** **

****

****

****

****

**CONVERSION CHARTER PETITION REQUIREMENTS 1**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR CONVERSION CHARTER RENEWAL PETITION 4

[CHARTER INFORMATION 7](#_Toc426905793)

[I. THE CASE 8](#_Toc426905795)

[1. Why we want a charter 8](#_Toc426905796)

[II. ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES, PLANS AND WAIVERS 17](#_Toc426905797)

[2. School’s performance objectives for the proposed charter term 17](#_Toc426905798)

[3. Monitoring that students are on track to meet these academic goals 21](#_Toc426905799)

[4. Specific actionsto ensure student performance objectives are met 26](#_Toc426905800)

[5. Plans for educating special population 35](#_Toc426905802)

[6. Meeting the needs of students identified as gifted and talented. 38](#_Toc426905803)

[7. Providing state and federally mandated services for students with disabilities. 39](#_Toc426905804)

[8. Methods, strategies and/or programs for students receiving supplemental education services.. 40](#_Toc426905805)

[9. meeting the needs of students at-risk of academic failures through remediation 40](#_Toc426905806)

[10. Providing state and federally mandated services for English Language Learners (ESOL) 41](#_Toc426905807)

[11. Extracurricular activities or other auxiliary educational activities 43](#_Toc426905808)

[12. Actions in the academic plan requiring a waiver of state law, rule, or guidelines 43](#_Toc426905809)

[III.ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES, PLANS AND WAIVERS 44](#_Toc426905810)

 [13.Organizational Goals and Measures 44](#_Toc426905811)

[14. Actions the school will take to achieve its organizational performance objectives 47](#_Toc426905812)

[15. Actions in the organizational plan requiring a waiver of state law, rule, or guidelines? 50](#_Toc426905813)

[IV.GOVERNANCE 51](#_Toc426905814)

[16. How an autonomous governing board will make decisions for the school*.* 51](#_Toc426905815)

[17. Grievances 59](#_Toc426905816)

[18. Certificate of incorporation for the required Georgia nonprofit corporation 62](#_Toc426905817)

[19. Governing board members. 63](#_Toc426905818)

[20. Bylaws. 63](#_Toc426905819)

[21. Conflict of interest 64](#_Toc426905820)

[V. CONTRACTS WITH EDUCATIONAL SERVICE PROVIDERS/OTHER PARTNERS 65](#_Toc426905821)

[22. Contracts with an education service provider (ESP) or other charter partner, 65](#_Toc426905822)

[23. Proposed business arrangements or partnerships 65](#_Toc426905823)

[VI.FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES, PLANS AND WAIVERS 66](#_Toc426905824)

[24. Financial Goals and Measures 66](#_Toc426905825)

[25. Actions the school will take to achieve the financial performance objectives 71](#_Toc426905826)

[26. Fundraising or Other sources of Income 72](#_Toc426905827)

[27. Actions in the financial plan requiring a waiver of state law, rule or guidelines 73](#_Toc426905828)

[VII.STUDENT ADMISSIONS 73](#_Toc426905829)

[28. Admission Process 73](#_Toc426905830)

[VIII.FACILITIES 77](#_Toc426905831)

[29. School Facility. 77](#_Toc426905832)

[30. MOU for the facility 78](#_Toc426905833)

[31. Certificate of Occupancy (CO) 79](#_Toc426905834)

[32. Emergency safety plan 79](#_Toc426905835)

[IX.STUDENT DISCIPLINE 80](#_Toc426905836)

[33. Student Code of Conduct. 80](#_Toc426905837)

[X. OTHER INFORMATION 81](#_Toc426905845)

[34. Transportation services 81](#_Toc426905846)

[35. Food services. 81](#_Toc426905847)

[36. Legal representation or counsel. 81](#_Toc426905848)

[37. Insurance coverage 81](#_Toc426905849)

[38. Additional Information 82](#_Toc426905850)

[XI.ADDENDUM – PERSONNEL 83](#_Toc426905838)

[AQ1 Personnel 83](#_Toc426905839)

[AQ2 Staff Qualifications, Recruitment, and Hiring Practices, Procedures, and Compensation 83](#_Toc426905840)

[AQ3 Certification Requirements and Use of Highly Qualified Teachers 85](#_Toc426905841)

[AQ4 Background Checks 86](#_Toc426905842)

[AQ5 Employee Evaluation 86](#_Toc426905843)

[AQ6 State Health Benefit Plan Participation 86](#_Toc426905844)

[**39.** **Letter of Assurances** 87](#_Toc426905851)

[DeKalb County School District Signature Sheet 100](#_Toc426905852)

**Appendices**

Admissions and Enrollment Forms 1

Attendance Zone 2

Budget - 5 year projected 3

Calendar / Schedule Information 4

Certificate of Incorporation 5

Conflict of Interest Form 6

Curriculum Information 7

Documentation of Vote 8

Evidence of Community Support and Involvement 9

Governance Matrix 10

Governing Board By-Laws 11

Governing Board Member Packet 12

Governing Board Member Resumes 13

Handbook, Faculty 14

Handbook, Code of Conduct and CCHS Parent and Student 15

Job Descriptions 16

References / Bibliography 17

Salary Schedule 18

School Safety Plan 19

**CONVERSION CHARTER PETITION REQUIREMENTS**

All conversion charter petitions that are submitted by a charter petitioner to the local Board must meet the additional petition requirements:

**a. Include a statement, and evidence, that the petitioner has held the appropriate votes, by secret ballot, required pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064, and shall describe the procedures and outcomes of those votes. For the purposes of the vote required pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064 (a)(1)(A), each faculty or instructional staff member shall have a single vote.**

The vote was held on August 12, 2015, from 7:00 am – 7:00 pm at Chamblee Charter High School, in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064 and “Eligibility Requirements and Procedures for Conversion & High School Cluster Petition Votes, dated 6/18/15,” (from DCSD)." Details of the vote and procedures are included in Appendix 8.

**b. A conversion charter petition shall include a statement detailing the flexibility that the conversion school shall have from the District. *Please see the Conversion Charter Flexibility & Freedom Chart at the end of this book.***

Chamblee Charter High School, a nationally recognized high school and a successful charter school for 14 years, proposes innovations in governance, scheduling and curriculum which will, when working together, engage students and stakeholders in meaningful governance of and service to CCHS; enable students at all levels and teachers of all subjects to use tested time management strategies for improved academic outcomes; and prepare CCHS graduates for higher education expectations and real world career opportunities not yet envisioned, We are proposing a game-changer.

This statement is, of necessity, a succinct and high-level summary of the much-more-detailed petition. Petition references listed herein shall be considered a part of the petitioner statement.

CCHS shall have the flexibility from the District, to include requisite funding, required to implement the innovations defined in this petition. The three major innovations requiring waivers from state law and rule are:

* **Innovation in Curriculum:** implementing a ***S****cience,* ***T****echnology,* ***E****ngineering,* ***A****rts and* ***M****athematics* (STEAM) program that uniquely suits and helps to grow CCHS’s current strengths.
* **Innovation in Scheduling:** changing *how teachers and students interact and use their time;* responding to the diverse learning needs of all CCHS students, leading to proficiency in subject matter.
* **Innovation in Governance:** changing *planning and decision-making* to grow involvement and engagement by all stakeholders in CCHS, utilizing their professional skills and personal strengths.

**1. A description of how resources will be managed**

Resources will be managed by the CCHS Principal and the Governing Board, with input from all CCHS stakeholders through the Tricameral Advisory Council composed of 3 units: (1) faculty and staff, (2) parent and community, and (3) students.

As stated in response to Question 16d, the Governing Board is inclined to defer to the judgment of the Principal in accordance with non-regulatory input from the Tricameral Advisory Council regarding resource allocation. The Governing Board will review decisions. The Board will provide expertise when asked. The Board does not intend to decrease the authority of the Principal.

**2. How human resources will be managed and personnel evaluated**

CCHS personnel will remain DCSD employees and as such will be managed and evaluated per DCSD policy. Exceptions related to the selection and evaluation of the Principal and the selection of the required Chief Financial Officer are defined in Section XI.

**3. The extent to which parents, community members, and other stakeholders will participate in the governance of the school**

Parents, community members, faculty and staff, and students will participate in the governance of CCHS through the Tricameral Advisory Council. The response to Question- 16m provides more detail about the role of parents and community members.

As stated in response to Question 16b, the Governing Board is inclined to defer to recommendations of the CCHS faculty, as expressed through the Tricameral Advisory Council, regarding selection of materials, development of STEAM curriculum, and scheduling priorities to foster interdisciplinary teacher collaboration, accommodate STEAM internships, and improved use of time during the school day.

**4. Any other innovative practices the school intends to implement**

Financial innovations are described in response to Question 25a. The first innovation is the establishment of a non-profit Governing Board with fiduciary financial responsibilities that works in accordance with a CCHS Chief Financial Officer. The second financial innovation is a proposed partnership with DCSD to develop and implement procedures so that the District is able to identify actual costs at the school level and define system modifications to permit tracking at the school level

Underlying this statement is a spirit of partnership, in which the petitioner seeks to collaborate with DCSD to fulfill the terms of the charter contract. Being the first conversion charter school under the new SBOE charter policy requires new thinking and flexibility, as many things cannot be anticipated. CCHS believes it has proven to be a trusted partner during its past and current charter terms (15 years) and looks forward to continuing that role.

**The petition shall describe all policies, procedures and practices the school intends to implement and how this will materially distinguish the conversion school from the school’s pre-conversion model.**

In responding to the 2015 DCSD Charter School Petition Guidelines in this document, all policies, procedures and practices that CCHS intends to implement have been described, with the understanding that not all policy and procedure needs can be anticipated as state law and State Board of Education (SBOE) Rules evolve. Implementing the innovations proposed in the petition will materially distinguish CCHS from both its pre-conversion model in 2000, and its current model under a contract with explicit waivers and consistent with previous SBOE policy. A representative but not exhaustive list of these differences is:

* A governance function utilizing a Tricameral Advisory Council of CCHS stakeholders plus a non-profit Governing Board with fiduciary responsibility.
* A STEAM program, open to all students, that addresses the needs of all levels of learners, and whose implementation will not be constrained by policy but driven by student need, Georgia STEM Program criteria, and the strengths of the CCHS STEAM community.
* An MLS program which provides a flexible schedule to support the STEAM program and ensure that students have real-time access to the content they need at the pace that they need, permitting more efficient use of time during the school day and promoting student responsibility for their own learning.
* A proposed partnership with DCSD to develop and implement procedures so that the District is able to identify actual costs at the school level, define system modifications to permit tracking at the school level and enable CCHS to select DCSD as the most cost-effective vendor of choice for items such as human resources, facility maintenance, food service, transportation, etc.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR CONVERSION CHARTER RENEWAL PETITION**

**HISTORY** Chamblee Charter High School’s (CCHS) roots go deep in its north DeKalb community, while as a charter school it serves all of DeKalb County School District (DCSD). Founded in 1905 as a one-room grammar school, it added high school courses in 1917, began serving only secondary students in 1928 and added 12th Grade in 1950. CCHS, formerly Chamblee High School, is DeKalb County’s second-oldest high school. CCHS’ timeline shows continued academic growth and recognition: (1) DCSD’s first school to be accredited by the Georgia Accrediting Commission (1926); (2) accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1934 - present); (3) the high school selected by DCSD for Kittredge and Chamblee Middle School High Achiever Magnet students (1990-present); (4) the only conversion charter high school in DCSD (2001-present); (5) National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence (1996). CCHS serves approximately 1300 students in grades 9-12. CCHS’s strengths include (1) actively involved parents and community; (2) academically engaged students within (3) an ethnically, culturally and socio-economically diverse student body; and (4) a committed and professional faculty and staff. This strong, stable foundation and deep roots prepare CCHS for the next step as a conversion charter school: developing true autonomy, as required by Georgia law [§ 20-2-2068.1(a) (b) (c)(c.2)] and State Board of Education (SBOE) rules.

**INNOVATIONS** CCHS proposes to increase student achievement with these innovations:

1. **Innovation in Curriculum:** implementing a ***S****cience,* ***T****echnology,* ***E****ngineering,* ***A****rts and* ***M****athematics* (STEAM) program that is a fit with and will grow CCHS’s current strengths.
2. **Innovation in Scheduling:** changing *how, when and where teachers and students interact and use their time,* meeting diverse student needs, leading to efficacy in learning and proficiency in subject matter.
3. **Innovation in Governance:** changing *planning and decision-making,* maximizing involvement and engagement by all CCHS stakeholders, fully utilizing their professional skills and personal strengths.

Related innovations in financial methods will improve identifying and tracking site-based costs within DCSD. Partnering with DCSD in these innovations, CCHS will be a laboratory for DCSD, exploring cutting edge ways to raise student achievement. Lessons learned will benefit all DCSD schools as DCSD transitions to a Charter System.

**PERFORMANCE** During the current charter term CCHS has maintained its high level of academic achievement. The CCRPI score of 79.8 exceeds that of DCSD (60) and Georgia (68.4). CCHS consistently earned Advanced Placement STEM, Achievement, and Access and Support honors, indicating strong participation and success by African American and Hispanic students. The CCHS Math Team consistently earned national and even international honors. CCHS was named a PASCH (Partner Schulen) Program partner by the German government during the current charter term, recognizing the excellence of faculty and students. CCHS is the only Georgia public high school with this honor.

CCRPI performance flags reveal areas for academic improvement. Various strategies (extensive tutoring, mentoring, differentiated instruction and common assessments) were implemented during the charter term, with mixed results. Many students do not or cannot attend tutorials before or after school, eliminating this opportunity for targeted instruction. Experience with the limitations of these traditional kinds of interventions drives the innovations proposed in this petition.

**GOVERNANCE** Governance at CCHS is top-down from the DCSD central office and implemented by the principal. The large Governance Council of parent, teacher, student, and community members is largely advisory, consistent with charter policy when the current charter was approved in 2009. Monthly meetings are held as required, training offered by DCSD was obtained, and changes in Governance Council leadership and membership were in accordance with the 2009 petition. A change in school leadership occurred in June 2015. A new principal, selected by DCSD, began on July 27, 2015. During the current charter term CCHS faced significant challenges related to enrollment and the total replacement of the facility during parts of three school years. Enrollment challenges included (1) a large influx of students (leapfrogging hundreds of students on the CCHS waiting list) when CCHS served as a No Child Left Behind receiving school and (2) a large drop in enrollment that coincided with construction activity and concerns about DCSD accreditation. CCHS stakeholders assisted the principal and staff to minimize these disruptions to ensure that academic achievement was still supported.

Governance during this charter term was affected by major revisions in Georgia Charter School policy, including changes in SBOE rules which reflect changes in state law enacted by the Georgia General Assembly and codified in the Official Code of Georgia (O.C.G.A.). SBOE rule changes occurred in 2014; DCSD charter policy was approved by the board on 2015.9.15. This petition is the third Charter Renewal Petition prepared by parent, faculty and community volunteers during the current charter term in response to changing requirements.

The most significant change in Georgia Charter School policy is that the Governing Board of all charter schools shall have authority to make: personnel decisions, including selection of the principal or school leader; financial decisions; and resource allocation decisions, including the number and type of personnel, as well as curriculum, supply, equipment and maintenance and operations costs; among other requirements. CCHS is working with the DCSD Charter Division and the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Charter Division to understand these changes and identify approaches of mutual benefit to DCSD and CCHS while ensuring that CCHS’ charter petition meets GaDOE requirements. A highly qualified team of professionals with requisite expertise to serve as an autonomous Governing Board, as required by Georgia law, has committed to CCHS .

**FISCAL** During the current charter term, fiscal responsibility of the Governance Council was advisory only. CCHS on-site funding (approximately 1%-2% of earned funding) was managed by the principal, with minimal reporting to or input from the Governance Council. Funding sources other than DCSD were from Partner-in-Education Cox Communications and CCHS’ Blue & Gold Foundation.

**ACADEMIC** Academic objectives defined in the 2009 charter aligned with the ambitious requirements of No Child Left Behind. While continuing to meets its overall goal of academic excellence, CCHS did not meet its objectives of 100% success on the Georgia High School Graduation Tests (since discontinued), but did consistently earn scores higher than DCSD and Georgia on those tests. The significant changes in DCSD math curriculum during the charter term negatively affected meeting Math End of Course Test (EOCT) goals, which were not adjusted to match the significant curriculum changes. Math EOCT scores dropped across DCSD, not just at CCHS.

**CHARTER INFORMATION**

##### **Name of Proposed Charter School: Chamblee Charter High School**

**Check one: 🞎**New Start-Up 🞎New Conversion

 🞎Start-up renewal 🗹Conversion Renewal

 🞎College & Career Academy

If renewal, when was the original charter term start date? **August 2001**

If renewal, for how many charter terms has the school been in existence?  **5**

 **(**2 one-year terms; 2 three-year terms; 1 five-year term + 2 one-year extensions**)**

**Note:** CCHS did not receive a breach of contract notice during the current charter term. Termination proceedings were not initiated during the current charter term.

**Name of the Georgia nonprofit corporation that will hold the charter, if granted:**

 **Chamblee Charter High School, Inc.**

**Contact person: Beverly J. Moon Past Governance Council Chairperson**

Name Title

**Contact address: 3688 Chamblee-Dunwoody Road,** **Chamblee, GA 30341-2143**

**Telephone number of contact: 770-335-6027**

**E-mail address of contact: beverlyjmoon@gmail.com**

**Grade Levels Served: 9-12**

**Ages Served: 14-19**

**Proposed Opening/Renewal Date: July 1, 2016**

**Proposed Charter Term: July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2021**

*The Petitioner should indicate all grade levels to be served each year during the charter term. For each year of the charter term, please indicate the maximum number of pupils the charter school plans to serve each school year.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year/Grade** | **K** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** | **11** | **12** | **Total** |
| **2016-2017** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 363 | 362 | 341 | 314 | 1380 |
| **2017-2018** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 383 | 363 | 362 | 341 | 1449 |
| **2018-2019** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 385 | 383 | 363 | 362 | 1493 |
| **2019-2020** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 390 | 390 | 367 | 367 | 1537 |
| **2020-2021** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 396 | 396 | 395 | 395 | 1583 |

1. **THE CASE**
	1. **Why do you want a charter?**
2. **What is your motivation for applying to be a charter school?**

The motivation for renewing the CCHS charter is to build upon the foundation of academic achievements by a diverse student population within a strong and challenging academic curriculum, a foundation that has been building since CCHS became a conversion charter school in 2001. CCHS has a school climate that values diversity: 45% of CCHS students are African-American; 24% are White; 14% are Hispanic; 12% are Asian and 5% are Multi-racial; 39% of CCHS’ students are eligible for free-and-reduced-price-meals (GOSA, 2013-2014). CCHS as a community of students, teachers and parents, thrives on diversity by insisting on high expectations and no-excuses performance for all students.

Continuing as an experienced charter school, under the expert guidance of a new principal with new ideas, and with the autonomy now required by Georgia law of all charter schools will enable CCHS to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of very different learners. The data shown below indicate strong CCHS student achievement as well as opportunities for improvement.

Since 2001 CCHS has welcomed many students from throughout DCSD through the School Choice/Charter program and served all CCHS students with the modest flexibility permitted in past charters. This strong, stable foundation has prepared CCHS for the next step as a conversion charter school: developing true autonomy, as required by Georgia law [§ 20-2-2068.1(a) (b) (c)(c.2)] and State Board of Education (SBOE) rules. Becoming the first autonomous conversion charter school in DCSD is an opportunity to partner with the District to develop true innovations that can be shared throughout DCSD.

1. **What will you be able to do with a charter that you cannot do without a charter?**

Over the next five years, beginning with school year 2016-2017, CCHS will address increased student achievement by planning for and rolling out in a deliberate manner the following innovations:

* 1. **Innovation in Curriculum:** implementing a ***S****cience,* ***T****echnology,* ***E****ngineering,* ***A****rts and* ***M****athematics* (STEAM) program that uniquely suits and helps to grow CCHS’s current strengths.
	2. **Innovation in Scheduling:** changing *how teachers and students interact and use their time;* responding to the diverse learning needs of all CCHS students, leading to proficiency in subject matter.
	3. **Innovation in Governance:** changing *planning and decision-making* to grow involvement and engagement by all stakeholders in CCHS, utilizing their professional skills and personal strengths.

A charter is necessary, as the innovations require waivers from DCSD policy, SBOE policy, and state law. Specific examples are listed in Sections II, III, and VI. In addition, these innovations require the multi-year commitment by CCHS, its partner DCSD, and the Georgia Department of Education, which a charter contract provides. Without that commitment, unanticipated changes in Administration, policy, and new programs can easily derail the innovations and deter potential business partners from committing their resources.

Our three innovations are closely linked and interdependent. They create the flexibility and accountability that will allow us to exploit the autonomy we will gain under the charter to the maximum benefit of our students.

**Innovation in Curriculum**  Supported by educational research, the STEAM program offers CCHS teachers a more natural and effective way to teach the Common Core Curriculum and beyond. It plays to the strengths of CCHS’ individual teachers and its collaborative community. Most importantly it will assure college and career readiness across *all* groups of learners at CCHS. The STEAM program will engage students who might initially think of themselves as too artistic or not scientific enough to work in a technology field. STEAM will show them that their talents and skills can be connected to a broader world of expanding opportunities. While not mandatory, STEAM and its components in curriculum and scheduling will be available to all students. Waivers from state rules for seat time requirements is necessary for STEAM components such as the Internship and collaborative projects. More detail on STEAM can be found in Questions 2b, 4a and 4d and Appendix 7.

**Innovation in Scheduling** A second proposed innovation is to change the way we use time at CCHS, for all CCHS students who would benefit from personalized use of instructional time. Integrating practical educational experiences – internships, work experience, lab work, long-term projects, etc – with classroom-delivered instruction is a crucial component of STEAM. Despite the clear consensus in the research literature for the benefits of these activities (Alfeld, Charner, Johnson, & Watts, 2013; National Research Council, 2011; Stone & Lewis, 2012), there are serious challenges to including them within a one-size-fits-all traditional school model (Farbman, 2012).

CCHS has students who would flourish if given the opportunity for integrated practical learning experiences made available through STEAM, but who would perish (grade-wise and learning-wise) if they missed two weeks of traditional classroom time for any reason. Joint classes, longer labs, ongoing interdisciplinary projects, tutorials, joint planning time for interdisciplinary collaboration, etc. that enable full implementation of STEAM are not a good fit within the confines of a traditional school day.

CCHS will phase-in, with teacher and student input and local administrator collaboration, the Mastery Learning System (MLS) initiative. This new scheduling model will alter how teachers and students use their time. MLS will allot instructional time through a software platform according to the assessed academic needs of the students and the complementary instructional plans of the faculty. This new scheduling model will redesign and restructure time during the school day to 1) more effectively and efficiently meet the individualized instructional needs of all students within our current school context, and to 2) assure that the STEAM program can reach its potential.

Because of this flexibility, students will experience educational opportunities structured according to their needs and subject matter requirements rather than according to an arbitrary schedule. They can also pursue valuable practical education opportunities not otherwise available to them. An extended commitment of time (such as the STEAM examples above) will not mean that the student falls behind in other areas. The class time is just rearranged, not omitted. See Appendix 4 for a more detailed description of the software and example schedules.

Implementing the MLS program requires waivers also, particularly relating to awarding credit hours for mastery rather than seat time, the expanded use of blended learning, and class size.

Redesign of the school day will require close supervision, gradual development, and strategic piloting. Who better to provide such oversight than CCHS stakeholders: parents, teachers, students, community leaders? This leads to the third crucial element of this petition: innovation in governance. More detail on MLS can be found in Questions 4d, 14a, 14b, and Appendix 4.

**Innovation in Governance** A bottom-up three-unit Tricameral Advisory Council governing system will promote a more authentic engagement of larger numbers of CCHS stakeholders in the vision and mission of CCHS. This approach to school governance, combined with a professional non-profit Governing Board, will maximize stakeholder involvement in the school improvement decision-making process, maximize responsiveness to local needs and conditions, and maximize stakeholder investment in the solutions that are needed to move CCHS to the next level in education. This type of governance is not possible without a charter, as there is no place for a non-profit Governing Board in DCSD policy. The structure and membership of the Tricameral Advisory Council differs from the School Council structure defined in O. C. G. A. §20-2-0086 and therefore requires a waiver. More detail on the governance structure is found in Question 16.

1. **Describe how parents, community members, and other interested parties were involved in developing the petition and will be involved with the school.**

As in past renewals, CCHS formed a Charter Renewal Committee of Governance Council members, CCHS faculty, parents of CCHS students, Blue and Gold Foundation members, and community members. This Committee met regularly and used surveys to solicit input from teachers, students and parents/guardians. The surveys asked for input in the areas of academic programs, curriculum, special services, performance goals and objectives, AP classes, STEAM Program, administration/faculty resources, teacher quality, student academic honesty, safety and discipline, student behavior, school facilities and extracurricular activities. Survey results were summarized and shared with CCHS Administration and Faculty and the Charter Renewal Committee for incorporation into the Charter Renewal Petition. Responses and comments from the survey informed choices made in writing this petition.

More than 75% of respondents stated that they were familiar with the differences between charter and non-charter schools and agreed that it is important for CCHS to remain a charter school. When asked what works well at CCHS, the two most frequent responses referenced the high academic expectations and the diversity of CCHS students, including diversity due to the mix of resident, charter, and magnet students *and* the racial/ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of the students. Comments like “The charter school is a LIFESAVER” were frequent. Parents were pleased with the academic opportunities at CCHS, including the proposed STEAM program, continuance of the strong Advanced Placement offerings, and flexibility in instruction to be effective in meeting needs of all CCHS students -- the high achieving and low achieving students, as well as the often-forgotten “average” students in the middle.

Meetings were held with the School Councils and/or PTA Executive Boards at each of the CCHS feeder schools to present information about new initiatives for the upcoming charter term, encourage discussion and receive input.  Bi-weekly committee meetings were held with education and charter school professionals to review CCHS’ current charter, discuss best practices and evaluate innovative opportunities. Subcommittees were formed to further explore planned innovations and to create drafts for the 46 primary questions and 142 sub-questions. Communication with the entire CCHS community, teachers and parents especially, included email and phone blasts to inform stakeholders of upcoming meetings, charter timelines, links to the petition, and requests for input. Appendix 9 contains representative examples of these communications. An online document-sharing and collaboration platform was used for discussion, research, and writing. Invitations to participate were disseminated as widely as possible.

Parent, faculty and community volunteers spent untold hours working on the renewal petition. They are eager to shift that energy from the petition to the implementing the innovations at CCHS.

1. **Describe in detail the community support for this school and the need for this school in the particular community it will serve. Support may be evidenced through additional documentation.**

As a conversion charter school, CCHS has an established feeder school community. Strong support was expressed by this community for continuing the CCHS charter, and particularly the STEAM program. Montgomery Elementary School has a formal STEAM program, the other elementary schools embrace STEM, and Chamblee Middle School is in the process of obtaining STEM certification. Having a STEAM curriculum at CCHS is a positive factor when parents in the Chamblee Cluster consider high school options for their children.

Official proclamations of support from The City of Chamblee and The City of Brookhaven are found in Appendix 9. The Mayor of Chamblee is a former CCHS Governance Council member. City Council members from Chamblee and Brookhaven have been involved in the charter petition process as well as making their city halls available for full committee and sub-committee meetings during the charter renewal process.

A Brookhaven City Council member explained, “The City of Brookhaven is dedicated to helping CCHS due to the direct benefit to the citizens of Brookhaven from an economic development standpoint. Our city must have successful public school options to attract businesses and residents to our area. Our city has established quarterly scheduled meetings with DeKalb County School District to discuss issues and projects relating to the schools within our attendance zones. Our city will continue to work with CCHS to support quality education for the children of our community, to strengthen communications to our residents, to ensure a strong community bond and awareness of the needs of our teachers and schools.”

A substantial demonstration of strong community support for CCHS was the ready way in which prospective Governing Board members accepted their role of service to CCHS. In some cases prospective Board member contacted CCHS to express interest in serving as a member of the Governing Board. These candidates are highly skilled professionals who have agreed to volunteer their normally costly services. They readily agreed to the roles and responsibilities outlined in the CCHS Governing Board Member packet included in Appendix 12.

Appendix 9 contains a letter of support from the pastor of Chamblee First United Methodist Church (CFUMC), located less than a mile from the school. CCHS students have provided volunteer service to CFUMC and CFUMC has opened its doors to the CCHS community.

1. **As part of your evidence of community engagement, you must provide a letter or petition signed by parents/guardians of school-age children eligible to attend the charter that demonstrates that they would consider enrolling their child in the proposed school. These items may be placed in the Appendix.**

Appendix 9 contains evidence of community support in the form of more than 600 signatures from parents/guardians in support of the charter. Signers indicated “I support Chamblee Charter High School’s petition for 2016 Charter-status. I am in support of the renewal and the innovations. I plan to send my school age child/ren to CCHS in the future.” This content is in addition to the nearly 300 signatures of community support obtained in Summer 2014 and submitted with the 2014 CCHS Charter Renewal Petition.

1. **Describe the steps you have taken to develop any partnerships and your plans to further develop additional community partnerships.**

Recent efforts at developing partnerships have focused on partners for STEAM Internships. CCHS is fortunate to be located in a vibrant area that includes many possible partners. The Region 7 Office of the Georgia Department of Transportation and Covalent Consulting welcomed CCHS Engineering interns. Internships with various schools in the Engineering College of the Georgia Institute of Technology were also positive.

In the new charter term, as more students request STEAM Internships and as CCHS gains more scheduling flexibility to accommodate these requests, we will increase efforts to develop additional Internship partners. Parent recommendations have led to most current Internship partners. Additional input from Governing Board members should provide an adequate number of Internship partners. DCSD is another untapped source for Internship partners, potentially in the Operations and Information Technology divisions.

We are seeking to partner with community organizations, such as the Youth Outreach programs of the Latin American Association, Hispanic Organization Promoting Education, and the Georgia Tech chapter of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SPHE), to develop initiatives aimed at improving the graduation rate for Hispanic students at CCHS. Hispanic students have a 62% graduation rate currently. CCHS will implement initiatives intended to improve the graduation rate substantially over the charter term. To date, the Latin American Association Youth Outreach staff has offered to provide a workshop for CCHS staff on how to work with students from Latin America. We will schedule that workshop as a first step. SHPE has sponsored outreach events at CCHS as part of the STEAM emphasis.

Academic partners for MLS have been approached, both at Georgia Tech and Georgia State University. We have had discussions with potential corporate partners like Coca Cola, and granting institutions like the Broad Foundation. However, we find ourselves in a position where very strong statements of interest and desires to collaborate cannot be turned into formal partnerships until our charter is actually granted. This is another reason charter autonomy and a five-year commitment are so central to our innovations – potential partners, while excited about the proposals, are not willing to commit resources until they know they have a stable, committed and independent institution to partner with.

1. **Provide a list of organizations that have committed to partner with your school and the potential nature of the partnerships. Provide evidence of support from the partners in the Appendix.**

While CCHS enjoys the informal support of numerous community businesses and individuals, three major partners have supported CCHS during its current charter term and will continue that support.  The three major partners are the Blue & Gold Foundation, Cox Enterprises, and the Chamblee Chamber of Commerce.

***The Chamblee Blue & Gold Foundation*** is a pivotal part of community support for the school as well as a way to recognize faculty and graduates who exemplify The Chamblee Way. The Blue & Gold Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created to raise funds to support Chamblee Charter High School and the greater CCHS Community.  The Blue & Gold Foundation typically receives annual donations of about $20,000 from alumni around the nation.  Recent gifts to faculty and students include $6,000 to the Science Department, $500 to the Media Center for books, $650 for Attendance Office supplies and additional funds to the Fine Arts Department.  Appendix 9 lists examples of recent Blue & Gold Foundation support to CCHS.

***Cox Enterprises*** is a Partner-in-Education with Chamblee Charter High School.  Each year Cox Enterprises commits significant personnel and financial resources to mentoring students, providing funds and supporting students in the classroom and through extracurricular activities.   Since 1990, Cox employees have served as mentors to at-risk students in a structured mentoring program.  Cox awards multiple student scholarships to CCHS students annually and provides financial support for the Math Team to compete locally, nationally and internationally. Currently, and frequently in the past, a Cox employee serves on the CCHS Governance Council as a community representative. With the implementation of CCHS’ STEAM program a student internship/job-shadowing component may be added to CCHS’ relationship with Cox. Appendix 9 contains evidence of support from Cox Enterprises.

CCHS is a member of the ***Chamblee Chamber of Commerce***, which was formed in April 2014.  Prior to that time, CCHS was a founding member of the Chamblee Business and Professional Coalition, the lead organization to advance economic development in and around the City of Chamblee and predecessor to the Chamblee Chamber.  The annual “Harris Scholarship” for CCHS students was started by this group

At this time, CCHS is not dependent on financial support from any outside organization to operate the school. CCHS appreciates the financial generosity of those who already donate to CCHS. Grants will be sought to offer more to increase student achievement and job satisfaction of our staff.

1. **What is the Charter School’s Mission? How does it support the legislative intent of the school’s program to “increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation?**

***The Mission of CCHS is to foster excellence through promoting the intellectual, social, and moral growth and physical health of every enrolled student.*** This mission statement has been in place since 2001 when CCHS became a Charter school. Evidence of intellectual growth comes from increased student achievement is seen in test scores, awards, and state and national recognition. Evidence of social and moral growth is seen by the way the diverse CCHS community, from throughout DeKalb County, becomes a cohesive and supportive school that celebrates excellence. Students’ physical health is encouraged through physical education classes during the school day and student participation in the large number of extracurricular sports activities open to all students.

Strong academic achievement by CCHS students coincides with its existence as a conversion charter school operating under this mission, thus demonstrating the alignment of the CCHS vision with the legislative intent to “increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation.” The greater autonomy of the new State charter policies increases the opportunities for innovation, and the particular innovations chosen by CCHS are focused on using our strong record as a base to build new programs that will allow us to deliver even higher student achievement.

1. **Please provide specific examples of and documentation regarding programs that would be offered by your school that are not offered in any existing schools in DCSD. Please see Board Policy IBB.**

None of the three proposed charter innovations, the STEAM program, the MLS system, and Participatory Governance are offered in any existing schools in DCSD.

The STEAM program proposed by CCHS is distinct and unique in DCSD high schools, and differs significantly from the DCSD Integrated STEM Project. The table below highlights some of the unique features of the STEAM program which distinguishes it from other DCSD programs and plans.

| **Program Feature** | **Chamblee CHS STEAM** | Arabia Mountain HS Magnet | Arabia Mountain HS CTAE | Columbia Math/Sci/ Tech Magnet | Integrated STEM Project |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Open to all students** | **Y** | N | N | N | NEngineering students |
| **Outreach to non-traditional STEM students**\* | **Y** | Unknown | Unknown | Unknown | Unknown |
| **Advanced Math/Science**\* | **Y** | N | N | N | N |
| Engineering pathway | **Y** | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Other pathways | **Y*** Engineering Graphics/DSN
* Computing with AP option
* Broadcast Video
* Digital Tech
* Literary Arts
* Visual Arts
* Perform Arts
* Math/Science
 | Y* Environmental

 Energy | Y* Agriscience
* Energy systems
* Therapeutic Services
* Broadcast Video
* Computing
 | Unknown | N |
| **Internship/ Capstone Project\*** | **Y** | Senior STEM Project | Senior STEM Project | N | N |
| Extracurricular STEM required\* | **Y** | Y | Y | Unknown | Encouraged and Supported |
| **Extracurricular Arts required** | **Y** | N | N | N | N |
| Curricular STEM required\* | **Y** | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| **Curricular Arts required** | **Y** | N | N | N | N |
| **Diploma Seal (other than College Prep, Career Tech, Honors Distinction)** | **Y** | N | N | N | N |
| **Collaborative Projects include Arts** | **Y** | N | N | N | N |

The MLS innovation is unique within DCSD schools. DCSD high schools operate on traditional schedules in seven-period day, block, or modified block formats. We are unaware of any DCSD policy that permits a high school to implement flexible scheduling to maximize the efficiency of the school day for all learners, perhaps because waivers from SBOE rules would be required. As described in Appendix 4 and Section II, MLS development and implementation will draw from existing programs in non-DCSD high schools, adapting the program to match CCHS needs.

The proposed governance innovation is not offered at any existing school in DCSD. Governance will consist of a non-profit Governing Board and a Tricameral Advisory Council. The role of the CCHS Governing Board is in accordance with the SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.04(o) definition:

*The nonprofit governing board that will serve as a school-level decision-making body at a local charter school (not including system charter schools), participates in the local and state petition review process, is a party to the charter contract, and is responsible for ensuring the implementation of and compliance with the charter contract*

The combination of the Governing Board with the proposed Tricameral Advisory Council consisting of 3 groups: faculty and staff, parents and community members, and students, is unique within DCSD.

1. **ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES, PLANS AND WAIVERS**
2. **What are your school’s performance objectives for the proposed charter term?**

The academic performance objectives at CCHS include continuing to achieve above District and State level on the state-mandated assessments. We expect CCHS scores to increase across all subgroups as the STEAM and MLS innovations are implemented. Related measures include participation and success in Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Measures related to organizational effectiveness and stakeholder perception of these innovations are defined in Section III. Measures of financial effectiveness related to these innovations are defined in Section VI.

**As background for your answer to this question, please see the CCRPI and Beating the Odds goals (Attachments A and B) and review the PowerPoint found on the GaDOE’s Charter Schools Division website. These goals will be included in your charter contract.**

**In your answer to this question you will list the specific areas you will target to achieve your CCRPI and Beating the Odds goals.**

CCHS has reviewed the CCRPI and Beating the Odds goals, as well as the GaDOE PowerPoint addressing these goals. CCHS is confident that student academic achievement measured by CCRPI and Beating the Odds will meet or exceed requirements. Consistent with its Continuous Improvement Plan, CCHS will target improvement by ninth graders in core content classes, and ELL and SWD students across the board. Improvement in these areas will positively affect graduation rate as well as CCRPI components.

**Academic Goal 1: Demonstrate Proficiency and/or Improvement in Beating the Odds Score**.

During each year of the charter term, CCHS shall “beat the odds” as determined by a formula measuring expected student academic growth. The Beating the Odds analysis is a GaDOE cross-sectional, fixed effects regression model that uses the following factors from the CCRPI school-level dataset, GaDOE student record file and Certified/Classified Personnel Information:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **a. Student-Based Factors** |   |
|   | % African American | % Hispanic |
|   | % White | % Other |
|   | % Free/Reduced Meals | % Students with Disabilities |
|   | % English Learners | % Gifted |
| **b. School-Based Factors** |   |
|   | School Size (FTE) |   |
|   | Student/Teacher Ratio |   |
|   | School Configuration/CCRPI Score Type (i.e. Middle, High) |
|   | Locale Type (i.e. City, Town, Rural) |
|   | District Performance (fixed effect) |

The renewal decision at the end of the charter term will be based, in part, on whether the school “beat the odds” in all years of the charter term except for the year in which renewal is sought.

**Academic Goal 2: Demonstrate proficiency and/or improvement on the CCRPI**

The 2014 CCRPI (College and Career Ready Performance Index) score for CCHS of 79.8 exceeds the average score of 60 for DCSD high schools as well as exceeds the average score of 68.4 for high schools in the state of Georgia. 2013 and 2012 CCRPI scores for CCHS also exceeded the average for DCSD and the State. It is not possible to identify a specific numerical goal for the CCRPI during the charter term due to the recent replacement of End of Course Tests by Georgia Milestones Tests. School level results have not been released, and given the difference in norming for Milestones it is expected that there will be substantial changes in CCRPI scores for all schools. There has been no opportunity to analyze results and set appropriate targets for scores at the aggregate or subgroup level, or for the individual CCRPI indicators. However, the goal will be to maintain or increase the margin by which CCHS scores exceed District and State averages, and our innovations target student achievement in ways that should increase scores across all subgroups (as discussed below).

The implementation of the STEAM program and the Mastery Learning System (MLS) are school-based innovations that target higher levels of academic achievement and narrowing the achievement gap within CCHS. MLS will provide additional instructional time during the school day for underperforming students. It will also challenge and extend high-performing students, producing growth in that domain also. Average students, who are often overlooked, will see real possibilities for improved academic achievement because of the integrated STEAM program and the flexible school schedule. The improvement in performance will be reflected in the sub-components of the CCRPI and the BTO.

Measure 1: The CCHS CCRPI score shall be equal to or better than both the State and the DCSD score in 2016-17, and better than both the State and DCSD score in 2017-18 and all remaining years of the charter contract.

Measure 2: If the CCHS baseline CCRPI (2015-16) is lower than either or both DCSD and the State, CCHS shall have until the end of the 2016-17 school year to close the gap between CCHS and whichever score is higher, DCSD or the State.

Measure 3: In 2017-18 and all remaining years of the charter contract, the CCHS CCRPI score shall be better than both the State and DCSD.

The renewal decision at the end of the charter term will be based in part on whether the CCHS CCRPI score was equal to or better than both the State and DCSD in 2016-17, and better than both the State and DCSD in 2017-18.

**Academic Goal 3: Implementation of the CCHS STEAM Program.**

In addition to the overall CCRPI measure, CCHS will monitor progress in implementing an innovative STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Mathematics) program. Our goal is to improve student readiness for college and the workplace by increasing participation in CTAE pathways, Arts pathways, and Advanced Academic pathways, while keeping our high academic achievement in College Board’s Advanced Placement programs. Earning STEM Program certification by GaDOE will add to points earned on the “Exceeding the Bar” portion of the CCRPI. Indicators 9, 10, 11, and 12 of the “Achievement,” and indicators 1, 4, and 6 in the “Exceeding the Bar” portions of the CCRPI should also be increased.

Outreach and support will be provided, consistent with STEM Program certification requirements, to student groups such as minorities, the economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, and Students With Disabilities who are traditionally underserved in STEM education and careers. Thus, the STEAM initiative will be a catalyst for improvement in CCRPI categories including achievement, progress, achievement gap, and challenge points, as well as be reflected in positive changes in the “Performance Flags” portion of the CCRPI. CCHS will monitor the success of the STEAM program by tracking the number of students enrolled in the STEAM program and the number of CCHS graduates who complete STEAM program requirements

Milestones associated with STEAM Program implementation are shown in the table below: Although progress has been made during the current charter term, it has been limited by the restrictions of the current charter that include resource allocation, professional development, and seat time. CCHS administration has been supportive as permitted, but has not been able to commit to the full program due to those constraints.  Students only have four years at CCHS.  The multi-year commitment of the new charter as well as the broad flexibility waiver it brings will encourage CCHS stakeholders, energize Internship partners, and help CCHS “make good” on STEAM plans which are strongly endorsed by our community, including students in the feeder schools

| **Year** | **STEAM Program Milestones** |
| --- | --- |
| 2013-14 | * Begin Internship program
* Complete self-assessment for Georgia STEM Program certification
* Develop plan of study
* Develop collaborative STEAM units
* Form STEAM Team of parents and faculty
* Record evidence of STEM activities
 |
| 2014-15 | * Expand Internship program inside Engineering IV
* Form STEAM Booster club
* Begin application process for 9th grade
* Implement collaborative STEAM units
* Hold STEAM emphasis event each semester, for outreach and recognition.
* Record evidence of STEM activities
 |
| 2015-16 | * Expand Internship program beyond Engineering IV
* Expand application process for all grades
* Expand Booster club; seek partners for STEAM Challenge
* Year 1 STEAM Challenge competition; local legacy emphasis
* Build E-portfolio requirements
* Build tutoring program
* Build business partners program
* Record evidence of STEM activities; build base-line data
* Award graduating STEAM SCHOLARS
 |
| 2016-17 | * Expand Internship program
* Expand sponsorships and business partners
* Year 2 STEAM Challenge competition; community legacy emphasis
* Record evidence of STEM activities
* Record achievement data
 |
| 2017-18 | * Year 3 STEAM Challenge competition; national legacy emphasis
* Continue STEAM program, adding refinements and pathways as needed
* Submit STEM Program certification application
* Expand sponsorships and business partners
* Record evidence and achievement data
 |
| 2018-19 | * Year 4 STEAM Challenge
* Support sponsors and business partners
* Record evidence and achievement data
 |

Measure: The Governing Board shall conduct an annual review of STEAM program milestones to determine whether annual progress is adequate. The review shall be scheduled so that results are available for inclusion in the Annual Charter Report. A DCSD representative will be invited to a review session to ensure that District input is obtained.

**Academic Goal 4: Increase student participation rates and student performance levels in Advanced Placement Classes**:

Student participation and success in Advanced Placement classes at CCHS has been monitored for most of its existence as a charter school. CCHS consistently earns Advanced Placement STEM, Achievement, and Access and Support honors, indicating strong participation and success by African American and Hispanic students. These measures will be one indication of STEAM program outreach efforts as well as measure of academic achievement.

Measure 1 - % of CCHS students taking an AP Exam. In 2013-14, 35% of CCHS students took an AP exam.

Measure 2 - % of CCHS students earning a score of 3, 4, or 5. In 2013-14, 72% of CCHS AP scores were 3, 4, or 5. Most colleges and universities award college credit for AP scores of 3, 4, or 5.

Measure 3 - % of CCHS AP Exams taken by Minority Students. In 2013-14, 65% of CCHS AP test takers were Minority students.

Measure 4 - % of CCHS AP Scores of 3, 4, or 5 earned by Minority Students. In 2013-14, 66% of CCHS AP scores for Minority students were 3, 4, or 5. Most colleges and universities award college credit for AP scores of 3, 4, or 5.

Target –CCHS will target an increase of 3% in participation and performance across the CCHS student population during the charter term, and maintaining the benchmark scores as a minimum.

**e. Indicate expected rate of student performance growth in each year of the proposed charter term.**

CCHS will compare actual growth versus the target based on linear growth, while recognizing that linear growth is not always the correct rate. For student performance measures related to the CCRPI, 2014-15 scores will have to be interpreted in light of the students knowing that these inaugural Georgia Milestones tests did not count, possible impacts due to the new on-line assessment protocol, the different and more rigorous assessment format, and the nuances associated with any first time test administration. Since the latter will directly affect Academic Goals 1 and 2, CCHS considers it prudent to compare actual growth to a linear target and to consider special circumstances which might account for the result, even if the actual growth exceeds the linear target.

Relating to Goals 1 and 2, CCRPI scores will be disaggregated to assess student performance growth by subgroup, to include graduation rate. Ninth grade growth will be of particular interest. Growth is measured by the imperfect comparison of 8th grade Content Mastery vs. 9th grade Content Mastery, as well as by components of the Achievement, Progress, Achievement Gap, and Exceeding the Bar Indicators pertaining to 9th graders. In particular, the measure of the percent of first time 9th grade students earning 4 Carnegie Unit credits in 4 core content areas and scoring at proficient or higher on all required Georgia Milestones tests should meet or exceed the 4 year cohort graduation rate by the end of the charter term. It is difficult to know whether this gap of nearly 20 percentage points should be closed evenly during the charter term (4% improvement per year) or if a more realistic rate will include a slow start but acceleration as innovations such as STEAM and MLS become more established.

For Goal 3 relating to STEAM program implementation, student growth will be linked with success in achieving the milestones shown in the high-level program plan. Successful implementation will require honest assessment and perhaps adjustment of program milestones coupled with feedback from students and teachers involved in STEAM. Typical program implementation does not follow a linear trajectory but may have an initial learning curve more properly described by an exponential model.

Growth in Academic Goal 4 may follow linear growth. Similar AP goals showed linear growth in the current charter term, even with the impact of unusual events during the current charter term (a large influx of No Child Left Behind transfer students plus an enrollment decrease due to a two year construction project).

The Governing Board will consider all factors in evaluating student performance growth, and make adjustments as necessary to ensure that goals are met by the end of the charter term

1. **How will the charter school governing board, management, instructional leadership, faculty and staff know that students are on track to meet these academic goals?**

**What assessments will the school administer to obtain performance data for each student?**

CCHS will administer the state-mandated Georgia Milestones Tests and state-mandated Student Learning Objectives (SLO) in core content areas without Georgia Milestones Tests. CCHS may, within the constraints of the Single Statewide Accountability System, develop or select SLOs that align more closely with the STEAM curriculum. The Principal will share results, trends, and action plans associated with these assessments with the Governing Board, the CCHS Administrative team, and each body of the Tricameral Advisory Council (faculty and staff, parents and community, and students). The annual Charter Report, which will report progress on the measures associated with each Academic goal will be shared with these groups and also serve as a summary report for the District and the State.

**b.** **Describe how the school will obtain baseline achievement data.**

The 2016-17 scores of students in each Georgia Milestone level will serve as a baseline for the charter term. Data will be analyzed by subgroup, including SWD, ED, and LEP, as well as racial/ethnic data consistent with ESEA reporting guidelines, to establish baselines for those student populations. CCHS will track student performance and demonstrate student improvement by benchmarking growth of measures on a school-wide basis, on the basis of particular subjects and teachers, and by monitoring individual student achievement over time. The Principal will determine the frequency of formal reviews, which is expected to be no less frequent than twice per semester, with more frequent review for underperforming students. The College & Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) will be a major measure, both in the aggregate and in its component measures. Analysis of these and other data will be used in an ongoing and active process of self-assessment, reflection and continuous improvement at the school level and for individual teachers.

**c. Describe how the school will benchmark student growth.**

In addition to the above, expanded use of the Star Reading and Star Math assessment tools will be introduced prior to the start of the new charter. These assessment items are aligned with Georgia’s Common Core standards, and were selected by DCSD for use in all schools. It is possible that these tools will meet some of the assessment needs of the MLS for the English/Language Arts and Mathematics domains. CCHS plans to utilize the Star Custom system, which aligns with the MLS objective of students taking increased responsibility for their own learning, including the use of assessments to confirm mastery or reveal deficits. When DCSD and CCHS determine CCHS funding levels a final decision on this purchase can be made.

**d. Describe plans for formally and informally assess student performance in the core academic areas.**

Formal assessment includes the Georgia Milestones tests in each core academic area. Student performance in Math and Reading will be assessed three times per year using the STAR Math and STAR Reading Assessment tool provided by DCSD. An Assistant Principal manages each STAR assessment. Individual teachers and departments assess student performance every 4.5 weeks as progress reports are distributed to students. SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement scores will be monitored. Results of formal assessments will be made available to the Governing Board and Tricameral Advisory Committees.

In addition to the measures described above, CCHS’ plans for innovation in scheduling requires a school-wide commitment to the development of authentic, reliable and regular assessments of student progress. The MLS software provides better alignment of the time and talents of teachers with the needs of individual students. For this to work, teachers must know when and where students need further support as well as which students have demonstrated mastery and are ready to move on. Additional information about MLS is found in Questions 1e, 4d, 13b, 14, and Appendix 4.

Planning by individual teachers and/or teams will follow the sequence below, in which assessment is critical:

1. What are the objectives? What skills/knowledge do we expect the student to master?
2. How will we assess whether the student has attained mastery?
3. How will we guide the student to that mastery?

Thus the less-formal process of formative assessment that is part of every teachers’ work process will become more formalized under MLS. Assessments will be developed, by subject area and topic, for frequent monitoring of student performance so that they can be appropriately served and supported in their schedule. Assessment will be frequent – at the unit (or sub-unit) level, rather than longer (e.g. semester or grading period) time scale – in order that the scheduling can be responsive to immediate challenges students might face.

MLS will also include automated reporting features – because it is designed to ensure that students keep receiving support until mastery is obtained and that their mastery is continuously assessed,

**e. Explain how the charter school will work with the local school system to participate in all state-mandated assessments. Provide a statement that the charter school will administer all state assessments in accordance with the DCSD testing calendar.**

As it has during its previous charter terms, CCHS will participate in all state-mandated assessments.  Effective procedures are in place. All state assessments will be administered in accordance with the DCSD testing calendar. CCHS will make every effort to avoid conflicts between Georgia Milestones Test dates and Advanced Placement test dates.

**f. Describe plans to diagnose educational strengths and needs of students and plans on how this data will be used for instructional planning.**

CCHS plans to address these issues at two levels of granularity – longer term (semester/year level) and shorter term (unit/week level). As described above in 3 (a), (b), (c) and (d), assessment data will be collected. That data will be tracked, disaggregated, and analyzed to identify both strengths and needs, so that strategic instructional planning can be responsive. At both the school, department and program (e.g. STEAM) level, regular meetings will be held to discuss how best to adjust and respond to what that data reveals.

However, much of that data is lagging data, and while suitable for long-term, strategic planning, it is not suitable for immediate responses and interventions. As described in 3(d) above, MLS has assessment components specifically designed to adjust the educational experience of students to current circumstances. Thus demonstrations of mastery will allow students to move on, and gaps in mastery will lead to immediate, tailored interventions.

**g. Describe the school’s plan for using assessment data to monitor and improve achievement for all students over a set period of time.**

Assessment data is posted in the Principal’s conference room to bring visibility to trends in student achievement. This includes CCRPI data, EOCT scores (Georgia Milestones data are not yet available), SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement scores and participation data, graduation rate, and grade level performance at progress report intervals. Additional disaggregated data will be monitored by the Principal and Assistant Principal for Instruction, as a minimum, to inform actions to improve achievement for all students.

An achievement-oriented school culture will be reinforced by the requirements and benefits of MLS:

1. CCHS expects genuine and authentic mastery (not just “passing the test”).
2. The first step to mastery is to know what you know and know what you don’t know, so you know what to work on.
3. The best way to know these things is to take assessment seriously as part of the learning process, not as its concluding step

CCHS students and teachers will be held to high standards. Students are expected to master the material, knowing that support is available as needed and understanding that mastery is possible. Teachers are expected to identify students for whom mastery of specific subject matter is elusive and provide the necessary help, using opportunities provided by the Mastery Learning System. Instead of a pass/fail model that moves on students whether or not they are properly prepared for the next level, MLS will ensure that all students at all levels are ready for the next step before they are asked to take it.

**h. Describe how the charter school shall comply with the accountability provisions of O. C. G. A. 20-14-30 through 20-14-41 and federal accountability requirements.**

CCHS will take intentional action to comply with accountability and assessment provisions of O.G.C.A. § 20-14-30 through § 20-14-41.  Examples include but are not limited to:

* Providing for appropriate levels of interventions through activities such as tutoring, mentoring, remedial services, or specific research- based instructional practices for students at risk of not meeting state standards.  Similarly CCHS will provide appropriate levels of intervention for students needing enrichment such as differentiating instructional levels to provide more rigor or modifying assessment methods or expectations.
	+ - Collecting appropriate data, analyzing it aggregated and disaggregated, and utilizing the data to inform instructional practices.
		- Providing data requested by DCSD to support statewide reporting mandates and to support strategic planning for the DCSD and oversight of CCHS.
		- Complying with any state performance audits conducted of DCSD schools and making data and stakeholders available for such audits.
		- Continuing to raise achievement and chose the achievement gap by using data from statewide assessments such as CCRPI to set goals and action plans for improvement.

The CCHS Mastery Learning System, when implemented, will provide strong support for prompt and appropriate interventions designed to meet students’ needs and close achievement gaps. The ongoing assessments integral to MLS will ensure that students, teachers and parents are all fully aware in a timely manner of a student's progress toward mastery and success.

**i. Describe how the charter will adhere to all assessment guidelines and procedures as outlined by the State Assessment Handbook, the State Accommodations Manual and other state and local guidance on assessment.**

As it has during its previous charter terms, CCHS will adhere to all assessment guidelines and procedures as outlined by the State Assessment Handbook, the State Accommodations Manual and other state and local guidance on assessment.

**j. Describe how staff from the charter school will attend required test administration training held by DCSD.**

As it has during its previous charter terms, CCHS will participate in any required test administration training by DCSD. The Assistant Principal for Instruction manages this function to ensure that appropriate staff attends test administration training held by DCSD.

1. **What specific actions will the school’s management, instructional leadership; faculty and staff take to ensure student performance objectives are met during the proposed charter term?**

In addition to monitoring assessment data described above, CCHS will monitor related measures such as 4-year cohort graduation rate and measures related to the Academic goals. Although the CCHS graduation rate exceeds that of DCSD in total and for subgroups, the CCRPI performance flags indicate challenges in some subgroups which we believe can be addressed with the proposed innovations.

Implementation and adoption of STEAM and MLS will serve students at all levels. Thus adoption of these innovations is our primary means of ensuring performance objectives are reached. STEAM’s interdisciplinary focus and lack of admission requirements mean that it will act as an outreach effort that will recruit vulnerable students and engage their energy and enthusiasm. By providing a more relevant and engaging educational experience, and providing career and educational prospects thatstudents might not have recognized as attainable previously, we believe that STEAM can be a driver of substantial improvements in achievement for subgroups identified as currently under-achieving.

Similarly MLS, instead of expecting students to succeed within the confining structure of traditional educational structures, will accommodate the educational experience to their assessed needs. Teachers, freed from the need to move all students through the assigned curriculum in a constrained time (as if they were all the same), will be able to adapt and differentiate to the needs of particular sub-groups and individual students. The first step in closing an achievement gap is to reveal it. CCHS will disaggregate data by subgroup to bring visibility into gaps that exist between subgroups. This will include expanding our initial analysis of participation and success in STEAM-related Advanced Placement courses by gender and subgroup. As much as possible, multi-year trend data will be used to better understand if a gap is new or has existed before. Effort will be made to identify qualitative factors that relate to the gap as well as to document the instructional practices associated with data, to better identify impacts of instructional practice changes.

Actions taken to close the achievement gaps will be documented and included in the CCHS Continuous Improvement plan were applicable. The expertise of the Governing Board member with Six Sigma training may be helpful in this effort.

**a. Describe the focus of the curriculum. This statement should also discuss any distinctive or unique instructional methods to be used that are research-based and standards driven.**

CCHS will fully implement the Georgia Standards of Excellence/Georgia Common Core Performance Standards (GCCPS), and, as appropriate and beneficial, will integrate and align STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) standards with GSE/GCCPS.STEAM will be the framework for inter-disciplinary course study, an approach that expands collaboration between previously discrete fields of math and science (including technology and engineering) with the Arts. The Arts offer a key to understanding math and science (including technology and engineering), thus STEAM will not only encourage student engagement, but also provides natural connections when teaching across the curriculum. STEAM will also foster innovation, the development of 21st Century skills and critical thinking skills.

DCSD uses Race to the Top funding to expand and integrate STEM into the curriculum to meet the following goals, aligned with the 2012-2017 Excellence in Education Plan:

* Create student-centered learning environments that empower students to become innovators and technology-proficient problem-solvers to gain 21st Century skills.
* Provide high quality STEM professional learning for administrators, teachers and counselors.
* Engage partnerships that allow schools and industry to connect the school district in improving student’s STEM-career opportunities.

The goals above, combined with the addition of the Arts component, demonstrate that CCHS’s initiative to provide STEAM learning pathways is aligned with and supported by DCSD’s strategic plan. A STEAM model, properly executed, can bring all the benefits of STEM – plus the academic benefits of arts, music, character development, and student achievement (Hallam, 2010; Deasy, 2002; Ritchhart, 2002; Ruppert, 2006). The STEAM initiative at CCHS will enable significant gains in academic performance, as well as support the cognitive, personal, social, and civic development of our students. Arts education is no longer a luxury, but a necessary step in promoting new ways of thinking, sparking creativity and imagination, thereby leading to innovation. Over the time period of this charter renewal, CCHS expects to achieve the following from implementation of the STEAM innovation:

|  |
| --- |
| **Academic Performance** * Higher levels of achievement in reading and writing.
* Higher levels of achievement in math computation, application and comprehension.
* Significant gains in IQ, classroom grades and performance on standardized tests.
* Increased attendance rates and reduced dropout rates (Catterall, 2012; Ruppert, 2006; Judson, 2014).

**Cognitive Development** of essential, independent critical thinking skills including**:** * Abstract reasoning and problem-solving skills;
* Imagination, creative thinking, adaptability; and
* Flexibility, originality, and abstract understandings (Hallam, 2010; Rinne, Gregory, Yarmolinskaya, & Hardiman, 2011; Ritchard, 2002).

**Personal Development** including healthy expression and self-regulation of emotions resulting in: * Increased engagement in learning;
* Increased motivation;
* Improved self-concept; and
* Improved self-confidence (Deasy, 2002; Hallam, 2010).

**Social and Civic Growth** that increases the capacity for collaboration and teamwork, resulting in: * Increased participation in social and community issues;
* Increased civic and economic participation; and
* Leadership skill development and growth (Catterall, 2012; Ritchart, 2002).
 |

CCHS will offer horizontal and vertical planning among teachers; inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary instruction; and transformative community and business partnerships to serve the spectrum of student needs associated with college-and-career-related pathways. Professional development will be needed for teachers transitioning to the STEAM curricular framework. CCHS’ Fine Arts faculty will collaboratively plan with core content area teachers to assure greater levels of Arts integration in the general education classrooms. On-site and off-site training, including observation of other successful STEAM settings, will be offered.

**b. A full and complete curriculum, aligned for all grade levels to be served during the proposed charter term is required to be submitted as an Appendix item. This information must be aligned with Common Core and Georgia Performance Standards (where applicable).**

CCHS will continue to offer a full curriculum aligned with the Georgia Standards of Excellence/Georgia Common Core Performance Standards, in accordance with the content at https://www.georgiastandards.org. Appendix 7 lists the courses, with GaDOE and DCSD-specific course codes, offered at CCHS. Course offerings by grade level are included. Appendix 7 also contains sample four year plans of study for the STEAM program at various core course levels. As the STEAM program is implemented course offerings may be expanded, but a review of State Approved Courses defined in SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.20 indicates that existing courses will likely serve the needs of CCHS students during the charter term. The curriculum is supported by co-curricular activities, also described in Appendix 7.

Of particular note are the strong CCHS course offerings in STEAM fields, and Advanced Placement (AP) and post-AP level courses, and the excellence of student extracurricular activities. The CCHS Math Team excels in the state, nation, and even internationally. CCHS is the only public high school in Georgia recognized by the German government as one of 900 schools worldwide which offer the German Language Diploma (DSD2), and has been recognized by the German government for excellence in DSD2 exam results. Accomplishments of the CCHS Robotics teams, Art Honor Society, Science Olympiad team, We The People, musicians, singers, and drama enthusiasts, and many other groups result in awards and drive meaningful community service. More efficient use of time during the school day, through MLS, should result in more participation in these vital activities.

**c. Identify materials/programs that the school plans to obtain/purchase to support the stated curriculum.**

Currently, CCHS does not have plans to replace curriculum materials provided by DCSD. As teachers identify alternative and supplementary materials, these will be assessed through the Tricameral Advisory Council. Recommendations will be forwarded to the Governing Board for their timely consideration, leading to approval and implementation. CCHS has begun an evaluation of using additional STAR Math systems to assist in targeted remediation, based upon a departmental request for additional tools in this area.

**d. Describe the educational innovations that will be implemented.**

STEAM and the Mastery Learning System (MLS) are the primary educational innovations proposed in this petition.

**STEAM** - As we prepare our students for a technological future, the STEAM program will prepare those who are already planning STEAM careers as well as ngage students who might initially think of themselves as too artistic or not scientific enough to work in a technical field. STEAM will show them that their talents and skills can be connected to a broader world of expanding opportunities.

STEAM program requirements are based on GaDOE STEM Program certification criteria plus the input of faculty and parents. Students completing the STEAM pathway will exceed DCSD graduation requirements. STEAM students must complete a 3-4 year STEAM course sequence (Engineering, Computer Science, Video Broadcasting, Literary Arts, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, and/or Advanced Academics) to receive the STEAM seal on their diploma. Also required is one Senior Capstone Experience (internship or rigorous research project), at least one AP class or Dual Enrollment class and STEAM extracurricular activities encompassing both STEM and the Arts (clubs, job-shadowing experiences, competitions, etc.). More details as well as representative 4 year plans of study for students at the general, advanced, and magnet levels are provided in Appendix 7.

A crucial component to making the STEAM program work is to integrate practical educational experiences – internships, work experience, lab work, long-term projects, etc. But despite the clear consensus in the research literature for the benefits of these activities (Alfeld, Charner, Johnson, & Watts, 2013; National Research Council, 2011; Stone & Lewis, 2012), there are serious challenges to including them within a traditional school model (Farbman, 2012). Most internship programs are offered in school settings in which internships are mandatory and confined to a single time of year, and thus a single scheduling plan can ensure that internship time is completely scheduled within appropriate classes. Since CCHS is committed to not making STEAM mandatory while making STEAM available to all students, a single school-wide schedule is not feasible.

CCHS already has many students who take advantage of opportunities of the kind we seek to make more broadly available under STEAM, but those students do so at some cost to themselves. Part of the culture of high expectations that leads to high achievement at CCHS is that teachers regard classroom time as an incredibly valuable, non-renewable resource that must not be wasted. Students who miss, say, considerable time to intern at a commercial lab, or develop a project in a university setting, or gain work experience with a relevant business, must somehow find the time and take the initiative to catch up on class work they have missed. CCHS has students who would flourish if given the opportunity for such experiences but who would perish (grade-wise and learning-wise) if they missed two weeks of traditional classroom time for any reason.

Thus full implementation of the STEAM vision would be extremely challenging within any traditional school scheduling model. This is not the only challenge. Joint classes, longer labs, ongoing interdisciplinary projects and so on are also difficult to manage within the confines of a traditional school day. Another challenge is finding joint planning time for teachers to make the collaborative elements a success. Therefore, the second educational innovation is to change the way we use our time at CCHS, for the benefit of STEAM students and for all who would benefit from personalized use of instructional time.

**MLS** is an educational innovation that also impacts the CCHS organizational structure. The organizational innovation aspects of MLS are described in the response to Question 14a in Section III. A description of MLS, its benefits, and feasibility follow.

**Description of MLS** - MLS is a program born from our recognition that the current scheduling system holds CCHS students back. Teachers know that they could do much more to support, challenge and develop our students with more efficient and flexible methods of allotting teacher and student time.

Students come to CCHS with great differences in preparation, motivation and ability. Within current, traditional models, students are placed in a classroom with a large number of other students who possess a variety of levels of previous learning experiences, interests, and skills. Traditionally-scheduled classes meet for a fixed amount of time with a single teacher who is responsible for moving all of the class together through the entire curriculum before the course ends. For some the pace will be just right, but for many the class will be too slow or too fast. MLS will address this problem by providing more time and attention to those students who need more time and attention, and providing the opportunity to move on further and faster to those students who could move on further and faster. The value of such individualized attention and intervention is clear in the research. (Rhodes, Stevens, & Hemmings, 2011)

The existing system also makes students pay a high price if they do not find success. At the end of the fixed time spent enrolled in a class, a student may fail, in which case the entire class must be repeated. In addition to the psychological costs of labeling a child a failure, this system is deeply inefficient – it assumes the student learned nothing in their time in class and must learn everything again. It is also often deeply unfair to those who pass – it assumes that all those who pass have learned everything they need from that class, which is often not the case. Teachers are, of course, perfectly aware of this issue. In a traditional school setting often the only available response is to spend valuable class time on remediation and reteaching, wasting the time of those students who are ready to move on to new material. See Appendix 4 for more details, including sample schedules.

**Benefits of MLS** - MLS permits a focus on the competencies that students acquire independent of the time taken to demonstrate that mastery. There are many advantages to the Mastery Learning System:

* Students will be afforded the opportunity to learn the content in a way and at a pace that caters to their assessed needs, sometimes in greater depth, and sometimes with greater breadth when compared to the current traditional schedule (Farbman, 2012). Differentiation will occur naturally and in the ways most appropriate to the individual student.
* Time and resources will be used more efficiently during the instructional day, and lessons will not be artificially constrained by inflexible school timetables. Appendix 4 contains specific examples of how the flexibility of MLS could benefit core classes.
* Students will acquire the real-world skills to regulate their own learning, developing the self-knowledge and capacity needed to take on this responsibility. Students will be guided to set goals, prioritize, and use time in the ways that are most productive for them. Over time, students will acquire the skills to be successful and life-long learners (Farrington, Roderick, Allensworth, et al., 2012). This new system of incentives will increase motivation and achievement.
* Mastery will be expected from CCHS students. In turn, students who show themselves capable of taking on that responsibility will be granted greater opportunities to manage their own learning time. On the other hand, where students do not meet required standards, the individual learner will receive closer guidance, and be required to attend tutoring, remediation, and instructional support sessions (Conley & French, 2013).
* Further, every student who has demonstrated mastery in an area will spend time tutoring a peer in that area. This benefits the student tutor, as research clearly indicates that teaching is an excellent way of increasing understanding and consolidating skills and knowledge, and will benefit those who will receive additional academic support (Bowman-Perrott, Davis, Vannest, Williams, Greenwood, et al, 2013; Hattie, 2013).
* MLS may permit new curricular options that include a selection of focused special topics such as Early Twentieth Century Literature, the Harlem Renaissance, Women Writers, etc. could be offered to engage student interests and teacher enthusiasms. Students would fulfill course requirements by taking a selection of such shorter sub-courses.
* Educational delivery options such as blended learning and flipped classrooms may be better suited to the flexibility inherent to MLS. CCHS will be able to test and adopt new learning strategies best suited to serving the requirements of particular student groups and subjects, applying them in the ways and places they are most likely to be successful. Students vary in so many ways. Given differences in levels of preparation, motivation and ability, differentiation is an absolute requirement of modern education.
* MLS is not just a plan to address the academic deficiencies of underperforming students. While CCHS is an academically demanding school, many CCHS students need to be further challenged. MLS provides the opportunity and the incentive for students to extend themselves. With current, traditional school models, though students may sign up for more advanced and more demanding classes, they still may progress only at the set pace of those classes. With this new model, students will be allowed (and encouraged) to move as fast through the required material as they can (while still demonstrating mastery).

As Dr. Stephen Harmon, Chair of the Learning Technologies Division at Georgia State University and CCHS Board member, notes, “education, for the most part, remains mired down in an industrial age model that seem inadequate to meet our current challenges, much less those we know are on the horizon.” MLS will move CCHS away from that industrial age model, to harness technology for reducing teacher and student stress without sacrificing real learning.

**Feasibility of MLS** - Elements of CCHS’s MLS proposal have been implemented successfully in other innovative high schools, as seen in the table below:

| **Mastery Learning System**: ***Reaching & Teaching Students Where & How They Learn*** |
| --- |
| **School** | **Location** | **Comments** |
| **Ingenium Schools**Re-Inventing Schools Coalition | Los Angeles, CA | Competency-based learning; students are placed in developmentally appropriate levels; progress based on student’s demonstration of mastery.<http://www.ingeniumschools.org/> |
| **Bergen County Academies**Public Magnet High School | Hackensack, NJ | School day is divided into 27 short units (mods). A flex-mod schedule assigns time (mods) based on the particular leaning experience.<http://bcts.bergen.org/index.php/bergen-county-academies> |
| **The Met**Big Picture Network | Providence, RI | Individualized learning tailored to student needs and interests; emphasis on non-traditional education like internships.<http://www.bigpicture.org/> |
| **Young Women’s Leadership** Charter School | Chicago, IL | Focuses on individualized learning; students have a major role in planning and executing their academic program.<http://www.ywlcs.org/> |
| **Westmount Secondary School**Self-Directed Learning Model | Hamilton, ON, CA | Students set the pace of their work with teacher support.<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/westmount/> |
| **Hampton High School**Henry County Schools, GA | Hampton, GA | Personalized learning using a blended learning model with online-computer-based component for responsiveness to student needs.<http://schoolwires.henry.k12.ga.us/Domain/7699> |

The concept of “scalability” exists relative to many of the flexible scheduling processes used by these schools, meaning that a successful small-scale application can be scaled up for a larger setting such as CCHS without “reinventing the wheel.” All of the above schools have demonstrated histories of success, with the exception of the relatively new Hampton High School, which demonstrated sufficient promise to earn major Gates Foundation support.

Dr. Robert Joseph, Governing Board member and holder of a Carnegie Mellon Computer Science Doctorate has assured us that the MLS computer system is not only possible, but also buildable with many off-the-shelf components. Dr. Joseph’s experience includes producing the Dart Student Information System for the Bering Strait School District (which is now open-sourced). Thomas Stubbs, Chief Digital Officer with Global Information Technology at The Coca Cola Company has told us: “The algorithms and rule-based expert systems required to implement this proposal exist – harnessing them as described is not just technically feasible, but would be a cutting-edge solution to the problems that have been identified.”

**e. Provide a clear explanation of how the innovations will increase student achievement.**

Research citations in response to Question 4a 4d provide evidence that a STEAM program contributes to increased student achievement as well as cognitive and personal development and social and civic growth. MLS will increase student achievement by providing a flexible schedule to promote individualized and tailored instructional support, and the use of frequent and diagnostic assessment tools to identify specific gaps in knowledge or skill. Increased time during the school day for remediation will address the needs of students who cannot or will not attend before or after school tutorials. These are only a few examples of how the concepts underlying MLS fall within the mainstream of contemporary research-based findings on effective means of raising student achievement.

**f. Describe why the innovations are appropriate for this unique school**

**STEAM** is an appropriate innovation for CCHS because it was generated out of the enthusiasm and commitment of our parents and teachers. We have very strong individual programs in each of the five components of STEAM, plus a history of collaboration and teamwork within the school. The STEAM program offers teachers a more natural and effective way to teach the Common Core Curriculum and beyond. It plays to the strengths of CCHS’ individual teachers and its collaborative community. Most importantly it will assure college and career readiness across all groups of learners at CCHS. Parents were quite vocal in wanting to nurture the creative and artistic talents of their students while also providing a strong academic focus for high school and beyond.

**MLS** is appropriate for CCHS because it take the strengths of existing education (knowledgeable teachers responding appropriately and sensitively to the needs of students they know well) while removing the weaknesses (a scheduling system that is incredibly inefficient and makes it hard for the right people to get together to facilitate learning) to build something new. Unlike some existing models which depend upon either having well-motivated students who can self-monitor and ensure their own progress, or upon a completely computer-based “blended learning” model, CCHS will develop a flexible scheduling system that can address the needs of all learners.

CCHS’ diversity is another aspect that uniquely suits us to carry out both proposed innovations. CCHS is, in many ways, ready to be a perfect laboratory – encompassing the many different kinds of students and learning techniques that are part of MLS under one roof. We have high-achieving students who will pursue the opportunities that STEAM and MLS offer to reach even greater heights than is currently possible. We have average and low-achieving students who will surprise themselves by succeeding in STEAM pathways. We have low-achieving students who are disenchanted with the educational system. We need to find ways to reach them, and we believe that STEAM plus MLS is the way. We have students of diverse cultures and backgrounds and personalities who will respond best to different kinds of learning experiences, and we have dedicated and curious teachers who will take the opportunities that MLS offers to seek out the best ways to serve those individuals and that diversity. We have parents and families who are deeply involved in their student’s education and the school, and others who are disengaged from the whole process. The response of these diverse segments of CCHS students to the STEAM and MLS innovations will provide DCSD with information to inform the introduction of similar innovations to other schools.

**g. Describe the anticipated teacher-to-student ratio and the rationale for maintaining this ratio. Please describe your intended class sizes, including the minimum and maximum number of students. Be sure to explain the source of any additional funding necessary if the class sizes are smaller than those set forth in the SBOE Class Size Rule 160-5—1-.08.**

The first goal for Class Size under the new charter term is to conform to class sizes defined in SBOE Class Size Rule 160-5-1-.08. During much of the current charter term the instructional resources provided by DCSD meant that class sizes were larger than SBOE Rules allow. At the high school level, an increase of even 2-3 students per class increases a teacher’s responsibility by 10-15 students, which is not insignificant. Academic results from 2016-17, under smaller class sizes, will serve as a stable benchmark from which to compare results in later years.

With implementation of the Mastery Learning System, “class size” will be variable -- a much less well-defined quantity. Students enrolled in a class may meet in a large group one day for lecture, then the same students may meet later in the week in smaller groups (e.g., labs of 20-30 students, discussion groups of 10-20 students, and/or tutorials and remediation in small groups of 1-5).

**h. If this is a charter high school, describe how the charter high school will determine that a student has satisfied the requirements for high school graduation, including the credits or units to be earned and the completion credentials to be awarded.**

CCHS Counselors will use the DCSD Program of Study Selection Advisement Form, or equivalent, to determine if a student has satisfied the requirements for high school graduation. CCHS will follow state graduation requirements pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.48 related to credits or units to be earned and the completion credentials to be awarded. In compliance with state rules, the scheduling system will ensure that a minimum of 150 hours of teacher contact are offered per unit in all strands offering graduation credit. CCHS will continue to offer the Diploma options offered currently, with the addition of a STEAM Seal. The Program of Study Selection Advisement Form will be updated to include STEAM program requirements.

**5. What are the school’s plans for educating special population?**

Chamblee Charter High School (CCHS) will continue to serve students with disabilities in compliance with all state and federal laws, rules and regulations related to serving students with special needs, including but not limited to: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). CCHS may, however, waive district guidelines relating to staffing in order to better serve our population of students with special needs.

Identification: CCHS will identify students with disabilities through the Student Support Team referral process that is currently in place. The team will consist of the SST Coordinator, the school psychologist; the lead teacher for special education (LTSE); a counselor; teachers; and the student’s parents. Students who are identified as underperforming through the Response to Intervention (RTI) problem-solving process will be monitored in the general education environment. Research based interventions will be utilized by their classroom teacher and the intervention will be modified according to the student’s progress and the response to the interventions. Referrals to SST may be made by teachers, counselors or parents.

Delivery of Services: Special education services will be provided to eligible students in compliance with all federal and state laws, rules and regulations. Specialized instruction and the delivery of individual student accommodations are intended for SWD’s to meet grade level standards in the least restrictive environment (LRE), with the goal maximizing the percentage of SWD's who receive at least 80% of instruction within the general education setting. Students who are performing more than two grade levels behind thier peers in reading and/or math will be identified through the Fall STAR universal screener. To address academic deficiencies, students will recieve push-in and pull-out reading and math remediation. Academic progress will be monitored bi-monthly by a school-based data team comprised of the SWD case manager, the student's teaschers, and school-based administrators.

The LTSE will oversee the delivery of service to students with special needs. The student, their parent(s), teachers, counselor and itinerant specialists will work collaboratively to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that details academic strengths, needs, services, parent concerns, transition plans, supports and accommodations. Individualized goals will be set according to student needs and will be monitored by a special education teacher/case manager. Parents will receive documentation of their student’s progress in meeting those goals whenever progress reports are issued. Meetings to update IEPs will be held at least annually or when a parent or teacher feels it in the best interest of the student.

CCHS will consider using a full/partial release teacher-role that is dedicated exclusively to supporting teachers of students with special needs. The addition of this position to the special education department will assure that consult students’ IEPs are closely monitored, research-based instructional strategies that are implemented in co-teaching classrooms, and that class-sizes are in accordance with federal and state guidelines. IEPs will be implemented as written, reviewed annually, and updated according to federal law. A continuum of services, such as one-on-one and small group instructional settings, will be provided for students with disabilities (SWDs) to ensure that each student is provided with FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), and served in LRE. Students with special needs will be assessed according to state requirements including the Georgia Milestones and SLOs assessments. CCHS may however, choose to opt out of or replace assessments utilized by DCSD, but not required by the state, if the CCHS Governance Board finds that the replacement of an assessment will better serve our students. Students will receive both classroom and testing accommodations according to their Individualized Education Plans.

Students with special needs will continue to come from the CCHS attendance area as well as be eligible to be selected through CCHS charter school lottery, when it is deemed an appropriate placement by a committee of CCHS affiliated special education specialists lead by the CCHS LTSE.

**Additional Strategies for CCHS Students with Special Needs**

In addition to the supports and accommodations required by federal law for students with special needs, CCHS plans to implement the following strategies to ensure that SWD students meet grade level standards in the least restrictive environment and graduate from high school.

* Offering additional electives that develop meaningful life-skills (Conley & McGaughy, 2012) (i.e., personal banking and finance).
* Offering courses that provide hands-on learning opportunities to prepare students for education, training and work beyond high school (Stone & Lewis, 2012). These courses will include STEAM career training and internships which fulfill state graduation requirements.
* Although research-based evidence on the benefits of smaller class size at the high school level is inconclusive (Biddle & Berliner 2014), studies have confirmed a positive relationship between smaller class sizes, the amount of teacher attention, and the level of student engagement at the secondary level, especially among low attaining students (Blatchford, Bassett, & Brown, 2011). As funding allows, CCHS will reduce the maximum number of students with special needs per class from ten to its former limit of seven. This reduction will be addressed through the Mastery Learning System innovation, and adjusted according to the assessed needs of the individual learners at CCHS.
* Core content area teachers will plan and work collaboratively with special education teachers to instruct students with disabilities who are placed in co-taught settings (Ford, 2013; Scruggs, Mastropieri, Berkeley, & Graetz, 2010). This collaboration will be encouraged and monitored both by the LTSE, administration and department heads. When possible, scheduling priority will be given to successful co-teaching partnerships.
* Course placement decisions for SWD will be prioritized according to the assessed skill level of the students, and within the least restrictive environment (Ford, 2013).

**Plans for Innovation: Implementation for Students with Special Needs**

To support students with special needs in adjusting to the Mastery Learning and STEAM innovations, CCHS will put the following supports into place:

* Student scheduling and student progress will be closely monitored by case managers, the LTSE and their classroom teachers. Because MLS allows additional time and individualized attention to be scheduled for students who require it, the maintenance of IEPs will be substantially easier, and accommodations consistently and effectually delivered. Maintaining students in the LRE will be easier, as special needs students (just like any other members of the student body) will receive whatever support is needed for them to maintain a trajectory that ends in a college-prep diploma (where appropriate).
* All scheduling is still subject to each student's service hours and course requirements stated in each individual student’s IEP.
* STEAM pathway courses will be developed in ways that support students with special needs who are seeking to either enter the workforce immediately after graduation or after post-secondary training.
* Special education teachers will be included in planned professional development related to STEAM and MLS.
1. **Describe methods, strategies and/or programs for meeting the needs of students identified as gifted and talented. Include any diagnostic methods or instruments that will be used to identify and assess those students.**

CCHS will continue to comply with DCSD policy for gifted and talented students. Currently 47% of CCHS students are identified as gifted. Our school has a site-based Gifted Coordinator, who coordinates our gifted students’ schedules and academic needs with our counseling department and the students’ teachers. She also assists us to process individual requests for assessments for gifted services, and coordinates with counterparts at our feeder schools to ensure we have timely, appropriate information to plan for future gifted students’ needs at CCHS. Gifted students are placed within academic settings that contain gifted-only and mixed-ability classrooms, depending on the students’ academic needs, academic department, and specific class. Currently CCHS offers no less than 59 gifted classes, with no less than 17 different teachers instructing those gifted classes, across the academic disciplines.

The Gifted Coordinator works with the Assistant Principal for Instruction to ensure that gifted services are delivered effectively. The Gifted Coordinator monitors PSAT and SAT scores to identify students who have not previously been identified as Gifted. All students are eligible to be identified as Gifted including ELL and Exceptional Education students, economically disadvantaged, and minority students. The Gifted Coordinator schedules appropriate testing if the student and parent/guardian agree [SBOE 160-4-2-.38]. The Gifted Coordinator also monitors progress of students in the gifted program and encourages CCHS teachers to seek gifted certification [PSC Rule 505-2.107].

Our assessment practices for gifted services adhere to the state requirements around ensuring students identified for gifted services fall within the 90th percentile on at least 3 of 4 assessed categories (Achievement, Mental Ability, Creativity, Motivation), or 96th percentile in one category. The assessment tools we use include but are not limited to: PSAT, SAT, ACT, student grades and grade point averages, teacher survey instrument, Renzulli Learning System assessment, student generated products and performances.

1. **Describe how the charter school will provide state and federally mandated services for students with disabilities. Include any diagnostic methods or instruments that will be used to identify and assess those students.**

In accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the IDEA, CCHS will do the following:

* Establish a Student Support Team (SST) in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies and use DCSD forms for SST.
* Establish a Section 504 team in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies and use DCSD forms for Section 504.
* Handle all discipline issues regarding Section 504 students in accordance with federal regulations, state guidelines, and local school board policies including the Code of Student Conduct.
* Participate in workshops, in-service and/or trainings offered by DCSD for persons serving as SST/Section 504 chairpersons and Exceptional Children staff.
* Comply with Section 504 by providing the appropriate accommodations and equipment.
* Immediately notify the DCSD Director of Charter Schools upon receipt of a complaint made by a parent/guardian or student concerning Section 504 and/or Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, furnish a copy of such complaint and cooperate fully in the investigation, defense and resolution of such complaint.
* Hire or contract certified special education teachers to provide services to eligible students.

The DeKalb County School District will:

* Provide professional development training for the SST.
* Provide professional development training for the Section 504 team.
* As appropriate, provide professional technical/consultative assistance when requested by the charter school.
* Conduct Compliance Reviews of all charter schools to ensure that students with disabilities are provided a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

CCHS will comply with all special education laws and regulations, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

1. **Describe methods, strategies and/or programs for students receiving supplemental education services. These services should be provided pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03 and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act / No Child Left Behind.**

Chamblee Charter High School offers several instructional programs to assist students who require additional support in mastering content knowledge or improving their test-taking skills. Students may take advantage of the lunch seminar, scheduled during lunch block review material related to assessments required for graduation. A CCHS staff member is available in the computer lab during each lunch period to help maintain a quiet environment and to provide additional academic support. The lunch seminar time allows students to prepare for standardized tests, extend learning opportunities, obtain additional tutorial help, and/or study independently. CCHS students also have access to USATestprep, an Internet based study tool, which connects students to thousands of standardized practice questions, educational games, and a video library.

Students may take advantage of USATestprep through their seminar time or on their own, as the site is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. As an elective option, students may also enroll in one of CCHS’ SAT preparation courses - Critical Reading or Mathematics. Both electives allow students to build a foundation for success by incorporating the required study tools and allowing extensive in-class practice. CCHS also uses the Nelson-Denny Reading Test to measure the reading ability of all incoming students (resident, magnet or charter), including the entire freshmen class. This test is used to identify students in need of remedial reading instruction. Test results will be part of each student’s academic baseline. Students, who require additional reading support, will receive targeted instruction through CCHS’ Remedial Education Program (REP). Additionally, CCHS students have access to peer tutoring through the Math Team, Interact, National Honor Society, and Beta Club members.

1. **Describe methods, strategies and/or programs for meeting the needs of students at-risk of academic failures through remediation. Include any diagnostic methods or instruments that will be used to identify and assess those students who are performing below grade level as well as the processes/programs/tools to be used in providing them with remedial instruction. These services should be provided pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01 and NCLB.**

All services described in response to Question 8 are considered remedial services. CCHS will continue to serve remedial education students and will comply with state laws, rules, and regulations related to the identification, eligibility, testing, placement and instructional delivery of services. CCHS will follow the GaDOE Remedial Education Program (REP) guidelines including, but not limited to, any two indicators from the following list:

* Student Support Team documentation and recommendation
* Documented low performance in math or reading
* Retained students
* Eligibility under Chapter A of Part 1 of Title 1
* Inability to verbally express ideas or to write or dictate a meaningful sentences
* “Does Not Meet” or “Failed” for grades 9-12 in EOCT/Georgia Milestones for reading, language arts or math
* Eligibility according to the IEP for SPED students who are not served through SPED

Remedial students will receive research-based instruction that support improved levels of achievement, particularly among high-priority underperforming students. Some examples may include but are not limited to: previewing, questioning, corrective instruction, tutoring, nonlinguistic representations, graphic organizers, cues, simulations, summarizing, and note-taking (Hattie, 2013).

Progress monitoring data will be collected regularly and used to assess growth, develop instructional plans, and support student mastery of state standards (Reddy & Dudek, 2014; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2012). Finally, CCHS will collect data and report required information for REP according to Georgia Department of Education guidelines.

1. **Describe how the charter school will provide state and federally mandated services for English Language Learners (ESOL). Include any diagnostic methods or instruments that will be used to identify and assess those students.**

**a. A description of the special language instructional program to be provided to ELLs that is designed to teach English, as well as general curriculum and who on staff will coordinate the effort.**

All students who speak, read, or understand English as a second language and who do not currently qualify for EL services are screened for proficiency utilizing the W-APT assessment [SBOE160-4-5-.02]. Students who score a 1.9 or below with limited or no English language skills are placed in the Intensive English Language pull-out program at the International Student Center. The students who score a 2.0-4.9 qualify for regular ESOL services at CCHS through a scheduled class period following class size regulations as determined by the State Board of Education [SBOE 160-4-5-.02]. Students receive language instruction and/or content instruction in English/Language Arts from a teacher with an ESOL Certificate or endorsement. Students take core content area courses (Math, Science, and Social Studies) alongside general education students with general education teachers. [O.C.G.A. 20-2-156]. Students who score a 5.0 or above on this assessment do not qualify for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) services.

English language instruction will be coordinated by the ESOL teacher of record and align directly to the WIDA 2012 Standards for English Language Development (2012-ELD). Although CCHS will prioritize the placement of EL students into core content area courses with teachers who have both content area certification and who are ESOL certified, in circumstances where this is not possible, content area instruction will be coordinated by the HQ certified classroom teacher of record. Students will receive language assistance and/or content instruction in English/Language Arts through a class composed of only ELs. If an EL is eligible for special education services, the IEP team, including the ESOL teacher will determine the type of services the student will receive. Students will be served in both ESOL and Special Education programs unless the disability is so profound that greater special services are necessary. English Learners with Disabilities (ELDs) who do not qualify for greater special services will receive content instruction in general education classes with a co-teacher.

The ESOL program utilizes WIDA Consortium resources which provide high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional development for ESOL educators (www.WIDA.us). The English Language Development standards (2012) support classroom instruction to properly challenge ELs to reach higher proficiency levels in social and instructional language, as well as develop English proficiency through the Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies disciplines. In addition, students have access to free, interactive digital textbooks through the Georgia Department of Education’s website. The digital textbooks are designed for secondary students and can be accessed at [www.gavirtuallearning.org/Resources](http://www.gavirtuallearning.org/Resources). The texts cover an array of subjects and feature interactive content, including study guides, discussion questions, games, audio recordings, and quizzes.

**b. A provision indicating that ELL students will not be excluded from curricular and extracurricular activities in school because of the inability to speak and understand the language of instruction.**

ELL students will not be excluded from curricular and extracurricular activities in school because of the inability to speak and understand the language of instruction. This provision is in place in the current charter term and will continue in the new charter term.

**c. Appropriate evaluative standards for measuring the linguistic and academic progress of ELL students, including program exit criteria.**

All English Language Learners (ELL) are required to take the ACCESS assessment which evaluates the extent that students have met the WIDA 2012-ELD. Linguistic progress will be measured through positive movement along the ACCESS performance bands. EL students who demonstrate positive movement of one performance band meet standards for language acquisition. Those who progress two performance bands or more exceed standards for language acquisition. Students enrolled in US schools for one year or more are required to take the Ga Milestones end-of-course assessments for state-designated courses. Academic achievement will be evaluated by the same standards that are set for all students at the school. Students who are administered the Tier A version of the ACCESS are not eligible to exit the ESOL program regardless of the student’s Composite Proficiency Level (CPL). In order to exit the ESOL program, students who are administered the Tier B or Tier C versions of the ACCESS must score a CPL of 5.0 or higher and earn a literacy sub-score of 4.8 or higher. Those students who exit are monitored for an additional two years by the ESOL staff [SBOE 160- 3-1-.07].

1. **List all proposed extracurricular activities or other auxiliary educational activities along with the grade levels in which these activities will be offered. Please list and describe the partnerships the school has developed to offer extracurricular activities (ex: chorus, band, sports, clubs, art). This information should explain who the partner organization is, at which location the activity will be offered, and any charges associated with providing these activities. Please provide copies of contracts or correspondence setting forth the terms of the partnership.**

CCHS will continue its extensive current co-curricular and extracurricular activities, listed in Appendix 7, while seeking to expand those offerings in ways that serve the school’s mission. As the STEAM program expands, we anticipate the addition of related educational activities. MLS may permit integration of educationally relevant extracurricular activities into the school day (for those students making good progress in required classes), increasing access to those unable to participate outside the regular school day.

CCHS’s membership in the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) and all rules for eligibility in academic competitions and competitive sports will continue to apply.

CCHS does not have contracts with organizations to provide extracurricular activities. Rather, the CCHS community steps up to this task. CCHS has an active PTSA as well as booster clubs for most sports and arts activities.

1. **Which of the specific actions in the academic plan require a waiver of state law, rule, or guidelines?**

**a. Although you will be granted a broad flexibility waiver if you are granted a charter, please demonstrate why a charter is necessary for this school by providing examples of significant components of your academic plan for which you need a waiver. Please also identify the specific waivers that are required to allow implementation of those components.**

An illustrative but not exhaustive list of waivers from state law, rules, and guidelines is shown in the table below. Waivers required for STEAM relate primarily to the Internship, the use of integrated courses covering curriculum standards for multiple subjects as part of the collaborative STEAM curriculum, and alternative methods of teacher compensation and/or certification particularly for STEAM elective courses. Implementing the MLS program requires waivers also, particularly relating to awarding credit hours for mastery rather than seat time, the expanded use of blended learning, and class size.

| **SBOE Rules** | **SBOE Rules** | **Georgia Statute** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 160-5-1-.02 School Day and School Year for Students and Employees160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance Program for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students160-4-2-.06 High School Graduation Requirements160-4-2-.30 High School Graduation Requirements160-4-2-.36 High School Graduation Requirements160-4-2-.17 Early Intervention Program (EIP)160-5-2-.05 Experience for Salary Purposes160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students. | 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 Years160-4-2-.47 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 202-03 School Year and Subsequent Years160-4-2-.48 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2008-09 Schol Year and Subsequent Years160-4-3-.14 Work-Based Learning Programs | **§** 20-2-159.4 Policies and guidelines for awarding units of high school credit based on demonstrated proficiency**§** 20-2-290.Organization of schools; middle school programs; schedule**§** 20-2-212. Salary schedules**§** 20-2-213.1 Pay-for-performance for rewarding group activity§ 20-2-204. Classification of all certified or permitted personnel§ 20-2-206 Alternative teacher certification program§ 20-2-140.1 Online learning§ 20-2-290 Class size |

Implementation of proposed academic innovations will also require waivers from DCSD policy. For example, STEAM requires a waiver from DCSD Board Policy IDCJ, Work-Study Programs, which addresses only a semester long work-based learning program in which students leave campus during one or two class periods a day for an entire semester. The STEAM program internship does not fit this structure. CCHS will establish a local policy governing STEAM program internships, adapting the DCSD work-based learning forms as necessary to fit program needs. The CCHS Governing Board shall establish all necessary policies and procedures to provide innovative internship opportunities for CCHS students.

CCHS also intends to continue to exercise the waiver described in its current charter petition of DCSD Board Policy IHA, Grading Systems. CCHS believes that teachers are competent to define an appropriate grading policy that reflects the various instructional levels spanning the range from remedial to Advanced Placement and post-Advanced Placement. The CCHS Governing Board will define a grading policy, which will likely delegate authority to the Principal and Department Chairs.

# ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES, PLANS AND WAIVERS

## 13. State the school’s Organizational Goals and Measures

**a. School organizational performance objectives should reflect where the school envisions itself organizationally at the end of the charter term.**

At the end of the charter term, CCHS envisions itself with a student body with a growing commitment to community service; with a highly trained and effective Governing Board; with demonstrated success of the Mastery Learning System at least in a significant pilot mode; and with stakeholder feedback confirming a positive school experience.

**b. Objectives should include areas such as: governing board training, student and teacher retention, and student, parent and teacher satisfaction.**

Organizational goals and measures responsive to these objectives are listed below.

**Organizational Goal 1: Developing the whole student through community service.**

In keeping with the CCHS mission of promoting the social and moral growth of every student, community service by students, faculty and staff, and parents is valued and encouraged.Students engage in community service on their own, with clubs, and also as a part of the strong CCHS administrative support of community service events, which have established a culture of service in the CCHS community:

|  |
| --- |
| * CCHS Day of Service – An annual Day of Service for CCHS students, parents, and teachers.  Events are held on Saturdays and include landscaping, painting, writing letters to soldiers, preparing scrapbooks of the school’s history, and many other similar activities.
* Senior Day of Service – An annual Day of Service for CCHS seniors.  Over 200 students volunteer at off-site locations including the Chamblee branch of the DeKalb Library, local Keswick Park, Senior Connections, Sheltering Arms Child Development Center, local elementary schools, and the City of Chamblee Police department.
* Cox Trot for Life Walk/Run – The annual Cox Trot for Life walk/run fundraiser for Donate Life Georgia.  This event is in honor of Kathryn Kennedy Cox, a Chamblee student who died in an automobile accident in 2006.  Students, faculty, and community members participate to raise funds and awareness for organ donation.
 |

CCHS established the Bulldog Service Award several years ago to recognize outstanding community service by its students. Individual students participate in community service events at the school and within the community. Those who document their service hours are eligible for the Bulldog Service Award. Community service recognition awards are presented by the principal at the annual Honors Programs for students.

Measure: The percentage of students earning the Bulldog Service Award will be monitored, with 2015-16 results serving as the benchmark. An increase of at least 5% over the charter term is the target.

**Organizational Goal 2: Ensure Governing Board members receive effective training as required by O.C.G.A. §20-2-2072**

As CCHS forms its first Governing Board, effective training will be essential to ensuring that Board members understand and perform their duty to govern CCHS. The Governing Board will establish a training plan that meets requirements from SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.06, including the selection of an approved training provider. DCSD, upon the signing of the charter contract, will provide timely and adequate funds for this training.

Measure – All Governing Board members shall participate in the required level and content of training at least annually from a GADOE approved training provider.

**Organizational Goal 3: Demonstrate Progress in Mastery Learning System.**

The Mastery Learning System is a major organizational innovation, which will provide a flexible schedule to ensure that students have real-time access to the content they need at the pace that they need. Time and resources will be used more efficiently during the instructional day, and lessons will not be artificially constrained by inflexible school timetables. Students will acquire the real-world skills to regulate their own learning, developing the self-knowledge and capacity needed to take on this responsibility.

Measure 1: Progress in MLS Development and Implementation.

The Principal, in consultation with the Tricameral Advisory Council, shall create an MLS Development and Implementation Plan. Initial milestones are shown in the table below, including the establishment of Evaluation criteria. The Governing Board shall conduct an annual review of MLS program progress to determine whether annual progress is adequate. A DCSD representative will be invited to a review session to ensure that District input is obtained.

| **Year** | **Mastery Learning System Milestones** |
| --- | --- |
| 2015-16(pre-charter) | * Complete research on schools with flexible scheduling
* Visit schools as possible
* Initial discussions with technology partner candidates
 |
| 2016-17 | * Prepare requirements document
* Select technology partner
* Develop draft implementation plan
* Establish project evaluation criteria
 |
| 2017-18 | * Implement plan
* Limited pilot and roll-out
* Formal project evaluation
 |
| 2018-19 and beyond | * Continue implementation if evaluation criteria achieved
 |

Measure 2: Academic Progress under MLS

Once the MLS system is operational, or at a pilot level, CCHS will compare the academic progress of students taught within the flexible scheduling model of MLS with the academic progress of students taught within the traditional seven period schedule. Sub-measures will include applicable Georgia Milestones scores, student success as measured by grades in the associated classes, and STAR assessments as applicable.

Measure 3: Positive Experience with MLS

Once the MLS system is operational, or at a pilot level, CCHS will assess students, teachers, and parents about their satisfaction with MLS. A survey will be used to gain insight into the smoothness of operation, the change in student responsibility and interest in their own learning, and teacher satisfaction related to changes in the use of instructional time.

**Organizational Goal 4: The Charter School shall promote a positive school experience that engages students, parents and teachers.**

The measures listed below will provide DCSD, the CCHS community, and the Governing Board with regular feedback on stakeholder satisfaction. Measures 1-3 are in accordance with Section 8(b)(iii) of the Conversion Charter School contract template found at <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/default.aspx>.

Measure 1: According to data reported by the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement Report Card, in each year of the charter, the percentage of students absent 6 days or more shall not exceed 10% and shall improve by at least 2 percentage points annually until the percentage of students absent 6 days or more is below 5%.

Measure 2: Each year, 90% of parents will indicate that they are at least “satisfied” with the overall quality of their child’s education as measured via an annual survey conducted at the conclusion of the school year, in which the options are very unsatisfied, unsatisfied, somewhat satisfied, satisfied, and very satisfied. The survey response rate target will be at least 85% of parents surveyed.

Measure 3: Each year, 90% of teachers will indicate that they are at least “satisfied” with the overall quality of their job as measured via an annual survey conducted at the conclusion of the school year, in which the options are very unsatisfied, unsatisfied, somewhat satisfied, satisfied, and very satisfied. The survey response rate target will be at least 85% of teachers surveyed.

Measure 4: Teacher retention shall be monitored by the Principal and reported to the Governing Board annually. An Exit Interview and/or Survey process will be defined to identify areas for improvement in teacher retention.

Measure 5: As a minimum, trends in student retention will be measured by enrollment and by the number of applications to attend CCHS. Declines will be investigated by the Principal and reported to the Tricameral Advisory Council and the Academic Achievement Committee of the Governing Board.

(NOTE: Organizational Goal 5 was moved to Section VI, Financial Objectives, Plans, and Waivers to better reflect its content.)

1. **What specific actions will the school take to achieve its organizational performance objectives?**

**Organizational Goal 1: Developing the whole student through community service. –** CCHS will continue to publicize and administer the Bulldog Service Award program. Students earning this Award are honored at the annual Honors programs. If progress is less than expected this issue will be raised with the Student body of the Tricameral Advisory Council to determine if changes can improve participation.

**Organizational Goal 2: Ensure Governing Board members receive effective training as required by O.C.G.A. §20-2-2072. -** Specific actions are included in the response to Question 16h of Section IV regarding the plan and timeline for securing required training.

**Organizational Goal 3: Demonstrate Progress in Mastery Learning System. -** High-level actions required to implement MLS are shown in the table in response to Question 13b above. Initial actions include research on existing flexible scheduling systems, with site visits as possible, discussions with potential technology partners, and development of program requirements. More detail will be added when funding details become available.

**Organizational Goal 4: The Charter School shall promote a positive school experience that engages students, parents and teachers. -** Annual surveys shall be prepared for parents and teachers to assess their satisfaction with the overall quality of their child’s education and the overall quality of their job experience, respectively. Results, along with GOSA data on CCHS student attendance and teacher and student retention data, will be reported to the Tricameral Advisory Council and Governing Board annually. These bodies shall determine appropriate action if results do not meet the goals.

**a. Describe the organizational innovations that will be implemented during the proposed charter term.**

The first organizational innovation is theMastery Learning System, an innovation with academic and organizational impacts. The academic impact of MLS was described in Section II. The MLS impact upon the CCHS organizational structure is the primary focus of this section. MLS will provide a flexible schedule to ensure that students have real-time access to the content they need at the pace that they need. Time and resources will be used more efficiently during the instructional day, and lessons will not be artificially constrained by inflexible school timetables. Students will acquire the real-world skills to regulate their own learning, developing the self-knowledge and capacity needed to take on this responsibility.

The second organizational innovation is the introduction of a professional Governing Board, the required Chief Financial Officer, and the establishment of a Tricameral Advisory Council at CCHS. These have not and are not in place in DCSD conversion charter schools. Board Training per SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.06 will provide the skills needed to meet the performance objectives defined above.

**b. Provide a clear explanation of how the innovations will increase organizational effectiveness.**

Development and implementation of MLS will increase organizational effectiveness by increasing the effective use of both a teacher’s time and a student’s time during the school day. Flexible scheduling provides the opportunity for both teachers and students to spend less time on a unit where justified, yet have a new means of providing extra instructional time for students who need more time to demonstrate mastery without restraining students who have already demonstrated mastery. Appendix 4 provides details related to MLS, including several examples showing increased effectiveness by both quantitative and qualitative measures. In the Science example provided in Appendix 4, teacher time for a unit can be reduced significantly, while gaining the ability to add small-group remediation sessions as well as to schedule lab class sizes that are appropriate for safety and student participation goals. Student time can also be reduced if the student demonstrates mastery, or small-group remediation can be used as needed.

While the MLS model is more “efficient,” that is not the main goal. Rather, the qualitative differences must be considered:

|  |
| --- |
| **Qualitative benefits to MLS:*** Time flexibility – if lecture needs 60 minutes (or 40, or 80) then that can be scheduled, instead of trying to make material fit into fixed period length. Same with labs and all other components.
* Class size flexibility - permits more student participation, less crowding, better utilization of facilities and equipment. (If you only have equipment for 20 students to do a lab, then you only schedule 20 students and all can play a full role.)
* Lab can be completed in a single session, without having to start/stop/clean-up/restart/ stop/clean-up.
* Remediation is offered in a small group setting, where it can be individualized and be more effective, and is offered only to those who need or request it.
* Remediation is offered during the school day, rather than before or after school, when many students can’t (or won’t) attend.
* Students whose assessment shows mastery without need for remediation can gain useful time during the school day, which can be used for enrichment, homework, remediation in another subject, club meeting, peer tutoring, etc.
 |

The second organizational innovation is the establishment of an independent professional Governing Board, created in response to new requirements in SBOE charter school policy and Georgia law. The current governance format at CCHS is a large group, advisory in nature, of parents, students, teachers, and community members. This structure will transition over to the Tricameral Advisory Council, while the autonomous governing duties required by SBOE rules and Georgia law will rest with the Governing Board.

A professional Governing Board dedicated to the academic achievement of CCHS as defined in the charter contract will increase organizational effectiveness by bringing significant locally-focused resources. Board members bring the requisite financial, managerial, and operations skills needed to increase organizational effectiveness related to wise use of finances to fulfill the charter contract. Organizational effectiveness will be supported by the training that Board members will receive, pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.06, to ensure that they bring best charter practices to inform CCHS governance and policy development.

The measures used to monitor organizational effectiveness, defined in response to Question 13b, include a process to assess the perceptions and needs of CCHS teachers and parents. A positive evaluation from stakeholders confirms the organizational structure, while results showing dissatisfaction may require adjustments in organizational structure or communications as a remedy. CCHS welcomes this vehicle for self-evaluation.

**c. Describe why the innovations are appropriate for this unique school.**

The Mastery Learning System innovation is appropriate for CCHS because the need for the system originated with CCHS stakeholders. CCHS teachers, students, and parents recognize the need for flexible scheduling. This innovation can benefit students at all levels, especially those who need the option of more instructional time in a smaller, focused group setting. The local development of a flexible scheduling system, rather than implementation of a system imposed from outside, is favorable because the stakeholders will have a strong role in designing system requirements and in system evaluation to ensure that the unique needs of CCHS students and teachers are addressed.

The innovation of a professional Governing Board is an appropriate step for CCHS, a conversion charter school with almost fifteen years of demonstrated success. Our community has embraced these innovations but recognizes that structural changes in governance and expertise in finance, management, and operations are necessary for the proposed innovations to be realized. Fortunately, CCHS has identified a Governing Board with these skills and with a commitment to CCHS. With best charter practice training and in partnership with DCSD, the innovations in this petition can become a reality to support increased academic achievement.

## Which of the specific actions in the organizational plan require a waiver of state law, rule, or guidelines?

Implementation of MLS requires waivers from state law and rule related to class size and seat time. The list in the table below is illustrative but not exhaustive.

| **SBOE Rules** | **SBOE Rules** | **Georgia Statute** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 160-5-1-.02 School Day and School Year for Students and Employees160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance Program for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students160-4-2-.06 High School Graduation Requirements160-4-2-.30 High School Graduation Requirements160-4-2-.36 High School Graduation Requirements160-4-2-.17 Early Intervention Program (EIP)260-5-1-.08 Class Size | 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 Years160-4-2-.47 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 202-03 School Year and Subsequent Years160-4-2-.48 High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2008-09 School Year and Subsequent Years160-5-1-.15 Awarding Units of Credit and Acceptance of Transfer Credit And/Or Grades | **§** 20-2-159.4 Policies and guidelines for awarding units of high school credit based on demonstrated proficiency**§** 20-2-290.Organization of schools, employment of school administrative managers§ 20-2-182. Class Size |

The innovation of a professional Governing Board and a Chief Financial Officer do not require a waiver of state law, rule, or guidelines, as they are in fact required by state law, rule, and guidelines. The structure and membership of the Tricameral Advisory Council differs from the School Council structure defined in O. C. G. A. §20-2-0086 and therefore requires a waiver.

# IV. GOVERNANCE

## Describe how an autonomous Governing Board will make decisions for the school*.*

CCHS is eager to embrace the new level of autonomy required by the State. Our approach in implementing that autonomy will be measured, deliberate and cautious to reflect the will and the needs of our faculty and administration, and the requirements of our innovations. The Governing Board will determine the specific areas and pace of assuming autonomy that will allow for a smooth transition for our faculty and staff whose primary focus is not the logistics of payroll or transportation or operations, but students and student achievement. Therefore, the initial focus for autonomy by the Governing Board is on CCHS faculty and staff, as defined in Section XI, and on local scheduling for instruction, as defined in Sections II and III. Should DCSD policy on charter school autonomy evolve, the Governing Board shall explore greater autonomy in areas other than those specifically cited in this petition. The Governing Board embraces these new responsibilities and the opportunity to work with DCSD to create a successful partnership.

While the Governing Board retains all such powers and shall at all times be the ultimate authority and decision-maker, the Board is, where consistent with and allowed by current law, expected to consult with and defer to the considered judgments of the Tricameral Advisory Council. At all times, however, the Board has the responsibility of maintaining strict oversight and ensuring that only policy consistent with legal and fiduciary requirements and with school goals can be formally adopted and enacted.

The Governing Board will provide professional expertise, focused on the needs of CCHS students, faculty and staff. This local focus and inclination to delegate authority to the Principal and faculty and staff will result in more timely responses to CCHS needs. Governing Board members will serve as advocates for CCHS in the community and in their professional careers, potentially bringing additional resources to CCHS as well as being well-placed to communicate the achievements of CCHS. The Governing Board has the necessary professional knowledge and skills to negotiate with their “counterparts” within DCSD to resolve concerns.

In general, the Governing Board will defer to the authority of the CCHS Principal, who will be the party responsible for responding to DCSD requirements for organizational change and financial forecasts. The Governing Board will review DCSD reports and CCHS inputs, and take action as required to protect the interests of CCHS.

The Tricameral Advisory Council structure will be collaboratively developed by a team that includes members from the following groups: the current Governance Council, PTSA, Academic Council, Student Government, and other interested faculty, staff, parent and community members. This development will be completed between Jan - July 2016.  The plan will be presented to the new Governing Board for discussion, input and approval in the first semester of the 2016-17 school year.

Only when passed by the Governing Board do programs that have passed the Tricameral Advisory Council become CCHS policy. In circumstances where the Governing Board find themselves in disagreement with suggestions originating from the Tricameral Advisory Council, the preferred resolution shall be for them to return such policies to the Council, along with their concerns and/or suggestions for improvements and/or modifications. In circumstances where agreement on changes cannot be reached, or the Board feels that decisions need to be made on a timely basis and/or are not going to be resolved within the Tricameral Advisory Council, the Board shall reassert its policy-making powers and step in and make such decisions.

The Governing Board shall advance the goals of CCHS by providing the governance function, which encompasses legal responsibilities, academics, fiscal health, planning, policy-making, fiduciary obligations, and by carrying out its statutory responsibilities associated with operating the charter in an efficient and ethical manner. Specifically, the Governing Board shall govern the Charter by setting policy and approving all budgets and significant transactions. The Governing Board also will be instrumental in building additional community and philanthropic support for the Charter. The Board will provide oversight of the Tricameral Advisory Council and will provide oversight and ultimate responsibility for achievement of the charter’s goals and objectives. All new board members will be communicated to the DCSD and updated with Georgia Secretary of State by way of corporate annual registration.

**a. Identify each member of the Governing Board; describe the composition of the Governing Board (number of members, skill sets to be represented, how members are/will be representative of the school and the community, etc.; describe how and when Board members will be selected, and the terms that Governing Board members will serve. Briefly explain the recruitment plan of new members if vacancies occur.**

**Governing Board Members and Composition of the Governing Board -** CCHS is proud to begin this charter term with the talented and diverse group of seven Governing Board members. This Board is representative of CCHS in terms of ethnicity, talent, and dedication to excellence. Professional expertise in finance, personnel, law, education, and technology is important to the success of the Board, as are previous board experience and personnel interests related to being a team member dedicated to high academic achievement within a vibrant, diverse student body. The identity and relevant professional experience of each Board member is listed in the table below:

| **CCHS Governing Board Member** | **Relevant Professional Experience** |
| --- | --- |
| Kathy Wilson-Chu | * Director of Network Engineering, AT&T
* Champion of Diversity Award from AT&T
* Prior Board Experience
* Parent of CCHS Graduate
 |
| Stephen Harmon, Ph.D. | * Chair, Division of Learning Technologies at Georgia State University
* Professional Experience in Instructional Technology and Project Evaluation
 |
| Matthew Harrison, Ph.D. | * Senior Director for Talent Management, Comcast Central Division
* Professional Experience in
	+ Establishing HR Policies and Procedures
	+ Performance Management
	+ Leadership Development
	+ Diversity and Inclusion
* Former Mentor at CCHS
 |
| Robert Joseph, Ph.D. | * Information Technology Professional
* Professional Experience in Development of School Information Systems
 |
| Uday R. Kumar | * Executive Director, Business Operations, Cox Communications
* Management, including Finance, Marketing, and Operations
* Prior Board Experience
 |
| Darron Kusman | * Director of Finance, Church’s Chicken
* Operations and Financial Reporting
 |
| Gregory Sale | * Lawyer at Seyfarth Shaw LLP
* Professional Experience in Corporate Governance Advice and Contracts
* Certified Lean Six Sigma Lean Green Belt
* Graduate of CCHS
 |

**Selection of Governing Board Members and Terms of Service** - Governing Board members were recruited by the current CCHS charter governance body, the Governance Council, and were approved by a vote of the Governance Council in 2014. Each Board member expressed a particular commitment to CCHS and identify with the mission of CCHS and the proposed innovations. Their experience with CCHS, with local education issues, and international experience will serve our students, faculty and staff well. The Governing Board Member Packet, included in Appendix 12, was used in 2014 when Governing Board members were recruited. As the Board members have committed to extend their commitment to serve, even with the one year delay in the charter process, dates in the Governing Board Member Packet were not changed.

**Recruitment Plan for New Board Members -** The CCHS bylaws address procedures if a Board member vacancy occurs. The Governing Board has not yet approved a policy on recruitment of new members if a vacancy occurs. It is likely that this policy will expand upon and formalize the process used to establish this Board, with a call for nominations issued to all CCHS stakeholders and input from the Tricameral Advisory Council. The Governing Board Member Packet in Appendix 12 will be updated as needed for use in recruitment of new Board members.

**b. Describe the Board’s function, duties and roles in the areas of budget, resource allocation, personnel decisions (primarily school leader selection, evaluation, and termination), establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, curriculum, and school operations.**

Budget – Initially, the Governing Board’s role will be limited, as it is unclear whether the Governing Board will receive control over any funds other than the school-based funds that are currently managed by DCSD Principals. For these funds, the Governing Board will defer to the judgment of the Principal in accordance with input from the Tricameral Advisory Council and will review decisions. The Board will provide expertise when asked. The Board does not intend to decrease the budget authority of the Principal. Once DCSD policy on funding of conversion charter schools is clarified, the Governing Board will establish financial policies commensurate with the level of funding.

Resource Allocation – The Governing Board will defer to the judgment of the Principal in accordance with input from the Tricameral Advisory Council and will review decisions. The Board will provide expertise when asked. The Board does not intend to decrease the authority of the Principal.

Personnel Decisions - The role of the Governing Board in personnel decisions is defined in Section XI.

Establishing and Monitoring the Achievement of School Improvement Goals - The Governing Board will review CCHS Improvement Goals presented by the Principal, suggesting revisions as necessary, and will establish a review schedule for the Academic Achievement committee. In addition to the formal Continuous Improvement Plan, CCHS commits to a culture of continuous improvement at all levels. The Governing Board (along with the Principal and Tricameral Advisory Council) shall be involved in this process, both in formulating such plans and in monitoring and evaluating progress. The Governing Board shall also have the responsibility of ensuring that appropriate action is taken should CCHS fall behind stated goals.

Curriculum and Instruction – The Governing Board will be inclined to defer to recommendations of the CCHS faculty, as expressed through the Tricameral Advisory Council, regarding selection of materials, development of STEAM curriculum, and scheduling priorities to foster interdisciplinary teacher collaboration, accommodate STEAM internships, and improved use of time during the school day. The primary role of the Governing Board shall be to create the environment within which the innovations of this charter, and others generated at the local level by members of the school community, can flourish and be successful. Facilitation is a key board function. The Governing Board shall also be responsible for giving final approval to changes, and for monitoring the effects of such changes and responding appropriately.

School Operations – The Governing Board will defer to the judgment of the Principal in accordance with input from the Tricameral Advisory Council and will review decisions. Matters with significant financial implications will be reviewed by the Finance committee. As progress on the joint CCHS-DCSD financial innovation occurs, the Board may elect to conduct a detailed review of CCHS operations functions.

**c. Please use the Governance Matrix to illustrate the level of autonomy your Governing Board will have.**

The CCHS Governance Matrix is found in Appendix 10.

**d. Use this section to provide a narrative of your matrix, including anything in the matrix that requires further explanation or clarification.**

As shown in the Governance Matrix, the Principal will be responsible for managing day-to-day personnel matters, managing site-based funds in the DCSD approved budget, leading curriculum and instruction matters, being responsible for establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and managing school operations. The Governing Board will be responsible for approving local policies in these areas, and for defining the review format and frequency to ensure its oversight and fiduciary responsibilities are performed. A respectful, collegial relationship between the Principal and Governing Board has existed during the petition preparation phase and is essential for success during the charter term.

**e. Describe your plan for ensuring that you maintain a diverse Board with broad skillsets.**

As the Governing Board begins operation, any deficiencies in needed skills will be identified and various options for obtaining those skills will be discussed. Factors to be considered will include whether the need is temporary or permanent, whether confidentiality must be maintained, and whether the objectivity of an outsider is necessary. Recommendations from parents and staff, current Board members, formal and informal partners of CCHS, such as the Blue & Gold Foundation and governments of the cities of Chamblee and Brookhaven, will be sought should additional Board resources be needed.

**f. Describe how and why Governing Board members may be removed.**

Governance Board members may resign or be removed from office, if necessary, in accordance to the by-laws in Appendix 11. To summarize, Board members may be removed by a 2/3 vote of the Board for death or disability, upon determination is made that a violation of the Board’s ethics or conflict of interest policies or a crime of moral turpitude has occurred, or a determination is made by a majority of Board members that a Board member is not fulfilling his or her obligation to CCHS or has missed three or more of the Board’s regularly-scheduled meetings within a calendar year.

**g. Georgia law now requires Charter Schools to provide initial training for newly approved charter school Governing Boards as well as annual governance training thereafter. Governance training should help build the capacity needed to make decisions in the above-mentioned areas. Trainers must be selected from a SBOE-approved list that ensures that the training covers certain SBOE requirements. Beyond those requirements, as a best practice, Charter Schools should also ensure that it selects a training program that covers areas of identified needs.**

The Governing Board shall adopt an annual training program for all members that meets or exceeds the training and program requirements established in SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.06. Subject matter will include finance and budgeting, best practices of charter school governance, and Whole Board training to enhance the effectiveness of the governance team and to assess the continuing education needs of the Board and Principal. CCHS training shall be conducted by charter school Training Providers approved by the SBOE. Board members with one or more years of service shall participate in at least nine hours of training annually. Training records will be kept by the Secretary.

**h. Describe your plan and timeline for securing a provider for your initial governance training as well as annual training thereafter. Include in this plan, areas of focus that are specific to your board and school. Provide a brief plan for continuous governance training, recruitment and retention of high quality governing board members.**

The founding Governing Board will participate in a minimum of 15 hours of training within one year of taking office, with the content as defined in the Guidelines for SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.06. Areas of focus specific to our Board and school include STEAM and flexible scheduling. Responsibility for continuous governance training, recruitment and retention of high quality Governing Board members shall be assigned by the Chair to the appropriate member or committee once the Board begins operation.

**i. Disclose any potential conflicts of interest and describe how the Governing Board will ensure that current and future Board members avoid conflicts of interest.**

The response to Question 21 states that no conflicts of interest exist for Governing Board members. Bylaws section 6.03, Conflict of Interest, addresses key matters such as the definition of a conflict of interest, a Board member’s duty to disclose, the procedure for determining if a conflict of interest exists, procedures for addressing a conflict of interest, and violations of the conflict of interest policy. Conducting Board operations in accordance with these provisions is a strong positive step to ensure that current and future Board members avoid conflicts of interest.

**j. How will the governing board’s role uphold the school’s mission and vision? Please provide specific examples.**

The Governing Board will uphold CCHS’s mission to foster excellence by promoting the intellectual, social, moral and physical growth of every student, by working to implement the innovations outlined in this petition, by working collaboratively with CCHS and DCSD officials to ensure that CCHS complies with the charter contract and all applicable federal, state and local laws that cannot be waived, and by ensuring effective organizational planning and financial stability at CCHS.

For instance, implementing MLS will require seeking technology partners, funding and appropriate personnel, and negotiating contracts or MOUs to govern those new relationships. Given the professional skills that the Governing Board brings to these matters, part of their job in support of CCHS’s mission will be bringing their expertise and connections to bear in service of this process. There are also a great many details – legal, financial and practical – that remain to be negotiated between CCHS and DCSD. The broad skillset present on the Governing Board will ensure that this process is conducted as smoothly as possible, and in the interests of all involved.

**k. How will the governing Board evaluate the Principal’s performance? This should include the assessment tool that will be used to determine effectiveness.**

The Governing Board will conduct a 360-degree review of the principal's performance. This review will provide the Principal with balanced feedback from CCHS stakeholders in areas such as leadership, teamwork, interpersonal communication, and accountability. In accordance with DCSD policy, the Principal will be assessed per the Leaders Keys to Effectiveness System. These two reviews will ensure a balanced evaluation of Principal performance, combining quantifiable student achievement and growth data as well as more descriptive feedback to guide development of leadership qualities important to the CCHS community.

**l. How will the Governing Board ensure effective organizational planning and financial stability? Please provide specific examples.**

As a conversion charter school, responsibility for effective organizational planning and financial stability is a joint responsibility of the Governing Board and DCSD. Initially, given that DCSD controls matters such as school schedule, compensation, and operations, and that the level of financial autonomy of the Governing Board for the charter term has yet to be defined and may well evolve over time, authority for all these functions is currently not within the control of the Governing Board.

Governing Board members will ensure effective organizational planning and financial stability with respect to the STEAM and MLS innovations by participating in program reviews to ensure that organizational and financial impacts associated with the programs are consistent with the organizational and financial stability of the entire school. The Board will ensure that potential stakeholder concerns associated with these programs are addressed, as well as any potential concerns of our DCSD partners. The wide range of skills and experience of Governing Board members should ensure that CCHS has the capacity to address organizational and financial effectiveness in a manner that is in the interest of both DCSD and CCHS.

**m. How will parents, community members, or other interest parties be involved in the charter school’s Governing Board?**

During the preparation of this petition, CCHS was advised that including parents of current students on a Governing Board with fiduciary responsibility for school operations was not best practices, due to the high probability of conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts. However, CCHS places a high value on parental input. This potential problem was resolved by the creation of the Tricameral Advisory Council structure that explicitly includes a strong role for parents, and the inclination of the Governing Board to defer to the Tricameral Advisory Council whenever possible. Thus the ability of parents and other interested parties to be involved in support of their interests will actually increase markedly under the proposed governance structure. (See response to Question 16 for details.) Any of the three TAC bodies can identify an issue requiring governance action and recommend study and/or action. CCHS does not anticipate that parents or guardians will serve while their children are attending CCHS unless there is a compelling reason for serving during that time. Beyond governance, there are numerous other opportunities for parents of current students to serve and provide input to CCHS, including the active PTSA and the numerous Booster groups.

Community members, including parents of former CCHS students, may be nominated to serve on the CCHS Governing Board. Parents and community members will also be involved in the Board member nomination process, as they were with the founding Board

**n. How will the school promote parental and staff involvement in school governance?**

Parents, staff, students, and the community will be notified of and encouraged to attend Governing Board meetings, speak at Governing Board meetings, comment on pending Board policies and decisions, and review Board agendas and meeting minutes. The CCHS website will post updates of Board activity, upcoming Board meetings, and notices of any Board vacancies and the appropriate nomination procedure. Interested persons may request email notification as well. Community newspapers and postings may also be used, including possibly the CCHS student newspaper, the Blue and Gold.

The Tricameral Advisory Council will serve as a leading means of communication between parents and staff and the Governing Board. By providing a body through which parents and staff can have a real voice in school policy, the Tricameral Advisory Council will energize involvement and participation, and strengthen the community that is already one of CCHS’s main assets.

**o. How will the school communicate with students’ families?**

CCHS will continue communication with students and their families through weekly email communications, automated voice mail messages, website posting, and will use DCSD communications options as appropriate. The Tricameral Advisory Council will be a venue for communication as well as for participation. Because the Council will provide a means for families of students to have a genuine influence on school policies and actions, we expect that it will generate much higher rates of engagement and participation, and thus be a much better venue for communication, than existing mechanisms for parental involvement.

## Grievances

It is understood that within any organization, conflicts and grievances between stakeholders may inevitably arise. Such is the case even within high-functioning organizations, amongst high performing and well-intentioned stakeholders. CCHS is in agreement with DCSD BOE Policy, which encourages all employees to resolve their complaints informally and professionally at all times. When such efforts do not succeed or when, for any other reason, the CCHS Governing Board believes in fair and transparent written procedures to address grievances and resolve conflicts involving CCHS stakeholders, with the Board itself, and with DCSD. These include notification and action time limits for each step, as well as methodology for documentation, notification, and public notice requirements. In accordance with DCSD BOE policy, a complaint or grievance that requires formal resolution must be in writing and include the complainant’s mailing address.

The guiding principles for CCHS’ addressing grievances is to resolve conflicts – large or small - in a respectful, collegial, productive, and transparent manner at the lowest organizational level possible. Successful conflict resolution can be productive in strengthening the commitment of stakeholders to their common mission and their collective understandings of each members’ contributions towards the overall success of the school.

1. **What will be school leadership’s role in resolving teacher, parent and student grievances and other conflicts? Describe the rules and procedures concerning how the school will address grievances and complaints from students, parents, and teachers. The grievance policy should clearly articulate how individuals may present grievances, how those grievances will be reviewed, and who will undertake the task to review grievances, as well as the time frame for disposing of a grievance.**

**Students /Parents**– The role of the Principal in resolving parent and student grievances will be in accordance with the DCSD Student Code of Conduct/Students Rights and Responsibilities and Character Development Handbook and associated DCSD BOE Policy JCD Student Conduct and JD Student Discipline.

There is no precedent in DCSD policy for the role of a Principal in resolving parent and student grievances within a governance structure that differs from the statutory Local School Council structure. Upon approval of the charter contract, a policy for resolving parent and student grievances and other conflicts will be prepared, to include rules and procedures that clearly articulate how individuals may present grievances, how those grievances will be reviewed, who will undertake the task to review grievances, as well as the time frame for disposing of a grievance. DCSD input on the policy will be requested.

Principles from the Parent Grievance process of the 2009 CCHS charter renewal petition and the guiding principles listed in the preceding section will inform these procedures.

**Faculty and Staff** - Since CCHS faculty and staff will be DCSD employees, DCSD policy will be followed to address their grievances. DCSD policy defines the rules and procedures, including how individuals may present grievances, how those grievances will be reviewed, who will undertake the task to review grievances, as well as the time frame for disposing of a grievance. DCSD BOE Policy GAE(2)/GAE(2)-E(1) addresses Complaints and Grievances, Certified Employees. DCSD BOE Policy GAE(3)/GAC(3)-E(1) addresses Complaints and Grievances, Non-certified Employees.

It is the understanding of CCHS that for teachers with grievances, the Principal serves the role of “Level One Administrator” as defined in GAC(2) and therefore participates in the DCSD grievance policy as defined. The Principal will participate in requested Informal Resolution Conferences and conduct Level One Hearings should resolution per IRC not be attained. Should Level One Hearings not prove successful, the Principal will participate in further actions per GAE(2)/GAE(2)-E(1) as required.

It is the understanding of CCHS that for non-certified employees with grievances, the Principal serves the role of “Level One Administrator” as defined in GAC(3) and will participate in the DCSD grievance policy as defined. The Principal will participate in requested Informal Resolution Conferences and conduct Level One Hearings should resolution per IRC not be attained. Should Level One Hearings not prove successful, the Principal will participate in further actions per GAE(3)/GAE(3)-E(1) as required.

1. **What will the Governing Board’s role be in resolving teacher, parent, and student grievances and other conflicts? This should include specific procedures and protocols for grievance resolution for each group. Describe the plan or method that the charter school’s Governing Board will utilize for resolving conflicts with the DeKalb County School District and/or Board of Education. Explain how conflicts will be addressed and resolved.**

**Governing Board Involvement in Teacher, Parent, and Student Grievances:**

The role of the Governing Board in resolving Teacher grievances and other conflicts has yet to be determined. There is no precedent in DCSD grievance policy for the role of a non-profit Governing Board as part of a conversion charter contract. The Governing Board will work with DCSD to create appropriate policy, including specific procedures and protocols for grievance resolution for each group, upon approval of the charter contract. The Governing Board recognizes that teachers are DCSD employees and have rights under DCSD policy. CCHS does not intend to reduce the rights of certified or non-certified employees with respect to grievances. However, the new governance structure of a non-profit Governing Board as party to the charter contract is a new situation which CCHS and DCSD will address in written procedure upon charter approval.

The role of the Governing Board in resolving parent and student grievances has yet to be finalized. Upon approval of the charter contract, the Governing Board will take action to prepare a policy, to include specific procedures and protocols for grievance resolution for each group and request DCSD review before the policy is finalized. Principles that will inform this policy are listed below.

* The Governing Board will not address complaints unless all relevant steps with respect to grievance and conflict resolution with appropriate faculty and administrative personnel have been adhered to and resolution with the specified individuals has been attempted in good faith.
* The Governing Board will not address a complaint based on hearsay or made on behalf of another parent or family or staff member.
* The Governing Board will not address specific complaints about the performance of individual school employees.
* The Governing Board will not usurp the authority of the Principal to resolve conflicts in his/her areas of responsibility.
* A Complainant dissatisfied with the decision of the Governing Board may appeal that decision to the DCSD Board of Education. Such appeals shall be governed by the applicable Board policy and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1160.
* This Grievance Policy is not designed to supersede or supplant federal law and parental rights under The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

**Resolution of Potential Disputes with DCSD**

The CCHS Governing Board will seek to cultivate a professional working relationship with DCSD. The Governing Board will follow the approach of respectful, non-adversarial resolution with DCSD should conflicts occur, which is consistent with the CCHS philosophy that this approach provides the most meaningful and sustainable outcome for all involved. To ensure common understanding, resolutions of any conflicts will be documented in writing.

Should a conflict between the Governing Board and DCSD be at an impasse, the Governing Board may enlist the assistance of an experienced alternative dispute resolution (ADR) professional or the Georgia Charter Advisory Committee. The GCAC is mentioned in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064 as a potential mediator between a local board and a charter petitioner whose petition was denied to assist in resolving issues which led to denial of the petition by the local board. As such, this body is familiar with the nuances of charter school law and operation and may be an appropriate mediator. We hope that no conflicts escalate to this level.

1. **Describe the method that the Governing Board plans to utilize for resolving internal conflicts.**

CCHS bylaws provide the framework for development of a Governing Board policy for resolution of internal conflicts. Guiding principles will include good faith, full documentation, keeping the welfare of CCHS students, faculty and staff of primary importance, due diligence in investigating internal conflicts, and adherence to DCSD BOE Policy BH, Board Code of Ethics, as appropriate. Resolution of formal conflicts shall include a public vote on the matter.

## In the appendix, attach an official copy of the certificate of incorporation for the required Georgia nonprofit corporation from the Georgia Secretary of State, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(b)(4).

A copy of the certificate of incorporation from the Georgia Secretary of State for the required Georgia non-profit corporation, Chamblee Charter High School, Inc. is found in Appendix 5.

## Provide a brief description for each governing board member that explains what role they will play on the board and why they were chosen to participate in the founding group. Attach the member résumés or curriculum vitas in the appendix.

The relevant professional experience of each Governing Board member is included in the response to Question 16 above. Board member resumes are in Appendix 13. The Governing Board will elect its own Officers and Committee Chairs when it officially begins operations upon petition approval. The financial expertise of Mr. Kusman will be used in the Finance committee, which is responsible for maintaining the financial viability of the corporation, preparing the annual operating budget and presenting it to the Board for review and approval, monitoring financial operations and reporting at board meetings, selecting the independent auditing firm and overseeing the audit process. The professional experience of Mr. Sale and Mr. Kumar will be used in the Governance committee, which serves to provide a strong, structured mechanism for stakeholder participation in the school governance. Ms. Wilson-Chu’s interests and experience will be used in the Academic Achievement committee, along with those of Dr. Joseph and Dr. Harmon. This committee is responsible for oversight of academic achievement of CCHS students, district, state, and federal reporting requirements, and oversight of the STEAM program and Mastery Learning System. Dr. Harrison’s expertise will be used in the Community Outreach committee, which is responsible for developing relationships with the community, other schools, and government/school board officials. External communications will also be the responsibility of the committee. However, each Board member has personal interests and a strong commitment to CCHS that will guide their service.

## In the appendix, please provide the proposed charter school’s bylaws, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2- 2065(b)(4). Bylaws must reflect the charter school’s mission and non-profit status and address the required topics.

Bylaws for the CCHS Governing Board, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2- 2065(b)(4), are included in Appendix 11. These bylaws reflect the mission of CCHS and its non-profit status.

**a. The method by which the Board will be elected or appointed and removed as well as the term of office for each member**.

Bylaws Section 2.03 defines Number, Election, and Term of Directors. Bylaws Section 2.04 defines Resignation and Removal of Board members. CCHS bylaws define a two year term of service, with appropriate exceptions for founding Board members.

**b. The number of members to serve on the board after the charter school is authorized and identify any seats reserved for specific constituents.**

Bylaws Section 2.013 defines Number, Election, and Term of Directors.CCHS bylaws require 7 – 11 members. No seats are reserved for specific constituents.

**c. The responsibility and authority of the Board for the policy and operations of the charter school.**

Bylaws Section 2.01 defines General Powers of the Board. Duties of the Board include, but are not limited to, reviewing and approving a long-term strategic plan and annual budget; seeking to maintain the financial viability of the Corporation; determining the responsibilities of, evaluating, and hiring and/or firing the Principal; and creating policy as may be required for successful operation of the Corporation.

Bylaws Section 2.02 defines Specific Power of the Board, to include:

* To enter into contracts, leases and other agreements which are, in the Board's judgment, necessary or desirable in obtaining the purposes of promoting the interests of the School.
* To ensure continuity of the School’s charter unless action is taken by the School community and Board to dissolve the charter in accordance with the terms of such charter and Georgia Law.

**d. A list of committees of the Governing Board.**

Bylaws Section 4.01 defines Board Committees.At minimum, Executive, Finance, Governance, Academic Achievement, and Community Outreach, committees are required, with provisions for establishing ad hoc committees.

**e. The calendar for board meetings, providing for a minimum of six meetings per year.**

Bylaws Section 2.06 Meetings and Adjournment defines the calendar for Board meetings. The CCHS bylaws provide for monthly meetings, except for the month in which the annual meeting is scheduled.

**f. A list of the quorum and voting requirements for board meetings and committees.**

Bylaws Section 2.07 defines quorum and voting requirements for the Board and Section 4.02 defines the quorum and voting requirements for Committees. CCHS bylaws require that the Governing Board will operate in accordance with applicable Georgia open meetings laws O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq.

## A conflict of interest is generally defined as a situation in which someone has differing or competing professional, monetary or personal interests. Any potential conflicts of interest of the founding governing board members must be disclosed. Provide the complete and signed conflict of interest form for each proposed founding board member, located at the end of these Guidelines. This form must be included in the petition appendices and completed by each founding and/or governing board member.

CCHS understands the importance of avoiding conflicts of interest and even the appearance of conflicts of interest. As a condition of service, Governing Board members have completed the DCSD Conflict of Interest form provided in Appendix 6. Board member Kathy Wilson-Chu serves on the Board of a non-profit 501(c)3 that awards scholarships to women in college going into non-traditional careers like STEM careers. There is no competing interest.

CCHS Governing Board members understand that they will not be paid for their service as a Board member and will not be compensated as contractors or employees of any business entity doing business with CCHS. Governing Board members may receive per diem for expenses incurred.

**V. CONTRACTS WITH EDUCATIONAL SERVICE PROVIDERS OR OTHER CHARTER PARTNERS**

**22. Does the charter school intend to contract, or has the school contracted, with an education service provider (ESP) or other charter partner, to provide management or consulting services? If so, please complete this section and include a signed, operationalized agreement submitted as an exhibit.**

CCHS has not contracted nor does it intend to contract with an education service provider or other charter partner to provide management or consulting services. CCHS is not partnering with an Educational Management Company or other management entity.

**23. List any proposed business arrangements or partnerships with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, or nonprofit organizations (excluding those relationships discussed in previous section).**

Appendix 9 contains evidence of strong community support for CCHS from parents, local governments, businesses, and non-profits. The CCHS Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA) and the Blue & Gold Foundation are independent non-profits that provide more than $30,000 each in annual support to our school. This suggest that our school community and the larger community are galvanized to ensure that all measures are taken to fill any fiscal gaps our school may face to ensure a comprehensive and cohesive educational experience for all Chamblee students.

CCHS believes that it is premature to have completed business arrangements or partnerships, prior to the approval of the petition and the establishment of the Governing Board. Reasons include:

* Potential partners are unable to commit until the charter contract is signed, thus confirming CCHS, DCSD, and GaDOE commitment to the innovations.
* Significant open issues remain with respect to the level of financial autonomy that the Governing Board of this conversion charter school will receive. As stated in Section VI, Question 24a/b, CCHS welcomes the opportunity to continue discussions with DCSD about these topics, realizing that this is a complex subject that is best approached at a measured pace by committed partners.
* Funding requirements for STEAM and MLS are not well-defined. While this is fully appropriate at this initial stage of development for these innovations, it means that the need for and nature of any potential partners and/or grantors is also not well-defined.

**a. Contact information for a representative of each business and/or partnership listed should be provided.**

When arrangements or partnerships are finalized, the contact information for a representative of each business and/or partnership will be provided to the DCSD Charter Office.

**b. Disclose any potential conflicts of interest within each arrangement or partnership.**

When arrangements or partnerships are finalized, any conflicts of interest within each arrangement or partnership will be disclosed to the DCSD Charter Office.

**c. Include a copy of any actual or intended contract with each arrangement or partnership in the Appendix.**

When actual or intended contracts are finalized, copies will be provided to the DCSD Charter Office.

# VI. FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES, PLANS AND WAIVERS

1. **State the school’s Financial Goals and Measures**

**a. School financial performance objectives should reflect where the school envisions itself financially at the end of the charter term.**

**b. Objectives should emphasize fiscal health and sustainability.**

At the end of the charter term, CCHS intends to have a proven record as an economically sustainable, successful charter school, with the associated benefit of increased transparency into public funding for education at the school level. The five measures shown below provide a means of evaluating progress in achieving this goal.

**Financial Goal - CCHS will be an economically sustainable school.**

Sound fiscal operation and planning are necessary if CCHS is to be an economically sustainable school, able to accomplish its mission. The five measures listed below are designed to guide CCHS financial operations and planning and provide DCSD and the State with evidence that CCHS is operating in an economically sustainable manner. These measures are in accordance with Section 8(b)(i) of the Conversion Charter School contract template found at <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/default.aspx>.

Measure 1– Each year, CCHS will operate in a fiscally sound manner as measured by an external audit that is submitted on time, with no major findings.

Measure 2 - Actual and proposed budgets for each school year will demonstrate effective allocation of resources.

Measure 3 - Yearly balance sheets will demonstrate that CCHS maintains adequate cash reserves.

Measure 4 - CCHS will meet all Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS) as demonstrated by external, annual audit reports.

Measure 5 - CCHS will meet all financial reporting deadlines set by GaDOE.

The Financial Goals and Measures of CCHS are designed to support its mission of fostering excellence through promoting the intellectual, social, moral and physical growth of every enrolled student, and meeting or exceeding the contractual Academic goals defined in Section II and the Organizational goals defined in Section III. CCHS will work with DCSD to develop and implement the required financial policy and procedure changes necessary to support these goals.

While we believe that legal statute requires that the full CCHS budget pass through the Governing Board, CCHS prefers to continue a strong partnership with DCSD, incorporating DCSD strengths and “economies of scale” where it is sensible. Thus most services will be “contracted back” to DCSD. However, appropriate financial autonomy will be required to meet charter contract requirements for at least three reasons. First, it is crucial to the successful development and implementation of the STEAM and MLS innovations that we obtain some budgetary flexibility. Second, as part of the Governing Board’s fiduciary role, it may need to evaluate the option of performing some functions at the local level. This requires knowing current costs in order to make a valid cost-benefit analysis. Third, funds must be made available for the required Governing Board training and the required Chief Financial Officer. CCHS welcomes the opportunity to continue discussions with DCSD about these topics, realizing that this is a complex subject that is best approached at a measured pace by committed partners.

These two realities led to the major CCHS/DCSD financial innovation proposed in response to Question 25. It is hoped that this innovation may address the needs identified above, as well as to provide for possibly modest, but meaningful, financial incentives to aid in improving teacher satisfaction and teacher retention. Teachers are, of course, the major force behind achieving the mission of CCHS.

**c. Describe the school’s plans for fiscal management; and specify how the school will manage budgets and expenditures.**

CCHS will follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). CCHS is committed to ensuring fiscal stewardship and budgeting practices that are aligned with its mission and vision. CCHS will comply with the Local Units of Administration Manual as it pertains to charter schools. The CCHS Governing Board will be responsible for approving fiscal policies andguidelines. DCSD policies will serve as guidelines for local policy development. The objective of fiscal management policy is not to decrease level of control, reporting, or transparency, but to adjust the organizational level of control to reflect the level of financial autonomy required by SBOE rules. These policies and guidelines shall address the following:

1. **Procedures for receipts,** which will outline processes to be followed upon receipt of money or non-monetary goods to ensure these resources are recorded and deposited properly, including receiving, depositing, recording and reconciling cash.
2. **Procedures Related to Bids**, which will provide for bid processes that are transparent and protect the integrity of the bid process itself and stewardship of public funds.
3. **Procedures for Disbursements**, which will provide an appropriate manner of disbursement of funds to ensure only authorized individuals have access to account information and are positioned to withdraw funds. These policies will shape procedures for vendor set-up and management; processing/approving purchase orders; processing invoices; and processing operating checks.
4. **Procedures for School Activity Accounts** will establish how CCHS will handle cash receipts, disbursements, and provide safeguards against theft and misappropriation. Procedures for Payroll, will specify how payroll is calculated and disbursed, thereby helping to ensure that relevant federal, state, and local laws are followed. These procedures also will include verification of payroll registers, methodology for setting up new employees, making payroll changes; processing payroll checks; and verifying payroll monthly.
5. **Investment policies and procedures** will provide guidance on how CCHS may invest its resources and establish safeguards to monitor investment decisions, including identification of investable assets vs. projected cash flow; timelines for investment portfolio; risk assessment; liquidity requirements; and diversification strategies.

Examples of controls to ensure appropriate stewardship of public funds include, but are not limited to, policies and documented practices related to:

***Receipts****:* sequential/pre-numbered receipts; segregation of duties between individuals receiving money (via mail or in person) and individuals posting to the general ledger; separation between receiving money and depositing money; established number of days acceptable to hold receipts; established maximum amount of cash that can be held in vault; requiring receipt books/spreadsheets for each person (sponsors, bookkeepers, teachers, etc.) receiving cash and require verification methods.

***Disbursements:*** Clear identification and protections with respect to signatory authority; maintenance of sequential check log; review of voided checks and voucher or reimbursement packages; pre-disbursement approval processes; password protection and maintenance for all hardware with the capacity to affect disbursements; check stock secured in a locked vault; review of new vendors; segregation of responsibilities between different employees for vendor set-up and vendor disbursements.

***School Activity Accounts***: Cash Disbursements: Require prior approval of expenses by appropriate personnel; Principal signing check is an acceptable approval of purchase, if it indicates the acceptance of responsibility for the validity of the purchase. When accepting responsibility, Principal shall review the voucher package for accuracy prior to signing check; provide extracurricular sponsors and others periodic updates of the expenses recorded in applicable accounts; absolute prohibition on checks payable to cash.

***Payroll:*** Thorough review of initial input; sequential log of employee numbers; redundant review of sample monthly salaries; pay adjustments must be approved/reviewed by CFO; external calculations of employee salaries reviewed by CFO; payroll reports comparison to initial salary calculations; review of new employees added; Principal or CFO approval; distribution of checks by personnel external to payroll; review of exception reports. Development of CCHS policy in this area is contingent upon a shift of Payroll functions from DCSD to CCHS.

Policy development in these areas will be paced by the level of school-based authority determined by DCSD and CCHS. The CFO will present financial reports (i.e. balance sheet, income and expense, and budget versus actual) to the CCHS Governance Board Finance Committee for review and discussion at each meeting. In turn, the chair of the Finance Committee will present report of fiscal heath to the Governance Board at each meeting.

CCHS will comply with DCSD requirements for financial reports, including but not limited to a monthly budget status report, monthly cash reports, and quarterly statements. Further, CCHS understands that it is subject to the DCSD’s Internal Audit Department.

The CCHS Budget will be based on sound, conservative, documented assumptions and will be aligned with the school’s mission and vision. Proposed budgets will be based on projected enrollment using historical data of CCHS demographics. The annual CCHS budget will include legal defense funds, legal representation, Crime/Fidelity Bonds and other insurance, among other items required by DCSD. The CCHS Governing Board will approve all budget and cash flow statements and may amend the budget as necessary per its procedures. The receipts and disbursements on the cash flow statement will be consistent with the amounts in the budget. Any services contracted for by CCHS, including those contracted for with DCSD, will be detailed in contracts as required by DCSD. All contracts between CCHS and DCSD will be approved by the CCHS Governing Board and legal counsel and be reviewed by the CCHS Governing Board annually for compliance and continuance.

CCHS will utilize the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) for not-for-profit organizations. CCHS will utilize the state’s Chart of Accounts and the adopted Budget will comply with O.C.G.A. § Title 20, Chapter 2, Article 6, Part 4. The CCHS cash flow statements will show receipts and disbursements on a monthly basis along with beginning and ending balance and will demonstrate that CCHS has adequate resources to pay its expenses throughout the year.

**d. Use the spreadsheets provided by GADOE, which list detailed budget information projecting revenues and expenditures for the first five years of the proposed charter term. If any sources of revenue appearing in the spreadsheets are anticipated to come from private sources, documentation of such revenues must be included along with the petition. Include a budget that complies with O. C. G. A 20-2-171.**

Appendix 3 includes the Revenue Calculation Worksheet that shows the calculation of QBE funds and Local funds earned by CCHS students. The petitioner recognizes that this total differs significantly from the total provided by DCSD on 9/23/15. Of note is the difference in gifted students (600 vs 155, respectively). These differences could not be resolved prior to the due date of the revised petition. CCHS welcomes the opportunity to discuss these topics with DCSD as part of a strong partnership during the charter term.

The petitioner’s estimate was used in the CCHS projected five-year budget in the required GADOE spreadsheet format in Appendix 3. This budget complies with O.C.G.A § 20-2-171 and does not include sources of revenue from private sources.

The Indirect Cost values for CCHS for Central Administration, School Administration, and Facility Maintenance and Operation received from DCSD on 9/23/15 can serve as a starting point for future discussions between CCHS and DCSD. Salaries and benefits for CCHS personnel, andtheTechnical Services, Travel, Supplies and Non-computer/Non-bus Equipment funding that all DCSD high school Principals control (line item 76) were available from the published FY16 DCSD budget. The District was unable to provide the petitioner with the requested actual cost data to account for District services actually provided to CCHS as defined in the many line items in the GaDOE spreadsheet. Therefore, in order to complete the GADOE spreadsheet, the petitioner scoured the District budget for funding levels for required functions and estimated a proportional share for CCHS wherepossible. The Governing Board member who is a Director of Finance reviewed the budget. The petitioner also reviewed charter school budgets from other districts. The results of this effort informed the budget presented in Appendix 3.The proposed budget shows a positive cash flow. Budget revisions will be made as DCSD Finance and CCHS work together to identify actual costs.

The initial allotment of federal, state and local funds due to CCHS will be provided by DCSD no later than July 31, 2016. Per DCSD requirements, CCHS shall operate on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year.

**e. Identify the school’s Chief Financial Officer and describe how that person’s credentials comply with the Guidelines for Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.05 for the purpose of developing and adhering to generally accepted accounting principles.**

After Petition approval by GaDOE, the CCHS Governing Board will select its Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The CCHS CFO shall be responsible for developing policies and guidelines for fiscal management and control, which must be approved by the Governing Board. In accordance with SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.05, the CFO will have qualifications meeting the following at a minimum:  1) A baccalaureate or higher degree in business, accounting, or finance from an accredited college or university and a minimum of four years’ experience in a field related to business or finance; or 2) documented experience of ten or more years in the field of business or financial management with supervisory experience.  The CFO will also assist in complying with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(b)(7) regarding annual financial audits.

**f. Identify the representatives of the school who will be responsible for the financial management of the charter, and describe plans to procure and maintain during the entire length of the charter a Crime/Fidelity Bond covering all persons receiving or disbursing funds. The DCSD required bond amount is $1 million.**

The CFO will present financial reports (i.e. balance sheet, income and expense, and budget versus actual) to the CCHS Board for review and discussion at each meeting. CCHS will procure a Crime/Fidelity Bond covering all persons receiving or disbursing funds and will maintain this bond in the amount of $1 million for the full term of the Charter.

CCHS understands the responsibility of the CCHS Governing Board for oversight of finance and facilities planning (in collaboration with the DCSD). Further, CCHS understands that it is subject to the DCSD’s Internal Audit Department.

1. **What specific actions will the school take to achieve the financial performance objectives?**

**a. Describe the financial innovations that will be implemented during the proposed charter term.**

Two financial innovations will be implemented during the proposed charter term. The first innovation is the establishment of a non-profit Governing Board with fiduciary financial responsibilities that works in accordance with a CCHS Chief Financial Officer. The second financial innovation is a proposed partnership with DCSD to develop and implement procedures so that the District is able to identify actual costs at the school level and define system modifications to permit tracking at the school level.

A non-profit Governing Board and Chief Financial Officer, as required by SBOE rules, has never been a signatory on a conversion charter contract in DCSD and thus is both unique and truly innovative. Bringing this innovation to life began over a year prior to petition submittal and will continue during the charter term, as the District and CCHS transition to new operations required by this structural change.

The proposed partnership with DCSD is also unique and innovative. Over the last two years, we have had many discussions and lengthy correspondence with the DCSD CFO and the DCSD Charter Division on the subject of conversion charter school funding. These discussions were both of a general nature as well as requests for specific CCHS cost data. As a result, we have come to realize three key things:

* The DCSD Finance department does not budget or track actual costs at the school-level for services such as Human Resources, Finance, Transportation, Operations, Food Service, Special Education, Curriculum and Instruction, Athletics, Legal, and other required services.
* State law is specific with regard to funding conversion charter schools (ref. O. C. G. A. § 20-2-2068.1.(a), (b), (c), (c.2))
* Implementation of conversion charter school funding per State law will require significant changes in DCSD Finance policy and systems.

The “perfect storm” of these three facts makes it impossible for the conversion charter petitioner to use current or past actual cost data to set realistic budgets for necessary school functions. Without school-level cost data for all local schools it is impossible to determine whether a conversion charter school is being treated “no less favorably” than other/traditional DCSD public schools. Without school-level cost data the Governing Board does not have the information required to make wise cost-benefit tradeoffs as part of its governance function.

Therefore, CCHS proposes to work with DCSD Finance to identify actual costs at the school level and define system modifications to permit tracking at the school level

**b. Provide a clear explanation of how the innovations will increase financial effectiveness.**

The first innovation benefits CCHS by bringing committed professional expertise in finance and related areas to focus on CCHS financial effectiveness.Clearly, the second financial innovation will increase financial effectiveness, as the CCHS Governing Board and CFO will have more accurate cost data to use to manage the school. The second innovation also benefits DCSD as it petitions to become a Charter System and must evaluate the financial impact of proposed changes submitted by each school. Greater insight and transparency regarding actual costs at the school level will enable DCSD to accurately provide required financial information to the public and to the Georgia Department of Education.

**c. Describe why the innovations are appropriate for this unique school.**

This innovation is appropriate for CCHS, as it is essential to achieving the contractually required goal of being an economically sustainable school. At the direction of the Governing Board, CCHS will work with DCSD Finance to identify costs at the school level.

1. **Fundraising or Other sources of Income**

**a. Please describe in detail the school’s plans for securing other sources of funding. This plan should demonstrate financial independence from the school district by using state and local funds and a feasible plan to supplement those funds with other funding sources on a yearly basis as required.**

The budget submitted with this petition is based solely on guaranteed public revenue derived from currently published enrollment counts for CCHS. Any additional funds earned through grants, fundraising or private donations will be used to enhance current programming in accordance with the terms of the grant(s). If CCHS should cease operation as a charter, any grant funds or loan proceeds shall be distributed in accordance with the terms of the grant or loan. DCSD shall not be responsible for repayment of any grant or loans to CCHS.

**b. Describe any planned fundraising efforts and who will lead and coordinate these efforts. Because there is no guarantee that these funds will be awarded, you must describe how your school would remain solvent if you do not receive these funds.**

As the need for additional funds is identified, CCHS will submit requests for additional appropriate funding from local, state, and federal sources, as well as from corporations, individuals, and foundations. These activities will be directed by the Governing Board and may be prepared by CCHS parents, teachers, and community members, in much the same manner as this petition has been prepared.

**c. Independent private funding sources that have been secured must be evidenced through a letter of intent, commitment letters, and/or loan agreements from the funder may be included as an Appendix item.**

CCHS understands its responsibility for use and administration of federal, state, local, and private grant funds or donations. Further, CCHS understands its responsibility for repayment of any loans or demands for the repayment of grant funds obtained by CCHS. Any grants received by CCHS will be administered in accordance with the terms of the grant. Oversight for grant administration will be coordinated by the CFO and Principal, and the CCHS Governing Board will review grant status on a quarterly basis.

**d. If established, provide evidence of your organization’s federal tax-exempt status in the Appendix.**

Federal tax-exempt status has not been established. CCHS will seek 501(c)(3) status early in the charter term.

1. **Which of the specific actions in the financial plan require a waiver of state law, rule or guidelines?**

**a. Although you will be granted a broad flexibility waiver if you are granted a charter, please provide examples of a significant component of your financial plan for which you need a waiver – and the waivers that are required to allow the implementation of that component.**

Because operation as an autonomous conversion charter school with respect to Finance is required by state law, rule, and guidelines, no specific waivers from State requirements are needed.

However, many waivers from DCSD policy will be required. For example, the DCSD Internal Grant Opportunity procedure, found at <http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/research-and-evaluation/>, shall not apply at CCHS. The related DCSD Board Fiscal Policy DFK, Gifts and Bequests, must also be waived. The CCHS Governing Board with input from the Tricameral Advisory Council will develop policies and procedures defining how grant funding will be acquired and administered at CCHS.

# VII. STUDENT ADMISSIONS

**28. How will students be admitted to the charter school?**

**a. What is the school’s attendance zone? Please describe or provide a map which indicates your targeted attendance zone.**

As a conversion charter school, the primary attendance zone for CCHS is defined by DCSD. Appendix 2 shows the boundaries of the CCHS attendance zone. The charter attendance zone is all of DCSD.

**b. Please state the following enrollment priorities that apply, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1), in the rank order the school will use them. If the school will not utilize any enrollment priorities, please leave this section blank.**

DCSD, which has managed the admissions process for CCHS for approximately ten years, does not use enrollment priorities. CCHS does not plan to add priorities. DCSD Policy JBCC Student Assignment shall apply relative to children of CCHS employees.

**c. Describe the rules and procedures that will govern admissions and registration. Please include the school’s admissions policy for potential students that are equitable, non-discriminatory, and will ensure that the student populations will reflect diversity. Please note that “enrollment priorities”, “admissions” and “registration” are different concepts. To avoid confusion the GADOE recommends the following:**

**i. “enrollment priorities” describe those students granted priority pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(B);**

Enrollment priorities were described in Section 28b above.

**ii. “Admission” describes pre-lottery processes and forms;**

CCHS plans for DCSD to manage the Charter Admissions process during the charter term. Thus Admissions will be conducted using DCSD rules and procedures which have been thoroughly approved by the DCSD Legal department to be equitable and nondiscriminatory. CCHS will continue to provide information to DCSD for inclusion in the DCSD School Choice Programs Catalog describing the CCHS Charter program.

The current charter application form used by DCSD for CCHS charter admission is included in Appendix 1.

The CCHS Governing Board, in consultation with the Principal and DCSD Director of School Choice, will decide in the first two years of the charter term whether there is a need to manage the CCHS charter admissions process locally and relieve DCSD of this responsibility. Any such changes will be discussed thoroughly with DCSD to ensure a well-defined, mutually acceptable process. Prior to making this change, the proposed process including forms and the lottery process will be subject to review by Legal counsel to ensure that it meets legal requirements. In this event, CCHS shall not discriminate in Admission on any basis prohibited by law, including, but not limited to: sex, race, religion, national origin, sexual persuasion, aptitude or disability. CCHS will not charge tuition or use admissions criteria or require letters of recommendation, essays, resumes, or other narrative summary of the student’s school and community activities, such as grades, academic programs, attendance records or disciplinary history. CCHS will not require parents or guardians or students to attend a meeting, be interviewed and/or tour the facilities.

**iii. “registration” describes post-lottery processes and forms after the student has been offered a seat at the school through enrollment priorities or the lottery process.**

The CCHS Registrar as directed by the principal will continue to use DCSD rules and procedures for registration of CCHS students, as has been done in past and current charter terms. CCHS will register any student who legally resides in the local attendance zone as defined by DCSD as of the date this charter renewal petition is submitted. Such students must submit a completed registration form, signed by at least one parent or guardian, and provide proof of residency. Charter school students, selected by lottery and with proof of residency will be enrolled at CCHS upon completion of a registration form, signed by at least one parent or guardian. Proof of residency will be required of all students who enroll in CCHS with the exception of children of CCHS employees who may live outside of DeKalb County (§ 20-2-2066 (a)(1)(b)(ii)). By law, an agreement with those students’ home schools/public school districts must be obtained.  (§ 20-2-2066 (2)) The CCHS Governing Board will provide information and direction to affected CCHS employees. Registration forms are included in Appendix 1.

CCHS will continue to register Magnet students selected by the DCSD School Choice office as part of the co-located Magnet program. Enrollment data is collected, managed, and reported according to DCSD policy by the CCHS Registrar per direction by the CCHS principal, as it has been for previous charter terms.

**d. Describe procedures for situations if student applications for admissions exceed available space, including the following:**

**i. The precise manner in which the lottery will be conducted and by whom;**

**ii. Measures to ensure that the admissions process adheres to legal requirements; and the procedures for wait-listing students who are not included in the first round of lottery offers.**

If CCHS capacity remains after application of the enrollment priorities established in this petition, with a confirmed proof of residency, additional charter school students shall be selected through a public lottery conducted by DCSD using DCSD procedures. The DCSD School Choice Department has conducted lotteries for the CCHS charter program for approximately ten years. DCSD information about the CCHS charter lottery process, including wait list procedures, for 2015-16 applicants is provided in Appendix 1. Applicants chosen in the lottery will receive an “Intent to Enroll” form from DCSD, which must be signed and returned by a specified deadline. Failure to return the form on time will result in selection of a new applicant from the waiting list.

**Student Withdrawal or Transfer**

CCHS shall comply with the provisions of O.C.G.A. §20-2-2066(d). A student may withdraw without penalty from CCHS at any time and enroll in another public school within the local system pursuant to policies of DCSD. CCHS will follow DCSD policy in assisting a student who wishes to transfer from CCHS.

In accordance with approved policy in its current charter, CCHS is not opposed to permitting magnet students who live outside the CCHS resident attendance area and who fail to meet the academic criteria for the Magnet Program to continue at CCHS. However, that decision rests with the DCSD School Choice Office, in consultation with the student and his/her parent/guardian

**e. How will the charter school reach students representative of the racial and socioeconomic diversity in the school system?**

The designation of a county-wide attendance zone indicates CCHS’s commitment to attract students representative of the racial and socioeconomic diversity of DCSD.The recruitment and publicity plan for the CCHS charter program, administered by DCSD for the past 10+ years, has resulted in a CCHS student body that reflects the demographics of DeKalb County, GA. The table below shows the most recent 2013-14 Report Card published by the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement and by the State and County Quick Facts 2013 published by the U. S. Census Bureau. We hope to maintain this diverse and refreshingly cohesive student body. An overall demographic characterization of CCHS students, faculty and staff, will be conducted annually.

|  |
| --- |
| **Chamblee Charter High School Demographics Comparison** |
| **Race / Ethnicity** | Chamblee Charter High School (1) | DeKalb County Schools (1) | DeKalb County Georgia (2) | State of Georgia (2) |
| African American (Black) | 45.00% | 67.00% | 54.80% | 31.40% |
| Asian | 12.00% | 6.00% | 5.60% | 3.70% |
| Caucasian (White) | 24.00% | 11.00% | 30.00% | 62.50% |
| Hispanic | 14.00% | 15.00% | 9.10% | 9.20% |
| Multiracial | 5.00% | 2.00% | 2.00% | 1.90% |
| **Other Sub-groups** |   |   |   |   |
| Limited English Proficient | 4.00% | 14.00% | 18.60% | 13.30% |
| Students with Disability | 7.00% | 8.90% | NA | NA |
| Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals | 39.00% | 73.00% | 19.00% | 18.20% |
|  | *(1)Governor’s Office of Student Achievement; (2)State and County Quick Facts, U. S. Census* |

A plan to reach students representative of the racial and socioeconomic diversity in DCSD is listed below, should it become necessary:

1. An annual review of racial and socioeconomic trends will be conducted by the Principal, Tricameral Advisory Council, and Governing Board.
2. If substantial reductions in diversity are seen, these changes will be investigated.
3. If reasons are due to the random nature of the student selection process used by the DCSD School Choice department, take no action but monitor.
4. If specific reasons are identified, then the Principal in consultation with the Tricameral Advisory Council will discuss possible approaches to change the trend.
5. Selected approach(es) will be discussed with the DCSD School Choice department for feasibility. Changes in publicity/recruitment, even though well-intentioned to increase diversity, must be equitable for all DCSD stakeholders through the charter process.

**f. How does the school plan to recruit students and maintain/increase enrollment? Please include an enrollment application in the appendix.**

CCHS will continue to participate in the recruitment activities of DCSD, which has been the sole recruitment instrument for its past 10+ years as a charter school. DCSD publicizes CCHS charter opportunities as part of its School Choice Brochure Catalog. CCHS conducts school tours weekly throughout the year as an opportunity to inform potential students of the benefits of the school.

To supplement DCSD recruitment activities, CCHS uses its website, neighborhood newspapers, social media, email blasts, and other means to publicize the mission, academic programs, achievements, and application information to raise awareness about CCHS. CCHS has included funding in its proposed budget for student recruitment. The CCHS Governing Board will monitor feeder school enrollment and the number of charter applicants annually, to determine if an increased level of student recruitment is required. If warranted, the Governing Board, in consultation with the Principal and Tricameral Advisory Council, will prepare a recruitment plan to maintain/increase enrollment. Comments on this plan will be requested from the DCSD School Choice Program Office. CCHS will post a link to the complete charter school petition and contract upon approval, so that it may be accessed by parents, prospective parents and teachers, and the entire community.

CCHS will use DCSD Enrollment forms as shown in Appendix 1.

**g. Attach the charter school’s proposed annual calendar and a draft of the charter school’s daily school schedule.**

Chamblee Charter High School’s proposed annual calendar will follow the DCSD calendar during the charter term. Appendix 4 contains the DCSD calendar for 2015-16. A draft of the traditional 7-period daily school schedule for school year 2015-2016 is included in Appendix 4.

# VIII. FACILITIES

1. **Describe the school facility that the charter school proposes to use.**

Chamblee Charter High School is an existing DeKalb County School District school and a conversion charter, not a start-up charter school Although CCHS is DeKalb County’s second oldest high school, construction of the new facility was completed in 2014. Because local autonomy with respect to facility operations is not central to the innovations proposed in this petition, DCSD will continue to provide Facilities services for CCHS.

**a. Is the facility new or existing? Describe the quantity and type of rooms (i. e. classrooms, administrative offices, program specific space (science labs, art workshops, etc.) media center, meeting space, and/or kitchen facility.)**

The CCHS facility consists of approximately 275,000 square feet, including approximately 84 classrooms, a media center, computer labs, specialized career technology classrooms, kitchen, cafeteria, performing arts, music and art rooms, natatorium, gymnasium and related administrative and support spaces. There are a number of small and large communicating spaces allowing for the various teaching and learning opportunities. A baseball field, softball field, tennis courts, and a multi-purpose athletic field are located on campus. CCHS has school-wide Wi-Fi, interactive Smart Boards and a Broadcast and Video Studio that can transmit school wide productions as well as facilitating higher education and joint learning environments world-wide through teleconferencing.

**b. Will the facility require renovations?**

No renovations are anticipated during the charter term.

**c. What is the location of the facility?**

CCHS will use all of that certain parcel or tract of land or ground situated at 3688 Chamblee Dunwoody Road Chamblee GA 30341, in Land Lot 308, 18th District, County of DeKalb.

**d. How does this facility meet the required space needed for the proposed school? Please indicate if the identified site will accommodate the school through the initial charter term and at full capacity. If the school will not start at full capacity, describe how the school will accommodate growth over an initial five-year term of the school.**

The CCHS facility was designed to accommodate approximately 1,600 students, which will accommodate the school during the charter term. In the previous charter term, in a smaller facility, CCHS served more than 1500 students enrolling via resident, charter, and magnet programs. The new facility is much better equipped to meet the instructional needs of these students. The enrollment numbers presented in this petition are inclusive of students who attend CCHS from outside of the attendance area.

**e. If applicable, schools must submit a School Site Selection Form for Site and Facility Approval.**

Per DCSD, the District submitted a School Site Selection Form for CCHS Site and Facility Approval in 2012

1. **Does the charter school have an MOU for the facility pending charter and facility approval?**

**a. The MOU should include the total proposed facility cost.**

**b. The MOU should set forth any material terms that will be reflected in a lease, such as the lease term.**

The District and the petitioner are in discussions regarding an MOU to clarify facility use, maintenance, and associated issues, pending charter approval. The petitioner understands, in particular, that the natatorium is a District asset, intended for usage by DCSD student-athletes and aquatic teams for purposes of training, practice, and competition of aquatic sports as well as intended for usage by CCHS student-athletes and aquatic teams for purposes of training, practice, and competition of aquatic sports. Other assets, such as parking for North DeKalb Stadium, are also shared between DCSD and CCHS. The petitioner does not intend to usurp District control relating to facility use and maintenance, but rather to continue the practices that have worked well in previous charter terms.

1. **Does the charter school have a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) for the proposed facility?**

The Certificate of Occupancy is held at the DCSD central office.

## Does the charter school have an emergency safety plan pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185 for the proposed facility?

**a. Provide the school’s emergency/safety plan in the Appendix.**

CCHS acknowledges that in accordance with OCGA §20-2-1185, Safe School Plan, a Safe Schools Plan must be submitted to the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and DCSD for approval. The CCHS Safe School Plan is included in Appendix 19.

As a conversion charter school, CCHS will adhere to its current set of approved policies and procedures regarding measures taken to prohibit unauthorized persons from entering the building, including information on intrusion alarms, after-hours security, cameras, keyless entry pads and other monitoring devices used at CCHS. The CCHS Faculty Handbook (Appendix 14) includes procedures for Keys/Access Cards, Burglar Alarms, Energy Conservation, Intruder Alerts, Fire Drill Procedures, Tornado Drill Procedures, and Bomb Threat Procedures. Other procedures will be developed and approved by the Governing Board as needed.

**b. Describe how all local and state policies related to health and safety will be met.**

The custodial staff and Plant Engineer included in the proposed CCHS budget will ensure that the facility is maintained in excellent condition on a day-to-day basis and that facility maintenance is performed. CCHS will continue to comply with existing approved operations policies to ensure that all local and state policies related to health and safety will be met.

CCHS will grant access to local health and fire department officials for inspection of the premises or operations of the school for purposes of ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of students and employees pursuant to Georgia Statutes and National Fire Protection Association Life Safety Code, N.F.P.A. 101. CCHS understands that it is subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights, insurance, the protection of physical health and safety of school students, employees and visitors, conflicting interest transactions, and the prevention of unlawful conduct. The CCHS facility meets all state and local codes for sanitation, fire, construction, stability, temperature, ventilation, and suitability of physical space.

# IX. STUDENT DISCIPLINE

## Please state whether or not the school intends to adopt the DeKalb County School District’s Student Code of Conduct as the school’s discipline policy.

1. **Provide the schools’ student discipline policies and procedures, setting forth student due process procedures for all disciplinary action, not just for the most serious forms of discipline such as out-of-school suspension and expulsion, in a Code of Conduct, as an Appendix item.**

CCHS has adopted the DCSD Student Code of Conduct/Students Rights and Responsibilities and Character Development Handbook, or “Code of Conduct,” as the school’s discipline policy, as has been the case during previous charter terms. This document is provided in Appendix 15. The DCSD Code of Conduct describes the rules and procedures for all disciplinary actions, not just for the most serious forms of discipline such as out-of-school suspension and expulsion.

This Code of Conduct is posted on the CCHS website. Each year students receive a copy of the DCSD Code of Conduct. A signed acknowledgement of receipt is required from each student and parent/guardian. During the first week of the school year, this booklet is discussed in class and students are tested on its content. Student’s test scores are recorded. Students who enroll during the school year also follow this procedure. CCHS participates in the Character Development Program defined in the Code of Conduct, which supports the mission of the school.

CCHS also publishes its own Student/Parent handbook, provided in Appendix 15. This handbook is in accordance with the DCSD Code of Conduct and also contains site-specific information to promote student success.

Within the first two years of the charter, we will request the student body of the Tricameral Advisory Council to review the CCHS Academic Honesty policy and revise as necessary to sustain and improve a culture of integrity and /or an honor code that is fair and reasonable. CCHS will work with the DCSD Department of Safe Schools and Student Relations in matters pertaining to the Code of Conduct, ensuring due process, safe school planning, and initiatives such as the district-wide Bullying Awareness Campaign.

1. **Provide a description of how the charter school will meet the federal due process requirements for students with disabilities, or students believed to have a disability, who are suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.**

CCHS will follow DCSD procedures in order to meet the federal due process requirements for students with disabilities, or students believed to have a disability, who are suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons. This policy has been in place since CCHS first became a conversion charter school. As defined in the Code of Conduct, students with disabilities will be disciplined in compliance with federal due process procedures in the case of suspension or expulsion of more than 10 days (manifestation determination), “special circumstances” related to weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury, and due process, or other matters covered under federal law. CCHS will collaborate with DCSD to ensure discipline is handled appropriately for these students.

1. **If the school intends to require a uniform, the dress code policy should also be included.**

CCHS does not intend to require a uniform.

# X. OTHER INFORMATION

## Describe whether transportation services will be provided and include a statement that the transportation program will comply with applicable law. If transportation services are not provided, explain how this will not discourage eligible students from attending the school.

CCHS will begin the new charter term by contracting with DCSD to seamlessly continue the transportation services currently provided to students residing in the CCHS attendance zone. The CCHS Governing Board may investigate other transportation that meet or exceed safety requirements and are more cost-effective or responsive to local requirements. Consistent with current DCSD policy, transportation will not be provided for students outside the primary attendance zone.  The decision to provide transportation for Magnet Program students is determined by DCSD.

## State whether the charter school will provide food services (including participation in the National School Lunch Program).

Chamblee Charter High School will continue to participate in the School Nutrition Program provided by DCSD, to include participation in the National School Lunch Program as administered by the District If CCHS stakeholders desire a change, the issue will be addressed through the Tricameral Advisory Council, and submitted to the Governing Board if appropriate. If the Governing Board elects to contract with an Independent Food Service provider, it will notify DCSD and work through the contractual arrangements. CCHS has been informed by DCSD that a 180 day notification process is required as a change in service would impact the employment of all employees providing those services.

## Provide information on the school’s legal representation or counsel.

**a. How will the proposed school ensure compliance with the requirements of law with respect to legal issues?**

Following the approval of this petition, CCHS Board will make the appropriate selection of legal counsel.  In accordance with its bylaws, the Board will direct the activities of that counsel. Until that time, Mark P. Kelly, Counsel with the Law Firm of King and Spalding LLP, serves as legal counsel during the charter preparation process. The Governing Board includes a lawyer, Mr. Greg Sale.

**b. Please confirm whether this organization or individual has reviewed the DCSD charter petitioner guidelines and petition document to be submitted.**

This counsel has thoroughly reviewed the DCSD charter petitioner guidelines and petition.

## Describe the charter school’s insurance coverage, including the terms and conditions and coverage amounts thereof. Information on insurance coverage and amounts are required in the following areas:

## General Liability

## Errors or Omissions

## Property/Lease Insurance

## Auto Liability

## Worker’s Compensation

## Theft

CCHS is working with an Insurance Broker specializing in Charter School Insurance, who will assist in procuring the appropriate insurance policies prior to July 1, 2016. Copies of each policy shall be provided to the DCSD Charter School Office at that time, prior to the opening of the school for the 2016-17 school year, for coverage determined necessary by CCHS and DCSD to include General Liability, Errors or Omissions, Property/Lease Insurance, Auto Liability, Worker’s Compensation, Theft. The cost of insurance has been included in the budget (appendix 3.)

Details on coverage will be settled once agreement is reached on matters concerning the DCSD/CCHS relationship which are still in process. Details will be subject to final legal review for adequacy by DCSD.

Each insurance policy required by the DeKalb County Board of Education for CCHS shall contain the statement ‘The DeKalb County Board of Education is included as an additional insured.’

## Additional Information

The following appendices are included with this petition

Admissions and Enrollment Forms

Attendance Zone

Budget - 5 year projected

Calendar / Schedule Information

Certificate of Incorporation

Conflict of Interest Form

Curriculum Information

Documentation of Vote

Evidence of Community Support and Involvement

Governance Matrix

Governing Board By-Laws

Governing Board Member Packet

Governing Board Member Resumes

Handbook, Faculty

Handbook, Parent and Student

Job Descriptions

References / Bibliography

Salary Schedule

School Safety Plan

**XI. ADDENDUM – PERSONNEL**

## AQ1 Personnel

**Describe a plan for organization and management of faculty, instructional staff, and other employees of the charter school. Please include a copy of the faculty handbook in the Appendix.**

At this time, complete control of Personnel by the CCHS Governing Board is not considered to be crucial to the success of implementing the major charter innovations nor to increased student achievement. Therefore, compliance with DCSD requirements that CCHS employees remain DCSD employees governed by DCSD policies and procedures is a viable option. Should policy evolve in the future, the CCHS Governing Board shall explore greater autonomy in this area, where it will be in the interests of both DCSD and CCHS.

DCSD management of personnel shall consist of the following: using the PATS system for managing job applications; issuing employment contracts; executing payroll and benefit functions; providing background checks; setting salary scales (with one important provision, noted below); and serving as the ultimate authority in disputes involving employees. Formal employee policies and hiring policies and procedures will be adopted by the Governing Board upon commencement of their tenure, in collaboration with DCSD. The initial starting point is described in the sections below.

The 2014-15 CCHS Faculty Handbook is included in Appendix 14. It is aligned with DCSD policy and defines CCHS-specific organization, administration, local school policies and procedures, teacher evaluation and supervision, curriculum and instruction, operations and finance, among other topics.

## AQ2 Staff Qualifications, Recruitment, and Hiring Practices, Procedures, and Compensation

**a. Describe the school’s employment policies and procedures, including the proposed staff qualifications, employee recruitment procedures, hiring practices, and compensation.**

Minimum staff qualifications will be in accordance with DCSD policy, with any future exceptions negotiated by the Governing Board and DCSD. The Principal and Governing Board, in their respective Personnel roles, will seek highly qualified personnel with personal interests and professional backgrounds that align with key CCHS interests in STEAM, flexible scheduling, and valuing the diversity of an educational community.

**Employee Recruitment Procedures and Hiring Practices -** Employee recruitment and hiring will be accomplished according to DCSD policy, with the following exceptions for CCHS Principal and CFO, and with any future exceptions negotiated by the Governing Board and DCSD.

**CCHS Principal Selection** – Although specific policy must be developed and approved by the Governing Board, the following general approach will be used in the case of a Principal vacancy. After advertising and recruitment, a short list will be created and candidates of interest will be invited to interview with the Governing Board and/or Personnel Committee, and to present to the staff and parents. Staff and parents will express their preferences. Results will be evaluated by the Personnel Committee, who will make a recommendation to the Governing Board. The Governing Board shall make a recommendation to DCSD Human Resources for hiring, or to continue the search if a suitable candidate has not been found. The DCSD BOE may overturn a Governing Board recommendation if it does not agree with the recommendation.

**CCHS CFO Selection** – CCHS will work with DCSD to define a job description and salary for the new position of Charter School CFO. The Governing Board Personnel and Finance Committees will review all applications, interview top candidates, and make a recommendation to DCSD Human Resources for hiring.

**CCHS Teacher and Staff Selection and Retention** – Applicants meeting the federal definition of “highly qualified” will be sought. Short-listed candidates for teaching position will be interviewed by the Principal and a committee drawn from the relevant department(s). Candidates may be asked to provide sample lesson plans, written teaching philosophies, and may be asked to teach sample lessons. Any DCSD employee wishing to transfer may use the DCSD transfer mechanism. DCSD shall not transfer an employee without the consent of the employee and the Governing Board.

**b. Job descriptions are found in Appendix 16.**

Because the CCHS principal will work under a new governance structure, with a non-profit Governing Board as a party to the charter contract, revisions to the standard DCSD Principal job description are needed. Appendix 16 contains an initial job description for the CCHS Principal. Because a school-based CFO is a new position for DCSD, an initial CFO job description is provided in Appendix 16. Other than these positions, existing DCSD job descriptions will be used.

Should the CCHS Governing Board decide to hire in a position with a description that does not match up precisely with DCSD categories or with DCSD requirements, then CCHS and DCSD shall negotiate concerning a nearest-equivalent job description and rank that will determine employment contract details.

**c. Describe whether the charter school will use the state salary schedule, and if another schedule will be used, provide that schedule.**

Initially, CCHS employees shall be compensated according to the DCSD salary schedule for certified employees. The 2015-16 DCSD salary schedule is shown in Appendix 18. In the future, CCHS DCSD salary schedules shall be considered the minimum allowed levels of compensation. CCHS shall seek to develop performance-based incentives and teacher bonuses. If the CCHS Governing Board determines that a new salary schedule will benefit our teachers and students, and contribute to improved levels of student performance, and greater levels of teacher satisfaction, such a schedule shall be developed. Implementation will hinge on this salary schedule being fiscally viable and sustainable. The CCHS Governing Board will pursue the right to renegotiate the partnership with DCSD.

**d. Indicate if substitute teachers will be utilized, for which positions, and at what rate of pay.**

In the instance of teacher absence from school, the DCSD SubFinder system shall be used per DCSD policy to include standard DCSD compensation for substitute teachers. As needed, CCHS will work with DCSD Employment Services for system and process changes for Substitute assignments. CCHS will develop a local policy on substitute teachers, which may include identifying a pool of substitute teachers who are a good match for CCHS. If a pool of substitute teachers is established, they will be invited to participate (unpaid) in school-wide trainings – particularly training regarding the Mastery Learning System. They will be notified of and invited to other trainings they may attend (unpaid) – particularly on-site and departmental trainings.

**e. A salary schedule for all certified employees should be in an Appendix.**

The 2015-16 DCSD salary schedule is shown in Appendix 18.

**f. How will the charter adhere to current DCSD policies, procedures and standards in all areas regarding the status of district employees to include treatment, qualifications/credentials, placement, compensation, and evaluations?**

Because CCHS’ teachers, staff and administrators will remain DCSD employees, CCHS will adhere to the state salary schedule and DCSD policies, procedures and standards in all areas regarding the status of district employees to include treatment, qualifications/credentials, placement, compensation and evaluations, with the exceptions described above.

## AQ3 Certification Requirements and Use of Highly Qualified Teachers

## If certification by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GAPSC) is not required, please provide a description of the training and experience that will DeKalb County School District be required, including how the school will determine whether a teacher has demonstrated competency in the subject area(s) in which he/she will teach as required by No Child Left Behind (NCLB). If the teacher is required to be highly qualified under No Child Left Behind, please describe how the school will ensure the teachers meet the definition of “highly qualified.”

CCHS plans to comply with DCSD policy concerning certification by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GAPSC), with possible exceptions related to teachers for STEAM elective courses in which certificated teachers may be difficult to secure. In these courses, content and/or industry experts may be used.

Per DCSD policy, it is the responsibility of all professionally certified employees to obtain and maintain Georgia certification. Employment of Highly Qualified teachers is preferred. CCHS will rely on DCSD Human Resources to ensure that these DCSD employees meet the definition of “highly qualified.” However, in circumstances of difficult-to-fill certified vacancies, particularly for elective courses, CCHS reserves the right to hire candidates within the NCLB flexibility clause on Highly Qualified Teachers. CCHS will consult with DCSD Human Resources in these matters affecting DCSD employees. All teachers are expected to complete the minimum professional development hours required by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

## AQ4 Background Checks

**Describe the charter school’s procedures to ensure compliance with the requirement that all staff members and Governing Board members are subject to fingerprinting and background checks.**

Per existing DCSD policy, all staff members must pass the background check and be fingerprinted. Governing Board members are subject to fingerprinting and background checks. Initial Governing Board member background checks will be performed at a stringent level acceptable to DCSD Human Resources, consistent with DCSD BOE Policy GAK(1), to include a national search for criminal offenses and the national sexual offenders registry. Subsequent background checks will be conducted on a periodic basis consistent with GAK(1) requirements.

## AQ5 Employee Evaluation

**Provide the methods of employee evaluations that will be utilized.**

As DCSD employees, the state of Georgia’s Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) and Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES) described at <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/School-Improvement/Teacher-and-Leader-Effectiveness/Pages/default.aspx> will be used to evaluate certified staff. Classified staff will receive performance evaluations that are customary to DCSD. As stated in Section 16k, the Governing Board will conduct a 360 -degree review of the Principal. The Personnel Committee of the Governing Board shall develop a policy describing any supplemental evaluation methods that may be used and provided with TKES and LKES results.

Employee evaluation methods for non-certified employees will follow DCSD policy.

## AQ6 State Health Benefit Plan Participation

**State whether the charter school will elect to participate in the State Health Benefit Plan as provided pursuant to O. C. G. A.** § **20-2-880 and O. C. G. A.** §**20-2-910.**

As DCSD employees, CCHS faculty and staff will participate in the State Health Benefits Plan, pursuant to O.C.G.A. §20-2-880 and O.C.G.A. §20-2-910

.

## Letter of Assurances

This Letter of Assurances (hereinafter “Assurances”) is made effective the day of \_\_\_ , 20\_\_, by and between DeKalb County School District (the “District” or “DCSD”) and the petitioner of a proposed charter school: Chamblee Charter High School, in which the petitioner assures that, if approved, the following procedures and obligations will be followed throughout the term of the charter in accordance with the terms of the Charter and all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations. These Assurances enumerate all of these requirements and, the Petitioner hereby provides the legal assurance that the proposed charter school understands and will do these things.

###### Students, Academic Performance & Student Growth

1. The charter school understands that as a public school, it cannot charge tuition or fees for attendance.
2. The recruitment of students is the responsibility of the petitioner and the charter school. During the recruitment process, the charter will provide parents of potential students with accurate information about the programs, services and amenities available at the school.
3. The charter shall comply with the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through § 20-14-41, and federal accountability requirements, and participate in statewide assessments. Additionally, the charter school will adhere to all assessment guidelines and procedures as outlined by the State Assessment Handbook, the State Accommodations Manual, and other state and local guidance on assessment.
4. The charter school agrees to unannounced visits and announced instructional audits conducted by the DeKalb School District’s Charter School Office, or the Internal Audit Team, as needed.
5. The charter school will adopt the DCSD Student Code of Conduct, and modify this document to meet the due process needs of the school. An electronic copy of the charter school’s Student Code of Conduct will be submitted to the Charter Office by August 1st, each school year.
6. The charter school shall comply with federal due process procedures regarding student discipline and dismissal.

###### Student Support Services

1. The provision of services and due process procedures will be implemented for students with disabilities and English Language Learners in accordance with all relevant Federal and State laws, rules, and regulations.
2. Establish a Student Support Team (SST) in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies manual and use DCSD forms for SST.
3. Establish a Section 504 team in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies.
4. Use DCSD forms for Section 504, special education, counseling services, psychological services, social services and health services.
5. Handle all discipline issues regarding Section 504 students in accordance with federal regulations, state guidelines, and local school board policies.
6. Comply with Section 504 by providing the appropriate accommodations and equipment.
7. Immediately notify the DCSD Charter Office, upon receipt of a complaint made by a parent/guardian or student concerning the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act or §504 Plan, furnish a copy of such complaint and cooperate fully in the investigation, defense and resolution of such complaint.
8. Hire or contract certified Special Education teacher(s), a licensed school counselor, a licensed certified school psychologist or a licensed clinical psychologist, a licensed school social worker, a licensed school nurse, and special education paraprofessionals, to provide services to eligible students (in accordance with State guidelines and DCSD policy).
9. Develop, maintain, and implement an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for each student identified as needing special education services.
10. If the charter school does not have a certified or Hi-Q identified special education teacher, the school must employ substitute teachers as required by state guidelines until a certified/Hi-Q teacher is hired, and the substitute must be able to knowledgably maintain and implement students’ Individualized Education Plans.
11. Handle discipline issues regarding special education students in accordance with federal guidelines, state rules and DCSD policy.
12. Report all allegations of child abuse and/or neglect to the charter school social worker and to the persons required to receive such reports pursuant to state law.

###### Governance

1. The charter school shall be subject to the control and management of the local board of the local school system in which the charter school is located, as provided in the charter and in a manner consistent with the Constitution.
2. The charter school’s governing board members shall receive initial training and annual training thereafter.
3. The local governance of the charter school shall operate under a structure that retains a local school level governance body of parents, teachers, administrators, and others who are involved in school level governance within the charter.
4. Charter school board members will not constitute a voting majority on any other charter school board, will be voluntary and fully insured and bonded prior to final approval of the charter, and will maintain fully bonded status throughout the term of the charter.
5. No Petitioner and no member of the governing board of the Petitioner or the charter school shall sell, lease, or receive payment for providing textbooks, supplies, services, equipment, facilities, or land to a charter school or other public school in this school system. Nor will the board members receive payment for services as board members.
6. All meetings of the charter governance board are subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq. (Open and Public Meetings) and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq. (Inspection of Public Records).
7. The governing board will be held accountable for the school’s operational functions including, but not limited to fiscal oversight and facilities planning.
8. The charter school’s governance board members may only receive compensation for reasonable and actual expenses incurred in connection with performance of their duties.
9. The charter school will have a written grievance procedure to resolve student, parent, and teacher complaints, and a written procedure for resolving conflicts between the charter school and the local board of education.

###### Financial

1. Any surplus funds remaining at the close of each fiscal year, may be placed in a reserve fund, but the reserves should be used to enhance the charter school’s academic program, facilities, or personnel plans, in the following school years.
2. The charter school’s annual audit will meet GASB guidelines and will contain a complete asset inventory.
3. The charter school is subject to an audit by the District’s Internal Audit Department.
4. The DeKalb County School Board requires an annual financial audit by an independent Georgia-licensed Certified Public Accountant, in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(b)(7), at the school. The financial reporting format shall be in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.
5. The school will comply and adhere to the State’s October 1 financial audit deadline, and forward a copy of the school’s annual audit to the DeKalb County School District’s Director of Finance and Charter Office no later than October 1st of each year.
6. The school will be responsible for providing various financial reports to the DCSD Charter Schools Office and DeKalb County Board of Education, including but not limited to monthly budget status report, monthly cash reports and quarterly statements.
7. Any financial audit findings may result in termination of the charter after review of by the DCSD Finance Department.
8. The charter school will comply with the federal monitoring requirements for schools receiving federal funds.
9. Any deficit occurring during or at the end of a fiscal year shall be eliminated by funds to be provided by the Petitioner. The charter school shall not request any additional funds from the DCSD to cover any deficit created by the charter school and the DCSD shall not allocate funds for the charter school for the next fiscal year until the deficit has been resolved satisfactorily.
10. The charter school is solely responsible for all debts incurred by the charter school and its governing body, and the DCSD shall not be contractually bound to the charter school or to any third party with whom the charter school has a contract or from whom the charter school has purchased goods or services, except as otherwise agreed in the charter contract.
11. The charter will provide evidence that it has obtained appropriate bonding of the governing board and administrators by October 1st of its first year of operation.
12. In the event the charter school ceases operation for any reason, the charter school and its governing body shall be responsible for closing out the business affairs of the charter school. The charter school shall cooperate with the DCSD to the extent necessary to provide an orderly return of the students to the appropriate schools for which they are zoned. Any surplus remaining at the time any charter school ceases operations shall be remitted to the DCSD. Any furniture and equipment purchased with state or local funds shall be delivered to DCSD.
13. If the charter school plans to cease operation, the school will notify the DCSD Charter Office within 24 hours of the governing board’s decision and include the name and contact information for the person responsible for the closing procedures. Unless an emergency closure is necessary, the charter school will ensure that a transition plan is developed, and the school will close at the end of the fiscal year in which it is operating, or another mutually agreed upon date. The charter school shall submit a financial audit for the final year of operation, prepared by an independent Georgia-licensed certified public accountant. This audit shall include a detailed inventory of all assets. Further, should the charter school not have sufficient funds to pay all of its bills, invoices, or other evidence of indebtedness at the time it ceases operation, DCSD shall not be responsible for any debts incurred or contracts signed by the charter school.
14. The petitioner acknowledges that a charter may be terminated or non-renewed by the DeKalb Board of Education if the Board determines that the charter school failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management as described by the District’s financial division.
15. The petitioner acknowledges that if, in the judgment of the DeKalb Board of Education, the charter petitioner is in material breach of one or more provisions of this charter and if such material breach is not fully rectified within 30 days after the receipt of written notice to the petitioner identifying the breach and what must be done to rectify it, the DeKalb Board shall be authorized to suspend all payments to the charter school by the District, until such breach is satisfactorily resolved, and/or pursue termination of the charter.

###### Facilities

1. The school will comply with the Uniform Building Code Inspection and the Standard Building Code, Standard Plumbing Code, Standard Mechanical Gas Code, Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAAA) access requirements and other applicable fire, health and structural safety requirements, local state, and federal laws.
2. The charter school will meet all applicable codes for sanitation, fire, construction, stability, temperature, ventilation, and suitability of physical space. The charter school will maintain a certificate of occupancy from the required government agency. The charter school will grant access to local health and fire department officials for inspection of the premises or operations of the school for purposes of ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of students and employees pursuant to Georgia Statutes and National Fire Protection Association Life Safety Code, N.F.P.A. 101.
3. The charter school is subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of physical health and safety of school students, employees and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct.
4. Any future facilities, beyond those proposed in the petition, which will be used to educate students are subject to approval by the local board of education and the State Board of Education prior to occupancy.

###### School Nutrition & Transportation

1. If the charter elects to participate in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program, the charter will submit its own application to the GADOE and will be responsible for accurately counting meals and submitting financial reimbursement claims to the GADOE for meals meeting specified nutrient standards.
2. The charter school agree to provide the system with transportation safety documentation, if any, as required by the GADOE no later than June 1 for the pending school year.
3. The charter school’s transportation program will comply with applicable law and any vehicles or drivers used for transporting students will meet the same safety standards applicable to public schools in this State.

###### Personnel

1. The charter school shall submit the Certified Personnel Index (CPI) survey to the DeKalb County School District’s Human Resources Department no later than October 1, May 1 and July 1, and other times upon request by Human Resources personnel.
2. The charter school will provide documented annual professional development for all instructional staff.
3. The faculty, instructional staff and all other personnel necessary for the operation of the Charter School shall be employees of the Charter School. Charter School instructors of core subjects shall be certified in those subjects by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, and any applicable state or federal laws. Teachers will meet all other GAPSC requirements for highly qualified teachers working at charter schools. Paraprofessionals with instructional support duties will meet guidelines and regulations of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, and any applicable state or federal laws.
4. The charter school shall comply with O.C.G.A. §20-2-210(b)(1) and implement an evaluation system as adopted and defined by the State Board of Education for elementary and secondary school teachers of record, assistant principals, and principals.
5. The charter school shall remit payments to TRS on behalf of employees and shall employ teachers in accordance with TRS.

###### Administrative

1. Representatives from the charter school will attend any workshop, in-services and/or training and other meeting(s) as required by the DeKalb County School District. Charter school administrators are responsible for informing the charter staff of all required meetings. Charter school administrators will use the school district’s email system and will check the email system daily to ensure they stay informed on all required events and information by DCSD, as this will be DCSD’s primary means of communication with the schools.
2. No administrator will be directly responsible for the supervision or evaluation of a member of his/her immediate family.
3. The charter school may not open except at the beginning of each school year. The charter may commence the school year at an earlier or later date than DCSD, however, the charter school’s school year must begin no more than two weeks before or two weeks after the beginning of the District’s school year.
4. The charter school shall report daily attendance to the DeKalb County School System (DCSD) using the standard, approved method of data collection. Master schedules and student schedules must exist for students in grades K-12, as well as final marks for each course after each semester. DCSD will provide the necessary software and training for the student information system application while the charter school shall provide hardware and the necessary internet service connection. The DCSD Student Information System is to be used for the collection of all data and information required by O.C.G.A. 20-2-320 for mandatory reporting to the State Department of Education (SDOE) and federal agencies (example: discipline). The method of data collection will be that which is currently in use by DCSD and may be changed from time to time based on technology currently in use. Existing periodic and end-of-year checklists provided by DCSD will be used to define when progress reports, report cards and other verifications that are to be produced.
5. The charter school shall maintain all student records in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, regulations, rules and policies. The charter school shall maintain all student records on behalf of the Board during each student’s enrollment in the charter school. Upon a student’s withdrawal or other matriculation from the charter school, the student’s educational records shall be returned within ten (10) business days to the Board’s student records center for retention. The charter school shall maintain and ensure the privacy and confidentiality of each student’s educational record in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, and shall not disclose to any unauthorized third party any personally identifiable information concerning any student enrolled in the charter school without first obtaining prior written parental permission.

###### Maximum Flexibility

1. Local charter schools are subject to the control and management of the DCSD Board of Education and are expected to abide by and enforce all laws and regulations governing the health, safety, and welfare of its students.
2. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §20-2-2065(a), the charter school will meet or exceed the performance-based goals and measureable objectives, in exchange for maximum flexibility afforded by the law from the provisions of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated and from any state or local rule, regulation, policy, or procedure established by a local board of education, the State Board of Education, or the Georgia Department of Education. Notwithstanding this maximum flexibility, the charter school shall comply with the terms of the Charter, the Charter Schools Act, and compliance with all applicable federal and state and local laws that may not be waived, pursuant to O.C.G.A. §20-2-2065, and any rules, regulations, policies, or procedures established by the State Board consistent with the Charter Schools Act.

###### Annual Report and Monitoring

1. The charter school shall and will, by October 1st, submit an annual report to the Georgia Department of Education, the DeKalb County Board of Education and parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school. This report shall include all state-mandated assessment and accountability scores and comply with all requirements set out in O.C.G.A. § 20-2- 2067.1(c)(1)-(6). The annual report must indicate the progress made in the previous year in meeting the performance based goals identified in the charter and include all state-mandated assessment scores and state mandated accountability indicators.
2. The charter school must use the template provided by the Georgia Department of Education to complete and submit the annual report, but will adhere to any additional survey or questionnaire requirements provided by the District. The District may exercise its right to include notice of deficiencies or provide comments and feedback in the annual report.
3. The charter school shall complete annual reports and surveys, as mandated by the DeKalb County School District, and shall be supervised and monitored by the DeKalb County School District’s Charter Office.

###### Charter Adherence of State and Federal Laws

1. The charter school will not waive and is not exempt from Federal law, nor the following state laws:
	1. School Accountability Provisions, Part 3 of Article 2 of Chapter 14 of Title 20 O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through O.C.G.A. § 20-14-41
	2. Shall Not Charge Tuition, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-133
	3. Unlawful Conduct in or near a Public School, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1180 through O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1182
	4. Reporting Requirements – Student Data Collection, O.C.G.A.§ 20-2-320
	5. Brief Period of Quiet Reflection, O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-1050, 20-2-1051
	6. Open and Public Meetings, O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq.
	7. Inspection of Public Records, O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq.
	8. Fingerprinting and Criminal Record Check of All Personnel Employed by the Charter School, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-211
2. The charter school shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations.
3. The charter school shall not discriminate against any student or employee on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, national origin, gender, disability or age. Moreover, the charter school will seek to ensure that a diverse representation of DeKalb students is enrolled in the charter school.
4. The charter school will provide documentation that the school has applied for accreditation and received probationary status by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC), or other recognized accrediting commission approved by the State Board of Education no later than October 1st of its first year of operation. The charter school understands if it does not receive full accreditation by the end of its second year of operation, DCSD may pursue termination of its charter.
5. The charter agrees to complete registration for the upcoming school year and provide the names, addresses and home school of all accepted students to DCSD no later than April 1st annually. It is understood that the school can continue to accept students after this date and will continue to update the system on the number of students registered and all other student information as requested. If the charter school does not meet its projected enrollment within twenty percent (20%), DCSD may pursue termination of its charter. If the enrollment levels create a financial hardship that puts student achievement in jeopardy, DCSD may pursue termination of its charter unless the charter school can document additional independent financial support.
6. The charter school shall provide an electronic copy of the complete charter school petition and contract to every parent as a part of the student enrollment procedures.

###### Assurances for Charter Schools with an EMO/CMO Agreement

1. No provision of the [EMO/CMO] agreement shall interfere with the Charter Board’s duty to exercise its statutory, contractual and fiduciary responsibilities governing the operation of the charter school.
2. No provision of the [EMO/CMO] agreement shall prohibit the Charter Board from acting as an independent, self-governing public body, or allow public decisions to be made other than in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.
3. Upon termination of the agreement, the charter school governing board shall ensure that the management company immediately turns over all student, personnel, fiscal, and other charter school records to the governing board.
4. Nothing in the agreement between the charter school and the [EMO/CMO] shall be construed in any way to limit the authority of the DeKalb County Board of Education including, but not limited to, the authority to take and enforce action pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq. and O.C.G.A. §50-18-70 et seq.
5. To the extent there are any conflicts between the terms of the charter school’s charter and the terms of the management agreement, the terms of the charter will control.
6. The Governance team of the school will solely retain authority over the budget. Representatives of the [EMO/CMO] will not serve on the Governing Board.
7. This [EMO/CMO] is the charter school’s only management partner.
8. The term of the contract with the [EMO/CMO] does not exceed the term of the charter agreement.
9. If an [EMO/CMO] purchases equipment, materials and supplies for the use of, on behalf of or as the agent of the charter, the [EMO/CMO] agreement shall provide that such equipment, materials and supplies shall be and remain the property of the charter. The [EMO/CMO] shall not charge additional commission, mark-up or similar fees, for the items purchased for the use of, on behalf of or as the agent of the charter. Any such purchases must be made from a third party supplier, unless set forth in the charter petition.
10. The governing board must ensure that, while management partners may make recommendations to the governing board, the Board will not be under any contractual obligation to accept these recommendations.
11. The governing board will ensure that the management agreement contains a section that will reasonably permit either party to terminate the contract.
12. The contract should include provisions dealing with ownership of physical and intellectual property developed by the [EMO/CMO] or by the charter school’s employees.

###### Indemnification Rights & Responsibilities

1. The charter school agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the DeKalb County Board of Education, the DeKalb County School District, and the DeKalb County School System (hereinafter collectively referred to as “DCSD”), their officials, officers, employees, agents, volunteers, and assigns (all of whom hereinafter may collectively be referred to as "Indemnitees"), from any and all claims, demands, suits, actions, legal or administrative proceedings, losses, liabilities, costs, interest, and damages of every kind and description, including any attorneys’ fees and/or litigation and investigative expenses, for bodily injury, personal injury, (including but not limited to the charter school’s employees), patent, copyright, or infringement on any intellectual property rights, or loss or destruction of property (including loss of use, damage or destruction of DCSD owned property) to the extent that any such claim or suit was caused by, arose out of, or contributed to, in whole or in part, by reason of any act, omission, professional error, fault, mistake, or negligence whether active, passive or imputed, of the charter school, its employees, agents, representatives, or subcontractors, their employees, agents, or representatives in connection with or incidental to the charter school’s performance of the charter contract, regardless of whether such liability, claim, damage, loss, cost or expense is caused in part by an Indemnitee.
2. The charter school shall be excused from its indemnification obligations, as stated in Paragraph 1 above:
3. If the claims, demands, suits, actions, proceedings, losses, liabilities arise solely and exclusively out of the negligence of DCSD or one of the Indemnitees; or
4. If DCSD fails to:
	1. provide written notice of the third party claim or suit as soon as practicable;
	2. cooperate with all legally reasonable requests of the charter school; or
	3. assists the charter school with the defense and/or settlement of such claim or suit.
5. The charter school’s obligation to indemnify any Indemnitee shall survive the completion, expiration, or termination of the charter contract, for any reason.

###### Insurance **[[1]](#footnote-1)**

1. The charter school shall procure and maintain throughout the term of the charter contract, a policy or policies of insurance providing coverage as set forth below that shall protect the charter school and the Indemnitees from any and all claims as set forth in the Indemnification clause that may arise out of charter school’s operations under the charter contract.
2. The policies shall be obtained from insurance companies approved to do business in the State of Georgia or companies acceptable to DCSD. The Charter School shall procure the insurance policy(ies) at it’s own expense and shall furnish to DCSD a certificate(s) of insurance containing the following information:
	1. Name and address of agent/broker;
	2. Name and address of insured;
	3. Name of insurance company, underwriting syndicate, or other insuring entity;
	4. Description of coverage in standard terminology;
	5. Policy period;
	6. Policy Number;
	7. Limits of liability;
	8. Name and address of certificate holder;
	9. Acknowledgment to the DCSD of notice requirements of material adverse change;
	10. Signature of authorized agent/broker;
	11. Telephone number of authorized agent/broker; and
	12. Details of policy exclusions applicable to this Agreement in comments section of Insurance Certificate.
3. In addition to the Certificates of Insurance, the charter school’s broker/ insurer shall provide copies of the policy endorsements evidencing the coverage(s) for DCSD through the Indemnification and Insurance obligations assumed by **the charter school.** All certificates/endorsements evidencing primary and excess layers shall be renewed and kept current and up to date on an annual or lesser time basis as needed.
4. The charter school is required to maintain the following insurance coverage(s) during the Term of this Agreement:
	1. **Workers’ Compensation Insurance** in the amount of the statutory limits established by the General Assembly of the State of Georgia. The charter school shall have the ability to self-insure its required workers compensation coverage if it is an approved self-insurer in the State of Georgia.
	2. **Comprehensive General Liability Policy** (CGL) including Products and Completed Operations, or equivalent coverage, to include the contractual obligation of the charter school for any liability assumed hereunder.
	3. **Business Auto Policy** to include but not be limited to liability coverage on any owned, non-owned and hired vehicle used by **the charter school** or charter school’s personnel in the performance of this Agreement and their operations.
	4. **Educators Professional Liability Insurance (Errors and Omissions)** in the amount of $1,000,000 per Insured per Wrongful Act and $3,000,000 in the annual aggregate per Insured for all Wrongful Acts.
	5. **Crime and Fidelity Insurance** in the amount of $500,000 per loss subject to a deductible of not more than $10,000 per occurrence covering Employee Theft and Dishonesty, Forgery or Alteration, Theft of Money and Securities, Robbery or Safe Burglary, Computer Fraud, and Money Orders and Counterfeit Currency.
5. Should the charter school desire to structure their insurance program utilizing a Commercial Umbrella or Excess Liability Policy, all such policies shall have sufficient limits to provide that there is no gap in coverage between an underlying policy and the secondary layer;
6. All **Risk Property Insurance** in sufficient amounts to cover the replacement cost of all structures and contents to their full value for property owned or leased by **the charter school.** Policy(ies) shall be endorsed to name DCSD as a Loss Payee as their interest may appear. Deductible or Self-Insured Retentions shall not exceed $250,000 per claim;
7. Under all coverage required hereunder, the policy(ies) shall be endorsed to include the following terms and conditions:
	1. Except for Professional Liability policies, all coverage shall be on an “occurrence” not “claims made” basis;
	2. The foregoing policies shall contain a provision that coverage afforded under the policies will not be canceled, allowed to lapse, fail to be renewed, or endorsed to adversely change any coverage applicable to DCSD or an Indemnitee for any reason until at least thirty (30) days prior written notice has been given to DCSD;
	3. Shall waive all right of subrogation against Indemnitees for any losses arising out of this Agreement;
	4. All such coverage shall remain in full force and effect during the Term and any renewal or extension thereof; and
	5. Except for any acceptable secondary layer of protection, the policies shall be primary and not excess to any other coverage provided by or available to the Indemnitees.
8. Under coverage required under Sections 7 (b), (c), (d) and (e) above, the policy(ies) shall be endorsed to include the following terms and conditions:
	1. Except as provided otherwise above, minimum limits of $1,000,000 per occurrence $2,000,000 in the annual aggregate (if applicable) with insurers approved to conduct business in the State of Georgia.
	2. Contractual liability coverage, specifically referencing this Agreement and the Indemnification herein.
	3. Shall include Indemnitees as “Additional Insureds.”
	4. A severability of interest or cross liability clause or endorsement applicable to Comprehensive General Liability, Auto, and any Excess Liability policy(ies).
9. The charter school shall require any and all subcontractors performing work under this Agreement to carry insurance of the type and with limits of liability as the charter school shall deem appropriate and adequate for the work being performed. However, the obligations of the charter school to the Indemnitees assumed in Sections “Indemnification”, and “Insurance” shall not be reduced or diminished by the standards set for the subcontractors. Further, the charter school agrees that their obligation to indemnify and insure the Indemnitees shall pertain to all losses arising out of the subcontractor’s acts or negligence in the same manner and to the same extent as if committed by the charter school. The charter school shall obtain and make available for inspection by DCSD, current certificates of insurance evidencing insurance coverage by such subcontractors.

###### Other Obligations

1. **Entire Agreement.** This Letter of Assurances constitutes the entire agreement between the Charter school, DeKalb Board of Education, and District, with respect to the matters set forth herein and supersedes all prior, contemporaneous, written or oral negotiations, agreements, or understandings between the Parties regarding such matters, but does not supersede the charter contract, which sets forth an entire agreement between the charter school, DeKalb Board of education, and State Board of Education.
2. **Modification.** The DeKalb Board of Education, or District Designee, reserves the right to require the charter school to sign updated versions of this Letter of Assurances throughout the charter term, as necessary.
3. **Waiver.** No failure or delay by the DeKalb Board of Education, or District Designee, in exercising any right or remedy herein shall operate as a waiver thereof. The rights and remedies of the DeKalb District under this Letter of Assurances are cumulative and are not exclusive of any rights or remedies which it would otherwise have herein.
4. **No Violation.** The charter school represents and warrants that the execution of, and performance under, this Letter of Assurances will not be a breach of, violation of, or conflict with any other contract or agreement to which it is a party or subject, including the charter contract.
5. **Headings/Interpretation of MOU.** The headings contained in this Letter of Assurances are for convenience only and shall not affect in any way the meaning or interpretation of this document.
6. **Severability.** In the event that any term or provision of this Letter of Assurances is found to be, or becomes by operation of law, invalid, unenforceable or void, the remaining terms and provisions shall not be affected thereby and shall remain in full force and effect, and the invalid, unenforceable or void term or provision shall be deemed not to be a part of this Letter of Assurances.
7. **Governing Law.** This Letter of Assurances shall be governed by and construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia.
8. **Notices.** Unless otherwise provided in the charter contract, or this Letter of Assurances, all notices shall be in writing and shall be sent by electronic mail, U.S.P.S. regular mail, personally delivered, overnight delivery service or certified mail, postage prepaid. Notices shall be deemed given (a) on the date delivered if delivered personally or by electronic mail, (b) on the first business day following the date of dispatch if delivered by overnight delivery service, certified mail, or regular mail, or (c) on the earlier of confirmed receipt or the fifth business day following the date of mailing if sent by certified mail.

Notices shall be addressed as follows:

To the DeKalb District: DeKalb County School District

1701 Mountain Industrial Boulevard

Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

**Attn: Superintendent**

With a copy to: Ronald B. Ramsey, Sr.,

 Chief Legal Officer

 DCSD Office of Legal Affairs

1701 Mountain Industrial Boulevard

Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Dr. José G. Boza, Jr., Director

Leadership Development & Charter Schools Office

1701 Mountain Industrial Boulevard

Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

1. **Counterparts.** This Letter of Assurances may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, and all counterparts so executed shall constitute one agreement binding upon all the Parties

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Chamblee Charter High School** |  | **DeKalb County Board of Education** |
| *Charter School Representative* |  | *Signature* |
| *Name (Please Print)* |  | *Name* |
|  Chair, DeKalb Board of Education  |
| *Title* |  | *Title* |
| *Date* |  | *Date* |

###### DeKalb County School District

*Signature*

*Name*

Superintendent, DeKalb County School District

 *Title*

 *Date*

# DeKalb County School District Signature Sheet

(Please sign section 1 only in blue ink and submit with petition)

**The petitioner hereby agrees to adhere to all laws, regulations, and District Guidelines & Board Policy IBB during the petition review process. The Petitioner also agrees to refrain from engaging in any conduct that could be deemed as, but not limited to, illegal, improper, unprofessional, intimidating, collusive, and/or bribery toward, of, or with any District employee and/or DeKalb County Board Member during the petition process. Engaging in any act as stated above will result in an automatic withdrawal of the petition for review and potential sanctions. The petitioner hereby asserts that a completed petition has been submitted. If a charter is granted, petitioners assure that the proposed charter school’s programs, services, and activities will operate in accordance with the terms of the charter and all applicable, federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.**

###### Authorized Charter School Representative Date

1. This Charter School Petition, Assurance Form, and Attached Exhibits were **approved** by the DeKalb Board of Education on the day of ,20 .

Authorized Charter School Representative Date

Chair, Local Board of Education Date

1. This Charter School Petition, Assurance Form, and Attached Exhibits were **denied** by the DeKalb Board of Education on the day of ,20 . Pursuant to state law, a reason for the denial will be delivered to the petitioner within sixty (60) business days of the decision.

Superintendent Date

Chair, Local Board of Education Date

1. ***Insurance coverage determined necessary by CCHS and DCSD will be procured by July 1, 2016.*** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)