Tier 1 standard-based classrooms, differentiated instruction, etc.) to these “new to the field of education” teachers. This program will progress over the school year and will have both school and system components.

Because Professional Learning is such a strong component of a performance culture, the system will continue to work through School Improvement Planning Teams at each school to ensure that all Professional Learning has a direct correlation with the School Improvement/Strategic Plan targets. At the request of our teachers, Professional Learning Days have been added to both the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school calendars. The system will also use the “*One Morgan*” approach to Professional Learning during the school day by staggering trainings so that students will not have to be taught by substitute teachers as often as they are now when groups of teachers are out on professional leave attending or presenting at conferences.

The use of technology continues to demand teachers’ time as they learn new programs and applications to help their students, mark attendance, give grades, and make parent contacts. Our “*Bring Your Own Device*” initiative has also caused teachers to need to be familiar with the variety of technology hardware, as well as the accompanying software and on-line Internet applications. Technology instruction (and practice) will be part of the Professional Learning Days for all staff and will also be included as part of the New to the System Orientation at the beginning of the school year. The system believes that providing staff with this knowledge at dedicated times, and anticipating new trends, programs, etc. will alleviate some of the day to day anxiety working with multiple programs and devices.

Teachers have requested peer coaching and feedback from their colleagues so that they can improve their craft. The system will set up scheduled times for observation and collaborative meetings during the school day for beginning and master teachers to learn from and share with each other. Senior Leadership staff

(superintendent and assistant superintendents) will continue to coach principals in areas identified on their LKES Climate Surveys as needing improvement.

In order to create an enhanced performance culture, teachers need to feel secure in their jobs. Recent furloughs and talks of Reduction in Force have greatly affected MCCSS teacher morale over the last few years. The activities described in this application have been specifically targeted to enhance our performance culture and are aimed at providing teachers with the tools they need to be effective to improve student achievement and workplace readiness. The Morgan County Charter School System will not use its flexibility status to waive the state tenure law.

Our current Charter status has allowed the MCCSS to take advantage of many innovative activities, tasks, and initiatives. This application has allowed stakeholders from all demographics in our county to have the opportunity to identify our challenges and have input in recommendations for changes that will address our current challenges to **improve student achievement**, provide a strong **workplace readiness** program, and enhance **a performance culture**. Greater flexibility of Title XX rules is needed for the Morgan County Charter School System to continue to meet the goal expressed in our mission statement, originally established over twenty years ago: *To ensure that all students will be successful in their learning and personal development*. The system will continue to be transparent in accountability to our stakeholders by providing frequent up-dates to our Board of Education and the media as to the success of these innovative programs for all Morgan County students.

\*The success of these solution will be reviewed and the Charter amended as may be necessary based on the data collected. The continuation of the solution plan will continue over the life of the charter and will work in tandem with the district strategic plan. Community leaders anticipate significant population growth in Morgan County over the next ten years. Flexibility with the charter will allow the district to adjust solutions to the challenges to best meet the needs of the school population with each school year.

**6. Although you will be granted a broad flexibility waiver if you are granted a charter, please list the specific Georgia law or State Board rule that must be waived to allow your district to implement each specific action (listed in #4 above).**

<b>Innovation(s)</b>	<b>Waivers</b>	<b>SBOE Rule(s)</b>	<b>O.C.G.A. Laws</b>
<p>Innovative Mini-Grants awarded to teachers/schools/system to improve student achievement. Certification, maximum class size, state EIP, REP, ESOL, and Gifted program delivery models and funding, alternative schedules and calendars, seat time requirements, variation of time allowed for specific content areas based on learner needs, integration of content standards for combined subjects, and alternative courses to meet graduation requirements will be used as innovations as part of the grants.</p>	<p>Alternative courses to meet graduation requirements (Grades 8-12)</p> <p>K-12 Seat Time</p> <p>Flexibility with EIP funding/delivery models (Grades K-5)</p> <p>Flexibility with REP funding/delivery models (Grades 6-12)</p> <p>Flexibility with ESOL funding/delivery models (Grades K-12)</p> <p>Flexibility with Gifted funding/delivery models (Grades K-12)</p> <p>Class Size (Grade K-12)</p>	<p><b>160-4-2-.01</b> <i>The Quality Core Curriculum and Student Competencies Required by the Quality Basic Education Act</i></p> <p><b>160-4-2-.05</b> <i>Middle School Program Criteria</i></p> <p><b>160-5-1-.02</b> <i>School District School Year for Students and Employees</i></p> <p><b>160-4-2-.12</b> <i>Comprehensive Health and PE Program Plan</i></p> <p><b>160-4-2-.11</b> <i>Promotion, Placement, and Retention</i></p> <p><b>160-4-5-.01</b> <i>Remedial Education</i></p>	<p><b>§ 20-2-159.4</b> <i>Policies and guidelines for awarding units of high school credit hours based on demonstrated proficiency</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-153</b> <i>Early Intervention Program for students at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-154</b> <i>Remedial Education Program</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-282-285</b> <i>Georgia Academic Placement and Promotion Policy</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-131, 20-2-140.1, 20-2-142</b> <i>Graduation Requirements/Seat Time</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-290, 20-14-33</b> <i>Middle School Criteria</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-154, 20-2-184.1</b> <i>Instructional Extension</i></p>

		<p><b>160-4-5-.02</b> <i>Language Assistance Program for English Learners (EL)</i></p> <p><b>160-4-2-.48</b> <i>High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2002-2003 School Year and Subsequent Years</i></p> <p><b>160-4-2-.17</b> <i>Early Intervention Program (EIP)</i></p> <p><b>160-4-2-.38</b> <i>Education Program for Gifted</i></p> <p><b>160-5-1-08</b> <i>Class Size</i></p>	<p><b>§§ 20-2-151</b> <i>School Day for Students</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-182</b> <i>Class Size/Staffing</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-180</b> <i>Scheduling for Instruction</i></p>
<p>Integrated Courses which cover curriculum standards for multiple subjects</p>	<p>Class Size (Grades K-12)</p> <p>Seat Time (Grades K-12)</p> <p>Alternative Classes to Meet Graduation Requirements (Grades 8-12)</p>	<p><b>160-5-1-08</b> <i>Class Size</i></p> <p><b>160-4-2-.01</b> <i>The Quality Core Curriculum and Student Competencies Required by the Quality Basic Education Act</i></p>	<p><b>§ 20-2-182</b> <i>Class Size/Staffing</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-180</b> <i>Scheduling for Instruction</i></p> <p><b>§§ 20-2-151</b> <i>School Day for Students</i></p>

	<p>Flexibility with English Learners Delivery Models (Grades K-12)</p> <p>Flexibility with EIP funding and delivery models (Grades K-5)</p> <p>Flexibility with REP funding and delivery models (Grades 6-12)</p> <p>Flexibility with Gifted funding and delivery models (Grades K-12)</p>	<p><b>160-4-2-.05</b> <i>Middle School Program Criteria</i></p> <p><b>160-4-2-.17</b> <i>Early Intervention Program (EIP)</i></p> <p><b>160-4-5-.02</b> <i>Language Assistance Program for English Learners (EL)</i></p> <p><b>160-4-5-.01</b> <i>Remedial Education</i></p> <p><b>160-4-2-.48</b> <i>High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2002-2003 School Year and Subsequent Years</i></p> <p><b>160-4-2-.12</b> <i>Comprehensive Health and PE Program Plan</i></p>	<p><b>§ 20-2-131, 20-2-140.1, 20-2-142</b> <i>Graduation Requirements/Seat Time</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-290, 20-14-33</b> <i>Middle School Criteria</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-159.4</b> <i>Policies and guidelines for awarding units of high school credit hours based on demonstrated proficiency</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-153</b> <i>Early Intervention Program for students at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-154</b> <i>Remedial Education Program</i></p>
<p>Hiring of “expert” teachers and other school/College and Career Academy staff who do not hold Georgia certification</p>	<p>Flexibility with Certification (Educational Staff)</p>	<p><b>160-4-7-.14</b> <i>Personnel, Facilities, and Caseloads</i></p> <p><b>160-5-2-.05</b></p>	<p><b>§ 20-2-984</b> <i>Professionals Standards Commission</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-211.1</b> <i>Clearance Certificates</i></p>

		<i>Experience for Salary Purposes</i>	
Opportunities for credit-earning internships and externships (Grades 9-12)	Seat Time (Grades 9-12)  Alternative Courses to Meet Graduation Requirements (Grades 9-12)	<b>160-5-1-.02</b> <i>School Day and School Year for Students and Employees</i>  <b>160-4-3-.14</b> <i>Work-Based Learning Programs</i>	
Opportunities to earn credit by demonstrating mastery of standards for specific content areas in both classroom and workplace settings (Grades 9-12)	Seat time (Grades 9-12)	<b>160-5-1-.02</b> <i>School Day and School Year for Students and Employees</i>  <b>160-4-2-.48</b> <i>High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2002-2003 School Year and Subsequent Years</i>	<b>§ 20-2-159.4</b> <i>Policies and guidelines for awarding units of high school credit based on demonstrated proficiency</i>
<b>Teacher Tenure</b>	<i>Teacher Tenure Law for the state of Georgia will <b>NOT</b> be waived by the system's Charter flexibility status.</i>		<b>§ 20-2-942</b> <i>Termination, Suspension, Nonrenewal, Demotion, or Reprimand</i>

<p><b>NOTE:</b> The system is not waiving this Code section regarding school administrators: <i>A person who first became a <u>school administrator</u> on or after April 7, 1995, shall not acquire any rights under Code Section § 20-2-942 (c)(1) to continued employment with respect to any position of school administrator</i></p>			
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- Please also list the waivers you have used during the past five years (including those granted to the entire state, e.g. class size) and what goals they helped you accomplish during those five years?

(Note: Morgan County High School was not part of the System Charter until April, 2015)

Waivers	System Goal(s) Accomplished or Improved through Waiver																																
<p>Seat Time Waiver (Grades K-12)</p> <p>Class Size Waiver (Grades K-12)</p> <p><b>§160-5-1-.02</b> <i>School Day and School Year for Students and Employees</i></p> <p><b>§160-4-2-.48</b> <i>High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2002-2003 School Year and Subsequent Years</i></p> <p><b>160-4-7-.14</b> <i>Personnel, Facilities, and Caseloads</i></p> <p><b>160-5-2-.05</b> <i>Experience for Salary Purposes</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-984</b> <i>Professionals Standards Commission</i></p> <p><b>§ 20-2-211.1</b> <i>Clearance Certificates</i></p>	<p>Make <i>Adequate Yearly Progress</i> as defined by Georgia State Requirements and No Child Left Behind. Students in all subgroups will demonstrate proficiency and improvement over prior year’s performance.</p> <p>These waivers helped the MCCSS make AYP the last school year (2011. All three schools under this system grant made AYP and were found to be “Distinguished” schools.</p> <p>CCRPI Scores (not including Morgan County High School since it was not a part of this system charter are as follows (sum of Achievement, Progress, Achievement Gap, and Challenge Points):</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="565 999 1414 1413"> <thead> <tr> <th>School Year</th> <th>School</th> <th>School Rating</th> <th>State Rating</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>Morgan County Elementary School</td> <td>87.9</td> <td>74.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>Morgan County Middle School</td> <td>75.6</td> <td>73.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>Morgan County Elementary School</td> <td>84.3</td> <td>77.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>Morgan County Middle School</td> <td>81.5</td> <td>74.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>Morgan County Elementary School</td> <td>79.2</td> <td>72.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>Morgan County Middle School</td> <td>74.6</td> <td>73.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;"><b>School ratings higher than State ratings every year of Charter.</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Goals accomplished by use of extended school year for identified students, waivers for maximum class size and seat time, and innovative EIP delivery model/time called Language Literacy Connection at Morgan County Primary School combining the EIP teacher with the Speech/Language Pathologist for collaborative, co-taught instruction to school’s lowest performing students.</p>	School Year	School	School Rating	State Rating	2012	Morgan County Elementary School	87.9	74.5	2012	Morgan County Middle School	75.6	73.8	2013	Morgan County Elementary School	84.3	77.8	2013	Morgan County Middle School	81.5	74.6	2014	Morgan County Elementary School	79.2	72.7	2014	Morgan County Middle School	74.6	73.8	<b>School ratings higher than State ratings every year of Charter.</b>			
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<p><b>§160-1-3-.02</b> <i>Suspension of Rules and Laws</i></p>	<p>Creation of School Governance Councils that will have decision-making authority regarding performance goals and operational plans of the Charter and making recommendations to the Charter. <b>School Governance Councils created at each school. Councils were trained in the school’s performance goals and operational plan.</b></p>
	<p>Forums will be developed for assessing need and providing information to a range of stakeholders at the school and system levels. <b>Annual parent and student surveys to identify school-specific and system level needs were administered by each school. Results helped guide School Improvement Plans and targeted goals identified with each School Governance Council (became the “School Governance Team” in 2014).</b></p>
<p><b>§160-1-3-.02</b> <i>Suspension of Rules and Laws</i></p>	<p>Develop and implement standards based evaluation rubrics and portfolios as another way to communicate student progress in meeting standards. <b>Standards-Based grading/reporting is on-going.</b></p>
	<p>Ensure transparent fiscal accountability System Chief Financial Officer employed who works with schools on internal audits and shares budgetary items with Board of Education and public/media monthly.</p>

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

<b>Specific Action (Listed in #4 above)</b>	<b>Timeline Implementation</b>
<p>Innovative Mini-Grants awarded to teachers/schools/system to improve student achievement</p>	<p><u>January, 2016</u> Applications for mini-grants explained to school staffs, LSGTs, system leaders <u>February 2016</u> Applications due to LSGTs for review/approval <u>March 2016</u> Read and approved by LSGTs; sent t superintendent, Innovations added to FY17 budget <u>2016-2017 School Year</u> Grant period <u>January 2017</u> Impact check #1 to LSGT and Senior Leadership Staff; Refinement of grant, as appropriate <u>June 2017</u> Impact check #2; Goals reviewed; Outcome of grant reviewed Decision to renew made by LSGT  <i>(Timelines continue according to this schedule each fiscal year for length of Charter)</i></p>

<p>Integrated courses which cover curriculum standards for multiple subjects</p>	<p><u>January-March, 2016</u>                      LSGTs, schools/system study courses to combine, analyze data to aid with decisions  <u>August, 2016</u>                      Implement small number of integrated courses approved by LSGTs/superintendent  <u>August 2016-April 2017</u>                      LSGTs and stakeholders continue to assess outcomes of this innovation; discuss new classes to integrate, especially in light of the new College and Career Academy   <i>(Timelines continue according to this schedule each fiscal year for length of Charter)</i></p>
<p>Hiring of “expert” teachers and other school/ College and Career Academy staff who do not hold Georgia certification</p>	<p>Present time (continuing from current Charter) throughout renewed Charter)</p>
<p>Opportunities for credit-earning internships and externships (Grades 9-12)</p>	<p><u>August 2016-April, 2017</u>                      Study teams to design credit-earning internships and externships; Approved by LSGTs; recommended to superintendent  <u>August 2017, continuing throughout life of this Charter</u>                      Students earn credit for these opportunities. LSGTs and stakeholders continue to study and choose appropriate “courses/experiences”</p>
<p>Opportunities to earn credit by demonstrating mastery of standards for specific content areas in both classroom and workplace settings (Grades 9-12)</p>	<p><u>August 2016-April, 2017</u>                      Study teams to design credit-earning internships and externships; Share and obtain approval from LSGTs/recommend to superintendent  <u>August 2017, continuing throughout life of this Charter</u>                       Students earn credit for mastering content areas in both the classroom and workplace. LSGTs and stakeholder groups continue with this process to make additional “courses/experiences” available for this innovation.</p>
<p>Strong Teacher Induction Program for teachers out of field or who have industry certification but not teacher certification</p>	<p><u>Summer, 2016</u>                      Current Induction Program modified to include component for non-certified teachers.  <u>August, 2016-end of school year (2017)</u>                      New Induction Program  <i>(Timelines continue according to this schedule each fiscal year for length of Charter)</i></p>

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

a. Innovative Mini-Grants awarded to teachers/ schools/system to improve student achievement was provided as part of our current Charter for the 2011-2012 school year; however, no flexibility waivers were needed. These new Mini-Grants awarded under the renewal Charter will focus on innovations requiring broad flexibility for the first time.

b. The innovation to hire “expert” teachers and other school/ College and Career Academy staff who do not hold Georgia certification was first used this school year for a Leadership position and a Career Adviser as the system prepared for the new Collage and Career Academy.

c. The innovation to provide opportunities for credit-earning internships and externships (Grades 9-12) of the magnitude discussed in this Charter in a new innovation.

d. The opportunity to earn credit by demonstrating mastery of standards for specific content areas in both classroom and workplace settings is a new innovation.

e.. The creation of a Strong Teacher Induction Program for teachers out of field or who have industry certification but not teacher certification will be added to the already-established New-to-the-System Teacher Induction Program. Creating an Induction component for non-certified teachers will be new to this Charter.

f. The MCCSS will continue to offer strong Professional Learning which is in direct alignment with School Improvement Plan target goals. This innovation is not new to this renewal.

g. The provision of peer coaching and feedback to all employees is new to this renewal Charter. Protocols and instruction for formal and informal observation, coaching, and feedback will be provided.

## 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 our five-year charter term, the Morgan County Charter School System shall “beat the odds” as determined by the formula measuring expected student growth.

Goal 2: During each year of our five-year charter term, each school in the Morgan County Charter School System shall “beat the odds” as determined by a formula measuring expected student growth. If schools fail to beat the odds in Year 1 of the charter, the Morgan County Charter School System shall decrease the number of schools not beating the odds during Years 2 and 3 at a rate so that all schools will beat the odds in Year 4.

Goal 3: The Morgan County Charter School System will demonstrate proficiency by exceeding the state CCRPI Score for each year of the Charter.

## 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).

- Provide a timeline that shows all the major steps in this transition, including the timing of the formation of LSGTs, the training of principals and LSGTs, and anything you deem important in making this critical transition for decentralized/distributed decision making.
- Include information about the steps that have already occurred or will occur to inform all stakeholders of the new governance structure.

Morgan County School System was granted its first system charter in FY2011, as one of the initial System Charters in the state. When Morgan County School System became a charter system, each previous Converted Charter School’s School Advisory Council evolved into a School Governing Team following System Charter approval (2011). Members were elected/selected based on Charter rules and meetings were held using Parliamentary Procedures. While early School Council meetings centered around *receiving*

school information, as new knowledge about System Charters was imparted and the School Governance Teams were trained on the system model, a more “governmental” model similar to our Local Board of Education emerged. Principals and School Governance Team members have been trained and understand their function. When the system first became a Charter System, training was done by the Superintendent of Schools, who used a training model he received as a member of the Charter System Foundation. The new principal at Morgan County High School was recommended by the LSGT to the superintendent in 2011, and since that time, all LSGTs have had the opportunity to recommend a new principal, a process taken very seriously by each LSGT. Each team has gotten more involved with the decision-making process since becoming a system Charter in 2011. This year, as new members have come on to the Team, a representative of the Charter System Foundation has trained two schools and, after received training from this representative, the Assistant Superintendent for Student Support and Community Relations is trained the other two schools. In order to share communication and consistency, the system established a System Leadership Team in 2012 comprised of the chairs and principals of each School Governance Team along with the Senior Leadership staff (Superintendent and two Assistant Superintendents). This group meets as a whole at least quarterly to review their purpose and to share information about school level recommendations, etc. The superintendent provides the group with current trending information regarding funding, allotments, newly adopted State Board of Education rules, etc. that the School Governance Teams need to know in order to make knowledgeable decisions about personnel and financial decisions, curriculum and instruction, resource allocation, establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations. While our School Governance Team members were at first hesitant to take part in decisions at the school-level, they are now, with this second system Charter, feeling more confident to make recommendations. Each School Governance Team participated in the development of the Charter System by-laws and followed these rules explicitly when electing new members. Stakeholders, including the local Board of Education members, were informed of the new System Charter School Governance Team

structure through GSBA training, information in the media, on the school websites, presentations at local Board of Education meetings, and newsletters/e-mails/ mass telephone calls.

The importance of distributive leadership/shared decision-making for our School Governance Teams has been evident in all of our schools, and to our community and local Board of Education as each Governance Team has had the opportunity to screen, interview, and recommend a school principal to the superintendent. This process has gone well, with local School Governance Team members “buying in” and praising the process.

**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 School-Based Governance Team shall consist of seven voting members, of whom a majority shall constitute a quorum. Members will serve on staggered terms. Membership on the SGT includes:

- One principal who shall serve as a non-voting member and co-chair (to maintain continuity) of the SGT;
- Three parents/guardians of a student in the school who are elected by the parents/guardians of the students in the school. Only parents who are eligible to be elected are eligible to vote;
- One full-time certified teacher who teaches a core academic subject and works the entire day at the school who is elected by members of the certified staff assigned to that school;
- One full-time certified teacher or other certified staff member or one full time classified employee who works the entire day at the school who is elected by the entire school staff;
- Two community members/business leaders appointed by the SGT who are non-staff members and who live, work, or have a substantial connection to Morgan County.

A person(s) serving as a liaison (non-voting) to the School Governance Team may be appointed by the co-chairs at any time during the year. Examples of liaison representatives could be students, community/business members, representatives of colleges or institutions of higher learning, task force/sub-

committee heads, or school staff members with direct contributions to the work of the School Governance Team.

NOTES: No parent or teacher may serve on multiple School-Based Governance Teams; the make-up of the SGT should reflect the demographics of the school (ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, etc.); an employee of the Morgan County Charter School System may serve as a parent representative on the SGT of a school in which his or her child is enrolled if such employee works at a different school; a parent of a child at CrossRoads Alternative Educational Program does qualify for election as a parent in the home school where the child would attend; School Board members are disqualified from serving on SGTs but are allowed to vote as a parent, if applicable; and teachers who have resigned but are currently employed in the school are eligible to vote and be elected as a teacher representative. Upon effective date of the resignation, the teacher is disqualified to vote or hold office on the SGT.

Each year the principal will send home a paper and/or e-mail ballot during the month of May to all people who are designated as parents/guardians of children who will be students in that school the next school year seeking nominations for the SGT for the upcoming school year. The purpose and responsibilities of a SGT member will be delineated in an accompanying letter. They will have one week to make the nominations. This information is also be placed on the school website and any other social media outlets. Teachers and other staff members eligible to serve will also be given an opportunity to nominate themselves or their peers during this time. After receipt of the nominations, the principal will contact the nominated people on the list to insure their approval to be listed on the ballot. Ballots will be prepared and sent via paper/e-mail or other electronic means to the appropriate voting bodies. A deadline for votes to be cast will be given. The nominees receiving the most votes will be contacted by the principal to insure participation, and then they will be announced to school stakeholders through a variety of communication networks. Announcements will be made on or before the last day of the student school year.

NOTES: All written materials will be printed in English and native languages, as required by law. Teachers/staff who are also parents of students enrolled in the school in which they work may vote in the teacher/staff election *and* the parent election.

The term of office will begin the first day of July and end on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Members of the SGT shall serve for a term of two years; the exception being any parent whose child will leave the school to transition up to the next school. That parent will only serve for one year. Parents of students who will be attending the school for more than one year will have a two-year term of office.

With the exception of the principal, SGT members may only serve two consecutive terms, even if combined between two different schools. After serving two consecutive terms, a member must rotate off the SGT for at least one two-year term before being re-nominated for re-election to the SGT at any school.

The SGT may, by an affirmative vote of the majority of all its members, terminate a member for the following reasons:

1. SGT member misses four SGT regularly-scheduled or called meetings per year
2. SGT member does not participate in required training
3. SGT members violates the SGT Code of Ethics; or
4. Other good and sufficient cause (which requires a two-thirds majority vote by the SGT.)
  - a. This provision is not applicable to the school principal.

School governance will be a part of the new College and Career Academy, as well. The Morgan County High School LSGT has already provided direction to the overall mission of MCHS as “A Georgia College and Career Academy,” embracing the vision that the entire school will operate as a college and career academy. Additionally, the Morgan County Board of Education approved a Board Resolution supporting the transition of MCHS to “a whole school model college and career academy”.

The transition to a whole school model college and career academy will be accomplished through this Charter renewal application. The Morgan County whole school model college and career academy will be the second of its kind in Georgia and will serve as a model for small school districts to implement and sustain college and career academies.

Until such time that Morgan County High School is fully transitioned into a whole school model college and career academy, its governance structure will include an exclusive college and career academy Board of Directors, beginning July 1, 2016. The MCHS-GaCCA Board of Directors will provide oversight, direction, and policy. The governance will be subject to input and collaboration through a liaison member of the Morgan County High School Governance Team, who will serve on both the Morgan County High School SGT and the MCHS-GaCCA Board of Directors. This governance structure will provide the required autonomy for the advancement of workforce readiness for Morgan County. The MCHS-GaCCA Board of Directors will complete training annually as prescribed by the Morgan County Charter School System contract and will be provided additional training to improve the effectiveness of the operation of a whole school model college and career academy.

The elected Chairperson of the SGT will be responsible for informing the terminated member.

**12. Use the Charter System Application – Local School Governance Matrix to show how the Superintendent will share with Local School Governance Teams his/her authority to develop recommendations to the Board of Education.**

<b>School Level Governance Decision-Making Matrix</b>				
System Name: Morgan County	Minimum LSCT Authority	<i>How and When</i> Minimum Authority will be Implemented	Additional LSGT Authority*	<i>How and When</i> Additional Authority will be Implemented
Personnel Decisions	LSGTs shall provide input for the principal or school leader for recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools to the local board of education	This decision has <u>already been implemented</u> by the LSGTs in all schools in the system.	Our LSGTs decide on qualifications/attributes, edit/approve the Vacancy Announcement for the principal, screen applicants to narrow down top candidates to interview, prepare/oversee creation of Interview questions, interview/rate candidates, make recommendation of finalists to superintendent. LSGTs will also have the authority to use this process for other leadership positions, as appropriate (Athletic Director, football coach, assistant leaders, system leaders, etc.)	This (school leader) decision-making authority has already been implemented by each LSGT in the system, with five new principals being hired since <u>2012</u> . LSGTs will expand the selection process to other leadership positions <u>Winter 2016</u> and beyond. The teams have already learned about FTEs and allocations, and will be trained at a more in-depth level as budget season begins ( <u>Winter, 2016</u> ) so that school level personnel decisions regarding number of personnel/qualifications needed for special programs and regular classrooms can be established. (As the “mini grants” are awarded in the <u>Spring of 2016</u> , more personnel decisions will be made by the LSGT as related to the descriptors in the grants.

<p>Financial Decisions and Resource Allocation</p>	<p>LSGTs shall provide input and recommendations for school level resources based on the School Improvement Plan</p>	<p>LSGTs have been providing input into some of the expenditures of federal, state and local funds annually since <u>2013</u> to a small degree. They have had training on the budget process and local, state, and federal funds.</p>	<p>LGSTs shall approve and/or recommend fund raisers before submission to superintendent. Review school # of instructional units based on innovations/ Make recommendations to the principal as part of the budget process.</p>	<p>LSGTs will approve annual fund raisers beginning <u>FALL 2016</u>, make recommendations for instructional units in <u>Early Spring, 2016</u>. Beginning with the <u>Winter Quarter, 2016</u>, they will review and set budget priorities for the coming year and approve the school budgets as related to the School Improvement Plan and "mini grants" (using Charter System funds allocated to the school). LSGTs will also review and make recommendations on teacher allotments, supplies, and other school resources before the adoption of the <u>FY 17 (and subsequent) budget(s)</u>.</p>
<p>Curriculum and Instruction</p>	<p>LSGTs shall have input into the selection of the curriculum and accompanying materials consistent with the district's Essential and Innovative Features as included in the charter contract</p>	<p>These decisions have not been made by LSGTs consistently at all MCCSS schools. They have been asked to provide input on some innovative plans, but no specific recommendations have been made by the LSGTs.</p>	<p>LGSTs shall recommend/approve new curricular materials based on School Improvement Plan and student performance, using guidance from principal.</p>	<p><u>Beginning Spring, 2016</u>, the selection and recommendation of curriculum and instructional resources/delivery innovations from "mini grants" will be based on prior school year student performance data and mid-year MAP scores twice a year. LSGTs will be trained on simple data analysis terminology and statistics in order to make informed data-based decisions. As the innovative practices geared to move some high school courses down to the middle school level, combine course content, create new course offerings, innovate student remediation (EIP/REP) and acceleration, and</p>

				utilize mastery of standards for high school credit, LSGTs will begin to review and make recommendations for the <u>2016-2017 school year</u> . Graduation requirements will be reviewed and recommended to the superintendent by the LSGT <u>every year</u> .
Establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals	LSGTs shall have input in school improvement planning	Since 2011, the LSGTs have reviewed school performance data.	“Mini grants” (using Charter School funds) at the school level will be approved by each LSGT ( <u>Spring, 2016</u> )	Beginning in the <u>Spring of 2016</u> , members of the LSGT shall serve as active members of the school improvement planning team. LSGTs will approve school targets from the School Improvement Plan and participate in bi-yearly Impact Checks
School Operations	LSGTs shall have input into school operations that are consistent with school improvement and charter goals	Since 2014, the LSGT has served as a resource and support to the school and teachers by participating in School Safety Walks and Maintenance Reviews. They also provided some input into the system’s ESPOST recommendations. In <u>late Fall of 2015</u> , the chairs of each LSGT served as members of the System Calendar Task Force. LSGTs recommended the	<u>Winter/Spring 2016</u> , LSGTs shall approve representative to the Chamber of Commerce’s Partners in Education, stakeholder surveys, parent involvement activities, communications strategies, field trips, fundraisers; continue to provide input and recommendations on system calendars	<u>Winter 2016 throughout Charter</u> , LSGTs will participate regularly with school operation functions. They will provide input and approve the school safety, maintenance, and facilities plans. The LSGTs will continue to develop the system calendar for the next school year, every year, receive public comment from their constituents, and make recommendations to the BOE regarding the calendars they created. LSGTs at each school will decide on when to place pre and post-planning days for teachers that may vary from school to school according to the instructional needs/innovative strategies of each individual school.

Morgan County Charter School System

		school calendars that were presented to the BOE.		
*The LBOE retains its constitutional authority.				

**13. Highlight the differences between the current local school advisory council structure and the new structure your new charter system will implement.**

MCCSS has been a system Charter since 2011 and has been trained to function under the new System Charter structure. Previously, LSGTs were made up of various numbers of members (one LSGT had seven members while another one had 15 members) with no regard to demographics of the school or make-up (parent, teachers, community/business). All of our LSGTs are now following their by-laws as to election and number of members, terms, removal from office, training, etc. Members also have a much clearer understanding, and have been specifically trained on their roles and responsibilities. They are learning more about personnel rules, school and system funding, curriculum and instruction, and basic school operations each month that will guide them into making even more specific recommendations to their school's team.

**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.**

In order to build the capacity needed to make decisions in the areas included in the spreadsheet, all of the MCCSS team members are trained, with new members being trained before December, 2015.

The system recognizes that training is an essential component of the charter system. Recent discussions following training have revealed the need for members to fully understand the importance of their roles and the manner in which they affect the governance of the school. All LSGT members are required to complete training in general responsibilities, decision-making, consensus-building, conflict resolution, accountability and commitment to the philosophy of decentralized authority. They sign a "Conflict of Interest" statement and also undergo training in the Code of Ethics for team members and mandated reporter instruction. Appropriate training, including make-up sessions, will continue to be provided to all LSGT members in

order to up-date Charter rules and procedures, ensure sustainability and build capacity needed to achieve an effective, shared decision-making culture.

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

Dr. Sherrie Gibney-Sherman has provided the training to our LSGT members this year, along with Sarah Burbach, Assistant Superintendent for Student Support and Community Relations. In previous years, training was conducted by Dr. Ralph Bennett, Superintendent, who was trained by the Charter Foundation. Mandated Reporter training will be conducted by the School Social Worker, Ms. Pam Benford, or on-line modules.

**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.**

Sarah Burbach, Assistant Superintendent for Student Support and Community Relations, will facilitate communications between the Department and the chairpersons of the Local School Governing Teams. Mrs. Burbach may be reached by email at [sarah.burbach@morgan.k12.ga.us](mailto:sarah.burbach@morgan.k12.ga.us) or by phone at (706) 752-4617.

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

As the Morgan County Charter School System continues its drive to move from “good” to “great,” we realize the importance of creating and nourishing a Performance Culture, (one of our identified challenges in this Charter!) where the central office and all schools work collaboratively to discuss barriers, determine root causes, and develop plans to improve student achievement. MCCSS has participated for multiple years in the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) to train in these areas and will continue to send cohort groups to this institute until we all learn to work collaboratively, as an aligned Charter SYSTEM, instead of “*just*” a SYSTEM of individual Charter schools. The central office staff will continue

to support the academic programs in the schools and monitor their effectiveness on student achievement. Results will be analyzed and communicated with all stakeholder groups. A collaborative process will be utilized to make informed decisions about all curriculum-related initiatives. Impact checks at all schools will ensure that schools are heading in the same, positive direction. School Governing Teams are already becoming an integral part of each school's decision-making process to improve student achievement, provide "real life: work experiences in an enriched performance culture.

## EXHIBITS

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

**1. Signed local Board of Education resolution approving the creation of the charter system.**

EXHIBIT "A" – Morgan County Board of Education Resolution

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

EXHIBIT "B" – Principal Notification

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

The Charter Renewal process formally began in the summer of 2014 as our current school system superintendent transitioned into his new role. One of his first orders of business was to become familiar with the Charter Applications for both the system and for Morgan County High School (which was still operating under as a Converted Charter School. He and members of the Senior Leadership Staff and Principals' Council examined the results from that year's Annual Report, and began discussing challenges and innovations during that fall. In the winter of 2015, budget talks for the new school year began. During this time, and as School Improvement Plans were being developed and challenges targeted, each principal and School Governance Team were encouraged to continue to use the innovative strategies identified in our current Charter to improve challenges. During this time, parents, students, educators, community and business leaders formed committees to develop a grant, centered around our current Strategic Plan, to build and enhance workplace readiness programs for all of our students. These committees met for a year to identify challenges and discuss innovations to meet these challenges as the new Charter application renewal and College and Career Academy grant were created. While this process was going on, our third and fourth cohorts (teachers and administrators) participated in the Georgia Leadership Institute for

School Improvement conferences. More challenges were identified based on data and root cause analysis; more innovations (“If only we could waive.....”) were discussed. During the 2015-2016 school year, our High Performance Professional Learning Communities (HPPLC) at each school also closely examined data, in light of their School Improvement Plans and target goals and identified challenges; discussed new strategies. The System Leadership Council (comprised of the chairs of each School Governance Team and principals, along with the superintendent and his Senior Leadership team (two assistant superintendents) brought focus to system challenges, which were shared and discussed at School Governance Team meetings. Data, discussion, and minutes from all of these groups (which have included parents, students, educators, community members and business representatives) that have met over the last fifteen months led to the identification of three key areas for improvement: student achievement, workplace readiness, and the creation of a true performance culture. On December 7<sup>th</sup> and December 8<sup>th</sup>, two advertised Public Forums were held at the Board of Education Central Office in order to present the renewal application to our stakeholders, and on December 14, 2015, the Morgan County Charter School System voted unanimously to approve the renewed system Charter.

4. **A list of all schools to be included in the charter system, including new schools or college and career academies that will be formed throughout the life of the charter, with an indication of which existing schools are currently in Needs Improvement status.**

<u>School</u>	<u>CCRPI Score</u>	<u>Needs Improvement (Priority, Alert, or Focus)</u>
Morgan County Primary School	95.5	No
Morgan County Elementary School	81.3	No
Morgan County Middle School	75.1	No
Morgan County High School	74.6	No
Morgan County College and Career Academy <i>(planned opening Fall 2017)</i>	N/A	No

Morgan County High School was not part of the original 2011 Charter System application. It had just achieved Converted Charter School Status when the other three schools united under the newly available System Charter. In April, 2015, after following all legal procedures, Morgan County High School appealed to the State Board of Education for their Charter to be revoked. Once this revocation occurred, Morgan County High School came under the system Charter, and will remain under the System Charter with this renewal.

In December, 2015, MCCSS received a \$3.3 million grant to build a new College and Career Academy, to be constructed in 2016, with classes in 2017. Innovations delineated in this Charter related to “workplace readiness” were made based on the stipulations and requirements of this grant. The governance structure of the College and Career Academy will be affected with the opening of new college and career pathways. A member of the Morgan County High School Governance Team will serve as a liaison (non-voting) to the board of the College and Career Academy, and a member of the College and Career Academy board will serve as a liaison (non-voting) member of Morgan County High School’s School Governance Team. Each school will have its own School Governance Team, even though the College and Career Academy will be a part of Morgan County High School.

- 5. A brief description of the charter system that includes the name, the mission, grades served, the focus of the curriculum, instructional methods to be used, including any distinctive or unique instructional techniques or educational programs to be employed, and other pertinent information.**

Morgan County Charter School System is a rural school system based in Madison, Georgia. Morgan County has a population of approximately 18,000 residents. Morgan County Charter Schools serve approximately 3200 students in grades Pre-K through 12 in four schools: Morgan County Primary School, Morgan County Elementary School, Morgan County Middle School, Morgan County High

School. CrossRoads Alternative Educational Program serves students expelled from Morgan County schools in grades 6-12, as well, offering middle school and high school-based content-based classes, credit recovery, special education, and English Learner services. Charter Schools have a mission to ensure that all students will be successful in their learning and personal development through a system characterized by a challenging personalized educational program encompassing advanced technology; extensive community and parental involvement; quality resources; an exemplary staff; and, a safe and caring environment. To fulfill this mission, Morgan County Charter Schools have made significant improvements to its technology infrastructure, developed a system wide STEAM initiative, and created a college and career academy model to be used as a template for small county systems state-wide. Morgan County Charter Schools is on the forefront of the use of high performing professional learning communities of teachers within the schools to use data to make curriculum and instructional decisions. Morgan County Charter Schools also participates in impact checks of instruction twice a year. The results of these impact checks are used when making decisions about instructional methods and educational programs.

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

<b>Training Topics</b>	<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Dates/Yearly</b>
LSGT Election Review	Sarah Burbach, Assistant Superintendent	Principals	Spring/every year
LSGT Overview, Roles and Responsibilities, Governance	Dr. Sherrie Gibney-Sherman; Sarah Burbach, Assistant Superintendent	Principals and LSGT members	Fall/every year
Budget and Finance	Dr. James Woodard, Superintendent	Principals and LSGT members	Jan/Feb

Personnel School Operations	Libby Whitaker, CFO		Every year
Data Driven Decision Making/Student Assessment	Chip Meyer, Assessment and Accountability Coordinator	Principals and LSGT members	Fall and Spring/Every year
Curriculum and Instruction; School Improvement Plans, federal programs/parent and community engagement	Jean Triplett, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning	Principals and LSGT members	On-going throughout year, but at least twice a year during Impact Checks and School Improvement Plan development
Hiring Process for Certified and Classified Staff	Diane Allmond, Human Resources Director	Principals and LSGT Members	Spring/every year

**7. Conflict of interest policy for local school governing teams.**

EXIHIBIT “C” – System Governance Council conflict of interest policy

**8. A list of business arrangements or partnerships with existing schools, educational programs, businesses and non-profits and the nature of the services provided, including disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest.**

<u>Partnerships</u>	<u>Services Provided</u>
Georgia Piedmont Technical College	MOWR/Dual Enrollment
Morgan County Parks and Recreation	Athletics and Facilities Support

Morgan County Sheriff's Department	Resource Officers, Explorers program
Morgan County Family Connections	Resources for families in need with school and food supplies
Northeast Georgia RESA/GLRS	Professional Learning; Shared Service Program for special education low incidence students
Partners in Education (Chamber of Commerce)	Financial Support, volunteers and stakeholders
Morgan County Foundation for Excellence in Public Education	Financial Support
Madison-Morgan Boys and Girls Club	Shared facility, volunteers
Madison-Morgan Cultural Center	Fine Arts resource for students and teachers
Morgan County HeadStart	Shared resources/Grant for PreK services
Morgan County 4-H	4-H Clubs in schools during school day
<p>Northeast Georgia RESA (Regional Education Service Agency), Oconee River GYSTC (Georgia Youth Science and Technology Center), and the MCFEPE.</p> <p>Secondary Partners include: Green Power EMC, Power Partners, UGA Department of Science Education, UGA Department of Engineering, Georgia Piedmont Technical College, Buck Institute for Education and Defined STEM</p>	STEAM grant from the Governor's Office of Student Achievement

University of Georgia, Georgia College and State University, Piedmont College	Field programs for student teachers, Rising STARs program
Morgan County Rotary Club, Kiwanis, and Lions' Club	Provide scholarships and recognition for MCCSS students
FERST Books	Provides a book each month to all identified Morgan County children from birth -5 years old

*The Morgan County Charter School System is not aware of any potential conflict of interest issues at this time.*

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

The Morgan County Charter School system recognizes its responsibility to the taxpayers in overseeing the spending of Federal, state, and local funds. The school system is striving to maintain sound fiscal management while emphasizing student achievement. The Morgan County Charter School System has never operated in a fiscal deficit.

**10. Online link to the school system’s most recent annual audit.**

[Morgan County Audit Report \(EXHIBIT “D”\)](#)

(if you have trouble opening the link above, please copy the entire URL address below and paste into your browser)

<http://www.audits.ga.gov/rsaAudits/download/18004>

**11. Online link to the school system’s most recent accreditation report.**

[Morgan County AdvancED Accreditation Report \(EXHIBIT “E”\)](#)

(if you have trouble opening the link above, please copy the entire URL address below and paste into your browser)

<http://www.morgan.k12.ga.us/cms/lib06/GA01903597/Centricity/Domain/69/AdvancEd%20Accreditation%20Report.pdf>

12. Online link to the school system's most recent strategic plan.

[Morgan County Schools Strategic Plan \(EXHIBIT "F"\)](#)

(if you have trouble opening the link above, please copy the entire URL address below and paste into your browser)

<http://www.morgan.k12.ga.us/cms/lib06/GA01903597/Centricity/Domain/69/Strategic%20Plan.pdf>

13. "The Case" Matrix (EXHIBIT "G")