



Charter System Application

DISTRICT NAME

Catoosa County Public Schools

DISTRICT ADDRESS

P. O. Box 130
307 Cleveland Street
Ringgold, GA 30736

Dr. John D. Barge
State School Superintendent

JULY 2014

CATOOSA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Application Package checklist

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

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

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

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CHARTER SYSTEM APPLICATION
COVER SHEET

Please enter the requested information in the gray boxes following each question. Thank you!

Proposed Charter System Information			
1. Full Name of Proposed Charter System Catoosa County Charter System			
2. Please indicate whether this is a: New Petition <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or a Renewal Petition		3. How many schools in total are you proposing to include in your charter system? 16	
4. How many of each of the following schools are you proposing to include in your charter system?			
Primary School(s) 2		Middle School(s) 3	
Elementary School(s) 8		High school(s) 3	
5. On July 1 of what year do you want your charter contract to be effective? 2016			
6. How many years are you proposing for the term of your charter contract? (Note that an initial charter cannot exceed five years) 5			
7. Charter System Street Address 307 Cleveland Street	8. City Ringgold	9. State GA	10. Zip 30736
11. Contact Person: Denia Reese		12. Title: Superintendent	
13. Contact Street Address 307 Cleveland Street	14. City Ringgold	15. State GA	16. Zip 30736
17. Contact's telephone number 706-935-0679	18. Contact's fax number 706-965-8913	19. Contact's E-mail Address dreese@catoosa.k12.ga.us	

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CHARTER SYSTEM APPLICATION

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

The Case

Catoosa County is located along the Tennessee border in northwest Georgia. Catoosa is approximately 15 minutes south of Chattanooga, TN, and the county is included in the Chattanooga MSA. With heavily traveled Interstate 75 intersecting the county, Catoosa County is considered to be the “Gateway to Georgia.”

The county’s population in 2014 was 65,621 making Catoosa County the 35th most populated county in Georgia. The county’s population is 93.7% White, 2.8% Black/African American, and 2.8% Hispanic. The median household income, 2009-2013, was \$47,087 compared to \$49,179 for the state. In 2014, 13.9% of individuals in Catoosa County were living in poverty.

With 82.3% of individuals age 25 and older graduating from high school (or higher), the county is slightly below the state’s 84.7%. The number of individuals with a Bachelor’s degree or higher (17.5%) is also less than the state (28.0%).

Catoosa County Public Schools (CCPS) currently serves 10,823 students, ranking the system as the 33rd largest in the state. Enrollment in the school system has remained relatively steady for the past five years. Almost 50% of students enrolled in the system receive free or reduced lunch. Three of the system’s elementary schools exceed 70% of students on free and reduced lunch.

The system consists of 16 schools and two alternative campuses, the Performance Learning Center (PLC) and Catoosa Online Academy (COA). Students attending the PLC or COA receive a diploma from one of the county’s three traditional high schools. At 85%, the graduation rate is the highest in the county’s history.

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The system's vision is: Catoosa County Public Schools will prepare every child to reach their full potential, so they graduate prepared to be good citizens and leaders of the future.

The system's mission is: Catoosa County Public Schools is a student-focused learning community, where excellence is expected from staff and students, every day, without exception.

The system also developed a value promise so everyone in the system understands their role to achieve the vision and mission: Every child, every day, without exception.

Catoosa County Public Schools sees charter system status as a great opportunity for our district. With more input from our parents and community, and broad flexibility to be innovative, CCPS can overcome challenges in our system to improve student achievement.

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

#	Question	Challenge #1	Challenge #2	Challenge #3
1	What challenges is your school district facing?	Increasing the number of students who graduate high school prepared for career and/or college	Preparing students and teachers to use 21st century technology productively	Providing academic programs and support to improve student achievement
2	What is the rank order priority of these challenges (from most to least important)?	1	2	3
3	Which of these challenges will your school district be able to address by becoming a charter system?	✓	✓	✓
4	What specific actions will your district take to address each of these challenges (listed in #3 above) during its five-year charter term?	<p>1.1: Catoosa U: Authentic work experience through internships in the school system that will be paid by CCPS</p> <p>1.2: Partnerships with Georgia Post-Secondary Schools: Move on When Ready, Dual Enrollment, and National Industry Certification on CCPS Campuses</p> <p>1.3: From Here to CAREER!: Partnership with area businesses to increase student exposure to career opportunities (K-12)</p>	<p>2.1 Let's Get CONNECTed!: Initiative to transform our classrooms into digital learning environments</p> <p>2.2 Professional learning: Targeted professional development to train teachers to use 21st century tools effectively and to integrate technology in the classroom to enhance instruction</p>	<p>3.1 Middle School Catoosa Online Academy (COA): Middle school students earn high school credits through blended learning</p> <p>3.2 STEM: Increase the number of certified teachers and explore STEM certified schools</p> <p>3.3 Flexible scheduling: Individualized learning and expanded learning opportunities to improve student achievement</p>

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<p>5</p>	<p>Provide a clear explanation of how each of these specific actions (listed in #4 above) will lead to the specific challenge being addressed.</p>	<p>1.1 Catoosa U will provide the opportunity for students to participate in “real-world” work experience while receiving high school course credit. Students will be “hired” by the department in charge of the internship (e.g. technology) to participate in <i>Catoosa U</i>, and the students will be paid by CCPS while in the work program.</p> <p>These experiences will help students determine their interest in different careers, learn specialized job-related skills, and learn soft skills needed to be successful in college and career (e.g. communication skills, interpersonal skills, and team work).</p> <p>1.2 Partnerships with Georgia Post-Secondary Schools: By partnering with post-secondary schools, students can participate in classes in their field of interest and earn college credit, national industry certification, or an Associate’s degree. These students will graduate from high school prepared for a career or college.</p> <p>Students who participate in dual enrollment will take more rigorous college classes. These students will receive college credit, and they will be better prepared for college level work.</p> <p>1.3: From Here to CAREER!: CCPS will seek partnerships to provide career awareness and exploration opportunities for students in</p>	<p>2.1 Let’s Get CONNECTed! To meet the needs of today’s students and the expectations of our stakeholders from our 2013 strategic plan survey, CCPS committed to the “Let’s Get CONNECTed!” initiative to transform our classrooms into digital learning environments. The initiative includes tablets and Chromebooks, digital classroom platforms, and updated Wi-Fi and infrastructure.</p> <p>Using a digital classroom platform, students learn to use 21st century technology and they will develop other skills they need in college and career, including: organization, time management, and digital communication with teachers and peers.</p> <p>2.2 Professional Learning: Traditional teaching and learning methods have become less effective in engaging students and motivating them to achieve success. Let’s Get CONNECTed! will not improve student success unless teachers understand how to use 21st Century tools effectively and have strategies to integrate technology in the classroom to enhance instruction. With the implementation of Let’s Get CONNECTed!, professional learning budgets and local professional learning will</p>	<p>3.1 Middle School COA: Middle and High Schools will work closely to align curriculum so students earn dual credit. To improve the graduation rate, some students identified as “at-risk” will be targeted to participate in this program so they have a “jump start” in high school.</p> <p>The Middle School COA will also enable students preparing for college to complete high school prerequisites in middle school. When these students enter high school, they can take more rigorous classes in their field of interest to be prepared for college.</p> <p>3.2 STEM: A number of CCPS teachers are STEM certified. Students in these classes are learning to think critically and problem solve. STEM lessons, workshops, and camps provide engaging, real-world experiences for students that encourage mastery of STEM related standards at high levels. Based on the success in individual classrooms, some of our schools may seek school-wide STEM certification. With Charter flexibility, STEM classes and schools have the opportunity to provide rigorous STEM lessons without constraints, such as minimum seat time.</p> <p>3.3: Flexible Scheduling to Individualize Student Learning: Using technology and Charter</p>
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		<p>grades K-12. <i>From Here to CAREER!</i> partners will deliver career-specific presentations and provide “field trip” opportunities for students. We expect that helping students make the connection between “campus and career” will motivate students to stay in school and graduate.</p>	<p>focus on using technology to engage students and improve performance across the curriculum.</p>	<p>flexibility CCPS will provide opportunities for students to accelerate, remediate, and participate in high interest subjects and electives (e.g. foreign language). Flexibility will include but not be limited to: the design of scheduling, instructional materials and resources, and instructional strategies.</p>
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<p>6</p>	<p>Although you will be granted a broad flexibility waiver if you are granted a charter, please list the specific Georgia law or State Board rule that must be waived to allow your district to implement each specific action (listed in #4 above).</p>	<p>1.1: Catoosa U</p> <p><u>School Day and Year for Students and Employees</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20- 2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))</p> <p><u>School Attendance, Compulsory Attendance as it relates to the attendance protocol</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.2)</p> <p><u>Graduation Requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47 and 160-4-2-.48)</p> <p><u>Scheduling for Instruction</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)</p> <p><u>Class-size and Reporting requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)</p> <p>1.2: Partnerships with Georgia Post-Secondary Schools</p> <p><u>School Day and Year for Students and Employees</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20- 2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))</p> <p><u>School Attendance, Compulsory Attendance as it relates to the attendance protocol</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.2)</p> <p><u>Graduation Requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47 and 160-4-</p>	<p>2.1: Let's Get CONNECTed!</p> <p><u>School Day and Year for Students and Employees</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20- 2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))</p> <p><u>School Attendance, Compulsory Attendance as it relates to the attendance protocol</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.2)</p> <p><u>Graduation Requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47 and 160-4-2-.48)</p> <p><u>Competencies and Core Curriculum, Online Learning</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-140.1, 20-2-142, and 20-2-777; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.12 and 160-4-2-.20)</p> <p><u>Scheduling for Instruction</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)</p> <p><u>QBE Financing</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161)</p> <p><u>Expenditure Controls</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167 and 20-2-171; SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.29)</p> <p><u>Categorical Allotment requirements</u> (Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20)</p> <p><u>Educational Programs</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, 20-2-153, 20-2-154, 20-2-154.1, 20-2-155, and 20-2-156; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.17, 160-4-2-.38, 160-4-5-.01 and 160-4-5-.02)</p>	<p>3.1: Middle School Catoosa Online Academy (COA)</p> <p><u>Middle School Program Criteria</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-290, 20-14-33; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.05)</p> <p><u>Competencies and Core Curriculum, Online Learning</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-140.1, 20-2-142, and 20-2-777; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.12 and 160-4-2-.20)</p> <p><u>Scheduling for Instruction</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)</p> <p><u>QBE Financing</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161)</p> <p><u>Expenditure Controls</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167 and 20-2-171; SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.29)</p> <p><u>Categorical Allotment requirements</u> (Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20)</p> <p><u>Educational Programs</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, 20-2-153, 20-2-154, 20-2-154.1, 20-2-155, and 20-2-156; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.17, 160-4-2-.38, 160-4-5-.01 and 160-4-5-.02)</p> <p><u>Class-size and Reporting requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)</p> <p><u>Program Enrollment & Appropriation</u> (O.C.G.A. §</p>
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		<p>2-.48)</p> <p><u>Scheduling for Instruction</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)</p> <p><u>Class-size and Reporting requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)</p> <p><u>Program Enrollment & Appropriation</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160)</p> <p>1.3: From Here to CAREER!</p> <p><u>School Day and Year for Students and Employees</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20- 2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))</p> <p><u>School Attendance, Compulsory Attendance as it relates to the attendance protocol</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.2)</p> <p><u>Graduation Requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47 and 160-4-2-.48)</p> <p><u>Scheduling for Instruction</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)</p> <p><u>Class-size and Reporting requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-</p>	<p>.01 and 160-4-5-.02)</p> <p><u>Class-size and Reporting requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)</p> <p><u>Program Enrollment & Appropriation</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160)</p> <p>2.2: Targeted Professional Development</p> <p><u>School Day and Year for Students and Employees</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20- 2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))</p> <p><u>Expenditure Controls</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167 and 20-2-171; SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.29)</p>	<p>20-2-160)</p> <p>Action 3.2: STEM</p> <p><u>School Day and Year for Students and Employees</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20- 2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))</p> <p><u>Scheduling for Instruction</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)</p> <p><u>Class-size and Reporting requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)</p> <p>Waivers Action 3.3: Flexible Scheduling to Individualize Student Learning</p> <p><u>School Day and Year for Students and Employees</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20- 2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))</p> <p><u>Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Program</u> (except as prohibited by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-82(e) and SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.12)</p> <p><u>School Attendance, Compulsory Attendance as it relates to the attendance protocol</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.2)</p> <p><u>ELL Program Requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20- 2-156)</p> <p><u>Middle School Program Criteria</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-290, 20-14-33; SBOE Rule</p>
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		1-.22)		<p>160-4-2-.05)</p> <p><u>Instructional Extension</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-184.1; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.14)</p> <p><u>Graduation Requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47 and 160-4-2-.48)</p> <p><u>Competencies and Core Curriculum, Online Learning</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-140.1, 20-2-142, and 20-2-777; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.12 and 160-4-2-.20)</p> <p><u>Scheduling for Instruction</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)</p> <p><u>Promotion and Retention</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and 20-2-284; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11)</p> <p><u>QBE Financing</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161)</p> <p><u>Expenditure Controls</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167 and 20-2-171; SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.29)</p> <p><u>Categorical Allotment requirements</u> (Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20)</p> <p><u>Educational Programs</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, 20-2-153, 20-2-154, 20-2-154.1, 20-2-155, and 20-2-156; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.17, 160-4-2-.38, 160-4-5-.01 and 160-4-5-.02)</p> <p><u>Class-size and Reporting requirements</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695,</p>
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				and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22) <u>Program Enrollment & Appropriation</u> (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160)
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<p>7</p>	<p>Indicate the timeline for implementation of each specific action (listed in #4 above).</p>	<p>1.1: Catoosa U <u>2016-2017:</u> Pilot Catoosa U with Tech Teams <u>2017- forward:</u> Expand Catoosa U to include other internships 1.2: Partnerships with Georgia Post-Secondary Schools <u>2016-2017:</u> Move on When Ready Dual Enrollment Partnerships are formed, and transportation to GNTC begins <u>2017-2018:</u> GNTC will provide classes for CCPS teachers to earn credentials to teach classes leading to National Industry Certification <u>2018-forward:</u> Each high school offers classes leading to National Industry Certification on their campus 1.3: From Here to CAREER! <u>2016-2017:</u> CCPS will identify a pilot group of business partners and develop a plan to launch <i>From Here to CAREER!</i> <u>2017-2018:</u> Pilot program in a middle school with 1-2 partners and make adjustments as necessary <u>2018-2020:</u> Launch <i>From Here to CAREER!</i> <u>2018-2020:</u> Seek new partners from major Chattanooga businesses to participate in the program (e.g. Memorial Hospital,</p>	<p>Action 2.1: Let's Get CONNECTed! (Assuming ESPLOST IV passes March 1, 2016) <u>2016-2017:</u> Purchase and set-up technology, and begin implementation of digital classroom platform. Rollout will take place as follows: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12 <u>2017 – 2018:</u> Purchase and provide technology for 9 – 12 (with the goal of students receiving Chromebook when they receive their schedule in August). 2.2: Targeted Professional Development <u>2016- Forward:</u> CCPS teachers who are utilizing technology effectively will model instruction in other schools. The system will pay substitutes, as necessary, so the “experts” can model technology integration in the classroom <u>2016:-forward:</u> Annual system-wide Instructional Fair focused on teachers using technology effectively and integrating technology in the classroom</p>	<p>3.1: Middle School Catoosa Online Academy (COA) <u>2016 – 2017:</u> Pilot Middle School COA in one school <u>2017 – forward:</u> Launch COA in all middle schools 3.2: STEM <u>2016-2017:</u> Increase the number of STEM certified teachers <u>2017-2018:</u> Determine a pilot school to research STEM school certification <u>2018 – Forward:</u> Begin STEM school certification in interested schools 3.3: Flexible Scheduling to Individualize Student Learning <u>2016 – Forward:</u> identify areas where flexibility is necessary with the goal of incorporating some flexibility in the 2016-2017 schedule <u>2016-2017:</u> Local School Governance Councils determine interest and explore electives that would be beneficial to their student demographic <u>2017- forward:</u> The system will develop all schedules with flexibility required to maximize individualized student learning</p>
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		Amazon, US Express, BCBS, and TVA)		
8	Indicate which of these specific actions (listed in #4 above) represents an innovation for your school district.	<p>1.1: <i>Catoosa U</i></p> <p>1.2: Partnerships with Georgia Post-Secondary Schools</p> <p>1.3: <i>From Here to CAREER!</i></p>	<p>2.1: <i>Let's Get CONNECTed!</i></p> <p>2.2: Targeted Professional Development</p>	<p>3.1: Middle School Catoosa Online Academy (COA)</p> <p>3.2: STEM</p> <p>3.3: Flexible Scheduling to Individualize Student Learning</p>

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1. What challenges is your school district facing?

- Provide a brief description of the specific issues that, if resolved, would allow you to consider your school district a complete success.

Catoosa County Public Schools (CCPS) engaged in the strategic planning process in 2013-2014. An important part of this process was listening to stakeholders to develop the “Bringing the Future into Focus” 5-year strategic plan. The system surveyed teachers, parents, businesses, and the community and received 1,629 responses (representing a 95% confidence interval with a 2.4% margin of error), and the superintendent presented the results to each school and to community groups, including the Chamber of Commerce.

The first survey question asked, “What are the greatest challenges or issues the school district faces to provide a quality education for all students?” The top five responses were: preparing students for a global economy, providing academic programs and support to improve student achievement, providing up-to-date technology, maintaining safe and secure schools, and addressing family situations that impact student achievement. The community responses from the survey were considered to develop the challenges in this application.

The strategies to address the challenges align with the school system’s “Bringing the Future into Focus” strategic plan. If the Charter is approved, CCPS will review and update the strategic plan based on the opportunity for broad flexibility. The system will listen to Local School Governance Teams (LSGTs) to determine additional innovative and individualized strategies, appropriate for the school’s demographics, to improve student achievement.

Challenge #1: Graduating students who are prepared for college and career

The primary responsibility for K-12 education is to prepare students for their future. To be college- and career-ready, high school graduates must have access to a rigorous and broad curriculum that is grounded in the core academic disciplines, but also consists of elective, high-interest, and accelerated subjects to create a well-rounded education.

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Additionally, with the growing complexity of a global digital economy and the increasing demands of the 21st century workforce, educators must understand that the skills graduates need to be successful in 2016 are very different than the skills they needed even ten years ago. Today's students must be proficient in the traditional 3Rs, but colleges and employers also expect students who are proficient in the 4Cs – critical thinking/problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity/innovation skills.

With broad charter system flexibility, CCPS can increase opportunities for students to access a well-rounded and rigorous curriculum, and we can also provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge while developing proficiency in the 4Cs in “real world” situations.

Challenge #2: Preparing students and teachers to use 21st century technology productively

Technology is ingrained in our culture, it is part of our student's identity. Students use their smart phones and devices to surf the Internet, instant message, listen to music, watch videos, and stay connected through social networking. Students are using digital devices for life and learning everywhere, except at school.

To prepare our students to be successful in a digital society, students and teachers must use technology productively in our classrooms to access information, produce knowledge, and share their ideas and work with others. To accomplish this goal, CCPS must train teachers to use 21st Century tools, teach strategies to integrate technology in instruction, provide a digital device for every teacher and student, and transition students from consumers of information to creative owners and producers of knowledge.

Challenge #3: Providing academic programs and support to improve student achievement

Today's classrooms are filled with students of varying interests, backgrounds, abilities, and learning needs. Traditional whole class instruction does not address the individual learning needs of a diverse population of students. To engage all students, instructional methods must be as diverse as the

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students. With today's technology, educators have many opportunities to differentiate and individualize student learning.

CCPS has developed a technology initiative to provide the tools to individualize student learning. With the broad flexibility of a Charter System, CCPS can utilize computer-based classes, blended learning, and virtual learning as delivery models to accelerate, remediate, and provide alternative options to individualize instruction.

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

Challenge #1: Graduating students who are prepared for college and career

Challenge #2: Preparing students and teachers to use 21st century technology productively

Challenge #3: Providing academic programs and support to improve student achievement

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

Challenge #1: Graduating students who are prepared for college and career

Challenge #2: Preparing students and teachers to use 21st century technology productively

Challenge #3: Providing academic programs and support to improve student achievement

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

Challenge #1: Graduating students who are prepared for college and career

Action 1.1: *Catoosa U*: Authentic work experience through internships in Catoosa County schools that are paid by CCPS

Action 1.2: Partnerships with Georgia Post-Secondary Schools: Move on When Ready, Dual Enrollment, and National Industry Certification on CCPS Campuses

Action 1.3: *From Here to CAREER!*: Partnership with area businesses to increase student exposure to career opportunities (K-12)

Challenge #2: Teaching students and teachers to use technology productively

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Action 2.1: Let's Get CONNECTed!: Technology initiative to transform CCPS classrooms into digital learning environments

Action 2.2: Targeted Professional Development: Professional development focused on training teachers to use 21st Century technology productively and to incorporate technology in instruction to enhance student learning

Challenge #3: Providing academic programs and support to improve student achievement

Action 3.1: Middle School Catoosa Online Academy (COA): Middle school students participate in blended learning to earn high school course credit while in middle school

Action 3.2: STEM: Increase the number of STEM certified teachers and explore STEM certified schools

Action 3.3: Flexible Scheduling to Individualize Student Learning: Using technology and Charter flexibility to accelerate, remediate, and to offer high interest subjects and electives

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

Challenge #1: Graduating students who are prepared for college and career

Action 1.1: Catoosa U: CCPS has planned a technology initiative that includes a tablet or Chromebook for every student, digital classroom platforms in every class, and infrastructure upgrades. The initiative will dramatically increase the number of digital devices in the system, which raised the need for additional tech support in our schools. Through the process of thinking innovatively for the Charter application, a paid student internship program developed – *Catoosa U*.

Students with work experience are usually more successful in the job market. *Catoosa U* will provide the opportunity for students to participate in “real-world” work experience while receiving high school course credit. Students will be “hired” by the department in charge of the

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internship (e.g. technology) to participate in *Catoosa U*, and the students will be paid by CCPS while in the work program.

These internships will help students determine their interest in different careers, learn specialized job-related skills, and learn soft skills needed to be successful in college and career (e.g. communication skills, interpersonal skills, and team work). In addition to benefitting students, *Catoosa U* should benefit CCPS and our community since high school graduates will have skills necessary to enter the local workforce.

Initially this innovative program included high school students who could support the *Let's Get CONNECTed!* technology initiative. As the idea developed, CCPS leaders realized that *Catoosa U* could include internships from a number of high school CTAE programs (including but not limited to):

- Technology: Tech Teams provide hardware & software support in every CCPS school
- Broadcast Journalism: High schools supporting elementary school news programs
- Medical: High school CNA students serving at Catoosa's Tiger Care School-Based Healthcare Clinic
- Education: High school students in the Early Childhood Education Program tutoring elementary students
- Agriscience: High school horticulture students maintaining the school system's landscaping

Action 1.2: Partnerships with Georgia Post-Secondary Schools: CCPS will increase the number of students who participate in Move on When Ready, Dual Enrollment, and National Industry Certification on CCPS Campuses.

- Move On When Ready (MOWR): CCPS will enter a dual enrollment partnership with Georgia post-secondary schools to increase the number of students participating in MOWR. Students choosing this pathway will participate in CTAE and advanced academic classes.

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Students completing this pathway graduate from high school with an Associate's degree, a technical diploma, or an industry certificate, so they are prepared to continue post-secondary education or enter the work-force with training and certification. With the new Georgia Northwestern Technical College (GNTC) campus in Catoosa County, the school system is planning to provide transportation to enable more students to participate in this program.

- **Dual Enrollment:** CCPS will encourage college-bound students to take more rigorous classes through dual enrollment to be better prepared for college-level work, and to have a “jump start” on credits when they enter college.
- **National Industry Certification:** To increase the number of students who graduate with a National Industry Recognized Certificate, CCPS will partner with GNTC. Catoosa County teachers will earn credentials from GNTC to teach classes leading to National Industry Certification in CCPS high schools. Essentially, CCPS teachers become adjunct professors for GNTC teaching classes on our school campuses.

Action 1.3: *From Here to CAREER!* CCPS has enjoyed local business and community support through our Partners in Education Program, Partnership 2000, for almost 30 years. During the strategic planning process, the system determined that it is difficult for some students to make the connection between “campus and career.” With the system’s strong business partnerships, an initiative developed to increase student exposure to careers in grades K-12 as appropriate for the grade level- *From Here to CAREER!*

Since Catoosa County is in the Chattanooga MSA, CCPS will also seek new partners from major Chattanooga businesses to provide a broader range of career awareness and exploration opportunities (e.g. Memorial Hospital, Amazon, US Express, BCBS, and TVA). With Charter flexibility and waiving seat time requirements, *From Here to CAREER!* partners will deliver career-specific presentations in our schools and provide “field trip” opportunities for students.

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CCPS will also explore job shadowing and internships with these partners. We expect that helping students make the connection between “campus and career” will motivate students to stay in school and graduate.

Challenge #2: Preparing students and teachers to use 21st century technology productively

Action 2.1: *Let's Get CONNECTed!* To meet the needs of today's students and the expectations of our stakeholders based on our 2013 strategic plan survey, CCPS committed to the “*Let's Get CONNECTed!*” technology initiative to transform our classrooms into digital learning environments. This initiative, which includes tablets and Chromebooks, digital classroom platforms, and updated Wi-Fi and infrastructure, will be funded when the system passes the fifth ESPLOST referendum (March 1, 2016).

With 1:1 devices and digital classroom platforms, CCPS will create a “Learning without Limits” environment. Utilizing blended, hybrid, and virtual delivery models, CCPS can provide learning alternatives, using non-traditional strategies, so students can learn “anywhere and anytime” they have access to Wi-Fi. The digital classroom platform allows students to have some control over the place and pace of learning. Students also learn skills they need to be successful in college and career, including: organization, time management, and appropriate digital communication.

Utilizing the flexibility of the Charter, the system will explore opportunities to use technology to remove attendance and other barriers that keep students from graduating. Becoming a Charter System will allow CCPS to maximize the investment in technology to improve student learning, to increase the graduation rate, and to prepare students for the demands of a digital global workplace.

Action 2.2: Targeted Professional Development: Traditional teaching and learning methods have become less effective in engaging students and motivating them to achieve success. Our teachers are responsible for preparing students for their future in a digital world with global

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connectivity. *Let's Get CONNECTed!* will not improve student success unless teachers understand how to use 21st century tools effectively, and they must develop strategies to integrate technology in the classroom to enhance instruction.

Prior to the launch of *Let's Get CONNECTed!*, CCPS piloted 1:1 technology with a digital classroom in all schools. We have an active technology committee and “teacher experts” in every school. We will use these experts to train other teachers, and CCPS will pay for substitutes, if necessary, to provide training in-the-classroom.

CCPS has hosted an Instructional Fair for teachers during in-service every other year. The 2015 Instructional Fair focused on integrating technology in the classroom, and it was a huge success (@CCPSIF). To ensure success for the *Let's Get CONNECTed!* initiative, CCPS will host an annual instructional fair focused on using technology in the classroom.

With limited professional learning budgets, CCPS developed a robust catalog of professional learning opportunities within the system. Local professional learning has been focused on best practices in instruction (writing, math, reading, etc.). With the implementation of *Let's Get CONNECTed!*, local professional learning will focus on using technology to engage students and improve performance across the curriculum.

Challenge #3: Providing academic programs and support to improve student achievement

Action 3.1: Middle School Catoosa Online Academy (COA): CCPS opened the High School Catoosa Online Academy in the 2013-2014 school year to meet the needs of 9th – 12th grade students who needed a flexible schedule and to provide elective and accelerated courses students requested that were not available in their high schools. COA students complete all assignments online, and they have access to a teacher in a lab for assistance and testing. The program has

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been very successful, and with the flexibility of the Charter, COA will be expanded to middle schools.

To launch the Middle School COA, middle and high schools will work closely to align curriculum so students earn dual credit. To improve the graduation rate, some students identified as “at-risk” will be targeted to participate in this program so they have a “jump start” on high school.

This program will also enable gifted and high-performing students preparing for college to complete high school prerequisites in middle school. When these students enter high school, they can take more rigorous classes in their field of interest to be prepared for college.

The program will be piloted in one middle school with the goal of providing a Middle School COA on every middle school campus.

Action 3.2: STEM: A number of CCPS teachers are STEM certified, and they are seeing great results from this hands-on approach to teaching and learning. Students in these classes are learning to think critically and problem solve. STEM lessons, workshops, and camps provide engaging, real-world experiences for students that encourage mastery of STEM related standards at high levels. Based on the success in individual classrooms, some of our schools may seek school-wide STEM certification. With Charter flexibility, STEM classes and schools have the opportunity to provide rigorous STEM lessons without constraints, such as minimum seat time.

Action 3.3: Flexible Scheduling to Individualize Student Learning: Using technology and Charter flexibility CCPS will provide opportunities for students to accelerate, remediate, and participate in high interest subjects and electives (e.g. foreign language). Flexibility will include but not be limited to: the design of scheduling, instructional materials and resources, and instructional strategies.

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As an example, band students will be allowed to earn health and PE credit by participating in marching band. Students in the marching band participate in many hours of physical activity, and allowing this activity to count toward PE credit will give these students the opportunity to take more rigorous classes in their field of interest or additional electives.

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

- Please also list the waivers you have used during the past five years (including those granted to the entire state, e.g. class size) and what goals they helped you accomplish during those five years?

Class-size and Reporting requirements (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)

Expenditure Controls (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167 and 20-2-171; SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.29)

With QBE reductions, these waivers have allowed the school system to maintain financial stability without a reduction in force or elimination of programs for students.

Waivers Action 1.1: *Catoosa U*

- **School Day and Year for Students and Employees** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))
- **School Attendance, Compulsory Attendance as it relates to the attendance protocol** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.2)
- **Graduation Requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47 and 160-4-2-.48)
- **Scheduling for Instruction** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)
- **Class-size and Reporting requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)

Waivers Action 1.2: Partnerships with Georgia Post-Secondary Schools

- **School Day and Year for Students and Employees** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))
- **School Attendance, Compulsory Attendance as it relates to the attendance protocol** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.2)
- **Graduation Requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47 and 160-4-2-.48)

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- **Scheduling for Instruction** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)
- **Class-size and Reporting requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)
- **Program Enrollment & Appropriation** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160)

Waivers Action 1.3: *From Here to CAREER!*

- **School Day and Year for Students and Employees** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))
- **School Attendance, Compulsory Attendance as it relates to the attendance protocol** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.2)
- **Graduation Requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47 and 160-4-2-.48)
- **Scheduling for Instruction** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)
- **Class-size and Reporting requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)

Waivers Action 2.1: *Let's Get CONNECTed!*

- **School Day and Year for Students and Employees** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))
- **School Attendance, Compulsory Attendance as it relates to the attendance protocol** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.2)
- **Graduation Requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47 and 160-4-2-.48)
- **Competencies and Core Curriculum, Online Learning** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-140.1, 20-2-142, and 20-2-777; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.12 and 160-4-2-.20)
- **Scheduling for Instruction** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)
- **QBE Financing** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161)
- **Expenditure Controls** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167 and 20-2-171; SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.29)
- **Categorical Allotment requirements** (Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20)
- **Educational Programs** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, 20-2-153, 20-2-154, 20-2-154.1, 20-2-155, and 20-2-156; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.17, 160-4-2-.38, 160-4-5-.01 and 160-4-5-.02)
- **Class-size and Reporting requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)

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- **Program Enrollment & Appropriation** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160)

Waivers Action 2.2: Targeted Professional Development

- **School Day and Year for Students and Employees** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))
- **Expenditure Controls** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167 and 20-2-171; SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.29)

Waivers Action 3.1: Middle School Catoosa Online Academy (COA)

- **Middle School Program Criteria** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-290, 20-14-33; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.05)
- **Competencies and Core Curriculum, Online Learning** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-140.1, 20-2-142, and 20-2-777; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.12 and 160-4-2-.20)
- **Scheduling for Instruction** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)
- **QBE Financing** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161)
- **Expenditure Controls** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167 and 20-2-171; SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.29)
- **Categorical Allotment requirements** (Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20)
- **Educational Programs** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, 20-2-153, 20-2-154, 20-2-154.1, 20-2-155, and 20-2-156; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.17, 160-4-2-.38, 160-4-5-.01 and 160-4-5-.02)
- **Class-size and Reporting requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)
- **Program Enrollment & Appropriation** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160)

Waivers Action 3.2: STEM

- **School Day and Year for Students and Employees** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))
- **Scheduling for Instruction** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)
- **Class-size and Reporting requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)

Waivers Action 3.3: Flexible Scheduling to Individualize Student Learning

- **School Day and Year for Students and Employees** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160(a), O.C.G.A. § 20-2-168(c))
- **Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Program** (except as prohibited by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-82(e) and SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.12)

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- **School Attendance, Compulsory Attendance as it relates to the attendance protocol** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.2)
 - **ELL Program Requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20- 2-156)
 - **Middle School Program Criteria** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-290, 20-14-33; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.05)
 - **Instructional Extension** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-184.1; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.14)
 - **Graduation Requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47 and 160-4-2-.48)
 - **Competencies and Core Curriculum, Online Learning** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-140.1, 20-2-142, and 20-2-777; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.12 and 160-4-2-.20)
 - **Scheduling for Instruction** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, and 20-2-168; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.16, 160-5-1-.01, and 160-5-1-.02)
 - **Promotion and Retention** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and 20-2-284; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11)
 - **QBE Financing** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161)
 - **Expenditure Controls** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167 and 20-2-171; SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.29)
 - **Categorical Allotment requirements** (Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20)
 - **Educational Programs** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, 20-2-153, 20-2-154, 20-2-154.1, 20-2-155, and 20-2-156; SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.17, 160-4-2-.38, 160-4-5-.01 and 160-4-5-.02)
 - **Class-size and Reporting requirements** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167, 20-2-181, 20-2-182, 20-2-187, 20-2-695, and 20-2-696; SBOE Rule 160-4-7-.14, 160-5-1-.08, and 160-5-1-.22)
 - **Program Enrollment & Appropriation** (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160)
7. Indicate the timeline for implementation of each specific action (listed in #4 above).

Action 1.1: *Catoosa U*

- 2016-2017: Pilot *Catoosa U* with Tech Teams
- 2017- forward: Expand *Catoosa U* to include other internships

Action 1.2: Partnerships with Georgia Post-Secondary Schools

- 2016-2017: Move on When Ready and Dual Enrollment Partnerships are formed, and transportation to GNTC begins
- 2017-2018: GNTC will provide classes for CCPS teachers to earn credentials to teach classes leading to National Industry Certification

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- 2018-forward: Each high school offers classes leading to National Industry Certification on their campus

Action 1.3: *From Here to CAREER!*

- 2016-2017: CCPS will identify a pilot group of business partners and develop a plan to launch *From Here to CAREER!*
- 2017-2018: Pilot the program in a middle school with 1-2 partners and make adjustments as necessary
- 2018-2020: Launch *From Here to CAREER!*
- 2018-2020: Seek new partners from major Chattanooga businesses to participate in the program (e.g. Memorial Hospital, Amazon, US Express, BCBS, and TVA)

Action 2.1: *Let's Get CONNECTed!* (Assuming ESPLOST IV passes March 1, 2016)

- 2016-2017: Purchase and set-up technology, and begin implementation of digital classroom platform. Rollout will take place as follows: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12
- 2017 – 2018: Purchase and provide technology for 9 – 12 (with the goal of students receiving Chromebook when they receive their schedule in August).

Action 2.2: Targeted Professional Development

- 2016- Forward: CCPS teachers who are utilizing technology effectively will model instruction in other schools. The system will pay substitutes, as necessary, so the “experts” can model technology integration strategies in the classroom
- 2016-forward: Annual system-wide Instructional Fair focused on teachers using technology effectively and integrating technology in the classroom

Action 3.1: Middle School Catoosa Online Academy (COA)

- 2016 – 2017: Pilot Middle School COA in one school
- 2017 – forward: Launch COA in all middle schools

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Action 3.2: STEM

- 2016-2017: Increase the number of STEM certified teachers
- 2017-2018: Determine a pilot school to research STEM school certification
- 2018 – Forward: Begin STEM school certification in interested schools

Action 3.3: Flexible Scheduling to Individualize Student Learning

- 2016 – Forward: identify areas where flexibility is necessary with the goal of incorporating some flexibility in the 2016-2017 schedule
- 2016-2017: Local School Governance Councils determine interests and explore programs and electives that would be beneficial to their student demographic
- 2017- forward, the system will develop all schedules with flexibility required to maximize individualized student learning

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

Action 1.1: *Catoosa U*

Action 1.2: *Partnerships with Georgia Post-Secondary Schools*

Action 1.3: *From Here to CAREER!*

Action 2.1: *Let's Get CONNECTed!*

Action 2.2: *Targeted Professional Development*

Action 3.1: *Middle School Catoosa Online Academy (COA)*

Action 3.2: *STEM*

Action 3.3: *Flexible Scheduling to Individualize Student Learning*

Performance Expectations

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

- As background for your answer to this question, please see the CCRPI and Beating the Odds expectations listed below. These expectations will be included in your charter contract.
- In your answer to this question you will list the specific areas you will target to achieve your CCRPI and Beating the Odds expectations.
- For example, you may choose to target Math or ELA to raise your overall CCRPI score – because your current Math or ELA scores are dragging your CCRPI score down.
- As a way to be competitive on Beating the Odds, you may also choose to focus on closing the gap in your system between educationally advantaged and educationally disadvantaged students – or you may choose to ensure gifted students are well-served, since average-performing gifted students will lower your Beating the Odds ranking compared to schools and districts with high-performing gifted students.

Goal 1: During each year of its first five-year charter term, the Catoosa County Charter System shall “beat the odds” as determined by a formula measuring expected student growth.

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

Goal 3: The Catoosa County Charter System will demonstrate proficiency and/or improvement on the CCRPI.

- A. **Measure 1:** For new Charter Systems first converting in 2015 or later, using Year 1 of the charter term to establish a CCRPI baseline, the Charter System’s CCRPI score shall be equal to or better than the State in Year 2, and better than the State in Years 3-5 of the charter contract.

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- B. **Measure 2:** If the Catoosa County Charter System's first-year CCRPI score is lower than the State, the Catoosa County Charter System shall have until the end of Year 2 of the charter term to close the gap between the Catoosa County Charter System and the State.

- C. **Measure 3:** In Years 3-5 of the charter term, the Catoosa County Charter System's CCRPI score shall be better than the State.

Renewal decisions for new Charter Systems first converting in 2015 or later will be based in part on whether the Charter System's CCRPI score was equal to or better than the State in Year 2, and better than the State Years 3-4 of the charter contract.

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Local School Governance

A key characteristic of charter systems is their distributed leadership decision-making structure. Within such a structure, a charter system must implement school level governance and grant decision-making authority in personnel decisions, financial decisions, curriculum and instruction, resource allocation, establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations per O.C.G.A. 20-2-2063(d).

10. Explain how your system will transition from Local School Advisory Councils to effective and fully functioning decision-making Local School Governance Teams (LSGTs).

Catoosa County Public Schools (CCPS) has a five member elected Board of Education (BOE) who serve four-year staggered terms. Presently, the local BOE is charged with creating policies and procedures to operate an effective and efficient public school system. The Board is responsible for hiring a Superintendent of Schools to direct the daily operations of the school system.

While the Catoosa County BOE has maintained ultimate decision making authority for the school system, the BOE seeks community input for important decisions. When state budget cuts forced difficult financial decisions, the BOE held community meetings to understand citizens' priorities. Prior to ESPLOST projects being determined, the BOE holds community meetings to listen to community requests. During the last strategic planning process, the superintendent spoke to community groups, and the system initiated a community-wide survey that was posted online, provided in written form, and advertised in the local community newspaper. The Superintendent and BOE value stakeholder input and understand that transitioning from listening to sharing decision making authority will have a positive impact on the school system. The BOE, Superintendent, and school principals are committed to the transition to Local School Governance Teams (LSGTs) to provide distributed leadership. System leaders are confident that the charter system culture with LSGTs having input and decision making authority will allow each school, and the school system, to be more flexible and creative to improve student achievement.

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Currently each school has a very active school council, but decision making at the school level is restricted to school administration. CCPS created its school councils based on the guidelines that were established in the 2007 General Assembly and include the following: the principal and at least two teachers, two parents, and two business partners. The members of the school council serve a two-year term and their role is to serve in an advisory capacity.

The CCPS transition to LSGTs will be deliberate and transparent. The members will have clearly defined roles, and training will be provided to prepare the team for increased responsibility. The process to transition from School Councils to LSGTs will be available on the system's website for public review and comment. The system will create an email dedicated to receiving charter application comments and questions (chartercomments@catoosa.k12.ga.us). The email address will be posted on the system website, school websites, and published in school newsletters.

As CCPS converts to a Charter System in 2016, the School Councils will be replaced with Local School Governance Teams (LSGT) in each school. CCPS anticipates a seamless transition to the LSGT structure because current school councils have actively participated in an advisory role. The primary difference from the current structure is the LSGTs decision-making authority regarding school oversight, review, and governance.

In the initial year of the Charter, existing school council members will be invited to participate on the LSGT for a one or two year term. Current school council members may decline the invitation, and an election will be held to fill the vacancy. If an election is necessary, CCPS will follow the guidelines established in this application: Certified staff and parents will be elected by the constituents they represent.

Training will begin in 2016, prior to CCPS converting to a Charter System in July 2016. Beginning training in the spring will prepare LSGT members for their new responsibilities. Training will continue in 2016 to prepare the LSGTs to participate in school policy and procedure decisions including personnel,

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school budgets, curriculum & instruction, school improvement, and school operations. Daily operation and management of the school will continue to be the responsibility of school administrators and staff.

- **Provide a timeline that shows all the major steps in this transition, including the timing of the formation of LSGTs, the training of principals and LSGTs, and anything you deem important in making this critical transition for decentralized/distributed decision making.**

2016

January 15	Governance training provided by DOE for BOE
February 19 & February 22	Present LSGT structure to ACE team and IDEA Exchange (Teachers of the Year) for input prior to public hearings
February 18	Press Release to the Catoosa County News announcing public hearings
February 24	Draft application posted on system website for public review and comment
February 24	Send text message to all users that the Charter Application is on the website for review and comment
February/March	Principals present Governance Structure to their School Council, leadership teams, and staffs
March 1 & March 31	Public Hearings for stakeholder input
March 31	Board approval
April	LSGT members determined/orientation & training
May	LSGT training

- **Include information about the steps that have already occurred or will occur to inform all stakeholders of the new governance structure.**

Catoosa County Public Schools will issue a press release to the local newspaper, the Catoosa County News, explaining the new governance structure. The Superintendent will prepare a LSGT PowerPoint presentation for principals to share with school council members, leadership teams, and their staff. The presentation will also be posted on the system and school websites for all stakeholders to access.

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11. Address the formation of the local School Governing Teams, including how members are selected, the terms of members, and how and why members may be removed.

In April 2016, existing school council members will be invited to serve on the LSGT, and elections will be held if necessary to form governance teams. At the first meeting of the LSGT, one teacher, one parent, and one business/community member will choose to serve a one-year term. The other teacher, parent, and business community member will serve a two-year term to establish the staggered rotation process.

The LSGT members will undergo governance team training to gain an understanding of their roles and responsibilities as LSGT members. In the first year, the LSGT decisions will be limited to recommending principal finalists and approving a system calendar (from two choices) to make a recommendation to the Superintendent. In the second year, LSGTs will be given more decision making authority in resource allocation, curriculum and instruction, school improvement, and school operations.

- Composition, 7 – 9 positions:
 - The current school principal will hold a permanent position on the LSGT. The principal will be a non-voting member *except in the event of a tie*;
 - 2 certified staff members who will be elected by certified staff (the principal may appoint 1 of the 2 teachers). Certified staff members become ineligible if they are no longer employed in the qualifying position;
 - 2 parents (non-staff employees) who will be elected by parents. Parents become ineligible if their child is no longer enrolled in the school;
 - 2 business/community members selected by the school leadership team (these members are not required to have students in the school; however, they must have a significant tie to the community (e.g. residency, employment, participation in Partnership 2000));
 - Middle and High School LSGT may include 1 – 2 students, selected by the school leadership team, to serve in a non-voting position.
- Guidelines:

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- Each LSGT will adopt and adhere to by-laws. In the first year of the Charter, the Superintendent will provide a by-law template for all LSGTs to follow. In the second year, each LSGT will have the authority to modify the template, subject to approval by the BOE.
- Each LSGT will have a chair, vice chair, and secretary. To ensure adherence to Open Meeting Laws and the LSGT by-laws, the principal will serve as chair for the first year. The LSGT will elect a vice-chair in their initial meeting to serve as chair elect for the second year (2017-2018). The vice-chair may not be a school employee. The secretary will be responsible for required notices and minutes, but a non-member of the LSGT will record minutes at each meeting.
- LSGT members may not serve on multiple teams. Multiple family members may not serve on the same team.
- Each LSGT will appoint a non-staff representative to serve on the Superintendent's Advisory Council for Excellence (ACE) that will meet two times per year. Each school principal will also serve on the ACE Team.
- Election: Certified staff and parents will be elected by the constituents they represent. Nominations will be accepted in August. The election will be held at a well-attended school function at the beginning of the year (August/September).
- Terms: All members will serve a two-year staggered term (after the first year of the Charter), except for the principal who has a permanent position. The term of service will begin August 30th and end September 1st of the following year. Members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.
- Removal of Members: The LSGT at each school may, by majority vote, relieve a member of duties due to lack of participation (missing more than 50% of meetings), conflict of interest issues, a code of ethics violation, lack of adherence to the bylaws, and/or changing roles (the member no longer represents the constituents he/she was elected to represent).

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- Filling a Vacancy: In the event of a vacancy on the LSGT by death, resignation, or removal, the principal, in collaboration with the LSGT, will appoint an individual to fill the vacancy. This individual will serve the unexpired term of office.
- Meetings: LSGT meetings will be held monthly. In addition to training, the principal (or designee) will provide regular updates on academic, operational, and financial progress of the school. Meetings will not be held during summer months, unless a called meeting is necessary. Meetings will be held at the school for no more than 90 minutes, unless otherwise advertised as in the case of a joint LSGT meeting or training. Meeting dates and times will be determined by each LSGT. Catoosa County Public Schools will publicize the LSGT meeting dates and times on eBoard. The minutes of each meeting will be available on eBoard to maintain transparency.
- Responsibilities:
 - LSGT: Each member will adhere to the PSC Code of Ethics for Educators, and sign a Conflict of Interest statement. Teams will abide by the LSGT by-laws, and they will agree to attend at least 50% of meetings. The LSGT will have significant decision-making authority in personnel decisions (specifically principal positions), resource allocation, curriculum/instruction, establishing and monitoring achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations (as outlined in the Decision Making Matrix).
 - School Principal: Principals will maintain their current responsibilities. Principals will actively participate as members of the LSGT, and the principal will seek and encourage a new level of participation from members of this governance team. The principal will present LSGT recommendations to the Superintendent.
 - Superintendent: The superintendent shares decision making authority with LSGT by considering recommendations from the governance team (as outlined in the Decision Making Matrix). The superintendent maintains the responsibility for making recommendations to the BOE that are in the best interest of the school system.

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- Board of Education: The local BOE will maintain constitutional authority as the legal entity with final decision making authority to review, revoke, or deny any decision they determine will negatively impact a school or the district's operations. Catoosa County Public Schools will continue to operate under the guidelines of the Fair Dismissal Act.

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12. Use the Charter System Application – Local School Governance Matrix found at this link <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/Charter-Petition-Application.aspx> to show how the Superintendent will share with Local School Governance Teams his/her authority to develop recommendations to the Board of Education.

School Level Governance Decision-Making Matrix				
System Name: Catoosa County	Department of Education Minimum LSGT Authority	<i>How and When</i> Catoosa County will implement Minimum Authority	Department of Education Additional LSGT Authority*	<i>How and When</i> Catoosa County will implement Additional Authority
Personnel Decisions	LSGTs shall recommend the principal or school leader for selection by the BOE	Year 1: The LSGT will interview principal candidates and make a recommendation to the Superintendent.	Examples include: Input on principal goals, feedback on principal performance, type and qualifications of all positions, requirements for substitutes, attributes and qualifications for school administrative positions, distribution methods for incentive funds	Year 2: Each LSGT will have the authority to provide input into requirements for substitutes. Year 3: The LSGT may make recommendations for staff positions specific for their school.
Financial Decisions and Resource Allocation	LSGTs shall have input into the final recommendations for the school budget, including number and type of personnel, curriculum costs, supply costs, equipment costs and maintenance and operations costs	Year 1: The LSGT will review the current school budget. Year 2: The LSGT will provide recommendations for school budgets during the system budget process.	Examples include: School budget approval, budget priorities aligned with school improvement plan, use of charter system funds, vendors for school resources, fundraising budget	Year 2: The LSGT will approve fundraisers and use of revenue from this source. The team will recommend priorities for the school budget aligned with the SIP. The team will recommend a budget for Charter QBE funds. Year 3: The LSGT will approve the school's budget for Charter QBE funds.
Curriculum and Instruction	LSGTs shall have input into the selection of the curriculum and accompanying materials consistent with the district's Essential and Innovative Features as included in the charter contract	Year 1: The LSGT will review curriculum and accompanying materials. Year 2: The LSGT will make recommendations for curriculum and innovative strategies to achieve Charter performance goals.	Examples include: approval of instructional delivery innovations that would traditionally require a waiver, approval of instructional programs and materials consistent with innovations, graduation requirements, new course offerings, opportunities for student acceleration/remediation	Year 2: The LSGT may recommend acceleration/remediation opportunities. The high school LSGT may make recommendations concerning graduation requirements and new course or program offerings. The LSGT may recommend waivers.
Establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals	LSGTs shall approve the school improvement plan and provide oversight of its implementation	Year 1: The LSGT will review the SIP. Year 2: The LSGT will monitor implementation of SIP and make recommendations. Year 3: The LSGT will approve the SIP.	Examples include: LSGT members serving as members of the school improvement planning team, LSGT approval of any innovations that would traditionally require a waiver of state law	Year 3: A non-staff member of the LSGT will serve on the school improvement planning team. The LSGT may recommend waivers to improve performance and to achieve goals in the Charter.
School Operations	LSGTs shall have input into school operations that are consistent with school improvement and charter goals	Year 1: Each LSGT will approve a system calendar (from 2 choices) and make a recommendation to the Superintendent. Year 2: The LSGT will recommend parent involvement activities.	Examples include: approval of use of instructional time during school day, partners in education, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, stakeholder surveys, parent involvement, communications strategies, school-level policies, volunteer support, field trips, fundraisers, student dress code, student discipline plan	Year 2: The LSGT will approve fundraisers and use of these funds. The LSGT will review proposed field trips and provide input. Year 3: LSGT has authority to review and recommend changes in school operations including partnerships, co-curricular & extra-curricular activities, stakeholder surveys, and communication strategies.
*The LBOE retains its constitutional authority				

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

Currently, school councils exist in an advisory role as mandated by the Georgia General Assembly. The purpose of the LSGT will be to maximize school level decision making, uphold the system's mission and vision, set policy for the school, determine recommendations for school improvement, and evaluate school performance to ensure that goals and measurable objectives established in the charter application are met. The members of the LSGT are accountable to the constituents they serve and will perform the duties of a LSGT as outlined in the Charter, and the team's by-laws. By transitioning to LSGTs, school stakeholders will have a greater opportunity to positively impact school performance and student achievement.

The Superintendent currently meets twice each year with an Advisory Council for Excellence (ACE). A council member from each school is nominated to participate in the ACE team, and the purpose is for the Superintendent to provide information about the system and current system initiatives. With the new governance structure, the ACE Team will be expanded to include a non-staff member from each LSGT, the Assistant Superintendent, system directors, and each school principal. The ACE Team meetings will provide an opportunity for members from all the system's schools to discuss common issues. The Superintendent or designee may also provide system updates on topics that impact all schools. Each LSGT will operate with substantial autonomy, so this system-wide meeting will ensure that Catoosa County Public Schools remains a school system and not a system of independent schools. Meeting topics may include, but will not be limited to: system performance, curriculum initiatives, charter performance goals and budgeting.

The difference between school councils and the LSGTs lies in the additional responsibilities of the LSGT to make recommendations to the Superintendent for action by the local BOE regarding personnel decisions (specifically principal positions), resource allocation, curriculum/instruction, establishing and

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monitoring achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations. The Superintendent is committed to considering all recommendations from the LSGT, so this new governance model will provide the structure necessary to transition from centralized to decentralized/distributed decision making.

Responsibilities of the LSGT will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Providing oversight governance regarding school programs, school-level policies, and initiatives (management of daily operations of the school will remain the responsibility of school administrators and staff);
- Operating substantially autonomous from the school district administration;
- Participating in on-going training;
- Complying with operational processes including Open Meetings and Open Records Acts;
- Making decisions and recommendations with a school-wide and system perspective;
- Supporting the System Strategic Plan and performance goals in the System Charter
- Monitoring school performance and making recommendation to improve student achievement.

14. Describe the governance training to be provided to principals and members of the Local School

Governing Teams in order to build the capacity needed to make decisions in the areas included in the spreadsheet.

In the first year of the Charter, training for LSGTs will be provided. The topics for training may include, but are not limited to: meeting etiquette, Open Meetings and Open Records Acts, school improvement plans, progress monitoring, school budgets, curriculum, technology, personnel, strategic planning, federal and state programs, effective schools, and special education law. Training modules will be available to new members of the LSGT. In the first year of the charter, training will be completed prior to the LSGT

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making financial, curriculum, school improvement, and school operations decisions. Proposed schedule and outline of training topics:

April 2016	Purpose, By-Laws, Meeting Etiquette, Open Meetings/Open Records, and Robert's Rules of Order (Pre-planning for all LSGTs – 4 hours)
May 2016	By-Laws
September 2016	Effective Decision Making
October 2016	Hiring Practices and Human Resource Protocols
November 2016	School Improvement Plans and SACS Recommendations
January 2017	Budgeting
February 2017	Charter Initiatives: <i>Catoosa U</i> and <i>Let's Get CONNECTed!</i>
March 2017	Family and Community Engagement
April 2017	Strategic Planning
May 2017	Summary Reports, Education and Governance
Charter Year 2:	Assessment, Special Education Law, Personnel Issues, Effective School Practices, Federal Programs, Budgeting, School Improvement Plan, Strategic Planning
Charter Year 3:	School Governance Teams complete a needs-assessment to determine topics

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

Training sessions may be developed and/or conducted by the DOE, Charter System Foundation, Northwest Georgia RESA, school system staff, and consultants retained by the school system.

16. Provide the name and contact information of an employee of the charter system that will facilitate communications between the Department and the chairpersons of the Local School Governing Teams in your charter system.

Superintendent Denia Reese, P. O. Box 130, Ringgold, GA 30736

Phone: 706-935-0679 Email: dreese@catoosa.k12.ga.us

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

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Currently the Catoosa County Public Schools Central Office focus is oversight and governance. Central Office Directors make recommendations to the Superintendent, and they ensure the system is complying with federal and state laws and DOE requirements.

With the LSGT governance structure, the Central Office will transition from a controlling role to a supporting role. LSGTs will have substantial decision making authority so the Central Office staff will be responsible for researching requests and providing information to enable the LSGT to make good decisions. Central Office administrators will also be responsible for some of the training that will be necessary for the LSGT to operate effectively.

As the LSGTs assume additional responsibility and accountability more flexibility will be necessary so innovations may be implemented. The Central Office staff will assist schools in determining the waivers needed to effectively implement innovative programs.

Central Office administrators will be responsible for researching LSGTs recommendations to determine the impact to the school and the school district. This information will be reported to the LSGT so they can evaluate their recommendation. The Superintendent will consider all LSGT proposals and make recommendations to the BOE, creating distributed leadership in the system. Additional opportunities for parental and community involvement will create a more innovative culture with a stronger commitment from all parties to improve student achievement.