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### 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? July 1, 2009

If renewal, for how many charter terms has the school been in existence? 3 (5 yr term +2 1-year extensions)

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
<b>2016-2017</b>										363	362	341	314	1380
<b>2017-2018</b>										383	363	362	341	1449
<b>2018-2019</b>										385	383	363	362	1493
<b>2019-2020</b>										390	390	367	367	1537
<b>2020-2021</b>										396	396	395	395	1583

## Chamblee Charter High School Charter Renewal Petition

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR CONVERSION CHARTER RENEWAL PETITION

Chamblee Charter High School (CCHS) was founded in 1905 as a grammar school. It added high school courses in 1917 and is DeKalb County's second-oldest high school. CCHS became the only conversion charter high school in DeKalb County School District (DCSD) in 2001 and currently serves approximately 1300 students in grades 9-12. The current charter was approved in 2009 and reflects policy in effect at that time, including rigorous academic performance measures tied to ESEA goals and specific waivers rather than a broad flexibility waiver. The school's strengths include long-standing traditions of actively involved parents and community; academically engaged students within an ethnically and socio-economically diverse student body; and a committed and professional faculty and staff. This strong foundation uniquely suits CCHS to take the next step for a conversion charter school: developing true autonomy, as required by Georgia law.

CCHS proposes to increase student achievement by pursuing the following innovations:

1. **Innovation in Curriculum** through implementing a *Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics* (STEAM) program that uniquely suits and helps to grow CCHS's current strengths.
2. **Innovation in Scheduling** through changing *how teachers and students interact and use their time* to maximize responsiveness to student needs, leading to efficacy in learning and proficiency in subject matter.
3. **Innovation in Governance** through changing *planning and decision-making* to maximize involvement and engagement by all stakeholders in Chamblee Charter High School, more fully utilizing their professional skills and personal strengths.

In addition, innovations in financial methods will be pursued, to improve the identification of site-based costs within the DCSD financial system. Currently, DCSD identifies few costs at the school level. This proposed partnership with DCSD and the three innovations will allow CCHS to be laboratory for DeKalb, exploring new ways of organizing schools and raising student achievement, to the potential benefit of all DCSD schools as the District moves toward being a Charter System.

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During the current charter term, CCHS has maintained its high level of academic achievement. CCRPI measures exceed those of the District and the State. Measures not directly included in the CCRPI, such as participation and success in the Advanced Placement program including AP STEM and AP STEM Access and Support honors as well as the national and international achievements of the CCHS Math Team indicate a substantial record of achievement. CCHS was designated as a PASCH (Partner Schulen) Program partner by the German government, in recognition of the achievements of faculty and students, during the current charter term. CCHS is the only public high school in Georgia to offer the DSD2 Diploma to its senior students and is celebrating its sixth year of that honor.

The performance flags portion of the CCRPI reveals areas for academic improvement. Various strategies have been implemented during the charter term, such as extensive tutoring options, the use of mentors including the Principal, differentiated instruction and the use of common assessments. However results were mixed. Many students do not or cannot attend tutorials before or after school and this opportunity for targeted instruction is lost. Experience with the limitations of these traditional kinds of interventions drives the innovations proposed in this petition

During the current charter term, governance at CCHS is by a large Governance Council consisting of parent, teacher, student, and community members. Monthly meetings are held as required, and required training was accomplished. The role of the Governance Council was largely advisory, consistent with charter policy in 2009. There was no change in school leadership during the charter term until the middle of this petition cycle, in June 2015. The term of the 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 related to a large influx of students when CCHS served as a No Child Left Behind receiving school, as well as a large drop in enrollment that coincided with construction activity and concerns about DCSD accreditation by SACS. CCHS stakeholders, including Governance Council members, assisted the Principal and staff in minimizing these disruptions, to ensure that academic achievement was still supported. Advocacy for the

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new facility as well as minimizing disruption once construction began also required the energy of many CCHS stakeholders, including Governance Council members.

Another significant governance challenge during the current charter term was the major revision of State policy on Charter Schools. State policy changes occurred during the previous renewal cycle for CCHS' charter; DCSD charter policy revision is on-going. As a result, parent, faculty and other community volunteers have produced three separate Charter Renewal Petitions during the current charter term in response to changing requirements.

The most significant change is the State requirement that the governing board of a charter school shall have authority to make: personnel decisions, including selection of the principal or school leader; and financial decisions and resource allocation decisions, including establishing the number and type of personnel, curriculum costs, supply costs, equipment costs and maintenance and operations costs; among other requirements. Working with the DCSD Charter Division and the Georgia Department of Education Charter Division to understand these changes, identify approaches of mutual benefit which would maintain or even exceed current student achievement, and educate and receive input from CCHS stakeholders continues and has been an enormous demand on volunteers' time. Fortunately, the Governance Council has secured commitment from an extremely qualified team of professionals with requisite expertise to serve as an autonomous Governing Board under the new charter. Success in managing these governance challenges to-date gives us confidence that challenges in the new charter term can be overcome.

During the current charter term, fiscal responsibility of the Governance Council was advisory in nature only. On-site management of CCHS funding, on the level of approximately 1-2% of earned funding was managed by the Principal, with limited reporting to or input from the Governance Council. Funding from sources other than DCSD was primarily from our partners Cox Communications and the Blue & Gold Foundation. The PTSA independently directs donations and fundraising proceeds to enrich the CCHS experience.



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Academic goals defined in the current charter from 2009 were aligned with the ambitious requirements of the No Child Left Behind legislation. CCHS did not meet its goals of 100% success on the Georgia High School Graduation Tests (since discontinued) but consistently earned high scores. The significant change in District Math curriculum during the charter term was linked to the lack of meeting planned targets on the Math End of Course Tests. Targets were not adjusted to match the significant change in District Math curriculum during the period. Scores dropped across the District, not only at CCHS.

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

### **I. THE CASE**

#### **1. Why do you want a charter?**

The mission of Chamblee Charter High School (CCHS) is to foster excellence through promoting the intellectual, social, moral and physical growth of every enrolled student. CCHS has worked toward this mission as a conversion charter school since 2001, and has demonstrated consistent success by developing and sustaining a strong academic curriculum within 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.

Widely recognized in Georgia and the nation as a high performing school, CCHS is uniquely situated to take the next step, innovating in ways that build on its past successes by developing and piloting exciting new programs. CCHS's strengths include long-standing traditions of actively involved parents and community, academically engaged students, and a committed and professional faculty and staff. In the CCHS school culture, students want the best for themselves, parents expect the best for their children and teachers have long experience and success in getting the best from students.

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This strong foundation uniquely suits CCHS to take the next step for a conversion charter school: developing the true autonomy required of conversion charter schools by the State of Georgia and the Georgia Department of Education. Freedom from one-size-fits-all policy requirements and the local control to exercise that freedom will allow CCHS to bring its students and teachers the benefits of successful flexible and innovative programs from other high-performing schools elsewhere in the USA, adapting these programs to meet the unique needs of CCHS.

Over the next five years, beginning with school year 2016-2017, CCHS will address increased student achievement by pursuing the following innovations:

1. **Innovation in Curriculum** through implementing a *Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics* (STEAM) program that uniquely suits and helps to grow CCHS's current strengths.
2. **Innovation in Scheduling** through changing *how teachers and students interact and use their time* to maximize responsiveness to student needs, leading to efficacy in learning and proficiency in subject matter.
3. **Innovation in Governance** through changing *planning and decision-making* to maximize involvement and engagement by all stakeholders in Chamblee Charter High School, more fully utilizing their professional skills and personal strengths.

These three major innovations are tightly linked to each other, to the CCHS community, to the DeKalb County School District (DCSD) and to a collective vision of Chamblee Charter High School's future. In addition to improving education opportunities offered to the diverse CCHS student population, these innovations also will provide exemplars for an equally diverse DCSD.

STEAM is supported by educational research and generated out of the enthusiasm and commitment of our community. 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. As we prepare our students for a technological

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future, the STEAM program will engage 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.

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 across the learning level diversity of our 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 a proper and 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

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collaborative elements a success. Therefore, the second part of our proposed 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.

CCHS will phase-in, with teacher and student input, 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 the students within our current school context, and to 2) assure that the STEAM program can reach its potential.

Instead of being locked into a rigid one-size-fits-all schedule, time will be allotted by a software platform according to the needs of the students and the plans of the faculty. For example, a unit in physics might contain conceptual content that requires a teacher presentation, a demonstration, or an assigned online learning segment (using a flipped classroom model). All students will be scheduled for this, and then given a brief online assessment to check understanding. Those who demonstrate a genuine grasp of the material will be scheduled for the associated lab. Those who cannot will be scheduled for further explanation, support, or tutorial, followed by the lab. The software platform will handle multiple-student/teacher scheduling, assessment, and online deliverables. Time for the presentation and the tutorial will be determined by the teacher and will be set to the amount of time needed. Using the planning tools of the software platform, teachers will be more prepared for instructional time with clear goals, students will spend only as much time on class material as needed to master it, and no student will be moved on before mastery, yet their needs will not cause the rest of the class to be delayed and bored.

Because of this flexibility, students will experience educational opportunities structured according to their needs and the needs of the subject matter rather than according to an arbitrary schedule. They can also pursue valuable educational opportunities that would not otherwise be

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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, because they do not miss any class time. The class time is just rearranged, not omitted.

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.

A bottom-up Tricameral governing system will be introduced to promote more authentic engagement of larger numbers of CCHS stakeholders in the vision and mission of CCHS. This approach to school governance 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.

The CCHS vision is to have a Tricameral Advisory Council overseen by the Governing Board. The three bodies in the Tricameral Advisory Council will consist of: ●teachers and staff; ●students; and ●parents and community. The Governing Board will have ultimate legal and fiduciary responsibility for CCHS. Each body in the Tricameral Advisory Council may originate policy, in an advisory role. The teacher and parent/community bodies will play the most important roles, which are to formally adopt school policies (or pass proposals through both bodies) for consideration by the Governing Board. The student body would play a more limited consultative role.

CCHS' Tricameral governance model will encourage experimentation, recommend fair resource allocations to the school improvement process, while also providing a necessary system of checks and balances. This organizational innovation is designed to channel community involvement, with all the attendant benefits, as well as encourage academic innovation. Advocates for good research-based ideas can make a case for school adoption, and if practical and affordable, the school community can consider piloting the idea. Proposals will have the advantage of coming with inherent buy-in, with a constituency that is enthusiastic enough about them to have developed the proposal, and persuasive enough to have convinced the whole community of their worth. Instead of dealing

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with initiatives and programs imposed from governing bodies that may be unfamiliar with the local school context, we will be reviewing, considering and implementing programs that address needs specific to the students at CCHS. Local innovation under the oversight of a Governing Board focused on CCHS will reduce risk because stakeholders who would have to live with the program will have great incentive to ensure success in function and implementation.

In past and current charter terms, CCHS has benefited from modest flexibility in terms of specific waivers from DCSD policy. CCHS has had the privilege of welcoming and educating many students from throughout DeKalb County who applied through the charter lottery to attend CCHS.

The flexibility noted above involved policies key to success, such as the freedom to choose seven year-long classes rather than conform to the required 4x4 block schedule. As a conversion charter school CCHS developed a distinctive accelerated math curriculum, established a grading policy that recognizes the professionalism of our teachers and cultivated a culture of high academic expectations for all CCHS students. DCSD has embraced some of the initiatives contained in the CCHS charter, such as permitting high schools to choose a block or seven period day schedule, and following GaDOE policy to extend the accelerated math curriculum across DCSD high schools.

However, during the charter term DCSD decreased the level of local school control in key areas, even areas specifically cited in the approved 2009 CCHS charter renewal petition. CCHS's experience with the grading policy and selection of the Principal are two such areas. For these reasons, the autonomy of the broad flexibility waiver is especially appealing. District policies are typically "district-wide," and "one-size-fits-all". They are not designed for the unique needs of a single, highly diverse school. That is why the Charter model fits CCHS so well.

An equally strong motivation for renewing and continuing the CCHS charter is the growing need to serve the CCHS student population in innovative ways. Our proposed innovations require multi-year development and implementation. Having a five-year charter term that contractually commits CCHS, the District, and the State to these goals means that significant innovations such as these are

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realistic and cannot be overturned or diminished by unforeseen District-wide policy changes that may occur.

With the approval of this charter petition, CCHS will obtain the contractual commitment of its partners, DCSD and the State, to develop and implement innovations designed to serve the needs of the diverse CCHS student population and increase student achievement. CCHS will gain the benefits of a committed and resourceful Governing Board. The Board can address locally any unanticipated issues that may arise during the charter term, while still maintaining a strong relationship with DCSD.

The CCHS Governing Board will rigorously review progress in STEAM, MLS, and Tricameral governance to ensure that increased student achievement is realized. The Governing Board will have the authority to make changes and correct deficiencies. Beyond the strong internal oversight role of the Governing Board, DCSD and the State have contractual oversight roles. Rigorous reporting of progress toward contractual goals will be provided at least annually per the charter contract. The contract contains numerous provisions for contract amendment and termination if progress is not made. Therefore, the opportunity for success is high and the risk of failure is low.

CCHS formed a Charter Renewal Committee of Governance Council members, CCHS faculty, parents of CCHS students, 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.

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. Responses and comments from the survey informed choices made in writing this petition. Examples follow.

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There were many comments about inconsistencies in teacher quality, in areas such as content knowledge, classroom management, availability for tutoring a struggling student, and timely provision of grades and communication with parents. The transition to school-based management of the instructional staff during the charter period provides new options to address those concerns effectively.

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, as parents were pleased with the academic opportunities that CCHS provided for their charter students.

Curricular-related comments guided the planned innovations. These include STEAM, 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.

There were comments that CCHS did not use its charter status to greatest advantage. In some cases, even explicit waivers in the approved charter contract were not permitted. The transition to a more autonomous charter as required by the State Board of Education (SBOE) and the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), guided by a Governing Board made up of experienced professionals, should result in local policies aligned with the mission of CCHS. District-wide policies cannot, by their nature, take into account the unique needs of each school.

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. A Charter Liaison position from each feeder school was established and will be maintained for the duration of the charter renewal. Strong support was expressed by members of the CCHS feeder school community for continuation of the CCHS charter and the implementation of the STEAM program. Montgomery Elementary has a formal STEAM



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program and Chamblee Middle School is in the process of seeking STEM certification. Having a STEAM curriculum in high school is a positive factor when these parents consider high school options for their children.

### **Community Support**

Community support for CCHS is evidenced in many ways, formal and informal. Official proclamations of support from the City of Brookhaven and the City of Chamblee, which contain the majority of the CCHS attendance area, are found in Appendix 9. The Mayor of Chamblee is a former CCHS Governance Council member. City Council members from both cities have been involved in the charter petition process, and we are grateful for their support.

CCHS Charter Renewal Committee has enlisted members from both the Chamblee and Brookhaven City Councils to use their experience to build relationships with local businesses. Brookhaven Councilman Bates Mattison proudly explains the relationship:

“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. As we continue to strengthen this partnership with the DeKalb County School Board, we hope to find ways in which our city can partner with the school system to accomplish more than we might otherwise be able to accomplish working independently. 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 community support for CCHS is the ready way in which prospective Governing Board members accepted their role of service to CCHS. In some cases the 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

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their normally costly services. They readily agreed to the roles and responsibilities outlined in the CCHS Governing Board Member packet included in Appendix 12.

Perhaps the most important indicator of strong community support for CCHS's charter program is the large number of students on the waiting list to attend CCHS as charter students. There were 263 students on the wait list in 2013-14 and 420 students on the wait list in 2014-15.

Appendix 9 contains further evidence of community support in the form of signatures from parents/guardians in support of the charter. 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.

Appendix 9 also contains letters of support from community organizations. As part of the STEAM initiative, further community partnerships will be developed to provide student internships and career direction. 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 addition to this formal relationship, CCHS will continue to provide our students with information on STEAM activities at Georgia Tech. This will also strengthen the CCHS/Georgia Tech relationship.

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.

While CCHS enjoys the informal support of numerous community businesses and individuals, three major partners have supported CCHS during its current charter period and will continue during the upcoming charter period. 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

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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.

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. Subsequently, CBPC was re-named "Chamblee Business Association." CBA conducted local fundraising efforts to provide annual "Harris Scholarships" for CCHS students. The scholarship program is expected to continue under the Chamblee Chamber of Commerce leadership.

The City of Brookhaven, which includes a large portion of the CCHS attendance area, was formed in 2012. Members of the City of Brookhaven government are supportive of CCHS. We expect to strengthen ties with Brookhaven.

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.

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Future plans are to pursue grants in order to be able to offer even more to increase the achievement of our students and the job satisfaction of our teachers and staff.

### **Our Mission**

The mission of CCHS is to foster excellence through promoting the intellectual, social, and moral growth and physical health of every student. This mission statement has been in place throughout the existence of CCHS as 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 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.

### **Unique Offerings**

None of the three proposed charter innovations, the STEAM program, the MLS system, and Tricameral Governance are offered by any other DCSD school.

The STEAM program proposed by CCHS is distinct and unique in DCSD. DCSD currently offers, two High Schools of Choice with a STEM focus: Columbia High School (CoHS) and Arabia Mountain High School (AMHS). CoHS hosts the Special Interest Magnet Program for Mathematics, Science and Technology while AMHS hosts the Environmental, Energy, and Engineering Magnet Program. Applicants must meet academic requirements. AMHS students must also write an essay, submit an academic recommendation, and interview before being admitted. While the brochures for these programs on the DCSD website describe a rich, hands-on STEM environment, there is no mention at all of including the Arts as an integral part of the curriculum.

DCSD offers an arts-focused high school at the DeKalb School of the Arts (DSA). Applicants must meet academic requirements, submit two academic recommendations, two arts recommendations, and audition in two arts disciplines. While DSA offers a strong academic focus in addition to the arts, there is no mention at all about including the STEM disciplines as an integral part

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of the curriculum.

The International Baccalaureate program offered at Tucker High School, Martin Luther King, Jr., High School, and Druid Hills High School, emphasizes first language, second language, social studies, mathematics, science, and fine arts. This high school program is open only to 11th and 12th graders, who must meet academic requirements, submit two teacher recommendations, submit an essay, and interview before being admitted. There is no emphasis on engineering or technology.

The STEAM program at Chamblee Charter High School is markedly different from other high school offerings at DCSD. There are no academic requirements for inclusion; there are no additional requirements such as interviews or essays or teacher recommendations. The STEAM curriculum includes collaborative projects between all of the STEAM disciplines. Internships, job shadowing, and mandatory participation in Arts *and* STEM clubs, events, or competitions are integral to STEAM at CCHS.

The MLS innovation is not found in any DCSD school. DCSD high schools operate on traditional schedules in seven-period day, block, or modified block formats. We are unaware of any DCSD initiative for flexible high school scheduling to maximize the efficiency of the school day for all learners. As described in Appendix 18, the CCHS development and implementation will draw from existing programs in non-DCSD high schools, adapting the program to match CCHS needs.

## **II. ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES, PLANS AND WAIVERS**

### **2. What are your school's performance objectives for the proposed charter term?**

#### **Academic Goals**

#### **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 cross-sectional, fixed effects regression model that uses the following factors from the CCRPI school-level dataset, GaDOE student record file, and GaDOE CPI data:

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### 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 (e.g. Middle, High)

Locale Type (e.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 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.

The implementation of the STEAM program and the Mastery Learning System are school-based innovations that will result in higher levels of academic achievement and narrow the achievement gap within CCHS. The Mastery Learning System will provide additional instructional time during the school day for underperforming students, thus creating a culture that supports data-driven instruction, and results in improved student growth. It will also challenge and extend high-performing students, producing growth in that domain also. Average students, who are often overlooked, will see the very real possibilities for improved academic achievement because of the integrated STEAM program and the flexible school schedule which enables true

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mastery. The improvement in performance will be reflected in the sub-components of the CCRPI and the BTO. The impact of our school-based innovations are discussed below.

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 the workplace by increasing participation in CTAE pathways while keeping our high academic achievement in College Board's Advanced Placement programs. Because this program is unique in that it is open to ALL CCHS students, student achievement will increase and subsequently so will CCHS' CCRPI via STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics) certification by the Georgia Department of Education, contributing to the points earned on the "Exceeding the Bar" portion of the CCRPI and through indicators 9, 10, 11, and 12 of the "Achievement," and indicators 1, 4, and 6 in the "Exceeding the Bar" portions of the instrument.

Outreach and support will be provided, consistent with STEM Program certification requirements, to student groups such as minorities, the economically disadvantaged, ELLs, and

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SWDs 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. In addition, CCHS will monitor the success of the STEAM program by tracking annually 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:

Year	STEAM Program Milestones
2013-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin Internship program</li> <li>• Complete self-assessment for Georgia STEM Program certification</li> <li>• Develop plan of study</li> <li>• Develop collaborative STEAM units</li> <li>• Form STEAM Team of parents and faculty</li> <li>• Record evidence of STEM activities</li> </ul>
2014-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand Internship program inside Engineering IV</li> <li>• Form STEAM Booster club</li> <li>• Begin application process for 9<sup>th</sup> grade</li> <li>• Implement collaborative STEAM units</li> <li>• Hold STEAM emphasis event each semester, for outreach and recognition.</li> <li>• Record evidence of STEM activities</li> </ul>
2015-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand Internship program beyond Engineering IV</li> <li>• Expand application process for all grades</li> <li>• Expand Booster club; seek partners for STEAM Challenge</li> <li>• Year 1 STEAM Challenge competition; local legacy emphasis</li> <li>• Build E-portfolio requirements</li> </ul>



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Year	STEAM Program Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build tutoring program</li> <li>• Build business partners program</li> <li>• Record evidence of STEM activities; build base-line data</li> <li>• Award graduating STEAM SCHOLARS</li> </ul>
2016-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand Internship program</li> <li>• Expand sponsorships and business partners</li> <li>• Year 2 STEAM Challenge competition; community legacy emphasis</li> <li>• Record evidence of STEM activities</li> <li>• Record achievement data</li> </ul>
2017-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 3 STEAM Challenge competition; national legacy emphasis</li> <li>• Continue STEAM program, adding refinements and pathways as needed</li> <li>• Submit STEM Program certification application</li> <li>• Expand sponsorships and business partners</li> <li>• Record evidence and achievement data</li> </ul>
2018-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 4 STEAM Challenge</li> <li>• Support sponsors and business partners</li> <li>• Record evidence and achievement data</li> </ul>

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

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.

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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, 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.

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

#### **Planned Assessments**

Chamblee Charter High School (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. 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.

#### **Baseline Achievement Data**

Baseline student performance data for the initial year of the 2016-17 autonomous charter will be drawn from the data from the planned, state-mandated assessments. The percentage of students in the “Meets” and “Exceeds” categories by grade and subject, as well as the raw scores, will serve as a baseline for goal-setting in subsequent years. The 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

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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.

### **Formative and Summative Assessment within Mastery Learning System**

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 its benefits by better aligning the time and talents of teachers with the needs of individual students. Teachers must know when and where students need further support as well as which students have demonstrated mastery and are ready to move on.

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?

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 the needs of the MLS for the English/Language Arts and Mathematics domains. Another option we will explore is 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. Reporting features provide teachers with timely assessment results which may be combined with other student responses such as classroom participation,

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special projects, and other types of assessments to permit the teacher to confirm student mastery.

In addition to ongoing efforts to improve the authenticity and validity of student evaluation at CCHS, an achievement-oriented school culture will be reinforced by the requirements and benefits of MLS. The following precepts are inherent in 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 of performance. 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, utilizing opportunities provided by the Mastery Learning System.

### **Required Accountability Provisions and Assessment Guidelines**

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

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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 close 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 properly-directed interventions designed to meet students' needs appropriately, and close achievement gaps. In addition, the ongoing assessments that are an integral part of the MLS will ensure that students, teachers and parents are all fully aware in a timely manner of student's progress toward mastery and success.

CCHS will comply with federal accountability requirements, and participate in all mandated statewide assessments. CCHS shall adhere to all assessment guidelines and procedures as outlined by the State Assessment Handbook, the State Accommodations Model, and other state and local guidance on assessment. CCHS will participate in any required test administration training by DCSD.

#### **4. 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?**

##### **Focus of Curriculum**

Chamblee Charter High School will fully implement the Georgia Common Core Performance Standards (GCCPS), and, as appropriate and beneficial, will integrate and align STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) standards with 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 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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skills and critical thinking skills.

DeKalb County School District (DCSD) uses Race to the Top (RT3) 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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,

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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 which result 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 that serve the spectrum of student needs associated with college-and-career-related pathways. Significant 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.

### **Description of Curriculum**

CCHS will continue to offer a full curriculum aligned with the Georgia Common Core

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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. As the STEAM program is implemented course offerings may be expanded, but a review of the State Approved Courses defined in SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.20 indicates that these 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 the Appendix.

Of particular note are the strong course offerings in STEAM fields, and Advanced Placement (AP) and post-AP level courses offered on-site. The CCHS Math Team has excelled in the state, nation, and even internationally. CCHS is the only public high school in Georgia officially recognized by the German government as one of 900 schools worldwide which can 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 students participating in these vital activities.

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.

STEAM and MLS are the primary educational innovations proposed in this petition. However, Tricameral Governance should also be regarded as an academic innovation, since it



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will empower members of the CCHS community to innovate and respond in a timely manner to locally-identified challenges, and thus will contribute to increases in student achievement.

CCHS is a very successful and high achieving school, but it is not a perfect school. One of the things handicapping CCHS' attempts to increase the achievement of all CCHS students is the traditional school scheduling model. MLS is intended to maximize the positive results of CCHS' existing strengths, while guiding us toward developing new strengths.

Students need time and support for individual learning combined with the incentive to reach for their personal best. 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 deep 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.

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Providing individualized and tailored support, reducing failure rates, and reducing the need to spend time on remediation will obviously benefit student achievement. Instead of focusing on the speed with which students move through their learning (“Can a student get through this material in one semester of 50-minute meetings?”) and grading them on their ability to keep up, we focus on the competencies they acquire independent of the time taken (“Has the student learned to do X?”).

There are many advantages to the Mastery Learning System:

1. 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.
2. Time and resources will be used more efficiently during the instructional day, and lessons will not be artificially constrained by inflexible school timetables. When appropriate, material could be delivered once to 120 students, for instance, instead of four times to 30. Remediation could be delivered to the ten students who need it instead of all 30 enrolled in the class. If an activity has a particular natural length then that is exactly what can be scheduled – learning experiences will not be cut unnecessarily to fit into a single class period, or spread awkwardly over multiple class periods. Facilities and school resources will be managed and utilized with greater efficiency. If a lab is set up to run an experiment for only 15 students at a time, then that is how many will be offered the learning experience at a particular point in time.
3. 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

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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, and they will be held responsible for that mastery. 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 will be beneficial for the student tutor, as research clearly indicates that teaching is an excellent way of increasing understanding and consolidating skills and knowledge, and will benefit others, who will receive additional academic support (Bowman-Perrott, Davis, Vannest, Williams, Greenwood, et al, 2013; Hattie, 2013).

MLS will also enable new and exciting options for our students, increasing engagement and thus achievement. For instance, the English/Language Arts Department has already begun discussing offering smaller, more focused special topics. Instead of offering just one long class on American Literature, a selection of special topics, like Early Twentieth Century Literature, the Harlem Renaissance, Women Writers, etc. could be offered that would engage student interests and teacher enthusiasms. Students would fulfill the course requirement by taking a selection of such shorter sub-courses. The department will have to produce a compelling plan that the requisite performance standards are covered by such combinations, and an assessment plan to ensure mastery, but such a plan would offer students both choice and a more personally compelling learning experience.

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The other major advantage to the educational program is that MLS will provide flexibility in terms of educational delivery systems. Students vary in so many ways. Given differences in levels of preparation, motivation and ability, differentiation is an absolute requirement of modern education. The same tools also are not always suited to all subject matter and all students. With 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. Dr. Steve Harmon, the Chair of the Learning Technologies Division at GSU and president of the Association of Educational Communications and Technology has accepted nomination to the Governing Board and is working already on bringing in Georgia State's resources and knowledge.

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 and do more than they would be able to under existing systems. With current, traditional school models, though students may sign up for more advanced and more demanding classes, of which CCHS has unparalleled offerings, 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).

Feasibility - Elements of CCHS's MLS proposal have been implemented successfully in other innovative high schools.

- A focus on competency-based learning is central to schools belonging to the Re-Inventing Schools Coalition such as the Ingenium Schools in Los Angeles, California. In these schools "students are placed in developmentally appropriate levels, and receive instruction on competencies required to move to the next level...Progress is based upon student's demonstration of mastery on internal assessments...not on seat-time or the age/grade level of student." (<http://www.reinventingschools.org>.)

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- The Bergen County Academies, a public magnet high school located in Hackensack, New Jersey, uses a “flex-mod” schedule to assign time to classes to more accurately reflect the needs of particular learning experiences. The school day is divided into 27 short units (“mods”), and then classes are scheduled to meet according to the number of mods that best suits the subject matter.
- Schools in the Big Picture network such as The Met in Providence, Rhode Island, focus on individualized learning tailored to student interests and needs, with an emphasis on nontraditional learning experiences like internships.
- The Young Women's Leadership Charter School of Chicago, Illinois, focuses on individualized learning, where students play a major role in both planning and executing their academic program.
- Schools on the Self-Directed Learning model, such as Westmont Secondary School in Hamilton, Ontario, allow students to set the pace of their work with teacher support.
- Hampton High School of Hampton, Georgia, focuses on personalized learning also, using a blended learning model with a substantial online/computer-based component to gain responsiveness to student needs.

These are only a few examples of how the concepts behind what we propose fall within the mainstream of contemporary research-based findings on the most effective means for raising student achievement. 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.

However, while CCHS’s MLS proposal builds on such systems, it adds unique elements. For example, existing models depend upon either having well-motivated students who can self-monitor and ensure their own progress, or upon a computer-based “blended learning” model, which has shown some promise but which research has shown is not a replacement for teacher-student interaction. The goal of MLS is to take the strengths of existing education

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(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.

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."

We have consulted with other software architects who have told us the same. We have begun the process of building relationships with both academic and corporate institutions to support the necessary software development, and have investigated grants to fund the process. The universal response has been one of great interest, but no commitment until we actually have the autonomy necessary to implement the system.

CCHS's successes have been built upon the dedication of our community. We have come together to find ways to do great things for our students. Our proposed innovations are all focused on empowerment, on enabling our community to do an even better job and do even greater things.

STEAM is a program born from the enthusiasm of dedicated teachers in different fields who wanted to bring their knowledge and expertise to an even broader range of students. It builds on existing strengths to create a program that will both be attractive and challenging to students and also more responsive to their needs and goals. It is a perfect example of the kind of thing our community can do when offered the independence and autonomy to better serve our students.

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

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develop our students with more efficient and flexible methods of allotting teacher and student time.

Tricameral governance is a program born from the great value and trust CCHS places on our community and our traditions of working together as partners, along with a recognition that we could do much more to extend that community, include more voices and utilize their skills.

CCHS' diversity is another aspect that uniquely suits us to carry out the proposed innovations. CCHS is, in many ways, ready to be a perfect laboratory – encompassing the many different kinds of schools 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 experiment and 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.

Thus we begin the process of implementing these innovations with a strong base that ensures that we will maintain our standards of excellence and student achievement, yet also facing sufficient challenges to ensure that our new ideas are “battle-tested” and thus can become our contribution to greater DeKalb.

### **Class Sizes/Student-to-Teacher Ratios**

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

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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).

### **High School Graduation Requirements**

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. However, in conformity with recent rule clarifications, individual students do not need to have 150 seat hours to receive credit, which permits the flexibility necessary for the proposed innovations.

Students electing the STEAM pathway will meet requirements that 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).

### **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



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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. The lead teacher for special education (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 whenever 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

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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 the least restrictive environment (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 the success of CCHS students with special needs:

- CCHS will offer additional courses that develop meaningful life-skills (Conley & McGaughy, 2012) (i.e., personal banking and finance).
- CCHS will offer 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 career training and internships while fulfilling state graduation requirements, and will be designed to align to new pathways as part of CCHS' STEAM Program.
- 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).

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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 will be closely monitored by case managers, the LTSE and their classroom teachers.
- 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.

### **6. 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 current DCSD policy for gifted and talented students. More than 40% of CCHS students are identified as gifted. CCHS provides gifted services by placing gifted

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certified teachers in mixed ability classrooms as well as in classrooms containing only gifted students.

A faculty member designated as the Gifted Coordinator works with the Assistant Principal for Instruction to ensure that gifted services are delivered effectively. Duties of the Gifted Coordinator include monitoring 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 will schedule 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].

**7. 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

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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).

**8. 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 the A or D lunch block to 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

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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.

- 9. 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

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- 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.

### **10. 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.**

All students who speak, read or understand English as a second language are screened for proficiency utilizing the federally mandated W-APT assessment [SBOE160-4-5-.02]. Students who score a 5.0 or above on this assessment do not qualify for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) services. Students who score a 1.9 or below with limited or no English language skills are placed in the Intensive English Language pullout program. The students who score a 2.0-4.9 qualify for regular ESOL services through an inclusion model following class size regulations as determined by the State Board of Education [SBOE 160-4-5-.02]. All English Language Learners (ELL) are required to take the federally mandated ACCESS assessment. In order to exit the ESOL program, students must have a composite score of 6.0 on the ACCESS. Those students who exit are monitored for an additional two years by the ESOL staff [SBOE 160- 3-1-.07]. Students will be taught by teachers with an ESOL Certificate or endorsement [O.C.G.A. 20-2-156]. ELL students will be included in all curricular and extracurricular activities at CCHS regardless of their ability to speak and understand the language of instruction.

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### Partnership with Hispanic Community Leaders to Improve Hispanic Graduation Rate

- We are seeking to partner with community organizations, such as the Youth Outreach Director for the Latin American Association, Hispanic Organization Promoting Education, and the Georgia Tech chapter of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, to develop initiatives aimed at improving the graduation rate for Hispanic students at CCHS. Hispanic students have a 54% 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.
- We will encourage parents and students to access free, interactive digital textbooks through the Georgia Department of Education's website. The DOE reports that students who have used these resources have been very successful. Studies have shown that using a variety of media improves learning for English Language Learners.
- The digital textbooks are currently available for middle and high school courses and can be accessed by visiting [www.gavirtualllearning.org/Resources](http://www.gavirtualllearning.org/Resources). The texts cover an array of subjects and feature interactive content, including study guides, discussion questions, games, audio recordings, and quizzes.

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.

**11. 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**



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**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 while seeking to expand those offerings in ways that serve the school's mission, as described in Appendix 7. As the STEAM program is expanded, 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) so as to expand their reach and value 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.

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

Implementation of proposed academic innovations will require waivers from DCSD policy. For example, implementation of the STEAM program will require a waiver from DCSD Board Policy IDCJ, Work-Study Programs. DCSD's work-study program, derived from SBOE Rules 160-4-3-.14 and 160-4-3-.02, 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 Governance Board shall establish all necessary policies and procedures to provide innovative internship opportunities for CCHS students.

CCHS also intends to continue to exercise its current waiver of DCSD Board Policy IHA, Grading Systems. CCHS believes that individual teachers are competent to define an appropriate

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grading policy and that a single District-wide grading policy is not appropriate. The CCHS Governing Board will define a grading policy, which will likely delegate authority to the Principal and Department Chairs.

A waiver from the definition of Carnegie Unit, as defined in DCSD Policy IDE, must be waived. A transition to awarding course credit based on mastery rather than seat time is fundamental to MLS. This is consistent with GADOE policy permitting students to receive Carnegie Unit credit by “testing out,” or demonstrating mastery of EOCT classes with zero seat time.

### **III. ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES, PLANS AND WAIVERS**

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

##### **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

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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 the Requirements from SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.06 and associated guidelines, 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.**

Year	Mastery Learning System Milestones
2015-16 (pre-charter)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete research on schools with flexible scheduling</li> <li>• Visit schools as possible</li> <li>• Initial discussions with technology partner candidates</li> </ul>

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<b>Year</b>	<b>Mastery Learning System Milestones</b>
2016-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare requirements document</li> <li>• Select technology partner</li> <li>• Develop draft implementation plan</li> <li>• Establish project evaluation criteria</li> </ul>
2017-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement plan</li> <li>• Limited pilot and roll-out</li> <li>• Formal project evaluation</li> </ul>
2018-19 and beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue implementation if evaluation criteria achieved</li> </ul>

Measure – Development of a Program Plan and meeting Program milestones. Initial milestones are shown in the table above. The Principal and Governing Board will approve the plan, including decision criteria to ensure that MLS is providing improved student achievement and financial sustainability.

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

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.

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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.

### **Organizational Goal 5: 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.

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 the Department.

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

CCHS has selected organizational goals associated with the innovations proposed for the charter term (Goals 2, 3, and 5) as well as goals linked to the mission of CCHS (Goal 1) and to the engagement and satisfaction of students, parents, and teachers (Goal 2).

The biggest organizational innovation has already been accomplished with the establishment of an independent professional Governing Board, created in response to new requirements in SBOE

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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.

Organizational Goal 2, “Ensure Governing Board members receive effective training,” will provide Board members with the proper foundation and skills for success. This new Governing Board has worked together informally during the petition process, but the formal training they will receive in accordance with SBOE rule 160-4-9-.06 will be essential to wise use of the autonomy and “best charter practices” to inform CCHS governance and policy development.

Organizational Goal 5, “CCHS will be an economically sustainable school,” is also linked with changes in SBOE policy. Previously, the charter governing body at CCHS has had very limited financial oversight responsibility and has had no financial authority. Success in this transition is aided by the change in the structure and composition of the charter governing body, since Governing Board members have the requisite financial, managerial, and operations skills to take on these serious new responsibilities. Achievement of economic sustainability per the measures of Organizational Goal 5 will provide evidence of an organization that is making effective use of public resources in the service of CCHS students and teachers.

Organizational Goal 3, “Demonstrate Progress in Mastery Learning System,” is directly linked with the MLS scheduling innovation proposed for the charter term. Success in meeting this goal requires proper development of system requirements, selecting a technical plan for implementation, defining appropriate program milestones and decision-criteria, and accomplishing all of this in a manner that respects the broad spectrum of opinions the diverse CCHS stakeholders will bring to the table. However, the commitment of CCHS stakeholders to innovation and improving the learning environment and opportunities for students will be paramount, as it has been throughout CCHS’ existence as a conversion charter school.

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Organizational Goal 4, “The Charter School shall promote a positive school experience that engages students, parents and teachers,” addresses organizational effectiveness by giving value to the perceptions and needs of CCHS teachers and the parents who choose CCHS for their students. 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.

Organizational Goal 1, “Developing the whole student through community service,” is unique to CCHS, as it uses a formal, locally-developed measure of student community service. Although we recognize that students generally perform more service than they formally record, this optional program provides an incentive and is a vehicle for building moral and social strength and a means of showing the community the special qualities of CCHS. Working with faculty and staff in a non-threatening goal-oriented service can build bridges of understanding, and CCHS welcomes that.

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

DCSD Board Policy AF, School Day, must be waived in order to implement petition innovations. Policy AF states that the DCSD Superintendent must approve the CCHS daily schedule. Instead, the CCHS Governance Board, shall approve the daily schedule submitted by the CCHS Principal with input through the Tricameral Advisory Council. Requiring approval by the DCSD Superintendent conflicts with the autonomy of the CCHS Governance Board.

Many DCSD Board policies must be waived in order for CCHS to achieve the levels of autonomy described in this petition and required by law. For example, DCSD Board Policy BBFA and BBFA-R(1), Local School Councils states that “The role of the school council in the principal selection process shall be advisory and will be specified in regulations developed by the Superintendent.” As described in Section XI, this policy must be waived in order to permit the Governing Board to have substantive control in the selection of the school leader.

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### IV. GOVERNANCE

#### 16. 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 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



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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.

### **CCHS Governing Board Members**

CCHS is proud to begin this charter term with the talented group of Governing Board members. These individuals represent relevant professional experience in law, finance, management, operations, and education. Each Board member expressed a particular commitment to CCHS. Board members identify with the mission of CCHS and the initiatives described in this petition. Their experience with CCHS, with local education issues, and international experience will serve our students, faculty and staff well. Board member resumes are included in Appendix 13; relevant professional experience is listed below.

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<u>CCHS Governing Board Member</u>	<u>Relevant Professional Experience</u>
Kathy Wilson-Chu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Network Engineering, AT&amp;T</li> <li>• Champion of Diversity Award from AT&amp;T</li> <li>• Prior Board Experience</li> <li>• Parent of CCHS Graduate</li> </ul>
Stephen Harmon, Ph.D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair, Division of Learning Technologies at Georgia State University</li> <li>• Professional Experience in Instructional Technology and Project Evaluation</li> </ul>
Matthew Harrison, Ph.D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Director for Talent Management, Comcast Central Division</li> <li>• Professional Experience in               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing HR Policies and Procedures</li> <li>• Performance Management</li> <li>• Leadership Development</li> <li>• Diversity and Inclusion</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Former Mentor at CCHS</li> </ul>
Robert Joseph, Ph.D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Technology Professional</li> <li>• Professional Experience in Development of School Information Systems</li> </ul>
Uday R. Kumar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director, Business Operations, Cox Communications</li> <li>• Management, including Finance, Marketing, and Operations</li> </ul>

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<u>CCHS Governing Board Member</u>	<u>Relevant Professional Experience</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior Board Experience</li> </ul>
Darron Kusman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Finance, Church’s Chicken</li> <li>• Operations and Financial Reporting</li> </ul>
Gregory Sale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lawyer at Seyfarth Shaw LLP</li> <li>• Professional Experience in Corporate Governance Advice and Contracts</li> <li>• Certified Lean Six Sigma Lean Green Belt</li> <li>• Graduate of CCHS</li> </ul>

Governing Board members were recruited by Governance Council members and were approved by a vote of the Governance Council in 2014. This diverse set of Board members is representative of CCHS. Professional expertise in finance, personnel, law, education 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 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 nominations from Board members and CCHS stakeholders will be encouraged when this policy is developed.

**Governing Board Functions and Duties**

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

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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 formalized Consolidated School Improvement Plan (CSIP), 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

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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.

The CCHS Governance Matrix is found in Appendix 10. As shown in the 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.

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. Formal and informal partners of CCHS, such as the Blue & Gold Foundation and governments of the cities of Chamblee and Brookhaven, also may be a source of resources should additional resources be needed.

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.

### **Governance Board Training**

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. The founding

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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. 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.

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.

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 skills to negotiate with their “counterparts” within DCSD to resolve concerns.

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 school 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.

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

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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.

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 these functions is currently not within the control of the Governing Board.

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.

### **Parent and Community Involvement on the Governing Board**

Community members and other interested stakeholders may be nominated to serve on the CCHS Governing Board. Stakeholders will also be involved in the Board member nomination process, as they were with the founding Board. 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.

Current parents/guardians and faculty and staff will be 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 upcoming Board vacancies and the appropriate nomination procedure. Interested parties in Chamblee, Brookhaven, and other communities 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 serves as a leading means of communication both to and from the Governing

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Board.

As described in Section II, the Tricameral Advisory Council will be the “grass roots” level of parental and staff involvement in school governance. Any of the three TAC bodies can identify an issue requiring governance action and recommend study and/or action. The resolution of the issue depends on the level of the issue, and the objective will be resolution at the lowest level defined by policy. The Principal or Governing Board, as appropriate, will use their decision-making authority.

CCHS will continue communication with students and their families through weekly email communications, calling post 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.

### **17. Grievances**

The CCHS Governing Board will develop procedures to address grievances and resolve conflicts involving CCHS stakeholders, business arrangements, DCSD, and within the Board itself. These procedures will address specific requirements such as notification and action time limits for each step of the procedure as well as documentation, notification, and public notice requirements. The approved policies will be forwarded to DCSD for concurrence.

The guiding principle for development of CCHS Grievance Policy 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.

#### **Role of the Principal and Governing Board in Addressing Grievances and Complaints**

Since CCHS faculty and staff will be DCSD employees, DCSD policy shall govern the manner in which their grievances are addressed. Policy developed by the Governing Board will be consistent with the DCSD Code of Student Conduct. The Governing Board will serve as recourse for CCHS stakeholders who have not achieved satisfactory conflict resolution at the school level. The Grievance Policy under the current CCHS charter, adapted for the replacement of the Governance



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Council by the Governing Board and Tricameral Advisory Council, is summarized below. Although not fully developed, it will inform the development of local policy and affirms the guiding principles for conflict resolution at CCHS.

1. If the complaint involves an academic or athletic situation, parents should seek to resolve the issue with the classroom teacher/teacher assistant or coach as is appropriate. If a resolution with the classroom faculty or coach is not possible, the parent should seek to resolve the issue with the Assistant Principal or the Principal.
2. If the complaint is related to the Assistant Principal, the parent should seek to resolve the issue with the Principal.
3. If the complaint is with a school-wide policy or procedure the parent should seek to resolve the issue with the Assistant Principal or the Principal.
4. Complaint associated with a school-wide policy or procedure may be addressed to the Tricameral Advisory Council, at the complainants' choice. If resolution is not possible with any of the parties above, parents may follow the Appeals and Grievance procedures which the Governing Board will establish to address such situations. Parents may also choose to sign up to address the Governing Board at a regularly scheduled meeting. The Governing Board will respond to grievances, in writing, typically no later than 30 days after the complaint is presented to the Governing Board.

Parents should remember the following when considering making a complaint to the Governing Board:

- The Governing Board will not address complaints unless steps 1 through 4 (as relevant) 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 complaints that are made anonymously.

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- The Governing Board will not address specific complaints about the performance of individual school employees.

If protocol has been followed, and the parents still believe that their grievance has not been resolved, they may present their concerns to the Regional Superintendent. The Regional Superintendent will review the complaint, meet with the parties as needed and communicate a resolution to the parents and Governing Board.

Complaints which are not resolved satisfactorily by the CCHS Principal shall be filed in writing to the Governing Board in accordance with approved policy. The Governing Board will not usurp the authority of the Principal to resolve conflicts in this/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.

### **Development of Policy 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,

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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.

- 18. 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.

- 19. 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. 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

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responsibility of the committee. However, each Board member has personal interests and a strong commitment to CCHS that will guide their service.

**20. In the appendix, please provide the proposed charter school's bylaws, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2- 2065(b)(4).**

Bylaws for the CCHS Governing Board are included in Appendix 11. These bylaws reflect the mission of CCHS and its non-profit status. The bylaws address all required elements, including:

- a. The method by which the board will be elected or appointed and removed, as well as the term of office for each member. 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. CCHS bylaws require 7 – 11 members. No seats are reserved for specific constituents.
- c. The responsibility and authority of the Governing Board policy and operations of Chamblee Charter High School.
- d. A list of committees of the Governing Board, which must be chaired by Board members. CCHS bylaws define, at minimum, Executive, Finance, Governance, Academic Achievement, and Community Outreach, committees as a minimum, with provisions for establishing ad hoc committees.
- e. The calendar for board meetings, providing for a minimum of six meetings per year. 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.

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.

**21. 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**

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**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. CCHS bylaws address conflicts of interest, including procedures for the duty to disclose, determining whether a conflict of interest exists, procedures for addressing the conflict of interest, and violations of the conflict of interest policy.

As stated in the CCHS Governing Board Member Packet included in Appendix 12, 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).**

CCHS does not have formal business arrangements or partnerships with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, or nonprofit organizations. Informal partnerships with such

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organizations as part of the STEAM internship requirement exist, and may be formalized as STEAM program development matures. Governing Board policies will be followed to ensure that any potential conflicts of interest within such a partnership are appropriately disclosed.

### **VI. FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES, PLANS AND WAIVERS**

#### **24. State the school's Financial Goals and Measures**

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 of this Renewal Petition and the Organizational goals defined in Section III of this Renewal Petition. CCHS will work with DCSD to develop and implement the required financial policy and procedure changes necessary to support these goals. At the end of the charter term CCHS intends to have a proven record as an economically sustainable, successful public school, with the associated benefit of an improved financial system for DCSD which increases transparency into public funding for education.

CCHS requests full autonomy over Finance including budgets, financial policies and procedures, and compliance with federal, state and local financial reporting requirements. Full autonomy over Finance is specifically required by the Georgia Department of Education and is crucial to the development and implementation of the STEAM and MLS innovations. Full autonomy over Finance will also give CCHS the ability to implement 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.

CCHS does not seek to operate like a start-up charter school, operating essentially independently of DCSD. CCHS seeks to continue a strong partnership with DCSD, incorporating DCSD strengths and "economies of scale" where it is sensible, and performing other functions at the local level so that the decision-making cycle is shortened to be more responsive to the needs of CCHS. However, without knowing actual costs, the CCHS Governing Board cannot make sensible and equitable tradeoffs. Therefore, major financial innovation is in order and is defined in response

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to Question 25.

### **Fiscal Management Plan**

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 and guidelines. 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

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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



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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 health 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

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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.

### **Budget and Cash Flow Spreadsheet**

The CCHS projected five-year budget in the required GADOE spreadsheet format is found 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 District was unable to provide the petitioner with any actual cost data to account for District services actually provided to CCHS, with the exception of salaries and benefits for CCHS personnel, and the approximately 1% of earned budget for Technical Services, Travel, Supplies and Non-computer/Non-bus Equipment that all DCSD high school Principals control (line item 76). Therefore, the petitioner scoured the District budget for costs associated with the line items required per GaDOE budget spreadsheets and estimated a proportional share for CCHS where possible. 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.

### **Proposed Timeline for State and Local Funding**

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.

### **Chief Financial Officer**

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. The CFO will have qualifications meeting the following at a minimum: 1) A baccalaureate or higher degree in business,

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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.

### **Representatives Responsible for Financial Management**

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.

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

Over the last several 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)(2) and Appendix 19)
- 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

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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.

Therefore, a major Financial Innovation is defined for the charter term: CCHS will work with DCSD Finance to identify actual costs at the school level and define system modifications to permit tracking at the school level. This innovation benefits DCSD as it petitions to become a Charter System and must evaluate the financial impact of proposed changes school by 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.

The results of this partnership in financial innovation will foster fiscal health and sustainability, as actual costs at the school level could be considered by the Administration and the Board of Education in both day-to-day operations, budgeting and strategic planning. Without site-based cost data, the financial effectiveness of CCHS and its Governing Board cannot be credibly calculated. This innovation is appropriate for CCHS, as it is essential to achieving the contractually required Organizational Goal of being an economically sustainable school (see Section III). At the direction of the Governing Board, CCHS will work with DCSD Finance to identify costs at the school level.

### **26. Fundraising or Other sources of Income**

CCHS will seek 501(c)(3) status early in the charter term, and expects to regularly submit requests for additional appropriate funding from local, state, and federal sources, as well as from corporations, individuals, and foundations. 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

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CCHS Governing Board will review grant status on a quarterly basis.

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.

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

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 Governance Board with input from the Tricameral Advisory Council will develop policies and procedures defining how grant funding will be acquired and administered at CCHS.

DCSD Board Policy DID, Audits, must be waived because the statement “The Superintendent or designee shall direct the preparation of audits of accounts administered by principals or other administrative agents.” shall not apply at CCHS. The CCHS Governance Board must direct financial matters at CCHS.

## **VII. STUDENT ADMISSIONS**

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

#### **Attendance Zone**

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

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zone is all of DCSD.

### **Enrollment Priorities**

Per O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(B), applicable to conversion charter schools, CCHS will use the following enrollment priorities:

1. A student who legally resides in the local attendance zone for CCHS.
2. All current students at CCHS who have not graduated.
3. A sibling of a student enrolled in CCHS or in any school in the CCHS high school cluster.
4. A student whose parent or guardian is a member of the governing board of CCHS or is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee at CCHS.
5. A student who legally resides in the charter attendance zone (DeKalb County)

### **Admission to the Charter Program**

CCHS will use an Admissions procedure in accordance with Charter Schools Act of 1998. CCHS anticipates continuing to have DCSD administer its Charter Admissions process in the first year of the charter term. CCHS will provide information to DCSD for inclusion in the DCSD School Choice Programs Catalog, describing the Charter program at CCHS and the application procedure. 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 to manage the CCHS charter admissions process locally and relieve DCSD of the responsibility. Prior to making this change, the proposed process including forms and the lottery process will be subject to review to ensure that it adheres to legal requirements.

If the Admissions process is moved from DCSD administration to CCHS administration, no significant changes in the Admissions application process are anticipated. The application would be simplified, as it would be used only for CCHS admissions. Managing the Admissions process in-

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house would permit CCHS to have greater oversight of the process and thus to be better able to respond to questions from applicants about their status. Similar to the start-up Charter Schools in DCSD which handle their own Admissions process, CCHS would align the admissions schedule with that of DCSD unless a compelling reason to do otherwise arises.

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. Proof of residency will be required of all students who enroll in Chamblee Charter High School 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. 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.

### **Enrollment**

Enrollment of CCHS students in past and current charter terms is performed by the CCHS Registrar. This process will continue. CCHS will enroll 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 proof of residency. All charter school applicants must legally reside in DeKalb County with the exception of children of CCHS employees who live with their custodial parent(s). By law, an agreement with those students' home schools/public school districts must be obtained. The CCHS Governing Board will provide information and direction to affected CCHS employees.

CCHS will enroll any student who is a legal resident of DeKalb County and is matriculating to Chamblee Charter High School from Chamblee Middle School including the co-located Magnet

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Program for High Achievers managed by DCSD, upon completion of a registration form signed by at least one parent or guardian. CCHS will negotiate with DCSD's and Georgia Department of Education's Charter Divisions to determine how best to fill new or additional magnet seats in grades 9-12.

Charter school applicants, 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. Once enrolled, all students will be educated in accordance with the policies and procedures established for Chamblee Charter High School in this Charter Renewal Petition. Should charter policy evolve and permit adding the enrollment priority defined in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1)iv, "Students matriculating from a local school designated in the charter," CCHS would like to explore the option of designating DeKalb PATH Academy Charter School which is located approximately 3 miles from CCHS and draws students primarily from the Doraville, Chamblee, and Clarkston areas.

### **Procedures for Student Applications and Available Space**

If after application of the enrollment priorities established in this petition, with a confirmed proof of residency, CCHS capacity remains, additional charter school students shall be selected through a public lottery conducted by DCSD in the first year of this Charter period. DCSD School Choice Department has conducted lotteries in all years that CCHS has been a charter school. 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.

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.

### **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



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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 student and his/her parents/guardians, in consultation with the DCSD Magnet Office, with the understanding that a student outside the CCHS resident attendance area who exits from the Magnet Program co-located at CCHS will no longer be provided with DCSD Magnet Program transportation.

### Recruitment and Diversity

Chamblee Charter High School already closely reflects the demographics of DeKalb County, GA, per 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.

### Chamblee Charter High School Demographics Comparison

<b>Race / Ethnicity</b>	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%
<b>Other Sub-groups</b>				
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*

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### **Student Recruitment and Enrollment Management**

During all previous charter terms, student recruitment has not been an issue. A waiting list of charter school applicants has existed each year, evidence of strong interest in CCHS from families throughout DeKalb County.

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. An overall demographic characterization of CCHS students, faculty and staff, will be a part of this annual review.

As a conversion charter, CCHS includes many students who reside in the DCSD defined attendance zone. Elementary school enrollment in the CCHS cluster has increased substantially over the charter term, and the alignment of STEAM and STEM interests should be a positive force in increasing the number of families in the attendance zone who choose CCHS. CCHS will use its website, neighborhood newspapers, social media, email blasts, and other means to publicize the mission, academic programs, achievements, and enrollment information to raise awareness about CCHS.

CCHS will use DCSD Enrollment forms as shown in Appendix 1. CCHS may add site-specific information to this form if the Governing Board determines that it is necessary.

### **School Calendar & Schedule**

Chamblee Charter High School's proposed annual calendar will follow the DCSD calendar during the charter period. 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**

### **29. 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. 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,

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18th District, County of DeKalb. 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. The Principal or Governing Board, as appropriate, will negotiate with DCSD should local facilities issues arise.

Using primarily federal funds, DCSD has provided an excellent facility for use by students who attend CCHS from throughout DeKalb County. The CCHS facility is designed to accommodate approximately 1,600 students. It 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 to 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. No modifications are anticipated. There is no intention to lease or contract with a church or other religious organization.

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

Not applicable to a DCSD Conversion Charter School.

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

The Certificate of Occupancy is held at DCSD central office.

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

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 21.

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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 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.

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**

#### **33. 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.**

Chamblee Charter High School has adopted the DeKalb County Code of Student Conduct. The code of conduct and programs for informing students and parents regarding student rights, responsibilities, and character development are available at <http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/student-relations>. The DCSS Code of Student Conduct describes the rules and procedures concerning student

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discipline and student dismissal (including code of conduct and student due process procedures). Chamblee Charter High School also publishes its own Student/Parent handbook (Appendix 15). Section II, pages 14-28, describes Student Expectations and Rules. By signing for and acknowledging the Code of Conduct and the CCHS Student/Parent handbook, parents and students agree to:

- Abide by the discipline and dress code policies of CCHS and the DeKalb County School System.
- Cooperate with and demonstrate respectful behavior towards teachers, staff, and students.
- Support the student conduct codes and policies of CCHS and the DeKalb County School System as outlined in the DeKalb County Code of Conduct/Students Rights and Responsibilities and in the CCHS code of conduct.

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 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.

### **Discipline Provisions and Students with Disabilities**

Students with special needs 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.

## **XI. ADDENDUM – PERSONNEL**

### **AQ1 Personnel**

At this time, complete control of Personnel by the CCHS Governing Board is not considered

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to be crucial to the success of the implementation of 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**

#### **Staff Qualifications**

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, and with any future exceptions negotiated by the Governing Board and DCSD.

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**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. Appendix 17 contains an initial Principal job description.

**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. Appendix 17 contains an initial CFO job description.

**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.

**Salary 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 20. 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

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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.

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.

**Substitute Teachers** - In the instance of teacher absence from school, the DCSD SubFinder system shall be used per DCSD policy. 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.

**Adherence to DCSD Policies, Procedures, and Standards** - 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**

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, but in circumstances of difficult-to-fill certified vacancies, CCHS reserves the right to hire candidates within the NCLB flexibility clause on Highly Qualified Teachers. All teachers are expected to complete the minimum professional development hours required by the Georgia



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Professional Standards Commission.

### **AQ4 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.

### **AQ5 Employee Evaluation**

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. 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.

### **AQ6 State Health Benefit Plan Participation**

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.

## **XI. OTHER INFORMATION**

### **34. 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 will be left to DCSD.

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

Chamblee Charter High School will continue to provide Food Service and participate in the National School Lunch Program, providing breakfast and lunch to eligible students who have applied to participate. CCHS will begin the new charter term by contracting with DCSD to seamlessly continue the food service that has been provided. 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.

**36. Provide information on the school's legal representation or counsel.**

Following the approval of this petition, CCHS Board will make the appropriate selection of legal counsel. Until that time, Mark P. Kelly, Counsel with the law firm of King and Spalding LLP, served as legal counsel during the charter preparation process. This counsel has not thoroughly reviewed the complete charter petition. However, Mr. Kelly and Mr. Greg Sale, Attorney and member of the Governing Board, have reviewed the by-laws.

**37. Describe the charter school's insurance coverage, including the terms and conditions and coverage**

Copies of each policy shall be provided to the DCSD Charter School Office prior to the opening of the school for the 2016-17 school year for:

- i. General Liability
- ii. Errors or Omissions
- iii. Property/Lease Insurance
- iv. Auto Liability
- v. Worker's Compensation
- vi. Theft

Each insurance policy required by the DeKalb County Board of Education for Chamblee Charter

## **Chamblee Charter High School Charter Renewal Petition**

High School shall contain the statement ‘The DeKalb County Board of Education is included as an additional insured.’

Chamblee Charter High School shall hold harmless and indemnify DeKalb County School District, the Board of Education, its members, officers and employees for every liability, claim or demand upon the charter school; and Chamblee Charter High School agrees to defend and indemnify the DeKalb County Board of Education in any action from the charter school’s activities.

### **38. Additional Information**

The following appendices are included with this petition

- Admissions and Enrollment Forms
- Attendance Zone
- Budget - 5 year projected
- Calendar and Daily Schedule
- Certificate of Incorporation
- Conflict of Interest Form
- Curriculum and Co-Curricular/Extracurricular Activities
- 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
- Insurance / Indemnification Information
- Job Descriptions

## **Chamblee Charter High School Charter Renewal Petition**

- MLS /Flexible Scheduling Background Information
- References / Bibliography
- Salary Schedule
- School Safety Plan
- STEAM Program Overview

## Chamblee Charter High School Charter Renewal Petition

### DeKalb County School District Letter of Assurances for Chamblee Charter High School

#### 39. 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.

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### DeKalb County School District Letter of Assurances for Chamblee Charter High School

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 knowledgeable 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.

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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.

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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



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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

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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

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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:
  - a. 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
  - b. Shall Not Charge Tuition, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-133
  - c. Unlawful Conduct in or near a Public School, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1180 through O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1182
  - d. Reporting Requirements – Student Data Collection, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320
  - e. Brief Period of Quiet Reflection, O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-1050, 20-2-1051
  - f. Open and Public Meetings, O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq.
  - g. Inspection of Public Records, O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq.

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- h. 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.

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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

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1 above:

- b. If the claims, demands, suits, actions, proceedings, losses, liabilities arise solely and exclusively out of the negligence of DCSD or one of the Indemnites; or
  - c. If DCSD fails to:
    - i. provide written notice of the third party claim or suit as soon as practicable;
    - ii. cooperate with all legally reasonable requests of the charter school; or
    - iii. assists the charter school with the defense and/or settlement of such claim or suit.
3. 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. 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 Indemnites 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:
  - a. Name and address of agent/broker;
  - b. Name and address of insured;
  - c. Name of insurance company, underwriting syndicate, or other insuring entity;
  - d. Description of coverage in standard terminology;
  - e. Policy period;
  - f. Policy Number;
  - g. Limits of liability;
  - h. Name and address of certificate holder;
  - i. Acknowledgment to the DCSD of notice requirements of material adverse change;
  - j. Signature of authorized agent/broker;
  - k. Telephone number of authorized agent/broker; and
  - l. 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:
  - a. **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

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is an approved self-insurer in the State of Georgia.

- b. **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.
  - c. **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.
  - d. **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.
  - e. **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:
    - a. Except for Professional Liability policies, all coverage shall be on an "occurrence" not "claims made" basis;
    - b. 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;
    - c. Shall waive all right of subrogation against Indemnites for any losses arising out of this Agreement;
    - d. All such coverage shall remain in full force and effect during the Term and any renewal or extension thereof; and
    - e. 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 Indemnites.
  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:
    - a. Except as provided otherwise above, minimum limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence \$2,000,000 in the annual aggregate (if applicable) with insurers

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- approved to conduct business in the State of Georgia.
  - b. Contractual liability coverage, specifically referencing this Agreement and the Indemnification herein.
  - c. Shall include Indemnitees as “Additional Insureds.”
  - d. 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



**Chamblee Charter High School Charter Renewal Petition**

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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

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9. **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*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Title*

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chair, DeKalb Board of Education**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Title*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

*DeKalb County School District*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Superintendent, DeKalb County School District**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Title*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

**Chamblee Charter High School Charter Renewal Petition**

**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

2. 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