

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: DeKalb County School District			
2. Please indicate whether this is a: New Petition <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or a Renewal Petition <input type="checkbox"/>	3. How many schools in total are you proposing to include in your charter system? 120		
4. How many of each of the following schools are you proposing to include in your charter system?			
Primary School(s) 0	Middle School(s) 18	Elementary School(s) 71	
		High school(s) 21	Other 10
5. On July 1 of what year do you want your charter contract to be effective? 2015			
6. How many years are you proposing for the term of your charter contract? (Note that an initial charter cannot exceed five years) 5			
7. Charter System Street Address 1701 Stone Mountain Industrial Boulevard	8. City Stone Mountain	9. State GA	10. Zip 30083
11. Contact Person Trenton Arnold		12. Title Regional Superintendent, Region III	
13. Contact Street Address 1701 Stone Mountain Industrial Boulevard	14. City Stone Mountain	15. State GA	16. Zip 30083
17. Contact's telephone number (678) 676-0671	18. Contact's fax number (678) 676-0535	19. Contact's E-mail Address Trenton_J_Arnold@fc.dekalb.k12.ga.us	

Updated: October 2, 2014

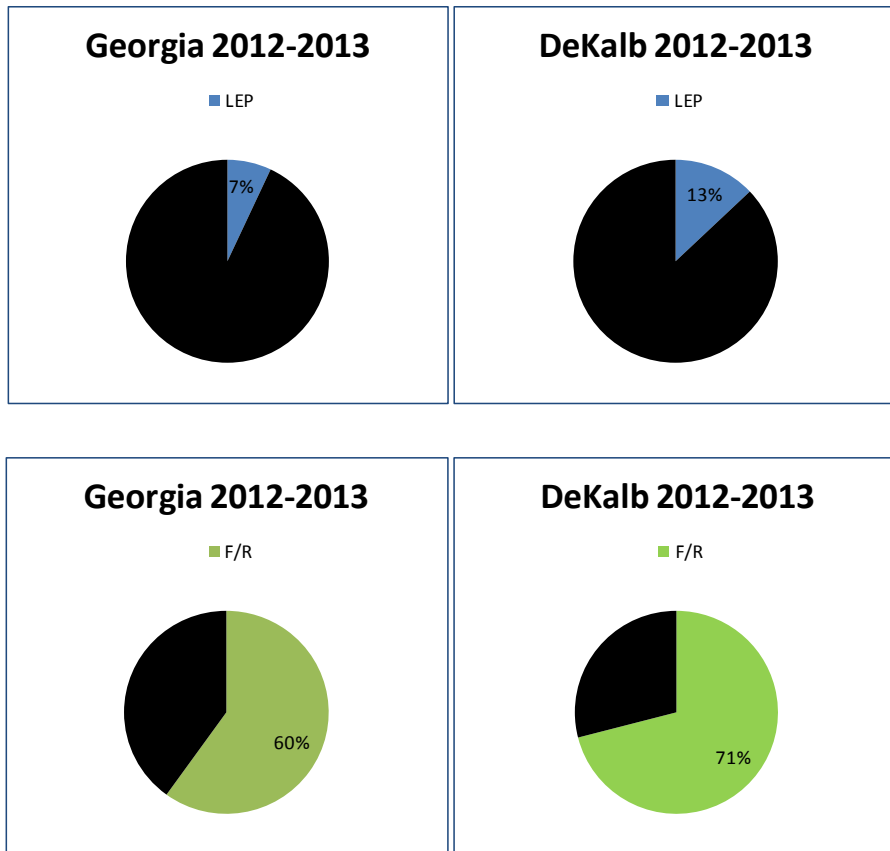
THE CASE

1. What challenges is your school district facing?

School enrollment for the DeKalb County School Districts consists of approximately 100,000 students and has remained steady since the FTE count from October, 2013, of 99,556 students. This enrollment is comprised of one of the most diverse student populations in the nation. While some areas of the community serve predominantly middle to upper income families with parents possessing multiple post-graduate degrees and speaking English as the family's home language, other areas of the District serve students that are impacted by the difficulties associated with deep poverty and little formal education for the parents outside of a high school degree. The District is also home to a large number of non-English speaking families, many of whom are recent immigrants. Furthermore, the City of Clarkston in DeKalb County is home to one of the largest refugee relocation sites in the United States, and these students, many of whom are from war-torn areas and have not experienced any formal schooling, are also served by the District. This incredible amount of diversity creates a number of challenges for the school district, most of which can be best addressed through local school-level innovation. The DeKalb County School District has promoted opportunities for innovation, and it has seen the successes and gains brought about through district support of the individual school and student. It is for this fundamental reason that the DeKalb County School District seeks to become a charter system. The specific challenges to be addressed through a charter system are outlined below.

DeKalb serves a significantly greater proportion of students in poverty as defined by Free and Reduced lunch status (F/R) and English Learners (EL) than the state average (also identified as Limited English Proficiency or LEP). The charts in Section A immediately below indicate these differences between the District and the state. By requesting charter system status and the opportunity for local school innovations, the District and its schools can better serve this population of students.

Section A



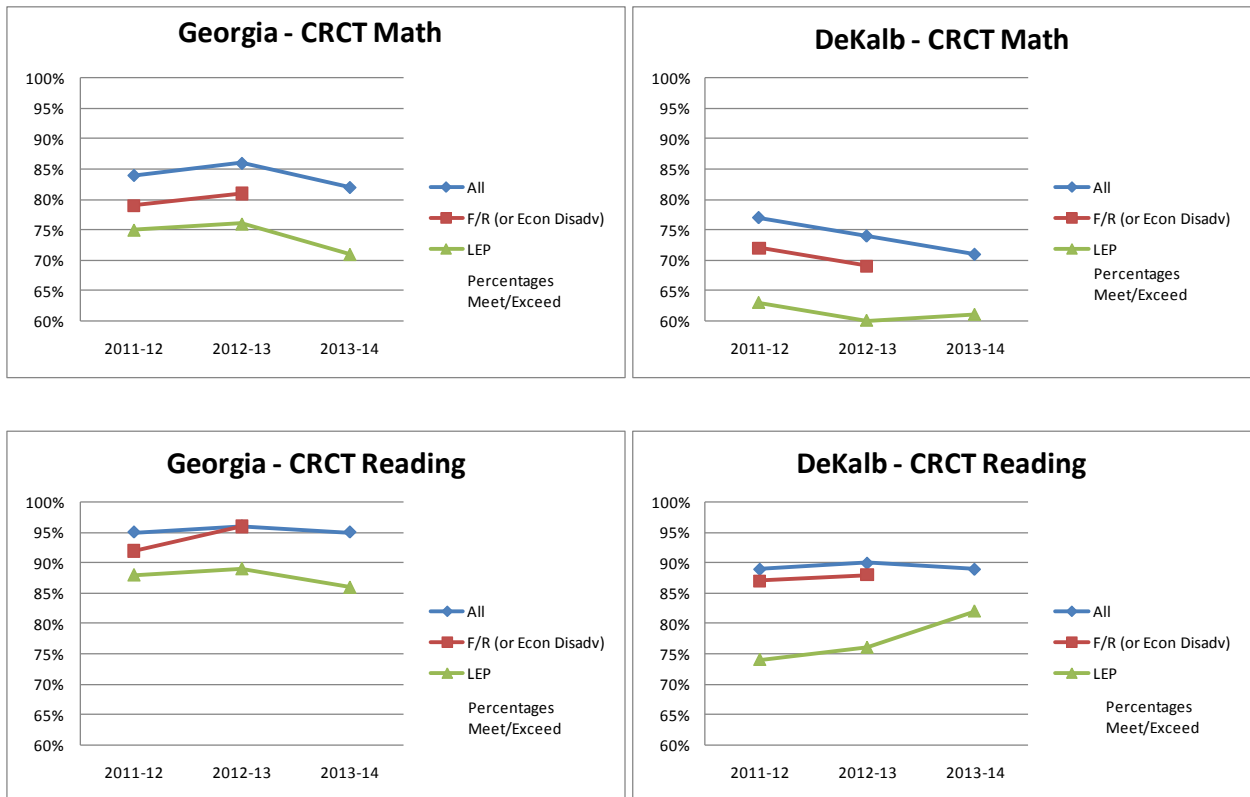
1. *Improving achievement among low-income students*

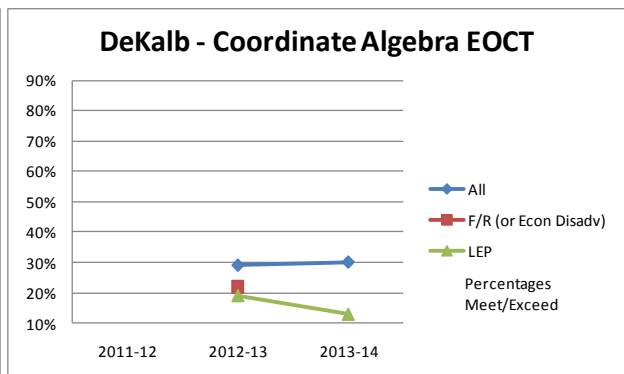
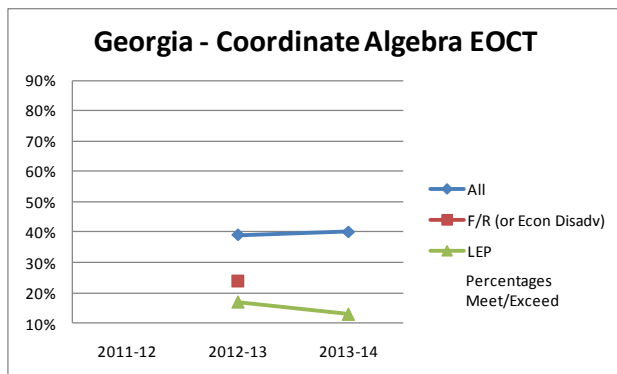
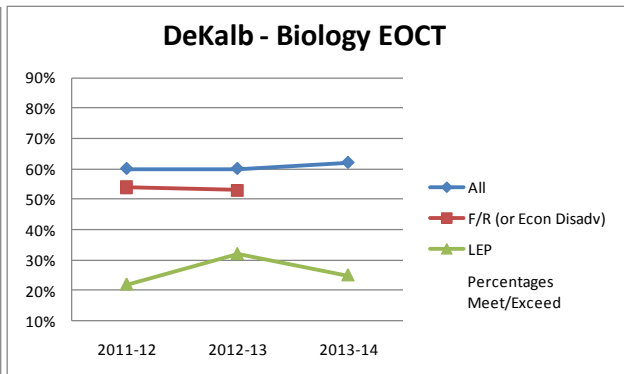
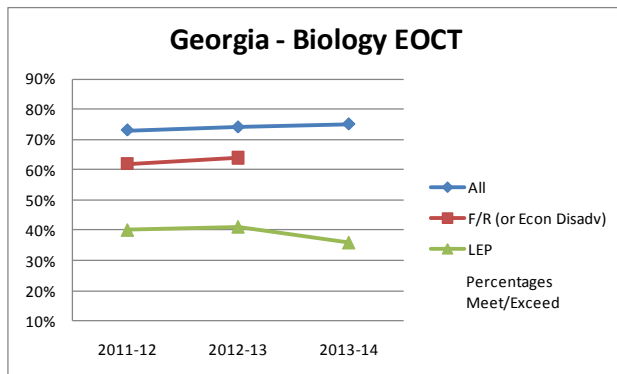
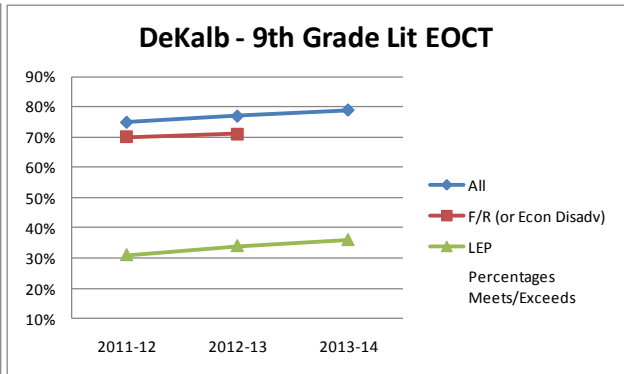
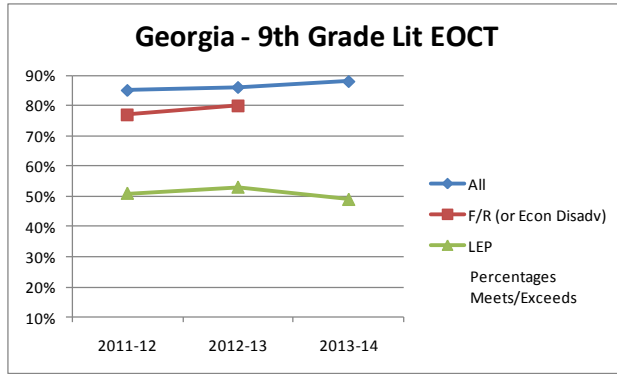
While student academic growth has been demonstrated in the district, the charts in Section B show that the performance of low-income students in DeKalb is below that of similar students in Georgia on state assessments associated with the Single Statewide Accountability System. Further supporting the need for this challenge to be addressed, the District has completed several data analysis of Federally identified racial subgroups and has discerned that within Federally identified racial subgroups, those students suffering from the effects of poverty score lower on average on standardized assessments than those students from the same racial subgroup that are not impacted by poverty.

2. *Improving achievement among students with limited English proficiency*

The percentage of students with limited English proficiency in DeKalb is almost twice that of the state average. As indicated in the graphs below, these students perform below the level of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students across the state in CRCT Math, although DeKalb’s LEP students are now approaching the state average in Reading and are at the same level in Algebra.

Section B





Within the limited English population, DeKalb faces unique challenges due to the number of nationalities and languages represented. Approximately 160 nationalities speaking more than 140 languages attend DeKalb County schools. The number of students with a home language other than English is approximately 21,000. These phenomena result in challenges not only related to language instruction, but also in addressing cultural differences and parental involvement.

As noted earlier, many of the limited English students in DeKalb are recent immigrants, and of those, over 4,000 are refugees who have experienced significant trauma. This brings additional

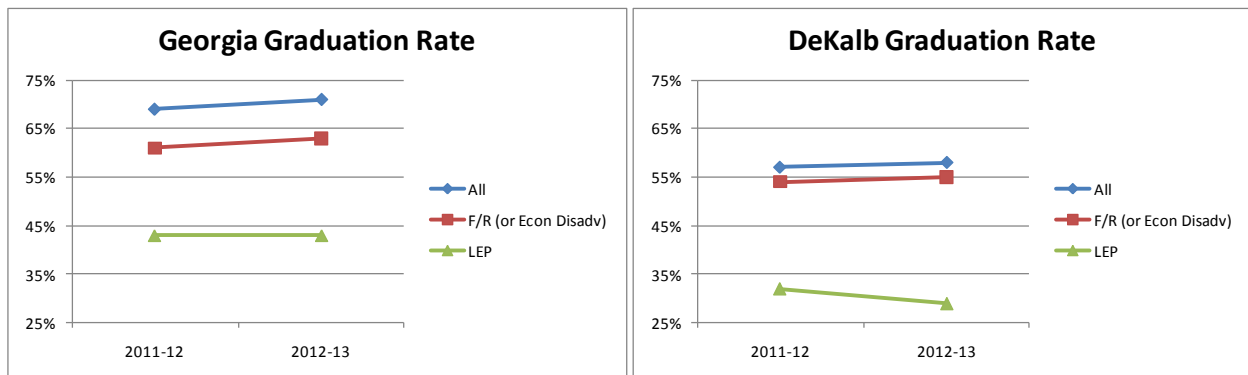
challenges such as students who have been unschooled for considerable periods of time, children who have no literacy skills in any language, and children dealing with the emotional consequences of traumatic, and sometimes horrific, events that most adults in the United States have never experienced. For those students who are of high school age, these issues are extremely difficult to address in the remaining years the students have in school, particularly if their academic performance is significantly below their age-based grade level.

DeKalb’s performance in moving limited English students among performance bands on the ACCESS test is significantly below the state performance target, indicating that innovative instructional methods are needed to address the unique needs of DeKalb’s limited English students.

3. *Increasing the high school graduation rate*

As indicated in the charts assigned to Section C, DeKalb’s performance on the cohort graduation rate reported for the past two years is significantly below the state average. Improvements have been noted in overall graduation rates and graduation rates for low-income students, but the graduation rate of LEP students has slightly decreased. While this data is lagging due to the calculation methods utilized by the Georgia Department of Education, the information still points to the need to address this challenge through charter system status.

Section C



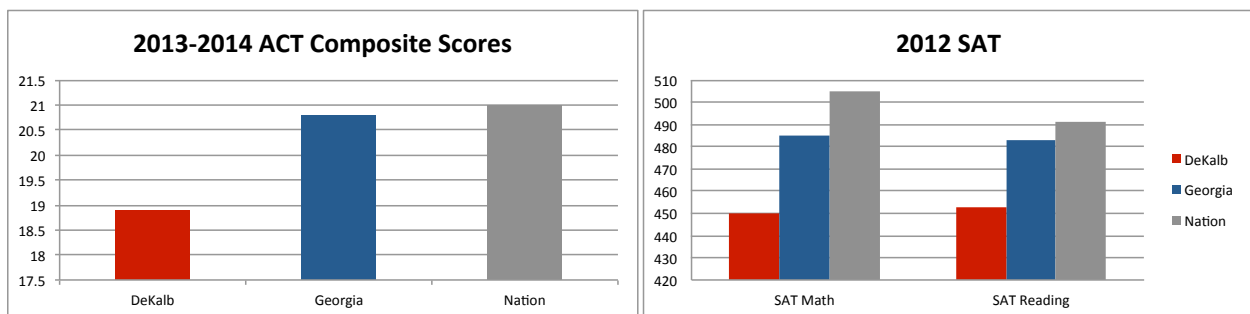
Some of the low graduation rates can be attributed to the challenges faced among low-income and limited English students; however, it should also be noted that the academic performance for all DeKalb students on the CRCT and EOCT is below the state average in most areas and particularly in science, math and social studies and this further impacts the overall graduation rate.

4. *Better preparing graduates for college and career success*

Related to high school graduation is the need to increase preparation of eventual high school graduates for college and career readiness. Fifty-five percent of DeKalb students earn credit for at least one Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) or dual enrollment course, and 78 percent complete a career pathway. This indicates the level of enrollment in courses aligned with post-secondary success is significant, although there are still opportunities for improvement. For example, the percentage of students meeting the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) indicator of post-high school readiness based upon academic performance is only 47 percent, thus indicating that large student enrollment in these advanced courses does not equate to content mastery. This leads to the understanding that the quality of instruction and level of content mastery must be improved, and the opportunity for local schools to request innovative strategies can address this gap.

As noted below in Section D, the scores of DeKalb County schools' students on the ACT and SAT are below state and national averages.

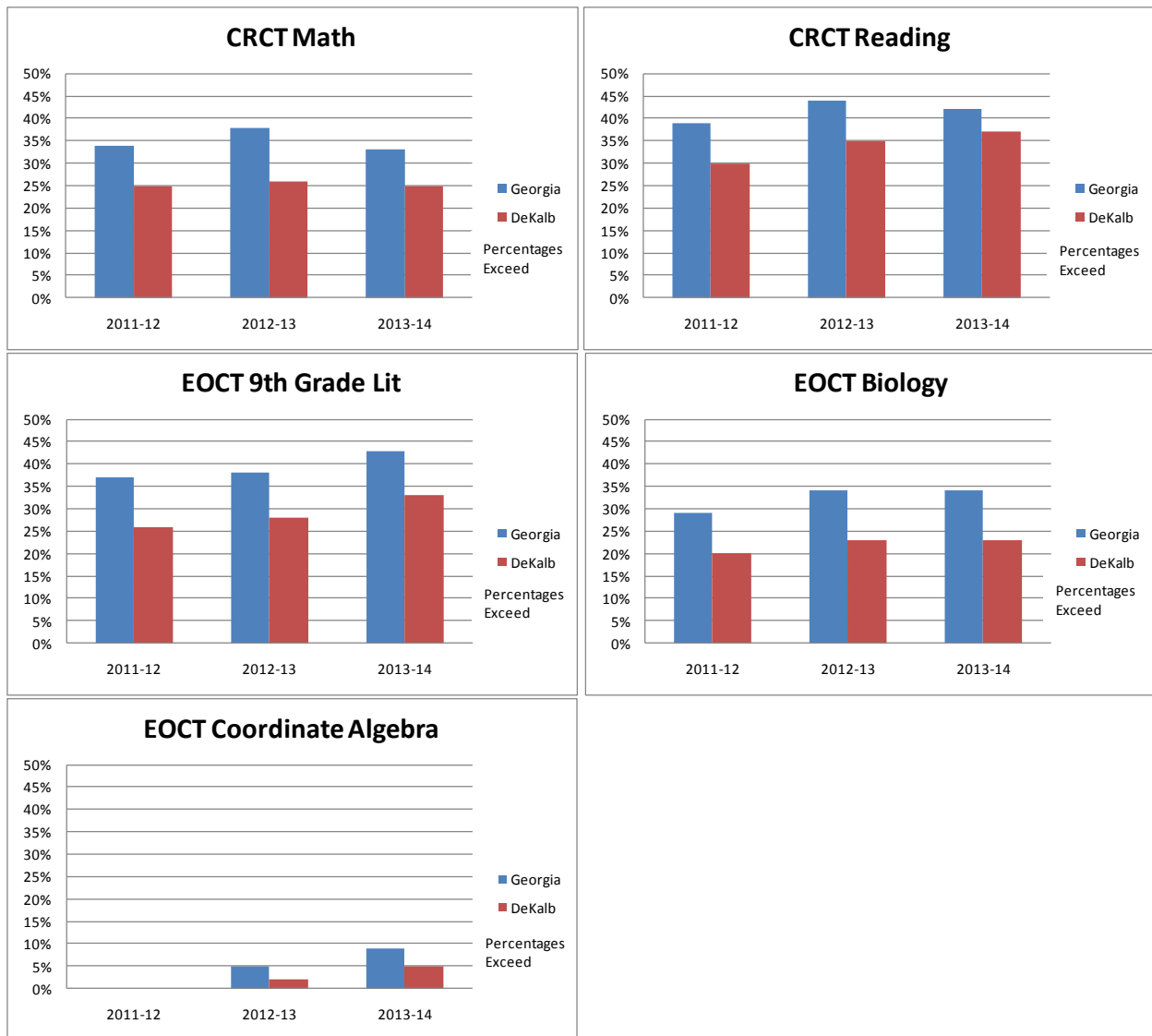
Section D



5. *Better serving academically advanced and gifted students*

As demonstrated in the charts found in Section E, year-to-year improvements are present; however, the percentage of DeKalb students exceeding on the CRCT and EOCT tests is below the state average .

Section E



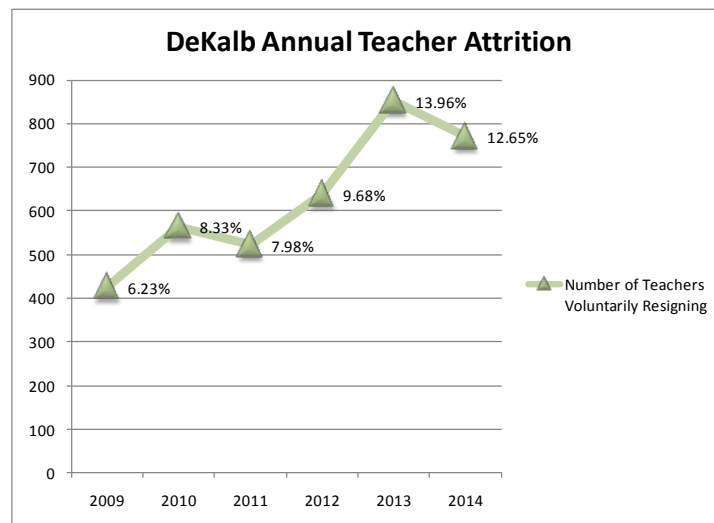
Approximately 10 percent of DeKalb students qualify for Gifted services. While 55 percent of these students receive credit for AP, IB or post-secondary courses, the District believes that number will

be much higher if students are provided with an engaging and relevant curriculum that prepares them for post-secondary success.

6. *Attracting, motivating, and retaining high quality teachers*

The chart below in Section F shows the number and percentage of teachers in DeKalb who leave voluntarily each school year. In 2013, 851 teachers voluntarily resigned, followed by 770 teachers in 2014; however, it is also worth noting that out of over 6,000 teachers employed with the District at the start of the 2014-2015 school year, 1,244 of them held 20 or more years of experience.

Section F



This creates both a challenge and an opportunity for the DeKalb County School District.

Research clearly shows that a highly effective teacher is the most influential factor in improving student achievement. If DeKalb can replace the exiting teachers with highly effective teachers who are motivated to remain in the school District, research indicates that student achievement will improve.

7. *Attracting, motivating, and retaining high quality principals*

Second to the influence of teachers in affecting student achievement is a highly effective school leadership. This is another area that is both a challenge and an opportunity for DeKalb. With 120 schools, the DeKalb County School District has hired 50 principals in the past three years. As principals

exit, experienced, innovative school leaders who are motivated to remain in their schools must be identified and be prepared to replace them.

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

The challenges are listed in priority order in the previous section.

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

The DeKalb County School District will address all of these challenges through charter system flexibility. By allowing local schools the opportunity to implement innovative practices specific to their populations, all of these challenges can be better addressed in ways that will improve student achievement. In the areas related to highly effective teachers and principals, charter system status will allow the use of innovative hiring and retention practices to support attracting, motivating and retaining such employees.

4. *What specific actions will your district take to address each of these challenges during its five-year charter term; and,*

5. *Provide a clear explanation of how each of these specific actions will lead to the specific challenge being addressed.*

The actions outlined below were generated through a series of interactive sessions with teachers, students, principals, District leaders, and the District's Flexibility Advisory Committee (FAC) that includes parents, teachers, principals, community members, central office staff, and a Board representative. Input from all of these participants was critical to the creation of these actions.

In order to ensure that the suggested innovative actions have a strong research basis, practices of nationally recognized school districts and charter networks were reviewed to identify effective approaches to addressing similar challenges to those in the Dekalb County School District. While local school governance will generate additional innovative ideas, the following section outlines specific actions to address the challenges, and explanations of how these actions will lead to greater student and District performance.

1. *Improving achievement among low-income students*

The DeKalb County School District will create flexible processes for providing increased instructional time, flexible scheduling, and additional supports for low-income students who are below desired levels.

Decades of research have shown that low-income students need more instructional time to keep pace with peers who arrive to school with a greater level of academic background knowledge. As noted by Robert J. Marzano in his book, *Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement* (2004), students “who have a great deal of background knowledge in a given subject area are likely to learn new information readily and quite well. The converse is also true.” Compounding this issue, low-income students experience an academic slide during the summer months and school breaks when other students may stay on track or make slight progress. In his book, *The Educators Handbook for Understanding and Closing Achievement Gaps*, Joseph Murphy quotes Entwisle, Alexander and Olson (2000) as finding, “The increasing gap in test scores between children and families of high and low socioeconomic status over the elementary-school period thus accrued entirely from the differential gains they made when school was closed: that is, during the summer months.” Effective charter school networks all utilized increased academic time as a primary strategy for improving student achievement via longer school days, weekend classes, and summer learning opportunities.

DeKalb will allow its schools flexibility to modify the state-mandated delivery models for EIP and Remedial programs so that low-income students have additional time for content area instruction,

rather than integrating interventions during regular classroom instructional time which only replaces one form of instruction with another. As Joseph Murphy also states in his evidence-based publication, *The Educators Handbook for Understanding and Closing Achievement Gaps*, the “bulk of evidence indicates these students do not need different types of interventions, but require much more intensive support and more of the quality education factors that promote higher levels of achievement in general.” These flexible models will be selected at the school level based upon the unique needs of each school population and may include core content instruction after school, during breaks or during summer, or creative integration of non-core subjects with remedial instruction such as creating an art class that focuses on basic math skills or a social studies course that integrates reading remediation.

The DeKalb County School District will also look to utilize teachers outside primary areas of certification during specific segments of the school day to create very small instructional groups for all students in reading and math. This would not change the teacher of record for purposes of Title I highly qualified compliance, but would instead be a method to provide supplemental instruction.

Flexibility will also be used to adjust scheduling so that the amount of time spent in specific subjects and courses is aligned with student needs rather than state mandated minimums. In this manner, science and math blocks may be longer than reading blocks, since reading is a subject where low-income students are on par with others. Courses and subjects may be integrated such as language arts and social studies to allow more time for instruction in math and science. Supplemental remedial support in reading or math may replace electives at middle and high school or be integrated with “specials” at the elementary level. Creative means of meeting requirements such as health and physical education may be utilized to free up time during the school day for supplemental instruction based upon student needs. Some schools may even choose to implement gender-based classrooms to further increase focus on instruction.

2. *Improving achievement among students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)*

The DeKalb County School District will create flexible processes for providing increased instructional time, flexible scheduling and additional supports for limited English students who are below level.

As with low-income students, students with limited English proficiency need more instructional time to keep pace with their English-speaking peers. Further compounding the struggle for this population of students is that academic background knowledge for LEP students may be missing, particularly among refugee students, and it is certainly made more difficult by the differences in language. LEP students may also experience an academic slide during the summer months and school breaks, particularly in homes and communities where English is not the primary spoken language.

DeKalb will allow its schools flexibility to modify the state-mandated delivery models for ESOL programs so that LEP students have additional time for content area instruction, rather than integrating interventions during regular classroom instructional time which only replaces one form of instruction with another. These flexible models will be selected at the school level and based upon the unique needs of each school population. Like the flexibility opportunities for low-income students, these models may include core content instruction after school, during breaks or during summer, or creative integration of non-core subjects with remedial instruction. This curricular integration is particularly critical with limited English students of high school age, who have little time to learn the language, catch up academically, and meet graduation requirements before aging-out of the public education system.

The District will also utilize teachers outside primary areas of certification during specific segments of the school day to create very small instructional groups for all students in reading and math, including ESOL certified teachers.

3. *Increasing the high school graduation rate*

Research shows that repeated retention and being two or more years over age for grade level are predictors for not completing high school. A compilation report, *Research Findings on Retention*, from

the National Association of School Psychologists states that the probability of dropping out increases with multiple retentions. Even for single retentions, the most consistent finding from decades of research is the high correlation between retention and dropping out. A recent systematic review of research exploring dropping out of high school indicates that grade retention is one of the most powerful predictors of high school dropout. It should be noted, however, that social promotion will not support student success either, so the District must seek a method to remediate struggling students without increasing the possibility for having a student leave school before graduating.

The DeKalb County School District will design flexible “bridge” programs for students who are not yet academically ready for the next grade level, with particular emphasis on those transitioning from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school. Such programs may be located at the “next level” school or at the current school. Students will be placed in the subsequent grade level for purposes of student reporting, and these students would be remediated on prior content while scaffolding to on-level curriculum. Students may be placed in on-level classrooms at various points during the school year based upon their readiness.

Content mastery will be utilized in lieu of seat time for a number of situations, including allowing students to make up failed courses during school-year breaks, over the summer or during an extended day. In a study of eight high-performing charter high schools serving at-risk students, USDOE researchers found that such schools teach for mastery. Students are given remediation, acceleration and more time on task to learn and master key academic standards. At these schools, if learning requires more time, more time is provided. All have developed longer school days or school years and some have added summer and weekend academics (*Charter High Schools: Closing the Achievement Gap*, WestEd for U.S. Department of Education, 2006).

Content mastery will also be used in lieu of seat time for accelerating students by awarding credit for demonstration of prior knowledge and placing such students in higher level courses.

Blended learning will be utilized for students who do not wish to be physically present in a school for the required number of minutes, or who need to participate at non-traditional times due to work or family arrangements. Similar to a post-secondary environment, students would access online instruction for part of their coursework and attend classes two or three times a week at a non-traditional, “open” location with classes scheduled based upon student needs, such as in the evening and on weekends. Such students would be considered full-time enrollees for FTE purposes but would engage in instruction both online and in physical classroom. This will allow students who otherwise may drop out due to work or family obligations, or simple lack of interest, to stay on track for graduation.

4. *Better preparing graduates for college and career success*

Career pathways can serve as a mechanism to keep students engaged and prepare them for post-secondary options while completing high school. The DeKalb County School District seeks to have more students complete higher-level career pathway courses and experience relevant work-study programs, internships and apprenticeships. In order to accomplish this, some entry-level career pathway courses will be moved to the middle school level for high school credit so that students who are able and interested can get a head start. Partnerships with businesses and industries will be sought so that community instructors and alternatively certified teachers may be used to teach such courses, with a focus on content knowledge within the career area. Additional dual-enrollment opportunities will be created, including the establishment of additional Career Academies. The District will integrate more dual enrollment courses into the high school curriculum on campus so that more students can participate.

Additionally, DeKalb high schools may utilize a seat time waiver to allow greater opportunities for credit-bearing internships and apprenticeships in the high school grades. Combined with a better-integrated alignment with technical and community college joint-enrollment, this will assist students in seeing the relevance of finishing high school while preparing them with skills to either enter the workforce with a certification to work in a high-demand field, or with sufficient credit to complete a two- or four-year degree in a realistic timeframe. In Harvard College of Education’s publication *Pathways to*

Prosperity, the authors cite the following: “The Georgetown Center projects that 14 million job openings—nearly half of those that will be filled by workers with post-secondary education—will go to people with an associate’s degree or occupational certificate. Many of these will be in ‘middle-skill’ occupations such as electrician, and construction manager, dental hygienist, paralegal and police officer. While these jobs may not be as prestigious as those filled by B.A. holders, they pay a significant premium over many jobs open to those with just a high school degree. More surprisingly, they pay more than many of the jobs held by those with a bachelor’s degree. In fact, 27 percent of people with post-secondary licenses or certificates—credentials short of an associate’s degree—earn more than the average bachelor’s degree recipient.”

A more recent study, also by the Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown, was recently reported in *The New York Times* (August 16, 2012). The study, based on data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, divided the nation’s work force of 140 million people into three groups: those who did not go to college, those with some college education or an associate degree and those with at least a bachelor’s degree. From late 2007, when the recession began, to early 2012, the number of people with jobs in the least-educated group fell by more than 5.8 million, or 10 percent. In the middle group, recession losses were not as steep and were almost completely reversed by early this year while in the best-educated group, in which there was no net loss during the recession, the number of people with jobs climbed by 2.2 million, or 5 percent.

Similar innovative practices are a hallmark of the Broad Prize winning Houston Independent School District, which focused resources on dual enrollment and career pathways to improve high school success. The student population of Houston is very similar to DeKalb so such effective approaches should be replicable with equal success.

5. *Better serving academically advanced and gifted students*

The DeKalb County School District proposes to create alternative methods to identify students who qualify for the Gifted program. Currently, approximately 10% of DeKalb students are officially

identified as Gifted according to the state identification criteria. This percentage does not adequately represent the numbers of DeKalb students who would benefit from Gifted program teaching strategies and have the potential to engage in higher-order thinking activities. Limited English students face language barriers that make it difficult for truly gifted students to qualify for the program given the current assessment methods. Low-income students are historically under-represented in Gifted services although many can benefit from the high-order thinking and creativity that is incorporated into the Gifted program. Each of these student groups would have greater number of students qualifying for gifted services given that the assessment methods allowed for greater emphasis on creative thought processes rather than prior knowledge and/or English proficiency.

Flexibility will also be implemented in the models used for Gifted program delivery so that innovative practices can be designed that best meet the needs of students in each school and do not create the perception of exclusion through pull out programs. Such exclusion creates a culture and classification of gifted and non-gifted students. It also has the potential to prevent Gifted program students from fully participating in needed classroom instruction. Alternative delivery models may involve rigorous, accelerated instruction for all students, such as robotics or science labs, with differentiated lessons or materials for the Gifted program students that are parallel to the lessons or materials for other students.

Gifted teachers will be utilized at elementary and middle school to support all students during portions of instructional time through teaching small groups of students who are capable of mastering accelerated curriculum. Additional opportunities will be created for students to successfully participate in Advanced Placement courses such as peer mentors, tutoring during an extended day, or extended time for AP courses by reducing other course requirements through waivers, content mastery or creative scheduling.

6. Attracting, motivating and retaining high quality teachers

The DeKalb County School District will seek to modify the state salary schedule in order to attract high quality teachers to hard-to-staff subject areas.

International teachers, particularly with experience in those areas of the world represented by the student population in the District, may be hired in particular schools for specific subjects based upon their instructional experience and methods rather than certification status.

Incentives will be considered for the most effective teachers to retain them in DeKalb County schools. This practice has been successful in attracting and retaining teachers in several nationally recognized urban districts including Duval County, Florida. Urban districts surrounded by more affluent suburbs, such as Pittsburgh and Denver, have found incentives for effective teachers to be a successful mechanism to attract and retain high performing teachers in their classrooms.

In order to offer innovative courses and subjects that align with student needs and interests, part-time community instructors with subject area expertise and teachers from non-education backgrounds may be hired. Schools may choose to share staff positions in order to create greater flexibility.

Furthermore, in schools with a particularly acute student need, teachers may be required to gain specific endorsements in order to continue to teach at the school. Depending on the student population this could include ESOL or Gifted endorsement. As an example, in the nationally recognized Corona-Norco School District near Los Angeles all teachers are required to gain Sheltered Observation Instructional Protocols (SIOP) certification.

7. Attracting, motivating and retaining high quality principals

As with teacher turnover, hiring new principals provides both a challenge and an opportunity. In the past three years alone, the DeKalb County School District has hired fifty principals, a number greater than the total number of principals in most Georgia school districts. These principals, who in addition to being in a new role may also be in a new district, will require strong leadership and support. The DeKalb County School District was recently selected for a competitive grant from the Wallace Foundation to participate in the Principal Supervisor program. This five-year program will provide intensive professional development to principal supervisors who will in turn support and prepare highly effective

principals. Participation in this grant program will lead to innovative principal preparation, selection and supervisory practices.

The DeKalb County School District may hire non-traditional principals to manage some of the non-traditional schools discussed in the prior sections, particularly at the high school level. Individuals with strong career preparation or college-level experience, but who might not have K-12 leadership certification, will be considered to lead such schools.

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.*

The following innovative actions requiring waiver to state laws and regulations will each address several of the Dekalb County School District challenges. In the interest of clarity, each innovative action requiring a waiver is listed only once.

Innovation	Waiver	SBOE Provision(s)	OCGA
Grade retention alternatives	Seat time, K-12	160-4-2-.01 The Quality Core Curriculum and Student Competencies Required by the Quality Basic Education (QBE) Act	§ 20-2-140.1. Online learning
	Alternative courses to meet graduation requirements, 8-12	160-4-2-.05 Middle School Program Criteria	§ 20-2-153. Early intervention program for students at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level
	Flexibility with EIP funding and delivery models, K-5	160-4-2-.11 Promotion, Placement, and Retention	§ 20-2-154. Remedial education program
	Flexibility with remedial funding and delivery models, 6-12	160-4-5-.01 Remedial Education	§ 20-2-159.4. Policies and guidelines for awarding units of high school credit based on demonstrated proficiency
	Flexibility with ESOL funding and delivery models, K-12	160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance: Program for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students	§ 20-2-282-285. Georgia Academic Placement and Promotion Policy
		160-4-2-.06 High School Graduation Requirements	
		160-4-2-.30 High School Graduation Requirements	
		160-4-2-.36 High School Graduation Requirements	
		160-4-2-.46 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 1997-98 School Year and Subsequent Years	
		160-4-2-.47 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2002-03 School Year and Subsequent Years	
	160-4-2-.48 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2008-09 School Year and Subsequent Years		
	160-4-2-.17 Early Intervention Program (EIP)		

Innovation	Waiver	SBOE Provision(s)	OCGA
Alternative schedules and calendars for students with differing needs	Seat time, K-12	160-5-1-.02 School Day and School Year for Students and Employees	§ 20-2-140.1. Online learning
	Class size, K-12	160-4-2-.05 Middle School Program Criteria	§ 20-2-153. Early intervention program for students at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level
	Alternative courses to meet graduation requirements, 8-12	160-4-5-.01 Remedial Education	§ 20-2-168. Distribution of federal funds; combined purchase of supplies and equipment; minimum school year; summer school programs; year-round operation
	Flexibility with EIP funding and delivery models, K-5	160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance: Program for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students	§ 20-2-182. Class size
	Flexibility with remedial funding and delivery models, 6-12	160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students	§ 20-2-290. Organization of schools; middle school programs; schedule
	Flexibility with gifted funding and delivery models, K-12	160-4-2-.06 High School Graduation Requirements	
	Flexibility with ESOL funding and delivery models, K-12	160-4-2-.30 High School Graduation Requirements	
		160-4-2-.36 High School Graduation Requirements	
		160-4-2-.46 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 1997-98 School Year and Subsequent Years	
		160-4-2-.47 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2002-03 School Year and Subsequent Years	
		160-4-2-.48 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2008-09 School Year and Subsequent Years	
		160-4-2-.17 Early Intervention Program (EIP)	
		160-5-1-.08 Class Size	

Innovation	Waiver	SBOE Provision(s)	OCGA
Integrated courses covering curriculum standards for multiple subjects	Seat time, K-12 Class size, K-12 Alternative courses to meet graduation requirements, 8-12 Flexibility with EIP funding and delivery models, K-5 Flexibility with remedial funding and delivery models, 6-12 Flexibility with gifted funding and delivery models, K-12	160-4-2-.01 The Quality Core Curriculum and Student Competencies Required by the Quality Basic Education (QBE) Act 160-4-2-.05 Middle School Program Criteria 160-4-5-.01 Remedial Education 160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students 160-4-2-.06 High School Graduation Requirements 160-4-2-.30 High School Graduation Requirements 160-4-2-.36 High School Graduation Requirements 160-4-2-.46 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 1997-98 School Year and Subsequent Years 160-4-2-.47 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2002-03 School Year and Subsequent Years 160-4-2-.48 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2008-09 School Year and Subsequent Years 160-5-1-.08 Class Size 160-4-2-.17 Early Intervention Program (EIP)	§ 20-2-153. Early intervention program for students at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level § 20-2-154. Remedial education program § 20-2-182. Class size § 20-2-290. Organization of schools; middle school programs; schedule

Innovation	Waiver	SBOE Provision(s)	OCGA
<p>Additional courses in middle school and high school, incorporating curriculum standards while integrating real-world relevance</p>	<p>Seat time, K-12</p> <p>Class size, K-12</p> <p>Alternative courses to meet graduation requirements, 8-12</p> <p>Flexibility with remedial funding and delivery models, 6-12</p> <p>Flexibility with gifted funding and delivery models, K-12</p>	<p>160-4-2-.01 The Quality Core Curriculum and Student Competencies Required by the Quality Basic Education (QBE) Act</p> <p>160-4-2-.05 Middle School Program Criteria</p> <p>160-4-5-.01 Remedial Education</p> <p>160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students</p> <p>160-4-2-.06 High School Graduation Requirements</p> <p>160-4-2-.30 High School Graduation Requirements</p> <p>160-4-2-.36 High School Graduation Requirements</p> <p>160-4-2-.46 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 1997-98 School Year and Subsequent Years</p> <p>160-4-2-.47 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2002-03 School Year and Subsequent Years</p> <p>160-4-2-.48 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2008-09 School Year and Subsequent Years</p> <p>160-5-1-.08 Class Size</p>	<p>§ 20-2-154. Remedial education program</p> <p>§ 20-2-182. Class size</p> <p>§ 20-2-290. Organization of schools; middle school programs; schedule</p>

Innovation	Waiver	SBOE Provision(s)	OCGA
<p>Expanded use of blended learning, with FTE awarded for time spent in a virtual learning environment outside of the classroom</p>	<p>Seat time, K-12</p> <p>Class size, K-12</p> <p>Alternative courses to meet graduation requirements, 8-12</p> <p>Flexibility with EIP funding and delivery models, K-5</p> <p>Flexibility with remedial funding and delivery models, 6-12</p> <p>Flexibility with gifted funding and delivery models, K-12</p> <p>Flexibility with ESOL funding and delivery models, K-12</p>	<p>160-5-1-.02 School Day and School Year for Students and Employees</p> <p>160-4-2-.05 Middle School Program Criteria</p> <p>160-4-5-.01 Remedial Education</p> <p>160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance: Program for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students</p> <p>160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students</p> <p>160-5-1-.08 Class Size</p> <p>160-4-2-.17 Early Intervention Program (EIP)</p>	<p>§ 20-2-140.1. Online learning</p> <p>§ 20-2-153. Early intervention program for students at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level</p> <p>§ 20-2-154. Remedial education program</p> <p>§ 20-2-182. Class size</p> <p>§ 20-2-290. Organization of schools; middle school programs; schedule</p> <p>§ 20-2-319.4. Virtual instruction programs; notice of opportunities; mechanisms for compliance; approved providers; approval status; curriculum plan</p>
<p>Opportunities for credit-bearing internships and apprenticeships (9-12)</p>	<p>Seat time, K-12</p> <p>Alternative courses to meet graduation requirements, 8-12</p> <p>Flexibility with gifted funding and delivery models, K-12</p>	<p>160-5-1-.02 School Day and School Year for Students and Employees</p> <p>160-4-3-.14 Work-Based Learning Programs</p> <p>160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students</p>	

Innovation	Waiver	SBOE Provision(s)	OCGA
<p>Mastery of standards in lieu of seat time as a basis for credit (9-12)</p>	<p>Seat time, K-12</p>	<p>160-5-1-.02 School Day and School Year for Students and Employees</p> <p>160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance: Program for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students</p> <p>160-4-2-.06 High School Graduation Requirements</p> <p>160-4-2-.30 High School Graduation Requirements</p> <p>160-4-2-.36 High School Graduation Requirements</p> <p>160-4-2-.46 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 1997-98 School Year and Subsequent Years</p> <p>160-4-2-.47 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2002-03 School Year and Subsequent Years</p> <p>160-4-2-.48 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2008-09 School Year and Subsequent Years</p> <p>160-4-2-.17 Early Intervention Program (EIP)</p>	<p>§ 20-2-159.4. Policies and guidelines for awarding units of high school credit based on demonstrated proficiency</p> <p>§ 20-2-290. Organization of schools; middle school programs; schedule</p>

Innovation	Waiver	SBOE Provision(s)	OCGA
Alternative methods of teacher compensation to recognize credentials in hard-to-staff areas and for innovation and improvement aligned with student achievement	State salary schedule	160-5-2-.23 Financial Administration for Georgia Local Units of Administration 160-5-2-.05 Experience for Salary Purposes	§ 20-2-167. Funding for direct instructional, media center, and staff development costs; computerized uniform budget and accounting system; submission of local budget to state board; provision of certain information by local boards; waiver of expenditure controls § 20-2-212. Salary schedules § 20-2-213.1. Pay-for-performance for rewarding group activity
Flexing class sizes throughout the day and week to allow times for greater differentiation of instruction in small groups	Class size Seat time	160-5-1-.08 Class Size	§ 20-2-182. Class size

Innovation	Waiver	SBOE Provision(s)	OCGA
<p>Providing more opportunity for differentiation by utilizing teachers earned through targeted programs such as EIP, Remedial, Gifted and ESOL to teach outside of their funded areas during segments of the day in order to create small student groups by performance levels</p>	<p>Flexibility with ESOL funding and delivery models, K-12</p> <p>Flexibility with gifted funding and delivery models, K-12</p>	<p>160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance: Program for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students</p> <p>160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students</p>	<p>§ 20-2-153. Early intervention program for students at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level</p> <p>§ 20-2-154. Remedial education program</p>
<p>Varying class time to allow more time for subjects where student learning needs are greater</p>	<p>Seat time</p>	<p>160-4-2-.17 Early Intervention Program (EIP)</p>	<p>§ 20-2-290. Organization of schools; middle school programs; schedule</p>
<p>Alternative certification paths for teachers, particularly those in elective fields</p>	<p>Teacher certification requirements</p>	<p>160-5-2-.05 Experience for Salary Purposes</p>	<p>§ 20-2-204. Classification of all certified or permitted personnel</p> <p>§ 20-2-206. Alternative teacher certification program</p>

Innovation	Waiver	SBOE Provision(s)	OCGA
<p>Flexible use of personnel and program models</p>	<p>Categorical expenditure requirements</p> <p>Funding by segment and seat time for general education classes</p> <p>Funding by segment and seat time for special program classes, specifically EIP, Remedial, Gifted and ESOL</p> <p>State salary schedule</p>	<p>160-5-1-.22 Personnel Required</p> <p>160-5-2-.23 Financial Administration for Georgia Local Units of Administration</p> <p>160-4-4-.01 Media Programs</p> <p>160-4-4-.10 Textbook/Instructional Materials Selection and Recommendation</p> <p>160-5-1-.29 Minimum Direct Classroom Expenditures</p>	<p>§ 20-2-153. Early intervention program for students at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level</p> <p>§ 20-2-167. Funding for direct instructional, media center, and staff development costs; computerized uniform budget and accounting system; submission of local budget to state board; provision of certain information by local boards; waiver of expenditure controls</p> <p>§ 20-2-171. Minimum direct classroom expenditures; waivers; sanctions for noncompliance; submission of budget and expenditure information; rules and regulations</p> <p>§ 20-2-201. In-service or continuing education</p> <p>§ 20-2-212. Salary schedules</p>
<p>Gifted Program Innovations</p>	<p>Flexibility with gifted funding and delivery models, K-12</p>	<p>160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students</p> <p>GaDOE Regulations Related to Program Delivery Models</p> <p>Georgia Gifted Resource Manual</p>	<p>§ 20-2-182(i)(2) Program weights to reflect funds for payment of salaries and benefits; maximum class size; reporting requirements; application to specific school years (as it relates to maximum class size for gifted students).</p>

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?

SBOE Meeting date (passed)	Waiver	Length approved
6/14	SBOE Rule 160-5-.29 Minimum Direct Classroom Expenditures (3)(b) and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-171 (b)(4) as authorized by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-244	DeKalb passed resolution in May 2014. For 2012-2013 (previous)
2/14	Blanket SBOE exemption of all statutory and regulatory class size maximums for the 2014-2015 school year contingent on local board resolution.	DeKalb passed resolution in June 2014. For 2014-2015
2/13	Blanket SBOE exemption of all statutory and regulatory class size maximums for the 2013-2014 school year contingent on local board resolution.	DeKalb passed resolution in August 2013. For 2013-2014.
2/12	SBOE exemption of all statutory and regulatory class size maximums for the 2012-2013 school year contingent on local board resolution.	DeKalb passed resolution in July 2012. For 2012-2013.
2/11	SBOE exemption of all statutory and regulatory class size maximums for the 2011-2012 school year contingent on local board resolution.	DeKalb passed resolution in April 2011. For 2011-2012.
10/09	Waived 160-4-2-.14 and OCGA 20-2-184.1 to Increase funds to be used for transportation by 5%	DeKalb passed resolution in Sept. 2009. For FY 10 and FY 11
10/09	Waived 160-4-8-.05 Guidance Counselors and 20-2-182(c): to use for direct instruction based on certification	DeKalb passed resolution in Sept. 2009. For FY 10 and FY 11
10/09	Class size	DeKalb passed resolution in Sept. 2009. For FY 10

10/09	Waived 160-5-1-.22 and OCGA 20-2-184, 185, and 186: Allow existing personnel to share workloads so as to reduce number of personnel required	DeKalb passed resolution in Sept. 2009. For FY 10 and FY 11
10/09	Waived direct instruction 65% requirement.	DeKalb passed resolution in Sept. 2009. FY 10
10/09	Alternative education program requirements	At least 1 year—assessed after that.
8/09	Waived AEP requirements for Early College and Online learning academy.	At least 1 year—assessed after that.
6/09	Waiver of scheduling for instruction requirements to allow block scheduling in certain schools.	At least 1 year—assessed after that.

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

Implementation of each specific action will be dependent upon the innovations approved by each Local School Governance Team (LSGT) in line with their School Improvement Plan. It is essential that innovations be carefully considered to best meet the needs of student in each school, rather than adopted wholesale without regard to school context, student achievement data and prioritization of needs. This will be the work of the LSGTs during Year 1 of implementation. In Year 2 of implementation, local schools will begin implementation of the actions listed above that respond to the needs of their students.

At the district level, the Dekalb County School District plans to move forward in Year 1 with increasing access to internships and apprenticeships, and creating opportunities for content mastery in lieu of seat time to remediate failed courses. In Year 2, the district will implement methods to recruit teachers in hard-to-staff areas through salary adjustments and to reward innovative and highly effective teachers. In Year 3, the District will seek to establish non-traditional schools offering blended learning and courses at non-traditional hours.

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

While some of the above practices may currently be in place in some sites across the district (including start-up and conversion charter schools), as systemic responses to student needs, all of these actions represent innovations for the DeKalb County School District.

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

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

Specific Performance Expectation 1:

The DeKalb County School District proposes to increase the high school graduation rate to 80 percent for the all-students category by the end of its five-year charter term as measured by the College and Career Ready Performance Index.

Given the upcoming changes to state assessments and potential modifications to student performance targets by the Georgia Department of Education, the DeKalb County School District will utilize the CCRPI and Beating the Odds (BTO) goals listed below as its remaining performance expectations.

Goal 1:

During each year of its first five-year charter term, the Charter System shall “beat the odds” as determined by a formula measuring expected student growth. The Beating the Odds analysis is a cross-sectional, fixed effects regression model that uses the following factors from the CCRPI school-level dataset, GaDOE student record file, and GaDOE CPI data.

A. Student-based Factors:

- Percentage of students identified as African American;
- Percentage of students identified as Hispanic;
- Percentage of students identified as White;
- Percentage of students identified as Other;
- Percentage of students identified as qualifying for Free/Reduced Lunch;
- Percentage of students identified as Students with Disabilities;
- Percentage of students identified as English Learners;
- Percentage of students identified as Gifted.

B. School-based Factors:

- School Size (FTE);
- Student/Teacher Ratio;
- School Configuration/CCRPI Score Type (i.e. Elementary, Middle, High);
- Locale Type (i.e. City, Town, Rural);
- District Performance (Fixed Effect).

Goal 2:

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

Goal 3:

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

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

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).

Unlike many large, urban school districts DeKalb has created high school clusters that have almost complete alignment among the elementary, middle and high school attendance zones, with each cluster including one high school, one middle school, and an average of four elementary schools. As a result, clusters serve students with similar needs and demographic characteristics.

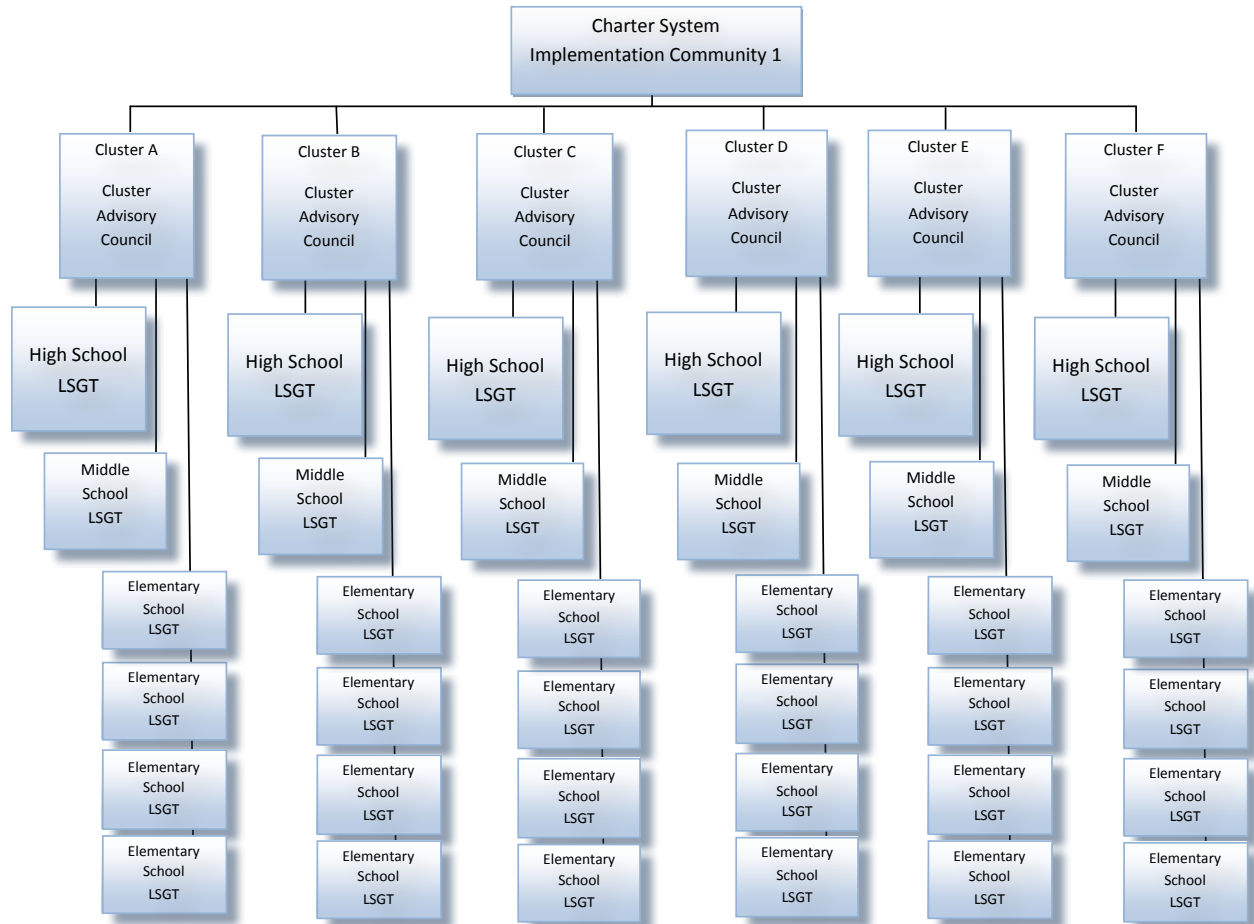
For that reason, in addition to implementing Local School Governance Teams (LSGTs) at each school, the DeKalb County School District proposes an innovative governance opportunity that will allow each cluster to create a Cluster Advisory Council (CAC) supported by the Regional Superintendent's office in each Region. These CACs will advise and provide input and support for individual LSGT processes, training and resources within each cluster. Cluster Advisory Councils will serve as resources for individual LSGTs who may need support in multiple areas including, but not limited to, parent engagement or LSGT meeting procedures; however, it should be noted that the CAC will serve in an

advisory or collaborative role and not have governance over individual schools. That will remain the role of the LSGT at each site. The CACs will have the ability to review and provide recommendations on proposed school innovations that impact the full cluster, such as additions to the curriculum or adjustments to school schedules but any innovative practice impacting the cluster must also get the full approval of each LSGT within that cluster. Each CAC will consist of every principal in the cluster as well as another LSGT member to be appointed by each LSGT as their CAC representative.

Due to the large number of schools to be included in the DeKalb charter system (120), the only responsible way to manage the implementation while ensuring fidelity to the charter system design and concepts is to stagger the implementation of schools over the next three years. The DeKalb County School District proposes to stagger this implementation by clusters to gain the benefits of cluster implementation cited above. Three Charter System Implementation Communities (CSIC) will be launched over the next three years with all participating schools included at the end of the three-year period. At least six of the eighteen clusters will be included each year. This staggered implementation has multiple benefits, including:

- Ensuring fidelity to the charter system models and practices;
- Allowing adequate support for success;
- Creating a learning community among and across participating clusters within each CSIC, of a size that the school and LSGT leaders can be convened to share practices and address common issues.
- Building capacity and support for communities to ensure the success of each LSGT.

The following image illustrates the CSIC design:



The nationally recognized San Diego school district has focused on community-based education reform, with an emphasis on revitalizing neighborhood schools. Their Vision 2020 guides policy and practice in the district along five focus areas: 1) creating improved and broader measures of student achievement; 2) developing schools as neighborhood learning centers; 3) ensuring effective teaching in the classroom; 4) engaging parents and the community; and 5) facilitating district-wide communication and support. Their approach is characterized by councils in each of the clusters similar to what is being proposed in DeKalb. San Diego’s cluster councils are comprised of the schools’ principals, parents and

community representatives and serve as a forum for stakeholders to discuss common needs, concerns and challenges. These councils, coupled with site-based management and decisions at the local school level, have been proven effective in improving student achievement. The DeKalb County School District believes that through charter system status, a similar approach to local school governance can lead to greater student performance.

Implementation of the CSICs will begin with at least six of the District's eighteen clusters, including one in each of the five regions. The selection of these initial clusters may be based upon the following criteria:

- Active Local School Advisory Councils:

Engaged stakeholders are critical to the success of any LSGT, CAC, or CSIC. Strong local school advisory councils and/or parents, teachers, and community members that demonstrate a readiness and eagerness for local school engagement would be a critical component for consideration.

- A preponderance of Proficient or Exemplary principals:

Leading in a charter system requires an instructional leader that works collaboratively with the school community. The school leaders in the first CSIC must be model leaders who will serve as exemplars for operating in a more autonomous school environment with distributed leadership. They must also be open to innovation and capable leaders of change.

- A mix of student demographics and achievement levels:

It is essential that the first CSIC serve as a model to solidify the implementation details of the charter system. They must also develop innovative practices that are applicable to all DeKalb schools. Therefore, it is essential that the schools and clusters of the first CSIC are representative of all 100,000 of the District's students and families.

DeKalb County School District

Additionally, DeKalb’s three non-cluster high schools will be included in this first CSIC. These are the DeKalb Early College Academy (DECA), Arabia Mountain High School, and DeKalb School of the Arts (DSA). These three high schools draw students from across the school district. Due to their focused curriculum they have a high state of readiness for innovation and meet the criteria listed above.

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.

This chart is based upon the expectation that the DeKalb County School District Charter application is considered by the Georgia Board of Education in April 2015 and approved in May 2015.

Phase 1: Charter System Implementation Community 1	
Identify clusters to be included in CSIC 1.	April 2015
Provide an orientation to CSIC 1 principals on charter system expectations, design and next steps.	May 2015
Create LSGT By-laws, including processes for election, code of conduct, meeting expectations, removal procedures, and processes for submitting decisions and recommendations to the superintendent for approval by the LBOE.	June 2015
Design election and appointment processes.	July 2015
Hold meetings in CSIC 1 clusters and schools to discuss the charter system design, LSGT opportunities and expectations.	August 2015
Parents and teachers submit notice of intention to run for election, schools communicate candidate information to school community.	September 2015
LSGT elections.	October 2015

DeKalb County School District

Appointment of LSGT members .	October 2015
Training of LSGT members.	November 2015
Convening of Cluster Advisory Council.	November 2015
Exercise of authority including input on school budget, approval of discretionary budget allocation, approval of updates to the School Improvement Plan, approval of innovations.	January through June 2016
Parents and teachers express interest in running for elected 2016-2017 CSIC 1 elected vacancies.	April 2016
Elect parents and teachers to 2016-2017 vacancies.	May 2016
Phase 2: Charter System Implementation Community 2	
Identify clusters to be included in CSIC 2.	May 2016
Provide an orientation to CSIC 2 principals on charter system expectations, design and next steps.	May 2016
Adjust LSGT By-laws based upon input from CSIC 1 CAC members, including processes for election, code of conduct, meeting expectations, removal procedures, and processes for submitting decisions and recommendations to the superintendent for approval by the LBOE.	June 2016
Hold meetings in CSIC 2 clusters and schools to discuss the charter system design, LSGT opportunities and expectations.	August 2016
Parents and teachers submit notice of intention to run for election, schools communicate candidate information to school community in CSIC 2.	September 2016
LSGT elections for CSIC 2.	October 2016

DeKalb County School District

Appointment of LSGT members.	October 2016
Training of LSGT members.	November 2016
Convening of Cluster Advisory Council for CSIC 2.	November 2016
Exercise of authority including input on school budget, approval of discretionary allocation, approval of updates to the School Improvement Plan, and approval of innovations.	January through June 2017
Parents and teachers express interest in running for elected 2017-2018 CSIC 1 elected vacancies.	April 2017
Elect parents and teachers to 2017-2018 vacancies.	May 2017
Phase 3: Charter System Implementation Community 3	
Provide an orientation to CSIC 3 principals on charter system expectations, design and next steps (all remaining principals of non-charter schools).	May 2017
Hold meetings in CSIC 3 clusters and schools to discuss the charter system design, LSGT opportunities and expectations (all remaining non-charter schools).	August 2017
Parents and teachers submit notice of intention to run for election, schools communicate candidate information to school community in CSIC 3.	September 2017
LSGT elections in CSIC 3.	October 2017
Appointment of LSGT members in CSIC 3.	October 2017
Training of LSGT members in CSIC 3.	November 2017
Convening of Cluster Advisory Council in CSIC 3.	November 2017

Exercise of authority including input on school budget, approval of discretionary allocation, approval of updates to the School Improvement Plan in CSIC 3.	January through June 2018
Parents and teachers express interest in running for elected 2017-2018 CSIC 1 elected vacancies.	April 2018
Elect parents and teachers to 2018-2019 vacancies.	May 2018

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.

Each LSGT will consist of nine members except at the high schools, which will have ten. All members will serve two-year terms, except for the first year in each phase when such terms will be staggered. The high school student will serve a one-year term. The following chart shows each type of member and the selection method.

Member Type	Selection Method
Principal	De facto voting member.
Parent/Guardian 1	Elected by parents.
Parent/Guardian 2	Elected by parents.
Parent/Guardian 3	Appointed by principal to ensure diversity of the LSGT reflects the school population.
Teacher 1	Elected by the staff of the school.
Teacher 2	Elected by the staff of the school.
Staff or faculty member	A school staff or faculty member recommended by the principal for appointment by the remaining LSGT members.
1 Business representative (non parent)	Nominated by the principal for appointment by the LSGT. District partnerships with civic and business organizations such as Rotary, Chamber

	of Commerce, Leadership DeKalb, Kiwanis, 100 Black Men, and other organizations will be utilized to create a pool of business representatives interested in serving on LSGTs throughout the county.
1 Community member (non parent)	Nominated by the principal for appointment by the LSGT. In order to build support for schools within their community this individual should be a non-parent representative.
1 student (at high school only, non-voting)	Nominated by the principal for appointment by the LSGT in order to ensure the diversity of the LSGT is representative of the school community.

Due to the diversity of the DeKalb County School District, it is essential for effective and representative local school governance that all families in the school community are represented. Some members of the DeKalb school community are not as comfortable standing for election and engaging in public as others. The potential lack of diversity and representation of the school population on the LSGT was a frequent concern during input sessions on the DeKalb Charter System design. In order to ensure that all students and their interests are represented in the deliberations and decisions of the LSGT, the principal will appoint one parent/guardian to balance the diversity of representation on the LSGT after parent elections have occurred. This is intended to ensure that all groups have a voice in school governance, including those with fewer resources, smaller social networks, language barriers, or cultural differences. At the high school level the student representative, who is non-voting, will also be appointed to balance the diversity of representation and bring needed perspectives to the work of the LSGT.

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.

DeKalb County School District

Ensuring appropriate boundaries on LSGT authority was a frequent concern voiced by the DeKalb County School District stakeholders during community input sessions. Community members including parents and other residents, principals, teachers and senior leaders all expressed concerns that achievement of all students needs to be paramount, and that unintended consequences of LSGT actions for the school, cluster, or the district as a whole need to be carefully considered. As a means to ensure these identified appropriate boundaries, a set of DeKalb Flexibility Risk Criteria were established. These criteria were reviewed with principals, teachers, and students; in community input sessions held in each of the five regions; and with senior leadership. All parties found these criteria to be necessary and reasonable through various interpretations as to their purpose. LSGT recommendations and decisions would be subject to review against these criteria. Provided that these criteria are met, LSGT actions would move forward and possibly approved.

DeKalb Flexibility Risk Criteria
✓ Maintains or increases results in CCRPI tested areas.
✓ Does not exclude or give preference to student or community groups.
✓ Ensures student safety.
✓ Does not impact surrounding schools (unless endorsed by Cluster Advisory Council).
✓ Does not increase district budget (except for innovations approved for use of charter system funds).
✓ Does not affect federal funding.
✓ Does not affect capital funding.
✓ Maintains economies of scale in district operations in such areas as nutrition, transportation and contracting.
✓ Does not conflict with standard operating procedures in contracting, employment processing, and compliance with federal regulations.
✓ Does not involve legal action.
✓ Does not interfere with maintenance and upkeep of physical facilities.
✓ Complies with Georgia High School Association rules.

The specific areas and levels of LSGT authority are outlined in the following *Local School Governance Matrix*.

School Level Governance Decision-Making Matrix				
System Name: DeKalb	Minimum LSGT 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	LSGT shall recommend the principal or school leader for selection by the BOE	Each LSGT will be granted this authority following election, appointment and training of members. Each LSGT will appoint two members to a selection panel. This panel will participate in interviews of principal candidates and recommend candidates to the Superintendent for consideration.	LSGT Authority will include: Conduct surveys of stakeholders (students, parents, teachers) regarding school performance; provide input on principal performance for the continuous improvement of the principal and their supervisor's consideration in preparing the principal's evaluation; provide input to the principal on type and allocation of personnel positions; provide input to the principal on desired qualifications for newly created positions; receive information on staffing patterns and assignments.	Additional authority will be granted following LSGT election, appointment and training. LSGT decisions will be reviewed by the Superintendent's designee to ensure alignment with DeKalb Flexibility Risk Criteria.

Financial Decisions and Resource Allocation	<p>LSGTs shall have input into the final recommendations for the school budget, including number and type of personnel, curriculum costs, supply costs, equipment costs and maintenance and operations costs</p>	<p>Each LSGT will be granted this authority following election, appointment and training of members. In November of each year, the principal will review progress against School Improvement goals with the LSGT. The LSGT will identify priorities for school resource allocation in order to improve student achievement. In January the principal will propose budget adjustments in line with the LSGT priorities. In February, the LSGT will provide final input on the school budget prior to submission to the Superintendent and Board.</p>	<p>LSGT Authority will include: Approval of the use of unrestricted, undesignated funds within the school budget for submission to the Superintendent and LBOE; approval of fundraising efforts and use of donated funds to the school; selection and approval of vendors from a district-approved list following district procurement processes, including vendors for school technology, instructional resources and staff professional learning; receive information about budget expenditures against allocations at least once during the school year.</p>	<p>Additional authority will be granted following LSGT election, appointment and training. LSGT decisions will be reviewed by the Superintendent's designee to ensure alignment with DeKalb Flexibility Risk Criteria.</p>
Curriculum and Instruction	<p>LSGT 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>Each LSGT will be granted this authority following election, appointment and training of members. Following review of progress against the School Improvement Plan goals and during the budget process, LSGTs will provide input on curricular and instructional improvements including methods, resources and materials.</p>	<p>LSGT Authority will include: approval of new courses or subjects; approval of instructional innovations requiring a waiver to state law; receive information on student achievement results, receive information on the implementation of innovations.</p>	<p>Additional authority will be granted following LSGT election, appointment and training. LSGT decisions will be reviewed by the Superintendent's designee to ensure alignment with DeKalb Flexibility Risk Criteria.</p>

<p>Establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals</p>	<p>LSGTs shall approve the school improvement plan and provide oversight of its implementation</p>	<p>Each LSGT will be granted this authority following election, appointment and training of members. LSGTs will receive a report on past performance against the School Improvement Plan in the Fall of each year and set priorities for future action.</p>	<p>LSGT Authority will include: Approval of innovative practices aligned with the School Improvement Plan resulting in changes in class size, seat time, teacher certification, delivery of programs through ESOL, Remedial or Gifted services, or additions to the school curriculum.</p>	<p>Additional authority will be granted following LSGT election, appointment and training. LSGT decisions will be reviewed by the Superintendent's designee to ensure alignment with DeKalb Flexibility Risk Criteria.</p>
<p>School Operations</p>	<p>LSGTs shall have input into school operations that are consistent with school improvement and charter goals</p>	<p>Each LSGT will be granted this authority following election, appointment and training of members. LSGT will discuss school operations matters at appropriate times on the monthly agenda.</p>	<p>LSGT Authority will include: approve plans for parent engagement and involvement, while following district policies on volunteers in schools; approve school dress codes; approve student handbooks; approve school-wide discipline plans including alternatives to suspension in alignment with state laws; approve events to be held at the school; provide input to the principal on co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.</p>	<p>Additional authority will be granted following LSGT election, appointment and training. LSGT decisions will be reviewed by the Superintendent's designee to ensure alignment with DeKalb Flexibility Risk Criteria.</p>
<p>*The LBOE retains its constitutional authority</p>				

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

The structure of the LSGT will be larger and more representative than the current Local School Governance Council (LSAC). Currently, LSACs have a minimum of seven members: four parents/guardians, two certified teachers, and the principal. All parent/guardians are elected to the LSAC. The LSGT structure allows for appointment of a parent/guardian to ensure balanced representation, as described previously. The LSGT will also include a staff member who may not necessarily be a teacher so as to allow representation across each school's full faculty and necessary perspectives to address the goals in the School Improvement Plan. The LSGT will include a business partner and member of the community-at-large to ensure the necessary skill set for sound decision-making and to build commitment and support for the school within the community. This external stakeholder involvement is also necessary to build trust within the broader community through inclusive governance that allows members of the community who do not have children in public school to be represented.

Additionally, the authority of the LSGT will extend beyond that of the LSAC. The LSAC currently makes recommendations to increase student achievement and to create a school improvement plan. Local School Advisory Councils represent the interests of that school council to the principal, who in turn conveys the information to the Regional Superintendents, Superintendent, and if necessary, the Board of Education. The LSAC does not approve School Improvement Plans or use of resources, nor do they inform the design of the budget or new staff positions. They do not approve school innovations or other practices such as school-wide discipline and parent engagement. The LSGT will have meaningful authority that extends beyond the current practice of providing input to the principal by the LSAC.

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.

Local School Governance Teams will be required to participate in training sessions that will be initially organized by each CSIC and supported by the DeKalb County School District. The training will cover basics of school governance including open meetings and open records laws, Roberts Rules of Order, and effective meeting practices. Additionally, the training will cover specifics of the DeKalb County School District LSGT By-laws, including Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct policies. Finally, the LSGT governance training will outline levels of authority and the DeKalb Flexibility Risk Criteria, the School Improvement Plan process, and an overview of the budgeting process. Time will be built into the training to allow cluster groups to practice the new skills, dialogue about the appropriate implementation of LSGT authority, and participate in the design of the Cluster Advisory Council processes.

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

District procurement processes will be followed to secure a School Governing Team training provider.

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.

Trenton Arnold, Regional Superintendent, 678 676-0671.

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

The District has already begun this transition by engaging the senior leadership in lengthy and meaningful conversations about the benefits and boundaries of local school governance. There is a genuine commitment to allowing local school flexibility as a means of best serving the needs of our students. The senior leadership embraces the DeKalb Flexibility Risk Criteria as setting the boundaries for local school autonomy and is committed to allowing flexibility within these criteria. During the course of the charter system design, the senior leadership, participated in meaningful discussion of the criteria and levels of local school autonomy on six separate occasions. Additionally, these criteria have been reviewed with all school principals, teachers, and the broader community.

Through the District's recent AdvancEd reviews and strategic planning processes, the DeKalb County School District has established a strong focus on student achievement results as the basis for management and decision-making. Clear lines of authority have been established and strong Regional Superintendent offices have been created to support principals and communities in obtaining greater student performance results. The challenges identified within this application have been previously identified and are those that the District has been continuously addressing. The District is proud to acknowledge that growth and achievement has been demonstrated.

The recent award of the Wallace Foundation's Principal Supervisor grant will enable the DeKalb County School District to put specific strategies in place to move from a compliance culture to one focused on instructional strategies and student achievement results. This initiative will finance training and support for principal supervisors and help them reduce the number of principals these supervisors support. It is worth noting that DeKalb was one of only six districts in the United States selected for this competitive grant, who the Wallace Foundation considers as "among the nation's most advanced districts in recognizing the importance of the principal supervisor position." These core districts – Long Beach (Calif.), Des Moines (Iowa), Broward County (Fla.), Minneapolis, Cleveland, and DeKalb County

DeKalb County School District

(Georgia) – will receive four-year grants averaging about \$3 million each. DeKalb will also be part of an independent, \$2.5-million evaluation that will help answer how and whether or not boosting the supervisor post leads to more effective principals.

The primary purpose of this grant is to address the question, “If principal supervisors in large, complex districts shift from overseeing compliance to sharpening principals’ instructional leadership capabilities, and if they are provided with the right training, support and number of principals to supervise, would this improve the effectiveness of the principals with whom they work?” The initiative has four goals:

1. Changing the position description from compliance to one of support for principals;
2. Reducing the number of principals supervisors oversee and planning central-office redesigns;
3. Developing lessons about how to change central offices to support principal supervisors; and
4. Assessing the effectiveness and effects of these activities across the districts.

(Wallace Foundation press release, *Effort Aims to Shift Supervisors’ Focus from Bureaucratic Compliance to Principals’ Performance*, June 24, 2014). The DeKalb County School District believes that these four goals reach out to the larger purpose of seeking charter system status, which is to provide opportunities for innovation, flexibility, and local school governance for all 100,000 of the district’s students.