



APPENDIX D: CHARTER APPLICATION RENEWAL ADDENDUM



Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
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Gordon County Schools

Charter System Renewal Addendum to the Charter System Application

Charter systems applying for renewal will need to fill out a new charter system application and this addendum. This information will allow the Charter Schools Division to assess your charter system's performance during your past charter term and to assess the rigor of proposed new charter goals. Please limit your response to 10 pages total.

PAST PERFORMANCE

1. Please provide a narrative describing how your charter system performed in meeting the academic and performance goals set forth in their previous charter contract. Please provide any charts, tables or graphs that provide quantitative data that can support your narrative. Please make sure to address your system's performance in each year of its charter term.

Gordon County's academic and performance goals as set forth in the original Charter Contract in 2011 are, in most cases, based upon obsolete measures.

Academic Goal 1 was based upon CRCT scores and state AMOs. These measures no longer provide relevant data for use in determining successful achievement; however the data that was available through 2013-14 showed the following results:

Gordon County Schools
Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT)

		Gordon County Data - All Students								Comparative Data	
		2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014		Georgia 2013-2014	
Grade Level	Subject	Exceeds	Meets + Exceeds	Exceeds	Meets + Exceeds	Exceeds	Meets + Exceeds	Exceeds	Meets + Exceeds	Exceeds	Meets + Exceeds
3rd Grade CRT	ELA	33.0%	92.3%	31.3%	91.7%	31.4%	91.2%	31.4%	92.9%	32.40%	88.5%
	Mathematics	45.1%	86.8%	39.6%	78.4%	51.9%	85.5%	46.6%	85.0%	44.00%	80.7%
	Reading	37.8%	97.0%	39.5%	95.7%	52.2%	95.9%	44.7%	97.3%	45.90%	95.2%
	Science	32.8%	87.0%	30.6%	78.7%	32.2%	82.9%	32.8%	78.9%	36.00%	77.2%
	Social Studies	16.3%	85.9%	19.5%	82.4%	27.0%	90.2%	31.6%	85.3%	36.00%	83.7%
4th Grade CRT	ELA	27.2%	89.1%	29.3%	92.7%	35.4%	91.5%	34.1%	90.0%	34.80%	88.8%
	Mathematics	44.0%	84.4%	34.2%	79.6%	41.8%	89.7%	44.5%	85.9%	39.00%	81.6%
	Reading	38.9%	90.6%	41.8%	92.5%	44.9%	93.0%	50.8%	93.8%	52.30%	93.6%
	Science	38.4%	81.6%	42.0%	82.4%	38.3%	82.1%	41.5%	82.5%	42.90%	80.9%
	Social Studies	18.3%	84.2%	19.0%	79.8%	20.9%	81.8%	25.2%	85.2%	30.10%	81.2%
5th Grade	ELA	31.2%	93.7%	37.8%	95.0%	38.1%	96.2%	39.1%	96.5%	39.2%	94.8%
	Mathematics	43.7%	94.6%	38.8%	91.6%	49.2%	96.0%	46.6%	96.7%	44.0%	93.2%



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CRC T	Reading	25.6%	95.6%	29.9%	95.2%	35.9%	98.0%	41.6%	99.1%	41.7%	97.5%
	Science	29.1%	75.9%	38.1%	79.1%	42.4%	84.1%	39.4%	85.2%	42.2%	81.9%
	Social Studies	14.7%	68.1%	18.6%	76.2%	26.3%	87.0%	28.2%	84.4%	26.9%	80.7%
6th Grade CRC T	ELA	26.3%	93.3%	26.0%	94.7%	32.9%	92.8%	30.6%	92.7%	32.3%	91.8%
	Mathematics	24.0%	82.4%	24.4%	85.3%	34.9%	89.0%	31.5%	89.5%	28.3%	84.1%
	Reading	35.1%	97.4%	38.3%	97.2%	44.4%	97.2%	49.6%	98.8%	49.6%	97.2%
	Science	16.9%	83.5%	14.5%	76.5%	22.7%	80.6%	19.4%	79.6%	22.7%	75.1%
	Social Studies	36.6%	78.4%	37.3%	78.9%	40.8%	81.0%	43.9%	85.6%	44.8%	79.8%
7th Grade CRC T	ELA	35.4%	91.9%	38.5%	93.7%	37.2%	92.4%	42.1%	94.7%	47.3%	93.9%
	Mathematics	32.7%	92.1%	36.9%	91.3%	35.3%	89.6%	37.8%	89.0%	37.4%	87.6%
	Reading	19.7%	92.6%	24.8%	97.3%	26.4%	95.9%	37.1%	94.9%	41.7%	94.7%
	Science	40.4%	90.2%	49.9%	91.1%	49.4%	91.1%	51.0%	87.6%	46.2%	84.2%
	Social Studies	43.8%	78.5%	49.2%	85.8%	51.2%	88.1%	56.4%	86.0%	53.0%	83.5%
8th Grade CRC T	ELA	45.5%	94.3%	34.0%	96.2%	39.0%	95.3%	41.8%	96.0%	44.3%	94.5%
	Mathematics	45.7%	93.1%	38.5%	91.4%	40.4%	94.0%	44.7%	90.1%	34.1%	87.3%
	Reading	37.0%	98.9%	43.5%	98.7%	43.2%	98.5%	49.9%	99.1%	53.2%	98.0%
	Science	20.6%	70.9%	15.7%	76.5%	18.4%	77.6%	22.1%	82.3%	25.0%	78.0%
	Social Studies	34.3%	77.1%	41.2%	82.1%	33.1%	80.9%	28.6%	79.0%	36.3%	80.7%

As evidenced in the chart above, Gordon County Schools' students scored consistently higher than the state in all content at all grade levels when comparing the meets and exceeds category. The two areas of focus for the original charter were in the areas of Reading/ELA and math for all tested grade levels. The average scores for all grade levels were considered when the original charter was produced. With this consideration, the goals for the charter were based upon the AMO set by ESA/NCLB. With those AMOs as the target, the goals were not met in reading/ELA, as scores remained a consistent 94%; however, the goal for math was met each year data was available.

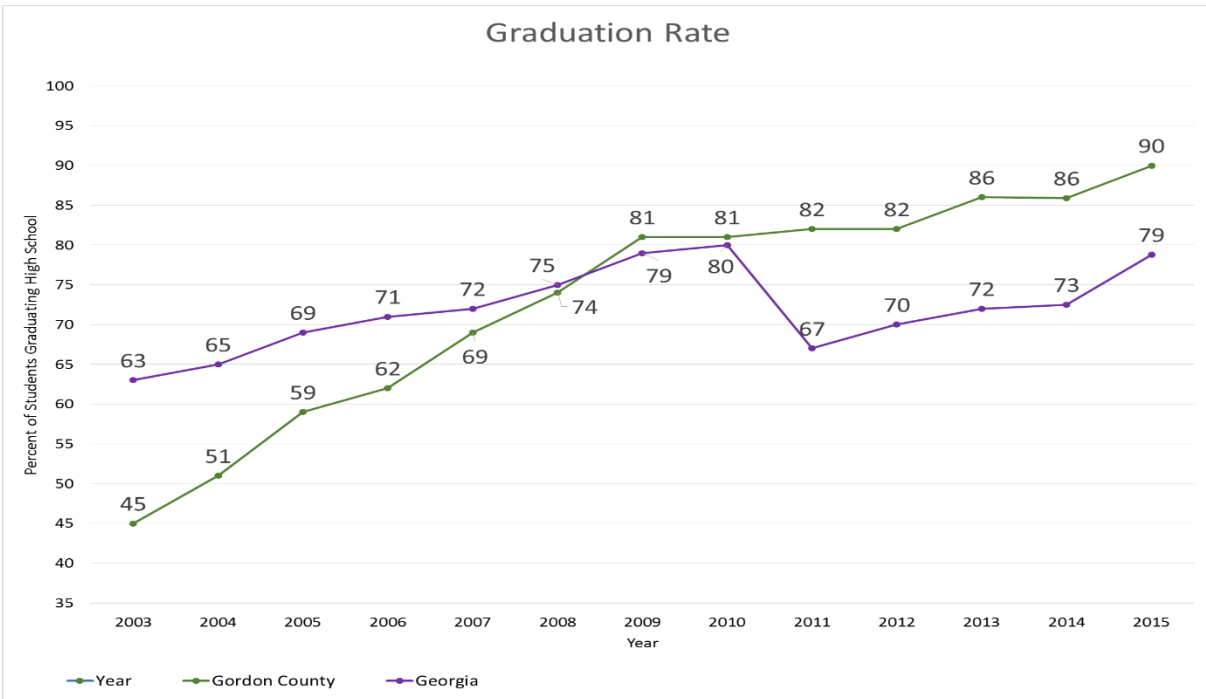
Academic Goal 2 was meant to measure student attendance as defined by AYP. Measure 1 was not made available in a quantifiable form, except to determine that the district met the goal of 95%+ participation for testing during all years of the charter. Measure 2 comes from district attendance records for students. The goal was to decrease the number of students absent more than 15 days in a school year. As evidenced in the Accountability Report Spreadsheet, this goal was met over the first three years of the charter term; however, the last two years have seen a spike in this rate from 3.1-3.67% of students missing 15 or more days in a school year. With the implementation of CCRPI indicators measuring absentee rates for students missing more than 6 days, the measure has changed, but so has the focus. Counselors and graduation coaches have worked on plans during the 15-16 school year to partner with business and industry to "adopt a school" for attendance incentives. Not only with this program ask industry partners to provide attendance incentives, it asks that they provide mentors and man hours to



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assist in promoting attendance, as well as innovative programs to incentivize their employees who have employees in the district. The business partnerships in the district have seen a surge over the last year, with the implementation of the Ford Next Generation Learning Community status and strategic plan for the district preK-12, and the anticipation of the launch of this program is very positive.



Academic Goal 3 placed an emphasis on college and career readiness. The measures included Cohort Graduation Rate and Post-secondary Attendance, as measured by National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker, as well as ACT WorkKeys assessment scores. In the area of graduation rate, Gordon County Schools demonstrated continuous improvement for all students, as well as significant improvement in graduation rates for students with disabilities (SWD).

For postsecondary attendance, there was a change in how the data was collected. During the initial two years of the charter term, the data collection source- National Student Clearinghouse- was provided to the district through the district's affiliation with GACHE. In 2013-14, the data was drawn from the Governor's Office of Student Achievement. That same year, there was a decrease of 3% in the college-going rates for Gordon County Schools. The following year, the rate was back up by 2% to 58% overall. Gordon County Schools' graduation coaches believe this change in measure to account for some of the drop in numbers for this goal.

When the original Gordon County School charter was authored, the ACT Work Keys assessment was given to every senior in the district, and Gordon County was designated a Work Ready community. Shortly after the charter approval, the test was no longer offered to seniors free of charge, and the school district no longer received the data for the exam from the technical college partner for any student who chose to take the assessment for a fee. This has made it impossible to get valid results for this measure.



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The past couple of years of the Charter Annual Report has provided an additional set of data to be considered in the success of the Charter relating to the new State accountability measure- CCRPI. This set of data has provided a more reliable data set from which to measure progress, given the consistency of availability of data. During the 2011-12 school year and the 2012-13 school year, 50% of Gordon County schools Beat the Odds or Met Expectations. In 2013-14, this average dropped to 45%. This may be due, in part, to the calculation of the measure, and it is believed that once 2014-15 scores are released, an increase will be evident.

From 2011-2014, the percentage of Gordon County Schools meeting the target for CCRPI scores has increased each year. In 2011-12, 70% of Gordon County schools met the CCRPI target. In 2012-13, 30% of Gordon County Schools met the target, when discounting the challenge points, but the actual, reported overall averages for CCRPI at each school demonstrated proficiency in all schools except one. In 2013-14, the percentage of those meeting the target without challenge points improved to 82%. However, the district CCRPI score was consistently above state averages for all available data terms.

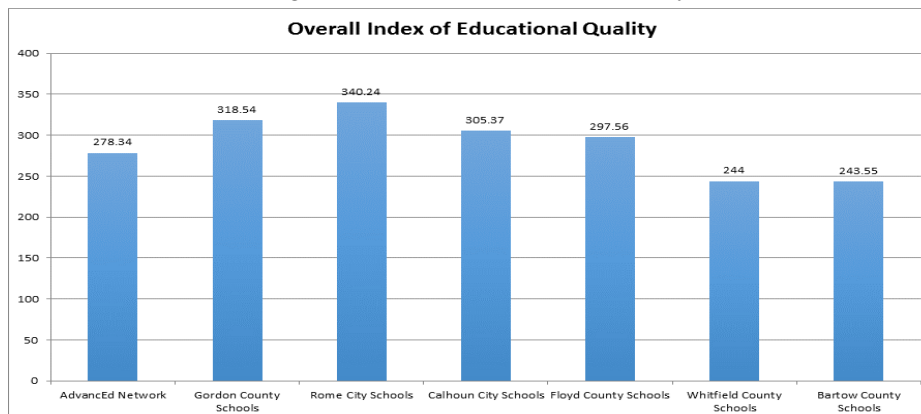
a. *In addition to the narrative above, please fill out the accountability spreadsheet available on the Department's website. The spreadsheet has spaces for your initial charter goals and objectives, as well as your actual progress towards meeting those goals and objectives in each of the first four years. Please be sure to highlight in green those targets which were met in a given year and use red for those that were not met -- and a yellow highlight for those that were close or showed significant growth or progress. This spreadsheet will be presented to the State Board of Education with your charter system application so please ensure its accuracy.*

Accountability Report

b. *If your charter system did not meet all the goals in your charter contract, please explain any mitigating factors to which this can be attributed, and explain how the system plans to address these issues in the next five years if your charter is renewed.*

In the schools that are still below the state targets for CCRPI have experienced changes in the last two years that will positively affect the outcome of this measure. The building principal has changed, therefore the entire climate of the educational environment has improved. There is a renewed focus on instruction and the use of data to inform instructional practices. The school climate has improved, as has employee morale in those buildings. Much of this was validated by the recent AdvancEd External

these
the
Below
chart



Review Team findings in schools, as evidence by overall scores received. is a comparison of school systems in the Gordon County Schools' district that

RESA

have gone through the AdvancEd process over the last two years. The first chart reflects the Overall IEQ

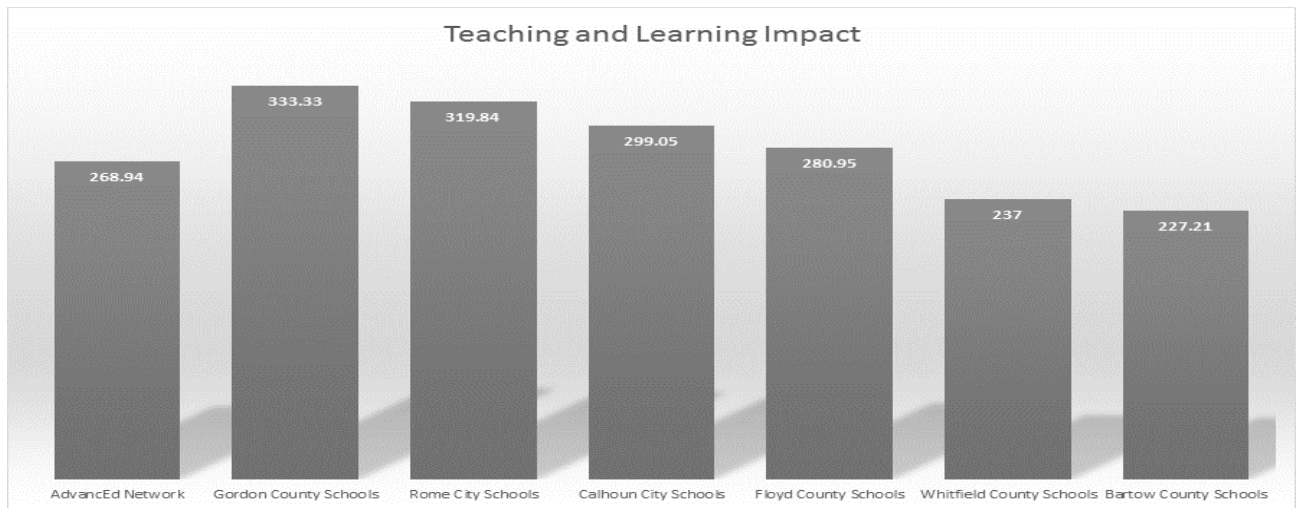


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scores, which takes into account scores on three separate domains: Teaching and Learning Impact, Leadership Capacity, and Resource Utilization. The second chart reflects the core business of any school system- Teaching and Learning Impact.

In



additional effort toward school improvement, Gordon County School embarked on a unique strategic planning process in partnership with Ford Next Generation Learning. The Ford NGL process utilizes a 3-strand approach to strategic planning and school improvement by focusing on the transformation of: Teaching and Learning, High School Redesign, and Business and Civic Engagement. A noteworthy piece of information is that Gordon County Schools is the first community to take the Ford NGL process and implement it system-wide in a PreK-12 environment.

Throughout the strategic planning process in 2014-2015, community members, staff members, and parents worked collaboratively to develop a guiding plan for the district. This process began with a survey and self-assessment. Each strand team gathered information from school staff and stakeholders to determine these ratings. The results hold relevance to the approach Gordon County Schools has taken for improving results on Charter goals, as well as in self-study for goals moving forward to ensure advancements in student achievement and are highlighted below:

Strand One: Transforming Teaching and Learning

The major outline of strand one action plan centers around the goals of teacher externships, problem based learning and professional development. Externship opportunities extended to teachers will provide experiences that serve as inspiration for investigations of significant issues and problems that can be aligned to the state standards. Externships will help bridge an understanding among the teachers. Problem based learning will be an avenue to teach standards that bring real world scenarios to the student, while providing the business partners with college and career ready students.



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Teacher Externships- Support from an active employer guidance advisory committee comprised of leaders from business, civic, and educational sectors that will steer the overall reaching goal of developing teacher externship opportunities for professional development and to help provide inspiration for real world performance based learning projects into the classroom will be needed.

Inquiry Based Learning- Teacher communities focused on the redelivery of externship experiences and the collaboration required to develop real world learning projects to be incorporated within the classroom will be required. Teachers must see inquiry based learning as a means to teaching standards as opposed to distractions.

Professional Learning- It is critical for the success of the externships and performance based learning objectives for the development and sharing of best practices disseminated by teachers to support classroom implementation of problem based learning. Administrators will develop and facilitate orientation/training for faculty promoting understanding of the use of inquiry based learning in the classroom. Additional training meetings for faculty promoting specific methodology of inquiry based learning will include:

1. Inquiry based tasks
2. Performance tasks
3. Real world scenarios such as case studies, project analysis design
4. Engineer solutions to real world scenarios

Emphasis on teamwork and collaboration skills utilized during the process as well as the importance of the written and oral component of the project demonstrating student reflection. Support teachers and students working with open-ended problems and issues that require student to identify problems, clarify, and analyze situations, explore solutions, and evaluate results.

Innovation and Flexibility- Schools will encourage innovation and flexibility by encouraging project based and inquiry based instruction. The schools will promote collaborative discussion among teachers and students to showcase the innovative practice gleaned from industry and education.

Internal and External Awareness- To fully utilize and capitalize on externship experiences and the unique opportunities provided by the CCA to connect student learning to specific career paths, an awareness of the program needs to be shared with the Gordon County community. This should include but not be limited to: students, parents, business partners, home schools, and other educational institutions.

Strand Two: Transforming the Secondary School Experience

The major focus of Strand 2 concerned the cooperation, collaboration, and partnership among students, their families, the Gordon County Schools' (GCS) professional community, local business and industry partners, and post-secondary institutions. By partnering together, these groups can ensure students are prepared for both college & career readiness in the highly competitive, global economy.



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The team focused on developing a plan of action to address the key strategic goals of Gordon County Schools. As part of this process, strand 2's committee focused on the Essential Practices outlined in the Ford Next Generation Learning document and connected those practices to the GCS goals. The desired outcome was to develop a plan that supports an innovative, focused and more personal K-12 experience for the students within Gordon County Schools.

As part of this plan, additional professional learning opportunities will be available to teachers, including:

1. Hands-on experiences within local businesses and industry through teacher externships, tours, collaborative projects, etc. These experiences, when transferred to the classroom, will help ensure students understand local career opportunities, the technical and soft skills necessary for success in those careers.
2. Best practice teaching techniques that can enhance the learning experience, including differentiated instruction, data-driven instructional decision-making, technical writing and Lexile levels, vocabulary instruction, etc.

Additionally, students will have increased access to the following:

1. Work-based learning, job shadowing, internships, industry-related experiences, etc.
2. Attendance incentives sponsored by business and community organizations
3. Advanced academic credit such as high school credit for middle school students and college credit for high school students
4. Tutoring and credit recovery opportunities

Students, local business & industry, and the community will reap the benefits of this work which in turn will have a significant impact on the continued growth of the local economy and community.

Strand Three: Transforming Business and Civic Engagement

The Strand 3 team focused on the integration of business and community support into the transformation of the PreK-12th grade school experience in Gordon County. These efforts to add corporate relevance to our school's curriculum were the focus of the strand's work. The outcome of the work led to a culmination of strategies that support the work of both strands one and two to ensure business and community partners are supportive and engaged in the opportunities designed by the other two strand teams. The work of this team will establish several new entities that will oversee the involvement of business and industry, as well as postsecondary partners, in the overall master plan implementation:

1. **Industry Councils:** Industry Councils (IC) provide standards to Georgia Northwestern Technical College (GNTC), Georgia Highlands College, and other participating post-secondary institutions, and Gordon County Schools (GCS) Pathway Courses to create ongoing curriculum used by Gordon County Schools and dual enrollment programs for GCS students.
2. **Senior Community Leadership Committee (SCLC):** The SCLC will be made up of senior community and business leaders who will meet bi-annually to review implementation status of the master plan. They will appoint mid-level employees of their companies to serve on industry councils and recruit from other business and community partners to serve as well.
3. **Master Plan Implementation Team-** collect and summarize Master Plan data into a "dashboard" 60 days prior to each biannual SCLC meeting.



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4. Business and Community Relations Coordinator- coordinate all interaction of business and community with schools in the district, plan marketing events, host informational meetings for both community and schools, coordinate biannual SCLC meetings and IC meetings.

Additionally, strand 3's tactical plan addressed securing funding to support the implementation of these entities, as well as scholarships for both advanced technical preparation to include tuition for both college and training programs, as well as for tools or other items need to pursue such training.

2. *Please provide a brief overview of your system's current organizational structure. Please provide a summary of any organizational or governance changes that your system made since the beginning of your charter term.*

Gordon County Schools has been operating as a charter school system for the past five years. Upon receipt of renewal of the application, the system will continue to operate as a charter system for the next ten years. The original governance structure for Gordon County Schools included a school advisory council, a school governance council, a system design team, the superintendent, and the local board of education. The experience gained while operating under the current governance structure indicated that modifications were needed to support the distributed leadership decision-making structure. Removing the school advisory and system design teams simplifies the structure, which allows more control for the local school governing teams, based upon the new requirements of the school governance matrix. Under the current Charter, each school has a governance team that acts upon minimum-moderate operational authority. Currently, LSGTs meet regularly; however, consistency among each LSGT is not evident.

3. *If you have received communications from the State regarding compliance issues and/or the limits of your broad flexibility during the past charter term, please explain what steps were taken to remedy these issues and/or address those limits, and what steps the system took to ensure such situations do not recur in the future.*

NONE RECEIVED

4. *Please state whether the system's charter was amended via a formal amendment or an administrative clarification during the past charter term. Please explain the reasoning for the changes to the charter contract and how they have benefited the system.*

NO FORMAL AMENDMENT OBTAINED

PROPOSED CHANGES

5. *Please briefly describe any substantial changes that your charter system proposes to implement in its next charter term in the areas of academics, governance and operations.*

The major change affecting charter status will be in the governance structure. LSGTs will no longer need an advisory council meeting to obtain input for recommendations for discussion in LSGT meetings, and those recommendations can be made directly to the Board of Education (BOE).

Under this new structure, the BOE will play a more active role governance structure, hence affording a more direct line for LSGTs to provide feedback to the Board of Education. With this model, the local board of education will receive all recommendations of the LSGT, including the annual report.

Additional changes are in the area of performance goals. Rather than the measures that were used in the previous charter, Gordon County Schools' focus will be on CCRPI (and pertinent indicators) and Beating the Odds as outlined in Charter application.

6. *Please provide a brief rationale for any changes planned.*



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Under this new governance structure, the BOE will play a more active role governance structure, hence affording a more direct line for LSGTs to provide feedback to the Board of Education. With this model, the local board of education will receive all recommendations of the LSGT, including the annual report. It is believed this will bring more viable authority for LSGTs to work in conjunction with the Board of Education for sustainable change to the school district.

Changes to performance goals will be more aligned to state accountability and will provide more pertinent, sustainable data to be utilized to show growth over the course of the charter term.

7. *Please briefly describe how your system will implement these proposed changes to serve the needs of its students for the upcoming charter term.*

Implementation of new performance measures will be outlined through district leadership team and strategic planning retreats/planning meetings, and are by default, a part of the school improvement process practiced in the district.

Training will be provided to ensure that all members of the LSGT understand their role as a governing body and have the information necessary to make good decisions about the operations of the school. The training schedule will be as follows:

DISTRICT AND PRINCIPAL TRAINING on new structure and bylaws requirements: Summer 2016
BOARD OF EDUCATION TRAINING on new governance structure and BOE interaction requirements:

New Members:

SYSTEM LEVEL TRAINING

August 2016- New member orientation on duties and responsibilities and conduct for effective meetings;
Charter 101

April 2017- System Master Plan Retreat

Existing Members:

SYSTEM LEVEL TRAINING

August 2016- Orientation for new bylaws and governance structure;

April 2017- System Master Plan Retreat

ALL Members: SCHOOL LEVEL TRAINING

August 2016- School Operations- safety and security procedures, principal management of school, and student/school support services

September 2016- Curriculum and Instruction- educational initiatives, curriculum expectations, assessment programs and instructional models

October 2016- School Improvement Planning- alignment to System Strategic Plan, CCRPI and School Improvement Plan

November 2016- Community Engagement- parent engagement strategies, activities, and federal compliance

January 2017- Financial Decisions and Resource Allocation- education funding with local, state, and federal funds; budget development and implementation

February 2017- Personnel Decisions- resource overview including technology, personnel earnings with state funds, employment/termination process, Teacher Keys Evaluation System, and Professional Learning

March 2017- Needs Assessment

June 2017- LSGT Retreat

Topics for each month will continue into each charter year, with updates provided annually