

Dr. Vernon Allwood  
2050 Tiger Flower Dr. S.W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30314  
August 1, 2006

Dr. Beverly L. Hall  
Superintendent  
Atlanta Public Schools  
130 Trinity Avenue SW  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Dr. Hall:

Please accept this letter of intent to submit a renewal charter school application on or before September 13, 2006 by 4:00 p.m.

Name of Proposed Charter School: University Community Academy

The purpose of the charter school will be: (Please limit to 100 words or less)

The charter school will continue its purpose as stated in the original charter approved in 2002: To create a learning environment that allows students to excel academically, psychologically, socially, and physically. We believe that all students can learn and most can excel. We will instill a thirst for knowledge in our students, provide continued staff development, take measures to include parents in their children's educational advancement, and include the community in creating and maintaining a successful institution of learning. The renewal goal for academic performance will reflect the federal No Child Left Behind mandate of meeting AYP yearly.

The proposed grade levels and total student enrollment will be as follows:

2007-2008 /Year 1 Grade(s) K - 8 - up to 340 students  
2008-2009 /Year 2 Grade(s) K - 8 - up to 400 students  
2009-2010 /Year 3 Grade(s) K - 8 - up to 500 students  
2010-2011 /Year 4 Grade(s) K - 8 - up to 500 students  
2011-2012 /Year 5 Grade(s) K - 8 - up to 500 students

The location and facility to be used, or current options for a school facility are as follows:

- Anderson Park Elementary School
- 2050 Tiger Flower Dr. S.W.
- Atlanta, Georgia 30314
- NPU J

Are you planning to work with an educational management organization (EMO)? Yes

- EdFutures, Inc./New Life Leadership Foundation

Have you submitted a petition to another Georgia school district? No

Do you plan to submit a petition to another Georgia district during the next 12 months?

- Atlanta Public Schools

Name of Petitioner's Designated Contact Person: Dr. Vernon Allwood  
Complete Mailing Address: 2050 Tiger Flower Dr. S.W., Atlanta, GA 30314  
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Fax: (404) 752-1512 Email: lallwood@msm.edu

Authorized Signature, Date

## Charter School Petition Requirements

### 1) Designate the performance to be improved.

The charter school will have as its purpose the improvement of academic performance as a continuance of the original charter that was approved in 2002. The original verifiable academic performance criteria for the school will be modified as follows:

- Meet or exceed federal AYP as measured by the Georgia State Accountability Program (*i.e.*, Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Tests in all tested subjects) each year of the school's operation and for a period of 5 years.
- Improve performance on the Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Tests by 3 percentage points each year (Grades 3-8) in each subtest.

The above stated performance criteria (goals) and subsequent measurable objectives are in the public interest by providing a high quality school with students performing at rigorous levels consistent with the No Child Left Behind mandate and making improvements each year.

- 2) Describe how the charter school will measure the improvement in such performance and over what period of time, provided that such requirement shall not waive the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through § 20-14-41;

All students, Grades 1 through 8, will be assessed annually via the Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT) in the content areas of Reading, English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Additionally, students will participate in other components of the statewide testing program including the Georgia Kindergarten Assessment Program, the Georgia Writing Test, national normed-referenced tests (*e.g.*, Iowa Tests of Basic Skills) and other state-required assessments that are added during the life of the charter. Additionally, the school will conduct its own diagnostic assessments including the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test and the Scholastic Reading Inventory.

Note that the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT) and the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) are used to complement each other. The GMRT is a diagnostic test that is used to identify areas of weakness and strength. The resulting data are used to inform instruction and help the teacher focus on needs and areas to accelerate students. The SRI is a reading level test and serves a different purpose than the GMRT. SRI data provide a reading level that teachers use to determine the level of books students should read, ensuring they are challenged and not overly frustrated. The appropriate level of books encourage growth and advancement in reading skills and is consistent with the school’s performance expectations for all children.

The school will not waive the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through § 20-14-41 and federal accountability requirements.

Since most students are returning to the school, the school possesses prior student performance data for such students. For newly enrolled students, the school will request permanent records from previous schools with the goal of having this information within three months of enrollment. Additionally, the school will conduct diagnostic testing of all students and generate an electronic profile of each students that will be used by teachers and administrators to plan appropriate instruction.

The tentative assessment calendar is as follows:

Month	Grade	Instrument
August	K-8	Gates MacGinitie Reading Test (Diagnostic)
	1-8	Scholastic Reading Inventory (Diagnostic)
	K	Georgia Kindergarten Assessment Program
December	1-8	Scholastic Reading Inventory (Diagnostic)
January	5, 8	Georgia Writing Assessment
March	3, 5, 8	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
	3	Georgia Writing Assessment
April	1-8	Georgia CRCT in reading, language arts, and mathematics
	3-8	Georgia CRCT in science and social studies
May	8	End-of-Course Test, Algebra I (and all applicable courses required by Georgia or any added by Georgia during the life of the charter)
	K	Georgia Kindergarten Assessment Program
	K-8	Gates MacGinitie Reading Test (Summative)
	1-8	Scholastic Reading Inventory (Summative)

The school will participate in any new assessments or any assessments for which the school was identified to participate (*e.g.*, National Assessment of Educational Progress).

The Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT) for Grades 3-8 will serve as the performance criteria for the school and will be the basis on which the school will be evaluated and its success determined, including renewal of the charter. Grades K-2 will not be included in performance criteria for the school and will not be used to evaluate the school and its success.

The school will use other measures listed in the chart above to determine success of the school and teachers. These assessments and the CRCT's will be used for comparative purposes in reports to the community and parents and in the school's annual report. Additionally, data from all assessments will be used to determine Pay-for-Performance adjustments for staff.

The goals/objectives for improving learning and measuring improvement will be as follows:

#### Instruments and Goals/Objectives

##### Average Yearly Progress (AYP)

Each grade level will meet or exceed federal AYP requirements, as measured by GCRCCT's.

##### CRCT (reading, mathematics, science, social studies)

Meet Georgia standards (*e.g.*, Scale Scores of 300 or 800 or greater and as modified by the Georgia State Department of Education)

##### GMRT

On grade level for Grade-Equivalence

##### SRI

Lexile levels as follows:

Grade 1, 250

Grade 2, 370

Grade 3, 530

Grade 4, 650

Grade 5, 710

Grade 6, 900

Grade 7, 900

Grade 8, 1000

##### GKAP

Ready for Grade 1

##### ITBS

At or above 50<sup>th</sup> percentiles for all subtests

##### Georgia Writing

Above the three lowest levels (Emerging, Developing, Focusing)

##### Georgia End-of-Course Tests

Pass all applicable end-of-course tests

In addition to long-term goals/objectives as indicated above, the following chart indicates specific growth or targets that will be achieved for students who attend the school from year

to year. Yearly targets will be established using increments that will result in achievement of goals/objectives at the conclusion of Year 5. These targets will be announced in the annual report and presented to the Atlanta Public Schools Board of Education for approval.

#### Instruments and Targets

Instrument	Target
CRCT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade-level scale scores growth of 3% for each subtest from year-to-year for Grades 1-8. Grades 3-8 will serve as verifiable performance criteria for charter evaluation/renewal. Grades 1-2 will not used for charter evaluation/renewal but will be used for personnel evaluations and salary adjustment calculations)</li> <li>See chart below for schedule of baseline years</li> </ul>
GMRT	One year's Grade-Equivalent growth for each student on a yearly basis from May to May assessment.
SRI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100 Lexile growth on a yearly basis for Grades K-5 from May to May assessment.</li> <li>50 Lexile growth on a yearly basis for Grades 6-8 from May to May assessment.</li> </ul>
GKAP	Percentage Not Ready for Grade 1 of no more than single digit percentage (e.g., <10%) for each May assessment.
ITBS	Grade level percentage below 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile that is equal to or less than the district average.
Georgia Writing	Grade level percentage below Level 4 less than the district average.
Georgia End-of-Course Tests	Grade level percentage not passing below the district average

During the phasing in of CRCT tests based on Georgia Performance Standards rather than the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum and the associated standard scale changes (*i.e.*, 300 criterion for QCC based testing versus 800 criterion for GPS), the initial change year will be a baseline year.

Below is a chart detailing this plan:

Grade 3		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Subject						
Reading Eng/LA		Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Math		Existing QCC Based Target	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Science		Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Social Studies		Existing QCC Based Target	Existing QCC Based Target	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target

<b>Grade 4</b>					
Subject	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Reading Eng/LA	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Math	Existing QCC Based Target	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Science	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Social Studies	Existing QCC Based Target	Existing QCC Based Target	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target

<b>Grade 5</b>					
Subject	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Reading Eng/LA	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Math	Existing QCC Based Target	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Science	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Social Studies	Existing QCC Based Target	Existing QCC Based Target	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target

<b>Grade 6</b>					
Subject	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Reading Eng/LA	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Math	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Science	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Social Studies	Existing QCC Based Target	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target

<b>Grade 7</b>					
Subject	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Reading Eng/LA	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Math	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Science	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Social Studies	Existing QCC Based Target	Existing QCC Based Target	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target

<b>Grade 8</b>					
Subject	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Reading Eng/LA	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Math	Existing QCC Based Target	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Science	Existing QCC Based Target	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target
Social Studies	Existing QCC Based Target	Baseline GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target	Existing GPS Based Target

Success in achieving growth or targets and achieving goals/objectives will be evaluated through a review and reporting of data in the school's annual report. These targets and goals/objectives will be achieved through focused instruction that is aligned to the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum/Georgia Performance Standards and supported through textbooks, instructional materials, and elements of High Quality Instruction described in Section 5.

#### Collection of Performance Data

Each student will be assessed at the beginning of the school year using the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test and Scholastic Reading Inventory. Data from these assessments will be used to identify strengths and needs for all students and will be the basis for establishing individual learning plans for each student.

The Scholastic Reading Inventory will be administered at a minimum of three times each year using pencil-paper format and the computer-based version that allows for on-line administration, scoring, and reporting of Lexiles. Performance in other core subjects will be monitored through the administration of published unit and chapter tests for textbook series used by the school. Furthermore, teachers will make use of portfolios to document and monitor learning related to growth and achievement of skills and knowledge. Portfolios will be jointly compiled with students so that they reflect typical products completed during instruction and long-term projects. Portfolios will be regular components of parent/teacher conferences and will enhance standardized data, giving

parents a clear understanding of their child(ren)'s performance. Finally, teacher-generated tests, quizzes, and rubric-based projects will be used as data gathering and monitoring tools. This comprehensive approach to assessment will provide all stakeholders (administration, teachers, students, parents, community, Charter School Board, district Board of Education, and state Board of Education) with a clear picture of the impact of the school's educational program.

Locally administered assessments will be scored and reviewed in house by administrative and teaching staff. Results of statewide assessments will be similarly reviewed upon receipt. All results along with progress toward achieving targets and goals/objectives of the school will be reported to parents, the Charter School Board, the district Board of Education, and the state Board of Education in an annual report, consistent with local and state requirements.

### Intervention and Remediation Plans

Teachers will use assessment data to make suggestions for family learning activities that address students' learning needs and help to improve student achievement. Assessment data will also be used to inform parents both of their child's progress and of the specific learning needs that they can help to address. As parents are informed of the specific learning strengths and deficits of their children, they will be able to make informed choices about the role they will play in improving student achievement. Assessment data will be shared with students to inform them of their progress, identify their learning needs, and help them to assume appropriate responsibility for their own learning.

Formative assessment instruments and strategies include the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test, Iowa Test of Basic Skills (Survey Battery), Scholastic Reading Inventory, and teacher-made and textbook-based assessments.

Should performance not meet the expectations of the Charter School Board or the school's principal, mid-course corrections will be made. These steps include remedial instruction in targeted areas as revealed by diagnostic and achievement tests. Furthermore, as these areas are identified, staff will be provided with professional development in designated content, pedagogy, and instructional strategies. Finally, consistent with the performance culture of the school continued employment and salary adjustments will be based on yearly academic measures.

### Use of Assessment Data

Teachers will use the aforementioned assessments to determine skills and information that students have mastered and specific learning needs or deficits' students may still have after instruction. This data will be the foundation for intervention (making decisions about what to teach next and for ameliorating any identified learning deficits). Teachers will be able to address individual student learning needs effectively by using assessments as the basis for designing learning activities appropriate to the learning style of the individual student. This monitoring and focused instruction approach is described as one of the key features that distinguish the school.

- 3) Demonstrate how any such waiver does not undermine and is consistent with the intent of the waived state and local rules, regulations policies, and procedures, or the provisions of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia;

The charter school is not seeking any waivers from Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia.

The school shall comply with all federal, state and local rules, regulations and statutes relating to civil rights (including, but not limited to, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Americans with Disability Act); insurance; the protection of the physical health and safety of school students, employees, and visitors; conflicting interest transactions and the prevention of unlawful conduct. The charter school shall also be subject to the following laws:

- The Charter School Act of 1998, O.C.G.A. 20-2-2061 et seq.
- All laws relating to unlawful conduct in or near a public school;
- The provisions of Part 3 of Article 2 of Chapter 14 of Title 20;
- The Georgia Open and Public Meetings Law, Chapter 14 of Title 50 and the Georgia law regarding the inspection of public records, Article 4 of Chapter 18 of Title 50.
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1401 et seq. And Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794;
- The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA);
- Cooperate with the U.S. Justice Department by implementing any specific provisions of a federal court injunction regarding desegregation in the school district deemed applicable to the charter school by the U.S. Department of Justice.

- 4) Describe the school’s mission, the students to be served, including students with special needs and disabilities, and the ages and grades to be included. For students with disabilities, describe how the charter school will provide state and federally mandated services;

The charter school’s mission remains unchanged from the original charter:

***The charter school’s mission is to create a learning environment that allows students to excel academically and socially. We believe that all students can succeed and most will excel. We will instill a thirst for knowledge in our students, provide continued staff development, take tremendous measures to include parents in their children’s educational advancement, and include the community in creating and maintaining a successful institution of learning.***

The charter school’s mission is consistent with the Georgia legislative intent. Specifically, the school will provide a high quality choice to students and parents that focuses on education and academic achievement through effective instruction and Georgia’s standards-based curriculum. The school will provide organization innovation through site-based management strategies, local decision making by the principal and charter school board, a performance-based pay for performance program, and a small-school venue that personalized instruction as needed.

Enrollment will be open to all students in the City of Atlanta. The attendance zone is shown in Section 10.

The charter school calendar will be identical to the Atlanta Public Schools calendar as established yearly, providing charter school students with 180 days of instruction. The new calendar of 180 days reflects the requests of parents over the past four years to adjust the charter school calendar consistent with the 180 day APS calendar. The instructional calendar will also be modified due to emergency closing announced by APS for weather or other emergency situations. Using the APS calendar will help alleviate any confusion among parents and students who live in the APS district regarding whether school is open, closed, delayed, or dismissed early.

The school will operate 8:30 am to 3:00 daily, providing 360 minutes of instruction each school day.

Kindergarten

Start Time	End Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Hour/Min
8:30 AM	9:30 AM	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	1:00
9:30 AM	10:00 AM	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	0:30
10:00 AM	10:30 AM	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	0:30
10:30 AM	11:30 AM	Math	Math	Library/Media Ctr	Music	Library/Media Ctr	1:00
11:30 AM	12:00 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
12:00 PM	1:00 PM	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	1:00
1:00 PM	1:30 PM	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	0:30
1:30 PM	2:30 PM	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	1:00
2:30 PM	3:00 PM	Story Reading	Story Reading	Story Reading	Story Reading	Story Reading	0:30
						Hours	6:00
						Minutes	360:00:00

## Grade 1

Start Time	End Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Hour/Min	
8:30 AM	9:30 AM	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	1:00	
9:30 AM	10:00 AM	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	0:30	
10:00 AM	10:30 AM	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	0:30	
10:30 AM	11:00 AM	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	0:30	
11:00 AM	11:30 AM	Spanish	Art	Music	Music	Spanish	0:30	
11:30 AM	12:00 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
12:00 PM	1:00 PM	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	1:00	
1:00 PM	2:00 PM	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	1:00	
2:00 PM	3:00 PM	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	1:00	
							Hours	6:00
							Minutes	360:00:00

## Grade 2

Start Time	End Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Hour/Min	
8:30 AM	9:30 AM	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	1:00	
9:30 AM	10:30 AM	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	1:00	
10:30 AM	11:00 AM	Spanish	Art	Music	Music	Spanish	0:30	
11:00 AM	11:30 AM	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	0:30	
11:30 AM	12:00 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
12:00 PM	1:00 PM	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	1:00	
1:00 PM	1:30 PM	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	0:30	
1:30 PM	2:30 PM	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	1:00	
2:30 PM	3:00 PM	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	0:30	
							Hours	6:00
							Minutes	360:00:00

## Grade 3

Start Time	End Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Hour/Min	
8:30 AM	9:30 AM	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	1:00	
9:30 AM	10:00 AM	Spanish	Music	Art	Spanish	Music	0:30	
10:00 AM	11:00 AM	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	1:00	
11:00 AM	11:30 AM	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	0:30	
11:30 AM	12:00 PM	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	0:30	
12:00 PM	12:30 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
12:30 PM	1:30 PM	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	1:00	
1:30 PM	2:00 PM	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	0:30	
2:00 PM	3:00 PM	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	1:00	
							Hours	6:00
							Minutes	360:00:00

## Grade 4

Start Time	End Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Hour/Min	
8:30 AM	9:30 AM	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	1:00	
9:30 AM	10:30 AM	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	1:00	
10:30 AM	11:30 AM	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	1:00	
11:30 AM	12:00 PM	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Spanish	Lang Arts/Writing	0:30	
12:00 PM	12:30 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
12:30 PM	1:00 PM	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	0:30	
1:00 PM	1:30 PM	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	0:30	
1:30 PM	2:30 PM	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	1:00	
2:30 PM	3:00 PM	Music	Spanish	Music	Lang Arts/Writing	Art	0:30	
							Hours	6:00
							Minutes	360:00:00

## Grade 5

Start Time	End Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Hour/Min	
8:30 AM	9:30 AM	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	1:00	
9:30 AM	10:30 AM	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	1:00	
10:30 AM	11:30 AM	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	1:00	
11:30 AM	12:00 PM	Music	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	0:30	
12:00 PM	12:30 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
12:30 PM	1:30 PM	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	1:00	
1:30 PM	2:00 PM	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	0:30	
2:00 PM	2:30 PM	Technology	Spanish	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Art	0:30	
2:30 PM	3:00 PM	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Spanish	Music	Lang Arts/Writing	0:30	
							Hours	6:00
							Minutes	360:00:00

## Grade 6

Start Time	End Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Hour/Min	
8:30 AM	9:30 AM	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	1:00	
9:30 AM	10:30 AM	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	1:00	
10:30 AM	11:00 AM	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	0:30	
11:00 AM	11:45 AM	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	0:45	
11:45 AM	12:30 PM	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	0:45	
12:30 PM	1:00 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
1:00 PM	1:30 PM	Spanish	Music	Spanish	Music	Art	0:30	
1:30 PM	2:30 PM	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	1:00	
2:30 PM	3:00 PM	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	0:30	
							Hours	6:00
							Minutes	360:00:00

## Grade 7

Start Time	End Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Hour/Min	
8:30 AM	9:30 AM	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	1:00	
9:30 AM	10:30 AM	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	1:00	
10:30 AM	11:30 AM	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	1:00	
11:30 AM	12:00 PM	Spanish	Music	Spanish	Music	Art	0:30	
12:00 PM	12:30 PM	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	0:30	
12:30 PM	1:00 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
1:00 PM	1:45 PM	Spanish	Music	Spanish	Music	Art	0:45	
1:45 PM	2:30 PM	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	0:45	
2:30 PM	3:00 PM	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	0:30	
							Hours	6:00
							Minutes	360:00:00

## Grade 8

Start Time	End Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Hour/Min	
8:30 AM	9:30 AM	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	1:00	
9:30 AM	10:15 AM	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	0:45	
10:15 AM	11:00 AM	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	0:45	
11:00 AM	12:00 PM	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	Lang Arts/Read	1:00	
12:00 PM	12:30 PM	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	Art	Spanish	0:30	
12:30 PM	1:00 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
1:00 PM	2:00 PM	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	1:00	
2:00 PM	2:30 PM	Music	Music	Spanish	Lang Arts/Writing	Lang Arts/Writing	0:30	
2:30 PM	3:00 PM	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	PE/Health	0:30	
							Hours	6:00
							Minutes	360:00:00

The school will serve Grades K-8 (Ages 5-13) with the following maximum teacher-student ratio and projected enrollment.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Students</u>
K	1	18
1	1	21
2	1	21
3	1	21
4	1	24-28
5	1	24-28
6	1	24-28
7	1	24-28
8	1	24-28

Students to be served will come from the specified attendance zone (Item 10) and will be limited to residents of the City of Atlanta. Consistent with the enrollment history of the school for Years 1-5, students will reflect a wide diversity of ability with mostly low-performing students. The school's Title I population for the 2005-2006 school was 73% and the school participates as a Whole School Title I school. The school has served special education populations with a variety of disabilities, mostly learning disabilities. Some students require other services such as speech and occupational therapy. The population approaches 100% African-American.

The following is the projected enrollment for the five-year charter period.

<b>Operational Year/Grade</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	54	42	42	42	48	48	48	48	48	<b>420</b>
<b>2</b>	54	63	63	63	72	48	48	48	48	<b>507</b>
<b>3</b>	54	63	63	63	72	48	48	48	48	<b>507</b>
<b>4</b>	54	63	63	63	72	48	48	48	48	<b>507</b>
<b>5</b>	54	63	63	63	72	48	48	48	48	<b>507</b>

Note: The school has observed a yearly drop in enrollment beginning at Grade 5 and the chart above reflects this phenomenon. The projected enrollment is constructed to reflect observed enrollment tendencies as well as maintaining the state requirements for student/teacher ratios. However, since the school has moved to a new facility, the school expects to attract more students as well as retain students after Grade 4. As needed, the school will add portable classrooms to accommodate increased enrollment in Grades 5-8 without compromising the building's capacity. The school does not intent to prevent students from continuing their enrollment beyond Grade 4. The operating budget will be modified as needed to reflect increased costs for portable classrooms as well as increased revenue from a higher student enrollment.

## Special Education

The charter school will be open to all students, on a space-available basis within each grade and will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, need for special education services, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, disability or proficiency in English, physical limitations, or challenges. The charter school will comply with all regulatory special education requirements. Students with special needs will enroll with an individualized education program (IEP) already in place or will be assessed through the charter school's School Support Team and the IEP team.

The special education program for the school is highly developed. The program features determining needs and reviewing of records, and providing a pullout and mainstream program, as well as individual instruction by state-certified specialists that meet needs as stated in students' Individualized Education Plan (IEP's). The school staff will include a Special Education Coordinator whose primary responsibility will be meeting the needs of special education students, and providing services for identified students consistent with IEP's.

The school will comply with all regulatory special education requirements. Suspected special education students will be evaluated and staff will be deployed accordingly based on the needs of students. The school will provide a special education pullout program, allowing students to be mainstreamed during part of the day. Students with special needs who enroll with an IEP will be noted and their progress monitored. Students who have special needs, but do not meet the criteria for the special education program will be provided with a 504 plan. This plan is designed to provide the child and the teacher with information that teachers can use to accommodate the child's special needs. This plan also gives the child special accommodations based on their needs during statewide testing.

The school will employ a Special Education Coordinator as described above responsible for individual case management of all special education students and for arranging the provision of services required by the IEP's and 504 plans. Since the number of special education students will not likely warrant full-time providers of specialized services, the school will contract with independent providers to provide speech therapy, counseling, occupational therapy, and any other services that students require. Consistent with and to comply with IEP's, the school will fully participate in any wrap-around special education services provided by Atlanta Public Schools, as described in the Atlanta Public Schools Charter Guidelines for Special Education and Wrap Around Services.

The Special Education Coordinator will monitor the delivery of needed services as stated in students' IEP's, as well as ensure that all relevant aspects of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Part 300 of the Federal regulations are followed including new provisions, as appropriate.

The Special Education Coordinator, with assistance from the school principal, will develop and implement procedures to comply with the requirements of FERPA (as it relates to the confidentiality of student records) and devise a communication system to make parents of children with IEP's aware of their child's progress toward attaining the goals stated on the child's IEP. In addition, the school will ensure that children with disabilities and their parents are guaranteed procedural safeguards. The safeguards include access to records, appointments of surrogate parents, appropriate notice, opportunity for mediation of disputes, and the right to a due process hearing.

Before the school opens and during the first trimester, the Special Education Coordinator will design and set up the special education program at the school, including the following: collection of all relevant student records, arrangement for referrals to providers for students as indicated in the IEP's, arrangement for any additional evaluations if needed, and develop a Special Education Checklist that demonstrates the school's compliance in providing special education. On-going monitoring of the students' IEP's and periodic re-evaluations will be part of the process, as well as annual reviews of the IEP's.

The inclusive nature of the school and required compliance with IDEA ensures that children with disabilities receive a free and appropriate education (FAPE). The school will make available a continuum of support options for special education students. Students' needs will be met through a variety of service delivery options including, but not limited to, collaborative learning groups, in-class support and pullout support on an individual or group basis, and individual services provided by contract work with state-certified independent contractors. High academic standards and performance indicators will be expected for all students, including special education students; however, the Individual Education Program Plan (IEP) will guide the instruction of special education students enrolled in the school. IEP's will be developed, revised, and implemented in accordance with IDEA by an appropriate team including the parents, and will be reviewed at least annually. The school will provide in-service training in special education to the faculty.

IEP's will be developed using the following process:

- Referral
- Preevaluation
- Evaluation
- Eligibility Determination
- Development of IEP
- Implementation of IEP
- Annual Review

A reevaluation will be conducted at least every three years or earlier if conditions warrant. Reevaluations may be requested by any member of the IEP team prior to the triennial due date.

Children with special needs will have access to the general academic program as well as other components of the school program such as art, music, and physical education. Nonacademic services and extracurricular activities will be provided including counseling services, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, and special interest groups and clubs.

If needed, Assistive Technology (AT) such as items, equipment, products, or systems, purchased, teacher-made, modified, or customized, will be used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of children with disabilities.

The Special Education Coordinator and the IEP team will develop an IEP designed specifically to meet the identified needs of the child. A least restrictive environment will be the guiding principle as decisions are made and the general education classroom will always be the first consideration. When a more restrictive placement is advisable, the IEP team will recommend general classes with supplemental aids and materials, general

classes with supplemental services such as resource or itinerant instruction, and special classes.

The Special Education Coordinator and the IEP team may determine that services other than instruction are necessary to help students benefit from special education. Included might be recommendations for an evaluation to determine the need for a specific related service. In all cases, related services will support the special education program outlined in the IEP with a clear correlation between the related services and IEP goals and objectives. Related Services normally include transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services required to assist a child eligible for special education to benefit from special education and may be delivered in school, home, or community settings. The following may be included: speech/language pathology and audiology services, psychological services, social skills development, behavior planning and implementation, physical and occupational therapy, recreation including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes.

Extended School Year (ESY) may be recommended consistent with state guidelines.

Special education students will participate in Georgia state-required assessments and the charter school will adhere to the evaluation and eligibility guidelines and standards prescribed by the state of Georgia. When recommended, assessment specialists will be used to provide such services.

The school will partner with Atlanta Public Schools to ensure that special education census data is reported to the Georgia State Department of Education as well as appropriate federal agencies in compliance with state and federal law. Data reporting will be accomplished using existing Atlanta Public Schools procedures and protocol. School staff will attend any school district training to ensure that procedures and tasks are completed accurately and timely.

Consistent with IEP's that require transportation for special education students, the school will provide transportation and pay for that transportation with school funds and any state/federal supplemental funds that follow such students.

### Instructional Strategies For Special Education Children

Teachers will use research-based instructional strategies and materials to meet the needs of special education students consistent with IEP's and recommendations provided by the Special Education Coordinator. In particular, teachers will use a multi-modal approach that includes visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile modes. The classroom environment will be adjusted, where possible, to reduce distractions including study carrels, removing unnecessary materials from desks, and providing additional resources such as paper, books, and writing materials, and reducing visual distractions. If needed, teachers will help students make use of cues that allow the special education child to be excused from an activity or to leave the classroom for short periods of time. Since attention span can be a problem for these children, teachers will schedule shorter work periods with breaks and provide additional time to complete assignments and homework. Management strategies will be used such as alerting children ahead of time that they will be moving to another activity and reducing the quantity of problems or assignment components.

As material is presented, teachers will modify expectations and simplify long tasks into shorter tasks that can be completed in single work sessions. If needed, alternate assignments and modes of communication will be used to allow students to demonstrate competence consistent with their disabilities. Visual directions and cues, as well as models of final products, will be used. Teachers will provide scaffolding for students including outlines of material, study guides, and copies of notes from overheads and boards. Assistive devices will be provided, as needed, including tape recorders, computers, calculators, and a Language Master.

During classroom assessments, teachers will provide a quiet setting, free of distractions. Tests and quizzes will be divided into short manageable sections and breaks provided, as needed. Consistent with IEP provisions, assessments may be administered orally and oral responses may be accepted.

The overall goal of teachers working with special education students is to support their achievement within the limits of their abilities and reducing the negative impact of their disabilities.

### English Language Learners

By federal definition, the term limited English proficient (LEP), when used with respect to an individual, means an individual who is Aged 3 – 21; who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual the a) ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments, the b) ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or c) the opportunity to participate fully in society.

Consistent with Federal law, the school's LEP program will contain the following components: identification, assessment, placement and program participation, transition and exit, monitoring and program evaluation.

In serving students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), the school will comply with all state and federal rules and regulations, while practicing inclusion to the fullest extent possible. Students entering the school will be checked for non-native English speaker status, through both a language survey of parents as well as teacher observation. Students identified as non-native speakers will be evaluated by formal and informal assessments, and students identified as LEP will be provided education support. As needed, an ESL teacher will be on staff to provide assistance to classroom teachers with ESL students for Levels 1-3. Level 4-5 students will remain with the homeroom teacher during the Reading/Language Arts block. Teachers with LEP students in their class will use alternate teaching strategies to service LEP students within the classroom. Support services may include supplementary English as a second language instruction in addition to instruction normally occurring during a literacy and language arts block. Since the school will use an inclusion model, an immersion program in all other subject areas will help LEP students quickly gain familiarity with English. Student progress will be assessed utilizing formal and informal measures. Student achievement will be monitored to facilitate program modifications, as needed, and students will exit the program when assessments indicate readiness for regular instruction.

In accordance with the law, the school will not exclude LEP students from curricular and extracurricular activities in school because of their inability to speak and understand the language of instruction. The school will not assign national origin minority students to classes for the disabled because of their lack of English skills. LEP pupils shall be provided instructional programs, which foster their success in math, Social studies and language arts. Non/Limited English Proficient Pupils will not be retained solely on the basis of lack of English proficiency and will not be placed in language-dependent courses until the pupil develops a degree of proficiency in the English language that will allow him/her to access the information presented and the materials used.

As described earlier, the reading needs and objectives of all students, including LEP students will be met through assessment, provision of focused instruction, reassessment, remediation as needed, and instruction that challenges students toward advanced proficiency.

Additional details follow, which specify compliance with federal requirements.

#### Initial Identification Procedures:

Registration of students: All students will register at the school they will attend by reporting to the registrar's office. Parents or guardians will be asked to complete the forms found in the general registration packet. Bilingual assistance will be provided, unless clearly not feasible.

Conducting Home Language Survey: Adults registering students will complete the Home Language Survey (HLS), containing the three questions required by law, found in the registration packet (unless the adult has copies of cumulative file records from the previous school containing a completed HLS). When there is an affirmative response on the HLS, the secretary will refer parents to the back of the HLS form which notifies them of ESL academic review and/or orally explain the process. A HLS with any affirmative response will be referred to the ESL contact person without delay.

Procedure to collect and retain the information: Registration personnel at each school site will be responsible for collecting and filing registration information along with the original copy of the HLS form in the student's cumulative folder. If there is an affirmative response to any of the questions posed on the HLS, the secretary will refer a copy of the form to the ESL teacher and/or the ESL liaison person.

Once a determination has been made concerning eligibility to receive ESL services as set forth below, the ESL liaison will complete the remainder of the ESL Procedures and the LEP Data Collection form and provide the data entry clerk with a copy for computer input. The liaison will also complete the Eligibility Notification form, which informs parents of program eligibility or ineligibility, and provide parents with copies.

When students qualify for ESL services, the ESL liaison will start record keeping in an ESL folder and include copies of the aural/oral assessment instrument, data collection form, eligibility form, and LEP Committee minutes, if a meeting was held. Written data will include an individual LEP plan, which identifies student name, instruction by program (including programs other than ESL), amount of instructional time, date of LEP identification, and assessment data. When

students are determined ineligible, all documents will be placed in their cumulative records files.

### Appropriate LEP Program

The primary goal of appropriate programming is to effectively develop each student's English language proficiency and academic potential. Programs should enhance self-esteem, promote cross-cultural awareness, and provide equal educational opportunities. Appropriate programming decisions will be based on on-going programmatic assessments.

Equal time in basic ESL as English-proficient students received in Language Arts: Basic ESL instructional time will be proportional to the Language Arts time received by non-LEP students. English instruction will be appropriate to the proficiency level and academic potential of the students. At the elementary level where a pullout model is used, basic ESL instruction will coincide with homeroom Language Arts periods. All instruction in basic ESL classes will be delivered by ESL-certified or endorsed teachers.

Equal access to all areas at instructional level/courses in the regular curriculum: All LEP students will be given equal access to appropriate programming, including intensive instruction in the English language and instruction in the basic subject areas (BSA) of math, science, social studies, and computer literacy, which is comprehensible and equal in amount, scope, sequence, and quality as that given to non-LEP students. This will be achieved through the use of on-going programmatic assessments and comprehensible instruction.

LEP students with special needs and/or at risk for dropping out or under-achieving will be given equal access to additional services as non-LEP when indicated.

Every teacher will monitor the performance of each student and call a LEP Committee meeting to review the placement and academic progress of any student whose performance indicates the need for more appropriate instructional planning and placement. Disciplinary action will not be used against a student, because the student might be speaking another language other than English.

Each teacher of LEP students, whether currently ESL trained or not, will develop and implement plans and activities that reflect ESL strategies and techniques which address individual needs and ensure the delivery of comprehensible instruction at each student's English proficiency level. Teachers will document ESL strategies and modifications in their lesson plan books or on instructional checklists. ESL teachers may provide basic subject and other subject area teachers with resources and assistance in ESL curriculum and testing strategies and modifications, as requested. Teachers may call LEP Committee or Student Study Team meetings to assist them in developing appropriate strategies and interventions.

ESL liaison will monitor the academic performance of LEP students to help determine the degree to which they are receiving comprehensible input. During classroom visits throughout the year, school principals or designees, as well as District Area Program supervisor/consultant, will monitor and observe teachers' use of understandable and effective instruction for LEP students.

## Grade Reporting

All staff members have responsibilities with regard to LEP students in the areas of instruction, grading, monitoring and certification requirements. Staff members need to make note of the requirements based on teaching assignment and be sure all certification requirements have been met. Additionally, teachers of core and elective areas having ESL students or students recently dismissed from ESL will have responsibilities to complete, and may be called upon for LEP committee participation, and/or the monitoring process.

The LEP student who cannot comprehend the language of instruction should not be assigned failing grades in the content area subjects. He should, however, be assigned grades based on cooperation, effort, and participation in classroom assignments to the degrees his English language proficiency allows.

Since the assigning of participation grades is subjective, the student, within his language capabilities, should be expected to do the following within the specified goals and accommodations of the students (IEP):

- Pay attention in class
- Follow directions
- Have required materials
- Participate in activities
- Complete homework assignments within reasonable expectations
- Join in class activities
- Show progress

If a LEP student is able to perform the skills in a particular subject, (*e.g.*, math) he/she should be given an achievement, not a participation grade in that subject.

## Student Home Language Survey

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship of Person Completing Survey:

Mother  Father  Guardian . Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Check the best answer to each question:

1. Was the first language you learned English? Yes No

2. Can you speak languages other than English? Yes No

Which other languages? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Which language do you use most often when you speak to your friends? English . Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Which language do you use most often when you speak to your parents? English . Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Does anyone in your home speak a language other than English? Yes No

Which other language? \_\_\_\_\_

\*If the answer to Number 2 is yes, and other languages are given as answers to numbers 3, 4, or 5, the student's English abilities should be tested even if the student's oral ability is good. In this case, a copy of this form should be given to the ESL teacher or coordinator in the school or school district.

\*One copy of this form should be kept in the student's permanent record.

From *The Identification and Assessment of Language Minority Students: A Handbook for Educators*, 1985, Hamayan et al., Illinois Resource Center, Arlington Heights, IL.

**Student Home Language Survey  
(Spanish Version)**

Nombre del/de la estudiante \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha \_\_\_\_\_  
Grado \_\_\_\_\_ Maestro(a) \_\_\_\_\_ Escuela \_\_\_\_\_

Indica la  mejor respuesta para cada pregunta.

1. Fue español el primer idioma que aprendiste? . Sí . No

2. Puedes hablar otros idiomas que español? . Sí . No  
Cuáles otros idiomas? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Cuál idioma usas con más frecuencia cuando hablas  
con tus amigos? . Inglés . Español

4. Cuál idioma usas con más frecuencia cuando hablas  
con tus padres? . Inglés . Español

4. Hay alguien en tu casa que hable otro idioma que  
español? . Sí . No

Cuál otro idioma? \_\_\_\_\_

\*If the answer to Number 2 is yes, and other languages are given as answers to numbers 3, 4, or 5, the student's English abilities should be tested even if the student's oral ability is good. In this case, a copy of this form should be given to the ESL teacher or coordinator in the school or school district.

- 5) Address the focus of the curriculum, the instructional methods to be used, and any distinctive or unique instructional techniques or educational programs to be employed;

### Teaching and Classroom Instructional Methods

The charter school will distinguish itself by focusing on Georgia Quality Core Curriculum/Georgia Performance Standards (QCC/GPS) and High Quality Instruction. These components are the hallmarks of the school and comprise the teaching and instructional methods.

In addition to implementing the QCC/GPS's and using nationally published materials that support the curriculum, teachers will be expected to implement components of high quality instruction. These components are based on current literature and research of pedagogy and successful schools and ensure that students learn and retain a high percentage of knowledge and skills. All instructional staff will receive training on these components as part of the teacher preparation days. Follow-up sessions will be scheduled quarterly, and the components will be included in evaluator forms used by the school-based administrator and program managers assigned to the school.

The charter school will operate with a consistent education approach based on best practices of effective schools and research in education. The approach is supported by training and professional development, as well as a rigorous supervision process that includes observation, written feedback, and teacher conferences. Experience with two start-up charters in Georgia and Florida by the management staff, serving at-risk populations, has demonstrated the soundness of the approach. The schools worked with have shown steady performance improvement in standardized tests required by their respective states.

Key features of the charter school include a standards-based curriculum, Six Elements of High Quality Instruction, diagnostic testing, focused instruction, high performance standards, and teacher pay-for-performance. These features contribute to improved student performance.

### Standards-Based Curriculum

The curriculum is primarily based on the curriculum standards of the state, (i.e., QCC/GPS's) in which the charter school is located. This decision is made with full understanding of research that points to the high correlation between instruction and student performance. As noted in the seminal work *Understanding by Design*, by Wiggins and McTighe, meeting school performance targets is best accomplished when there is an "Explicit link between instruction and assessment." Other studies have shown that there is a substantial correlation between what is taught and what is assessed (Cooley & Leinhardt. 1980. *The instructional dimensions study. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 2(1): 7-35). By focusing on the state content standards, we expect students to be prepared for the state assessments and to perform well.

## Six Elements of High Quality Instruction

While standards-based curriculum is important, experience and research have demonstrated that the effective delivery of that instruction is critical to student learning and ultimately performance results. To ensure that the curriculum is effective, all EdFutures' teachers follow an instructional approach that includes high expectations, higher order questioning, meeting individual needs, active teaching, student engagement, and instructional grouping practices. Each of these strategies is tied to effective schools and education research, and teachers undergo training and on-going professional development so they fully understand and develop skills in using them. The following is an annotated list of components of high quality instruction.

**Teacher Expectations:** Teachers will be selected for their belief and commitment to the fact that all children, regardless of background, exposure, socio-economic conditions, can and will learn. K Cotton, 2001, in NREL's *School Improvement Research Series* reviews 46 research documents (primary and secondary sources) on the evidence about the relationship between expectations and student outcomes. Furthermore, high expectations are cited at or near the top of essential elements of effective schools. Low achieving schools generally view students as having limited ability and teacher expectations can and do affect students' achievement and attitudes, high-expectation students achieve at or near their potential, but low-expectation students will not gain as much as they could have gained if taught differently (Good 1987, p. 33). Throughout instruction, teachers will model high performance in their own behaviors such as oral and written communication skills, and in product expectations and examples of polished products. Furthermore, these expectations will be for all students. In support of this model, teachers will post student that is in final form and graded with comments. Furthermore, scoring rubrics will accompany the products so that students and parents clearly understand high expectations.

**Higher Level Thinking:** Teachers will be expected to understand cognitive levels and focus on advanced thinking levels such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Most teacher questions are at lower levels (60%) (Reported by Marzano, Piker, Pollock 2001, ASCD *Classroom Instruction that Works*. P. 113). Consider that higher level questions produce more learning as reported by Redfield & Rousseau (1981, A Meta-analysis of experimental research on teacher questioning behavior. *Review of Educational Research*, 51(2), 237-245), and that the Title I Higher Order Thinking Skills Project, which emphasizes higher order thinking activities resulted in higher performance on standardized tests, both in reading and math (Pogrow. 1995. National Diffusion Network *A revalidation o, the effectiveness, of the HOTS program*). Furthermore, 37 studies of the relationship between teachers' questioning behaviors and student achievement supports increases in higher cognitive questions (Cotton, K. 1989 Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory *Classroom Questioning, Close-up #5*). During instruction, teachers will self-monitor questioning strategies to ensure that higher-level questions are included and where possible, emphasized. Additionally, teachers will promote problem solving and critical thinking.

Meeting Individual Needs: Teachers will focus on understanding and meeting the individual needs of students. The biggest mistake in teaching has been to treat all children as if they were variants of the same individual, and thus to feel justified in teaching them the same subjects in the same ways (H Gardner, Siegel & Shaughnessy. 1994. *Educating for understanding: A conversation with Howard Gardner. Phi Delta Kappan*, 75(7), p. 564). In classrooms where individuals perform at a level of about 80% accuracy students learned more (Fisher, 1980 in Tomlinson & Allan. 2000. *Leadership for differentiating schools and classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD). Furthermore, Team Assisted Individualization, individualized instruction that incorporates cooperative learning groups, has been shown to increase student achievement (Slavin. n.d. Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University *A Model of Effective Instruction*). To support meeting individual needs, diagnostic assessments as well as critical reviews of standardized assessment data will be reviewed and used to provide instruction that addresses deficits as well as challenges students. Teachers will precede instruction with informal assessments and provide differentiated material as needed.

Active Teaching: A key component of instruction will be minimizing lecture since lecturing often overloads and overwhelms students (Stronge. 2002. ASCD. *Qualities of Effective Teachers*. P 44). Teachers will be expected to serve as learning coaches or facilitators since it is well known that the effective teacher is one who coaches by providing clear instruction, assigning practice and offering feedback (Perkins, D. 1992. Free Press, *Smart Schools: Better Thinking and Learning for Every Child*). Instruction and questioning will be directed toward redirecting student thinking into understanding and analyzing peer responses. In all cases, teachers will be actively involved during instruct through small group interactions and project work.

Student Engagement: Instruction will begin with an engagement component such as a sponge, grabber, discrepant event, or ill-structured problem. This approach is critical to learning as student engagement has been shown to be an important contributor to classroom success (Stronge. 2002. ASCD. *Qualities of Effective Teachers*. p. 48). To ensure success, teachers will make connections to prior learning. Activities will be meaningful and have real-world significance so that students see applications for concepts and skills. Students will be challenged through instruction that is regularly just above comfort level.

Instructional Groupings: Above all, instruction will stress group work and cooperative learning techniques as numerous studies have demonstrated the importance of adjusting groups often and moving students when achievement levels change (Cotton. 1995. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. *Effective Schooling Practices: A Research Synthesis*). Furthermore, effective teachers use a variety of grouping strategies, including cooperative grouping, flexible grouping, and ability grouping (Stronge. 2002. ASCD. *Qualities of Effective Teachers*. p. 58). Student groups will change during the day, month, and year, sometimes based on assessment data and other times based on informal teacher observations. Visitors to the classrooms will see individual, small-group, whole-group instruction.

## Diagnostic Testing

All students in every grade level served by the school undergo diagnostic testing at the beginning of the year. Because reading is considered a gatekeeper skill, the focus is on reading. Two nationally normed reading tests are used; one focuses on skills and the other on reading level. Data from each are reviewed with teachers so they understand any student weaknesses and provide the appropriate level reading material that fosters growth and appropriately challenges students. Other diagnostic tests are used, as needed.

## Focused Instruction

Following diagnostic testing and review of other standardized performance data, teachers provide focused instruction to meet the individual needs of students. This instruction is conducted in a variety of ways including individual instruction, small group work, or project work. By focusing on the individual needs, students are more likely to benefit from class instruction and develop the skills needed to make progress.

## High Performance Standards

The charter school establishes aggressive performance standards. These standards include on-grade level performance and at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on national norms, and at or above Georgia performance standards. Yearly targets are established from previous year's data. Each year, performance and status of meeting targets are reported in an Annual Report for the Charter School Board to be submitted to parents and local and state boards of education.

## Pay-for-Performance

As an incentive to teachers and to ensure the intensity and commitment needed to reach at-risk students, Teachers are provided with a Pay-for-Performance compensation plan. Salaries are adjusted based on the number of performance targets met and professional evaluations; teachers who meet all targets for their grade level and have high evaluations may receive a yearly salary adjustment that is as much as a 2 percent over that of the charter school's district. Consequently, teachers have the opportunity to earn higher salaries than those of local district teachers.

## Summary

The instructional program is based on practices that have been shown to result in high performance. This combination of practices, coupled with aggressive support and monitoring makes the charter schools capable of achieving high student performance.

## School Curriculum

The curriculum for the school has been designed to meet or exceed the Georgia QCC/GPS's as well as comply with the federal mandate specified in No Child Left Behind. In addition, up-to-date textbook materials, published ancillary resources, and Internet learning sites will challenge students and make real-world connections to instruction.

## Textbooks

The charter will continue to use comprehensive sets of textbooks and curriculum materials. Correlations with the Georgia QCC/GPS's are the primary criterion for selection. A curriculum committee consisting of the principal and teachers will review textbook offerings to ensure that the materials satisfy both teacher and student needs. Complete programs will be used for English/language arts and reading, phonics, mathematics, science, and social studies. To ensure a seamless education experience with surrounding communities, adopted textbooks of Atlanta Public Schools will be considered for purchase and will take precedence over other considerations unless there are compelling and research-based reasons for selected other textbook (*e.g.*, new textbooks are available ahead of the Atlanta Public Schools textbook adoption timeframe). However, only state-approved textbooks will be selected and used for instruction.

The school will focus on effective instruction consistent with the state curriculum and through the components of high quality instruction, described above.

While the QCC/GPS's serve as the primary source of the school's curriculum, the school will provide enhancements designed to support achievement. Other materials that are newly published and become available, as well as materials found through teacher Internet searches and teacher made materials, will be used to meet the needs and desires of the community.

## English Language Arts

The QCC/GPS's will serve as the primary program for the school's curriculum. Additionally, staff will be guided by the following summary of English/language arts/reading programs.

The development of literacy and language skills is the foundation for communication and the basis for acquiring further knowledge through inquiry, research, and comprehension. The English Language Arts Curriculum focuses on reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. The development of literacy will foster a love of learning to read and in turn, the competency of reading to learn. Students will develop a desire for interpreting and comprehending the written word.

Through poetry, expressive drama and role-plays, public speaking, as well as use of video and other media, students will develop confidence in their expression. Through

opportunities to write in journals, letters, reports, and self-authored books, they will see their ideas become print. Each teacher will use literature for the development of language skills. Stories from cultures represented in the classroom, as well as stories from other cultures will become the vocabulary, plot development, language patterns, and basis for interpretation and critical thinking. These stories will also be part of the valuing of diversity inherent within the environment and culture of the school.

The literacy program emphasizing reading will be part of a comprehensive and balanced reading/English language arts program consisting of phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, phonics, grammar, spelling, creative and expository writing, and narrative and expository reading. A precursor of instruction and an on-going component will be diagnosis and assessment. All students will undergo diagnostic testing using instruments such as the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test and Scholastic Reading Inventory. These instruments will effectively identify students with advanced skills and reading levels. Consequently, teachers can guide advanced readers toward texts that are challenging and yet not overly frustrating to students. Strategies that will be used for these students include literacy circles, higher order techniques such as questioning the author and student-led book discussions. These advanced students will be continually monitored and challenged to develop new skills, competencies, and fluency.

Teachers will also have detailed information that pinpoints specific student deficiencies. Consequently, teachers will provide small group instruction designed to address deficits and build skills that promote reading achievement. Small and large group instruction will be used to accelerate students so that they gain competency at higher reading levels. Furthermore, the Scholastic Reading Inventory will be used to determine Lexile levels for each child. These data will allow teachers to select text materials at levels where students reading at lower levels can be successful. Teachers can also strategically select appropriately challenging materials that push students toward more advanced skills without being overly difficult and frustrating students. The overall approach to helping lower level reading students is to assess, provide focused instruction, reassess, remediate as needed, and challenge students toward advanced proficiency.

## Mathematics

The QCC/GPS's will serve as the primary program for the school's curriculum. Additionally, staff will be guided by the following summary of mathematics program.

The mathematics curriculum is based on the principle that all children can learn, that as learners they will construct their own meaning to problem solving, and that learning the concepts and applications of mathematics is a life-long process that begins and continues in the home and extends to the school and community setting. Students will begin to see mathematics as applied numeration and the relationship of numbers to combining, separating, and dividing tactile and visual objects.

Through application, the use of manipulatives and group problem solving students will come to know and understand major mathematical concepts such as measurement,

estimation, quantity, probability, statistics, and algebra and will explore the relationship of mathematics to other areas of knowledge and occupations. Students will recognize and use patterns, construct mathematical models, reason about quantities and shapes, and learn to draw conclusions from data. They will learn to solve, justify, and explain solutions to problems.

Students will be provided numerous opportunities to reflect on and communicate their thinking about mathematical ideas by representing, describing, and listening to mathematics as a vital part of learning and using the concepts.

Instruction in mathematics should emphasize the quality of understanding rather than quantity of information presented. This understanding involves reasoning, making connections among facts and concepts, and applying these newly acquired connections. The classroom will encourage students' confidence, perception of ability, and persistence in solving complex problems. Problem solving will initially model a team approach as research shows that many females and minorities achievement in mathematics appears to improve when they participate in cooperative activities.

The curriculum will be carried out in classrooms where asking questions, raising ideas, observing, measuring, and working with objects and numbers are a natural part of daily instruction. Teachers will provide students with problems that are connected to their lives. Mathematics knowledge develops in large part from concrete experiences, which provide a foundation for transitioning and connecting to concepts and facts, allowing children to gradually develop the ability to represent concrete experiences more abstractly with thought, words and symbols. They will benefit in cognitive development from continuing to connect concrete, real-life experiences with abstract ideas. Technology will be integrated into the mathematics curriculum through in-class use of computers and calculators. Students will become familiar with using technology as another resource to solve problems. This sequence is based on recommendations made by the National Council Teachers of Mathematics.

## Science

The QCC/GPS's will serve as the primary program for the school's curriculum. Additionally, staff will be guided by the following summary of science program.

Understanding science is the way to understand the natural world. Children are natural inventors and explorers, therefore natural scientists. The science curriculum will engage students in hands-on experimentation where they discover the power of science and technology and develop the ability to reason. They will be given the opportunity to use their natural instincts to enhance their scientific learning.

Students of all races and ethnic backgrounds can attain scientific literacy including female and male students and students from different economic levels. The presentation of science learning will carefully scrutinize material and pedagogy to insure that all students have a successful introductory educational experience in science.

Students should be able to state a problem, propose a solution, implement a strategy, and evaluate the results; the teacher will act as a facilitator in developing this method of learning. Tasks will be designed to give every student a sense of accomplishment, to challenge their upper reaches of scientific understanding, and to provide a window for assessing each student's thinking.

As a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Explorer School, the school is committed to the continuous exploration of “cutting edge” science and technology as a means of enhancing student achievement. Over the past three (3) years, University Community Academy has hosted a variety of student-centered community-based forums, conferences, and visual presentations by authentic NASA astronauts on “science and space”, “outer space travel and exploration”, and “the future role of science in community schools.” During this same period, the students have been actively involved in scientific inquiry, experimentation, and discovery under the leadership of a host of competent and highly talented science instructors. Through their combined efforts, UCA students have produced a variety of successful experiments and projects that have been recognized by City of Atlanta government officials, and by colleges and universities in the southeastern region of the United States. For example, students involved in scientific inquiry were responsible for the following:

- The development of functional Hydroponics Program that successfully cultivated a variety of plant seeds including vegetables, shrubs, and flowering plants and successfully rooted a variety of tree burls from conifer and deciduous tree plants.
- Assisting in the design of computerized mechanical devices with students in the Robotic Program at Morehouse and Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia.
- Developing hand crafted design concepts for rockets and boosters, complete with command modules, living quarters, and emergency back-up life- support systems.

Furthermore, students involved in discovery learning and scientific technology over the last three years have received notable recognition listed below:

- Invitation to attend a banquet and receive a citation by the Atlanta City Government Commissioner of Watershed Management for the development of a working wastewater filtration system.
- An ongoing invitation to the “Toy Challenge,” an annual science and technology program sponsored by NASA and the University of North Carolina, at Raleigh, North Carolina for successful design and development of a remote control vehicle that functions as a boat in water and a coach on land.
- Annual invitations to the “Explorer Vision,” a science and technology program sponsored by NASA and Toshiba Electronics that require students to design and fabricate a functional futuristic appliance and explain its application and benefit to society.

As a NASA Explorer School, University Community Academy remains committed to providing high quality instruction to all students in science, as well as reading, language arts, and math.

## Social Studies

The QCC/GPS's will serve as the primary program for the school's curriculum. Additionally, staff will be guided by the following summary of social studies program.

The Social Studies curriculum will be taught through themes that value the individual and the contributions of all people. This process promotes an appreciation of each student's heritage and links those heritages to school and community; it further links to roots in the broader world.

Each student will study the dynamics of local human communities, and how the students can set the pattern for their relationships in society and as a member of the world family. They will learn the value of fairness, effective communication, and non-violence. Through discussions and role-playing they will experience examples of unfairness, injustice, lack of or unwillingness to communicate/negotiate, and how it results in violence. Students will learn how their behavior affects the whole environment. They will explore the heritage of the past, and understand the impact it has had upon humanity, and project its impact upon the future.

Teachers will connect students to the broader world through guest speakers, television, radio, the news, pen pals, magazines, and interactive telecommunications via telephones and computers. They will be able to compare their development of ideas with peers in other parts of America and across the world. Students will read about and listen to the viewpoints of others, and how they compare and contrast their own beliefs and understanding, and how this all relates to the known truth. Students will learn that there are multiple viewpoints on social issues and will learn to question and evaluate different perspectives. They will learn how events and people are connected to one another and why the tools of map reading, globes, etc. are essential to understanding and evaluating our surrounding world and ourselves.

## Technology Program

Technology will be integrated throughout all subjects, as well as recreational and cultural activities, and will allow for communication among teachers and students, family and friends, as well as the global community. The school's technological capabilities will enable parents to monitor their children's daily progress and engage in consistent dialogue with the teachers. The technology curriculum begins with basic computer skills and advances the students to a level of utilizing technology resources to develop presentation tools, such as videos and web pages.

Technology is not viewed as a separate discipline, but as an appropriate part of every discipline for all students, at every level of instruction. It is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Technology is a tool to enhance learning.

The school will be a results-driven organization with a commitment to continuous improvement. The technological system will allow the administrators to collect

information for the purposes of assessing the appropriate uses of resources. Specific needs can be targeted and resources can then be reallocated, if necessary.

Instructional technology will provide a means for teachers to teach and students to learn in new ways. Most significantly, technology will be used to make instruction more student-centered and individualized, allowing the teacher to provide a greater level of individual attention to students. In addition, teachers will use technology to respond to the diverse needs of our students, especially those in most need of remediation and/or support.

Students will complete technology-rich projects that exercise higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Students will become more independent learners as they are given complex tasks to complete individually and collaboratively. Students will use new means of communication such as electronic mail, video conferencing, and the Internet. All students will be proficient with the computer tools of word processing and older students will use and explore databases, Internet research, and spreadsheets where they prepare tables and graphs.

In an effort to include parents as a very critical component to any child's continued success, the parent/guardian will be given website access codes so that students' grades and assessments may be reviewed at any time. Additionally, parents/guardians will be allowed the opportunity to engage in consistent dialogue with the teachers.

Ultimately, the school's computers will not be a subject matter to be taught, but a tool to enhance learning, identify needs, provide real-world connections to classroom lessons, and foster communication. The technology curriculum will be one that supports core instruction and improved performance.

### Family Life and Human Development

As required by the state, students will participate in family life studies including the dynamic process of growth and development that encompasses physical, mental, emotional, and social maturation. Children will learn about positive personal and family relationships that provide a foundation to promote healthy development. Other topics to be explored will include contributions of family relationships to healthful living, stages of human growth and development, and need for and process of setting personal goals and standards for healthful living.

### Counseling and Health Services

The school will have a counselor position to be filled by a Georgia certified school counselor. The counselor will provide services to students and families based on referrals from the principal, teachers, or from students themselves. Services will include helping students develop skills and means to cope with problems before they occur, anger management strategies, self concept development, family relationships, peer pressure, and other issues that are common to school-age children. Additionally, the counselor will assist with health services for students by making contacts with community, city, and state agencies. The counselor will provide regular

updates to the principal and discuss individual cases with the principal to explore strategies for supporting students. The counselor will work with individual students or in small groups, as needed. The counselor will participate in School Support Team meetings and IEP/504 plan development and annual reviews.

### Consciously Resting Meditation

In today's society, no one, especially children, can escape the effects of daily stress in their lives. Children are constantly being bombarded by TV, music, video games, advertisements, negative news and an array of other psychological and physiological assaults to their mind, body and spirit. Simultaneously, we ask our children to learn, study, act appropriately and be alert, awake and aware from early in the morning until well into the night. Very few children are getting enough rest at night to release the stress and fatigue they receive from school and home during their over extended waking hours.

Dr. Kofi Kondwani is a psychologist, faculty member at Morehouse School of Medicine, and an independent meditation consultant. He has been teaching Consciously Resting Meditation (CRM) for the past 30 years. He has taught children from 4 years young to over 90 years old. Dr. Kondwani is proposing to introduce CRM to teacher, staff and students at the University Community Academy. Research continues to show that quiet time is important to the spiritual, mental and physical life of individuals. Establishing a 10-minute CRM period every morning and again in the afternoon on a daily basis will make the University Community Academy a unique charter school that takes into account the need to continually prevent or reduce stress and improve the health of its employees, teachers and students.

Students in the classrooms will be taught CRM in groups after receiving written parental permission. It will take one normal class period on three consecutive days for students to learn to consciously rest. After instruction, students will have two ten-minute sessions daily to consciously rest. During that time, there would be no talking, walking in the hallways or other activities. Student leaders and teachers in each classroom will be taught how to facilitate group meditations.

Teachers and staff will learn CRM during release time for staff development and during after-school sessions. Three one-hour sessions over three consecutive days will be used to learn CRM. During this time teachers will learn to facilitate CRM in the classroom.

Based on the evidence, with the incorporation of CRM into the daily routine of the school, it is expected that students will be more alert in the classroom. Students will do better on standardized testing and the school will experience less behavior problems. Teachers will experience less stress in the classroom, be absent less due to illness, and be less burnt out at the end of the day. Once every one has been instructed in CRM, the administration can expect calmer, happier, healthier and smarter students and more satisfied employees. These expected outcomes will be evaluated on a regular basis for effectiveness.

### Supplemental Education Activities

The school employs reading and mathematics instructors from September to April using Title 1 funds. The duties of these instructors include tutoring and helping with homework for those students who have been identified as needing assistance from the teachers or the student's parents. Additionally, schoolwide tutoring and after-school instruction are provided every Wednesday, 3:00 – 5:00 pm.

#### Extracurricular Activities

The school has planned three sports-related extracurricular activities beginning this school year, now that the school has relocated to a larger and more comprehensive facility. In January 2007, the school will form boys and girls basketball teams. In spring 2007, a girls softball team will begin. Also in Spring 2007, boys and girls soccer teams will be formed. These teams will participate in league play in the City of Atlanta.

#### Supplemental Education Services

The school will participate fully in federal/state supplemental education programs as outlined in SBO Rule 160-4-5-.03. The school will provide additional academic instruction provided outside the regular school day through the school's after-school program (daily, 3:00 – 6:00 pm). This program is designed to increase academic achievement of low-income students. The school will inform parents at least twice annually of the availability of such services and provide tutoring services not to exceed the 1:8 tutor/student ratio using highly qualified tutors. Furthermore the school will provide data on student progress as requested by the district and state. All Title I procedures will be followed.

#### Remedial Education Programs

The school will participate fully in federal/state remedial education programs as outlined in SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03 and 160-4-5-.01. The school will provide additional academic instruction for students in Grades 6-8 who have identified deficiencies in reading, writing, or mathematics. Eligibility requirements will include review and analysis of a formal student support team process with evidence to support the placement in remedial education, failed either a language arts or a mathematics course in Grades 6-8, is receiving Title I services, or the student has been recommended by the teacher due to low performance in reading, mathematics, or inability to verbally express ideas or to write or dictate a meaningful sentence. Other criteria will include a score on standardized tests at or below the 25th in reading, writing, or mathematics or scores at the "Does Not Meet" category in reading, or English/language arts, or mathematics of the Georgia CRCT. The number of students eligible for participation in REP shall not exceed 25 percent of the school's most recent FTE count for Grades 6-8. This remediation will be provided by highly qualified instructors consistent with No Child Left Behind requirements.

#### Partnerships

The charter school has partnerships with the six (6) academic institutions that comprise the Atlanta University Center (AUC). The AUC is the largest consortium of Historical Black Colleges in the United States and consists off the following schools. Clark Atlanta University, the Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse College, the Morehouse School of Medicine and Spelman College. These institutions provide a variety of supports to the school including mentoring, facilities for special events, professional development, and gifts in the form of teacher supplies, books, and educational stipends.

The school also has partnerships with Ace Hardware Company, Re-Max Realty, and the Boy's and Girl's Club of America. These groups provide building and cleaning materials, media center furniture, and after-school care for many of our "latchkey" students.

- 6) State whether the charter school will utilize a local school council, as provided for in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-85, or another similar board, which shall be 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). If the charter school elects to utilize a board other than a local school council, as provided for in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-85, the petition shall state its role, function, composition, and how and when members should be selected;

The school will not utilize a local school council but will be governed by an elected Charter School Board, of which one-third will be parents. The Charter School Board will be subject to Georgia laws related to open and public meetings and inspection of public records.

The roles of the Charter School Board are as follows:

- Serve as the responsible legal entity for operating the charter school
- Develop policies for the school's operation
- Obtain input from parents on all aspects of the school's operation
- Review and approve all financial reports and monthly statements
- Review and approve all local district and state reports regarding performance, audits, school activities, and parent involvement
- Select and approve the management contract of any Education Management Organization (EMO) that is selected to operate the school
- Serve as the final step for any grievance filed by parents or staff
- Approve the appointment of school principal
- Conduct hearings for students or his/her parents that contest proposed disciplinary actions to determine whether cause exists for the disciplinary action.
- Conduct hearing for expulsion proceedings

The Charter School Board will have the following officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Board members will be elected yearly.

- 7) Describe the proposed staff qualifications, employee recruitment procedures, hiring practices, compensation, and employee evaluation procedures. If the petition proposes that students will be taught by individuals other than those certified by the Professional Standards Commission, the petition shall so state and shall generally describe the qualifications of such personnel;

All professional staff must be graduates of accredited education programs and possess degrees and state certification/licenses appropriate for their positions, as defined by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. The principal will review official transcripts and Georgia teaching certificates to verify that professional staff is appropriately certified.

All school staff will be required to undergo a criminal background check and fingerprinting through the local police department prior to hiring and subsequently at five-year intervals. Starting salaries will be competitive and commensurate with those of Atlanta Public Schools as defined by degree and years of service and will meet the state salary schedule.. However, salary raises will be provided based on the academic performance of students. Specifically, salaries are adjusted based on the percentage of performance targets met and professional evaluations; teachers who meet all targets for their grade level and have high evaluations may receive a yearly salary adjustment that is as much as a 2 percent over that of Atlanta Public Schools salaries. Consequently, teachers have the opportunity to earn higher salaries than those of local district teachers provided school targets are made. Teachers who do not meet school targets will be given a pro-rated salary adjustment.

Teaching assistants (paraprofessionals) must have completed two years of college or possess an Associate's degree, consistent with federal Title I guidelines. The principal will review official transcripts and Georgia certificates to verify that paraprofessionals are appropriately qualified.

The principal will recruit teachers using local contacts and regional/state/national outreach efforts. The principal will interview qualified staff and decisions will be shared with the Charter School Board.

#### Evaluation of Staff

Teachers and other instructional staff will be evaluated using an established Human Resource Plan. This plan will be distributed and discussed during pre-service workshops. The plan provides for joint principal's and program director's review and scoring of staff on 12 categories of performance using a predefined rubric scale of 0 - 4. The categories are as follows.

- Effective Instruction
- Classroom Management & Discipline
- Classroom Environment
- Objectives/state standards posted
- Teacher Requirements (meeting academic targets)
- Certification
- Professional Development
- Contribution to School
- Communication with Parents
- Principal's Confidence
- Attendance
- Reports/Departs On Time

The evaluation timeline is as follows:

- Process/criteria/goals to be reviewed during August pre-service meetings

- Informal observation/feedback from Program Manager/Director of Teacher Training & Development; August
- Formal observation and conference conducted by principal; September
- Joint agreement with principal on personal objectives, areas of focus, and improvement plan; September
- Informal observation/feedback from Program Manager/Director of Teacher Training & Development; October, January, March
- Formal observation and written evaluation from principal by April 1
- Contracts for next year distributed prior to April 15, for classroom teachers with high evaluation ratings
- Other contracts provided after considering performance data and enrollment projections; June

Individuals with a composite rubric of greater than 3 will be offered a renewal contract no later than April 15 yearly.

All personnel will have objectives, knowledge, skills, and motivation and share a common belief system herein described, which supports the mission and goals of the school.

#### Number of School Staff

	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
Administration Staff					
Principal	1	1	1	1	1
Counselor	1	1	1	1	1
Office Personnel	2	3	3	3	3
Custodians	1	1	1	1	1
Total Administration Staff	5	6	6	6	6
Instructional Staff *					
Paraprofessionals	7	8	8	8	8
Total Staff	40	51	51	51	51

\* Includes classroom teachers, special education teachers and coordinator, ESOL teachers

Listed below are key staff and job descriptions:

#### Principal

The principal will be responsible for directing and supervising the instructional program and operations of the school. The underlying focus for his/her administration will be ensuring the implementation of the high standards and research-based curricula in all classrooms. Additionally, the principal will be responsible for the following:

- Building a performance-based school culture of high expectations for all students throughout the school community
- Selecting school staff with the knowledge, skills, and beliefs to ensure each child reaches high levels of academic achievement, in accordance with state standards
- Evaluating the performance of school staff and making decisions regarding the continuation or termination of the employment of school staff members
- Recommending a program of professional development for staff members designed to improve student achievement.

- Engaging the active support of parents and community members in support of the education of the students in the school
- Leading a school-wide process of staff analysis of student assessment data to plan improvements in the educational program
- Administering the school policies determined by the Charter School Board and the applicable local, state, and federal regulations
- Providing reports on student progress and all matters of school operations
- Directing the enforcement of the school policies and rules of student conduct, including decisions regarding the suspension or expulsion of students from the school.
- Serving on the School Support Team as permanent member

Reports to: Education Program Director

Qualifications: State Principal Certification and Master's Degree

Experience Minimum, three years successful administrative; Minimum two year's successful classroom teaching experience

Knowledge and Skills:

- Experience implementing high academic standards and curricula in an educational setting, preferably in an urban setting
- Knowledge of flexible school scheduling, especially "continuous progress" systems which differentiate instruction for individual students, based on assessments of their academic skills
- Capacity to build a school culture which mobilizes the effort of students, staff, and parents to achieve the mission of all students achieving at high levels
- Knowledge of effective practices motivating students to adhere to high standards of conduct
- Knowledge of urban children and their families, especially of those from the dominant cultural groups represented in the school's student population
- Capacity to facilitate groups to plan and make decisions
- Capacity to build relationships which foster the development of staff
- Capacity to analyze data on student learning to identify needs for improvement in instruction
- Capacity to observe, evaluate, and select effective teaching and teachers
- Skill in oral and written communications
- Ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously while prioritizing projects and assignments
- Experience working under time pressure and maintaining a positive work environment

Beliefs and Attitudes

- Unshakable belief that children from under-resourced communities can reach the highest academic levels.
- Persistence and resourcefulness in overcoming obstacles to solve problems
- Acceptance of personal responsibility for the educational results of the school
- Flexibility/willingness to embrace change
- High personal ethical standards
- Comfort with smart, highly skilled, assertive staff members
- Sense of humor, can make work playful
- Lifetime interest in how people learn and on one's own personal development

### Special Education Coordinator

Reports to: Principal

Qualifications: Bachelor's degree and state certification as Special Ed. Teacher

Minimum

Requirements: Staff development skills and special education practices. Must comply with all Federal and State laws regarding students with disabilities. Subject to background checks, conducted in a manner consistent with the law, prior to hiring.

Objectives: The significant improvement of the academic achievement of all students toward the school's standards. The Principal and Special Education Coordinator will establish challenging goals or targets for improvement of individual and overall student academic performance. These goals will be a combination of absolute measures and measures of progress.

Responsibilities:

- Uses appropriate assessments to screen students in need of special education services and support.
- Plans and monitors implementation of individualized educational programs (IEP's) for students identified with special learning needs.
- Provides individualized and small group instruction according to student IEP's.
- Provides individualized and small group counseling on education and personal problems that relate to the student's growth and development.
- Conferences frequently with parents and staff members on each pupil's progress.
- Analyzes data from assessments of student work in collaboration with their teams to determine which teaching strategies need to be expanded and which need to be replaced by more effective ones.
- Performs other duties as assigned by the Principal.
- Serves on the School Support Team as permanent member

Knowledge and Skills:

- Experience implementing academic standards and curricula to special education students in an educational setting.
- Capacity to teach in a school, which mobilizes the effort of students to achieve the mission of all students achieving at high levels.
- Knowledge of effective classroom management practices motivating special education students to adhere to high standards of conduct.
- Capacity to analyze data on student learning to identify needs for improvement in instruction for the special education population.
- Skill in oral and written communications.
- Capacity to work as an effective team member by interpreting the abilities and disabilities of special education students to the entire staff.

### Teacher

Reports to: Principal

Qualifications: Bachelor's degree and State Certification/license as defined by the state board of education. Subject to background checks, conducted in a manner consistent with the law, prior to hiring. If assigned to work with special education and related services or bilingual education, state certification in area of assignment.

Objective: The significant improvement in the academic achievement of all students toward the school's standards.

#### Responsibilities:

- All staff must meet and maintain the behavior established in the charter school's Code of Ethics.
- Accountable for designing, implementing, and monitoring the learning experiences of each student and class.
- Works collaboratively with school staff, students, parents, and community partners and responsible for communicating regularly with parents.
- Establishes challenging goals or targets for improvement of individual and overall student academic performance. These goals will be a combination of absolute measures and measures of progress.
- Analyzes data from assessments of student work to determine which teaching strategies need to be expanded and which need to be replaced by more effective ones.
- Performs other duties, as assigned.

#### Knowledge and Skills:

- Experience implementing high academic standards and curricula in an educational setting.
- Capacity to teach in a school, which mobilizes the effort of students to achieve the mission of all students achieving at high levels.
- Knowledge of effective practices that motivates students to adhere to high standards of conduct.
- Knowledge of urban children and their families, especially of those from the dominant cultural groups represented in the school's student population.
- Capacity to analyze data on student learning to identify needs for improvement in instruction.
- Skill in oral and written communications.
- Capacity to work as an effective team member.

#### Administrative Assistant

Reports to: Principal

Qualifications: Bachelor's degree from four-year college or university; or one to two years' related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience. Subject to background checks, conducted in a manner consistent with the law, prior to hiring.

Summary of responsibilities: Schedules appointments, gives information to callers, takes dictation, and otherwise relieves officials of clerical work and minor administrative and business detail by performing the following duties:

- Prepares and communicates reports.
- Reads and routes incoming mail
- Locates and attaches appropriate files to correspondence to be answered
- Composes and types routine correspondence
- Organizes and maintains file system and files correspondence and other records
- Answers and screens telephone calls and arranges conference calls
- Coordinates schedules and makes appointments
- Greets scheduled visitors and conducts to appropriate area or person
- Arranges and coordinates travel schedules and reservations
- Conducts research and compiles and types statistical reports
- Coordinates and arranges meetings, prepares agendas, reserves and prepares facilities, and records and transcribes minutes of meetings
- Makes copies of correspondence or other printed materials
- Prepares outgoing mail and correspondence, including e-mail and faxes

- Orders and maintains supplies and arranges for equipment maintenance

Knowledge and Skills:

- Ability to read, analyze, and interpret general business periodicals, professional journals, technical procedures, or governmental regulations.
- Ability to write reports, business correspondence, and procedure manuals.
- Verbal skills to effectively present information and respond to questions from groups of managers, clients, customers, and the general public.
- Ability to apply concepts of basic algebra and business mathematics related to ordering.
- Ability to solve practical problems and deal with a variety of concrete variables in situations where only limited standardization exists.
- Ability to interpret a variety of instructions furnished in written, oral, diagram, or schedule form.
- Word processing, Spreadsheets, Internet software, E-mail

Teaching Assistant (Paraprofessional):

Reports to: Teachers as assigned and principal

Qualifications: Minimum requirements:

High School Diploma and two years of college, Associate's degree (Preferred). Written and oral communications skills. Ability to work closely with young children (both individually and in small groups). Some proficiency with computer technology. Subject to background checks, conducted in a manner consistent with the law, prior to hiring.

Objectives: Assists, under the direction of the classroom teacher, in improving the academic achievement of all students and helps students develop skills that are necessary to have successful school experiences.

Responsibilities:

- Assists in the implementing and monitoring of learning experiences of each student and class as prepared by teachers.
- Works collaboratively with students, staff, parents, and community partners.
- Supports the emotional and social growth of young children by assisting them in developing caring interaction skills.
- Learns and applies a variety of assessment mechanisms.
- Works with a flexible schedule.
- Infuses technology into instruction and assessment and participate in training needed to acquire the skills to carry out these functions.
- Performs other duties and responsibilities, as assigned.

Typical Teacher Day

All teachers will report to school at 7:30 a.m. daily. Typical activities will be conducted prior to 8:30 am including checking into the office, picking up mail, making parent phone calls, and organizing materials for instruction. All teachers will teach core subjects of Language Arts (reading and writing), mathematics, science, and social studies. Special teachers will teach physical education/health, technology, Spanish, art, and music during which classroom teachers will plan individually or in grade-level teams. All teachers will serve on schoolwide committees, attend monthly parent meetings, and participate in weekly after-school professional development/faculty meetings. Teachers will also conduct compulsory tutorials every Wednesday, 3:30 - 4:45 p.m.; however, many teachers will volunteer after school for other days of the week to tutor students. Teachers

will be required to remain in school until 4:00 p.m. to supervise students in extracurricular activities.

A typical teacher will teach 4 1/2 hours in core subjects with 1 1/2 hours for planning during special instruction.

#### Teacher Qualifications Presented to Parents

Media and other recruitment notices and parent recruitment meetings will include information about the school staff and qualifications of teachers. Additionally, written summaries of staff background, certification, and qualifications will be available in the school office and will be posted on the school's website. Open house meetings and back to school parent meetings will include staff information.

#### Participation in Georgia's Teachers' Retirement System (TRS)

The school will withhold, report and remit employer and employee contributions to the Georgia Teachers' Retirement System (TRS).

#### Charter School Employees Not Eligible for APS Benefits

During the interview process and contract acceptance, employees will be told verbally and in writing of the benefits package provided by the school. Included will be written notice that charter school employees are not eligible for benefits provided by the Atlanta Board of Education.

#### Volunteers

Parents are considered important resources to the school community and students. As such, volunteers and parents will be actively recruited to play a vital role in the development, maintenance, and enhancement of mathematics and reading achievement levels. Specific roles of volunteers and parent include assisting students with their mathematics and reading assignments through daily tutorials, reading to and with students during the regular day and after school hours, and critiquing students reading ability through daily listening activities.

Volunteers and parents will be asked to sign a compact to validate their involvement with and assistance to the school. Volunteers will be provided with mentoring and skills training, parental seminars, and volunteer workshops through the school's Federal Title I program. Furthermore, volunteers and parents will be invited to provide input for the school's leadership programs and the school's academic achievement plans. Additionally, incentives in the form of gifts, plaques, recognition dinners, and photographs in the Neighborhood Planning Unit Brochures will be used to show appreciation to volunteers and parents. These strategies will encourage, motivate, and inspire them to continue their association with and support of the school program and student body.

Students at the Atlanta University Center serve as student volunteers in the school and thus satisfy community service requirements. Many Morehouse and Spelman students receive a Bonners scholarship that has a community service requirement attached to it. Both institutions are registered as official sites for the Bonners Program.

- 8) Describe financial policies and procedures proposed that are to be followed by the charter school to assure sound fiscal management and by the local board or state board to assure a predictable flow of funds to the charter school. Petitioner's plan shall include a financial plan for the first fiscal year and a budget for the full term of the proposed charter. The financial plan shall include an estimate of all public and private dollars available per student; an itemized list of working capital and assets, including cash, bonds and real estate; a monthly cash flow projection detailing revenues and expenditures; and all potential sources of funding that petitioner is actively pursuing;

The School will utilize accepted state codification of accounts in all transactions pertaining to its operations. The charter school will hire a firm to help oversee the financial management of the school.

Additionally, audited financial reports will include a complete set of financial statements and notes prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Such statements will be formatted by revenue source and expenditures and detailed by function and object.

The School will use an outside financial management company familiar with charter schools to manage financial matters of the school.

#### Annual Financial Plan

The charter school's annual financial plan for operation appears in Attachment A. The plan is yearly in nature and collectively covers all years of the operating charter.

#### Fiscal Accountability

The school will be financially viable. An annual audited statement conducted by an independent auditing firm to be reported under Government Auditing Standards will be submitted. Should the audit report reveal a deficit, the auditors will notify the Charter School Board and Atlanta Public schools.

#### Control Measure To Safeguard Finances - Internal Control Procedures

The School will also maintain a number of internal financial controls and bookkeeping practices. The School will establish a financial system that provides fiscal control and accounting procedure that are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Internal controls will be reviewed and evaluated annually by an independent auditor in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. A detailed description of specific internal controls and accounting procedures is presented below.

#### Annual Line Item Budget:

The principal, in conjunction with fiscal staff, will annually submit a detailed budget to the Board of Directors for review and approval. The proposed budget will include a line item breakdown by appropriate cost categories. Modification to the budget will be submitted to the Board when required due to funding changes and unexpected changes in the program.

#### Monthly Schedule of Revenue and Expenditures – Budget and Actual

A monthly Schedule of Revenues and Expenditures – Budget and Actual will be maintained. The monthly report will include the following:

- Total amount budgeted
- Expenses for the Year
- Remaining budget balance

#### Oversight

Detailed financial statements will be prepared on a monthly basis for analysis by the principal. These financial statements will be reviewed by the Charter School Board at monthly meetings. Policies and reporting procedures established by the district and state will be followed.

#### Cash Management

Funds will be deposited in a financial institution with FDIC coverage. Interest earned on funds will be used as program income.

#### Bank Reconciliation

The Principal will review and approve all bank reconciliations. Bank reconciliations procedures will include:

- Accounting for check numbers used
- Comparing all checks with the statement
- Checking signatures and endorsements
- Investigating checks outstanding for more than 90 days
- Tracing and reviewing bank transfers
- Itemizing outstanding checks

#### Cash Receipts

All School program cash receipts are received, opened, and stamped "For Deposit Only." The original receipt is duplicated and a bank deposit slip is prepared. A copy of the validated deposit slip is faxed to fiscal personnel.

#### Cash Disbursements

The charter school will make payment for goods and services upon verifying receipt, in proper condition, of materials actually ordered. Prices, terms, and mathematical accuracy will be verified prior to check preparation. All checks require signatures of the principal and the school's Chief Financial Officer.

#### Personnel and Payroll

These activities will require a multitude of services including payroll administration, human resources management, compliance reporting, and employee benefits administration. In this light, the charter school will out-source these services to the EMO. The charter school will retain hiring, firing, supervision, evaluation, promotion, salary determination, and employee benefits determinations.

#### Accounting System and Financial Reporting

As stated earlier, the charter school will maintain an accrual accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). The financial records will contain accurate information pertaining to grant awards and authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, liabilities, expenditures and income. This system will permit the tracing of all transactions to source documents in order to establish that funds have been used in accordance with policies.

#### Financial Statements

The School will prepare financial statements on a monthly basis for submission to the Charter School Board for approval. An annual independent financial audit will be conducted by an independent Georgia licensed CPA in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS). The annual audit will be financed through school funds.

### School Chief Financial Officer

Gary Scott, CPA, will serve as the school's chief financial officer. The school has contracted with School Financial Services, Inc. for financial management. Gary B. Scott, the President of School Financial Services, is responsible for implementing and maintaining the financial management of the school. Mr. Scott is currently bonded consistent with APS policy. The school plans to maintain that bond.

Mr. Scott holds a B.A. degree in Accounting and an M.B.A. from the University of West Florida with a (Magna Cum Laude). He has 25 years of experience in accounting, including 10 years of governmental accounting and finance and 8 years of governmental auditing including several audits of school district internal accounts. Mr. Scott worked for four years as a district level financial administrator in a school district, in which he was responsible for budgeting (\$165 million operating budget, \$350 million total budgets), accounting, accounts payable, purchasing, payroll, MIS, property management, and data processing. Mr. Scott has provided financial and accounting services to charter schools in Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, and California for five years.

### Recruiting Plan

With the school's successful operation for nearly five years and having made AYP for the last three years in a row, the school has a record of meeting and exceeding enrollment capacity. The move to a newly renovated facility will enhance the school's ability to attract students. In its former limited capacity facility (Saint Anthony School, 953 Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard), the school turned away students; this will not be the case for the renewal operation that will be housed at the former Anderson Park Elementary School (2050 Tiger Flower Drive) located in NPU J. However, to provide a high quality choice to parents in the community of the new facility(Former Anderson Park Elementary), the school will conduct open house activities and a variety of community outreach activities.

### Plan for Maintaining/Increasing Attendance

As stated above, the school's enrollment has shown steady enrollment increases. High performance, meeting AYP, small class sizes, and individualized support to students contributed to this phenomenon. Similar conditions will likely contribute to maintaining/increasing attendance.

### Timeline for Receiving Funds

The school should begin receiving state and local funding during Summer 2007 that are disbursed to charter schools in ten payments from August through May.

### Federal Monitoring

The school will comply with federal monitoring requirements for all federal funds.

### Budget Assumptions and Contingency Plans

Revenues are based on current year levels, with an inflation factor of 3.5%. No additional sources of revenues are budgeted. Expenses are budgeted with an inflation factor of 4%, thus providing conservative budgeted amounts. The school ended FY06 with a fund balance of \$454,738, which provides substantial cushion in the event of unforeseen expenses or reduction of students. Nonetheless, the school will adjust staffing and other expenses to maintain fiscal integrity. The school has substantial funds budgeted for special education.

## Fundraising and Contributions

The charter school board will be responsible for fund raising. No specific fundraising campaigns are currently planned.

No funds or in-kind donations have been committed. The school relies on state and federal education funds. Any donations received will be used to enhance the educational program.

9) Specify the proposed duration of the charter;

The charter will have a duration of 5 years.

- 10) Specify the proposed attendance zone for the school and address rules and procedures concerning admission of students.

Enrollment will be open to all students in the city of Atlanta with preference as follows:

Primary Attendance Zone

- West - Fair St SW from Northside Dr.
- South - Holderness St SW to West view Dr. SW
- West - Westview Dr. SW to Laurel Dr. SW
- South - Laurel Dr. SW to Abernathy Blvd. SW
- Southwest - Abernathy Blvd. SW to White St
- Southwest - White St. SW to Lee St SW
- North - Lee St SW to Abernathy Blvd.
- East - Abernathy Blvd SW to Northside Dr.
- North - Northside Dr. SW to Fair St.

Former Anderson Park Elementary School zone

- NORTH - Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway (south side only) from 1-285 east to Harwell Road, Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway (not included) from Harwell Road southeastward to Hamilton E. Holmes Drive
- EAST - Hamilton E. Holmes Drive (not included) from Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway south to Baker Road, Hamilton E. Holmes Drive (both sides included) from Baker Road south to Ryne Street, Ryne Street (not included) from Hamilton F. Holmes Drive eastward, with an imaginary line to northern boundary of Lincoln Cemetery, continuing along northern boundary of Lincoln Cemetery, and along northern boundary of Simpson Woods Apartments property [Collier Heights Apartments] (included) to Detroit Avenue/New Jersey Avenue intersection, New Jersey Avenue (not included) from Detroit Avenue south to Simpson Road, Simpson Road (not included) from New Jersey Avenue westward to eastern boundary of Land Lot 178, eastern boundary of Land Lot 178 from Simpson Road south and continuing along eastern boundary of Land Lot 179 to Verbena Street at southwest corner of Anderson Park property (not included), Verbena Street (both sides included) from eastern boundary of Land Lot 179 west and continuing along southern boundary of Land Lot 179 west to western portion of Verbena Street at Dahlia Avenue (included), Verbena Street (both sides included) from Verbena Street south to 1-20
- SOUTH - 1-20 from Fairfield Place westward to 1-285
- WEST - 1-285 from 1-20 north to Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway

The secondary attendance zone will be any students residing in the city of Atlanta.

## 11) Admission Rules and Procedures

The charter school will not enroll students who reside outside the City of Atlanta.

The charter school will not discriminate against students on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, marital status, need for special educational services or academic/athletic/artistic ability.

Residency will be checked by the administrative secretary and approved by the school principal. During the enrollment process, parents/guardians will be required to submit the following required documents:

- Certificate of Immunization or affidavit of religious objection
- Official copy of Birth Certificate
- Certificate of Eye, Ear and Dental Examination
- Proof of Residency (home utility bill such as electricity/gas and lease)

The admissions procedure is as follows:

- Parent/Guardian comes to the school and requests an enrollment form.
- Parent/Guardian enters enrollment information on paper forms and submits to designated staff member
  - Student name and date of birth
  - Student's primary language
  - Parent/Guardian name, home address, and telephone
  - Emergency contact information
  - Emergency medical information
- Parent/Guardian completes Free and Reduced Lunch application
- Parent/Guardian provides required documentation.
  - Certificate of Immunization or affidavit of religious objection
  - Official copy of Birth Certificate
  - Certificate of Eye, Ear and Dental Examination
  - Proof of Residency (home utility bill such as electricity/gas, telephone, water)
- Parent/Guardian provides requested documentation.
  - Student Social Security Card
  - Withdrawal form from previous school
  - Transcript and/or report card from previous school
  - Address of previous school
  - Discipline Report from previous school
  - Copy of IEP or 504 Plan

The form is date stamped by the designated charter school official

### Enrollment Procedures

#### Current Students (February 1 – February 28)

- Letter sent to parents February 1, inviting them to confirm returning to the school
- All who respond prior to March 1 will be accepted
- All who do not respond will be treated as New Students, described below

#### New Students, Primary Zone (March 1 – March 25)

- Staff will analyze the number of grade level openings
- If any grade level enrollment exceeds capacity, all New Students in the primary zone will be chosen through the Primary Lottery
- Primary Lottery will be held the last school day in March

- Once selected by lottery, parents will have 1 week to accept enrollment
- Names selected through this lottery will be placed on a Primary Waiting List and as slots become available, students will be contacted in the order they were selected (by grade level). This waiting list will be in effect through the end of the next school year.

New Students, Secondary Zone and other new students from the primary zone or returning students who did not respond prior to February 28 or to the March Lottery for New Students (April 15 – May 15)

- Staff will analyze the number of grade level openings
- If any grade level enrollment exceeds capacity, all New Students in the secondary zone and others described above will be chosen through the lottery
- Secondary Zone lottery will be held the third Monday in May
- Once selected by lottery, parents will have 1 week to accept enrollment
- Names selected through this lottery will be placed on a Secondary Waiting List and as slots become available and the Primary Waiting List is exhausted, students will be contacted in the order they were selected (by grade level). This waiting list will be in effect through the end of the next school year.

All other students (returning students, and students in the primary zone and secondary zone who did not enroll as described above (June 1 and beyond)

- Once the Primary and Secondary lottery waiting lists are exhausted, all other students will be accepted as space allows.

The socio-economic and cultural background of the students attending the school closely reflects the demography of the school's community, which at present, is predominately African American. However, because the school is located near a transient area of the city, the student population has included, and will continue to include a number of white and Hispanic students from time to time.

Enrollment Priorities Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066 (a)(1)

As stated above, the school will give enrollment preference to siblings of any enrolled student. Preference will be given also a student whose parent or guardian is a member of the governing board of the charter school or is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee at the charter school. Since the facility has relocated to the former Anderson Park Elementary School and will now serve that community, students who live in the Anderson Park school zone will be afforded a primary enrollment priority in combination with students from the initial petition's attendance zone.

Student Information System

The school will comply with all local, state, and federal requirements to collect and submit electronic data. School staff will fully cooperate with APS as a conduit for such collection and submission. To that end, the school will use the APS student information system and accept and use hardware and SASIxp software. School staff will attend any training related to record keeping and electronically transmitting data. The school will obtain electronic connectivity, and maintain the system so that it operates reliably, consistently, and safely and that confidentially is ensured.

Under the direction of the principal, a data clerk will be responsible for maintaining accurate enrollment and attendance records. Daily attendance will be recorded electronically and entered into the school's student information system. Using the SASIxp software, all data will be readily available for local and state reports and will be transmitted upon request. Regular backup procedures will ensure accurate archival records. Other data including discipline, grades, all schedules, and any other student data will be recorded and maintained by a data clerk, under the supervision of the principal.

12) Address rules and procedures concerning student discipline and dismissal, including the schools code of conduct;

As stated in the mission statement, the focus of the school is on learning (*i.e.*, the charter school's mission is to create a learning environment that allows students to excel academically and socially. We believe that all students can succeed and most will excel). The philosophy that guides the school is that appropriate and acceptable discipline and behavior is best supported through engaging instruction, a supportive and inviting school climate, a positive attitude and approach to behavior modification, clear and fair rules, and clear and consistently applied consequences. The school environment will be constructed so that children feel trusted and respected, that they have choices, that they are expected to take on responsibilities, and that the administrators, teachers, and staff are there to help them succeed.

Consequently, staff will implement a comprehensive schoolwide learning environment that provides a safe and nurturing atmosphere for all students. To that end, teachers and other staff will be trained and encouraged to provide positive reinforcement to students and to administer fair and consistent consequences for behavior infractions. Above all, the entire school community will strive to exhibit behaviors of caring for others, respect, honesty, integrity, leadership, sharing, negotiation, shared decision-making, and conflict resolution.

Prior to the beginning of school, school-wide rules will be presented to parents and subsequently to students during the first week of school as follows:

#### School Rules

- Follow adult directions.
- Speak respectfully to others
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- Confrontational, vulgar, or profane language may not be used.
- No running or roughhousing inside the building including classrooms, stairs, cafeteria, media center, hallways, and other common areas.
- Prohibited items are those not needed for learning (e.g., toys, electronic equipment, large amounts of money, sports equipment)
- No weapons of any type

#### Consequences (Progressively Implemented):

- Verbal warning without record
- Verbal warning recorded on school discipline report
- Reduction of free time such as recess
- Referral to the office for principal conference
- Parent call
- In-school suspension
- Out of school suspension
- Expulsion

Extreme disciplinary measures will be used only in acute cases. Criteria for suspension and expulsion of students will be consistent with local policies and the state laws. The school will provide students with due process hearings using representatives from the charter school board in conformity with the requirements of local and state guidelines regarding discipline, special education, confidentiality, and access to records. While suspension and expulsion are regarded as a last resort, the following represents some of the suggested grounds for such action:

- The threat, causation, or attempted causation of physical injury to another person.

- Possession of a weapon (e.g., firearms, knives, and explosives).
- Unlawful possession, use, sale, offer, or being under the influence of any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
- Robbery or attempted robbery of another person's property or school property.
- Significant damage or attempt to damage school property.
- An obscene or offensive act or habitual profanity/vulgarity.
- Persistent failure to respond to correction, especially as to respect for staff, respect for others or persistent and repeated failure to follow student rules.

The charter school will use the following definitions:

**Suspension:** Dismissed from attendance at school for any reason not more than ten (10) consecutive days. Multiple suspensions shall not run consecutively nor shall multiple suspensions be applied to avoid expulsion from school.

**Expulsion:** Removal from attendance for more than ten (10) consecutive days or more than fifteen (15) days in a month of school attendance. Multiple suspensions that occur consecutively shall constitute expulsion.

Prior to suspending a student, the student shall be given a written statement of the reasons for suspension and an offer to meet with the parent/guardian to provide additional details and to gather other information or points of view from the parent/guardian and student. The students and his/her parents shall be given an opportunity to meet with the school principal to present any evidence as to why suspension should not be imposed. If circumstances require an immediate suspension, verbal contact with the parent shall be made and a written notice shall be sent home with the student.

If a student is recommended for expulsion, the following procedures apply. The student must be given written notice of the proposed expulsion and of the reasons. If the student or his/her parents contest the proposed disciplinary action, a hearing shall be held before the Charter School Board to determine whether cause exists for the disciplinary action. The student shall have the right to be represented by counsel at the hearing to present evidence on his/her own behalf. The written notice to the student of the proposed disciplinary action must advise the student of the above-listed rights, and must specify the date, time and place of the disciplinary hearing. The disciplinary hearing shall be held within ten days from the date the student was originally suspended. In order to preserve a student's due process rights, if a student has been suspended for ten (10) days waiting for a hearing, that student will return to school. The decision of the Charter School Board shall be final. Rights to return to the school following expulsion shall be the same as rights of return for expelled students in any other district non-charter school.

For all suspensions and recommendations for expulsion, students will be given the following due process:

- The principal will meet with the student to obtain his/her explanation of the event
- The principal will meet with the teacher or other staff member to obtain details of the event circumstances and witnesses
- The principal will interview all witnesses
- The principal will take one of the following actions and tell the student of the action and reasons for the action
  - Return the student to class and tell teacher/staff of the decision to return the child to class and the reasons
  - Tell the student he/she is suspended (less than 10 days or 10 or more days), contact the parent/guardian, and provide the student with written notice of the

- suspension, details of the student's rights, the date he/she can return to school, and an invitation for the parent/guardian to meet with the principal.
- Tell the student he/she is being recommended for expulsion, contact the parent/guardian, and provide the student with written notice of the recommendation, details of the student's rights, and the date, time, and place of the disciplinary hearing with the Charter School Board.
- If a child is recommended for expulsion, the principal will notify the district.

The charter school will adhere to the following:

#### Zero Tolerance Illegal Drugs And Alcohol

In compliance with state and federal laws, the charter school prohibits the possession, use, purchase, sale or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol by any student on school property or at any school sponsored activity. Furthermore, the selling or giving of any substance to another student under the guise of it being a controlled substance or prescription drug is prohibited and violations will be treated as a drug offense.

For the purpose of this policy the words illegal drugs shall mean any mind-altering drug or any mind-altering substance, the purchase, possession, use, sale, or distribution of which is made illegal by any federal statute, statute of the state, or any ordinance of the district. This includes the selling, sharing, or possession of prescription drugs.

The following discipline actions shall be taken for students possessing, using, selling or purchasing illegal drugs or alcohol at school or school sponsored activities:

- On the first offense of possession, use, purchase or being under the influence of illegal drugs, the student will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency. In addition, the student shall be expelled for one (1) calendar year (180 school days).
- On the first offense for possession of alcohol or impairment by alcohol, the student will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency. In addition, the student shall receive a long-term suspension or expulsion.

#### Gun Free Policy

Any student possessing or having had in his/her possession a firearm on a school campus or at a school sponsored activity will be expelled from the school system for a minimum of one (1) calendar year, one hundred eighty (180) school days, and referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency. For purposes of this policy, firearms are defined in 18 U.S.C. §921, but shall also include shotguns, antique guns, and rifles. The Charter School Board has the authority to modify the expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

#### Battery On School Personnel

Any student who commits battery on any charter school employee will be expelled for one (1) calendar year, one hundred eighty (180) school days, except where modified by the Charter School Board and will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

#### Classroom Rules and Discipline Policy

Each teacher will develop classroom rules with students on the first day of classes and will be posted for reference. Additionally, the following guidelines will be used in the classroom and supplement the school discipline policy.

- A-Team: All students start in this category at the beginning of every day  
 No restrictions  
 If a student breaks class rules including horseplay and minor disrespect to others, he/she will receive a Strike Out Warning

Caution List: After three Strikes, students are moved to this category

Restricted: Upon the fourth Strike, the student loses privileges including some of the following or others developed by the classroom teacher. Parents will be notified with a telephone call of this category.

- Time out at recess
- Restricted lunch
- Completing work in another classroom

Flagrant Misbehavior (hitting, extreme verbal abuse, or other serious misbehavior)

First Offense: The child will be sent to the office with a referral sheet with class work to be completed. After 1/2 hour of quiet work, the child will be sent back to class.

Second Offense: The child will be sent to the office with a referral sheet with class work to be completed. The parent will be called and the child and parent will discuss the matter. After 1/2 hour of quiet work, the child will be sent back to class.

Third Offense: The child will be sent home for the rest of the day with a letter for the parent/guardian and copy placed in the student's permanent record file as a suspension. If the child is sent home two days in a row, the child may not return the following school day. A letter will be sent home with the child and a copy placed in the student's permanent record file as a suspension. The child may not return to school until a meeting is held with the parent, child, and teacher.

Extreme Disrespect for Adults and Violent Uncontrollable Behavior

The child will be immediately sent home for the rest of the day and the following school day. A letter will be sent home and a copy placed in the student's permanent record file as a suspension. The child may not return to school until a meeting is held with the principal, parent, child, and teacher.

These actions are designed to enhance learning in the school and are in addition to the school's policy on suspension and dismissal from the school as listed in the school's charter.

Special Education Discipline

Before initiating any suspension, expulsion, or exclusion that will result in a change of placement for a child with a disability, the school shall convene a meeting of the School Support Team. During such meetings, the team will consider all information relevant to the behavior subject to disciplinary action including evaluations and diagnostic results, observations of the child, and the child's individualized educational program and placement. The team will determine whether the behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability. If not a manifestation of the child's disability, the team will determine if the child's disability did not impair the ability of the child to understand the effect and consequences of the specified behavior, and whether the disability impaired the child's ability to control the specified behavior. The team will prepare a report of findings and conclusions. If suspended, expelled, or excluded the school will provide a free appropriate public education in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400 et seq., on the 11th school day that a child is removed and during any subsequent school day in which the child is removed from school.

Should a pattern of discipline actions result in interruption of services, the team will meet to discuss the matter and if appropriate, provide services as described above.

If as a result of the team's deliberations, a change in placement is warranted due to disciplinary action, the parent shall be notified in writing of the team's findings and recommendations. That notification will be consistent with previously stated efforts to communicate effectively with the parent.

Should a student be expelled from the school consistent with the above policy and procedures, the school will provide equivalent education services to the student.

- 13) Identify the manner in which the school will be insured, the terms and conditions thereof, and the amounts of coverage;

The charter school shall, at its own expense, purchase and maintain insurance covering all of its operations. Said insurance shall include but not be limited to workers compensation the limits of which shall be in compliance with state law, employers liability insurance to cover bodily injury by accident in the amount of \$100,000 for each accident, bodily injury by disease in the amount of \$100,000 for each employee, comprehensive general liability insurance in the following forms: (1) comprehensive form; (2) contractual insurance; (3) personal injury; (4) broad form property damage; (5) premise – operations; and (6) completed operations. This coverage shall be in the amount not less than \$1,000,000, combined single limit, and shall also cover the use of all equipment, hoists, and vehicles on the premises not covered by automobile liability. The policy coverage will be on an occurrence basis. Automobile liability insurance is provided in the following amount: (1) comprehensive insurance in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 for bodily injury and property damage combined single limit; and (2) specific extensions of comprehensive form coverage and coverage for all owned, hired, leased and non-owned vehicles used in the operation of the charter school.

Proof of all insurance required by this section will be provided to the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) Office of Risk Management and shall be maintained during the term of the charter. APS shall be covered as an additional insured under any and all insurance. Confirmation of this shall appear on all Certificates of Insurance and any and all applicable policies. The Charter School Board shall be given no less than ninety (90) days written notice of cancellation and of any material change of coverage in any insurance required pursuant to this Agreement. The Charter School Board shall also be given written notice of renewal of coverage not less than ninety (90) days prior to the expiration of any policy.

Each and every agent shall warrant when signing the Certificate of Insurance that he or she is acting as an authorized representative on behalf of the companies affording insurance coverage under this Agreement and that he or she is licensed by the State of Georgia and is currently in good standing with the Commissioner of Insurance for the State of Georgia.

Any and all companies providing insurance required by this Agreement must meet the minimum financial security requirements as set forth herein. The rating for each company must be indicated on the Certificate of Insurance. Companies providing insurance under this Agreement must have a current Best's Rating not less than A and Best's Financial Size Category no less than Class IX.

### Legal Services

Under direction of the school's legal council, a yearly orientation program will be conducted for all board members and staff that includes an understanding of current applicable state and federal laws. Additionally, EdFutures and the school's legal council will conduct a quarterly review of legal requirements related to charter school operation, including local, state, and federal statutes. A quarterly report will be prepared for charter school board review and the charter school board will adopt resolutions, as needed to ensure compliance.

As described in other sections, the school will follow all legal requirements with regard to personnel, health/safety, state-assessment, No Child Left Behind provisions, independent financial audits and reporting, open meeting requirements, and special education requirements, any other laws.

Charter board's legal counsel and contact information

Brent Wilson  
Elarbee, Thompson, Sapp & Wilson, LLP  
229 Peachtree Street  
800 International Tower  
Atlanta, GA 30303-1605  
404-582-8427 fax 404222-9718

- 14) Describe the facilities to be used and their location. The petition must include documentation of ownership or lease of the facility and certification that the building is in compliance with all building code standards and regulations and fire, safety, environmental and accessibility requirements. If the facilities have not been obtained or the documentation is not available at the time the petition is submitted, petitioner shall provide a timeline for obtaining such facilities or providing such documentation;

During September 2006, the school relocated to the Atlanta Public Schools Anderson Park facility, located at 2050 Tiger Flowers Dr. N.W., Atlanta, Georgia (NPU J). This facility was selected because of its proximity to the former campus and because the number and size of the classrooms would facilitate student instruction; the development of science, language arts, and computer laboratories; and an enhanced gifted student program. Furthermore, the building's design (a single level structure) facilitates the swift movement of resources from one area to another; provides adequate restrooms for student and staff use; and supports a smooth evacuation of students and staff from the facility in the event of an emergency. University Community Academy is in compliance with all standards, regulations, and safety codes relevant to this facility.

Since Anderson Park served as a school building for Atlanta Public Schools, no modifications are planned to ensure it is appropriate for education purposes. Minor renovations have been completed, consistent with local and state codes. The facility is existing.

Lease documentation for the facility appears in Attachment D.

Because the school facility is owned by Atlanta Public Schools and is leased for the charter school's use, Atlanta Public Schools maintains and stores the Certificate of Occupancy.

#### Emergency and Safety Plan

The school is completing an updated GEMA safety plan and will have this approved no later than January 1, 2007, in compliance with Georgia § 20-2-1185. Additionally, the school will work with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency to obtain updates and remain current for the safety of students, parents, and employees.

See Attachment E (Excerpts from the schools safety plan)

#### Plan to Maintain the Facility

University Community Academy will continue to maintain it's physical facility in the highest quality standards through the following services:

##### Daily Maintenance

- Daily cleaning, sanitizing, and ongoing maintenance will be achieved through a combination of staff custodial services.
- Contractual daily cleaning and sanitizing with ServiceMaster, Inc., 5 days per week.

##### Extended Maintenance

- The University Community Academy leases the building located at 2050 Tiger Flowers, Atlanta, GA 30314
- The lessor, Atlanta Public Schools, is not responsible for any day-to-day cleaning.
- The lessor, Atlanta Public Schools, is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the roof and external components of the building. In addition, UCA reserves it's

claims, if any, due to the failure of Atlanta Public Schools to deliver the building in good working order, normal wear and tear excepted. Ref: Sections 2.23 and 2.24

**Annual Health and Safety Inspections**

- University Community Academy will obtain and present annual health and safety inspections as required by APS.

15) Describe the manner in which annual financial audits will be conducted;

The charter school shall cause a Financial Statement Audit and Financial and Administrative Procedures Controls Review (collectively, the “Financial Audits”) to be performed annually at its expense by an outside independent auditor (a certified CPA) retained by the charter school and acceptable to the Charter School Board and the Atlanta Public School Board. The charter school shall provide to the Charter School Board any reportable conditions and other advisory comments as defined by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. The Financial Audits and other financial reports shall be provided to the Charter School Board and Atlanta Public Schools no later than October 1 of each year.

16) Provide that all personnel employed by the charter school shall be fingerprinted and have a criminal record check prior to employment;

All school staff will be required to undergo a criminal background check and fingerprinting through the local police department prior to hiring and subsequently at five-year intervals.

17) Address whether transportation will be provided and, if so, provide a brief description of the transportation program for the charter school;

As has been the practice since the school opened in August 2002, transportation is not provided. Parents continue to be satisfied with bringing children to the school daily and picking them up.

- 18) Address whether food service will be provided and, if so, provide a brief description of the charter school's proposed food service program;

The school will provide breakfast and lunch to students by employing its own licensed food service provider and arranging its own participation in the National School Lunch Program with the Georgia Department of Education. These new arrangements will serve the specific nutritional needs of students and staff and will adhere to all laws and guidelines related to school food services. The school will use district scan forms for identifying students eligible for free/reduced lunch.

- 19) Specify that the charter school shall provide an annual report to parents or guardians of students attending the charter school, the local board, and the state board. The charter school shall make available for the community copies of the annual report. The annual report must indicate the progress made in the previous year in meeting the performance-based goals identified in the charter and include all state-mandated assessment scores and state-mandated accountability indicators.

The charter school will produce an annual report that outlines the instructional program, academic progress, financial information, and other information required by Georgia State Department of Education. This report will be provided to parents/guardians and submitted to Atlanta Public Schools and the Georgia State Department of Education, as required by Georgia law.

Specifically,:

- The school's governing board will be subject to the control and management of the local board and subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq.
- The school will submit an annual report complying with all requirements set out in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2067.1(c)(1)-(6).
- The school will submit an annual report outlining the previous year's progress to the state board no later than October 1st of each year.
- The annual report will include all State-mandated assessment scores and all State-mandated accountability scores.

20) For start-up charter schools:

- (i) Describe how parents, members of the community and other interested parties were directly and substantially involved in developing the petition.

Parents and guardians of students were directly involved in developing this petition through their involvement with teachers in the development of the school plan, their direct assistance to teachers in the classroom, their involvement with teachers in the development of Student Learning Plans, their participation in decision-making capacities as members of the Charter School Board, as members of school's auxiliaries, leagues, and support programs, and as members of the UCA Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). The principal and board have been encouraged by parents to renew the charter early as part of the overall plan to obtain a new school facility. These requests have been expressed to board members and staff during parent meetings in fall 2005 and winter 2005-2006.

- (ii) Describe how parents, members of the community and other interested parties will be involved in the school;

Parents are and will continue to be involved in decision making capacities at the school as they continue to work with Charter School Board members, community groups, state and local politicians, members of the Atlanta Public School System, and in school support service groups. Since the principal and Charter School Board consider parents to be a critical component to their children's success, parents will be provided access to information and websites so that their student's grades and assessments may be reviewed at any time. Additionally, parents will be invited to continue dialogues with teachers, occupy position of authority within the Charter School Board, and act in facilitative roles within the campus community.

- (iii) Specify that the charter school will be organized and operated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of Georgia and attach a copy of the Articles of Incorporation of the nonprofit corporation, a list of the current board members of the nonprofit corporation and provide the name of a primary contact for the petitioner.

The charter school will be organized and operated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of Georgia. The name of the corporation is University Community Academy, Inc., and a copy of the Articles of Incorporation appears as Attachment B. The current board members are as follows; resumes and conflict of interest forms appear in Attachment H:

Board Office	Name
Chair	Dr. L. Vernon Allwood
Vice Chair	Attorney Sekou Richen
Secretary	Ms. Unica Hodge
Treasure	Mr. Nathaniel White
Member	Ms Gloria Whatley
Member	Ms. Caletha Powell
Member	Dr. Marshalita Peterson
Member	Mr. Dana Williams
Member	Dr. Kawalie M. Fataki
Member	Dr. Hasan Crockett

The primary contract for the petitioner is listed below:  
Dr. Vernon Allwood  
Director of Community Relations & Special Projects  
Morehouse School of Medicine  
720 Westview Drive, SW  
Atlanta, Georgia 30310  
allwood@msm.edu  
404-752-1659

- (iv) If the nonprofit corporation intends to contract or has contracted for the services of a for-profit entity, the petition shall so state, and petitioner shall attach a copy of the contract to the petition. If a contract has not been entered into at the time the petition is submitted, petitioner shall include a timeline for providing such documentation;

The charter school will contract with EdFutures, Inc. for education and management services. A copy of the contract appears as Attachment C.

- 21) For local charter school petitions, provide for the charter school to be subject to the control and management of the local board of the local school system in which the proposed charter school will be located, as provided in the charter and in a manner consistent with the Charter School Act of 1998 and the Constitution.

The charter school to be subject to the control and management of Atlanta Board of Education as provided in the charter and in a manner consistent with the Charter School Act of 1998 and the Constitution. Furthermore, the charter school will comply with all requests issued by Atlanta Public Schools consistent with state law.

## 22) Governance Structure

### Governing Board's Function, Duties and Composition?

The charter school board will have controlling legal power and responsibility for the school, providing leadership, oversight, and policies to ensure the school operates consistent with the school's mission and state law. Additionally, the board will participate in school development activities and promote awareness of the school's educational opportunities among local families, civic and political leaders and the media. Specifically the Board will:

- oversee the academic and social effectiveness of the school
- engage parents and the broader community in support of the school
- ensure compliance with applicable legal requirements
- negotiate and oversee the management contract with the educational management company and other major contractors
- monitor and enforce personnel policies and decisions
- review and will maintain bylaws, and establish policies and plans consistent with the mission
- be accountable for the financial well-being of the school, including capital assets, operating budgets, fund-raising, and endowments
- review the EdFutures, Inc., written annual report including an evaluation of the performance of the principal and approve goals for the following year
- keep full and accurate records of its meetings, committees, and policies
- work to ensure that all of its members are actively involved in the work of the board and its committees
- develop itself through orientation, ongoing education, and leadership succession planning
- assure compliance with applicable laws and regulations and minimizes exposure to legal action

The composition of the board will reflect a balance of expertise and perspectives needed to achieve the mission of the Charter School. As approved by the charter school board in February 2006, the required number of parents on the board was changed to a minimum of one-third.

Officers will include chair, vice-chair, secretary, and treasurer and assume duties as follows:

#### Chair:

- preside at all meetings of board
- sign acts necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Board
- consult regularly with the principal and school staff,
- establish board committees
- call emergency meetings of the board, as necessary
- enforce parliamentary procedures
- communicate board policy to the management organization

#### Vice-Chair

- attend all meetings, acting as support for the Chair
- serve in the capacity of the chair, in the latter's absence

#### Secretary

- record and distribute board meeting minutes
- publicly advertise meetings, in accordance with state regulations
- oversee, announce, and record all motions and voting results

#### Treasurer

- oversee financial policy issues
- consult with principal and management organization on all financial matters

- sign checks according to appropriate procedures

Charter school board members will be individuals of high moral character who are leaders in the school's community or in the nation and who have evidenced sincere concern for the welfare of children and for the improvement of education. Members will reflect the diversity of cultural, academic, and professional expertise that is essential for fulfilling the school's unique mission and consist of not less than two or no more than 20 members. The board will appoint at least five working committees:

#### Finance Committee

- Monitor and report on the business operations of the school including reviewing financial reports and statements, providing primary contact with the auditing firm, reporting on the status of the school's financials to the full Board and the broader school community.
- Ensure compliance with key measures of accountability plan.

#### Student Affairs Committee

- Monitor the progress of the overall student body against their academic and social goals and objectives.
- Review student life issues including appeals of school suspension and expansion decision of the School Director

#### Parent and Community Involvement Committee

- Communicate school activities and issues of interest to the broader community.
- Engage parents and community members in dialogues around major decisions impacting the school and the community.
- Monitor and support school outreach, adult education, and GED programs for parents.

#### Personnel Committee

- Participate in selection and evaluation of School Director.
- Support recruiting efforts for all staff positions (e.g., identify candidates, provide feedback and references).
- Support the development of the Charter School personnel manual

#### Advisory Grievance Committee

- Convene as necessary to review filed complaints
- Render and enforce final decision, regarding the complain

#### Selection of Governing Board

Board members will be selected on the basis of the special skills, talents and expertise that will support the educational and moral development of the students of the school. As needed to replace members, a search will be conducted within the community by the existing board to identify candidates who possess the following:

- A shared vision and commitment to the school's mission
- Credibility and integrity in the community
- Significant educational, professional, or practical qualifications.

Candidates will be interviewed by existing board members and asked to indicate the value that they will offer to the board and the school. The entire board will then vote on the candidates and make their final selections.

#### Governing Board Term

Board members will serve renewable four-year terms. Board terms are not staggered since membership end dates vary due to varied start dates.

#### Governing Board Meetings

The Charter School Board meetings will be subject to Georgia laws related to open and public meetings and inspection of public records. The Board will meet monthly and parents will be notified of these meetings through posted notices at the school and through periodic flyers sent home with students.

#### Removing Governing Board Members

Any member may be removed with or without cause at any regular or special meeting of the board by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members then in office. A member who fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings of the board without any reasonable excuse shall be automatically removed from the board unless the board affirmatively decides to retain such member.

#### Governing Board will Uphold the School's Mission and Vision

The principal give a written progress report at all Board meetings in order to keep board members informed. This process involves a question and answer period where issues involving mission and vision are explored and clarified. Differences are resolved through board action with written notice to the principal and EMO.

#### Governing Board's Appraise the Principal's Performance

Each April, the charter school board will submit to EdFutures, Inc, input on the principal's performance to be included in the principal's formal evaluation. When completed, the charter school board will review and approve the principal's evaluation.

#### Governing Board Ensure Effective Organizational Planning

The board has scheduled planned retreats and participates in the Georgia Charter Schools Association activities. Several members attend training sessions where strategies for effective board development are explored.

#### Governing Board Ensures Financial Stability

The board has a finance committee to monitor the financial operations of the school. In addition to approving the annual budget, the board receives monthly financial reports from the educational management organization and is intimately involved in the auditing process.

#### Governing Board's Role in Resolving Grievances and Other Conflicts

In the event a complaint emerges that cannot be resolved by the school principal informally, the Charter School Board will follow the Complaint and Grievance Procedure described below. These procedures appear in the Parent-Student Handbook (see Attachment I) and are available at the school office. Staff is instructed to provide them to any parent, community member, or employee who requests copies.

### **General Information**

It is the desire of this Board that any complaints arising in the school be resolved fairly and promptly. Prior to the initiation of a grievance, the parent, employee, or community member should discuss the dispute with the principal in an attempt to resolve the problem. Many issues can be resolved through open discussion between the parties involved. When such discussions are in progress, the written grievance must be initiated within ten (10) days of the event which formed the basis of the dispute or from the date that the person was made aware of the incident; there shall be no more than five (5) days between the date that the person receives the decision at any level and the appeal to the next level. In situations where dispute resolution has not been successful, the school administers the grievance procedure. Only certain types of grievances, however, will qualify for review by the Advisory Grievance Committee. The grievance procedure has

strict rules that must be followed by all parties. The Advisory Grievance Committee shall be comprised of three Charter School Board members: Chair (or designee), secretary, and parent representative. A grievance may be withdrawn or concluded at anytime by the person who initiated the grievance.

### **Grievance Definition**

A grievance is defined as a dispute, difference, disagreement, or complaint between parties related to wages, hours, and conditions of employment. A parent may also initiate a grievance if he/she feels that the principal has in some way violated a policy or the rights of his/her child as they relate to the school's Student Code of Conduct. The grievance process should be reserved for employees, staff members, and administrators or parents who have legitimate complaints with the principal. Complaints filed by parents against teachers or staff should be referred to the principal and not the Advisory Grievance Committee.

### **Stages of the Grievance Procedure**

The grievance procedure will contain three resolution steps:

#### **First Resolution Step:**

A person must initiate a grievance on a fully completed Grievance Form. The form must state the claim, detailed statement of the facts in support of the claim, and the relief requested. Attachments may be used.

The form is then given or mailed to the principal within ten (10) calendar days of the date that the event occurred or from the date that the person was first made aware of the incident. A copy must also be submitted to the Advisory Grievance Committee.

In certain instances, the principal may not be the first step respondent. This would apply in cases where the person is concerned about possible retaliation. In these cases, the grievance may be submitted directly to the Charter School Board, which then becomes the 1st step respondent. The Board would assign the resolution to the Education Management Agency (EMO) who would follow the Step One procedure.

Upon receiving the completed grievance form, the principal will respond by holding a conference within five (5) working days of the request. In any such discussion, the principal shall have authority to settle the grievance by providing a solution to which the person agrees. The person likewise shall have authority to settle or withdrew the grievance in whole or in part.

If no resolution is reached as a result of such discussion, the principal shall render a decision orally stating the reasons for the decision. The principal's decision should be stated during this discussion, if possible, but in no event shall it be given to the grievant later than five (5) working days after the initial conference, unless the parties agree in writing to extend the five (5) day period. Within five (5) working days after the principal's decision, the principal shall list his/her response on the grievance form, sign and date the form as the first step respondent, and return it to the grievant for their signature. The person has two options at this point:

1. Conclude the grievance by accepting the principal's decision and returning the form to the Advisory Grievance Committee.
2. Appeal this decision and advance the grievance to the second step within five (5) calendar days.

#### **Second Resolution Step**

An appeal of the decision reached in Step One can be initiated by submitting a copy of the completed grievance form and the response given by the first step respondent (principal) to the Advisory Grievance Committee no later than five (5) days after receiving the Step One written decision.

The Charter Board Chairman will assign the resolution of the grievance to the EMO and an EMO designee will meet with the person as expeditiously as possible, but no later than five (5) days following receipt of the Step 1 appeal unless the parties agree upon a later date. The EMO designee shall have authority to grant or settle the grievance in whole or in part by providing a solution to which the person agrees. The grievant shall also have the authority to settle or withdraw the grievance as a result of discussions or compromise in this step.

If no resolution is reached at this level, the EMO designee shall provide its written response within five (5) days of its meeting with the grievant, sign the grievance form as the second step respondent and return it to the parent for signature. The person has two options:

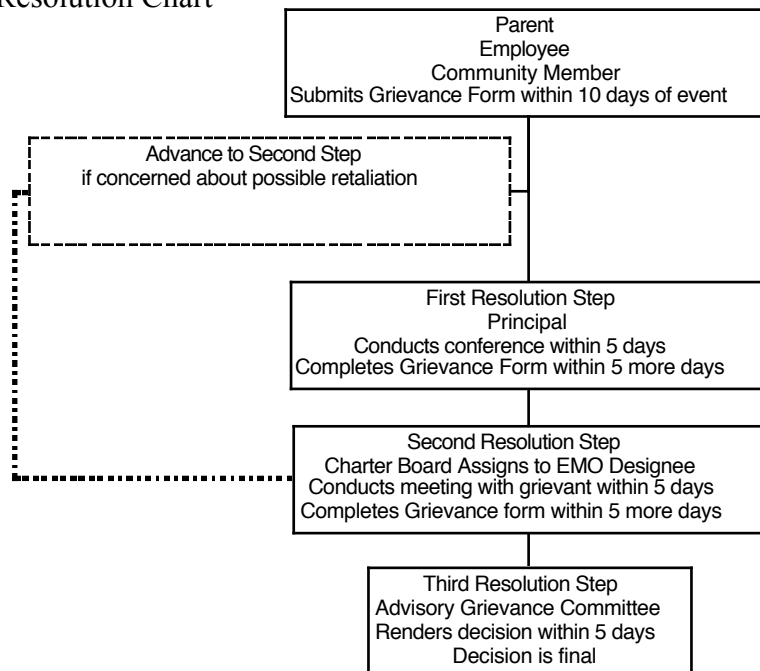
1. To accept the decision and thereby conclude the grievance and return it to the Advisory Grievance Committee.
2. To advance the grievance to the third step, the Advisory Grievance Committee

**Third and Final Resolution Step**

The Advisory Grievance Committee shall convene as necessary to review filed complaints and to render and enforce final decisions regarding such complaints. The final decision will be communicated to the parent within five (5) working days of receiving the response.

In all phases of the grievance process, it is the responsibility of the parent to sign the grievance form and have it delivered to the proper person and to forward a copy to the Advisory Grievance Committee. Additionally, respondents at all levels must adhere to the five (5) day rule. If this is not done, there can be no effective resolution of problems in a timely manner.

Grievance Resolution Chart



Certificate of Incorporation, Georgia Secretary of State  
See Attachment F

Non-profit Organization By-Laws  
See Attachment G

#### List of Business Arrangements/Partnerships/Educational Programs/Businesses/Non-profit Organizations

The charter school has partnerships with the six (6) academic institutions that comprise the Atlanta University Center (AUC). The AUC is the largest consortium of Historical Black Colleges in the United States and consists off the following schools. Clark Atlanta University, the Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse College, the Morehouse School of Medicine and Spelman College.

#### Method to Resolve Conflicts Between Local Board and Charter School

The board chair maintains frequent contact the Charter School Liaison for the Atlanta Public Schools. Efforts are made to ensure that the Charter School complies with all of the rules and regulations that are required. The board is sensitive to providing all deliverable to APS in a timely manner and has a history of resolving conflicts to the district's satisfaction.

The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the district in the event of a dispute relating to the provisions of the charter are as shown below:

- In the event of a dispute concerning whether the Charter School is meeting requirements of the charter, the School District or the Charter Board shall provide written notice to the other of the nature of the dispute and the facts which the party believes supports the failure to comply. This notice shall be provided in a timely fashion and must follow an informal attempt at resolution between the parties. In an emergency, where oral notice precedes written notice, the oral notice shall be immediately followed by written notice.
- After the receipt of the notice, the Superintendent or designee and a representative of the Charter School Board shall meet to try and resolve the dispute. If a resolution is reached, a written description of that resolution shall be drafted and signed and preserved as guidance for future action. If no resolution is reached, the matter shall be submitted to a third party (in a non-binding mediation process) experienced in conflict resolution and educational issues. Within thirty calendar days or otherwise mutually agreed, the parties shall meet to resolve the dispute. Any agreements reached shall be written and preserved as set out above. This shall be done at no cost to the District. Nothing within this section shall constrain the District from making a final decision. Nothing within this section shall constrain petitioner from legal action in the event that petitioner disagrees with the District's final decision.

#### Plans to Survive If Charter School Board and EMO Terminate

Should the relationship between the Charter School Board and EdFutures, Inc., be terminated, the Charter School Board will seek a replacement EMO through a public RFP process. The board chair will assume management duties until such time that a new EMO is hired.