



Charter Office
Charter Petition Review Results
1st Review

Petitioner: Druid Hills High School Charter Cluster

I. Charter School/Petitioner Information

1. List the proposed grade levels and ages of students to be served by the charter school.

Page(s) Located: 1, SBOE Application pg. 5, 18	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The Petitioner has indicated that Pre-Kindergarten is not covered under this petition, but the DHCC will seek continuation of the existing pre-K programs at the five elementary schools with the appropriate DCSD Department.</p> <p>“Research indicates that children exhibit significant growth during their Pre-K year across all domains of learning including language and literacy, math, general knowledge and behavioral skills” (Bright from the Start, January 2013). The DeKalb County School District recognizes the importance of identifying, recognizing, and supporting, high achieving, marginal, and under-performing students. (DCSD Bridge Initiative, September 2013)</p> <p>How does the Petitioner plan to implement Pre-Kindergarten within the Cluster schools?</p> <p>What is the number of students the charter cluster plans to serve, per school? While the chart on page 5 of the SBOE application is the projected student enrollment for the entire cluster, the Petitioner should break these numbers down by each individual school.</p> <p>While not required at this time, the Petitioner may also want to compare these numbers against the maximum capacity of each facility to ensure sufficient space. The Petitioner has proposed to serve 1,682 students between grades 9-12. Currently Druid Hills High School has 1462 students enrolled as of 10/11/13.</p>			

2. Detail the proposed duration of the charter, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2067.1 (b).

Page(s) Located: 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: Completed.			

II. STATEMENT OF INTENT

3. Describe the charter school’s mission.

Page(s) Located: 1-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments:</p> <p>Petitioner should clearly define the Mission Statement. The petition should contain a clear statement that explains what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree.</p>			

4. Provide a description of how the proposed charter school promotes the legislative intent of the charter schools program to “increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation,” in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2061.

Page(s) Located: 1-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments:</p> <p>Academic Innovation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - K-5 School Choice may not be feasible for DeKalb to provide this service at a cost, if it exceeds transportation capacity. - The Petitioner should further define “expanded gifted services.” - If the Cluster waives the extra PE requirement, this will have negative implications for those students who transfer from the cluster high school to another DCSD high school. Would waiving this be in the best interest of DeKalb students? The Petitioner should further define “coordinated support services.” - The DeKalb County School District currently has planned to implement Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) in the elementary and middle schools. <p>Benefits of Flexibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Petitioner references reassigning students who require additional supports in 9th grade to Cross Keys High School. How would the Petitioner define categories of “additional support?” Please explain the rationale for the proposed Cluster’s intent to transfer students who need additional educational support to other DeKalb schools? The Cluster does not have the option to transfer students outside of its attendance lines. <p>Operational Innovation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Petitioner should further define the Cluster’s attendance policies. <p>The Petitioner’s proposed curricular program appears to duplicate programs currently offered in DeKalb Schools, such as the International Baccalaureate, Montessori, or Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) programs. What role will this Cluster play in the community? Does the Cluster offer an innovative option not currently available to parents and students? Does the Cluster propose to serve a segment of the community in a unique way or draw students not currently being served into the Cluster or School District?</p>			

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

5. Describe the focus of the curriculum.

6. Describe the instructional methods to be used, including any distinctive or unique instructional techniques or educational programs to be employed.

Page(s) Located: 7-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments: *Question 5 & 6 were scored collectively.*

The Petitioner’s proposed curricular program appears to duplicate programs currently offered in DeKalb Schools, such as the International Baccalaureate, Montessori, or Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) programs. What role will this Cluster play in the community? Does the Cluster offer an innovative option not currently available to parents and students? Does the Cluster propose to serve a segment of the community in a unique way or draw students not currently being served into the Cluster or School District? How will the proposed Cluster address the performance of marginal and underperforming students?

The Petitioner should describe the unique IB PYP (Primary Years Program), MYP (Middle Years Program), and DP (Diploma Program) instructional delivery methods, special instructional materials, course offerings, weighted grading for the DP, community service, special assessments, thematic unit planning, and local school collaborative planning. The Petitioner should also describe how the Cluster’s use of extracurricular offerings will be built to enhance the curriculum. The petition language, “Modified calendar,” and “Infusion of field trips,” needs further clarification. The petition does not indicate how pacing guidelines will be planned or utilized. There is also no indication of professional development for curriculum implementation and delivery.

Is the cluster utilizing a STEM or STEAM program? Has STEM/STEAM professional development and funding been decided? What are the plans in the event that Cluster schools do not receive STEM/STEAM certification?

Has a sixth grade curriculum been decided for Montessori, because the Montessori program typically only goes to fifth grade?

How will the Cluster plan to implement curriculum for all programs in a legally compliant and fiscally sound manner?

The following statements from the Petitioner Guidelines should be addressed: Please provide a description of the curriculum and how it will be implemented, including the standards, skills, and content to be covered in each grade the school will serve, [which] must be aligned with the Common Core Standards so that [Petitioner] assures coverage of each standard area topic. Include names of purchased materials/programs to support the stated curriculum. This statement should discuss the focus of the curriculum and any distinctive or unique instructional methods to be used that are research-based and standards driven. The Petitioner should ensure that neither the curriculum, nor the reading list, contain any religious tenets or doctrine.

7. Describe the anticipated teacher-to-student ratio and the rationale for maintaining this ratio. See Class Size Rule 160-5-1-.08 for compliance.

Page(s) Located: 17-18	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The class sizes are desirable and ideal. Low class sizes may impact Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) funding, which may impact personnel and instructional services offered at each school, as well as the Cluster’s annual budget.</p> <p>How will DHCC address the financial implications of maintaining the targeted class sizes? Are there considerations for gifted, Early Intervention Program, Remedial Education Program, special education, and Career Technical Agriculture Education (CTAE) class sizes? Will Pre-K class sizes be considered? Are paraprofessionals needed or earned in this structure?</p> <p>All Cluster schools must maintain “Title I Comparability.” The Petitioner should address how the Cluster will remain compliant with the NLCB requirement. (See http://febp.newamerica.net/background-analysis/no-child-left-behind-act-title-i-comparability-requirement.)</p>			

8. Describe how the charter school will meet the needs of students identified as gifted and talented.

Page(s) Located: 18-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments: On page 19 of the petition, it states, “The DHCC equitably will include English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, economically disadvantaged, and minority students in the Gifted Program.” The Petitioner may be seeking to demonstrate that there will be diversity in the program. All public schools are required to consider students for the gifted program based on the criteria set forth by the State of Georgia. A student’s subgroup classification, as listed above, is not a factor that should be considered. The Petitioner must be specific regarding the Cluster’s plan to determine exact eligibility requirements for identifying gifted students, utilizing traditional and non-traditional criteria, and further detail exact traditional and non-traditional methods for educating the Cluster’s students enrolled in gifted programs.</p> <p>What gifted guidelines do the Petitioner seek to waive? What is unique about this approach? Explain the “non-traditional process.” Who will be trained to identify the gifted students using these “non-traditional” methods? What is unique about the Cluster’s approach? Is the Petitioner aware that gifted funding could be impacted if services are inappropriately operated by the Cluster, exclusive of any potential waivers requested?</p> <p>Innovative models for the gifted program must be approved by the State Board of Education. The Petitioner should provide evidence of approval.</p>			

9. Describe any extracurricular or other auxiliary educational activities the charter school may offer, including any partnerships between the charter school and the local school system or other community agency(ies) regarding charter school students utilizing extracurricular activities at the local school that the student would otherwise attend, or at any other community location.

Page(s) Located: 20-21	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The cluster should provide evidence of business partnership contracts, agreements, or correspondences setting forth terms of a potential partnership. The terms should include the schools that will be served, the grade levels served, the type of service, and if available, the actual contract. Also, if these partnerships' employees will be interacting with students, the Petitioner should ensure that student safety is considered paramount through the means of third-party vendor background checks.

The Petitioner should also identify the extracurricular or other auxiliary educational activities that will be offered, in a manner other than survey results. Please refer to the Petitioner guidelines.

10. If this is a charter high school, describe how the charter high school will determine that a student has satisfied the requirements for high school graduation as defined in SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47.

Page(s) Located: 21	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments: In the first paragraph of the Question 10 petition response, the Petitioner states, "we will follow state graduation requirements pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.47." However, in the Appendix section, entitled "Waiver Requests and Rationale," there appears to be some contradiction.

Is the Cluster creating dual graduation tracks by waiving physical education requirements for students identified as remedial in Math or ELA? Will the Cluster keep the extra physical education credit for students not considered remedial in the Math or ELA core subjects? Graduation requirements should be clearly established and defined in the petition for students who are identified as remedial and those students who are non-remedial.

The Petitioner must clarify information regarding the community service graduation requirement.

Since Druid Hills High School implements block scheduling, students may earn 32 units. Students may use the additional 8 units for remediation or enrichment. Is it necessary to eliminate the extra PE unit? Please explain.

Additional DCSD Academics Requirements:

11. Attach a copy of the curriculum aligned with Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) and Georgia Performance Standards where applicable. Please note that the State of Georgia will be participating in the National Common Core Standards for curriculum and all charters are required to be in compliance with these standards.

Page(s) Located: 21	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

Petitioner should submit an in-depth curriculum, per grade level, aligned with Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) and Georgia Performance Standards, where applicable. All charter schools are required to be in compliance with state standards.

IV. STATE AND FEDERALLY MANDATED SERVICES

12. For students with disabilities (SWD), describe how the school will provide state and federally mandated services and comply with all special education laws, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Page(s) Located: 22-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The following petition statement needs further clarification: “DHCC may, however, waive any district guidelines relating to staffing and to process in order to ensure fidelity of implementation needed to comply with federal and state mandates.” The petition should describe how the Cluster will adhere to federally and state mandated services and compliance with special education laws.

The Petitioner appropriately identified SWD Tiers as I, II, III, IV, and V (class scheduling tiers based on type of disability). However, the Petitioner should be advised that all special education classes do not receive complete funding because there may not be enough students assigned to a class, due to the types of disabilities a school may service. Therefore, the Petitioner’s projections of SWD students per school likely won’t be sufficient in regard to staffing SWD classes. If the Petitioner only uses the percentage of SWD students per school, rather than the number of students in a tier per school, this could lead to a false impression that there are fewer Students with Disabilities enrolled at each school than the actual total.

The Petitioner asserted the following SWD data for each school (percentage of student population):
 Druid Hills HS: 6.2%
 Druid Hills MS: 7.6%
 Avondale ES: 3.0%

(continued on next page)

Briar Vista ES: 5.1%
 Fernbank ES: 3.6%
 Laurel Ridge ES: 11.2%
 McLendon ES: 5.0%

However, the following percentages are the actual SWD data for each school, as of 10/9/2013:

Druid Hills HS: 13%
 Druid Hills MS: 12%
 Avondale ES: 5%
 Briar Vista ES: 12%
 Fernbank ES: 10%
 Laurel Ridge ES: 16%
 McLendon ES: 10%

One (1) LTSE per school could negatively impact the Cluster’s budget, especially if the Cluster utilizes the funding size data to determine staffing needs.

Did the Cluster consider additional resources or staffing requirements pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act As Amended (ADAAA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), or Student §504 Plans or Individualized Education Plans?

Identify which “Universal Screener” the Petitioner plans to utilize to assist students with disabilities.

The Petitioner stated, “If a determination is made that the least restrictive environment for a cluster student falls outside of the Cluster, a representative of DCSD will be invited to IEP meetings to determine appropriate placement.” Further clarity regarding this statement is needed. (Please review the Petition Guidelines p.14, listing limited services provided by DCSD.) How will the Cluster plan to attract and retain a comparable or greater enrollment of students with disabilities? The Cluster must demonstrate a well-defined plan and capacity to service the learning needs of students with special needs.

13. For English Language Learners, describe how the charter school will provide state and federally mandated services.

Page(s) Located: 24-27	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

Petition meets the English Learners eligibility requirement, using the Home Language Survey, screening (W-APT), ESOL service provided by content certified/ESOL endorsed teachers, annual assessment of proficiency on the ACCESS tests and exit requirements.

The Petitioner asserted the following ELL data for each school:

Druid Hills HS: 1.9%
 Druid Hills MS: 1.5%

(continued on next page)

Avondale ES:	1.6%
Briar Vista ES:	4.0%
Fernbank ES:	1.2%
Laurel Ridge ES:	1.0%
McLendon ES:	5.4%
However, the following percentages are the actual ELL data for each school, as of 10/11/2013:	
Druid Hills HS:	8.1%
Druid Hills MS:	10.4%
Avondale ES:	9.6%
Briar Vista ES:	33.3%
Fernbank ES:	3.9%
Laurel Ridge ES:	13.8%
McLendon ES:	25.6%

14. Describe how the charter school will provide supplemental educational services in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03.

Page(s) Located: 27	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments:			
SES is no longer available due to the waiver the State of Georgia applied for through the United States Department of Education. FLP was created by the State, and is not a DCSD “established” program. This section is missing pertinent and correct information, and needs further revision and clarity.			

15. Describe how the charter school will provide remediation in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01.

Page(s) Located: 27-30	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments:			
The chart located on page 28 has a typo, “Druid Hills ES.” The data for Druid Hills HS and Druid Hills MS must be added. The language “approved gifted models” may be a typo on page 29. The last paragraph of page 29, regarding EIP and REP student funding counts may not be needed.			
Please address the following from the Petitioner Guidelines: Describe methods, strategies and/or programs for meeting the needs of students at-risk of academic failures through remediation. Include any diagnostic methods or instruments that will be used to identify and assess those students who are performing below grade level as well as the processes/programs/tools to be used in providing them with remedial instruction. These services should be provided pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01 and NCLB.			

V. PERFORMANCE-BASED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

16. Please list and describe in detail the specific academic performance-based goals and measurable objectives for the charter school, which at a minimum must include goals and objectives that are related to state and Federal assessment standards, measurable on an annual basis, attainable, and reflect the mission set forth in the petition. The petition must demonstrate that the performance based goals and objectives will result in continuous improvement in student achievement and will comply with the Single Statewide Accountability System. Failure to meet specific performance based goals and measurable objectives may result in charter termination.

Page(s) Located: 30-35	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: The Petitioner should realign the proposed academic performance-based goals to adhere to Georgia's new Accountability System. Will the Petitioner meet all requirements of Georgia's Accountability System? Please explain how.			

VI. WAIVERS

17. State whether the charter school will or will not utilize the broad flexibility from law, rule, and regulation permitted by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(a). DeKalb is not inclined to accept a blanket waiver. List waivers being requested and how they will support raising student academic achievement.

18. If the school will utilize this flexibility, state that the charter school will comply with all the requirements of the Single Statewide Accountability System and will meet or exceed the performance-based goals included in the charter including but not limited to raising student achievement. Please provide a description of illustrative examples of how the charter school will implement the flexibility granted by the broad flexibility waiver to meet or exceed the performance-based goals and to increase student achievement. This should explicitly state what the flexibility granted will allow the charter to accomplish over the course of the charter term. The petition shall include illustrative examples of how the charter will implement the flexibility to meet or exceed the performance-based goals and to increase student achievement.

19. If the school will NOT utilize this flexibility, the school must enumerate specifically what waivers it is requesting and the rationale for each including how each waiver shall help the school meet or exceed the performance goals and to increase student achievement. Describe further how each waiver shall help the school meet or exceed the performance-based goals included in its charter.

Page(s) Located: 17-19 & Appendices "Waiver Requests"	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments: Questions 17, 18, & 19 were scored collectively.</p> <p>Question 17: "The Cluster desires the broad flexibility from law, rule, and regulation permitted by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(a)." This language is acceptable. However, the Cluster understands that DeKalb is not inclined to accept a blanket waiver.</p> <p>Question 18: The petition language did not specifically state the following: "The charter school will comply with all the requirements of the Single Statewide Accountability System." Furthermore, question 18 is addressed by the Petitioner in a brief paragraph which discusses "raising student achievement," and fiscal responsibility, but it does not specifically address the promise that the Cluster "will meet or exceed the performance-based goals included in the charter including but not limited to raising student achievement." This is the innate purpose and consideration for receiving the waivers and flexibility.</p> <p>Question 18 is further addressed with a chart, located on page 36, which depicts the Title 20 laws, SBOE rules, and DeKalb BOE rules, requesting to be waived. However, the chart language states, "all waiver requests support the plan to raise student achievement through innovations in governance, instruction, operations, and finance." The Petitioner should specifically state how each of the requested waivers will allow the Cluster to meet or exceed the performance-based goals and to increase student achievement. The response does not "explicitly state what the flexibility granted will allow the charter to accomplish over the course of the charter term." The petition refers to Question 4 and Question 16 as illustrative examples of how the charter will implement the flexibility to meet or exceed the performance-based goals and to increase student achievement.</p> <p>Question 19: In the petition appendix is a "Waiver Requests and Rationale" section. The Petitioner lists all waivers requested and provides a rationale as to why they have requested this waiver. The rationale for the waiver requests do not explicitly demonstrate how each waiver can help the Cluster meet or exceed the [student] performance-based goals included in its charter. Based on the petition, one has to draw implied parallels between the Petitioner's rationale and potential student achievement and performance goals. A thoroughly completed review of the Waiver Requests and Rationale should be further completed.</p> <p>In the appendix, the Petitioner should do a comparison chart between the waivers requested from Title 20 that are related to the DeKalb County Board of Education policies.</p>			

VII. DESCRIPTION OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

20. Describe the charter school’s plan to obtain student performance data for each student, which must include how the current baseline standard of achievement shall be determined in order to meet the petition’s performance-based goals and measurable objectives. For the charter school’s first year, baseline student achievement data shall be collected within three months of the first day of school. This data may include, but is not limited to, standardized assessment results from previous school years.

Page(s) Located: 37-40	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The Petitioners appear to take a very narrow approach to obtaining student data. The response to question 20 addresses the use of CRCT and EOCT results to provide benchmark data and even provides a matrix detailing grades in which assessments to be used are to be administered; however, while the Petitioner mentions complying with the “administration of <i>this</i> criterion referenced test” [emphasis added] as noted in the Single Statewide Accountability System (SSAS), the matrix used misses several other required state assessments, including, but not limited to, ACCESS for ELLs, GAA, CRCT-M, GHSWT, Grade 3 Writing Assessment, Grade 5 Writing Assessment, and Grade 8 Writing Assessment as well as the need to provide allowances for any former student showing up to participate in the GHSWT. The Petitioner’s matrix should acknowledge the administration of the EOCT in Grade 8, and identify the grade levels in which a norm-referenced test is to be administered. How will the Petitioner identify gifted students if no norm-referenced tests are mentioned?</p> <p>The Petitioner mentions the application of the PARCC assessment, but the State has since decided not to utilize this consortium. The Petitioner will need to respond to this change in state assessments. The Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) is a formative assessment with multiple administrations throughout the year. Renaissance Learning’s STAR Reading and STAR Math are also mentioned as being used, but this needs more clarity when taken in totality with the use of the MAP since both instruments serve a similar purpose. While not mentioned in this section, the purchase of any assessments beyond those provided by the state, such as MAP, STAR Reading, STAR Math, Accelerated Reader, and ITBS/CogAT should be thoroughly reviewed in the charter’s budget. The Petitioner also states that “formative assessments also will be used to measure teacher effectiveness” but does not mention how these assessments will be created and how teachers will be evaluated. It should be noted by the Petitioner that Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) & Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES) may not be waived.</p> <p>How does the Cluster plan to obtain student performance data and monitor student achievement? Has the Cluster considered the costs associated with the purchase of student assessments?</p>			

21. Describe how the charter school’s assessment plan will measure student improvement and over what period of time.

22. Describe how the charter school will use this assessment data to monitor and improve achievement for all students.

Page(s) Located: 40-41	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments: Question 21 & 22 were scored collectively.

The Petitioner begins by describing the use of the CCRPI to monitor school performance; however, the question that arises is whether or not the CCRPI overall score will be used, or if the Board of Directors will use the component measurements of the CCRPI to measure student improvement, i.e. the Achievement Score, the Progress Score, the Achievement Gap Score, and/or the Challenge Points. The Petitioner should refer to CCRPI as the College and Career Ready Performance *Index (not Indices)*. Furthermore, the Petitioner details how the Cluster will reserve the right to develop or select Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) that meet the needs of the Cluster, but no detail is present as to who would develop the SLOs should the cluster choose this route. Would teachers within the cluster carry the assignment and work of developing SLOs or would the Board of Directors?

While the Petitioners describe the proposed instruments to measure student improvement over time, how this will be accomplished and how the targets for growth will be set, additional information is needed. More clarity is needed in order to adequately respond to questions 21 and 22.

23. Provide a statement that the charter school will not waive and shall comply with the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. §20-14-30 through 20-14-41 and federal accountability requirements.

24. Provide a statement that the charter will adhere to all assessment guidelines and procedures as outlined by the State Assessment Handbook, the State Accommodations Manual and other state and local guidance on assessment. Staff from the charter is also required to attend required test administration training held by DCSD.

Page(s) Located: 41-42	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments: Questions 23 & 24 were scored collectively.

The Petitioner responds to both question 23 and 24 in a single section and clearly details that it will meet all required elements, including the charter’s participation in all assessment workshops provided by the district and mandated statewide assessments (see notes from question 20).

“The DHCC will take intentional action to comply with accountability and assessment provisions of O.C.G.A. §§ 20-14-30 through 20-14-41.” The Petitioner did not request these laws to be waived.

25. Attach the charter school’s proposed annual calendar and a draft of the charter school’s daily school schedule. This calendar shall align with DeKalb County’s calendar for all assessments required by the State.

Page(s) Located: 42	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The Petitioner states that the calendar(s) can be found in the appendix, but more importantly also states that the cluster will “administer all state mandated testing in accordance with the DCSD calendar.”

The Cluster’s academic calendar needs improvement. Each school should have an identified bell to bell schedule for instructional hours. Does the Cluster plan to follow the District’s academic calendar?

VIII. DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS

26. Describe the attendance zone for the charter school, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2062 (1.1).

Page(s) Located: 42 & Appendix- Attendance Zone Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

Completed. What are the proposed addresses and/or communities to be served by the cluster?

27. Describe the rules and procedures that will govern the admission of students to the charter school.

28. Describe or attach a copy of any admissions application the charter school proposes to use or a description of the application that demonstrates that the application conforms to requirements set forth in the Guidance accompanying this Rule, including the requirement that charter schools shall have open enrollment.

29. Describe whether the charter school will use any enrollment priorities pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a) and (b). Additionally, students not residing in DeKalb County are not eligible to attend the charter school. A charter school may not charge tuition.

Page(s) Located: 43-44	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments: Questions 27, 28 & 29 were scored collectively.

The page number for Question 27-29 are listed incorrectly in the Table of Contents.

The admissions process is not described completely. Please review the state and local school district admission/enrollment guidelines and required documents. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(B), please rank the Cluster’s enrollment preference categories.

The attendance zones for the cluster and district needs clarification. Will currently enrolled out-of-attendance zone students have to participate in the random lottery process for the 2014-2015 school year? Will students living outside of the Cluster attendance zone, who are selected through the random lottery process, be allowed to attend the Cluster school(s) up to the highest grade available at that school, or through grade 12? Will students be wait-listed? How will parents and guardians access and return application and registration documents (online, mail, hand delivery, etc.) to the local schools within the cluster?

Because the Petitioner has chosen to adopt the DCSD *Student Code of Conduct* in its entirety, the following statement should not be included in petition response, as written: *“A student may withdraw without penalty from a Cluster school at any time and enroll in another public school within the local system pursuant to policies of DCSD. A student who is suspended or expelled from a DHCC school as a result of disciplinary action taken by the Cluster may enroll in another public school within the local system if, following DCSD policy, the student would not otherwise have been suspended or expelled.”*

30. Describe the steps that will be taken to reach students that are representative of the racial and socioeconomic diversity in the school system.

Page(s) Located: 44	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments:			
<p>The Petitioner should identify specific resources, activities, locations and dates to inform DeKalb parents, students, and community members about the Druid Hills Cluster Open Enrollment options.</p> <p>How and when will the DCSD School Choice Office be notified of the enrollment options provided by the Cluster?</p> <p>The following statements from the Petitioner Guidelines should be addressed: Provide an outreach plan, including strategies for publicizing and recruiting prospective students that is equitable, nondiscriminatory, and will help ensure that the student population will reflect the demographics of the community you intend to serve. For the purposes of this petition, “community” is defined as the entire school system.</p>			

31. Describe the rules and procedures concerning student discipline and student dismissal (including code of conduct and student due process procedures). It is advisable to adopt DeKalb’s Code of Student Conduct. See DeKalb’s Code of Student Conduct for Guidance and attach a copy in the Appendix.

Page(s) Located: 44-45	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments:			
<p>The Petitioner asserted that the Cluster will adopt the DeKalb County School District Code of Student Conduct ~ Student Rights and Responsibility and Character Development Handbook (Appendix 21) to govern student discipline, due process procedures, etc. The Petitioner has also included a description of how the Cluster will meet federal due process requirements for students with disabilities. It is recommended that the Cluster’s Special Education Department, LTSEs, and/or administrators attend all informational meetings or in-services offered by the DeKalb County School District Department of Safe Schools and Student Relations to receive the most current information regarding student discipline procedures, policies and law.</p> <p>The Petitioner stated that the Cluster will create its own student discipline procedures, but only provided a DCSD <i>Student Code of Conduct</i> in the appendix. The Petitioner should provide information detailing the Cluster’s procedures, interventions and due process policy that must adhere to legal, state, federal guidelines, if the Petitioner is going to adopt its own student discipline code. An actual Cluster Student Discipline Code should be provided. Procedural safeguards regarding discipline of SWD must be written specifically outlining how the Cluster plans to address SWD students who violate the Code of Conduct. What other procedures, interventions, and due process policies will the Petitioner develop?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(continued on next page)</p>			

The Petitioner should further explain why the Cluster requires collaboration with the District to ensure discipline is handled appropriately for the Cluster’s special education students? The Cluster should clarify what “collaboration” means to them in regard to discipline measures for special education students.

32. Describe the rules and procedures concerning how the school will address grievances and complaints from students, parents, and teachers.

Page(s) Located: 45-46	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The petition response refers to “collective bargaining,” (page 46) which is not available in the State of Georgia. The Petitioner should clarify this wording in their response. The grievance policies for parents, students, and employees are located in the appendix.

33. Generally describe the charter school’s employment procedures and policies.

Page(s) Located: 46-49	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The Petitioner listed the job descriptions and contract for employment in the appendix. An HR handbook, demonstrating the employment procedures and policies, is crucial to a petition review, and is contingent upon approval. The exhibits provided by the Petitioner in the appendix, such as the job descriptions, salary description, example contract for employment, and employee benefits can be utilized in the employment procedure and policies.

The following information was highlighted in the Petitioner’s proposed employment contract:

- The cluster is requesting to waive O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200, regarding educator certification. However in section 4(f) of the contract, the Cluster states that if an employee is unable to maintain a valid in-field certificate, as “Highly Qualified,” DHCC shall have the option of canceling the employment contract or reducing the rate of pay to that of a substitute teacher.
- Section 3(c) of the draft contract, located in the appendix, states, “Employee expressly acknowledges and agrees that he or she shall not attain or accrue any statutory or contractual tenure rights as a result of this contract or Employee’s employment with DHCC, nor have any right to continuation or renewal of employment based on any previous contract or employment with the Cluster.” How does the Cluster plan to classify those DCSD teachers who currently have tenure, or are protected under the Fair Dismissal Act, O.C.G.A. §20-2-942?

(Question 33 continued)

- Also see, section 6(d), which states, “The parties acknowledge and agree the provisions of the Georgia Fair Dismissal Act, found at O.C.G.A. §20-2-942, shall not apply to the decisions to terminate this contract or employee’s employment in the Cluster.” When DCSD employees participated in the Cluster’s Employment Survey, were these employees made aware that tenure or Fair Dismissal rights would not transfer or continue, to their employment with the Cluster? The Petitioner should clearly identify what will be utilized in place of O.C.G.A. 20-2-942

The high percentages of the Petitioner’s employee survey results, as suggested in the appendix, do not reflect a true representation of the overall number of DCSD employees in the cluster. According to the survey provided in the appendix, only 82 employees replied. However, data retrieved by DCSD Human Resources demonstrates that there were approximately 426 eligible employees to vote. Furthermore, the survey demonstrated that the majority of these 82 employees surveyed are employed at Druid Hills High School, Druid Middle School, and Fernbank Elementary School, thereby demonstrating a lack of school representation in the employee survey. Additionally, some of the questions in the survey may have presented facts that were either assumed or unrealized. Please see data below:

- Avondale Elementary: 0 participants
- Briar Vista Elementary: 5 participants
- Druid Hills Middle: 22 participants
- Druid Hills High: 16 participants
- Fernbank Elementary: 30 participants
- Laurel Ridge Elementary: 5 participants
- McLendon Elementary: 4 participants

What evidence exists to confirm a sufficient interest among faculty to support the proposed Cluster?

On page 47 of the petition response, is it the “CAO” or the “CFO” who will review and approve the payroll register monthly?

On page 48 of the petition response, the following statement has not been approved by the DeKalb County School District: *“Upon offering Cluster contracts, the DHCC will provide to all personnel relevant information and documentation related to transfer under DCSD policy in the event any employee requires or desires transfer to a DCSD school or location outside the Cluster. As public school employees authorized under the jurisdiction and authority of the DeKalb County Board of Education, employees will retain standing in DCSD related to tenure, salary step, transfer of sick/personal time, and sick leave bank participation.”* Will the Cluster advise current DCSD employees who choose to contract with the Cluster, that they may lose certain benefits, time, and legal rights if they continue their employment with the DHCC?

(continued on next page)

(Question 33 continued)

Will classified employees be provided a Cluster contract? How will the Cluster recruit and/or hire classified employees? Will current DCSD “classified” employees (meaning not contracted) be offered a position for the 2014-2015 school year? What is the procedure to determine pay rates for the Cluster’s classified employees? Will classified employees receive the same opportunity for health or other benefits as certified employees?

Has the Cluster identified which positions will be considered 10-month, 11-month, or 12-month? How will the DHCC calculate sick, personal, bereavement, and vacation leave? Who will receive vacation leave?

Will all classified and certified employees be offered right of first refusal to an employment opportunity with the DHCC? What about those employees who have been recommended for non-renewal of contract for the 2014-2015 school year?

The Cluster’s plan to offer contracts ahead of the DCSD’s contract renewal period, may result in the Cluster risking the chance of offering contracts to DCSD employees who may be recommended for contract non-renewal.

Any DCSD employee who wants to become employed with the Cluster must resign from their employment with the DCSD. The Petitioner suggests using AppliTrack. However, it is unclear how DCSD employees who choose to be employed by the Cluster will apply for a job with the Cluster.

How will Human Resources fit into the proposed organizational structure presented by the Petitioner?

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

Page(s) Located: 46-48	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

This information was not found in the petition response. Per DCSD Human Resources Department, the United States Department of Education-Office of Federal Programs conducts an annual audit of the DeKalb County School District’s highly qualified faculty (teachers and paraprofessionals). Although the District has no authority over charter school’s human resources, the District is held accountable for the number of staff, including those employed by a DeKalb-approved Charter School, that are not highly qualified. The District’s goal is to assure that 100% of DeKalb teachers and paraprofessionals meet the qualifications to be considered “highly qualified.”

35. Describe whether the charter school will use the state salary schedule, and if another schedule will be used, provide that schedule. Please attach the salary schedule to be used.

Page(s) Located: 46-48 & the Appendix	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The Petitioner provided a state salary schedule and a DHCC salary schedule. The Petitioner seeks to compensate employees above the recommended state salary. The Petitioner has also proposed to have the minimum number of students allowed per class. How will the Petitioner plan to supplement the salaries above the state’s recommended salary? Has the Petitioner considered the financial impact their proposal to minimize class sizes may have on their plan to compensate employees above the state’s current salary schedule? Please explain.

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

Page(s) Located: 48-49	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

Which company or agency will the Cluster utilize to complete background checks? When will background checks be completed? Who will pay for this service, the employee or the Cluster? Will background checks be completed for DCSD employees converting to employment with the Cluster?

37. Describe the charter school’s insurance coverage, including the terms and conditions and coverage amounts thereof.

Page(s) Located: 50-51	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

No evidence of any insurance policy is located in the appendix. At the minimum, the Petitioner should provide projected quotes for each type of insurance from potential vendors. This effort would demonstrate the Petitioner’s good faith attempt to seek the appropriate coverage.

Copies of policies must be provided by the opening of school. Please ensure the following required statement is included in each of the school’s insurance policies: Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(b)(5), the DeKalb County Board of Education should be included as an additional insured.

The following statement should be included at the end of each insurance policy section discussed in the petition: *“The charter school shall hold harmless and indemnify DeKalb County School District, the Board of Education, its members, officers and employees for every liability, claim or demand upon the charter school; and the charter school petition shall contain a statement that the charter*

(Question 37 continued)
school agrees to defend and indemnify the DeKalb County Board of Education in any action arising in any way from the charter school's activities."

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

Page(s) Located: 52-53	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The DCSD has a limited amount of buses in its fleet. Because of the Petitioner's proposed school choice plan, the Petitioner should create a contingency plan to identify Cluster transportation services, schedules, and potential vendors, in addition to the DCSD, pursuant to the Cluster's waiver requests.</p> <p>Additionally, the Petitioner budgeted 2.5 million for transportation for the 1st year of implementation. The Petitioner may want to conduct a cost analysis to determine if this budget is adequate.</p>			

39. State whether the charter school will provide food services (including participation in federal school meals programs). If food services will be provided, please describe this program briefly.

Page(s) Located: 53-55	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments:</p> <p>Has the Petitioner clearly defined the plan to implement food services, in compliance with federal law and regulation, including associated costs?</p> <p>On page 53, the DHCC plans to use a vendor in alignment with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation/Healthy Schools Program. However, on page 54 of the petition response, the DHCC reports that it will seek to contract with DCSD for the continuation of services during the first year of implementation. The petition response covers several alternatives for the Cluster's food service. The Petitioner should state the plan for years 1-5 of the charter. Consequently, in a separate paragraph, the Cluster must state how it seeks to adhere to state and federal laws and regulations for each of these school years.</p> <p>Also, the Petitioner should be advised that contracting with DCSD School Nutrition Services requires an annual BOE-approved agreement. The Alliance for Healthier Generation/Healthy Schools Program framework is aligned with the DCSD School Nutrition Program. The DCSD School Nutrition Program is in compliance with all local, State, and Federal guidelines. Entities participating in the</p>			

(Question 39 continued)

National School Lunch program cannot waive the requirements requested by the Petitioner. See <http://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program>.

The Petitioner did not state if the food would be prepared on-site or off-site and the anticipated cost to students.

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

Page(s) Located: 55-56	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The petition response is appropriate as the Cluster intends to offer the State Health Benefits Plan (SHBP), even though it is not required. Additionally, although not required, does the Cluster plan to offer employees flexible benefit options such as dental insurance, vision insurance, life insurance, pre-paid legal, long term care, specified illness, medical or child care spending account, long term disability, or short term disability? These benefit options were not found in the petition.

The petition response discusses “offering competitive compensation and benefits,” but does not go into further detail. The Petitioner does not identify providers, services, or costs to the Cluster or the employee. Were current DCSD employees, employed in the Cluster, informed of the Cluster’s plan to offer or discontinue certain benefits?

Additional DCSD Personnel Requirements:

41. Describe the proposed staff qualifications, employee recruitment procedures, hiring practices, compensation, and employee evaluation procedures. For Conversion Charters: please state, “The charter will adhere to current DCSD policies, procedures and standards in all areas regarding the status of district employees to include treatment, qualifications/credentials, placement, compensation, and evaluations.”

Page(s) Located: 56-58	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The Petitioner did not include the following statement: “The charter will adhere to current DCSD policies, procedures and standards in all areas regarding the status of district employees to include treatment, qualifications/credentials, placement, compensation, and evaluations.” The Petitioner requested “complete autonomy in all employment and human resources matters as the employer of record.” The Petitioner wrote in lieu of the required statement: “The Cluster will ensure comparable DCSD policies, procedures, and standards in all areas including treatment, qualifications/credentials, placement, compensation, and evaluations.”

(Question 41 continued)

The petition response should provide detailed information regarding recruitment and hiring. The responses provided limited information and ideas versus a detailed plan of action. Refer to questions 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 40 for further review.

Pursuant to the Petitioner Guidelines, reviewers will [continue to] look for school operations plans that include the following:

- Staffing plans, staff hiring criteria and staff evaluation procedures that are clear and aligned with the school’s mission and educational design;
- A well-developed operations and policies section that reflects viable plans for health programs, food services, transportation services, student records, and federal requirements.

IX. FACILITIES

42. Describe the school facilities to be used, their location(s), and any pending modifications necessary for utilizing the space for educational purposes. Please state whether the building is new or existing. Building plans must be approved by the DeKalb County School’s Facilities department. If the charter intends to lease or contract with a church or other religious organization, please attach a completed questionnaire regarding this arrangement (please see DCSD Charter Guidelines for this form).

Page(s) Located: 58-59	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments: The Petitioner demonstrates good understanding of the facility needs. The Petitioner stated that it intends to enter into an agreement with the DCSD for the maintenance of the facilities and grounds of the leased sites that on-site custodial staff cannot complete.

The Petitioner should provide the following information:

- All schools must submit a School Site Selection Form for Site and Facility Approval for a Site or Facility not to be owned by the School System. These forms can be found on the GADOE website: http://www.gadoe.org/fbo_facilities.aspx under the Facilities Services Link.
- Please indicate if the identified site will accommodate the school through the initial charter term and at full capacity. If the school will not start at full capacity, please describe how the school will accommodate growth over an initial five-year term of the school.

Please note that currently and historically, the District’s charter schools that control their earned FTE funding have managed their own building and facilities maintenance.

43. Please provide a statement that any future facility used to house students will be subject to approval by the local Board of Education and the Georgia Department of Education prior to occupancy.

Page(s) Located: 59	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: Complete.			

44. Provide documentation of ownership or a copy of the lease of the facility. If ownership documentation or a lease is unavailable, provide a timeline for obtaining such facilities or providing such documentation (this question does not apply to conversion charter schools).

Page(s) Located: 59-60	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

A multi-year lease agreement for all eight (8) facilities must be obtained by the Petitioner from the DCSD. The Petitioner will lease Druid Hills HS for 5 years, Druid Hills MS for 5 years, Avondale ES for 5 years, Briar Vista ES for 5 years, Fernbank ES (currently under construction) for 4 years, (Question 44 continued)

Avondale MS (currently housing Fernbank ES until the new building is completed) for 1 year, Laurel Ridge ES for 5 years, and McLendon ES for 5 years. The lease agreement may provide for existing fixtures currently located in the schools.

The District acknowledges that O.C.G.A. §20-2-2068.2(e) states, "Local boards are required to renovate, repair, and maintain the school facilities of charter schools in the district to the same extent as other public schools in the district if the local board owns the charter school facility, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Petitioner and the local board in the charter." The petition language regarding this state law is slightly inaccurate because only the following language was provided: "Local boards are required to renovate, repair, and maintain the school facilities of charter schools in the district to the same extent as other public schools in the district if the local board owns the charter school facility." Please note that renovations, repairs, and maintenance may be negotiated in the lease agreement(s).

The District further acknowledges, pursuant to O.C.G.A. §20-2-2068(h), that the District, in addition to leasing facilities to charter schools for profit, is also prohibited from charging a leasing fee for the "property normally used by the public school which became the local charter school." While not required to pay for the leasing of DCSD property currently located in the school, the Petitioner should mention how the Cluster plans to acquire additional furniture and prepare for furniture repairs (See Question 51).

Has the Cluster planned, within its budget, for the renovation, repair, and maintenance of the proposed locations? Please provide evidence.

(Question 44 continued)

The following requirements from the Petitioner’s Guidelines should be addressed:

Please provide evidence that the site has been secured, which should include:

a. **Preferred:** Letter of Intent (LOI) signed by the building owner, to lease or sell the proposed facility to your organization. The LOI must contain specific terms, including rent or purchase amount and any agreement(s) on building renovation costs; or if an LOI is not possible, please provide:

b. **Alternative:** Provide a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the owner, that does each of the following:

- Describes the status of negotiations with your organization regarding the possible lease or purchase of the building should your proposal be approved;
- Describes any foreseeable conditions, circumstances, or considerations that may affect the decision to lease or sell the building to your organization;
- Specifies any decision-making process that may be required before an agreement can be finalized;
- Specifies a date by which a decision to lease or sell is likely to be reached; and
- If the facility will be leased, identify what responsibilities the landlord will have for the maintenance and what the school’s responsibilities will be for maintenance, custodial services, and annual health and safety inspections.

45. Attach a copy of Certificate of Occupancy. Please provide a Certificate of Occupancy, or a timeline detailing the latest possible date by which the Certificate of Occupancy will be obtained prior to students occupying the proposed facility.

Page(s) Located: 60	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

No “Certificate of Occupancy (CO)” was located in the petition. Petitioner should be advised that Certificates of Occupancy must be obtained for all eight (8) locations. The latest possible date by which the CO may be obtained is (30) days prior to the established opening of the school and must be included in the petition.

Certificates of Occupancy for all but Fernbank Elementary are available and will be used. The District will obtain Certificate of Occupancy for the new Fernbank ES and will provide it to the Charter Organization prior to occupancy.

46. Provide the school's emergency safety plan, which may constitute a statement that the Petitioner will prepare a safety plan in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185 and will submit and obtain approval of that plan from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency by a specified date.

Page(s) Located: 60-61	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The Petitioner acknowledges that it must submit and/or update its school safety plans in compliance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185, to the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) for approval, and that such GEMA-approved plans must be received by the District prior to July 1, 2014, and on required dates mandated by the DCSD thereafter. The Petitioner acknowledges that, in collaboration with the District, it must meet all codes for sanitation, fire, construction, stability, temperature, ventilation, and suitability of physical space. The Petitioner will follow all state and local mandates and guidelines related to safety processes and drills and documentation and reporting.

No plans were submitted as evidence in the appendix of the petition. The Petitioner should be advised that the facilities plan, safe school plans, and certificate of occupancy must be obtained for all eight (8) locations 30 days prior to the established opening of the school and must be included in the petition.

Additional DCSD Facilities and Insurance Requirements:

47. Provide a copy of the school's site selection form.

Page(s) Located: 60	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:
Site selection forms are handled by the District for the existing and one proposed facility.

X. PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

48. Describe how parents, community members, and other interested parties contributed to the development of the petition and how they will be involved in the school.

Page(s) Located: 61-63	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments: The Petitioner's response for community and parent involvement in the creation of the petition is acceptable; however, there are contradicting reports regarding the planning process. It has been noted that surveys were provided to Cluster parents in both English and Spanish.

The Petitioner should provide clarification on the following:

Are agendas of all Cluster planning meetings available for review? The Petitioner should provide a list of dates and times, and if available, sign-in sheets, of these meetings.

(Question 48 continued)

Was the community at large allowed to participate in open discussion about pros and cons of the Charter Cluster and the petition in these meetings?

Please address the following from the Petitioner Guidelines:

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

- This petition should represent parents/guardians of school-age children who would enter the grade(s) your school plans to serve in first year of operation.
- At minimum, the petition should include names, as well as addresses, district of residence, child's name, a contact number and expected child's grade during proposed charter school's first year of instruction (this list should be separated from other support lists and all information should be legible and verifiable).
- The petitioner may also provide letters of support for your proposed school from representatives of the community you wish to serve. This may include but is not limited to, community leaders, businesses, or other institutions.
- A statement from partners indicating their intended involvement in the school.

The reviewers did not find evidence of community support that includes the following:

- Community representation on the planning team and letters of support;
- Demonstrated and genuine interest among the community for the proposed Cluster (including local stakeholders such as community groups, elected officials and parents of students in proposed attendance zone);
- Solid capacity to reach out to both the local and broader communities;
- High levels of family, parent and student representation throughout the planning process;
- Capacity to communicate effectively with the school's families, and stakeholder engagement strategies that mobilize parents and the community in a way that promotes school success;
- and
- Proposed Partnership Plans and Letters of Support offered as an attachment.

Additional DCSD Community Understanding Requirements:

49. Describe in detail the community support for this school and the need for this particular school in the community it will serve. Support may be evidenced through additional documentation (see DCSD Guidelines for Charter School Petitions for details).

Page(s) Located: 63-65	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The petition response speaks to internal parent involvement; however, the Petitioner should also be responsive in the area of community involvement. The list of organizations provided in the appendices is not an actual list of “committed business partners” for the Cluster. There are two (2) letters from two businesses that may partner with the Cluster upon the approval of the petition. However, this is not a substantial number of community or business support. The petition response states that the Petitioner has “established and will continue to establish formal relationships with non-profit entities, colleges, universities, and the business communities within and around the Cluster area.” There is a letter from Emory University, but no actual indication of a future partnership. More evidence of a well-established presence and partnership with businesses in the surrounding area is needed.</p> <p>How will your proposed partnerships enhance student achievement and actively engage students, parents, and the community? Was there sufficient interest among parents to support the Cluster? Please provide evidence. Please provide a rationale as to why this Cluster would not have the potential of dividing the community in an adverse way, i.e. racially, by national origin, by neighborhood, or disability?</p>			

XI. DEMONSTRATION OF FISCAL FEASIBILITY AND CONTROLS

50. Indicate whether the school will utilize the local school board for fiscal management; and, if so, specify what autonomy the charter school will have over budgets and expenditures.

Page(s) Located: 65-68	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments: Completed.</p>			

51. Please use the spreadsheets provided by GADOE to accompany Guidance for Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.05, which list detailed budget information projecting revenues and expenditures for the first five years of the proposed charter term. If any sources of revenue appearing in the spreadsheets are anticipated to come from private sources, documentation of such revenues must be included along with the petition.

Page(s) Located: 68-69 and Appendices	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The Petitioner’s cash flow projection did not print out correctly; the document must be fixed in MS Excel.

The Petitioner projected a per pupil revenue for 5,420 enrolled students. District data as of 10/9/2013 demonstrates only 4,826 students are enrolled in the Cluster schools. Therefore, the Petitioner’s budget may be impacted by the over-projection of per pupil revenue and number of students enrolled.

The projected five year budget (and cash flow projection) may seem unrealistic in terms of operation. The Petitioner should update the petition with a budget projection chart that fits onto one page across all columns (rows may exceed one page.) The budget spreadsheet provided by the Petitioner needs further clarification in the following categorical lines, for the stated reason:

Assumptions

- **“Revenue Per Pupil (State and/or Local)”**- The projected budget quotes do not appear to take into consideration actual budget/revenue for a special education, gifted, alternative education, or kindergarten student.

Expenses- Personnel

- The Petitioner did not list a budget for the salaries of the Cluster Administrative Officer and the Cluster Financial Officer.
- **“Office Assistant”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for an Office Assistant for any of the five operating years.
- **“Maintenance”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for Custodians for any of the five operating years.
- **“Food Service”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for Food Service Associates for any of the five operating years.
- **“Retirement Benefits” and “Health Benefits”**- The Petitioner should identify specific benefits that will be provided to employees. Who will receive benefits? Will all the benefits afforded to DCSD employees, certified and classified, be offered by the Petitioner?

(Question 51 continued)

- **“Computers”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for technology/computers for the first year of operation. The Petitioner budgeted minimally for computers for the remaining four (4) years. The DCSD is not required to provide hardware to a charter school.
- **“Software”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for software for any of the five operating years. This is a major concern for implementing technology in the schools for operation and or instruction, especially those identified as “STEAM” by the Petitioner.
- **“Classroom Furniture”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for replacement or additional classroom furniture for any of the five operating years (See Question 44).
- **“Library and Media Center”**- The Petitioner calculated a projected library and media center budget of \$81,300 for the first year of operation. Does this budget include the salary of a Media Specialist for each of the seven (7) Cluster schools? It has been noted that the Petitioner seeks to waive SBOE Rule 160-4-4.01 regarding media programs staffing requirements. The Petitioner also seeks to waive O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167 regarding funding for direct instructional, media center, and staff development costs. Based on the waivers preliminarily requested and the projected budget allotment for Library and Media Center, will the DHCC be able to continue the resources that the DCSD Educational Media Department provides traditional DeKalb County Schools?

Services & Supplies

- **“Athletic Program”**- For a cluster of seven (7) schools, the Petitioner only projected a year-to-year budget of “\$50,000” to be allotted to the Cluster’s athletic program for all five operating years of the Cluster. Also, please be mindful of Title IX requirements. What does this projected amount cover, e.g. equipment, uniforms, trips, etc.? How does the Cluster plan to implement the athletic program?
- **“Office Supplies”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for office supplies for any of the five operating years. The DCSD is not required to provide office supplies to a charter school.
- **“Office Furniture”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for office furniture for any of the five operating years (See Question 44).
- **“Office Computers & Software”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for office computers and software for any of the five operating years. (See Question 44).
- **“Bookkeeping”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for bookkeeping for any of the five operating years. Does the Cluster plan to use an internal bookkeeper?
- **“Banking Fees”**- For a cluster of seven (7) schools, with millions of dollars potentially being allocated annually to the Cluster, the Petitioner only projected a year-to-year budget of “\$500” to be allotted to the Cluster’s banking fees, for all five operating years of the Cluster.
- **“Legal Services”**- For a cluster of seven (7) schools, the Petitioner only projected a year-to-year budget of “\$50,000” to be allotted to the Cluster’s legal services budget, for all five

operating years of the Cluster.

- **“Staff Recruitment”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for recruitment for any of the five operating years.
- **“Tech Support”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for tech support for any of the five operating years.
- **“Phone/Internet Service”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for communications for any of the five operating years.
- **“Health Supplies”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for health supplies for any of the five operating years.
- **“Pest Control”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for pest control for any of the five operating years. School buildings require pest control due to the large size and age of the building. Failure to control potential pests could result in the endangerment of the health and safety of staff and students, which could potentially be a violation of state law and consequently, a charter contract. (See Question 44).
- **“Janitorial Supplies & Services”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for custodial supplies and services for any of the five operating years. Failure to maintain clean buildings with the appropriate products could result in the endangerment of the health and safety of staff and students, which could potentially be a violation of state law and consequently, a charter contract. The Petitioner should budget for this service, even if planning to contract for it.
- **“Waste Disposal”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for waste disposal for any of the five operating years. Failure to dispose of waste appropriately could result in the endangerment of the health and safety of staff and students, or the environment, which could potentially be a violation of state law.
- **“Marketing”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for marketing for any of the five operating years. How does the petition plan to pay for flyers, maintain a website domain, advertise, etc.?
- **“Special Education”**- The Petitioner needs to consider costs associated with additional resources or student and staffing requirements pursuant to ADAAA, IDEA, or Student §504 Plans or Individualized Education Plans. The first year projection of \$26,200 allocated to Special Education seems insufficient for seven (7) schools.
- The Petitioner may also want to consider costs associated with employee §504 accommodations, pursuant to the American Disability Act as Amended (ADAAA).

Facilities

- **“Grounds Maintenance”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for Grounds Maintenance for any of the five operating years (See Question 44).
- **“Utilities”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for Utilities for any of the five operating years (See Question 44).

(Question 51 continued)

- **“Fire and Safety Compliance”**- The Petitioner did not calculate any budget projections for Fire and Safety Compliance for any of the five operating years. Failure to be in compliance with state fire and safety laws or regulations could result in the endangerment of the health or safety of Cluster staff and students, and could potentially be a violation of state law and consequently, a charter contract.

52. Please state that the school is subject to an annual financial audit by an independent Georgia-licensed Certified Public Accountant, in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065 (b) (7). The financial reporting format shall be in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Page(s) Located: 69	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments:			
The Cluster has indicated that they are subject to an annual financial audit by a CPA certified in Georgia. It is suggested that the Cluster identify candidate businesses who will conduct the financial audit.			

53. Identify the school’s Chief Financial Officer and describe how that person’s credentials comply with the Guidance for Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-5-2-.23 for the purpose of developing and adhering to generally accepted accounting principles.

Page(s) Located: 69	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments:			
The Cluster did not identify a CFO in the petition response. Who assisted the Cluster in developing the projected budget?			

54. Provide a description of the method used to recruit the number of anticipated students at the school and a statement setting forth the school’s plan for maintaining and/or increasing attendance.

Page(s) Located: 69-70	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments: Question 54 is relative to Full-Time Equivalency funding. Also, see question 29 and 30.</p> <p>DHCC will obtain its students from the existing enrollment of the attendance zone. If available, how does the Cluster plan to offer seats to students who may reside outside of the attendance zone? Further explanation is needed regarding the following petition statement, “The Cluster will track demographic shifts and increases/decreases in numbers in the district and Cluster attendance zone annually and utilize these trends for forecasting.”</p>			

55. Describe the manner in which the school’s enrollment count will be determined for the purposes of calculating charter school funding, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2068.1 (c) or O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2090 (d), as appropriate.

Page(s) Located: 70	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The petition response does not accurately describe the manner in which the school's enrollment count will be determined for the purposes of calculating charter school funding, pursuant to O.C.G.A 20-2-2068.1(c).</p>			

56. Provide a proposed timeline as to when the charter school expects to receive state and local funding from the local board in order to begin operations.

Page(s) Located: 70	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments:</p> <p>State Funds are not received by the District until the last day of each month. The date listed in the petition should be revised to reflect the last day of July 2014.</p>			

57. Please state that the charter school will comply with the federal monitoring requirements for schools receiving federal funds.

Page(s) Located: 70	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The charter school needs to be autonomous in its compliance with the federal monitoring requirements for schools receiving federal funds or grants. However, the DCSD will work collaboratively with the Cluster to distribute state or federal grant funds, including Title I funds.</p>			

58. Please describe in detail the school’s plans for securing other sources of funding.

Page(s) Located: 70-71	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments: There is a typo on page 71. An additional “m” is behind the word “from.”</p> <p>What loans do the Cluster plan on securing? Has the Cluster already secured any loans? Is the Cluster aware that Federal implementation and planning grants are available? How does the Cluster plan to repay these loans?</p> <p>As stated in the petition, explain instances in which “demands” for repayment of grant funds would occur, and provide further detail as to how the Cluster would resolve this matter, especially in a situation where the charter is dissolved or terminated.</p> <p>Please note that the DCSD will work collaboratively with the Cluster to reimburse state or federal grant funds, including Title I funds.</p>			

XII. DESCRIPTION OF GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

59. Please describe in detail how the charter school will be governed.

Page(s) Located: 71-72	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments: Completed.</p>			

60. Please state that the governing board shall be subject to the control and management of the local board and subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-1 et seq. and 50-18-70 et seq.

Page(s) Located:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
<p>Comments: Completed.</p>			

61. Describe in detail the governing board’s function, duties, and composition, including the board’s role as it relates to the charter school’s mission. Also include information on how and when governing board members will be selected, trained, how long each governing board member will serve, how governing shall avoid conflicts of interests and how governing board members may be removed from office, as outlined in Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.04.

Page(s) Located: 72-85	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments: The DHCC Board of Directors’ roles and functions, located in the petition, were well thought out. However, it is strongly recommended that pages 72-85 of the petition response be merged with the proposed bylaws located in the appendices. The bylaws appear to be missing much of the Petitioner’s intent located on pages 72-85. (Also see Question 66 below).

The Petitioner has indicated that the nomination committee for the Board of Directors will consist of one member from each School Leadership Team. This committee will provide recommendations to the Board of Directors to conduct their vote for new Board of Directors. If “new [board] members are to be elected by a majority vote of the then-existing [DHCC] Governing Board,” the following questions should be considered:

- 1- How will the nominating committee “solicit, identify, recruit, and screen” Board of Director nominees in a manner that is representative of all members of the Cluster?
- 2- How will the Board of Directors ensure that broad representation (demographics, socioeconomic, etc.) of the Cluster is considered in their vote?
- 3- How will parents and stakeholders have access to voice their opinion regarding the selection of the Governing Board?

For the election and re-election of the School Leadership Team, is it in the public interest of all the families in the Cluster for some parents or guardians to have the opportunity to submit more votes than others, depending on the number of students they have enrolled in the school?

It does not appear that the Petitioner has projected a budget for Board Governance training. (See Question 50.)

The following questions should also be considered for response:

How was the current Board of Directors selected?

Will parents and stakeholders have access to express their opinion regarding the selection of the Cluster Board of Directors?

Has the Petitioner considered a more democratic voting process for the School Leadership teams?

62. Describe how parents, community members, or other interested parties will be involved in the charter school’s governing board.

Page(s) Located: 86	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments: Please see comments in Question 61.

63. Describe the method that the local board and the charter school plan to utilize for resolving conflicts.

Page(s) Located: 86-88 & Appendices "Grievance Procedure"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

An "Employer Grievance Procedure" and a "Student, Parent, & Guardian Grievance Procedure" are located in the appendix.

If the Petitioner plans to "enlist the assistance of an experienced alternative dispute resolution professional," did they budget for this? Currently, the Petitioner provided a budget projection of \$50,000/per year for legal services (See Question 50 above). The Petitioner should further reflect on the types of simultaneous legal issues that may occur while operating a school, e.g. employee relations, discrimination complaints, special education complaints or violations, workers' compensation, tort, contracts, and other potential litigious situations.

64. List any proposed business arrangements or partnerships with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, or nonprofit organizations and disclose any potential conflicts of interest. This includes a copy of any intended contracts for the provision of educational management services or the provision of supplemental educational services and remediation, and any agreements with other local schools for the charter school students' participation in extracurricular activities such as interscholastic sports and clubs.

Page(s) Located: 87 & Appendices	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The appendix included Montessori and STEAM "partners," but there seems to be no evidence that the businesses or organizations on these lists are willing, actual partners of the Cluster, rather than potential field trip opportunities and/or organizations who will visit the Cluster schools for educational or extracurricular purposes.

The appendix also contains two (2) potential partnership letters from "Culture Connect, Inc.," doing business in Clarkston, Georgia and "TAG-Ed," doing business in Atlanta, Georgia. However, no contract is provided for either company. There is also one (1) Memorandum of Understanding for Laurel Ridge Elementary School only, from the "Alliance for a Healthy Generation," dated June 27, 2013. However, the 2013 Petitioner Guidelines clearly state, "Any business arrangements or partnerships described should already be initiated at the time the charter petition is submitted and should be documents through signed agreements between the parties involved."

The letter from Emory University Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Claire Sterk, dated July 30, 2013, is acceptable as a letter of support, but does not indicate a partnership between the Cluster and Emory University.

(Question 64 continued)

The Petitioner’s partnership with International Baccalaureate Organization was not included. The Cluster should anticipate the annual membership fees for IBO, and Montessori training costs, in their projected budgets. (See Question 51 above)

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

Page(s) Located: 88	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: Located in the Appendix.			

66. Please provide a copy of the by-laws for the nonprofit corporation, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(b)(4)]. (Conversion Charter Schools do not need to provide certificates of incorporation; however the by-laws to be used by the governing board are still required).

Page(s) Located: 88 & Appendices	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: A draft document of the intended bylaws is located in the petition appendix. However, it is recommended that the Petitioner merge their petition response for question Questions 61-62 into the bylaws. Furthermore, the Petitioner did not meet requirements for this section because the bylaws should not be a “draft.” Please provide a proposed, final version of the bylaws.			

Additional DCSD Governance Requirements:

67. Please provide a complete and signed conflict of interest for each proposed founding board member (see DCSD Guidelines for Charter School Petitions 2013 for this form).

Page(s) Located: 88 & Appendices	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: All seven (7) conflict of interest forms need to be completed with penned signatures. The criminal background history section needs to be initialed on each line. Minor traffic violations do not need to be reported. Electronic signatures or other marks should be fixed.			

68. Please provide a resume for each governing board member that explains what role they will play on the board and why they were chosen to participate in the founding group.

Page(s) Located: 88	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: It is suggested that actual résumé templates be utilized.			

69. Please provide a brief plan for continuous governance training, recruitment and retention of high quality governing board members.

Page(s) Located: 88	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: The Petitioner meets requirements of this response. However, it has been noted in Question 50 that the Petitioner has not budgeted for this training.			

70. Describe the governing board’s role in resolving teacher, parent, and student grievances and other conflicts.

Page(s) Located: 90	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: Completed.			

XIII. STATEMENT ON ANNUAL REPORT

71. State that the charter school shall, by October 1st, submit an annual report to the Georgia Department of Education, the DeKalb County Board of Education and parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school. This report shall include all state-mandated assessment and accountability scores and complies with all requirements set out in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2067.1(c)(1)-(6). Charter schools must use the template provided by the Department of Education to complete the report.

Page(s) Located: 90	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: Completed.			

Other Additional DCSD Requirements:

72. Please provide information on the charter board’s legal counsel and how the proposed school will ensure compliance with the requirements of law with respect to legal issues.

Page(s) Located: 90-91	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: Ford & Finnerty, LLC, located at 1100 Peachtree Street, Atlanta, Georgia 30309, is the current legal representative of record for the DHCC. The law firm has reviewed the petition. The Cluster plans to publish a request for proposals for legal services. The response does not explicitly state how the Cluster’s legal representation will ensure compliance with the requirements of law (federal and/or state) with respect to legal issues. The response also indicates that Ford & Finnerty, LLC may not be retained as counsel for the Cluster, if approved. Additionally, the Petitioner may want to review the projected budget of \$50,000/per year for legal services. (Also see Question 63).			

73. Please complete the insurance/indemnification clause as stated (see DCSD Guidelines for Charter School Petitions 2013 for required wording).

Page(s) Located: 91 & Appendices	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: The response meets requirements; however, the Petitioner should revise the petition to state the legal name throughout the paragraphs. The legal name of the organization is “Druid Hills Charter Cluster, Inc.”			

74. Please include the Indemnification and insurance requirements to be met by charter Petitioner. The statement that must be included can be found in the DeKalb County Schools Charter Schools Guidance. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(b)(5), each insurance policy required by the DeKalb County Board of Education for every charter school shall contain a statement that the DeKalb County Board of Education be included as an additional insured. Copies of each policy shall be provided to the DeKalb Charter Schools Office prior to the opening of school, the charter petition shall include a statement that the charter school shall hold harmless and indemnify DeKalb County School District, the board of education, its members, officers and employees for every liability, claim or demand upon the charter school; and the charter school petition shall contain a statement that the charter school agrees to defend and indemnify the DeKalb County Board of Education in any action from the charter school’s activities.

Required insurance coverages are as follows with coverage amounts as written:

- a. General Liability
- b. Errors or Omissions
- c. Property/Lease Insurance
- d. Auto Liability
- e. Worker’s Compensation
- f. Theft

Page(s) Located: 91 & Appendices	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

The Petitioner must provide proof of insurance policies with the mandatory indemnification language by July 1, 2014, if approved.

75. Please attach any other relevant materials referenced in your petition. These materials may include academic and financial data for other schools managed by the educational management organization, program descriptions, letters of support from the community, etc. Any other handbooks, policies or procedures referenced in your charter must be attached (see DCSD Guidelines for Charter School Petitions 2013 for a list of possible attachments/appendices).

Page(s) Located: N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments: N/A

76. Please provide required charter assurances document.

Page(s) Located: N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments: This is completed; however, the petition guidelines require that the assurances are a part of the charter petition “as the last pages of the main section.” Please correct.

For Conversion Charter Schools

a. Include a statement that the Petitioner has held the appropriate votes, by secret ballot, required pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064(a)(1) and (2), and shall describe the procedures and outcomes of those votes. For the purposes of the vote required pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064 (a) (1), each faculty or instructional staff member shall have a single vote. For purposes of the vote required pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064(a)(2), a student’s parent(s) or guardian(s) shall collectively have one vote for each student enrolled in the school.

Page(s) Located: 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
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Comments:

This statement was not present. The Petitioner estimated that 5,420 students were currently enrolled in the DHCC cluster at the time of the August 13, 2013 petition vote. (The cluster currently has 4,878 students enrolled as of 10/9/2013.) There were at least 4800 potential votes available, one per child enrolled, according to O.C.G.A §20-2-2064. Parents or guardians, who resided in the Cluster attendance zone only, received one ballot for each child enrolled. The Petitioner indicated that 997 qualified parent/guardian votes were cast. This number represents 20% of the eligible 4800 potential ballots. It is unknown how many parents or guardians voted, because theoretically one household could have multiple votes. The District is cognizant that, pursuant to state law, **60%** of the **20%** of these votes were sufficient to approve the submission of the petition. Therefore, it appears that the parents, guardians, and/or communities of these cluster schools were overwhelmingly underrepresented during the voting process.

The Petitioner should provide validated vote counts by school.

Was the vote conducted in a way that would provide confidence to the Local Board and the community that the faculty and parents, as a whole, have been truly heard and had an opportunity to express themselves?
 How was input from parents and guardians who reside outside of the attendance zone received?
 How was input from stakeholders received?

b. A conversion charter petition shall include a statement detailing the autonomy that the conversion school shall have from the local school system. This statement shall include, among other things, a description of how financial resources will be managed; how human resources will be managed and personnel evaluated; the extent to which parents, community members, and other stakeholders will participate in the governance of the school; and any other innovative practices the school intends to implement. The petition shall describe all policies, procedures and practices the school intends to implement. The petition shall describe all policies, procedures, and practices that will materially distinguish the conversion school from the school’s pre-conversion model.

(continued on next page)

Page(s) Located: 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: The petition includes a rationale for becoming a charter school on page 2. However, this requirement is demonstrated throughout the petition. Many of the statements detailing autonomy in the DHCC petition present points of major concern, requiring further detail, explanation, or correction in the areas of finance and budget, human resources, curriculum and instruction, parent and community involvement, board governance and bylaws, etc.			

FOR HIGH SCHOOL CLUSTER PETITIONS ONLY

All high school cluster charter petitions that are submitted by a charter Petitioner to the local board must meet all petition requirements in sections I through XIII above.

A high school and all the middle and elementary schools whose students matriculate to that high school may act as a single charter Petitioner to convert to charter school status pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2063 (b). The high school cluster petition may include new and existing start-up charter schools, conversion charter schools, and renewals thereof.

a. A statement describing the rationale for petitioning as a high school cluster, such as consistency of academic calendar or educational approach.

Page(s) Located: 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: The rationale was present.			

b. A description of how *each school* shall be held accountable for performance goals stated in the charter.

Page(s) Located:	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: A description of how each school shall be held accountable for performance goals stated in the charter was not found. Please include.			

c. A description of how the high school cluster as a whole shall be held accountable for performance goals stated in the charter.

Page(s) Located:	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Requirement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Requirement(s)
Comments: This response was not explicitly described in the petition. More details are necessary.			

DeKalb County Schools Required Statements

Charter School Petitioners are required to copy the statements below, as written, and insert into the charter petition as the last pages of the main section of the charter petition. Please check to ensure each statement is entered into the petition.

Academics and Assessments

- The charter school understands that as a public school, it can not charge tuition or fees for attendance. **Present** **Not Present**
- The charter will adhere to all assessment guidelines and procedures as outlined by the State Assessment Handbook, the State Accommodations Manual, and other state and local guidance on assessment. **Present** **Not Present**
- The charter school agrees to unannounced visits and announced instructional audits conducted by the DeKalb School District's Instructional Audit Team as needed and as determined by the Charter School Office. **Present** **Not Present**

Student Support Services

- "The provision of services and due process procedures will be implemented for students with disabilities and English Language Learners in accordance with all relevant Federal and State laws, rules, and regulations."
 Present **Not Present**
- Establish a Student Support Team (SST) in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies manual and use DCSD forms for SST.
 Present **Not Present**
- Establish a Section 504 team in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies.
 Present **Not Present**
- Use DCSD forms for Section 504, special education, counseling services, psychological services, social services and health services.
 Present **Not Present**
- Handle all discipline issues regarding Section 504 students in accordance with federal regulations, state guidelines, and local school board policies.
 Present **Not Present**
- Comply with Section 504 by providing the appropriate accommodations and equipment.
 Present **Not Present**
- Immediately notify the DCSD Director of Support Services upon receipt of a complaint made by a parent/guardian or student concerning Section 504, furnish a copy of such complaint and cooperate fully in the investigation, defense and resolution of such complaint.
 Present **Not Present**

- Hire or contract Certified Special Education teacher(s), a licensed school counselor, a licensed certified school psychologist or a licensed clinical psychologist, a licensed school social worker and a licensed school nurse; to provide services to eligible students (in accordance with State guidelines and DCSD policy). **Present** **Not Present**
- Develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for each student identified as needing special education services, with the full participation of the DCSD Program for Exceptional Children staff. **Present** **Not Present**
- Employ substitute teachers as required by state guidelines until certified teachers are hired if the charter school does not have certified staff.
 Present **Not Present**
- Handle discipline issues regarding special education students in accordance with federal guidelines, state rules and DCSD policy. **Present** **Not Present**
- Immediately notify the Director of Special Services upon receipt of a complaint made by a parent/guardian or student concerning the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, furnish a copy of such complaint and cooperate fully in the investigation, defense and resolution of such complaint.
 Present **Not Present**
- Report all allegations of child abuse and/or neglect to the charter school social worker and to the persons required to receive such reports pursuant to state law.
 Present **Not Present**

Facilities

- The school will comply with the Uniform Building Code Inspection and the Standard Building Code, Standard Plumbing Code, Standard Mechanical Gas Code, federal Americans with Disabilities (ADA) access requirements and other applicable fire, health and structural safety requirements, local state, and federal laws. **Present** **Not Present**
- The charter school will meet all applicable codes for sanitation, fire, construction, stability, temperature, ventilation, and suitability of physical space. The charter school will maintain a certificate of occupancy from the required government agency. The charter school will grant access to local health and fire department officials for inspection of the premises or operations of the school for purposes of ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of students and employees pursuant to Georgia Statutes and National Fire Protection Association Life Safety Code, N.F.P.A. 101. **Present** **Not Present**
- The charter school is subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of physical health and safety of school students, employees and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct.
 Present **Not Present**

Financial

- Any surplus funds remaining at the close of each fiscal year will be used to enhance the charter school's academic program the following year.
 Present **Not Present**

- The charter school's annual audit will meet GASB guidelines and will contain a complete asset inventory. **Present** **Not Present**

- The charter school agrees to submit monthly financial statements to the DCSD Charter Schools Office. **Present** **Not Present**

- The charter school is subject to an audit by the District's Internal Audits Department.
 Present **Not Present**

- Any surplus funds remaining at the close of each fiscal year will be used to enhance the charter school's academic program the following year.
 Present **Not Present**

- Any deficit occurring during or at the end of a fiscal year shall be eliminated by funds to be provided by the Petitioner. The charter school shall not request any additional funds from the DCSD to cover any deficit created by the charter school and the DCSD shall not allocate funds for the charter school for the next fiscal year until the deficit has been eliminated.
 Present **Not Present**

- The charter school is solely responsible for all debts incurred by the charter school and its governing body, and the DCSD shall not be contractually bound to the charter school or to any third party with whom the charter school has a contract or from whom the charter school has purchased goods or services, except as otherwise agreed in the charter contract.
 Present **Not Present**

- The charter will provide evidence that it has obtained appropriate bonding of the governing board and administrators by October 1st of its first year of operation.
 Present **Not Present**

- In the event the charter school ceases operation for any reason, the charter school and its governing body shall be responsible for closing out the business affairs of the charter school. The charter school shall cooperate with the DCSD to the extent necessary to provide an orderly return of the students to the appropriate schools for which they are zoned.
 Present **Not Present**

- If the charter plans to cease operation, the school will notify the DCSD Charter Office with 24 hours of the governing board's decision and include the name and contact information for the person responsible for the closing procedures. Any surplus remaining at the time any charter school ceases operations shall be remitted to the DCSD. The charter school shall submit a financial audit for the final year of operation, prepared by an independent Georgia-licensed certified public accountant. **Present** **Not Present**

- This audit shall include a detailed inventory of all assets. Any furniture and equipment purchased with DCSD funds shall be delivered to the school system. Further, should the charter school not have sufficient funds to pay all of its bills, invoices, or other evidence of indebtedness at the time it ceases operation, the DCSD shall not be responsible for any debts incurred or contracts signed by the charter school. **Present** **Not Present**

Personnel

- The charter school shall submit certified personnel information (CPI) to the DeKalb County School System's Human Resources Department no later than October 1, May 1 and July 1 and other times upon request by Human Resources personnel. **Present** **Not Present**

- The charter school will provide documented annual professional development for all instructional staff. **Present** **Not Present**

- The faculty, instructional staff and all other personnel necessary for the operation of the Charter School shall be employees of the Charter School. Charter School instructors of core subjects shall be certified in those subjects by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission as defined in Section 1119 of the No Child Left Behind Act, unless a waiver of this requirement is requested. If this requirement is waived, teachers will meet all other GAPSC requirements for highly qualified teachers working at charter schools. Paraprofessionals with instructional support duties will meet guidelines of Section 1119 of the No Child Left Behind Act and ESEA. **Present** **Not Present**

Governance

- The local governance of the charter school shall operate under a structure that retains a local school level governance body of parents, teachers, administrators, and others who are involved in school level governance within the charter. The operation and support of the charter school under the control and management of DCSD will be the sole function of the local school level governance body. **Present** **Not Present**

- The charter school board members will not constitute a voting majority on any other charter school board, will be voluntary and fully and insured and bonded prior to final approval of the charter, and will maintain fully bonded status throughout the term of the charter. **Present** **Not Present**

- No Petitioner and no member of the governing board of the Petitioner or the charter school shall sell, lease, or receive payment for providing textbooks, supplies, services, equipment, facilities, or land to a charter school or other public school in this school system. Nor will the board members receive payment for services as board members. **Present** **Not Present**
- All meetings of the charter governance board are subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq. (Open and Public Meetings) and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq. (Inspection of Public Records). **Present** **Not Present**

Administrative

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

Other

- The charter will comply with all legal and regulatory local, state, and federal laws or court orders requirements, including those outlined in DeKalb County Board of Education Charter School Guidelines. Failure to comply with any and all recommendations or directions of the DCSD Board Of Education with respect to the operation of the charter school may result in termination of the charter.
 Present **Not Present**
- The charter school will observe a brief period of quiet reflection in compliance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1050. **Present** **Not Present**
- The Charter School is subject to all laws relating to unlawful conduct in or near a public school.
 Present **Not Present**
- The charter school will not waive and is not exempt from the Federal law, including the following:
 - School Accountability Provisions, Part 3 of Article 2 of Chapter 14 of
 - Title 20 O.C.G.A. 20-14-30 through O.C.G.A. 20-14-41
 - Shall Not Charge Tuition, O.C.G.A. 20-2-133
 - Unlawful Conduct in or near a Public School, O.C.G.A. 20-2-1180 through
 - O.C.G.A. 20-2-1182
 - Reporting Requirements – Student Data Collection, O.C.G.A. 20-2-320
 - Brief Period of Quiet Reflection, O.C.G.A. 20-2-1050, 20-2-1051
 - Open and Public Meetings, O.C.G.A. 50-14-1 et seq.
 - Inspection of Public Records, O.C.G.A. 50-18-70 et seq.
 - Fingerprinting and Criminal Record Check of All Personnel Employed by the Charter
 - School, O.C.G.A. 20-2-211 **Present** **Not Present**
- The charter school will provide documentation that the school has applied for accreditation and received probationary status by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC), or other recognized accrediting commission approved by the State Board of Education no later than October 1st of its first year of operation. The charter school understands that a school not able to receive full accreditation by the end of its second year of operation shall forfeit their charter. **Present** **Not Present**
- The charter school will comply with all federal, state, and local laws, policies, procedures, and requirements unless specifically waived in the charter. The charter understands that DCSD will not accept the “blanket waiver” but requires specific waivers and the rationale for each waiver.
 Present **Not Present**

- The charter agrees to complete registration for the upcoming school year and provide the names, addresses and home school of all accepted students to DCSD no later than April 1st annually. It is understood that the school can continue to accept students after this date and will continue to update the system on the number of students registered and all other student information as requested. If the charter school does not meet its projected enrollment within twenty percent (20%), the charter may be terminated. If the enrollment levels create a financial hardship that puts student achievement in jeopardy, the charter may be terminated unless it can document additional independent financial support.

Present **Not Present**

- The charter school shall provide an electronic copy of the complete charter school petition and contract to every parent as a part of the student enrollment procedures. **Present** **Not Present**